Mentoring as a Supportive Way for Novice Teachers in Foreign Language Teacher Development: A Case Study in an Ethnic College in China*

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Abstract—**Mentoring has been explored from various perspectives under different theoretical frameworks. The situation-based mentoring brings a lot of possibilities and sustainabilities to the student teachers. Given the overview on the literature of mentoring, it can be found that the research about mentoring mainly is concerned with English-speaking countries such as US and UK and populates in general teacher education. The research in subject-specific field receives scant attention, such as in Foreign Language Teacher Development (hereafter, FLTD). Finding few reports from China, especially about the novices in ethnical colleges, the empirical study running through one year from in an ethnic college shows that mentoring is a supportive way in FLTD for supporting novices. Under the framework of sociocultural theory, we found that, in addition to improving of teaching skills, mentoring can (1) lessen novices' stress and 'reality shock' in teaching and strengthen the sense of belongings; (2) facilitate novice teachers' reflection ability and (3) foster novice teachers' self-efficacy in teaching.**

Index Terms—**mentoring, a supportive way, FLTD in an ethnic college of China**

I. INTRODUCTION

Originating from the Holmer's *Odyssey*, mentoring has its more than 3000 year's history. In the ancient epic, mentors played dyadic roles as '*matriarchal*' and '*patriarchal*' ways. The former entails the relationship based on personal, emotional support; the latter denotes that the mentors guide, instruct, and impart knowledge for novices (Orland-Barak, 2014). With the development of modern society, the contents of mentoring in ancient guild have been widened, varying from transmitting some skills and techniques in work to facilitate the competence of individual career development (Guo, 2009).Current concept of mentoring in education stresses the on-going relationship between mentors and mentees in a particular context, it entails the *'teacher as teacher educator'* into field setting (Orland, 2001). Mentors play multi-roles in promoting the mentees' personal and professional development, they are regarded as *models, acculturators, supporters, sponsors* and *educators* (Malderez & Bodoczky, 1999). With the further research about mentoring and the support of developmental, learning and social theories (Dominguez and Hager, 2013), mentoring has been explored more deeply and widely. The present literature mainly discusses the following aspects: mentoring can supply the help for novice teachers' cognitive and emotional support in their career lives; different kinds of relationship between mentors and mentees create different opportunities for the learning of mentees(Wang, 2001); mentoring activities are influenced by various situation and function in distinguished way(ibid); some other premises such as the training of mentors, critical reflection about the relationship in mentoring had been also explored (Orland, 2001; Wang & Odell,2007). Most research about mentoring appeared in English-speaking countries with matured-supporting systems and national support, although mentoring has been practiced in many other nations. Comparatively, the mentoring in China receives little research especially in FLTD in colleges. We assume that in certain context, mentoring exerts different functions and the process of operation will not be the same as others because of various cultural situations.

II. RESEARCH BACKGROUND

The English teaching in China, the practice of mentoring begins to be focused on with the requirements of National English Curriculum Standard (NECS, 2001, 2011)[1] in primary and middle school. Accommodating to this program, the mentoring activities are mainly manipulated in 'one-to-many' form. The experts give lectures to the teachers around China and introduce the main ideas of NECS and the teaching techniques, then; the innovation is carried out gradually

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* There are about 20 ethnic colleges or universities in ethnic accumulating areas in China. Most of them are located in the western China.
[1] The National New Curriculum Standards were carried out from 2001, revised in 2011.

in various administrative mode. From the national level, the Ministry of Education (2010) initiated the "primary and secondary school teachers training projects" (also called "National Training Projects") for the teachers from the middle-western China (the remote& ethnic area), in order to improve the quality of teachers from rural areas. With the operation of this plan, many experienced teachers are trained as mentors in the "Modeling Training", after that, these trained mentors perform the district or school-based training for more others; the purpose is to guide the development of more teachers including novice teachers, thousands of teachers benefit from the "National Training Projects". It is estimated that about 3,000,000 teachers from rural areas benefitting from the projects (2010-2013, the data from the webpage of the Ministry of Education).

Comparatively, the teachers in colleges get few opportunities to development themselves, especially during the novice teachers. According to the document from Chinese Education of Ministry (2012), the novice teachers in college should undertake one-year internship; various types of guidance for novices including mentoring are encouraged in favor of the professional development of new teachers. At present, for the foreign language teachers, there are three main kinds of development programs for them in China by *academic institutions* (complementing by many teachers' colleges) of higher learning offering teacher certifications, *non-governmental sectors*(supporting by some key publishers) and *some official effort support* (Zhou,2011). Since 2000s, Chinese government made a lot of efforts in creating the chances of the career development for foreign language teachers in colleges, such as the Visiting Scholar Program abroad and at home, exchanging learning etc.. In 2008, the Bureau of Higher Education started its involvement with the ELT teacher development (ibid). According to the guidance advices of Chinese government, all the novice teachers should accept the pre-service training , the excellent teachers' mentoring, team-working mechanisms are encouraged to help the novice teachers; Colleges and Universities should establish a sound teaching organization to improve new teachers to be involved in teaching teamwork, innovate team-working system; perfect and enhance mentoring new teachers in their teaching philosophy, methods, skills, and career planning; bring together the mentoring mechanism into fully play in leading role model (Ministry of Education, 2012). But although so much devotion to foreign language teachers' development, the problems we are facing today are still in great discrepancies between supply and demand of teachers including their perceived needs and actual needs, reported belief and classroom behavior, pedagogical content knowledge and pedagogical content competence(Zhou, 2011). In practice, the pre-service training for novice teachers from national requirements mainly includes general pedagogical knowledge and regulations, few concerning the subject-specific teaching knowledge. Another factor is that many novices without teaching experience during their college life. When many student teachers move to work in colleges, being short of knowledge for understanding students and teaching context, most of novice teachers are always pressed emotionally and professionally. The*" reality shock"* (Corley, 1998) or *"wash-out effect"* (Smyth, 1995) and *loneliness* are always lingering in new teachers' early professional lives. The *'reality shock'* refers to the helplessness, sometimes collision in teaching because lack of knowledge, ability and inexperienced practice; the *'wash-out effect'* mainly comes from the non-adaptation to the present context (Song, 2012). We should look for practice-based and context-based enter-close for those novices in terms of supporting their professional development. For the new teachers, there are more complexities and uncertainties for the novice teachers come to teach in ethnic colleges due to the diverse teaching context and reality. We try to explore how mentoring supports novice teachers development and to which extent to facilitate their career in the particular context.

III. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The whole study is carried out under the framework of sociocultural theory. The sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978, 1986) mainly includes the origin and development of person's psychological mechanism, the internalization, activity theory and the tool of artifacts. The main viewpoint of sociocultural theory is to explain and help to enhance the learner's psychological development from low to high level historically. During the process, the mediation of education and context play important role, education should activate all the aspects of students, teachers and context. While the all active factors are functional, the learning will be stimulated out. The teachers as learners of teaching from sociocultural perspective, we should "recognize the inherent interconnectedness of cognitive and social, and allow us to see the rich details of how teachers' learning emerges out of and is constructed by teachers within the settings and circumstances of their work"(Johnson, 2009,p.3). Because the sociocultural theory tries to provide "comprehensive examination of the quality and character of the meditational means designed to support teacher professional development and the subsequent tracing of that development" (Johnson & Golombek, 2011, p.21). The research focuses the contextual factors and strives for the strategic mediation or an appropriate way of internalizing concepts through interactions with expert teachers and colleagues. Personal development often obeys the hierarchical layers by interaction→internalization→knowledge→development. In language teacher education field, the sociocultural theory can be used in cognitive mentoring in the multi-directional system, mentoring is essentially mediating the teachers' learning during the novices.

IV. THE RESEARCH DESIGN

Comparing with the FLTD in other colleges or universities, the FLTD in ethnic colleges is underdeveloped owing to

fewer chances for novices; the different ethnic backgrounds of novice teachers is another vital factor in influencing their development. The discrepancies between supply and demand of teachers are the key problem, and meanwhile, its strong context-specific feature is obvious. Searching for the local and suitable way for improving the new teachers' professional ability, we are operating the mentoring by its diverse performing mechanism. It assumes that the application of mentoring in the particular situation has its characteristics owing to the distinctive experiences of teachers, the requirement of students and the teaching. Under the sociocultural theory, this paper will explore the mentoring performances in an ethnic college from western China, where situation-based mentoring is adopted. Which will answer the two questions: Is mentoring helpful for FLTD in ethnic college? If at all, to which extent, mentoring helps the novices; whether mentoring can help to enhance novices' reflection ability and self-efficacy in teaching in addition to acquiring some skills in teaching.

A. Research Site

Most of ethnic[2] colleges are located in the ethnic accumulating areas in China. The ethnic college in this study lies in south of Guizhou province (two typical ethnics are Buyi and Miao) in the western China, in which more than 65% students (all of them speak Mandarin in their daily life but ethnic language at home) are ethnics from different parts of China; the teachers in this college include both ethnics and non- ethnics with distinct backgrounds. The college is full of strong ethnical culture and students often are encouraged to show and perform their own different ethnical activities on campus. The ethnic colleges in China hold the important position in protecting and inheriting the colorful ethnical culture. With the limitations of situation, the students in ethnic colleges usually have some difficulties in English learning, at the same time the teachers also meet more challenges in their teaching because of the certain context, their development should be focused.

B. Participants

There are mainly ten participants (in fact more) in this case study including the author of this research. Five are novice teachers (mentees) with MA degree, who began to take up English teaching in the ethnic college from September 2013; the rest are experienced teachers (corresponding mentors) in the college, who have at least ten years teaching experience. During the first year's mentoring, all the mentees have been burdening the same work as those experienced teachers and taught their own classes by themselves. Although the five novice teachers have diverse ethnics, teaching practice or experience before their teaching in this college, this is their first year in teaching in ethnic college, we regard them as novice teachers in this study. See table1. (N1=novice 1, M1= corresponding mentor1, and so on.)

TABLE-1
THE BACKGROUND OF NOVICE TEACHERS

order	ethnic	experience
N1	Han	three years English teaching in train institution
N2	Han	one year English teaching in middle school
N3	Han	no experience in English teaching
N4	Miao	seven years in middle school
N5	Buyi	two years in primary and middle school respectively

TABLE-2
THE BACKGROUND OF MENTORS

order	ethnic	experience
M1	Buyi	20 years English teaching in the ethnic college
M2	Shui	10 years English teaching in the ethnic college
M3	Han	26 years English teaching in the ethnic college
M4	Buyi	30 years English teaching in the ethnic college
M5	Han	12 years English teaching in the ethnic college

C. Procedures

The whole process of operation mentoring in this case benefits the two important factors: one is the support from administrative departments in the college in supplying the possible time, fund and condition; the other is the multi-models are used, such as *one-to-one, one-to-many, many-to-one and whole-to-one* forms (But one mentor assigned to a corresponding novice teacher during the whole mentoring) in carrying out the program in order to help the student teachers to improve their development in the particular teaching context. At the beginning of mentoring, all the requirements are illuminated; the mentors and mentees signed the mentoring contract. The contents of mentoring are regulated periodically in detail, all the participants including many other experienced teachers are activated in complementing the whole task. The holistic purpose of the mentoring is to help novice teachers in their personal and professional development in the Ethnic College, to be involved in foreign language teaching smoothly in their first year. All the concerned activities and corresponding tasks are showed in Table-2:

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[2] There are 56 ethnics in China, Buyi and Miao are two of them. Han doesn't belong to minority because of its majority in China.

TABLE-3
THE PARTICIPANTS (AS MENTORS) AND ARRANGEMENTS IN THE MENTORING

Participants	Activities involved	Mentoring type
Administrative department	1. formulate the contract for mentors and novice 2. introduce the college context and regulations 3. guide novices to visit and appreciate the minority cultural exhibition to get some sense about minorities 4. supply time, fund and energy support	Whole-to-one Whole-to-many
All the experienced teachers & Learning community	1. give the chance for novices to participate all the learning activities in the community with corresponding mentor 2. give the chance for novices to observe their class teaching 3. give the opportunity for novices to visit student's activities after class.	Many-to- one One-to-many Many-to-many
The corresponding mentor	1. attend the novice's class no less than 6 times during mentoring 2. novice required to attend the mentor's class no less than10 times 3. accept the interview and visit of corresponding novice 4. check & accomplish all the requirements in contract	One-to-one

The mentoring in this research runs one year with the support from the administrative department to the situation-based practice. First, we assume that the novices in Ethnic College should be used to their working context, especially the vivid ethnic culture, they are given chances to visit and appreciate the exhibition for minority culture, and sometimes they would be given the chance to enjoy the colorful festivals in ethnical area. At the same time the novices should understand the students' needs and condition in learning English. For those English teachers, especially non-ethnic ones, they should have the high awareness for the working context in order to organize their teaching in class. Of course, the delivery of enough time, fund support for the mentoring, the contract for the mentors and novices from the administrative department can regulate the whole program.

Second, to keep the effective mentoring, the novice teachers' professional development should experience from mentoring to learning community (Huan, 2012). The new teacher's autonomy can not be ignored and their development should be constructed in learning community. We emphasize the importance of community of practice (Wenger, 1998). With the corresponding individual mentor, all the novices get the chance to attend the classes of those generous experienced teachers, to experience different classroom teaching. Meanwhile, to close the distance from colleagues and students, the novices will be invited to manage the students' activities after class.

Third, during the operation of mentoring, the corresponding mentors play a vital role not only in charge of the novice's teaching but also their cognitive and emotional needs. They should help the novice teachers learn how to improve his knowing, analyzing, recognizing, doing and seeing (Kumaravadivelu, 2012)in teaching, because teaching English in the Ethnic College also entails its particularity, possibility and practicability (ibid). In this research, we mainly try to observe whether the mentoring can enhance the novice's reflection ability and their self-efficacy in teaching, the rest are not concerned.

V. METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION

The main qualitative approaches and small-scale quantitative one are used in this study, including structured and semi-structured interview with the novice teachers during pre&post-mentoring, the interview with the mentors is also included; the journal writing, self-report of new teachers will be investigated including their records for visiting those experienced teachers and their own reflective diaries in teaching. The small-scale questionnaire as an auxiliary means is also used to explore the general condition about new teachers. The ethnographic research goes through the whole study, because we strive to describe and interpret the shared and learned patterns of values, behaviors and beliefs of the new English teachers in the Ethnic College. As a process and outcome of research (Agar, 1980), ethnography is an approach of investigating a culture-sharing group (Harris, 1968) and final, written product of the group. The researcher in the study, as one of corresponding mentors is involved with the investigation by '*participant observation*' and in the day-to-day lives of all the participants, interviewing the group participant (Creswell, 2013). As a researcher, the author plays dual roles of "intervening and investigating …of improving and understanding" (Adler et al., 2005) to get more authentic and primitive information for this study. The purpose of this research tries to illustrate, under the specific context, whether mentoring can facilitate the professional development for the English teacher. The data cover the interviews with all the mentors and mentees formally and informally.

The data collection should be congruent to the research questions and the choice of research approach. Because the qualitative study and 'grounded' theory is adopted in the present study, we try to investigate the novice language teachers in the Ethnic College and identify the variables, which influence their professional development. All the variables can not be measured easily and there is no predetermined information from the literature in other study. What we can do is to hear their voice, have them collaborate with us in *flexible style* (Creswell, 2013) during the data collection, the deep observation and interview with the related group; the other important factor –context or settings in which participants in the research will be addressed as a key issue, because we can not separate what the people say from where they say it. So the following data are concerned in this study: a). the regulations and requirements for the

mentoring from administrative department; b). the novice teachers' observation journal writings in attending experienced teachers including their own corresponding mentor's; c). the interview of novice teachers and all mentors; d). the new teachers' self report; e). the evaluation from mentors; f). the records in two sessions during the mentoring; g. a small scale questionnaire. The research tries to uncover the reality of new language teachers' development and their changes under the guidance of mentoring in the Ethnic College, exploring most suitable 'scaffolding' for the novice teachers.

VI.   ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Focusing on the supposed questions, the data from interviewing with novices and mentors, meanwhile, the records of novices in interacting with other experienced teachers, the mentees' journal writings of observing class and students' activities are also concerned. We code all information focusing on three themes as follows:

A.   The Strong Sense of Belonging

The novices are always suffered with the stress from occupational and emotional exhaustion (Klusmann, Kunter, Voss, & Baumert, 2012;Tynjälä & Heikkinen, 2011). They meet a lot of challenges and tensions from the working context, which is the reason why there is high attrition from the job (Ingersoll, 2001; Kukla-Acevedo, 2009). We assume that the emotional support should be critical for the novices, especially for non-ethnics. 'Matriarchal' function in mentoring should be focused. For the N3 (whose ethnic is Han) comes from the northeastern China, she hardly has any experience and practice in teaching English. M3's mentoring for her often conveys not only in class but also after class with both formal and informal way, the excerpt from the interaction between N3 and M3:

Living alone in another place, met a good sister and her friends, enthusiastically accepted me, as if many years of knowing each other like old friends, so I gradually eliminate loneliness, slowly adapt to this strange and familiar working context. I am lucky enough, it is my own personal experience. [N3's message to M3]

Interviewing with the M3, the experienced teacher said, N3 is the only child in her family (China has been carried out one-child family plan for 30 years); N3 almost has no any social experience, let alone the knowledge about ethnical culture. She is far away her hometown and the loneliness is coming into her lives. On many weekends, M3 often invites N3 to go outing, to be guest at her own house, to communicate with other friends, to take part in some activities etc.. M3 tries to give the chance for N3 to attend some learning conferences.

Another excerpt about N4 (whose' ethic is Miao), who has taught English in middle school for seven years but shows strong anxiety in teaching ethnic college students. In her self-report, she said:

Although I have been teaching English for 7 years, I am still scared at the beginning of my teaching in this college when I find many students in my class are always silent. In fact, I am really a new-coming old teacher. [From the self-report of N4]

N4 shows one of her journal writings as follows:

Today, I attend the class Mr. Yang's   (her corresponding mentor)class about Pedagogic theories in English teaching, I learn a lot: a). he can connect the practice in explaining the theory, the whole atmosphere in classroom is active; b). he encourages students to speak out their viewpoints and directs the hot discussions. [November 5th, 2013]

M4 gave a lot to help N4 to recognize the teaching requirements, the needs analysis of student, the features of different courses etc… M4 told N4 the following is critical:

Due to the change of teaching environment and teaching object, new teachers should adjust their teaching strategy according to the needs of students. Especially now, with the help of technological development and media resources we should strengthen students' autonomous learning consciousness, we should believe the students have the ability to learn by themselves with the help of teacher. It is not necessary to control everything for students, they are adults now. [From the interview with M4]

Owning to the different backgrounds for the novices, the mentors strive to solve the critical problem for the newcomers in hope of conforming to the new context. Although N4 is ethnic member, she knows something about the present situation of learning English but with the 'fossilized' teaching strategies used in middle school, trying to explain and interpret every point for the students is not appropriate for the needs of college students in ethnical area. In fact the adult students in ethnic college have the possibility and ability to learn and to find the solution by themselves, so giving encourage and help for them to learn automatically is vital. One year later, M4 said: "N4 has come to change a lot in her teaching strategies, in N4's class, the students get much more opportunities to learn automatically".

According to the sociocultural theory, the cognitive development can be realized with the mediating of mentoring. M1 (the author of this study) tried to supply enough opportunities for N1,such as suggesting N1 to attend more experienced teachers' class, encouraging N1 to hold the open class for the learning group, guiding N1 to manage the students' activities. N1 gives the feedback of mentoring in her interview:

Well, I think "mentoring", this way is very good, let's quickly have a sense of belonging in the heart, under the guidance of all the experienced teachers, quickly into the community, and really get the teacher's guidance, for me, without any experience in colleges and universities, by listening to lectures, participating in all kinds of students' activities. I understand more about them, which is very important for my teaching. [From the expert of interview with N1]

The excerpts come from the novices and their corresponding mentors. We found that not only ethnic but non-ethnic novice teachers, when they take up teaching English in the Ethnic College, they have serious psychological pressure in their beginning professional lives with diverse aspects because of different backgrounds. For the non-ethnics, they are in a particular situation in urgency of emotional support and care from colleagues and avoiding the anxiety of the strange cultural context, adjusting to the ethnic context comes first for them. The mentors' role as acculturator is preliminary. For ethnic new-comers, they need the support of models of educator, because they find that their inexperienced teaching practice in college is the utmost obstacle in their teaching, how to integrate their prior knowledge and present activities in classroom teaching is most important for them. From the novice teachers' voices, after the mentoring, most of them felt the strong sense of belongings and well-being in certain community of practice with the supporting of mentors.

B. The Reflection Ability

Reflection in education generally can be traced to Dewey's (1938) idea of learning in the book *How we think: a re-statement of relation of reflective thinking to the educational process* and to Schon (1983, 1987, 1991). Deway gives the definition of reflection as "*the active, persistent and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of grounds that support it*". Dewey's idea has strong Cartesian basis obviously, the knowing about self or self-knowledge is the important part for the individual development (Akbari, 2007). Comparatively, Schon pays much attention to the practical aspects about reflection. *'Reflection-in-action'* and *'reflection-on- action'* are necessary in the practice by the cycling ways. Kemmis (1986) gives the summary about reflection:

Reflection is not just an individual, psychological process. It is an action- oriented, historically-embedded, social and political frame, to locate oneself in the history of a situation, to participate in a social activity, and to take side on issues.

Kemmis' words about reflection display that the efficient reflection needs the participation in activities, collaboration in practice of community and reconstruction of self in trinity forms. In practice, teachers should not only do 'reflection-in-action', 'reflection-on-action' but also *reflection-for-action* in cycling and repetitive way, because teaching activities are in constantly changeable. Of course, the widespread of teacher's reflection benefits from the disappearance of method giving the possibility and bringing the sense of practice and realism of teaching (Akbari, 2010); under the sociocultrual theoretical framework, the development of novice teachers' cognitive level needs the 'scaffolding' from the mentors or other experienced teachers, the mentoring is to give the mediation for the reflection of the new teachers. To elicit the effective reflection, the factor of context should be concerned. The data analysis from a small-scale questionnaire, novice teachers' journal writing, the record of observation, the interview and the questionnaire can supply the awareness and contents of reflection of novices. We strive to explore the novice teachers' reflective components and aspects comprehensively.

1. The findings from a small-scale questionnaire

It is believed that teachers' reflection is the key point in introspecting and improving professional ability. We still want to assume whether their reflections are effective. Borrowing from Akbari's (2010) *Evaluation Model Inventory* for effective reflection, we did a small-scale questionnaire investigation (29 items in the question list as Akbari's with a little modification) for all the novice teachers in the study. Our purpose is to uncover the new teachers' reflective changing situation during their first -year teaching under the help of mentoring. The questionnaire includes all the six aspects, which Akbari (2010) developed and validated with EFA (exploratory data analysis), CFA (confirmatory data analysis) and the Model Evaluation estimates (Cronbach α=0.7). The six components model of second language teacher reflection encompasses *practical, cognitive, affective meta-cognitive, critical and moral* aspects. All the items in the questionnaire are evaluated by a Likert Scale of five values which range from the option of 'never' (1), to the option of 'always' (5). The level of reflection is divided into three levels: *high, middle* and *low*, with one to two points being regarded as *low* reflection, three to four as *middle,* and four to five as *high*; the data are processed with SSPS 19. The novice language teachers in the Ethnic College show different level of reflection because of diverse background and personal characters. But the data shows that all of the new teachers display positive awareness and behaviors in performing reflective teaching. Table-4 gives the general level of all the novice teachers' reflection condition.

TABLE-4
DESCRIPTION OF THE GENERAL LEVEL OF ALL NOVICE TEACHERS' REFLECTION

Novice	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
N1	1.00	5.00	2.90	.939
N2	1.00	5.00	3.38	.903
N3	2.00	4.00	2.76	.739
N4	2.00	5.00	3.66	.814
N5	2.00	5.00	3.76	.872

The mean value for novice teachers' overall reflection situation is between two to three points, which belongs to the *middle* level, the highest value (Mean =3.76) is at an upper-middle level. N4 and N5 show strong sense of reflection, perhaps this is related to their prior experience in middle school. We omit the individual reflective level analysis in individual component because of limited space for this paper. The novice teachers show comparatively concerning about the practical and affective aspects, cognitive and critical reflections also get more foci.

2. The findings from the qualitative analysis

According to the requirements of the mentoring operation, the novices are claimed to record their knowing, thinking and doing periodically. After collecting and sorting out all the hand-in materials, we get some typical information about new teachers' reflection. In N1's self-report about the mentoring, she says:

During the mentoring, I used three words to express my recognition about teaching: *listening, activating* and *searching*. Listening tells me that I should listen to the needs of students, adopting the suggestion from my mentor, then adapting my teaching method in teaching; activating gives me the information that each class has its particularity, I should find it and activate all kinds of active factors to elevate my teaching; searching shows me that I should learn how to development in on-going way depending on the internal and external support, which has no end. [N1's reflective journal]

With three simplified words, N1 shows her active reflection in her teaching during the mentoring. Not only does she reflect teaching techniques but also the way for developing herself in teaching. To observe N1's class, the author realizes N1 can utilize different methods in organizing the teaching activities. On the 20th of May, 2014, M1 encourages N1 to give an open class teaching for all the new teachers. When teaching the unit about *Chinese Festival*, she tries to relate this topic to some ethnic festivals. Many students of Miao and Buyi become active in the class while talking the Eight of April calendar (Miao and Buyi's festival)! Because they are willing to speak out the important day, which they are enjoying, after all, they have one day off (in this ethnical area, the festival is one-day holiday for all people)! In the class, the ethnic students gave the explanations of its original history (commemorating for the OX, which gives a hand to the farmers during the spring farming), the typical activity (bullfighting) and food (enjoying colorful glutinous rice) etc.. The teaching is wonderful that day. This open class shows that N1 can integrate students' background knowledge into her teaching, which creates the opportunities of interaction in classroom. Another passage from N2, she gives different perspective in her reflection:

After observing other experienced teachers' classes including my mentor's, I learn a lot about how to communicate with students. I suddenly I realize how to stimulate my students even though they have difficulty in learning English. Organizing diverse activities for my students majoring in art, they should learn English happily. [The N2's speech on the middle-session of mentoring]

N2's teaching for the student majoring in art. At the beginning of her class, she told us how exhausted because most of students are chatting, eating, playing mobile phone without any attention to her teaching. N2 decides to know them about their wants and needs. She found the poor basic knowledge and the boring class atmosphere are the key reasons. How to stimulate the motivation in class should come first, N2 tells how to organize the topic of *My Dream*

At beginning, I did some warm-up from the Chinese dream (the hot topic in China recently) and then asked "how about yours?" Most of students said "our dream is to cancel the English courses, then we can have a good dream!" at this moment, one student sang a song about the dream. I encourage him to sing in English, it is unbelievable that he did it well. In fact, I found that all the students are so active; they need the stimulation in learning English from the heart. In my subsequent class, trying to respect the advantages of students and did a lot of adjustments, that is wonderful class!

(Interview with N2 informally)

It is evident that N2 reflects her teaching techniques and the modes of interactive activities with students in class in practical and affective aspects, because in N2' class, how to stimulate students' motivation and interest comes first. N3, an introverted newcomer without any experience in teaching, she reports:

With the guidance of my mentor, especially attending many experienced teachers' class, I come to know I should give the chance to my students. I have the deep impression on the videotapes from the modeling teaching in the activities of learning group, both the teachers and the students interact effectively, the atmosphere is so exciting! [From N3's self-report after participating the activities in learning group]

N5 is a novice teacher with two-year teaching experience in middle school, she shows her reflection on her teaching after attending the activities of learning group, and she gives her opinion like this:

Our students are so nice in fact, perhaps their poor basic knowledge and skill in English learning challenge for them. What we do is to set their confidence, build on their belief and improve their cognitive level for language learning.

N5 reflects the affective aspects of students. She believes that the effective learning is influenced by their motivation and belief.

By far, the excerpts show that the novices can reflect their teaching actively with the help of their mentors. They do not intimate their mentor without thinking completely. On the contrary, they can benefit from their observation, experience and investigation, try to adjust their teaching methods to be congruent to the needs of students with the guidance of their mentors, reflect their teaching in practical, cognitive, affective, meta-cognitive, critical and moral aspects in diverse degree.

C.   Teaching Efficacy

Self-efficacy (Bandura, 1986) is defined as *"people's judgments of their capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performances".* It is a kind of expectation concerning individual abilities for future action in particular context. Being used in the teaching domain, self-efficacy depicts teacher's belief about their own capabilities to teaching in face of difficulties (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). The present relative research of teacher efficacy associated with teachers' belief (Woolfolk, Rosoff, & Hoy, 1990), job satisfaction (Caprara, Barbaranelli, Borgogni, & Steca, 2003), and burnout (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2007) etc.. For the development of teacher

efficacy of novices, Woolfolk Hoy and Spero (2005) delivered that the change of new teachers' self-efficacy appears in wavy way: increasing first declining subsequently. They assumed that mentoring programs may provide the possibility for developing teachers' efficacy during novices; Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2007) found that the positive or negative support of experienced teachers and the colleagues often produce distinct effect on the change of teachers' efficacy. Richter, Kunter and al (2013) reported that the quality and frequency of mentoring influence on the teachers' professional competence, and the constructivist mentoring improves teacher efficacy, enthusiasm and job satisfaction. This research tries to find the change of teachers' efficacy in the mentoring in specific context.

To know the level of self-efficacy about novice teachers in this study, first of all, we refer to Ho and Hau (2004) and Chacón (2005)'s five distinct dimensions of teacher efficacy including *external, instruction, discipline, engagement and guidance efficacy*, giving a quantitative research about the overall self-efficacy of the novice teachers in the present research. A questionnaire with 19 items concerning the upper five components, being evaluated by a Likert Scale of six values which range from the option of 'never' (1), to the option of 'always' (6), the data are processed with SSPS19. The level of self-efficacy is divided into three levels: *high, middle* and *low*, with one to three points being regarded as *low*, three to five as *middle*, and five to six as *high*. We get the result as follows:

TABLE-5
DESCRIPTION OF THE GENERAL LEVEL OF ALL NOVICE TEACHERS' SELF-EFFICACY

Novice	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
N1	3.00	6.00	4.89	.809
N2	3.00	5.00	4.37	.684
N3	2.00	5.00	3.42	.692
N4	3.00	6.00	4.84	.898
N5	4.00	6.00	5.05	.621

Table-5 shows that most of the new teachers' self-efficacy reaches the middle high level. The reason of N3 with lowest level (Mean=3.42) maybe originates from her inexperienced teaching practice and little knowledge about the ethnic culture, which brings some negative influence on her confidence.

From the qualitative perspective, this study depends on the self-report from the mentees and mentors including their journal writing and interview. Our viewpoint is the psychological sense of self-efficacy can be verbalized. In fact, sometimes, the assessment based on the test often deviates from subjective measure of competence. (Richter, Kunter and al, 2013). So the data mainly come from novices' self-report, the observation and comments from mentors. N5 in her final report for the mentoring says:

This year, I experienced from anxiety and worry to quiet and comfort. Remembering the first three month, I began to doubt about me because of a lot of difficulties from teaching, communicating with students and colleagues. Benefiting from the mentoring, I got many opportunities to experience in teaching. The end of this year, one of my students got the third prize in the speech competition, many others are willing to contact with me, l become more confident that before…. [From N5's self report]

M5 gives the comments on N5:

Comparing with the beginning, I found she really changes a lot. My observation to her class, I am surprised to find her class full of miracle! Her classroom become artful, the students are doing the activities actively. She has very effective classroom management skills and helps her students' value learning English.[from M5's comments on N5]

For N5, she has more confidence and ability to deal with the difficulties in classroom. M5's comments prove that. N5's self-efficacy increases obviously in instruction and management aspects.

Interviewing with N1 and N2, both the two novices show strong self-efficacy in guidance and engagement learning for students. During this year, for these two non-ethnic teachers, they say that this is first time to come to the ethnic area but it is unbelievable to be involved in the community so quickly and love here very much. N1 says:

In the past, I worried my lack of knowledge about ethnical culture and students will hinder my teaching. Now, everything is changed. Walking into the wonderful college culture, trying to know my dear students and learning from my mentors, the difficulties in my teaching as if have been gone so quickly!

N1 is the author's mentee. The author has the strong feeling that N1 is optimistic and confident. One day, she is willing to invite many experienced teacher to attend her open class, she wants to get more feedback from more mentors. N2 also gives her feelings like this:

Observing, trying and understanding my students and everything here, now I come to find out the solution to problem. I love my students here!

M2 gives the judgments for N2 of this year:

It seems that N2 was an experienced teacher; she can manipulate the class skillfully. Of course she is very involved and diligent in her work.

N3 is mentioned many times in this study. Maybe her introvert character and inexperience bring some obstacle to her development, she shows inconspicuous in her teaching efficacy. When observing her teaching, we found that she still displays weak ability in disciplinary management and guidance for students' learning, she says in her journal writing:

After observing Mr.Zhou's (M3) classes many times, I know I have many disadvantages to be dealt with in the future. At first, eliciting the teachers' guidance learning for students is very important part for me at this moment; it is always

so hard for me.[from N3' journal writing]

Comparatively, with many years' experience in teaching, N4 exhibit very strong confidence in her teaching. She says:

Now, how to improve my teaching, to improve students' motivation can be manipulated now. My problem is to theorize my teaching, I need to improve my security in teaching practice and try to do some teaching research. This year, with the M5's help, I am successful in applying for a project, I believe it can supply some support in my teaching [interview with N4].

The above analysis show the novice teachers' self-efficacy varies to some degree, but all in all, they improve their self-efficacy in most aspects. For the newcomers to work in Ethnic College, they are facing a lot of challenges. With the guidance of mentors and possible opportunities, the novices obtain much amelioration in their self-efficacy. We assume that the improvement of self-efficacy comes from activities participating. Once the new teachers have the chances to experience in a certain context, they will acquire the knowledge and skill to face the music. Of course, the individual active experience and the support from others are necessary.

VII. CONCLUSION

The study is based on the viewpoint: learning to teach is a complex social activity, which can be elicited effectively with the support of outsiders and individual active reflection in practice. The related factors in certain context should be considered, because teaching is practical experience in a particular situation. The artifacts give important influence on the learning to teach for the novices. For the novice teachers, besides the sense of belongings to a certain community of practice emotionally and cognitively, they need the active and self-reflection and self- regulation to develop their own ability in teaching by means of the external scaffolding from mentors, the improvement of sense of self-efficacy in teaching also needs the active experience and action. The research of mentoring carried in the Ethnic College in western China shows that the multi-dimensional mentoring can be effective way in improving the novice teachers' professional development in their early career against the particular background. In teacher education, any top-down training still can not satisfy the needs of teachers, especially for the teachers in ethnic areas in China. For the first year of teaching, the novices' chances for personal and professional development are important in their future lives. When they have the strong sense of belonging, the acquirement of reflect ability, self-efficacy improvement, the novices can realize their own learning automatically and easily. In this empirical study, we find that mentoring can be a supportive strategy in carrying out 'teacher as educator', at least in Ethnic College. Of course, many questions about mentoring are still unconcerned, such as the training for mentors, the strategy of mentoring and the critical analysis for mentoring of FLTD etc., so we make sure that the field of mentoring in FLTD is significant and worthy of further research in China, especially in ethnic areas. There is still few research of subject-specific mentoring and the context of language teaching in China is complicated.

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