

# Mentoring for Effective Teaching - An Analysis of Austrian Teachers' School-based Mentoring Practices

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## Abstract

Mentoring studies worldwide indicate various methods of mentoring yet there are commonalities for mentoring around the classroom and school practices. Gauging a country's potential for mentoring early-career teachers can provide understandings of current mentoring practices towards initiating advancements. This quantitative study drew upon a validated survey instrument to gain insights on how mentoring occurs in Austria. Participants (mentors, n=63) provided indications on their mentoring experiences across five factors (personal attributes, system requirements, pedagogical knowledge, modelling, and feedback). Results show that these mentors were motivated to support their mentees, particularly with pedagogical knowledge (e.g., classroom management). As a self-reporting instrument, participants claimed they mentored on 9 of the 11 pedagogical knowledge items with percentages greater than 68%, however, only a little more than half mentored content knowledge and assessment. Using the survey provided information on what to focus on for advancing mentoring practices in Austria - especially with questions of support in the areas of planning, implementation, questioning techniques and assessment.

**Keywords:** mentoring, mentors, reform, five-factor model, support mentees, pedagogical knowledge for mentees, mentoring practices in Austria

## 1. Introduction

During their studies towards becoming teachers, preservice teachers in Austria must complete courses in the fundamentals of educational sciences, subject sciences, subject didactics, and pedagogical practical studies. This university coursework is combined with in-school professional experiences where preservice teachers are placed under the guidance of a more experienced teacher or mentor who supports them to develop their pedagogical practices and understand the wider role of the teacher. In-school professional experiences benefit the development of preservice teachers by forming a bridging function between theory studies and teaching practices enacted in the classroom. Further benefits of professional experiences are linked to the development of reflective practice on behalf of the preservice teacher where they develop insights into their own practice towards growth and development for effective teaching (Arnold et al., 2014; Hascher, 2012). Research suggests that it is not necessarily the duration of professional experience that is crucial, but rather the quality of the experience (Gröschner et al., 2015) that impacts the preservice teachers' learning outcomes (Dieck et al., 2010, Müller, 2010). Much of the quality of the professional experience is dependent on the mentor teacher. Effective mentors can guide the preservice teacher through the "third space" (Burch et al., 2013, p. 57f) as it can be called, between the training education institution and the enactment of teaching (Hellmann, 2019, p. 9). Mentor teachers play a vital role in preservice teacher development as they can guide the preservice teacher towards becoming autonomous, self-reflective classroom practitioners. With recognition of the importance of the role in initial teacher education, it is evident that the mentoring process needs to be focused and purposeful.

Mentor teachers can be challenged as they work with their preservice teachers (mentees) to unpack the personal-professional areas of teaching, as well as job-related competencies (Haas, 2021). It is widely recognised that the mentoring offered by a more experienced teacher is a way to educate mentees to successfully transition to the teaching profession (Crisp, 2010; Hobson et al., 2009; König et al., 2018). The important role mentor teachers play in preservice teacher education is not always recognised by the teachers themselves (McIntyre & Hagger, 2018) nor do they always understand the approaches they should be undertaking to be a successful mentor (Naidoo & Wagner, 2020). The current study presents

an opportunity for mentor teachers to self-evaluate their own attributes and practices using a validated survey instrument. It is hoped that by gathering data about the mentor teachers' perspectives of their own mentoring, the approaches of teachers in Austria can be informed and refined.

In Austria, since the turn of the millennium, there has been a paradigm shift in mentoring through the new teacher education. Nowadays the concept of mentoring in the context of school internships focuses on learning instead of teaching (Barr et al., 1995; Kraler et al., 2022, p. 280) and thus on observing personalized development and learning processes. The focus is on self-organization, establishing a questioning attitude and promoting personal development (Windl, 2021, p. 32) For a long time, the social cognitive model according to Bandura (1976) was predominant in Austria, in which thought and action patterns were to be adopted. The paradigm shift emphasizes the constructivist approach to learning and creates exploration, testing, analysis and reflection as central elements in the mentoring process. Mentors are needed to act as reflective practitioners to support the students. In this context, Fraefel (2018) speaks from a collaborative mentoring, in which co-constructive tasks in co-planning, co-teaching and debriefing are worked on together (Fraefel, 2018, p. 53). In this context, the author also points out the importance of including the pupils in the mentoring process.

Austrian training programs within the framework of mentoring are based on international conditions such as the European Commission (2010) and the curricula underline the accompanying-advisory-research-reflective-supervising approach (Kraler et al., 2022, p. 280). The training programs are offered at the universities of teacher education for teachers who want to work with students or who make themselves available as mentors. The training to the extent of 30 ECTS-credits takes four semesters.

## 2. Research Design

### 2.1 Conceptual Framework

This research is underpinned by Hudson's Five Factor Model of Mentoring (Hudson, 2003). The Five Factor Model for Mentoring has been identified, namely, personal attributes, system requirements, pedagogical knowledge, modelling, and feedback. The Model was developed as part of a large research project and was formulated from the research literature and empirical studies. The five factors include the Personal Attributes of the mentor teacher which incorporates how they support the mentee, guides them towards reflective practice, instills positive attitudes for teaching, demonstrates active listening, undertakes problems solving and instills confidence for teaching. The second attribute includes the System Requirements for teaching where the mentor teacher shares the aims, policies and curriculum relevant for teaching. Pedagogical knowledge, the next factor has eleven practices that includes the mentor teacher sharing Planning, Timetabling, Preparation, Teaching strategies, Content knowledge, Problem-solving, Classroom management, Questioning skills, Lesson implementation, Assessment, and Viewpoints about teaching. The fourth factor highlights the importance of Modelling practices that include modelling Teaching, Effective Teaching, Well-designed lessons, Hands-on lessons, Rapport with students, Enthusiasm, Classroom management, and the appropriate Language for teaching. The Modelling factor is accompanied by the need to have two-way professional conversations about what is being modelled in order to guide the mentee's observation of the mentor's practice. The final factor is how the mentor teacher shares Feedback and the importance of the quality of the feedback. The model highlights the importance of the mentor teacher providing the mentee with clear expectations about how the feedback will be delivered, the reviewing and discussion of lesson plans, the position of planning and enacting formal observation, the importance of both oral and written feedback and conversations about teaching evaluations. Figure 1 below highlights Hudson's Five Factor Model of Mentoring (2003; 2010).

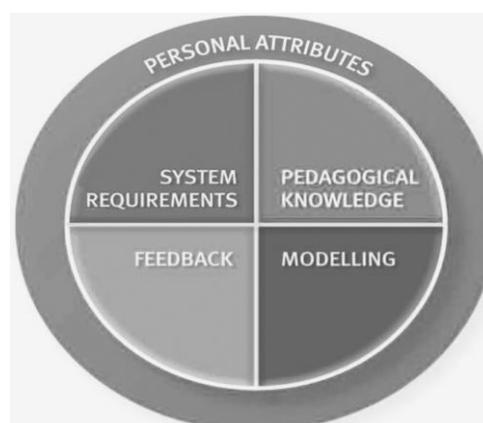


Figure 1. Hudson's Five Factor Model of Mentoring (2003, 2010)

The study focused on mentors' perceptions of their own mentoring attributes and practices. The aim of the study was to

explore the perspectives of mentor teachers about their own mentoring attributes and practices during professional experience. Research studies around the world have used the Five-Factor Model of Mentoring instrument to determine current mentoring approaches and provided directions for advancement of mentoring practices (e.g., Bird et al., 2015; Carrosa et al., 2019; Day, 2020; Galamay-Cachola et al., 2018; James et al., 2020; Kaur et al., 2018; Ploj Virtič et al., 2021). While the previous studies investigated the mentees perceptions of the mentor teachers' attributes and practices for mentoring, this current study is novel as it researches the mentor teachers' perspectives about their own mentoring.

## 2.2 Survey Design

The instrument used for this study was based on the same tool used in the previous studies that investigated the mentees perspective of their mentors' practices. The introduction of the survey tool was changed to reflect the mentor teachers' participation in the study. First the mentor teachers were asked about their background for the purpose of demographic information. For example, how long they had been teaching, what was their current position and how many preservice teachers they had previously mentored? The survey then commenced with the statement: During the last field experience (internship/practicum) for mentoring towards effective teaching, I felt I: The mentor teachers then self-reported on a five-point Likert scale (i.e., 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Uncertain, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree) whether they had demonstrated the desired mentoring attribute and/or practice during the preservice teacher's professional experience. To respond the mentor teachers circled the appropriate response against the survey item. The participants involved in this study did not record their names or the names of the schools, so the study met university ethical approvals by ensuring the anonymity of the participants (Hittleman & Simon, 2006).

There were 32 survey items, each linked to a mentoring factor and the associated attributes and factors as summarised in Figure 1 and the supporting discussion. The survey was administered within ten days of the mentor teachers hosting a preservice teacher completing a professional experience or internship at their school. The mentor teachers self-reported their responses on the survey. There is evidence to suggest that participants in self-reported studies indicate higher responses (see Hawthorne Effect); however, in a study (Koziol & Burns, 1986) comparing self-reported data with observation data from third parties indicated high accuracy of self-reported data.

## 2.3 Sampling Procedures

As previously highlighted, the participants were the mentor teachers who had just completed hosting a preservice teacher from a teacher education university in Austria. The preservice teachers were completing their placements as part of the teacher training courses at either a primary or secondary school within the framework of the university subject entitled, Pedagogical Practical Studies. The focus of this unit was for the preservice teacher to work with their mentor teacher towards their pedagogical development. The mentor teachers were from a range of schools of varying sizes and locations. The placements were allocated via the university 'Internship Office' which is a partnership arrangement between the university and the various colleges of education. Fourteen of the mentor teachers taught in primary schools while forty-nine of the mentors surveyed taught in secondary settings. The survey was completed by the mentor teachers within 10 days of the placement conclusion. A de-briefing was called at the university and the mentor teachers completed the survey during the face-to-face meeting. While there were 89 mentor teachers who attended the meeting, incomplete surveys were discarded leaving 63 complete responses (e.g., see Hittleman & Simon, 2006).

## 2.4 Data Analysis

The de-identified raw survey data were entered into SPSS, Version 27 (IBM Corporation, Armonk, NY) which is a statistical software package. The data were analysed and organised into the five factors and arranged in Tables to demonstrate the participants' self-reported responses to the associated attributes and practices they believed they demonstrated. Presented in the Tables were the percentage of responses where the mentor teachers agreed or strongly agreed, the Mean and the Standard Deviation.

# 3. Results

## 3.1 Samples Demographics

For the study, the participants (n=63 mentors) had previous mentoring experiences and had completed mentor training (i.e., 8 ECTS-credits). Respondents were either in a teaching position (98.4%) or as a headmaster (1.6%) with 22% in primary school and 78% in secondary school (middle school). Of the 63 mentors surveyed there were 69.8% male, 28.6% female, and 1.6% diverse gender.

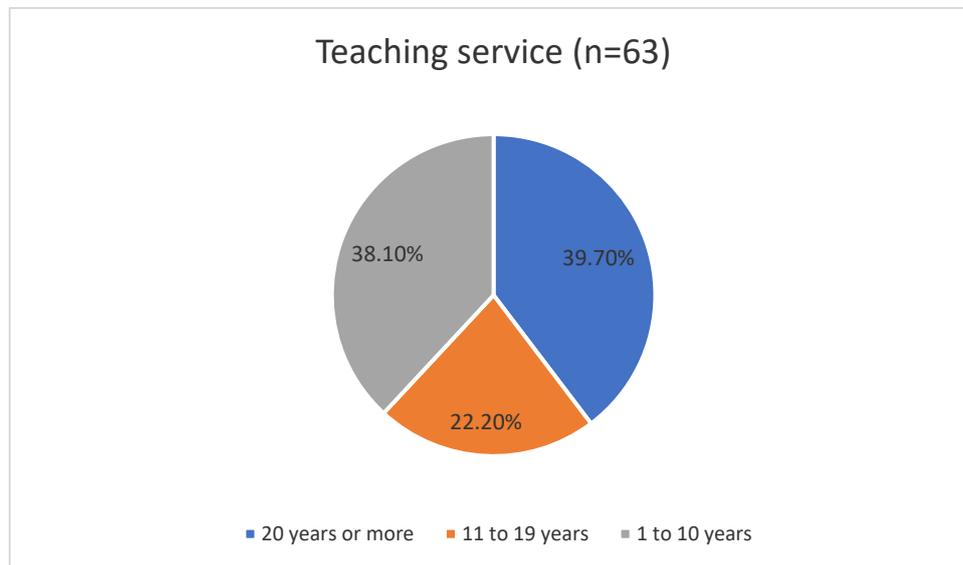


Figure 2. Teaching service (n=63)

Participants showed that 39.7% had 20 years or more teaching service, 22.2% had 11 to 19 years of teaching, and 38.1% had between 1 to 10 years. However, years of service at the current school varied with the over a third of teachers indicating they were at the same school for between 1 to 5 years while 22.2% noted 6 to 10 years, 12.7% stated 11 to 15 years, 11.1% 16-20 years, and 15.9% had 20 years and more at the current school. Of the respondents, 53.9% stated they had mentored 11 or more students, and 46.1% claimed they had mentored up to 10 mentees during their careers. All mentors (100%) received professional learning in the form of education events at the university after enrolling in the university delivered Mentoring course (15 ECTS-Credits).

### 3.2 Statistics and Data Analysis of the MET: The Five Factors

In the following, the five factors (i.e., personal attributes, system requirements, pedagogical knowledge, modelling, and feedback) are presented in table form indicating the mentor teachers' responses.

#### 3.2.1 Factor: Personal Attributes

Mentors reported on their "Personal Attributes" with items around the mentor being supportive, comfortable in talking, attentive, instilling confidence, instilling positive attitudes, and assisting in reflecting. These Austrian mentors self-reported on their personal attributes for supporting their mentees (range: 84.2% to 96.9%). There were 84.2% who believed the mentee was more confident as a result of having a mentor. According to the mentors, 96.9% were comfortable in talking about teaching practices. Mentors also indicated high levels of supportiveness (93.7%) with attentive listening (93.6%) and instilling positive attitudes for teaching (90.5%). Table 2 provides descriptive statistics, including mean scores and standard deviations, associated with each item.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of "Personal Attributes" for Mentoring Teaching (n=63)

Mentoring practice	%*	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Supportive	93.7	4.3333	0.64758
Comfortable in talking	96.9	4.7460	0.64678
Attentive	93.6	4.5238	0.73741
Instilled confidence	84.2	4.2222	0.83172
Instilled positive attitudes	90.5	4.4286	0.75593
Assisted in reflecting	86.7	4.1746	0.70801

\*% =Percentage of mentors who either "agreed" or "strongly agreed" with that specific mentoring practice.

#### 3.2.2 Factor: System Requirements

The next factor shows statements to the "System Requirements" with the three items discussed aims, outlined curriculum and discussed policies. With a percentage of 85.7%, the mentors state that they have discussed the aims of teaching with the mentee. Slightly more than half namely 56.7% state that they have given the mentee in written feedback. A remarkably low-value results in the question of discussing topics on school policies. The data show that only 23.8% of the mentors lead school policy discourse. An overview can be obtained from the following table (Table 2):

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of “System Requirements” for Mentoring Teaching (n=63)

Mentoring practice	%*	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Discussed aims	85.7	4.1270	0.79295
Outlined curriculum	56.7	3.6667	1.04727
Discussed policies	23.8	2.9524	0.94063

\*% =Percentage of mentors who either “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that specific mentoring practice.

### 3.2.3 Factor: Pedagogical Knowledge

An important factor in mentoring is the exchange of Pedagogical Knowledge. “Pedagogical Knowledge” captures items related to class leadership, classroom management and design of teaching and learning processes such as guided preparation, assisted with timetabling, assisted with classroom management, assisted with teaching strategies, assisted in planning, discussed implementation, discussed content knowledge, discussed questioning techniques, discussed assessment, discussed problem-solving and provided viewpoints. Mentors agreed with the high percentage of 92.0% to the general question about support in the preparation of the lessons. On closer inspection of the data, the following can be documented for support: Mentors inside assisted with timetabling (85.7%), they assisted with classroom management (82.5%), they assisted with implementing teaching strategies (77.8%) and they assisted in planning to teach (68.3%). To the question, whether the mentors gave the mentee new viewpoints on teaching, the mentors also agreed with 87.3%. Further items in the study related to points on pedagogical knowledge. The following can be emphasized here: Mentors give a high level of approval when it comes to talking about the implementation of teaching strategies (82.5%), about questioning techniques (84.1%) and to discuss problem-solving strategies (73.0%). Questions about assessment of the students’ learning (50.7%) and the discussion to content knowledge (58.7%) received little agreement.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics of “Pedagogical Knowledge” for Mentoring Teaching (n=63)

Mentoring practice	%	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Guided preparation	92.0	4.3651	0.74707
Assisted with timetabling	85.7	4.2063	0.78614
Assisted with classroom management	82.5	4.0635	0.82056
Assisted with teaching strategies	77.8	4.1270	0.72938
Assisted in planning	68.3	3.8889	0.93517
Discussed implementation	82.5	3.9841	0.79295
Discussed content knowledge	58.7	3.6032	1.05555
Discussed questioning techniques	84.1	4.1746	0.83356
Discussed assessment	50.7	3.5873	0.96110
Discussed problem solving	73.0	4.0000	0.87988
Provided viewpoints	87.3	4.2381	0.71198

\*% =Percentage of mentors who either “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that specific mentoring practice.

### 3.2.4 Factor: Modelling

The factor “Modelling” Teaching documents statements about the items modelled rapport with students, displayed enthusiasm, modelled a well-designed lesson, modelled teaching, modelled classroom management, modelled effective teaching, demonstrated hands-on and used syllabus language. With an average value of 71.4% for the 8 items on the factor modelling teaching, mentors claim to use this support for mentees in the mentoring process. Especially the items with modelled report with students (71.4%), modelled a well-designed lesson (77.8%), modelled classroom management (66.7%), modelled effective teaching (85.7%) and demonstrating hands-on materials for teaching (80.9%) received a high level of approval from the mentors during the last field experience for mentoring. On the other hand, the question, I felt I modelled teaching, was answered with only 44.5% agreement. The question about the use of the language from the current syllabus is also calculated with a value of 60.3%. Particularly noteworthy for the factor modelling is the enthusiasm when modelling teaching a lesson. The mentors agree with 84.1%.

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics of “Modelling” Teaching (n=63)

Mentoring practice	%	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Modelled rapport with students	71.4	4.0317	0.94984
Displayed enthusiasm	84.1	4.1429	0.85868
Modelled a well-designed lesson	77.8	4.0000	0.76200
Modelled teaching	44.5	3.3810	0.72798
Modelled classroom management	66.7	3.7778	0.72833
Modelled effective teaching	85.7	4.3016	0.79585
Demonstrated hands-on	80.9	4.2222	0.85089
Used syllabus language	60.3	3.7619	0.89288

\*% =Percentage of mentors who either “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that specific mentoring practice.

### 3.2.5 Factor: Feedback

The factor “Feedback” describes statements about the items such as observed teaching for feedback, provided oral feedback, reviewed lesson plans, provided evaluation on teaching, provided written feedback and articulated expectations. With the high percentage of 95.2% the mentors indicate that they observed the mentee teach before providing feedback. It is striking that the mentors received the oral feedback (93.6%) instead of a written response (52.4%). Also, fast indicate two-thirds (65.1%), that they reviewed the mentee's lesson plans before teaching. In factor Feedback mentors also pay attention to a discourse on evaluation (84.1%) and improvements (87.3%) of the mentee's teaching.

Table 5. Descriptive Statistics of “Feedback” on Teaching (n=63)

Mentoring practice	%*	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Observed teaching for feedback	95.2	4.4127	0.71018
Provided oral feedback	93.6	4.6508	0.72198
Reviewed lesson plans	65.1	3.9206	0.97222
Provided evaluation on teaching	84.1	4.1111	0.65034
Provided written feedback	52.4	3.6667	1.37957
Articulated expectations	87.3	4.2222	0.70584

\*% =Percentage of mentors who either “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that specific mentoring practice.

In the following section, the items are analysed according to the severity of the evaluations.

### 3.2.6 Summary of the Quantitative Analysis of Survey Data

The following illustration lists the numerical sequence of those 15 items for which the 63 mentors have given a high approval and the mean scores (*M*) on the Likert scale is between 4=Agree and 5=Strongly Agree. Furthermore, the presentation documents the weighting and view of the mentors' behaviours in mentoring.

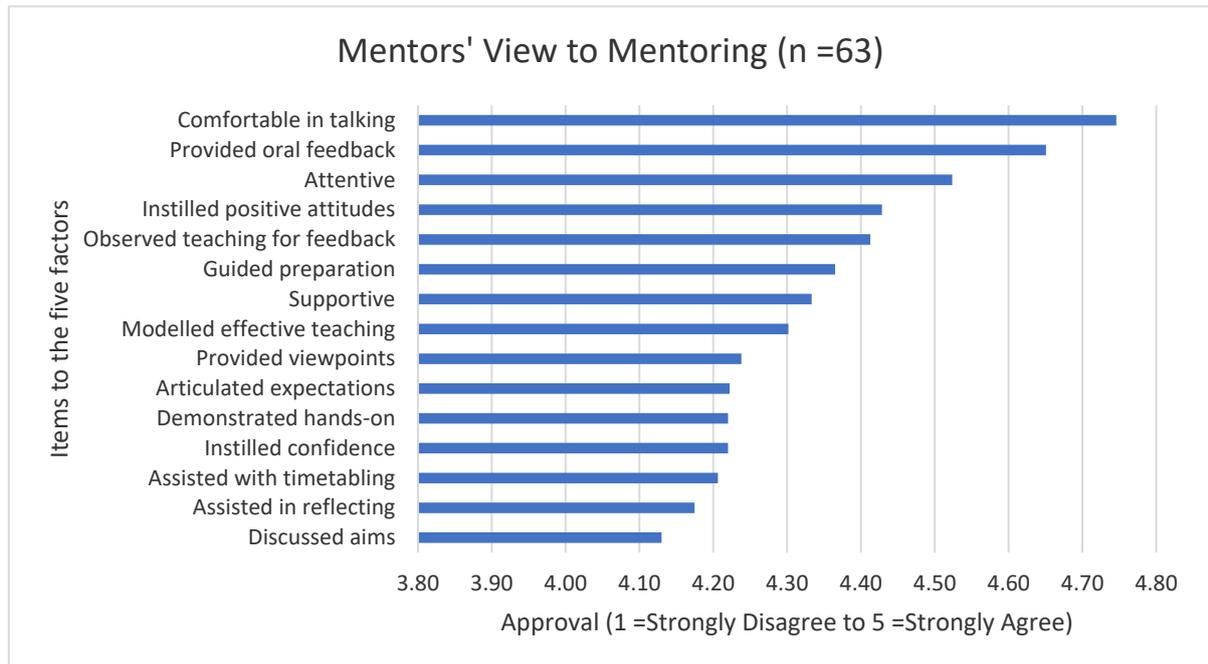


Figure 3. Mentoring practice (n=63)

The study showed that the majority of mentors perceived themselves to have personal attributes for mentoring. There were more than five percent of mentors who indicated otherwise. Notwithstanding the mentor training that each mentor undertook in this study, there were mentors who may consider themselves unsuitable. In a practical exercise, the survey may be amended to allow mentors to record their potential for undertaking the mentoring practices. This may also allow new mentors to understand the responsibilities and make a decision to proceed with mentoring or not, particularly as studies have suggested the need to find suitable mentors (Hobson et al., 2009, p. 212). To carry out the activity, the mentor needs professionalism, personality, idealism, time and individual resources as well as a solid environment (Haas, 2021, p. 84). "Mentoring is sometimes a (...) exhausting and demanding personal working relationship." (Pflaum, 2017, p. 65) Challenges are manifold and requirements are different. Not every mentor who makes himself available is also suitable (Graf et al., 2017, p. 147). Oettler (2009) emphasizes the importance of voluntariness and shows a correlation in this context with the item "Mentor benefits from the student's educational knowledge" (Oettler, 2009, p. 241).

That the surveyed mentors give the items on the factor "Personal Attributes" a high level of approval. Of the 6 items on this factor, all 6 are listed in this figure. The mentors state that they had a good atmosphere of conversation ( $M = 4.75$ ;  $SD = 0.65$ ), listened attentively on teaching matters ( $M = 4.52$ ;  $SD = 0.74$ ), instilled positive attitudes ( $M = 4.42$ ;  $SD = 0.76$ ), were supportive of the mentee for teaching ( $M = 4.33$ ;  $SD = 0.65$ ), instilled confidence ( $M = 4.22$ ;  $SD = 0.83$ ) and assisted in reflection ( $M = 4.17$ ;  $SD = 0.71$ ). Likewise, 3 out of 6 items receive a high approval of the factor "Feedback". The items Provided oral feedback ( $M = 4.65$ ;  $SD = 0.72$ ), Observed teaching for feedback ( $M = 4.41$ ;  $SD = 0.71$ ) and Articulated expectations ( $M = 4.22$ ;  $SD = 0.71$ ) should be mentioned. As a successful mentoring practice in connection with the factor "Pedagogical Knowledge" mentors see the need for support in the parts of Guided preparation ( $M = 4.37$ ;  $SD = 0.75$ ), Provided viewpoints ( $M = 4.24$ ;  $SD = 0.71$ ) and Assisted with timetabling ( $M = 4.21$ ;  $SD = 0.79$ ). High mean values within the survey results for the factor "Modelling" in the aspects of Modelled effective teaching ( $M = 4.30$ ;  $SD = 0.79$ ) and Demonstrated hands-on materials ( $M = 4.22$ ;  $SD = 0.85$ ). The experienced mentors are convinced that they have used these elements in practical school mentoring. This suggests that it is also important to them. For the factor "System Requirements", the item Discussed aims ( $M = 4.13$ ;  $SD = 0.79$ ) can be highlighted as a special feature of the mentoring practice. Development in mentoring practice can be seen in the following parts: Discussed policies ( $M = 2.95$ ;  $SD = 0.94$ ), Modelled teaching ( $M = 3.38$ ;  $SD = 0.73$ ), Discussed assessment ( $M = 3.59$ ;  $SD = 0.96$ ), Discussed content knowledge ( $M = 3.60$ ;  $SD = 1.06$ ) and Outlined curriculum ( $M = 3.67$ ;  $SD = 1.05$ ).

#### 4. Discussion

The aim of the study was to determine which aspects within the five factors are increasingly used and how mentors evaluate mentoring practice. Mentors form a bridging function and act through their professionalism in the function of mentor and trainer. The inclusion of mentors in training concepts is of great importance when it comes to guiding students for self-directed and reflexive learning processes (Arnold et al., 2014, p. 5f). In German-language literature, mentors have long been

referred to as teacher trainers (Schratz, 2015, p. 41) because they proactively support the educational and learning process of the students. The results of the study can also show which priorities mentors set in the support function, which motives and values they bring to the table and what understanding mentors bring with them. A possible success generation or investigation into the effect on mentee could be investigated in a further companion study.

The surveyed mentors highly rate their abilities and personal characteristics for mentoring. Mentors experience themselves as extremely supportive, attentive, strive for a good atmosphere for discussion and the building of trust. According to research findings, it can generally be assumed that the motivation and attitudes of female mentors have an impact on a learning process. Respondents in this study can be assumed to be motivated and with a positive attitude to take on their task.

According to Cramer (Cramer, 2012), a competent teacher is when they solve tasks and challenges in the teaching profession in an aim-oriented and responsible manner, when they initiate a process of self-reflection in order to further develop their own behavior (Cramer, 2012, p. 35). If mentors adequately support students, this knowledge is also expected from them. In the present study, there is a high level of approval for the implementation of these activities in the field of Pedagogical Knowledge, Modelling and Feedback. Mentors state that they help to design lesson preparations, work on practical pedagogical questions together with the mentee and assist with class management. Also striking is the coordination of time management for effective teaching. Also noteworthy is the fact that mentors first closely observe lessons and teaching sequences and then give feedback. In doing so, they also formulate target dimensions and future expectations. The interviewed mentors are familiar with the oral feedback. Written feedback is given by mentors in the rare cases – especially since it is not mandatory for the training institution. The values suggest that mentors expand students' ability to plan and reflect, as well as general pedagogical knowledge, through structured and self-reflective leadership.

Formal and informal discussions support the exchange or co-constructive actions (Kreis, 2012, p. 43) and aim at "optimising teaching action" (Kreis, 2012, p. 87). Bach et al. (2018) were able to prove in a study that female mentors deal significantly more with practical school dimensions than with theory-based university performance requirements in the mentoring process (Bach et al., 2018, p. 197). This statement can also be confirmed in the present study. Pedagogical and content knowledge as well as didactic knowledge, Organisational knowledge and Consulting knowledge are part of the Professional Knowledge of teachers (Voss et al., 2015). Only half of the surveyed mentors state that they have talked to the students about Content Knowledge. This indicates that there is a need for increased cooperation with scientific and didactic training teacher education institutions. Subject-related theories, concepts and models should be able to be tried out in class and discussed in the mentoring process as basis. Then the desired entanglement of theory, practice and research takes place in teacher education.

## 5. Conclusion

In the accompanying process, mentors are expected to have competences and qualifications for mentoring early-career teachers (Haas, 2021; Schnebel, 2018). This requires action and specialist knowledge, consulting competence, an understanding of profession and reflection as well as a self-critical reflexivity to values and attitudes. Since the academic year 2019/20, there have been curricula and training programs for teachers in Austria for advancing qualifications as mentors within school-based mentoring. In the present study, mentors were interviewed who have already completed a one-year training program and acted as mentors. They were familiarized with the new training concept (Bachelor/Master/PhD) within the teacher training reform (since 2015/16) in seminars. However, it cannot yet be assumed that knowledge about structural, institutional, and normative-formal formats will be consolidated and anchored in the everyday school context, in the teaching staff of schools and/or among mentors. According to this study, a special task for the mentoring process is the question of support in planning, addressing, and discussing implementation, questioning techniques and assessment. This still requires an intensive discourse and exchange between the participants.

Haas et al. (2018) emphasize in their study the consideration of affective-motivational factors in the mentoring process. A follow-up study could take this factor as a supplement and draw conclusions from it. Mentoring succeeds through an appreciative approach to the relationship structure and careful mindfulness of the other. Ultimately, students are responsible for their learning progress by proactively shaping the process and working on the profession-specific developmental tasks (Havighurst, 1948, 1953).

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