How do International Trainee Teachers and Mentors Respond to Cross-cultural Mentoring Relationships?

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Abstract

Forty-one percent of the trainee teachers who trained to teach modern foreign languages (MFL) at the University of Worcester between September 2008 and June 2011 were international trainee teachers who spoke English as an additional language. International trainee teachers and home trainee teachers do not usually share the same mother tongue or the same culture. A small-scale research project was conducted using both qualitative and quantitative methods to consider international trainee teacher and mentor attitudes to cross-cultural mentoring relationships. The study found that it was critically important to facilitate communication between mentor and trainee teachers in order to support the development of cross-cultural mentoring relationships, to help avoid misunderstandings and to enable trainee teachers to meet their potential.

Introduction

This paper considers international trainee teacher and mentor attitudes to cross-cultural mentoring relationships. Forty-one percent of the trainee teachers who trained to teach modern foreign languages (MFL) at the University of Worcester between September 2008 and June 2011 were international trainee teachers who spoke English as an additional language. International trainee teachers and home trainee teachers do not usually share the same mother tongue or the same culture. Rosinski (2003: 20) defines a group's culture as 'the set of unique characteristics that distinguishes its members from another group'. International trainee teachers and home trainee teachers form two groups which do not constitute homogeneous entities who originate from a variety of countries. However, they share similarities with home trainee teachers and, as such, they belong to alternative groups: young trainee teachers, mature trainee teachers, parents, former cover supervisors or teaching assistants, career changers etc. This is echoed by Clutterbuck and Raggins who

explain that 'Individuals hold multiple group memberships and vary on multiple dimensions of diversity' (2002: 25). International trainee teachers therefore embark on a teacher training course with a variety of strengths and needs, some of which are discussed regularly in school and in University. International trainee teachers become more aware of cultural differences after spending a few weeks in school. They start identifying 'observable artifacts' (Schein, 1990) such as school routines and they also begin to develop their understanding of the 'values' and 'basic assumptions' of the English education system (Schein, 1990; Rosinski, 2003). School mentors are instrumental in this process and they discuss a wide range of aspects of the English education system with trainee teachers. School mentors working in partnership with the University of Worcester meet trainee teachers on a weekly basis to review the progress they have made over the past week. As part of their roles, they support and assess trainee teachers by checking their lesson plans and by carrying out lesson observations. However, it is not always clear to what extent they do this in relation to trainee teachers' educational backgrounds. Determining whether and to what extent 'cultural differences' are acknowledged in discussions and shape mentoring constitutes the focus of this small research project.

Literature Review

Effective mentoring takes the form of a 'thoughtful relationship' in which mentors aim to 'support the development of the whole person' (CUREE, 2005). Clutterbuck suggests that this relationship does not only benefit the mentee but that it is a process in which 'mentees and mentors progress their personal and professional growth' (2004: 17). However, Rosinski opines that whilst mentors can 'talk about their own personal experience', they should only do this if 'this is relevant for the mentee' (2003: 5). Megginson and Clutterbuck (2005) invite mentors to consider in which quadrant the mentor-student relationship falls: high clarity or low clarity alongside high rapport or low rapport.

High clarity			
High rapport	Open dialogue Shared expectations Openness to mutual benefit Sense of urgency	Task focused Debate rather than dialogue	Low rapport
	Friendship Lack of direction Opportunistic in dealing with issues Short term perspective but … May be long term relationship	"going through the motions"	
Low clarity			

Source: Clutterbuck and Ragins: p.18 cited in Megginson and Clutterbuck, 2005.

A mentoring conversation focusing on the mentor's personal experience but irrelevant for the mentee could fall into the high rapport and low clarity quadrant. 'Relationships with low clarity but high rapport can be enjoyable, but are likely to deliver less personal change' (Megginson and Clutterbuck, 2005: 18). They therefore highlight the importance of having 'shared expectations' to facilitate change. Zeus and Skiffington suggest that this can lead to a 'transformational dialogue' which can have an impact on trainee teachers' 'way of thinking, feeling and acting' (2002: 160). For this to happen, subject mentors need to help trainee teachers define the nature of the relationship and to develop an understanding of 'the demands of the new role, to understand the responsibilities it brings and the values it implies' (CUREE, 2005: 5).

Mentoring international trainee teachers can prove to be more complex as international trainee teachers have their own sets of values, points of reference and usually a different cultural background from their mentors'. The way they were educated is likely to influence their views on education. Their decision to train to teach in England does not mean that they should forfeit their values. However, they need to make sense of and adapt to value systems that may be different from theirs (Hofstede, 1998; Rosinski, 2003). This, to some extent, may constitute a 'cultural shock'. For instance, teachers in France are not expected to do bus or break duties. Pupils do not wear a uniform. Teachers are not necessarily expected to stay at school if they have a 'free' period. Pupils do not have form tutors. Most pupils carry on studying French, Modern and/or Languages, Humanities subjects, Mathematics, Science

and PE until Year 13. They also study Philosophy in Year 13. More than 80% of 18 year olds pass A-Level exams in a wide range of subjects. If pupils do not do well at primary school or secondary school, they may be asked to retake a year or two. Those examples are some of the observable 'practices' that can represented by the outer layer of an onion diagram (Hofstede et al., 2010). They are features of a school system that trainee teachers know and identify with. Mentors and trainee teachers in a cross-cultural mentoring relationship have experienced different practices. Trainee teachers also need to make sense of the values that are the centre of the onion (Hofstede et al., 2010). At the start of the course, they are peripheral to the 'onion' or newcomers to the community of practice of teachers (Wenger, 2000). Passmore and Law (2009: 10) explain that 'understanding a culture is a general problem about understanding the life experience of others'; fortunately, 'understanding something in one way does not preclude understanding it in other ways' (Bruner, 1996: 13). Self-awareness and how we view others are pre-requisites to changing our attitudes and learning (Clutterbuck and Raggins, 2002; Rosinski, 2003).

In order to learn, trainee teachers need to engage in a 'doing' and 'becoming' cycle (Megginson and Clutterbuck, 2005: 5). Their engagement enables them to become more central to the community of practice (Wenger, 1998) of MFL teachers in England. The learning process suggests a ongoing movement between the development of social practice and the 'development and transformation of identities' (Wenger, 1998: 13). Therefore, both mentors and mentees in a successful cross-cultural relationship go, to varying degrees, on a journey of self-discovery and find out more about themselves by encountering differences. To represent this journey, Bennett (1993 cited in Hammer et al., 2003) developed a framework of intercultural understanding comprising six phases (see Appendix 1). The first three phases are ethnocentric and the last 3 phases are ethnorelative. The first ethnorelative phase is the acceptance phase in which people show some interest in different cultures. This phase bears resemblance with the emotional intelligence cross-cultural competency element of the Universal Integrated Framework (Passmore and Law, 2009) and with the idea that 'emotional intelligence is a useful bridging competency' to navigate potential barriers to communication and understanding (Blake-Beard, 2009: 17). Once the acceptance stage has been reached, the relationship is consolidated (Passmore and Law, 2009). Trainee teachers and mentors can move onto the next stage, which requires them to take action to adapt to cultural differences (Bennett, 1993; Rosinski, 2003; Passmore and Law, 2009). By developing their understanding of norms, values, basic assumptions and beliefs (Rosinski, 2003) and working work through Bennet's stages of intercultural understanding (1998), mentors and trainee teachers can 'socially come to grips with a multiplicity of realities' (Adler, 1998 cited in Rosinski, 2003: 38). Rosinski (2003) suggests that a further ethnorelative stage

can be added to Bennet's framework (1998). At this stage, mentors and trainee teachers explore and use cultural differences creatively 'creating a synthesis bigger than the sum of cultural components taken separately' (2003: 40). However, he warns that it may not always be possible or desirable. An amalgamation of approaches could potentially be confusing and counter-productive.

Methodology

The study aimed to analyse and compare international trainee teacher attitudes and mentor attitudes to cross-cultural mentoring relationships. Characteristics of mentoring relationships in general and cross-cultural mentoring relationships in particular were identified to structure data collection. Bennett's Development Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) (1993) served as a framework to construct a survey (see Appendix 2). The stage added by Rosinski in 2003 was included. The survey was set up to collect quantitative and qualitative data. Bell (2005: 14) warns that 'causal relationships can rarely, if ever, be proved by survey method'. This issue was addressed by asking mentors and trainee teachers to justify their answers. Similar questions were asked of mentors and to trainee teachers to facilitate a comparison of answers. For example, mentors and trainee teachers were asked the following questions: 'Please tick the statement(s) that characterise your approach to cultural differences' and 'In which context did you discuss differences and similarities of education systems?'

Participants were sent a link to the Bristol Survey questionnaire and completed it individually. No contact details were asked for in the questionnaire to ensure complete anonymity. All the trainee teachers who responded had completed the course by the time they completed the questionnaires, in order to avoid conflict of interest. Participants had the right not to be involved and those who chose not to take part did not complete the survey. Seven mentors of the twenty-six mentors completed the survey. They were all of English heritage. The eleven international trainee teachers from the PGCE MFL 2011-2012 cohort completed the online survey. They were all from Europe and the USA. There was no ethnic minority (as understood in the British context) international trainee teacher on the PGCE Modern Languages course in 2011. Trainee teachers and mentors were asked similar and mainly closed questions as this enables 'comparisons to be made across groups in the sample' (Oppenheim, 1995: 111 cited in Cohen et al., 2007: 321). Questionnaires were supplemented by an interview. An 'interview guide' approach was used (see Appendix 3), which has been described as follows: 'Topics and issues to be covered are specified in advance, in outline form; interviewer decides sequence and working of questions in the course of the interview'. (Patton, 1980, cited in Cohen et al., 2007: 413) Three international trainee teachers on the PGCE Secondary course volunteered to take part in the research.

There were all European and they were not from an ethnic minority background. The purpose of the interview was to share initial findings with trainee teachers and use findings as a basis to ask further questions and to get a deeper understanding of issues surrounding cross-cultural mentoring relationships.

Findings and discussion

Trainee teachers and mentors were asked to reflect on their experience of mentoring and being mentoring. International trainee teachers all answered questions relating to school terms. Out of the seven mentors who completed the questionnaire, five had experience of mentoring international trainee teachers in the three school terms. One mentor had experience of mentoring international students in term 1 only and one mentor had experience of mentoring international trainee teachers in terms 2 and 3 only.

Findings were used subsequently with a group of 4 International trainee teachers who had not taken part in the survey but who volunteered to take part in a focus group discussion. The focus group discussion sought to gather international trainee teachers' views and to cross reference their answers with the survey findings. The reason for working with a focus group was that it may be used to 'explain the range and depth of attitudes, beliefs, and experiences within a defined population' (Seal et al., 1998: 253).

The views of the subject mentor coordinating group in a meeting to get an insight in some of the challenges that international trainee teachers can encounter at the start of the PGCE course. Their views informed questions asked in the survey.

Some findings suggest that mentors and international trainee teachers are in agreement. A similar proportion of international trainee teachers and mentors (72%) indicated that it is important that the person they are working with shows some interest in their cultural background. The remaining 28% neither agreed nor disagreed.

Trainee teachers and mentors used Bennett's (1998) and Rosinski's (2003) DMIS model to evaluate the stage of intercultural understanding they were working at, one being at the lower end of the ethnocentric phase and seven at the higher end of the ethnorelative phase. At the end of the first school placement, results shows that trainee teachers felt that they were on the adaptation stage on average (5.2 on the DMIS scale) but mentors believed that trainee teacher were not quite there yet and that they were not quite accepting differences as yet (3.8 on the DMIS scale) (Figures 1 and 2). Towards the end of the second school

placement, both trainee teachers (5.8 on the DMIS scale) and mentors (5.2 on the DMIS scale) agreed that trainee teachers were on the adaptation stage. Overall, mentors believed that they adapted to trainee teachers' differences (5.6 on the DMIS scale) whilst trainee teachers believe that mentors just about accepted differences on placement 1 (4 on the DMIS scale) and adapted to them on placement 2 (5.2 on the DMIS scale). Trainee teachers and mentors rated themselves higher on the DMIS scale (5.5 and 5.6 respectively) than they were rated (and 5.5 and 5.2 respectively).

Figure 1: To what extent did mentors adapt to cultural differences?

	Mentors' perceptions (average on the DMIS scale)	Trainee teachers' perceptions (average on the DMIS scale)
Overall	5.6	4.6

Figure 2: To what extent did trainee teachers adapt to cultural differences?

	Mentors' perceptions (average on the DMIS scale)	Trainee teachers' perceptions (average on the DMIS scale)
Term 1	3.8	5.2
Terms 2 and 3	5.25	5.8
Overall	4.5	5.5

On occasions, mentors and international trainee teachers are mainly in disagreement (as can been seen in Figures 3, 4, 5 and 6). Four international trainee teachers indicated that they knew about the English Education system at the start of the course. Three of them had worked in a Secondary school before. Mentors' answers to the same question reveal that only one international trainee teacher was deemed to be familiar with the English Education system at the start of the first placement, which contradicts the trainee teachers' answers. One mentor did not know whether international trainee teachers knew the English Education system at the start of the course. Five trainee teachers judged that they were unfamiliar or very unfamiliar with the English Education system. Two mentors shared their views.

Figure 3: Whether International trainee teachers knew about the English Education system at the start of the PGCE course.

	Mentors' views	Trainee teachers' views
strongly agree or agree	1	3
neither agree nor disagree	2	2
disagree or strongly disagree	2	5

Mentors and international trainee teachers also tend to disagree on whether they discussed differences and similarities of education systems. According to Figure 4, six of the seven mentors discussed cultural differences when planning lessons, they all discussed cultural differences when they gave feedback on lesson observations (Figure 5) and in weekly review meetings (Figure 6). International trainee teachers' perceptions are different. Four agreed that differences were discussed when planning lessons and in weekly review meetings. Four disagreed and three chose not to answer. Three trainee teachers stated that differences were discussed in lesson observation feedback sessions.

Figure 4: Did mentors and international trainee teachers discuss differences and similarities of education systems in meetings focusing on planning lessons?

	Mentors' responses	Trainee teachers' responses
Yes	6	4
No	1	4

Figure 5: Did mentors and international trainee teachers discuss differences and similarities of education systems in meetings focusing on feedback from lesson observations?

	Mentors' responses	Trainee teachers' responses
Yes	7	4
No	0	7

Figure 6: Did mentors and international trainee teachers discuss differences and similarities of education systems in weekly review meetings?

	Mentors' responses	Trainee teachers' responses
Yes	7	4
No	0	4

The qualitative data that were collected provided information on whether there is a need to discuss cultural differences. The trainee teachers who took part in a focus group discussion in 2012 agreed that it is important for mentors to show interest in their background. They all agreed that they were given opportunities to talk about their cultural background to some extent. One international trainee teacher however would have liked members of staff to show more interest in her cultural background. Another trainee teacher captured the nature of discussions in the following comment:

'I talked about this with both mentors, in first and second placement, and the outcome in terms of adaptation to the system has been quite similar, meaning that in both cases the differences were recognised but set aside. Reasons for us bringing up the discussion lay both in reciprocal curiosity and in comments to my actions in class.' (Trainee Teacher)

One of the subject mentors who took part in the PGCE in MFL course coordinating group in 2012 suggested that at the start of the year, a specific induction programme should be developed by subject mentors in school to help trainee teachers and colleagues familiarize themselves with different aspects of a culture. The mentor mentioned the importance of 'meeting trainee teachers half-way' and of making them feel welcome. This is an area that the focus group mentioned. They explained that their school subject mentors showed interest in their cultural backgrounds and, as such, they felt valued. As a result of feeling valued, they felt that they could integrate differences and make progress. Two of those trainee teachers however were anxious about the way they came across. They were worried about the implications of coming from a different cultural background, especially in terms of the contributions they made to group tasks in school and how they might be perceived.

All the trainee teachers and mentors who took part in the survey agreed that it is important to discuss differences between education systems. Eight trainee teachers and all the mentors said that cultural differences were discussed. However, one of the trainee teachers commented: 'I think it was really hard for me to communicate with my first mentor as she tended to ignore the fact that I came from a different system of education.' It could be that, as mentioned above, 'differences were recognized but set aside'. This also echoes Clutterbuck's suggestion that sometimes, 'critical clues to the client context are missed' (2010: 73). The trainee teacher explains that he was able to make sense of his experience and address issues when a visiting tutor suggested that his teaching approach was influenced by the way he had been taught himself. He explained that until then he had not been able to make a conscious correlation between the way he taught and his cultural background. In the survey, the trainee teacher acknowledged that he adopted an ethnocentric approach to culture in the first placement (Bennett, 1998). He also acknowledged that he displayed a behaviour that was not necessarily conducive to a positive learning experience. It is of course important to make the distinction between behaviour and personality or culture, between the individual and the group (Hofstede, 1998; Bruner, 1996; Blake-Beard, 2012) to avoid developing misunderstandings or stereotypes. In this particular instance, some aspects of the mentoring relationship might have fallen into the

low clarity and low rapport quadrant (Megginson and Clutterbuck, 2005). Crutcher explains that 'Maintaining appropriate boundaries is challenging, because if the mentor distances him or herself too much, the relationship can suffer' (2007: 24). This applies to trainee teachers too.

A learning journey implies a willingness to encounter and make sense of differences. This is an area that mentors mentioned in the survey. Four mentors felt that trainee teachers had an ethnocentric approach to cultural differences in Term 1. One mentor added that: 'A willingness to work within the constraints of the system should be fully discussed and worked through.' This highlights again the importance of commitment and strong interpersonal skills. The same mentor added that 'methodologies that are used by international trainee teachers that would complement learning here are not always applied as well as they could be or exploited'. This suggests that trainee teachers do not necessarily leverage differences and it is of course worth asking 'why'. Ragins suggests that part of the answer lies with the fact that 'The most common experiences fall in the middle of the mentoring continuum. But by focusing just on the average, we neglect the extraordinary' (Chandler and Ellis, 2011: 489). The ability to make sense and to make the most of this 'extraordinariness' is key. Rosinski suggests useful questions that can help trainee teachers and mentors elicit differences and develop their self-awareness: 'What was different about the other culture(s) and what was your experience of the differences? Were you puzzled, did you feel frustrated, offended, amused, or excited?' (2003: 29). This approach puts a positive spin on cross-cultural mentoring relationships. Clutterbuck (2010: 70) qualifies this view and suggests that approaches need to be judged on their own merit. He explains that coaches 'judge new techniques, models and processes on the criterion of "Will this enrich and improve the effectiveness of my potential responses to client" to achieve creative learning needs?'' and he advises readers against a 'mechanistic' approach to coaching (2010: 73). Not all international trainee teachers are the same and they all have different strengths and needs. This is summed up by a trainee teacher who states: 'I realise this is an on-going process, and my former education culture will often clash, and other times merge, with my current one.' However, she adds that being able to leverage differences could turn out to be 'an asset within the classroom.'

Data shows that both mentors and trainee teachers agreed that trainee teachers progressed by one stage overall on the DMIS scale between placement 1 and placement 2. Trainee teachers spend 36 days in their first placement school and 84 days in their second placement school. Trainee teachers and mentors therefore have more time to get to know each other and to develop a mentoring relationship in placement 2. Trainee teachers are

also acquainted to the English education system by the start of placement 2 and all the mentors agreed that all the trainee teachers were familiar with the English education system at the start of placement 2 in January. This did not seem to be the case in September. The results shown in Figure 3 may suggest that trainee teachers or mentors interpreted the question differently. For example, the four trainee teachers who said that they were familiar with the English education system probably had some knowledge of the outer layer of culture or 'observable artifacts' (Schein, 1990) as they had spent between a few days and a year in a Secondary school before the start of the course but mentors may have perceived that trainee teachers had a limited, if not inexistent knowledge of 'values' and of the 'unconscious assumptions that determine perceptions, thought processes, feelings, and behavior' (Schein, 1990: 111).

Conclusion

The questions asked in the survey do not make it possible to analyse with precision the areas that were discussed. However, findings have highlighted the importance of facilitating communication between mentors and trainee teachers to help the cross-cultural mentoring relationship develop, avoid misunderstandings and enable trainee teachers to meet their potential. This can be partly achieved by making both parties aware of the challenges and of the rewards of engaging in an open conversation. This small scale investigation has made it possible to identify some of the key elements that can contribute to an effective cross-cultural relationship. As highlighted by a school mentor, trainee teacher commitment is key. Indeed, 'The coaching alliance will not prosper if the coachee does not make a commitment to change his or her world views. (Zeus and Skiffington, 2002: 9) but change can only take place once trainee teachers have gone through the stages of 'awareness', 'understanding' and 'acceptance' (Megginson and Clutterbuck, 2005: 42). The ability to develop effective relationships is vital and 'culturally trained coaches aim not only to unleash human potential, they also aspire to make the most of alternative world-views' (Rosinski, 2003: 19).

The small scale investigation did not make it possible to follow up findings from the survey with the cohort of trainee teachers who completed the survey. The trainee teachers who took part in a focus group discussion completed the PGCE course the following year. It would also been helpful to gather more information about mentors' prior experience of mentoring international trainee teachers, about their own cultural backgrounds and to what extent this plays a role in mentoring relationships. A case study approach could have yielded interesting results as journeys could have been analysed in parallel.

It is important not to underestimate the culture shock that some international student may experience and it is worth considering whether pre-course preparation tasks and an induction period for trainee teachers on the PGCE course and international students in general could alleviate potential challenges and to dispel anxiety.

Both mentors and trainee teachers embarking on a cross-cultural mentoring relationship start a learning journey in which they can broaden their palette of experiences and develop their self-awareness and deepen their understanding of their own and others' practices and of cultures. One of the next steps will be to set up a University support group that will enable international trainee teachers to meet regularly throughout the year and discuss how they can make sense of cultural differences and make the most of cultural diversity. This will hopefully lead to the development of some guidance that can be used both by mentors and trainee teachers.

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Biography

Isabelle Schäfer is a Senior Lecturer in Secondary Education: Modern Foreign Languages. Before working in Higher Education, Isabelle taught in Secondary schools in England and took part in the development of a Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) programme in the last school she taught at. She taught the PSHE and Geography Year 7 programmes entirely in French. Since she has been the PGCE Languages Subject Leader at the University of Worcester, Isabelle has introduced trainee teachers to the CLIL methodology. Some of her former trainees, who are now mentors, have experimented with CLIL and taken part in projects. Isabelle presented the outcomes of a CLIL project at the ALL conference in London in 2011. Some of the resources that were created are on the LinkedUp website.

Appendix 1: DMIS framework

Framework of Intercultural understanding					
Ethnocentric Stages			Ethnorelative Stages		
Denial	Defense	Minimization	Acceptance	Adaptation	Integration

Adapted from Bennett (1998).

Appendix 1: DMIS framework

Appendix 2

Trainee Teachers' Questionnaire Responses

1. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statement: I already knew about the British Education system (Secondary school) before the start of the course			
1 strongly agree:		27.3%	3
2 agree:		9.1%	1
3 neither agree nor disagree:		18.2%	2
4 disagree:		27.3%	3
5 strongly disagree:		18.2%	2
6 don't know:		0.0%	0

2. Did you work in a Secondary school in England before the start of the course?			
yes:		27.3%	3
no:		72.7%	8

3. Did you work in an educational setting in England other than a secondary school before the start of the course?			
3.a. Primary school			
yes:		18.2%	2
no:		81.8%	9
3.b. University			
yes:		20.0%	2
no:		80.0%	8
3.c. College			
yes:		11.1%	1
no:		88.9%	8
3.d. Special school			
yes:		0.0%	0
no:		100.0%	9
3.e. Other educational setting			
yes:		20.0%	2
no:		80.0%	8

4. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statement: My subject mentor was familiar with my cultural background.			
1 strongly agree:		27.3%	3
2 agree:		54.5%	6
3 neither agree nor disagree:		0.0%	0
4 disagree:		0.0%	0

5 strongly disagree:		9.1%	1
6 don't know:		9.1%	1
7 I have never mentored an international student in the second placement.:		0.0%	0

5. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statement: It is important for my subject mentor to be familiar with my cultural background.

1 strongly agree:		27.3%	3
2 agree:		45.5%	5
3 neither agree nor disagree:		18.2%	2
4 disagree:		9.1%	1
5 strongly disagree:		0.0%	0
6 don't know:		0.0%	0

6. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statement: my subject mentor showed some interest in my cultural background.

1 strongly agree:		36.4%	4
2 agree:		36.4%	4
3 neither agree nor disagree:		9.1%	1
4 disagree:		0.0%	0
5 strongly disagree:		18.2%	2
6 don't know:		0.0%	0

7. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statement: It is important for my subject mentor to show some interest in my cultural background.

1 strongly agree:		27.3%	3
2 agree:		45.5%	5
3 neither agree nor disagree:		27.3%	3
4 disagree:		0.0%	0
5 strongly disagree:		0.0%	0
6 don't know:		0.0%	0

8. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statement: It is important to discuss similarities and differences between the British Education system and my education system with my mentor.

1 strongly agree:		36.4%	4
2 agree:		63.6%	7
3 neither agree nor disagree:		0.0%	0
4 disagree:		0.0%	0
5 strongly disagree:		0.0%	0

6 don't know:		0.0%	0

9. Did you discuss similarities and differences between the British Education system and your education system with your subject mentor? If you answered yes, please go to question 10. If you answered no, please go to question 11 if you want to add further comments or go to question 12.

yes:		72.7%	8
no:		27.3%	3

10. In which context did you discuss differences and similarities of education systems?

10.a. Planning lessons

yes:		50.0%	4
no:		50.0%	4

10.b. Feedback from lesson observations

yes:		37.5%	3
no:		62.5%	5

10.c. Weekly review (discussion)

yes:		50.0%	4
no:		50.0%	4

10.d. Weekly review (target setting)

yes:		25.0%	2
no:		75.0%	6

10.e. Communication with members of staff

yes:		75.0%	6
no:		25.0%	2

10.f. Conversation not related to the course

yes:		100.0%	8
no:		0.0%	0

10.g. Other

yes:		42.9%	3
no:		57.1%	4

11. Please please free to add further comments.

an important issue is whether your mentor feels threatened by the native speaker's language competence and how he/she deals with this

Behaviour strategies, Ensuring progression if necessary by detention, lack of motivation of pupils to work independently

12. Rosinsky suggests that people deal with cultural differences in different ways.
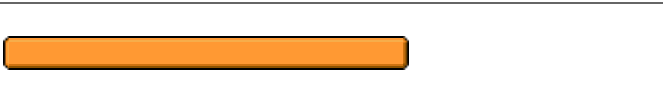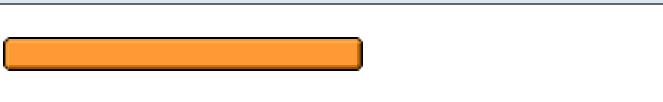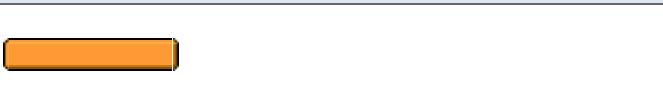
12.a. 1. ignore differences

In the first placement and in informal conversations, I did:		n/a	1
In the first placement and in		n/a	1

professional conversations,I did:			
In the second placement and in informal conversations, I did:		n/a	1
In the second placement and in professional conversations, I did:		n/a	1
12.a.i. 1. ignore differences -- Please feel free to add comments.			
I could never ignore differences, however my first mentor was not interested in knowing more.			
12.b. 2. recognize differences but evaluate them negatively			
In the first placement and in informal conversations, I did:		n/a	0
In the first placement and in professional conversations,I did:		n/a	0
In the second placement and in informal conversations, I did:		n/a	0
In the second placement and in professional conversations, I did:		n/a	0
12.b.i. 2. recognize differences but evaluate them negatively -- Please feel free to add comments.			
I never see differences as a negative thing. They are our richness			
12.c. 3. recognize differences but minimise their importance			
In the first placement and in informal conversations, I did:		n/a	3
In the first placement and in professional conversations,I did:		n/a	2
In the second placement and in informal conversations, I did:		n/a	0
In the second placement and in professional conversations, I did:		n/a	0
12.c.i. 3. recognize differences but minimise their importance -- Please feel free to add comments.			
12.d. 4. recognize and accept differences-acknowledge, appreciate and understand does not mean agreement or surrender.			
In the first placement and in informal conversations, I did:		n/a	3
In the first placement and in professional conversations,I did:		n/a	2
In the second placement and in informal conversations, I did:		n/a	3
In the second placement and in professional conversations, I did:		n/a	3
12.d.i. 4. recognize and accept differences-acknowledge, appreciate and understand does not mean agreement or surrender. -- Please feel free to add comments.			

12.e. 5. adapt to differences -- move outside one's comfort zone, empathize (temporary shift in perspective) and understand that adaptation does not mean adoption or assimilation.

In the first placement and in informal conversations, I did:		n/a	2
In the first placement and in professional conversations, I did:		n/a	3
In the second placement and in informal conversations, I did:		n/a	4
In the second placement and in professional conversations, I did:		n/a	4

12.e.i. 5. adapt to differences -- move outside one's comfort zone, empathize (temporary shift in perspective) and understand that adaptation does not mean adoption or assimilation. -- Please feel free to add comments.

From day 1, I started adapting to differences. For me it is the point to living in a foreign country.

12.f. 6. integrate differences -- hold different frames of reference in mind, analyse and evaluate situations from various cultural perspectives, and remain grounded in reality; it is essential to avoid becoming dazzled by too many possibilities.

In the first placement and in informal conversations, I did:		n/a	2
In the first placement and in professional conversations, I did:		n/a	2
In the second placement and in informal conversations, I did:		n/a	4
In the second placement and in professional conversations, I did:		n/a	4

12.f.i. 6. integrate differences -- hold different frames of reference in mind, analyse and evaluate situations from various cultural perspectives, and remain grounded in reality; it is essential to avoid becoming dazzled by too many possibilities. -- Please feel free to add comments.

Pros and cons of cultural differences sometimes took longer to emerge and thus to reach a point of acceptance

12.g. 7. leverage differences -- make the most of differences, strive for synergy, proactively look for gems in different cultures, and achieve unity through diversity.

In the first placement and in informal conversations, I did:		n/a	1
In the first placement and in professional conversations, I did:		n/a	2
In the second placement and in informal conversations, I did:		n/a	4
In the second placement and in professional conversations, I did:		n/a	3

12.g.i. 7. leverage differences -- make the most of differences, strive for synergy, proactively look for gems in different cultures, and achieve unity through diversity. -- Please feel free to add comments.

I have only felt confident enough to integrate part of my cultures in my teaching on my second placement. I also felt free to talk about it and I found a mentor who was eager to find out more.

13. B - Please tick the statement(s) that characterise mentors' attitudes to cultural differences when communicating with you,

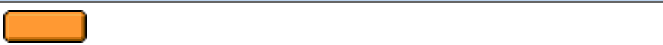| as colleagues(in an informal conversation) and mentees (in a professional conversation).			
13.a. 1. ignore differences			
In the first placement and in informal conversations, my mentor did:		0.0%	0
In the first placement and in his/her professional role, my mentor did:		50.0%	1
In the second placement and in informal conversations, my mentor did:		50.0%	1
In the second placement and in his/her professional role, my mentor did:		0.0%	0
13.a.i. 1. ignore differences -- Please feel free to add comments.			
13.b. 2. recognize differences but evaluate them negatively			
In the first placement and in informal conversations, my mentor did:		0.0%	0
In the first placement and in his/her professional role, my mentor did:		0.0%	0
In the second placement and in informal conversations, my mentor did:		100.0%	1
In the second placement and in his/her professional role, my mentor did:		0.0%	0
13.b.i. 2. recognize differences but evaluate them negatively -- Please feel free to add comments.			
13.c. 3. recognize differences but minimise their importance			
In the first placement and in informal conversations, my mentor did:		60.0%	3
In the first placement and in his/her professional role, my mentor did:		20.0%	1
In the second placement and in informal conversations, my mentor did:		0.0%	0
In the second placement and in his/her professional role, my mentor did:		20.0%	1
13.c.i. 3. recognize differences but minimise their importance -- Please feel free to add comments.			
13.d. 4. recognize and accept differences-acknowledge, appreciate and understand does not mean agreement or surrender.			
In the first placement and in informal conversations, my mentor did:		28.6%	2
In the first placement and in his/her professional role, my mentor did:		14.3%	1
In the second placement and in informal conversations, my		28.6%	2

mentor did:			
In the second placement and in his/her professional role, my mentor did:		28.6%	2

13.d.i. 4. recognize and accept differences-acknowledge, appreciate and understand does not mean agreement or surrender. -- Please feel free to add comments.

13.e. 5. adapt to differences -- move outside one's comfort zone, empathize (temporary shift in perspective) and understand that adaptation does not mean adoption or assimilation.

In the first placement and in informal conversations, my mentor did:		20.0%	1
In the first placement and in his/her professional role, my mentor did:		40.0%	2
In the second placement and in informal conversations, my mentor did:		20.0%	1
In the second placement and in his/her professional role, my mentor did:		20.0%	1

13.e.i. 5. adapt to differences -- move outside one's comfort zone, empathize (temporary shift in perspective) and understand that adaptation does not mean adoption or assimilation. -- Please feel free to add comments.

13.f. 6. integrate differences -- hold different frames of reference in mind, analyse and evaluate situations from various cultural perspectives, and remain grounded in reality; it is essential to avoid becoming dazzled by too many possibilities.

In the first placement and in informal conversations, my mentor did:		16.7%	1
In the first placement and in his/her professional role, my mentor did:		16.7%	1
In the second placement and in informal conversations, my mentor did:		33.3%	2
In the second placement and in his/her professional role, my mentor did:		33.3%	2

13.f.i. 6. integrate differences -- hold different frames of reference in mind, analyse and evaluate situations from various cultural perspectives, and remain grounded in reality; it is essential to avoid becoming dazzled by too many possibilities. -- Please feel free to add comments.

My mentor in my second p,a cement was of different cultural background herself

13.g. 7. leverage differences -- make the most of differences, strive for synergy, proactively look for gems in different cultures, and achieve unity through diversity.

In the first placement and in informal conversations, my mentor did:		16.7%	1
In the first placement and in his/her professional role, my mentor did:		0.0%	0
In the second placement and in informal conversations, my mentor did:		0.0%	0
In the second placement and in his/her professional role,		83.3%	5

my mentor did:			

13.g.i. 7. leverage differences -- make the most of differences, strive for synergy, proactively look for gems in different cultures, and achieve unity through diversity. -- Please feel free to add comments.

14. How well does the University prepare international students for school placements?			
1 very well:		18.2%	2
2 well:		36.4%	4
3 neither nor:		36.4%	4
4 not well:		0.0%	0
5 not well at all:		9.1%	1
6 don't know:		0.0%	0

Mentors' Questionnaire Responses

1. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statement: The international students I have mentored were familiar with the British education system at the start of the first placement.			
1 strongly agree:		0.0%	0
2 agree:		14.3%	1
3 neither agree nor disagree:		28.6%	2
4 disagree:		28.6%	2
5 strongly disagree:		0.0%	0
6 don't know:		14.3%	1
7 I have never mentored an international student in the first placement:		14.3%	1

2. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statement: The international students I have mentored were familiar with the British education system at the start of the second placement.			
1 strongly agree:		0.0%	0
2 agree:		85.7%	6
3 neither agree nor disagree:		0.0%	0
4 disagree:		0.0%	0
5 strongly disagree:		0.0%	0
6 don't know:		0.0%	0
7 I have never mentored an international student in the second placement.:		14.3%	1

3. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statement: The international students I have mentored have shown interest in the British education system.			
1 strongly agree:		14.3%	1
2 agree:		57.1%	4
3 neither agree nor disagree:		28.6%	2
4 disagree:		0.0%	0
5 strongly disagree:		0.0%	0
6 don't know:		0.0%	0

4. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statement: The international students I have mentored were familiar with my cultural background.			
1 strongly agree:		0.0%	0
2 agree:		42.9%	3
3 neither agree nor disagree:		28.6%	2
4 disagree:		28.6%	2

5 strongly disagree:		0.0%	0
6 don't know:		0.0%	0

5. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statement: It is important for international students to be familiar with my cultural background.

1 strongly agree:		28.6%	2
2 agree:		42.9%	3
3 neither agree nor disagree:		14.3%	1
4 disagree:		0.0%	0
5 strongly disagree:		0.0%	0
6 don't know:		14.3%	1

6. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statement: International students have shown interest in my cultural background.

1 strongly agree:		0.0%	0
2 agree:		42.9%	3
3 neither agree nor disagree:		42.9%	3
4 disagree:		14.3%	1
5 strongly disagree:		0.0%	0
6 don't know:		0.0%	0

7. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statement: it is important for international students to show interest in my cultural background.

1 strongly agree:		14.3%	1
2 agree:		57.1%	4
3 neither agree nor disagree:		28.6%	2
4 disagree:		0.0%	0
5 strongly disagree:		0.0%	0
6 don't know:		0.0%	0

8. It is important to discuss with international students similiarities and differences between their education system and the British education system.

yes:		100.0%	7
no:		0.0%	0

9. Have you discussed with international students similarities and differences between the British Education system and their education system? If you answered yes, please go to question 10. If you answered no, please go to question 11 (if you want to justify your answer) or 12.

yes:		100.0%	7
no:		0.0%	0

10. In which context did you discuss differences and similarities of education systems?			
10.a. Planning lessons			
yes:		85.7%	6
no:		14.3%	1
10.b. Feedback from lesson observations			
yes:		100.0%	7
no:		0.0%	0
10.c. Weekly review (discussion)			
yes:		100.0%	7
no:		0.0%	0
10.d. Weekly review (target setting)			
yes:		71.4%	5
no:		28.6%	2
10.e. Communication with members of staff			
yes:		57.1%	4
no:		42.9%	3
10.f. Conversation not related to the course			
yes:		71.4%	5
no:		28.6%	2
10.g. Other			
yes:		33.3%	2
no:		66.7%	4

11. Please please free to add further comments.
The questions about whether it is important for a student wo understand/show interest in my cultural background: I think it is preferable, but only to the same extent that I would hope that any colleague would demonstrate such interest, and that I would demonstrate to my colleagues. On the other hand, it is VERY IMPORTANT that students understand the pupils' cultural background and they must be committed to learning about this in a tolerant and non-judgmental fashion.

12. Rosinsky suggests that people deal with cultural differences in different ways.			
12.a. 1. ignore differences			
In the first placement and in professional conversations, my student did:		n/a	0
In the first placement and in informal conversations,my student:		n/a	0
In the second placement and in Professional conversations, my student did:		n/a	0
In the second placement and in informal conversations, my		n/a	0

student did:			
12.b. 2. recognize differences but evaluate them negatively			
In the first placement and in professional conversations, my student did:		n/a	2
In the first placement and in informal conversations, my student:		n/a	2
In the second placement and in Professional conversations, my student did:		n/a	0
In the second placement and in informal conversations, my student did:		n/a	0
12.c. 3. recognize differences but minimise their importance			
In the first placement and in professional conversations, my student did:		n/a	1
In the first placement and in informal conversations, my student:		n/a	2
In the second placement and in Professional conversations, my student did:		n/a	0
In the second placement and in informal conversations, my student did:		n/a	1
12.d. 4. recognize and accept differences-acknowledge, appreciate and understand does not mean agreement or surrender.			
In the first placement and in professional conversations, my student did:		n/a	1
In the first placement and in informal conversations, my student:		n/a	0
In the second placement and in Professional conversations, my student did:		n/a	1
In the second placement and in informal conversations, my student did:		n/a	2
12.e. 5. adapt to differences -- move outside one's comfort zone, empathize (temporary shift in perspective) and understand that adaptation does not mean adoption or assimilation.			
In the first placement and in professional conversations, my student did:		n/a	2
In the first placement and in informal conversations, my student:		n/a	0
In the second placement and in Professional conversations, my student did:		n/a	4
In the second placement and in informal conversations, my		n/a	1

student did:			

12.f. 6. integrate differences -- hold different frames of reference in mind, analyse and evaluate situations from various cultural perspectives, and remain grounded in reality; it is essential to avoid becoming dazzled by too many possibilities.			
In the first placement and in professional conversations, my student did:		n/a	0
In the first placement and in informal conversations,my student:		n/a	0
In the second placement and in Professional conversations, my student did:		n/a	0
In the second placement and in informal conversations, my student did:		n/a	0
12.g. 7. leverage differences -- make the most of differences, strive for synergy, proactively look for gems in different cultures, and achieve unity through diversity.			
In the first placement and in professional conversations, my student did:	▮	n/a	1
In the first placement and in informal conversations,my student:	▮	n/a	1
In the second placement and in Professional conversations, my student did:	▮	n/a	1
In the second placement and in informal conversations, my student did:	▮	n/a	1

13. B - Please tick the statement(s) that characterise your approach to cultural differences when communicating with international student teachers, as a colleague and as a mentor.			
13.a. 1. ignore differences			
In informal conversations, I:		0%	0
In professional conversations, I:		0%	0
13.b. 2. recognize differences but evaluate them negatively			
In informal conversations, I:		0%	0
In professional conversations, I:		0%	0
13.c. 3. recognize differences but minimise their importance			
In informal conversations, I:		0%	0
In professional conversations, I:		0%	0
13.d. 4. recognize and accept differences-acknowledge, appreciate and understand does not mean agreement or surrender.			
In informal conversations, I:	▮	33.3%	1
In professional conversations, I:	▮▮	66.7%	2
13.e. 5. adapt to differences -- move outside one's comfort zone, empathize (temporary shift in perspective) and understand			

that adaptation does not mean adoption or assimilation.			
In informal conversations, I:		100.0%	2
In professional conversations, I:		0.0%	0
13.f. 6. integrate differences -- hold different frames of reference in mind, analyse and evaluate situations from various cultural perspectives, and remain grounded in reality; it is essential to avoid becoming dazzled by too many possibilities.			
In informal conversations, I:		33.3%	2
In professional conversations, I:		66.7%	4
13.g. 7. leverage differences -- make the most of differences, strive for synergy, proactively look for gems in different cultures, and achieve unity through diversity.			
In informal conversations, I:		100.0%	2
In professional conversations, I:		0.0%	0

14. How well does the University prepare international students for school placements?			
1 very well:		0.0%	0
2 well:		28.6%	2
3 neither nor:		57.1%	4
4 not well:		0.0%	0
5 not well at all:		0.0%	0
6 don't know:		14.3%	1

15. Please feel free to make recommendations.
I think their understanding of an willingness to work within the constraints of the system should be fully discussed and worked through. Sometimes the understanding was limited in terms of the implications for students learning, also methodologies that are used by international students that would complement learning here are not always applied as well as they could be or exploited.
It is the attitudinal difference which is problematic. There is a 'blindness' regarding learning how to behave and relating it to preparing pupils for life.

Appendix 3

Interview guide:

1. Initial findings show that trainee teachers need quite some time to adapt to the English Education system. What are your thoughts?

2. How important is it for mentors to take into account your cultural background?

3. To what extent has your cultural background been taken into account by your subject mentor? To what extent is this an advantage or a drawback?

4. How could the course be improved?