Mentoring EFL Preservice Teachers in EFL Writing

Peter Hudson, Hoa Thi Mai Nguyen, and Sue Hudson

Effective mentoring of EFL preservice teachers may advance EFL teaching practices. Five factors for mentoring have been identified, namely, personal attributes, system requirements, pedagogical knowledge, modeling, and feedback. An empirically based survey instrument focused on 106 Vietnamese preservice teachers' perceptions of their mentoring for EFL teaching across these five factors. Apart from acceptable Cronbach alphas for four of the five factors (system requirements was .08 below the accepted .70 level), analysis revealed that more than 50% of these preservice teachers perceived that they had not received mentoring for developing their teaching of English writing on 29 of the 34 survey items. Mentoring practices in this study varied; consequently, EFL mentors may require guidance for enhancing their practices. In addition, the instrument linked to the five-factor mentoring model may assist in identifying mentors' needs for devising professional development programs.

Le mentorat efficace auprès des stagiaires en anglais comme langue étrangère pourrait faire avancer les pratiques d'enseignement dans le domaine. Cinq facteurs y ont été identifiés, notamment les attributs personnels, les exigences du système, les connaissances pédagogiques, l'apprentissage par l'observation et la rétroaction. Un instrument à base empirique a servi pour interroger 106 stagiaires vietnamiens sur les perceptions qu'ils avaient de leur mentorat dans le contexte de leur formation comme enseignants en ALE, et aussi en fonction de ces cinq facteurs. Mise à part les alphas de Cronbach acceptables pour quatre des cinq facteurs (les exigences du système étaient de 0,08 sous le niveau accepté de 0,70), l'analyse a révélé que plus de 50% de ces stagiaires estimaient que pour 29 des 34 items du sondage, ils n'avaient pas reçu de mentorat pour appuyer le développement de leur enseignement de la rédaction en anglais. Les pratiques de mentorat évoquées dans cette étude différaient les unes des autres; il est donc possible que les mentors en ALE aient besoin d'appui pour améliorer leurs pratiques. De plus, l'instrument lié au modèle de mentorat à cinq composantes pourrait servir dans l'identification des besoins des mentors pour la création de programmes de développement professionnel.

Introduction

During the 20th century when the Vietnamese government implemented its open-door policy, English was widely used for international communication.

The teaching and learning of English has become much more significant and widespread in Vietnam, with English-language skills contributing to higher individual status. English is currently a compulsory subject starting in grade 3. Data from a recent survey showed that of all Vietnamese junior secondary schools, 99.1% taught English, whereas only 0.6% taught French, 0.2% Russian, and 0.1% Chinese (Loc, 2005). Despite the increasing role of English in education and employment, the competence of Vietnamese English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers is a major concern. A mismatch continues between the expected and actual levels of competence, and educators claim that EFL preservice teacher education is largely inadequate (Nunan, 2003; Pham, 2001). These issues suggest a need for reform in EFL preservice teacher education. Among many attempts to enhance EFL preservice teacher education, efforts have focused on developing candidates' teaching practices during the practicum.

It appears that few mentoring studies involve EFL preservice teachers; any similar studies in this field tend to focus on multicultural classrooms in ESL contexts (Beckett, Marquez-Chisholm, & Wetzel, 2003). Empirical research is needed on mentoring EFL preservice teachers (Nguyen, 2008). Indeed, there seem to be no studies in mentoring EFL preservice teachers in any of the four key elements, that is, reading, writing, speaking, listening (Harmer, 2001). Hence in order to narrow the topic of investigation for this study, EFL writing was selected as a specific area of EFL teaching. The aim of this study was to articulate the existing mentoring practices linked to this survey instrument for Vietnamese EFL preservice teachers' mentoring in the area of teaching English writing. Another aim was to determine the transferability of the science mentoring instrument (Hudson, Skamp, & Brooks, 2005) to the development of an instrument for mentoring EFL preservice teachers in the teaching of English writing.

Literature Review

Preservice teachers must be prepared to meet the challenges and standards for EFL teaching (Lu, 2002; Wertheimer & Honigsfeld, 2000), and many educators (Cook, 1996; Haley & Rentz, 2002; Larsen-Freeman, 2000) have been calling for effective EFL teaching approaches to raise the standard of learning. Implementing EFL teaching approaches in schools must begin with preservice teacher education, in which universities and schools have a significant role to play in shaping effective practices. The in-school context of EFL preservice teacher education is pivotal for developing knowledge and skills (Chow, Tang, & So, 2004; Sutherland, Scanlon, & Sperring, 2004; Tin, 2006; Wharton, 1998; Woodward, 1992). Indeed, there is extensive research on the benefits of preservice teachers' field experiences, which are recognized as crucial for enhancing the practicalities of teaching (Catapano, 2006;

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Gaffey, Woodward, & Lowe, 1995; Goodfellow & Sumsion, 2000; Mule, 2005; Power, Clarke, & Hine, 2002).

Preservice teacher education has become more school-based, with further responsibilities assigned to mentors (Sinclair, 1997). Although mentors have individual beliefs about what is important for developing preservice teachers, the general result of effective mentoring is "improvement in what happens in the classroom and school, and better articulation and justification of the quality of educational practices" (Van Thielen, 1992, p. 16). Mentoring is typically described as a way to develop teaching practices that involves a close relationship between a less experienced person and one who is more experienced, who provides guidance, advice, support, and feedback (Haney, 1997). The two key players at the center of the mentoring process are the mentee (preservice teacher) and the mentor (the supervising or cooperating teacher). These positions are also at the center of achieving professional and practical knowledge for implementing EFL education. A competent mentor can be considered as one who is "more knowledgeable on teaching practices and through explicit mentoring processes develops pedagogical self-efficacy in the mentee towards autonomous teaching practices" (Hudson, 2004, pp. 216-217). Thoughtful mentors organize their preservice teachers' professional development by "advising on effective practices, making the theory-practice link overt … and evaluating and reporting upon their practicum performance" (Sinclair, 1997, p. 309). Although many versions of mentoring exist worldwide and vary with the individual, mentors are generally required to have proficient knowledge and skills with respect to effective mentoring practices (Edwards & Collison, 1996; Little, 1990, Tomlinson, 1995). However, some EFL teachers may be inadequately skilled to fill the role of effective mentors in this field.

Belore 1990, few in-depth studies of generic mentoring had been conducted (Little, 1990). Although the last decade and a half produced significantly more scholarship about generic mentoring (Edwards & Collison, 1996; Tomlinson, 1995), little has involved subject-specific mentoring (Hodge, 1997, on physical education; Hudson, 2005, on science; Jarvis, McKeon, Coates, & Vause, 2001, on science; Jarworski & Watson, 1994, on mathematics), and such research is virtually nonexistent for mentoring preservice EFL teachers. Specific-subject mentoring focuses on ideas associated with the subject. For example, mentoring preservice teachers in mathematics education is different from mentoring in EFL reading. However, generic practices and attributes can be used to mentor more specifically.

Unlike English as a second language (ESL), which may occur in English-speaking countries, EFL recognizes that the English language is foreign to the host country, and so EFL preservice teachers and ESL preservice teachers may operate in different contexts. This study acknowledges the contextual differences for EFL learners and preservice teachers who are EFL speakers

themselves. Hence Vietnamese preservice teachers work in a social environment where Vietnamese is the mother tongue and English is a foreign language. Although there are differences in teaching expectations, styles, and attitudes in EFL countries, there may be common mentoring attributes and practices as indicated in the literature. For example, several studies in the field of mentoring have reported that listening is a desirable mentor attribute (Beyene, Anglin, Sanchez, & Ballou, 2002; Harrison, Dymoke, & Pell, 2006; Luft, Bang, & Roehrig, 2007), which also needs to be part of mentoring in EFL writing.

This study focuses on Vietnamese preservice teachers' perceptions of their mentors' practices for developing their teaching of writing in English in the five factors—personal attributes, system requirements, pedagogical knowledge, modeling, and feedback—that are linked to a literature-based survey instrument (Appendix A). Personal attributes, particularly the mentor's personal attributes of trust and emotional support that foster a learning environment conducive to developing the mentee's skills (Ackley & Gall, 1992; Halai, 1998), are essential for facilitating the mentoring of preservice teachers (Ackley & Gall; Ganser, 1996). System requirements provide a direction for teaching and present a framework for regulating the quality of teaching practices (Smith, 2000), which in the simplest form involves an education system's policies, curriculum, and aims. Pedagogical knowledge, which is developed pragmatically in the school setting and encompasses knowledge for teaching, is crucial for preservice teacher development (Gatbonton, 1999; Jonson, 2002; Morine-Dershimer & Kent, 1999). As mentees are in the beginning stages of learning how to teach, and mentors are more experienced in the profession (Barab & Hay, 2001), it is strongly argued that teaching practices are most effectively learned through a mentor's modeling (Ackley & Gall; Carlson & Gooden, 1999). For example, modeling EFL language, management of EFL classrooms, and effective EFL teaching may be noted as fundamental mentoring practices (Appendix A). Finally, numerous researchers (Bishop, 2001; Kouritzin & Vizard, 1999; Little, 1990; Schön, 1987) have reported that a mentor's constructive feedback allows opportunities for preservice teachers to reflect on and to improve their teaching practice.

Research Question

The research question for this study was: What are Vietnamese preservice teachers' perceptions of their mentoring in EFL writing with respect to each of the five factors and associated attributes and practices?

Research Design

The theoretical grounding for this study was a five-factor model for mentoring that had been previously been identified, namely, personal attributes,

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system requirements, pedagogical knowledge, modeling, and feedback (Hudson, 2003). Empirical studies were analyzed to devise items to reflect effective mentoring practices. For example, numerous studies advocated mentors being supportive of their mentees; hence an item was constructed that reflected this practice (Item 1, Appendix A). Items were then grouped into factors using a priori clustering. Survey construction required experts in the field, pilot tests, and a main study with statistical analysis. Thus the five factors and the items associated with each factor were empirically established (Hudson et al., 2005). To illustrate further, statistical analysis of 331 preservice teachers' responses on the survey from nine Australian universities on the five-factor model indicated acceptable Cronbach alpha scores for each key factor, namely, personal attributes (mean scale score=2.86, SD=1.08), system requirements (mean=3.44, SD=.93), pedagogical knowledge (mean=3.24, SD=1.01), modeling (mean=2.91, SD=1.07), and feedback (mean=2.86, SD=1.11) were .93, .76, .94, .95, and .92 respectively. Correlations and covariances of the five factors were statistically significant (p<.001), and standardized regression weights ranged from .67 to .89 (p<.001). All standard errors, which are a measure of how much the value of a test statistic varies from sample to sample, were minimal for all items (≤.01; Hair, Anderson, Tatham, & Black, 1995). The five factors, the associated practices and attributes, and the development of a mentoring instrument were well articulated in earlier scholarly literature (Hudson et al.), to which this survey (Appendix A) provides a direct link. Items associated with each of these factors are displayed in Appendix B and are displayed in Tables 2-6, which can also be linked to the survey instrument (Appendix A). In addition, each survey item has two or more empirical studies advocating that mentoring attribute or practice (Hudson et al.).

Data Collection and Instrument Design

The Mentoring for English as a Foreign Language Teaching (MEFLT) survey instrument (Appendix A) evolved through a series of preliminary investigations on Mentoring for Effective Primary Science Teaching (MEPST; Hudson, 2003, 2004; Hudson et al., 2005), which also identified a link between the literature and items on the survey instrument. The MEPST survey instrument, which focused on the same five factors noted above, was altered to reflect mentoring for developing EFL teaching of writing; hence no further a priori clusters were required. The 34 survey items and the position of these items in the MEFLT survey remained the same as the MEPST survey with two exceptions: the word *science* was replaced by the word *writing*, and the preamble focused on EFL teaching rather than science teaching. For this study the perceptions of 100 Vietnamese preservice teachers of their mentoring were obtained through five-part Likert scale items (i.e., strongly disagree=1, disagree=2, uncertain=3, agree=4, strongly agree=5) in the MEFLT

instrument. Scoring for the MEFLT instrument was the same for as the MEPST instrument (Appendix B). SPSS was the statistical program used to produce mean scale scores, Cronbach alphas to indicate the level of internal consistency with survey items interpreted by participants as intended (Kline, 1998), and descriptive statistics (percentage, mean, standard deviation) for each variable. The instrument aims to gather data about mentees' perceptions of their mentoring.

Participants

The EFL preservice teachers in this study were completing a four-year undergraduate course for TESOL and starting their six-week practicum in upper-secondary schools in Hanoi. Across the four years, 106 preservice teachers participated in this study (representing 42% of the total cohort) who completed their field experience at various secondary schools in the Hanoi area. Before starting the practicum, they studied nine credits on EFL teaching methodology with theory and practice. The university course provided them with pedagogical knowledge of EFL teaching methods, as well as opportunities to present EFL teaching to their peers. As a result of this university education, assessments revealed that they had at least met the minimum requirements for EFL teaching before entering the practicum.

The participants were randomly selected from various participating schools in Hanoi. Participants provided pseudonyms to ensure anonymity. Each school was allocated between 10 and 30 EFL preservice teachers, with each being assigned to one mentor. A classroom teacher served as a mentor during the preservice teachers' field experiences. These mentors at secondary schools received a nominal fee for their service. In some rural areas, such a small amount of money would be an incentive for mentors; however, this was not the case in most areas. According to Dyer and Nguyen (1999), teacher mentors were willing to mentor EFL preservice teachers for a variety of reasons including a sense of professional responsibility for developing the teachers. However, most had not been trained in mentoring. Although the preservice teachers were required to teach at least six lessons in six weeks, they usually taught significantly more. Over past years, foreign-language education at the secondary level in Vietnam has been criticized for overemphasizing grammar and reading because secondary students assessed as competent in reading and writing grammatically often cannot communicate effectively in English. Recently a new English course book with a focus on all four skills has been introduced. Among these, teaching writing to secondary students continues to be a challenge.

Data were gathered from 106 Vietnamese EFL preservice teachers at the conclusion of their final field experience—practicum or professional experience—through the MEFLT survey (Appendix A). One of the researchers (Nguyen), who was also a TESOL lecturer in the course, distributed the

survey to all TESOL classes and collected the surveys the following day. Six incomplete survey responses were deleted (Hittleman & Simon, 2006). The completed responses (from 95 women and 5 men) provided descriptors of the participants (mentors and mentees) and data for each of the above-mentioned five factors and associated attributes and practices. Twenty percent of the mentees (n=100) were under 22 years of age, and the rest were between 22 and 29. All these preservice teachers had completed at least one English curriculum unit at university (1% had completed 1 English unit, 16% 2 units, 51% 3 units, and 32% 4 or more units). Eighty-nine percent were in their fourth year of university (7 were in the third year, 3 were in the second year, and 1 in the first year) with 94% of the participants as undergraduates. Thirty percent had completed one field experience (professional experience or practicum) with 54% completing three or more field experiences. No professional experiences were of less than three weeks' duration. Their field experiences occurred in a variety of locations: 44% were in a metropolitan city, 19% in city suburbs, 16% in regional cities, 20% in rural towns and villages, and one preservice teacher in an isolated rural area. Although 79% of the preservice teachers in the study taught one or more writing lessons, including 34% who taught four or more lessons, 21% did not teach a writing lesson during this last field experience.

Mentees were required to provide observation information about their mentors. Mentees estimated their mentors' (men=17, women=83) ages as follows: 37% 22-29 years, 33% 30-39 years, and 30% 40 years and over. It may be that 50% or more of these mentors had had at least 10 years' teaching experience, whereas at least one third had had fewer than 10 years' teaching experience; therefore, the results need to be interpreted with these potential experiences in mind. Thirty-three percent of the mentees claimed that they had observed their mentors model four or more EFL writing lessons during their last field experience. Whereas 38% of mentees were unsure that teaching English writing was a strong subject area for their mentors, 50% perceived that English writing was their mentors' area of strength.

Results

The results showed Cronbach alphas, mean scale scores, and standard deviations (*SD*) of the five factors followed by insights into attributes and practices associated with each factor. Four of the five mentoring factors had acceptable Cronbach alphas greater than .70 for internal instrument consistency (Kline, 1998): personal attributes (mean scale score=3.25, *SD*=0.74); pedagogical knowledge (mean scale score=3.18, *SD*=0.73); modeling (mean scale score= 3.09, *SD*=0.68); and feedback (mean scale score=3.19, *SD*=0.71) were .74, .89, .81, and .75 respectively (Table 1). System requirements had a Cronbach alpha score of .62 (mean scale score=3.09, *SD*=0.81), which was .08 below the acceptable level. An earlier study on mentoring science education (Hudson

Table 1

Confirmatory Factor Analysis for Each of the Five Factors (*n*=100)

Factor	Mean scale score	SD	Cronbach alpha
Personal attributes	3.25	0.69	.74
System requirements	3.09	0.81	.62
Pedagogical knowledge	3.18	0.73	.89
Modeling	3.09	0.68	.81
Feedback	3.19	0.71	.75

et al., 2005) had indicated that system requirements would have the lowest Cronbach alpha score of the five factors.

Personal attributes. Analysis of the mentees' responses relating to their mentors' personal attributes indicates that most mentors were perceived as comfortable in talking about teaching English writing (53%). However, other than for the instilled confidence variable (50%), all other personal attributes were less than 50% (Table 2). Table 2 provides mean item scores (range: 3.07-3.36; *SD* range: 0.93-1.21) and rank-order percentages on mentees' perceptions of their mentors' personal attributes.

System requirements. The percentages of mentees who perceived EFL mentoring practices associated with system requirements were all below 50%. Specifically, 46% of mentees agreed or strongly agreed that their mentors had discussed with them the aims of teaching writing in English, 44% reported mentors discussing the school's English-language writing policies with their mentees, and 34% agreed or strongly agreed that mentors had outlined English writing curriculum documents (mean item scores range: 2.95-3.16; *SD* range: 1.06-1.10, Table 3).

Table 2

Personal Attributes for Mentoring the Teaching of EFL Writing (*n*=100)

Mentoring Practices	%*	M	SD
Comfortable in talking	53	3.30	1.01
Instilled confidence	50	3.27	1.12
Supportive	46	3.36	1.21
Assisted in reflecting	45	3.28	0.93
Listened attentively	44	3.20	1.08
Instilled positive attitudes	42	3.07	1.08

*%=Percentage of mentees who either agreed or strongly agreed that their mentors provided that specific mentoring practice.

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Table 3
System Requirements for Mentoring the Teaching of EFL Writing (*n*=100)

Mentoring practices	%*	M	SD
Discussed aims	46	3.16	1.07
Discussed policies	44	3.16	1.10
Outlined curriculum	34	2.95	1.06

*%=Percentage of mentees who either agreed or strongly agreed that their mentors provided that specific mentoring practice.

Pedagogical knowledge. Mean item scores (3.06-3.32; *SD* range: 1.00-1.14, Table 4) indicate that most mentees did not agree or strongly agree that their mentor had displayed pedagogical knowledge for teaching writing in English. More than 45% of mentors may not have mentored pedagogical knowledge practices (see Table 4 for rank-order percentages). For example, in the planning stages before teaching writing, only 37% of mentors reportedly assisted in planning, 48% discussed timetabling the mentee's teaching, and at the top end of the rank order, only 52% were perceived to guide the mentees' English writing preparation (Table 4). Although teaching strategies needed to be associated with the assessment of students' prior knowledge, more than 60% of mentors appeared not to have discussed assessment or questioning techniques for teaching EFL writing. Many mentors also ap-

Table 4
Pedagogical Knowledge for Mentoring the Teaching of EFL Writing (*n*=100)

Mentoring Practices	%*	M	SD
Guided preparation	52	3.20	1.05
Assisted with classroom management	52	3.32	1.14
Discussed implementation	48	3.27	1.05
Assisted with timetabling	48	3.32	1.09
Discussed problem-solving	44	3.24	1.08
Discussed content knowledge	44	3.21	1.05
Provided viewpoints	41	3.14	1.10
Discussed questioning techniques	38	3.10	1.00
Assisted in planning	37	3.10	1.08
Assisted with teaching strategies	37	3.06	1.03
Discussed assessment	32	3.07	1.12

*%=Percentage of mentees who either agreed or strongly agreed that their mentors provided that specific mentoring practice.

Table 5
Modelling for Mentoring the Teaching of EFL Writing (*n*=100)

Mentoring Practices	%*	M	SD
Modeled teaching	46	3.24	1.04
Modeled rapport with students	44	3.16	1.04
Displayed enthusiasm	43	3.14	1.12
Used syllabus language	41	3.22	0.96
Modeled classroom management	37	3.02	1.05
Modeled a well-designed lesson	35	3.15	1.07
Demonstrated hands-on	34	3.05	0.96
Modeled effective teaching	26	2.75	1.09

*%=Percentage of mentees who either agreed or strongly agreed that their mentors provided that specific mentoring practice.

peared not to consider content knowledge and problem-solving strategies for teaching EFL writing (44%), and providing viewpoints on teaching writing may not have been considered a high priority (41%, Table 4). This implies that many preservice teachers may not have been provided with adequate pedagogical knowledge for developing successful EFL teaching practices.

Modeling. Modeling teaching provides mentees with visual and aural demonstrations of how to teach writing in English; yet mean item scores in this study (2.75-3.24; *SD* range: 0.96-1.12, Table 5) indicate that most mentors were perceived not to have modeled EFL writing teaching practices. More than 50% may not have been enthusiastic about teaching writing in English. In addition, more than 60% did not seemingly model a hands-on lesson, a well-designed lesson, or classroom management practices for teaching writing (see Table 5 for rank-order percentages). Of the 46% who supposedly modeled the teaching of writing, 20% were considered by their mentees as not effective in their EFL teaching of writing (Table 5).

Feedback. Mean item scores (3.07-3.27; *SD* range: 0.99-1.10, Table 6) indicate that 50% or more of mentees did not agree or strongly agree that their mentors had provided feedback as part of their mentoring practices for teaching writing in English. Surprisingly, mentees perceived that only half of the mentors had observed their teaching of writing, with 41% articulating their expectations for the mentees' teaching of writing. More surprising is that 60% of mentors reportedly did not provide written feedback, and only 47% reviewed the mentees' lesson plans, which is necessary to provide feedback before teaching begins in order to enhance instructional outcomes (Table 6).

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Table 6

Providing Feedback for Mentoring the Teaching of EFL Writing (*n*=100)

Mentoring Practices	%*	M	SD
Observed teaching for feedback	50	3.27	1.10
Provided oral feedback	49	3.26	0.99
Reviewed lesson plans	47	3.22	1.07
Provided evaluation on teaching	45	3.17	1.04
Articulated expectations	41	3.12	1.09
Provided written feedback	40	3.07	1.06

*%=Percentage of mentees who either agreed or strongly agreed that their mentors provided that specific mentoring practice.

Discussion and Conclusions

Data analysis revealed that more than 50% of these preservice teachers perceived that they had not received mentoring for developing their teaching of English writing on 29 of the 34 survey items. Only five attributes or practices were reported by most mentees, namely, comfortable in talking, instilled confidence, guided preparation, assisted with classroom management, and observed teaching for feedback. Conversely, most mentees claimed that no teaching practice was modeled for them.

Apart from the system requirements factor, there was transferability of the MEPST survey instrument (Hudson et al., 2005) to the MEFLT instrument, generally supported by acceptable Cronbach alphas and descriptive statistics. Further sampling may yield additional information on the internal consistency of the system requirements factor. Nevertheless, the MEFLT instrument provided a way to collect data for articulating mentees' perceptions of their mentors' practices for learning how to teach writing in English. Although the Likert scale intervals differentiated degrees of perceived mentoring (e.g., strongly disagree to strongly agree), the quality of these mentoring practices needs to be investigated further. Anecdotal evidence suggests that mentors vary their mentoring practices considerably; however, mentoring needs to be more consistent to provide equity among preservice teachers. Although some mentoring practices are considered effective to educate preservice teachers, for example, listening to preservice teachers, modeling teaching practices, or providing feedback on teaching, this empirical research may need to be investigated across a range of Asian contexts in order to determine further commonalities. In addition, data from the MELFT survey may be an indication of areas to investigate for determining cultural differences between Western and Asian mentoring attributes and practices. As significant research has been conducted in mentoring in Western cultures, this study provides insight into developing more effective mentoring prac-

tices in other cultures for the purposes of advancing teaching practices. As a cautionary note, this study analyzed mentees' perceptions of their mentoring, and so each mentee may have had a distinct perception about what was modeling of effective teaching; yet these mentees were in unique positions for observation because they were receiving the mentoring, not unlike university students evaluating their lecturers' teaching.

Mentees' in-school context is pivotal to their development as teachers (Jasman, 2002; Lu, 2002), yet this study indicated that preservice teachers' perceptions of inadequate mentoring for learning how to teach writing in English implies that many will not receive equitable mentoring. Professional development and scaffolding for subject-specific mentoring skills may be required to advance mentors' practices. The inadequate mentoring perceived by mentees in this study might initially be addressed through specific mentoring interventions that focus on each of the items associated with the survey instrument (Appendix A). For example, if one system requirement is discussing aims for EFL teaching of writing, this practice could be built into a mentoring program to guide mentors' practices. In addition, tertiary institutions may employ the instrument to gauge the extent and quality of mentoring in subject-specific areas (such as EFL writing), and as a result of diagnostic analysis may plan and implement mentoring programs that aim to address specific needs of mentors in order to enhance the mentoring process. Furthermore, benchmarking mentoring practices may aid in determining means for improving them. The MEFLT survey instrument may also assist mentors in their education regarding subject-specific mentoring as a way to measure and enhance their own mentoring practices. As the mentoring attributes and practices in this study were derived from the generic literature on mentoring, this survey instrument can be amended to reflect other EFL areas, for example, by changing the word *writing* to *reading, speaking*, or *listening*. The instrument may also be altered to gather information on the general area of English mentoring (i.e., substituting *English* for *writing*).

The education of EFL preservice teachers is a place to focus attention in an effort to produce quality EFL teaching (Haley & Rentz, 2002; Larsen-Freeman, 2000). In their role as mentors, EFL teachers are essential in assisting preservice teachers to develop competence, knowledge, and skills (Chow et al., 2004; Mule, 2005). These teachers (mentors) are well positioned to educate preservice teachers about the pedagogical knowledge and content knowledge necessary for effective EFL education practices. The quality and degree of collaboration in field experience programs can aid in EFL preservice teachers' development as future practitioners, and more efforts need to be made to educate quality EFL teachers (Lu, 2002). Currently, little or no information is available that reveals how much field experience is sufficient to prepare competent EFL teachers, or on specific mentoring that may be required for developing EFL preservice teachers during their field experi-

ence. The data in this article may serve as information for beginning the benchmarking of mentoring practices.

In conclusion, the mentor's involvement in facilitating the mentee's learning for more effective teaching of English-language writing cannot be without purpose or direction; rather, it must be sequentially organized with specific and clear objectives for mentors. Effective mentoring aims to elevate preservice teachers' real-life learning experience with opportunities for developing effective teaching practices in school settings; hence educating mentors on subject-specific mentoring practices may enhance this process. This study focused on the mentees' perceptions of their mentors' practices and did not consider mentees' involvement in the mentoring process. Even so, if the mentees perceived that they had not received adequate mentoring in particular areas, either the mentors had not provided this practice or it was not explicit enough for the mentees to recognize it. Either way, assessing mentees' perceptions of their mentoring can present useful information for devising quality mentoring programs. As mentoring needs to be a two-way process, investigating preservice teachers' practices and roles in field experience will provide a deeper understanding of learning how to teach EFL.

The Authors

Peter Hudson, senior lecturer at Queensland University of Technology, has 31 years of experience in education. He has taught in Ottawa; worked with Chinese physics teachers; and lectured Japanese university students, Malaysian preservice teachers, and postgraduates from Hong Kong. Peter currently supervises four doctoral students (Japan, China, Chile, Australia) and an doctorate in education student from Korea.

Hoa Thi Mai Nguyen (MA in TESOL at the University of Queensland and MEd in educational management and leadership at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology) is a doctoral candidate in the School of Education at the University of Queensland. Her publications are mainly in the areas of language teaching methodology and EFL teacher education. She has experience teaching TESOL pedagogy and training EFL teachers at both preservice and inservice levels in Vietnam (e-mail: maihoa.nguyen@uqconnect.edu.au).

Sue Hudson is currently the Academic Coordinator for the Caboolture campus at Queensland University of Technology (QUT) and has 30 years in education including 18 years as a lecturer at SCU. She has taught and coordinated various TESOL programs for university students from Hong Kong, China, and Japan.

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Appendix A
Mentoring for *English as a Foreign Language* Teaching (MEFLT)
Writing

SECTION 1: This section aims to find out some information about you. To preserve your anonymity, do not write your name. Please *circle* the responses that apply to you.

a) What is your gender?   Male   Female

b) What is your age?   <22 yrs   22-29 yrs   30-39 yrs   >40 yrs

c) What English units did you complete in Years 11 and 12 at high school (if any)?

_____

d) How many English curriculum/methodology units have you completed at university?

     0   1   2   3   4 or more

e) How many English writing lessons did you teach during your last field experience (practicum)?

     0   1   2   3   4   5   6 or more

f) How many field experiences (block practicums) have you now completed during your tertiary teacher education? (including this one).

     1   2   3   4 or more

g) Please circle the class(es) on which you completed your last field experience (practicum).

     1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10   11   12

h) Where was your last field experience located?

Metropolitan city   City suburbs   Regional city   Rural town or village   Rural/isolated

i) Please circle the university year in which you are currently enrolled.

First year   Second year   Third year   Fourth year

j) I am: an undergraduate (without a degree)   a graduate (with a degree)

SECTION 2: This section aims to find out some information about your mentor during your last field experience (practicum). Please *circle* the response you feel is most accurate.

a) What is your mentor's gender?   Male   Female

b) What was your mentor's approximate age during this last field experience?

<center><22 yrs   22-29 yrs   30-39 yrs >40 yrs</center>

c) Would writing in English be a strong area for your mentor?

Strongly disagree   Disagree   Uncertain   Agree   Strongly agree

SECTION 3:

The following statements are concerned with your mentoring experiences for teaching writing in English during your last field experience (practicum). Please indicate the degree to which you disagree or agree with each statement below by *circling only one response* to the right of each statement.

KEY

SD = Strongly Disagree

D = Disagree

U = Uncertain

A = Agree

SA = Strongly Agree

During my last field experience (i.e., practicum) for teaching writing in English my mentor:

1. was supportive of me for teaching writing.	SD	D	U	A	SA
2. used writing language from the current writing syllabus.	SD	D	U	A	SA
3. guided me with writing lesson preparation.	SD	D	U	A	SA
4. discussed with me the school policies used for teaching writing.	SD	D	U	A	SA
5. modelled the teaching of writing.	SD	D	U	A	SA
6. assisted me with classroom management strategies for teaching writing.	SD	D	U	A	SA
7. had a good rapport with the students when teaching writing.	SD	D	U	A	SA
8. assisted me towards implementing teaching strategies for writing.	SD	D	U	A	SA
9. displayed enthusiasm when teaching writing.	SD	D	U	A	SA
10. assisted me with timetabling my writing lessons.	SD	D	U	A	SA
11. outlined national writing curriculum documents to me.	SD	D	U	A	SA
12. modelled effective classroom management when teaching writing.	SD	D	U	A	SA
13. discussed evaluation of my teaching of writing.	SD	D	U	A	SA
14. developed my strategies for teaching writing.	SD	D	U	A	SA
15. was effective in teaching writing.	SD	D	U	A	SA
16. provided oral feedback on my teaching of writing.	SD	D	U	A	SA
17. seemed comfortable in talking with me about teaching writing.	SD	D	U	A	SA
18. discussed with me questioning skills for effective teaching of writing.	SD	D	U	A	SA
19. used hands-on materials for teaching writing.	SD	D	U	A	SA

During my last field experience (i.e., practicum) for teaching writing in English my mentor:

20. provided me with written feedback on my teaching of writing.	SD	D	U	A	SA
21. discussed with me the knowledge I needed for teaching writing.	SD	D	U	A	SA

22. instilled positive attitudes in me towards teaching writing.	SD	D	U	A	SA
23. assisted me to reflect on improving my writing teaching practices.	SD	D	U	A	SA
24. gave me clear guidance for planning to teach writing.	SD	D	U	A	SA
25. discussed with me the aims of teaching writing.	SD	D	U	A	SA
26. made me feel more confident as a teacher of writing.	SD	D	U	A	SA
27. provided strategies for me to solve my problems for teaching writing.	SD	D	U	A	SA
28. reviewed my writing lesson plans before teaching writing.	SD	D	U	A	SA
29. had well-designed writing activities for the students.	SD	D	U	A	SA
30. gave me new viewpoints on teaching writing to students.	SD	D	U	A	SA
31. listened to me attentively on teaching of writing matters.	SD	D	U	A	SA
32. showed me how to assess students' writing.	SD	D	U	A	SA
33 clearly articulated what I needed to do to improve my teaching of writing.	SD	D	U	A	SA
34. observed me teach writing before providing feedback.	SD	D	U	A	SA

Appendix B

Factor	Survey item	Score[a]
Personal Attributes:	1, 17, 22, 23, 26, 31	(30)
System Requirements:	4, 11, 25	(15)
Pedagogical Knowledge:	3, 6, 8, 10, 14, 18, 21, 24, 27, 30, 32	(55)
Modelling:	2, 5, 7, 9, 12, 15, 19, 29	(40)
Feedback:	13, 16, 20, 28, 33, 34	(30)

[a]Scoring: SD=1; D=2; U=3; A=4; SA=5