



**BENEMÉRITA UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA DE PUEBLA**

***Facultad de Lenguas***

**Evaluating the Effectiveness of the Mentoring Program**

**based on Mentor-students' perceptions at LEI.**

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of Languages for the

Degree of Licenciatura en la Enseñanza del Inglés

By:

Anabel Ocotitla Vergara

**Thesis Director:** Dr. María Amelia Xique Suárez

April 2015



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## **DEDICATIONS**

I dedicate this project to the most beloved people in my life; my parents Olga and Roberto. To my mom Olga, who is also my best friend and has always been by my side looking after me. To my dad Roberto, his unconditional support not only to me but for all my family. I share this achievement with them because without them it would not have been possible. I thank God for giving me the strength and allowing me to conclude my studies.

Sincerely,

Anabel.

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# Evaluating the Effectiveness of the Mentoring Program based on Mentor-students perceptions at LEI

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Dedications .....	i
Acknowledgements .....	ii
Table of contents.....	iii
Lists of charts, excerpts and figures.....	vi
<b>CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Introduction to the Problem .....	1
1.2 Purpose of the Study .....	3
1.3 Research Questions .....	4
1.4 Method.....	4
1.5 Significance of the Study .....	4
1.6 Research content and Organization.....	5
1.7 Definition of Terms.....	6
<b>CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW.....</b>	<b>9</b>
2.1 Origins of Mentoring.....	9
2.1.1 Defining Mentoring.....	10
2.1.2 The role of Mentoring in the Global Education .....	11
2.2 Goals and Benefits of Mentoring.....	11
2.3 Mentoring Stages.....	13
2.4 Participants in the Mentoring Process.....	15
2.4.1 The Organization and Planning of Mentoring Programs .....	15
2.4.2 Role and Definition of Mentor and Mentee or Protégé .....	16

2.4.3 The Coordinator of Mentoring .....	17
2.4.4 The External Participants of Mentoring .....	18
2.4.5 The Appropriate Matching of Mentors and Mentees .....	19
2.5 Formal and Informal or Natural Mentoring .....	20
2.5.1 Other Types of Mentoring .....	21
2.5.2 Peer Mentoring .....	22
2.6 Educational Theories supporting Mentoring.....	23
2.7 The Evaluative Process of Mentoring Programs.....	25
2.7.1 The Mentoring Program at BUAP .....	26
2.7.2 Mentoring Program Evaluation based on Mentor's Perceptions .....	27
2.8 Types of Research Approaches.....	28
<b>CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY .....</b>	<b>30</b>
3.1 The Participants.....	30
3.2 The Instruments.....	31
3.2.1 Written Questionnaire (Survey method).....	31
3.2.2 Individual Interviews Questionnaire (Interview method).....	32
3.3 The Procedure .....	32
<b>CHAPTER IV: RESULTS .....</b>	<b>34</b>
4.1 Program Assessment.....	34
4.1.1 General Assessment of the Mentoring Program .....	35
4.1.2 Mentee Matching Satisfaction .....	36
4.1.3 Type of Assistance Mentor-students received .....	37
4.1.4 Program Components.....	38
4.1.5 Strengths and Weaknesses of the Mentoring Program.....	39
4.1.6 Recommendations regarding the Mentoring Program .....	41

4.2 Mentor Experience Assessment .....	42
4.2.1 Mentor Experience Satisfaction .....	42
4.2.2 Effectiveness as Mentors .....	43
4.2.3 Mentoring Impact on Mentors' Personal Life.....	45
4.2.4 Benefits from Mentoring .....	46
4.3 Interviews.....	46
4.3.1 Strengths of the Peer-mentoring Program and Reasons for Participating	47
4.3.2 Mentors' Experience Satisfaction and Effectiveness as Mentors .....	48
4.3.3 Mentor's Benefits from Mentoring .....	50
4.3.5 Recommendations to the Mentoring Program.....	51
<b>CHAPTER V: CONCLUSIONS</b> .....	<b>53</b>
5.1 Findings .....	53
5.2 Implications .....	54
5.3 Limitations of the Study .....	55
5.4 Directions for Further Research .....	55
<b>APPENDIX I: SURVEY INSTRUMENT</b> .....	<b>56</b>
<b>APPENDIX II: INTERVIEW INSTRUMENT</b> .....	<b>58</b>
<b>REFERENCES</b> .....	<b>59</b>

## LIST OF CHARTS

	<b>Page</b>
Chart 4.1 Type of Assistance Mentor-students received.....	37
Chart 4.2 Program Components.....	38
Chart 4.3 Strengths of the Program.....	40
Chart 4.4 Weaknesses of the Program.....	41
Chart 4.5 Recommendations regarding the Weaknesses of the Program.....	41
Chart 4.6 Mentoring Impact on Mentors' Personal Life.....	45

## LIST OF EXCERPTS

	<b>Page</b>
Excerpt 4.1 Mentor 3. Mentor's Reasons to Participate in the Program.....	47
Excerpt 4.2 Mentor 4. Mentor's Reasons to Participate in the Program.....	48
Excerpt 4.3 Mentor 1. Mentor's Satisfaction.....	49
Excerpt 4.4 Mentor 4. Mentor's Satisfaction.....	49
Excerpt 4.5 Mentor 1. Learning from Mentees.....	50
Excerpt 4.6 Mentor 3. Learning from Mentees.....	51
Excerpt 4.7 Mentor 4. Recommendations to the Mentoring Program.....	51

## LIST OF FIGURES

	<b>Page</b>
Figure 4.1 General Assessment of the Mentoring Program.....	35
Figure 4.2 Mentee Matching Satisfaction.....	36
Figure 4.3 Mentor Experience Satisfaction.....	43
Figure 4.4 Effectiveness as Mentors.....	44

## **CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Introduction to the Problem**

The whole life of human beings is full of learning. We are constantly learning new things that allow us to develop new knowledge, as well as certain experiences that might make us more prepared on specific learning topics. In that way, the more knowledgeable individual can assist others less experienced or with less knowledge during the path of learning in order to reach their goals. According to Packard (2003), this kind of relationship between a less experience individual named mentee and a more experienced individual called mentor is known as mentoring. Donaldson, Ensher, & Grand-Vallone (2000, cited in Packard 2003) mentioned that mentoring is a “face-to-face, long-term relationship between a supervisory adult and a novice student that fosters the mentee’s professional, personal or academic development” (p. 1). It means that mentoring is growth in company where an experienced person shares his skills, knowledge and perceptions to promote the professional and personal development in someone else.

The origins of mentoring come around the world from the oldest African tribes, even before the Greek culture. As Dominguez (2012) mentioned, the term mentor is borrowed from the male guide, Mentor, in Greek mythology, in which traditional manifestation of mentoring can be observed. However, mentoring can be observed in any place around the world because a mentor can be a friend, a parent or a co-worker who is willing to assist others in the learning process.

According to Dominguez (2012), the history of mentoring as a discipline started in the 1970's in the business area since it was perceived as a valuable way to train new employees in diverse areas and disciplines. After that, mentoring moved to the academic training in the Universities. Gatta and McCabe (1997, cited in Nguyen 2005) suggest that schools go back to the position that they have in the society, principally in terms of the social support they give students. This kind of support is fundamental not just for the academic but the personal and professional development of college students.

From the business area, mentoring moved to the educational one and it has been adopted in many universities from Europe and the United States of America mainly but not in Latin American universities. The BUAP, as a pioneer in this area, introduced the model of Mentoring in order to support students who are studying at this university. To have mentors, a training workshop for teachers to become Mentors was opened in Summer 2012. At the end of this workshop, that group of teachers had to design a mentoring program that would be applied in their schools or faculties. The mentoring program proposed to be developed at the Faculty of Languages was related to Peer-mentoring where students who were ready to do their social service giving tutorials to students whose competences in English had a low development since the beginning of the BA program. This program started in Autumn 2012 and 15 students have collaborated in this project since then.

The appliance of the Mentoring program in the Faculty of Languages was a good opportunity to increase the experience and knowledge of advanced students in the teaching area but it was also a good strategy to assist novice students with

problems in English. That is why the Faculty of Languages of the Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla trains students of the BA of English Language Teaching (LEI) to become English teachers. As Levinson (1978, cited in Dominguez 2012) mentioned those people who have experienced having a mentor have a successful growth. Also people who made some progress at work wanted to contribute helping others as well. One of the subjects that is considered in the Plan de Estudios of the LEI is that students have to do their social service after having completed 70% of their credits. Students who decided to do their social service in the Mentoring program gain the opportunity to practice and get more experience at teaching. Three years have passed since the mentoring program was implemented; however it has not been evaluated since it started. As a consequence, there is no information about the success or failure of the program. For that reason, it is necessary to apply an evaluative process in order to find out the weaknesses and strengths of the program and how effective its development has been.

## **1.2 Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose underlying the present investigation is to examine the general perceptions of mentors about the Mentoring program that is taking place at the Faculty of Languages BUAP and about their own performance in order to identify the strengths and the weaknesses of the program. Taking the weaknesses into consideration the researcher of this investigation was able to make some

suggestions in order to improve the Mentoring program and fulfill the participants' expectations.

### **1.3 Research Questions**

This project addresses the following research questions:

1. What are the perceptions of mentors about the Peer-mentoring program?
2. How satisfied are the peer mentors with their own performance during the Peer-mentoring program?

### **1.4 Method**

The evaluation of the mentoring program was carried out under the mixed method approach. According to Creswell, (2003) it is based “on the assumption that collecting diverse types of data best provides and understanding of a research problem” (p.21). This type of research uses both quantitative and qualitative data collection. Since the purpose of this study is to examine the perceptions of the mentor students of the mentoring program as well as their own performance, the survey and the interview as research methods were used.

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

The implementation of a Mentoring program is a great challenge that requires the active and constant participation of different individuals in order to fulfill all the expectations around a project like this.

This study contributed to the improvement of the Peer-mentoring program implemented at the Faculty of Languages BUAP by providing the results obtained from mentor students' perceptions about the mentoring program and their participation in it. In that way, the mentor students' perceptions can help to identify the weaknesses and strengths of the program.

Additionally, this research showed the impact that the students' participation in the mentoring program can have. The mentoring program is a helpful complement to the professional development of LEI students as future teachers.

## **1.6 Research content and Organization**

The study consists of five chapters. Chapter 1 is an introduction to mentoring history and development through time in education. Also, it is presented the purpose and significance of the study and the main concepts that support this research. Chapter 2 is the literature review which is developed by explaining concepts of the study, such as mentoring definition, stages, participants and models, and the educational theories supporting mentoring as well.

Chapter 3 is the research methodology, which involves the participants, instruments and method used to explain the research details. Chapter 4 shows the results obtained from the survey and the individual interviews applied to mentor students are presented. The survey shows the results about the mentoring program assessment and mentoring experience from mentors' perspectives. In addition, some excerpts from the individual interviews are presented to support survey results. Chapter 5 explains the findings highlighted. Additionally, the

implications of the study, its limitations and directions for further research are also provided.

### **1.7 Definition of Terms**

**Evaluation:** In general terms Richards, Platt and Platt (1992) define evaluation as “a systematic gathering of information for purposes of decision making” (p. 130). The evaluative process can be applied to programs and individuals. The evaluation of programs includes the study of the curriculum, objectives, materials and tests. Moreover, the individuals’ evaluation involves decisions about entrance to programs, placement and achievement.

**Learning:** The term of learning can be seen under several approaches. A traditional view of the teaching/learning process mentioned by Malderez & Bodóczy (1999) is the one in which the learner is expected to receive external knowledge, transmitted by teachers or books. The term learning is linked to a behaviorist theory of learning but for the purpose of this study the term acquisition is more suitable. Acquisition, according to Richards, Platt & Platt (1992), refers to the learning and development of an individual language.

**Mentoring:** According to Michael (2008) “the term mentoring can be used to describe different situations in which one person (mentor) assists, instructs or guides another person (mentee)” (p. 1). This process takes places in the development of the mentee’s skills as well as in the professional and personal development.

**Mentee:** This term refers to the participant of the mentoring process who receives the assistance or help. Mentee is the one with less experience who can be also named as protégé (Dominguez, 2012).

**Mentor:** This term can be defined as the individual who assist some other members of a specific group who are struggling with problematic situations. The role of a mentor, according to Ya-Hui (2011), “involves open communication, effective feedback and helping the student grow in the new process” (p. 77). Mentors who are part of formal professional developmental schemes are more involved in the five roles stated by Malderez & Bodóczy (1999): mentors can play the role of model, acculturator, sponsor, support and educator.

**Mentoring model (also mentoring programs):** Michael (2008) describes the characteristics that a mentoring program can possess. It can be structured or unstructured, optional or mandatory, with or without mentor guidance, prolonged or short-term, individual or group-based. The most common mentoring programs are the formal (structured) and the natural or informal (unstructured).

**Perception:** According to Richards, Platt & Platt (1992), perception is the “recognition and understanding of events, objects, and stimuli through the use of senses.

**Peer-Mentoring:** There exist different kinds of mentoring, for instance Peer-mentoring. Terrion & Leonard (2010), mention that it is a situation in which experienced students assist other students with problems. This intervention can be formal or informal.

**Teaching:** The concept of teaching has considerations with what is being taught, how it is taught and who are involved in this process, the teacher and the learner. According to Claxton (1990, cited in Malderez & Bodóczy, 1999) teaching is “in part about putting together clear, interesting, well-judged lessons ... above all it is about relationships” (p. 12).

## **CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW**

This chapter is focused on mentoring and its different related topics such as the history and roots of mentoring, as well as its definitions and importance in education. Moreover, mentoring stages are mentioned, as well as the goals that are pursuit in mentoring and the benefits that participants receive from this process. Also the role of these participants and their matching process is presented in this paper. Furthermore, the most relevant mentoring models for this work are described and more attention is paid to the Peer-mentoring model since it is the one this research is based on. Moreover, a description about the mentoring program at BUAP will be given and the mentoring program that is implemented at the Faculty of Languages BUAP will be briefly described. Finally, the educational theories that support Mentoring are mentioned as well as the type of research this work is developing.

### **2.1 Origins of Mentoring**

In order to understand better the process of mentoring it is important to investigate about its history. According to Domínguez (2012) and Crow & Matthews (1998); a good example of mentoring history can be found in Greek mythology; in Homer's epic "The Odyssey", where Odysseus gave the responsibility of educating and nurturing his son Telemachus to his loyal friend Mentor. Furthermore, Domínguez (2012) mentions that the "roots of mentoring go more than 5,000 years ago in Africa" (p. 7), where more experienced guides showed young people the way of living. Moreover during the Industrial Revolution, the need of more qualified

workers made these people become mentors inside of a relationship focusing on the development of new workers abilities (Domínguez, 2012). Finally, it is important to mention that mentoring has a large history and can be associated to different areas. For instance, according to Domínguez (2012) the implementation of mentoring programs in the educational area became popular in European and North American Universities.

### **2.1.1 Defining Mentoring**

According to Michael (2008) mentoring is a term “used to describe a variety of situations in which one person instructs, assists or guides other person” (p. 1). Additionally, Malderez & Bodóczyk (1999) assume mentoring as “a relationship between a mentor and a mentee” (p. 4), where the mentor is a more experienced individual and the mentee is a less experienced one. According to Crow & Matthews (1998, p. 2) “mentoring offers a rich banquet of many different aspects of life and work”. This is because mentoring can be the assistance of academic, personal or professional development. Similarly Altounyan (1995, cited in Crow & Matthews, 1998, p. 2) mentioned that mentoring is “too rich and individual”. It means that mentoring is not changing people according to mentor’s preferences but suiting the mentoring process to the mentee needs and context. In sum, the term mentoring has to do with the reciprocal relationship between mentor and mentee and the exchange of relevant information.

### **2.1.2 The role of Mentoring in the Global Education**

The role of mentoring can be seen from different perspectives depending on the place or context this process takes place. According to Coleman (1996) the stress of different aspects of mentoring and the training conduction at different stages of the mentoring process depends on the context, for instance on the country. Moreover, talking about the mentoring process of new principals by other experienced principals, Coleman (1996) pointed out that in the United States and Singapore the mentoring process happens as part of the administrator-training process. While in the United Kingdom occurs in-service education contexts. Although mentoring can be considered a traditional concept, as Domínguez (2012) mentions the literature work about mentoring became relevant until the end of 70's.

### **2.2 Goals and Benefits of Mentoring**

The mentoring process includes some purposes or destinations that make possible to accomplish this process. Crow & Matthews (1998) specified some mentoring goals, such as the establishment of a group or community of learners, in which not just novice participants learn but the most advanced participants keep learning and promoting learning in others. Moreover, Crow & Matthews (1998) identified some other goals of mentoring: dynamism and development. The term **dynamic** describes how mentors should lead this process while **development** is crucial in mentoring because in this process the mentor and mentee are able to develop their professional and academic skills. In addition, Malderez & Bodóczyk (1999) stated that mentoring courses should “aim to help participants to gain

knowledge, skills and confidence” (p. 22), in order to help participants to accomplish their specific roles. Crow & Matthews (1998) mentioned that the main goal of mentoring “should be to develop dynamic school leaders who cultivate a learning community for other leaders, teachers, parents and students” (p. 7). They emphasize the idea of a learning community in which not just mentor and mentee are involved in this learning process.

All the mentoring participants receive certain benefits from this process and several authors have mentioned the benefits that participants receive from mentoring. Firstly, mentor benefits, as Crow & Matthews (1998) stated that mentors gain enthusiasm for the profession, the opportunity to evaluate themselves critically, gain new knowledge and a meaningful friendship. McKimm, Jollie & Hatter (2007) and Domínguez (2012) added some others such as awareness of own learning gaps, job satisfaction, networking opportunities and the development of leadership, organizational and communicative skills. Related to the mentee’s benefits, Crow & Matthews (1998) argued that mentee can be benefited with the exposure of new ideas and creativity from the mentor as well as with the mentor protection from risk situations. They also gain confidence, increase competence and motivation. Domínguez (2012) added the professional development, personal growth, collaborative opportunities and professional satisfaction as other benefits of mentoring. Finally, the profits that external participants receive from the mentoring process are as Crow & Matthews (1998) stated, for the academic administrators; more capable leaders and better recruits

and candidates for administrative positions. Teachers and learners gain the opportunity to work in a more dynamic, reflective and collaborative environment.

### **2.3 Mentoring Stages**

As a relationship, mentoring is meant to have different stages of evolution. According to Kram (1985, cited in Chao 1997) there is a sequence of four mentoring phases: Initiation, Cultivation, Separation and Redefinition.

The first stage is the **Initiation**; as its name says, it is the initial interaction of the mentoring members in order to get mentors and mentees acquaintance. As Chao (1997 p. 16) mentioned, this stage “is the time period where the mentorship forms”. Before the members’ interaction begins there must be a matching process. According to the American Psychological Association (2006), in informal mentoring the Initiation process emerges on its own, “it occurs through social or professional interactions between potential mentors and mentees” (p. 5). Moreover, with formal mentoring the matching process is managed by administrators taking into account “demographic variables as well as common professional interest” (American Psychological Association, 2006 p. 6). In the initiation stage the mentee recognizes and respects the potential of the mentor as a role model. At the same time, the mentor recognizes the mentee as someone who deserves attention and coaching.

Assuming that the initial stage has succeeded then the relationship progresses into the **Cultivation stage**. This phase is mainly focused on members’ learning and development of knowledge and abilities. According to Chao (1997 p. 16), during the Cultivation stage “the mentorship partners learn more about each other’s capabilities and optimize the benefits of participating in the mentorship”. So,

the mentor-mentee relationship become stronger since the mentee learns from the mentor and the mentor promotes mentees development. In this stage the mentoring functions are maximized, as Chao (1997 p. 16) mentioned, “mentors promote mentees’ potential, performance and career development”. The Cultivation stage, according to the American Psychological Association (2006) “is generally a positive stage for both mentor and mentee” (p. 6). This is because mentor teaches mentees important lessons but also the mentee may teach mentor valuable lessons.

The third stage is the **Separation**, which generally describes the end of a mentoring relationship. According to Chao (1997 p. 16) this phase “involves a structural and psychological separation between the mentorship partners when the functions provided by the mentor decrease and the mentee acts with more independence”. The mentoring relationship may end because of several reasons; such as the mentee wants to develop an independent learning or there may be nothing left to learn. The Separation stage can be emotionally stressful for one or both participants. For instance, the American Psychological Association (2006 p. 6) explained that “mentees may feel abandoned or unprepared if they perceive the separation to be premature”; in the other hand, mentors can have some emotional issues during this mentoring stage as well, they “may feel betrayed or used if the mentee no longer seeks their counsel or support” (American Psychological Association, 2006 p. 6).

The **Redefinition** stage is the termination of a mentoring relationship. In this stage the participants realized they can continue with their relationship; it will not be the same mentoring relationship but it can become in a “collegial relationship or

a social friendship” (American Psychological Association, 2006 p. 6). After the mentoring relationship termination both members can do different activities; mentors can establish relationships with new mentees, and mentees can be empowered by their previous mentoring experiences to serve as a mentor to others.

## **2.4 Participants in the Mentoring Process**

The roles and definitions of each of the participants involved in the mentoring process; mentor, mentee and some external participants, is presented and explained. Moreover, the matching, organizational and planning processes of a mentoring program are briefly described.

### **2.4.1 The Organization and Planning of Mentoring Programs**

Before the implementing of a mentoring program there must be some aspects and processes that help as a solid basis to mentoring; such as the organizational and planning process. Crow & Matthews (1998) expressed the view that some practical aspects must be taken into account in developing the mentor program. For instance, the participants of the program, their selection and training, the monetary costs of the program, the matching of mentors and mentees and the monitoring of their relationship and progress during the mentoring process, the evaluation of the program and others. In a narrower concept, the organization of mentoring programs, as Domínguez (2012) proposes, can be planned into four stages: presentation, negotiation, facilitation and closing. These stages are closely related to the mentoring stages previously presented.

### **2.4.2 Role and Definition of Mentor and Mentee or Protégé**

It is important to mention the functions and roles that mentors can fulfill during the process of mentoring, as well as the definition of the mentor term. In the mentoring relationship mentor is the more experienced individual. Therefore, as McKimm, Jollie & Hatter (2007) stated a mentor is someone who helps another person through an important transition, such as in career development or personal growth. As stated in the previous topic, the term mentor was borrowed from Greek mythology. *Mentor* was in charge of the education of Telemachus. As Megginson & Clutterbuck (1995, cited in Crow & Matthews 1998) mentioned Mentor acted as a guide just looking on and encouraging Telemachus, rather than doing the job for the learner. According to Blake-Beard (1999, cited in Packard 2003) an effective mentor may possess different characteristics from the mentee, such as gender, field of study, ethnic background and socioeconomic status.

Furthermore, within the function of guide mentors can take on other roles. Packard (2003) uses two categories to describe mentor roles: psychosocial and career-related. Ragins & McFarlin (1990, cited in Packard 2003) mention that in the psychosocial mentoring, the role of mentor is as a counselor or friend, while career-related mentoring involves roles such as coach or sponsor. In this view, Melderez & Bodóczy (1999) proposed five roles of mentor: model, acculturator “to help mentee get used to the particular professional culture” (p. 4), sponsor, support and educator. The role of sponsor or coach is introduced by both authors and the other roles are different; this is because a mentor may fulfill only one role or many

different roles. Although there is no a definite list of roles that mentors can fulfill, it is vital to know the roles that a mentor can perform in the mentoring process.

The mentee or protégé is the participant less experienced in this process who is needed of assistance. The word *protégé* comes from the French term *protegere*, “meaning one who is protected by a person with experience and influence” (Crow & Matthews, 1998, p. 2). In an academic context the protégé is the learner, the person who is being assisted by a mentor. Although there are no established roles for the mentee, there are some characteristics that the learner can fulfill through the mentoring process. For instance, McKimm, Jollie & Hatter (2007) listed the following characteristics: willing to learn and develop, committed, able to develop alliances, self-aware, able to receive constructive feedback, and others. At the beginning of the mentoring process the mentee can be quite dependent of the mentor but with the time mentoring will bring some benefits to the mentee. As Domínguez (2012) mentioned, some benefits can be personal growth, learning, professional development, collaborative opportunities, belonging and self-satisfaction.

### **2.4.3 The Coordinator of Mentoring**

The coordinator is an essential participant for the successful development of a mentoring program, specifically in formal mentoring programs. Roles and responsibilities of the program coordinator vary according to the objectives of the mentoring program. According to the MENTOR/National Mentoring Partnership (2005) the coordinator’s duties can include:

- Oversees and manages program on-site;
- Signs written agreements that outline the program parameters and expectations among the participants;
- Provides guidance to mentors and mentees to ensure that both have an enriching mentoring experience;
- Organizes orientation sessions that outline goals, procedures and current events for both mentors and mentees;
- Oversees and assists with participant screening, training, matching, support, supervision, recognition and closure activities for mentors and mentees;
- Maintains records of attendance and outcomes for mentors and mentees;
- Organizes initial and ongoing support and training sessions for mentors and mentees;
- Prepares and provides training materials for mentor training events;
- Contributes to program evaluation efforts.

#### **2.4.4 The External Participants of Mentoring**

There are other participants in the mentoring process besides the mentor and mentee. These participants are indirectly related to this process. Even so, they have an important role for the mentoring process realization. According to Crow & Matthews (1998) this group of participants can include the university faculty, district administrators, teachers, students, family and friends. For instance, university faculties can be closely related to the mentoring programs design and application. Furthermore, faculties “view the internship experienced as a critical period in which

students learn to apply theory to practice” (Crow & Matthews, 1998, p. 6). According to McKimm, Jollie & Hatter (2007) the organizational participants or as Crow & Matthews (1998) named them “university faculty and district administrators” have several benefits from mentoring. For example, it develops a mature management population, improved quality of service through increased competence and confidence of supported practitioners, and improves teamwork and co-operation. Finally, as Crow & Matthews (1998) mentioned teachers and students are affected directly by the mentoring process. In sum, the mentoring process involves external participants that play an important role for its achievement.

#### **2.4.5 The Appropriate Matching of Mentors and Mentees**

The matching process is a crucial moment in mentoring where participants’ relationships begin. Before the matching process goes the selection and training of mentors taking place in mentoring. According to Crow & Matthews (1998) these processes are key elements for the program’s success. As it was mentioned in previous sections, mentors have to fulfill certain characteristics in order to be selected to accomplish this role. Some attributes that mentor possesses are for instance: a leadership attitude, dynamism and a great sense of responsibility.

Moreover, the matching of mentors and mentees is an important moment inside the mentoring process, since it is the moment where relationship work nets are created. Parkay (1988, cited in Crow & Matthews 1998 p. 160) claimed that the best way forming mentor relationships is when “mentors and mentees share similar

styles of thinking”. Considering this, both participants will feel more comfortable with each other if they have similar ideologies, even more if they are under the same age. Finally, the best way achieving this matching process, in the opinion of Crow & Matthews (1998), is not to bring all the choice opportunities to mentors or mentees about who to work with. Instead, it is making a balance between choice and developmental needs of both participants.

## **2.5 Formal and Informal or Natural Mentoring**

There exist two general models under the mentoring programs can be developed: the **formal and the natural mentoring**. Michael (2008) mentioned that a mentoring program can be “structure or unstructured, optional or mandatory, with or without mentor guidance, prolonged or short term, individual or group-based”. All the previous terms refer to the formal and informal mentoring. The organization and application of a specific model in a mentoring program depends on different factors. Peters (2000, cited in Nguyen 2005) mentioned factors such as the durations of programs, selection and recruitment of mentors and mentees, types of mentoring relationships and others.

The **natural or informal mentoring** occurs as its name mentions, in a natural context. According to Domínguez (2012) generally the natural mentoring process does not have a starting point neither an ending definite point. In the same line, its direction and expectations are not defined. This is because this kind of mentoring is not planned. It is a confident and natural relationship in which most of the time the mentor is an older person with more experienced than the mentee. Domínguez (2012) mentioned that natural mentoring assists going through and achieving goals

and dreams in life. This kind of mentoring has received different names: informal, traditional, non-planned, and as Michael (2008) called it unstructured mentoring.

On the other hand, the **formal mentoring**, or as Dominguez (2012) stated “intentional, systematic or planned mentoring”, is quite different from the natural mentoring. In this kind of mentoring there is a process to follow. According to Dominguez (2012) in this type of mentoring the steps to follow are: recruitment, selection and training of the participants. Mentor’s selection is based on aspects, such as professional experience and achievements. Moreover, the formal mentoring has many benefits for the mentor and mentee, such as professional development and personal growth. Since this kind of mentoring is planned, it is organized to accomplish specific goals and objectives, such as career development, participants’ growth and personal development. Therefore, the formal mentoring is the one that provides a basis to the mentoring program at BUAP.

### **2.5.1 Other Types of Mentoring**

Both, Formal and Natural or Informal Mentoring Models can be carried out in different types. The **traditional mentoring model** is a one-to-one relationship that has had considerable changes through the time. According to Crow & Matthews (1998) and McKimm, Jollie & Hatter (2007) the typical Mentor-Telemachus model, mentor-mentee or one-to-one relationship has changed because of the demands of different situations, such as in the educational context. All this has propitiated a wide range of possible mentoring models. Packard (2003) mentioned that

mentoring can be a **network or “cascade mentoring”** (p. 1), in which several mentors are involved. Michael (2008) named this type of mentoring as **group mentoring**, in which the number of mentees can be 3 to 5 or even a whole class. Packard (2003) added one more way to perform mentoring: by internet means, in which mentoring makes use of technologies. Dominguez (2012), mentions that this type of mentoring is also named **virtual mentoring**. For McKimm, Jollie & Hatter (2007) there are other models of mentoring besides the traditional one, such as **co-mentoring or peer mentoring**. More specific attention will be given to the peer mentoring model since it is the one that this project is based on.

### **2.5.2 Peer Mentoring**

Terrion & Leonard (2010 p. 85) define peer mentoring as “the situation in which experienced students assist other students with problems”. This intervention can be formal or informal. For Roszkowski & Badmus (2014 p. 123) it is “a supportive one-to-one relationship between a less experienced person (mentee) and a more experienced individual (mentor), who are of more or less equal status, engaged in some common endeavor”. This type of mentoring can be used in several beneficial ways; for instance, “to improve academic performance and decrease student attrition” (Terrion & Leonard, 2010 p. 85). In addition, Terrion & Leonard (2010) argue that in programs based on peer mentoring, the mentor’s matching should be according to their age, experienced and the capability to serve into two functions: academic task function or psychosocial functions. That is, a peer mentor helps to nurture the potential in other students. Moreover, it is not the amount of work they do but the quality and kind of work they do what really

matters. It is meant, not all experienced students can performance the role of a peer mentors.

## **2.6 Educational Theories supporting Mentoring**

According to Tracey & Morrow (2006 p. 4) the term theory in education “refers to a well-documented explanation for a phenomenon related to teaching and/or learning”. There are many educational theories but for the development of this paper just the behaviorism, constructivism and cognitivist theories are presented. According to Tracey & Morrow (2006 p. 33), **Behaviorism** “is a theoretical perspective on learning that focused on observable changes in behavior”. There are two assumptions underlying behaviorism; the first mentioned that “behavior is the result of an organism’s, or person’s response to stimuli”. The other assumption “is the belief that external stimuli can be manipulated to strengthen or reduce an organism’s or an individual’s behavior” (Tracey & Morrow, 2006 p. 33).

Woolfolk (cited in Tracey & Morrow 2006 p. 47) mentioned that **Constructivism** “is a theory of learning that emphasizes the active construction of knowledge by individuals”. The integration of new knowledge with previous or existing knowledge is only possible when the learner is engaged with the learning process. In addition, Frank Smith (cited in Tracey & Morrow 2006 p. 47), a famous proponent of the constructive model, stated that “learning is not an occasional event, to be stimulated, provoked, or reinforced. Learning is what the brain does naturally, continually”.

Moreover, there exist social learning perspectives that incorporate several different theories. These perspectives emphasize “the central role of social interaction in the development of knowledge and learning” (Tracey & Morrow, 2006 p. 100). The **Social Constructivism** is one of the theories that follow social learning perspectives. It was developed by Vygotsky, a Russian scholar whose work is extremely influential in psychology and education fields. According to Vygotsky (cited in Lee & Smagorinsky 2000) “learning is a product of the ongoing interaction between development and instruction”. Tracey & Morrow (2006 p. 108) argued that the most important idea of Vygotsky’s work is “the belief that children learn as a result of social interactions with others”. Furthermore, Tracey & Morrow (2006 p. 109) mentioned that Vygotsky argued that children’s learning is most affected by signs systems or “semiotic mediation”, such as language –the alphabet, listening, speaking-, and they learn more about signs systems from the interaction with people around them.

There are two key concepts within Vygotsky’s Social Constructivism; the zone of proximal development and scaffolding. Lee & Smagorinsky (2000 p. 194) mentioned that Vygotsky defined the *zone of proximal development* as “the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of the potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers”. Moreover, Tracey & Morrow (2006 p. 109) mentioned that the zone of proximal development “refers to the ideal level of task difficulty to facilitate learning”.

Inside social constructivism we can also find the term *scaffolding*. According to Tracey & Morrow (2006 p. 109), scaffolding “refers to the assistance that adults

and more competent peers provide during learning episodes”. This support can be represented through encouragement, provide pieces of advice, or anything that allow student to be a more independent learner. Tracey & Morrow (2006) made an association between “children learning during experiences within the zone of proximal development as a result of others’ scaffolding” (p. 109).

According to Richards, Platt & Platt (1992), the theory of **Cognitive development** “is based on the belief that language learning is a process which involves active mental processes and not simply the forming of habits” (p. 59).

## **2.7 The Evaluative Process of Mentoring Programs**

Every mentoring program should have an evaluative process. According to Worthen, Sanders & Fitzpatrick (1997, p. 62), the term evaluation can be defined “as a process of identifying and collecting information to assist decision makers”. They also mentioned that “evaluation is viewed as the process of comparing performance data with clearly specified objectives” (Worthen, Sanders & Fitzpatrick, 1997, p. 62). Different types of evaluation can be described, for instance Crow & Matthews (1998) mentioned three types of evaluation; a comprehensive program evaluation, a needs assessment for program modifications and a feedback on the quantity and quality of the mentoring program. In the first one, Crow & Matthews (1998) suggest that all the participants should participate in the evaluation of mentoring content and methods with the use of a confidential instrument and selective interviews. In the second type of evaluation, the assessment for program modifications must be, as Crow & Matthews (1998) state, a continual series of efforts for renewal a mentoring program. The last type of evaluation, according to

Hay (cited in Crow & Matthews, 1998), presents several problems in order to obtain the feedback about the quality and quantity of the program. For instance, one problem is the lack of willingness of the mentees to evaluate their mentors. Since the mentor-mentee relationship should be constructed on an environment of trust, mentors can just evaluate mentees in those areas in which mentors provide assistance to the mentee development.

Richards, Platt & Platt (1992) mentioned that program evaluation may include the study of curriculum, objectives and materials of the program as well as the evaluation of the participants or individuals. In this kind of evaluation the “decision about the entrance to programs, placement, progress and achievement” are involved (Richards, Platt & Platt 1992, p. 130).

### **2.7.1 The Mentoring Program at BUAP**

According to the BUAP (2009) and Lopez (2012), the main concern of BUAP under the Modelo Universitario Minerva is the development of each individual student in the academic areas of knowledge, abilities and attitudes. In this view, different programs to improve the quality of the college education are proposed. One of these programs is named Desarrollo Integral de los Alumnos, in which several proposals of students’ assistance before, during and at the end of the career are proposed. Moreover, Lopez (2012) mentioned the Sistema Integral de Tutorias program; this program proposed the students’ assistance by a prepared teacher during the career. This proposal was the basis for a further project; the Mentoring Program at BUAP. Furthermore, Lopez (2012) justified this project as a

viable alternative to the students' encouragement and companionship through the academic development of the career.

In order to make clearer how the Mentoring Program at BUAP was created and developed some of the highlights of this program will be presented. According to Lopez (2012), the BUAP University along with the Mentoring Institute of the University of New Mexico (MI-UNM) established a learning alliance in order to initiate collaborative networks, creating a mentoring program at BUAP and promoting the training of the participants of this program. This project started with the selection and certification of 20 teachers and students. The certification was given by the Mentoring Institute Program (UNM) in levels 1 and 2. The principal of the Mentoring Institute, Nora Domínguez, was in charge of the preparation of the participants. In order to be certificated as mentors, this group took a workshop where they learnt the highlights about Mentoring. At the end of this intensive course, mentors were asked to design a project based on mentoring to develop in their School or Faculty.

### **2.7.2 Mentoring Program Evaluation based on Mentor's Perceptions**

For the development of this paper an evaluation based on participants' experiences and perceptions about mentoring is carried out. Every human being has certain beliefs about specific situations or people that lead them in different ways. In order to analyze mentor's perceptions about mentoring program and about their own performance it is important to define some terms. One of them is perception, defined by Richards, Platt & Platt (1992) as "the recognition and understanding of events, objects and stimuli through the use of senses" (p. 268).

According to Albaladejo (2008), these sensations are the physical recognition of the surrounding environment. Then, perceptions are the inner or mental representations of the environment through the process of selection, organization and interpretation. Kenny (1994) mentioned three different types of perception: a) others' perception, b) meta-perception, and c) self-perception. The first type of perception, as its name shows, is about how an individual perceives another one. The second type of perception is about how a person believes other people perceive and think about him. The third one, named self-perception is the one that this project is more focused on, in which an individual perceives himself as a person and as a participant of a social circle, this perception could be in a positive or negative way.

As stated before, perceptions of mentoring participants are the main resource of this paper to carry out an evaluation of the mentoring program. This evaluation can be seen from different approaches; one is the naturalistic. According to Worthen, Sanders & Fitzpatrick (1997, p. 62), in program evaluation under a naturalistic model "those individuals involved with the entity being evaluated play the prime role in determining what direction the evaluation study takes".

## **2.8 Types of Research Approaches**

According to Creswell (2003 p.20) in the **quantitative approach** the researcher tests a theory by specifying narrow hypotheses and the collection of data to support or refute the hypotheses". In this kind of method the data are collected "on an instrument that measures attitudes and the information collected is

analyzed using statistical procedures” (Creswell, 2003 p.20). There are different data collection strategies that are associated with this kind of method; for instance, experiments and surveys.

Moreover, for the **qualitative approach**, the inquirer seeks “to establish the meaning of a phenomenon from the views of participants” (Creswell, 2003 p.20). In order to collect data in this method the researcher uses strategies, such as observations and interviews.

Finally, in the **mixed approach** according to Creswell, (2003 p.21) the research is based “on the assumption that collecting diverse types of data best provides and understanding of a research problem”. This type of research uses both quantitative and qualitative data collection.

After having introduced relevant information to this investigation like mentoring evaluation and the ways to make research the methodology followed to get necessary information will be presented in next chapter.

## **CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY**

In this chapter information about the approach used to accomplish this research is described, as well as the participants, the instruments and the procedures followed in the analysis of the data. This research project was carried out under the mixed method approach. According to Creswell, (2003) it is based “on the assumption that collecting diverse types of data best provides and understanding of a research problem” (p.21). This type of research uses both quantitative and qualitative data collection.

Since the purpose of this study is to examine the perceptions of the mentor students of the mentoring program as well as their own performance, the survey and the interview as research methods were used.

### **3.1 The Participants**

15 students participated in this program as mentors from Autumn 2012 to Spring 2014. However, only 8 students (six girls and 2 boys) responded to the call for the development of this project. All eight participants were students from the Languages Faculty in the BUAP. Seven of them belonged to the LEI program (Licenciatura en Enseñanza del Inglés) and the eighth one was from the LEMO program (Licenciatura en Lenguas Modernas). The number of mentees per mentor was from 1 to 7 per period. When the instruments were applied seven mentors were taking the last subjects of the BA program and just one had already completed all the credits and left the university.

The age of the participants ranged from 21 to 34 years old, and just three of them had been to the United States of America. As mentioned before, the main criteria for the participants' selection was their participation in the Mentoring program implemented as a Social Service program at the Faculty of Languages BUAP.

## **3.2 The Instruments**

The data was collected by means of two questionnaires; a written questionnaire for a survey and a set of questions used for individual interviews.

### **3.2.1 Written Questionnaire (Survey method)**

The questionnaire (see Appendix I) was adapted from MENTOR/National Mentoring Partnership (2005). It is divided in three sections: a) personal information, b) mentoring program assessment, and c) mentor experience assessment. In the first section some personal information was required from the participants, such as age, gender, social service term, number of mentees and school term. That information is illustrated in the Participants' description.

The second section was for the evaluation of the Mentoring Program. It included nine multiple choice questions and three open questions in which mentors assessed the mentoring program based on the its strengths and weaknesses. The third part of the questionnaire was for mentor experienced assessment, in which each mentor made a self-evaluation of their own performance. It consisted of nine multiple choice questions and two open questions.

### **3.2.2 Individual Interviews Questionnaire (Interview method)**

The questionnaire for the individual interviews was carried out at the Faculty of Languages in Spanish in order to make the participants feel more comfortable, and in that way obtain real information about their perceptions of the mentoring program. This instrument was applied just to four of the eight participants. The interview consisted of five questions related to their English language contact, opinions regarding to their performance as a mentor-student and their expectations of the Mentoring program at BUAP (see Appendix II). The information gathered through the interviews worked as a backup for the survey, making the information about mentors' perceptions more reliable.

### **3.3 The Procedure**

First of all, literature about mentoring was revised in order to deepen into the research problem and reach an appropriate level of comprehension. Afterwards, the questionnaire for the survey was selected from MENTOR/National Mentoring Partnership (2005). After it was checked by the tutor and the teacher in charge of the Seminar II subject, the questionnaire was adapted to the participants' characteristics and to the purpose of this research. Then, the second questionnaire for the interviews was designed in order to complement the information gather in the survey.

After the instruments were revised the participants were contacted. From the 15 mentors, 10 were contacted by internet; it is meant that the questionnaire for the survey was sent by e-mail to the 10 mentors. Only three out of these 10

participants were able to answer and sent the questionnaire back by e-mail. For the other 5 mentors the questionnaire was personally given; after having answered it they returned the questionnaire.

About the interviews, they took place at the Faculty of Languages in different days. The interviews were carried out in Spanish, in order to make the participants feel more comfortable and in that way obtain more reliable information to evaluate the mentoring program. The length of the interviews ranged approximately from 3 to 7 minutes. The main purpose of the individual interviews was to complement the information obtained through the questionnaire, by asking the participants more details about the performance and perceptions of the Mentoring Program. Only four participants were interviewed, and all the interviews were recorded.

Afterwards, both instruments were gathered and the data analysis process begun. The information from the questionnaire for the survey was analyzed and the interviews were transcribed. Then, the results from the survey were organized in sections, such as Program and Mentor experience Assessment, charts and figures illustrate better the results, and some excerpts from the interviews were used to support the information obtained from the survey.

After having presented the method and the procedure this research followed the results obtained with the instruments applied will be presented in next chapter.

## **CHAPTER IV: RESULTS**

In this chapter the results obtained from the two questionnaires for the survey and the interview applied to the mentor-students are shown. The results are organized following the order of the questionnaire for the survey which is divided in three variables. The first one, mentors' personal information, was previously described in Chapter III. The second variable contains the results about the Mentoring Program Assessment with aspects such as the general assessment of the mentoring program and its strengths and weaknesses according to the mentors' perceptions. In the third variable the mentors' self-evaluation about their Mentoring Experience are shown. Some excerpts from the individual interviews are presented in order to support and illustrate the results from the survey.

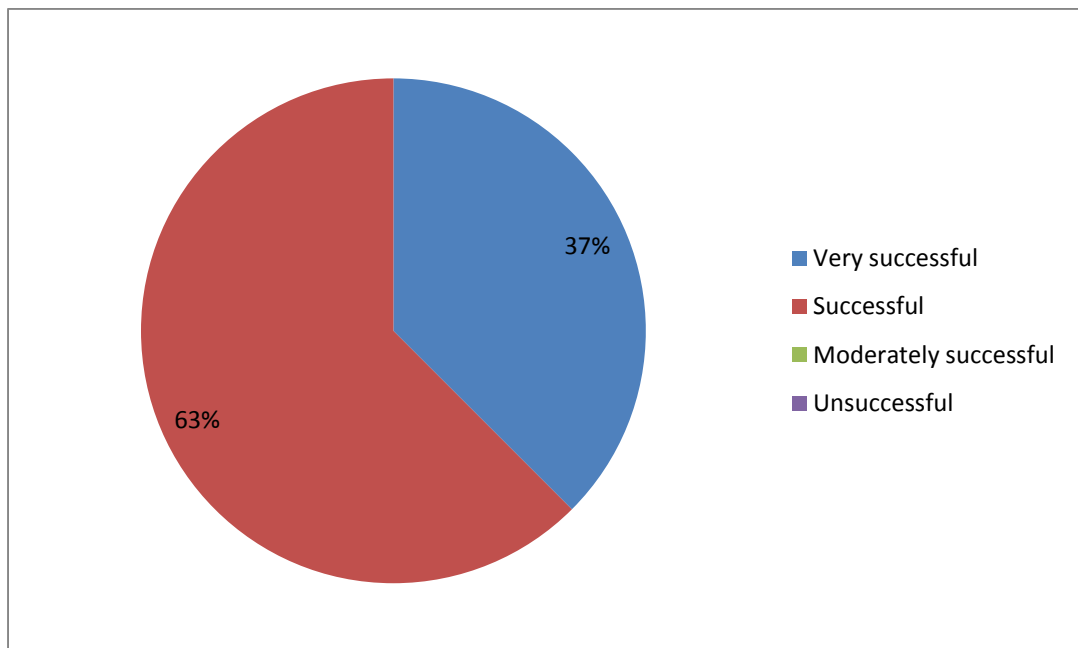
### **4.1 Program Assessment**

In order to gather the necessary information for the Mentoring Program Evaluation, the subjects were asked about their Mentoring Program assessment, their satisfaction with the mentee matching, program components, assistance from mentoring staff, mentoring program components assessment, weaknesses and strengths about the program, and recommendations regarding the weaknesses they mentioned. The results are better illustrated through tables and figures in the following sections.

#### 4.1.1 General Assessment of the Mentoring Program

According to Richards, Platt & Platt (1992) perception is “the recognition and understanding of events, objects and stimuli through the use of senses” (p. 268). The results from the question related to the **assessment of the mentoring program** showed that all the participants have a positive perception about the Mentoring Program in which they participated. These results are better illustrated below in Figure 4.1.

**Figure 4.1 General Assessment of the Mentoring Program**

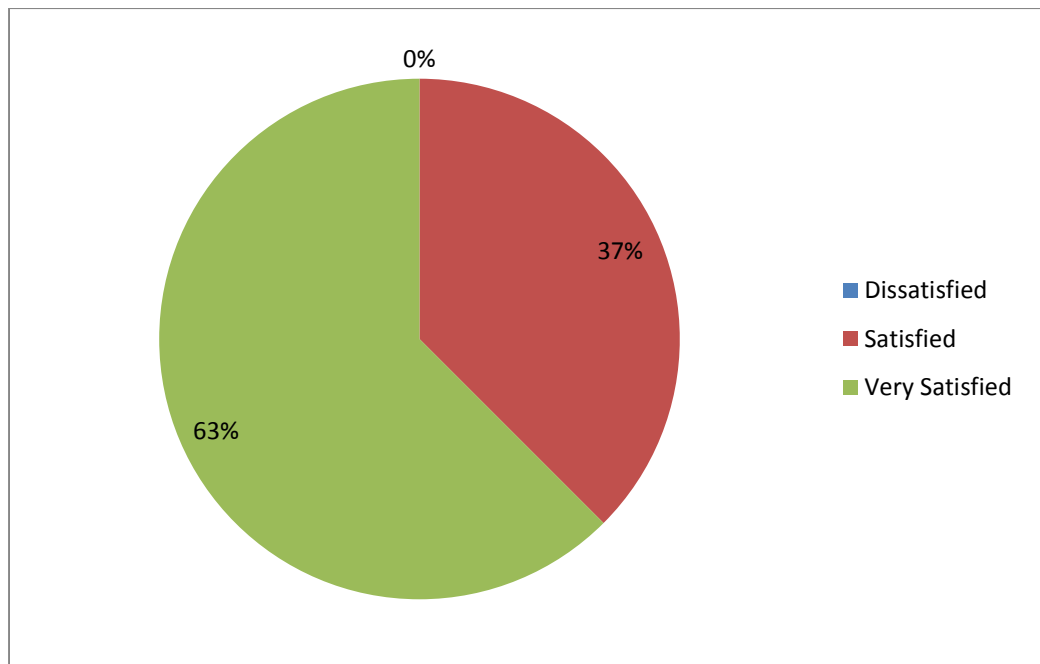


There were four options of assessment: very successful, successful, moderately successful and unsuccessful. In this regard, 63% of the participants responded that they found the Mentoring Program successful, whereas the remaining 37% found it very successful. None of the participants found the Mentoring Program moderately successful or unsuccessful.

#### 4.1.2 Mentee Matching Satisfaction

One of the first steps of the Mentoring Program is the mentor-mentee matching. Crow & Matthews (1998) claimed that the best way forming mentor relationships is when “mentors and mentees share similar styles of thinking” (p. 160). This is an important aspect of mentoring because if the mentor-mentee relationship is built with empathy and trust, then the teaching-learning process happens in a more natural way. For this reason, participants were asked about how satisfied they were with the **mentee matching process** of the program. This information is illustrated below in Figure 4.2.

**Figure 4.2 Mentee Matching Satisfaction**



Based on the results, it was found that mentors felt very satisfied with their mentee matching. 62 % of the participants were very satisfied with the mentee matching process and the rest 38% were just satisfied. None of the participants

chose the option dissatisfied in this statement, so it can be seen that the mentee matching process was carried out successfully.

#### **4.1.3 Type of Assistance Mentor-students received**

Here, the mentors' opinions regarding the **assistance** they received **from the mentoring program staff** are presented. 75 % of the participants answered positively; they said they received the adequate assistance from the mentoring staff, whereas 12.5% of the participants stated that the assistance was not adequate, and the other 12.5% did not answer the question. Those participants who answered they received adequate assistance gave some examples, such as the facilities they obtained from the mentoring staff. The explanations mentors mentioned are listed below in Chart 4.1.

**Chart 4.1 Type of Assistance Mentor-students received**

<b>Material facilities</b>
<b>Advice regarding teaching</b>
<b>General information about the Mentoring program development</b>
<b>Mentees' frequent progress checking</b>
<b>Equipment and classroom facilities</b>

12.5% of the participants who stated that the assistance was not adequate mentioned that the program needed more attention from the Faculty authorities in order to give the mentoring program more promotion and support since it is a useful development tool for the students' community.

#### 4.1.4 Program Components

In order to gather information about mentors' perceptions on the **program components assessment**, mentors were asked to rate as “not enough”, “just right” or “too much” some program components, such as, information about the program and the mentees in charge, and mentor training and support. The complete results are shown in Chart 4.2.

**Chart 4.2 Program Components**

	<b>Not enough</b>	<b>Just right</b>	<b>Too much</b>
<b>Information about the program at the recruitment session</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Information about the mentee</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Mentor training</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Regular mentor support</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Interaction with the program coordinator</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Networking with other mentors</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>

As can be seen in Chart 4.2, the component “Information about the program at the recruitment session” was rated by 6 mentors as “just right”. The next component “information about the mentee” was rated by all mentors as “just right”. This shows that all of the participants agreed that they received appropriate

information about their mentees and that this program component was well managed.

The component “Mentor training” received 5 in “just right” and 3 in “not enough”. In the component “Regular mentor support” 6 of the participants rated it as “just right” while 2 of them chose “not enough”. Both components “Mentor training” and “Regular mentor support” received “not enough” answers but they were also rated as “just right” by a higher number of participants. This means that both program components were properly managed. In the “interaction with the program coordinator” component, 5 mentors said it was “just right” and 3 of them said “too much”. Finally, the “networking with other mentors” component was rated by 4 as “just right”, 2 as “not enough” and 2 as “too much”. This last program component shows that the mentor-mentor relationship is considered excessive for 2 participants and not enough by other 2, but 4 of them consider it adequate. So this component is a program strength.

#### **4.1.5 Strengths and Weaknesses of the Mentoring Program**

The **strengths and weaknesses** of the mentoring program, according to mentors’ perceptions are presented in this section. As can be seen in Chart 4.3, some of the **strengths** of the mentoring program under mentors’ perceptions are the facilities and materials. Mentors found several benefits that the program provides to both parts, mentor and mentee. For instance, mentors gain more confidence and teaching experience, and their lesson plan production was controlled by the coordinator of the program; in that way, they received feedback

from their work. Moreover, mentees are encouraged by mentors to keep learning the language on their own. All the strengths of the program given by mentors are listed below in Chart 4.3.

**Chart 4.3 Strengths of the Program**

<b>Facilities and material</b>
<b>Mentors can practice and review different English topics</b>
<b>Mentors gain confidence and teaching experience</b>
<b>Mentees with low language proficiency improvement</b>
<b>Lesson plans monitoring</b>
<b>Mentees' needs assistance</b>
<b>Mentor and mentee abilities improvement</b>
<b>Mentees' English learning encouragement</b>

On the other hand, some of the **weaknesses** of the program according to mentors' perceptions are, for instance, the number of mentees per mentor; it is too large and some mentees do not attend mentoring sessions regularly. Also, the time per class; there is not enough time to cover a topic in a single session. All the weaknesses of the program mentioned by mentors are listed below in Chart 4.4.

### Chart 4.4 Weaknesses of the Program

<b>Not enough diffusion of the Mentoring program</b>
<b>Not enough material</b>
<b>Not enough time per class</b>
<b>Too much mentees per mentor</b>
<b>Mentees do not attend regularly to class</b>
<b>Not appropriate equipment working</b>
<b>Not enough feedback</b>

#### 4.1.6 Recommendations regarding the Mentoring Program

According to the weaknesses mentors mentioned about the program, they also gave some pieces of advice. For instance, about the weakness “not enough material”, they proposed “to share material between mentors”. All the **advice or recommendations regarding weaknesses of the program** are listed below in Chart 4.5.

#### **Chart 4.5 Recommendations regarding the Weaknesses of the program**

<b>Invite the whole community at the beginning of the courses of the Faculty</b>
<b>Share material between mentors</b>
<b>Make assessments from the mentees’ improvement</b>
<b>Motivate and make mentees more autonomous</b>
<b>Have a longer period of training for mentors</b>
<b>Have a feedback session every week</b>

According to the results, it seems that the program has not been promoted enough, however, it is known that at the beginning of each period, the coordinator of the program and mentors visit the classes to invite the students with problems to take tutorials in this program.

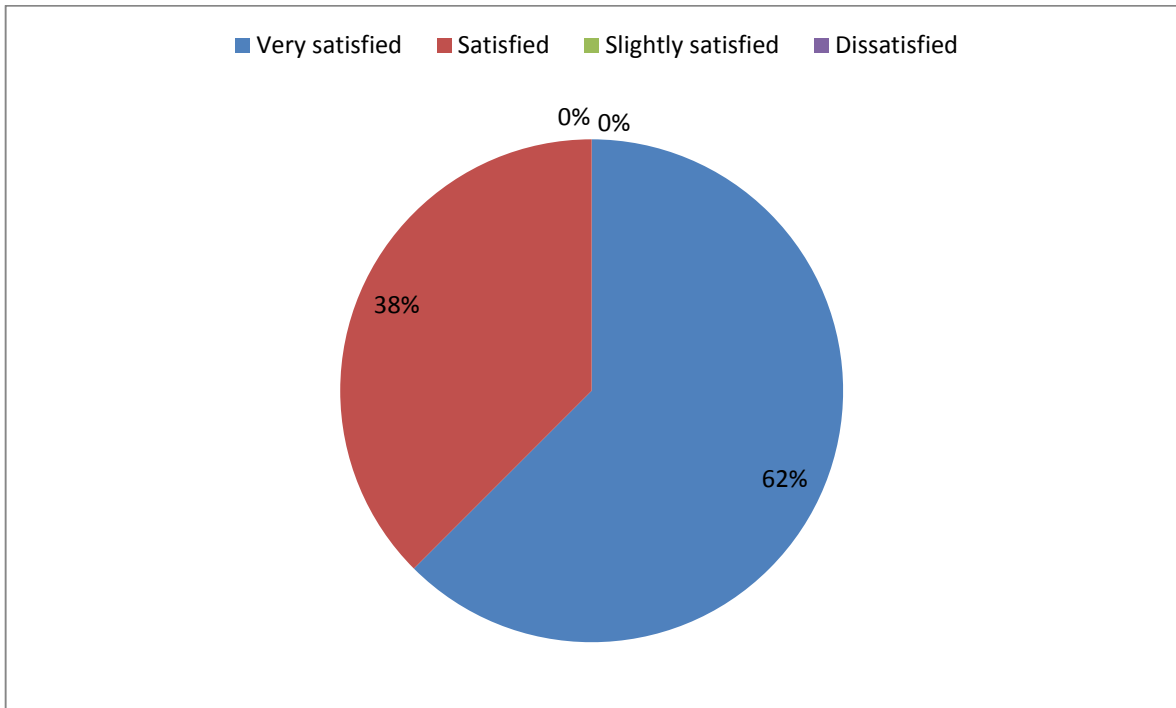
## **4.2 Mentor Experience Assessment**

This section of the questionnaire was focused on the mentors' assessment about their own experienced and performance in the mentoring program. The results regarding this section presented four main aspects; mentor experience satisfaction, effectiveness as a mentor, personal impact of mentoring and benefits they gained from the program. The results are better illustrated with tables and figures.

### **4.2.1 Mentor Experience Satisfaction**

Participants were asked about how they perceive their general experience as mentors. As Figure 4.3 below shows, there were four different options, where 62% of the participants chose "very satisfied" and the other 38% said they felt "satisfied" with their experience as mentor. The other two options, "slightly satisfied" and "dissatisfied" were not selected by any of the participants.

**Figure 4.3 Mentor Experience Satisfaction**



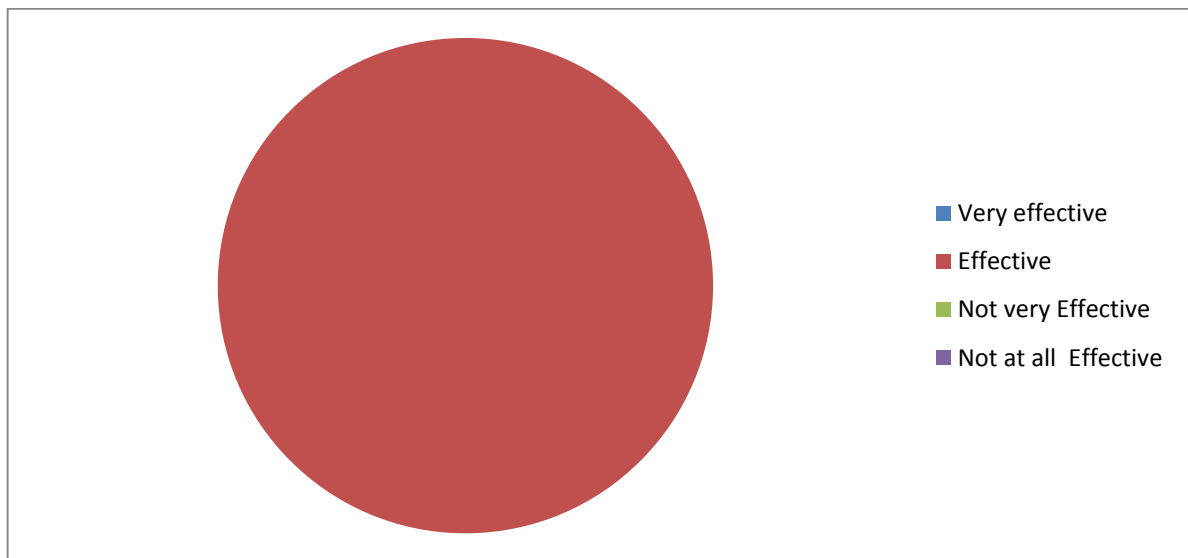
Mentoring is divided in four developmental stages; one of them is the Cultivation stage. According to the American Psychological Association (2006) this stage it “is generally a positive one for both mentor and mentee” (p. 6). As can be seen in Figure 4.3, most of the participants have a positive perception about their own experience and participation as mentors in the mentoring program. This is because mentor teaches mentees important lessons but also the mentee may teach mentor valuable lessons.

#### **4.2.2 Effectiveness as Mentors**

In order to take into account the mentors’ opinions and perceptions about their own performance in the mentoring program evaluation, they were asked about how effective they felt they had developed their mentoring role. The results

can be seen in the following Figure 4.4. There were four different options to rate their **effectiveness as mentors**; “very effective”, “effective”, “not very effective”, and “not at all effective”. From these options, 100% of the participants selected “effective” as the way they felt their mentor role performance.

**Figure 4.4 Effectiveness as Mentors**



Mentors mentioned the reasons why they felt effective as performers of the mentor role. For instance, the mentees’ progress and improvement through the mentoring program was evident. Also, mentees’ attitude was an important factor, because they were always involved and interested in every single lesson. Therefore, mentors felt they were making a positive and effective impact on mentees. Finally, mentors stated that they felt “effective” with their performance because a good mentor-mentee relationship had been built.

### 4.2.3 Mentoring Impact on Mentors' Personal Life

Mentoring can become an important part of participants' lives. In this section, the **personal impact of mentoring on mentors** is presented. There were seven different personal aspects that mentors rated as “to a great extent”, “somewhat”, and “not at all”. Aspects such as, learning new things about themselves, how easy they found to be a mentor and their own motivation and productivity feeling. These results are better illustrated in the following Chart 4.6.

**Chart 4.6 Mentoring Impact on Mentors' Personal Life**

	To a great extent	Somewhat	Not at all
<b>I learned new things about myself</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>I found it easy to be a mentor</b>	<b>37.5%</b>	<b>62.5%</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>I have better understanding of the education system</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>I felt more motivated at work</b>	<b>62.5%</b>	<b>37.5%</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>I was able to keep up with my work</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>I felt more productive at work after mentoring</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>I have a better understanding of diversity issues</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>

As can be seen in Chart 4.6, all the participants answered positively to all the aspects of the chart. For instance, from the aspects “I learnt new things about myself” and “I felt more productive at work after mentoring” 75% of the participants answered “to a great extent”. Also 62.5% answered “to a great extent” to the “I felt more motivated at work” aspect. Furthermore, in the aspect “I have a better understanding of diversity issues” a 100% of the participants answered “to a great extent”. Those results show that mentoring has had a great impact on mentors not just academically but also at a personal level.

#### **4.2.4 Benefits from Mentoring**

Finally, mentors were asked about the most important things they gained from the mentoring program. Among the principal benefits mentors mentioned are the confidence and experience when teaching, the practice and review of English grammar when teaching, to be more sympathetic with other students (mentees) in order to know about the mentees’ necessities and help them in a better way. This can be supported with Malderez & Bodóczy (1999) opinion, that mentoring should “aim to help participants to gain knowledge, skills and confidence” (p. 22). Another benefit mentors mentioned was that they learnt to be more responsible with mentees and with their own issues.

#### **4.3 Interviews**

In the following part, the information from the interviews that took place at the Faculty of Languages is presented. In the interview the participants were asked about their English language learning previous experience, their reasons to

participate in the Peer-mentoring program, their development and expectations about the program, suggestions regarding the weaknesses they found in the program, among another issues related to the mentoring program evaluation.

Since the purpose of the interviews is to support and help to understand the information obtained with the survey's questionnaire excerpts with relevant information are presented.

#### **4.3.1 Strengths of the Peer-mentoring Program and Reasons for Participating**

As can be seen in Chart 4.3 Strengths of the Program, mentors mentioned aspects of the program they considered positive to both, mentee and mentor, such as, mentors practice and review of English topics, mentors gain confidence and teaching experience, and mentees' with low language proficiency assistance. Supporting this information Mentor 3 explained in Excerpt 4.1, that the main reasons to participate in the mentoring program was to **practice and teach the language**, and to share knowledge also.

##### **Excerpt 4.1 Mentor 3. Mentor's Reasons to Participate in the Program**

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Interviewer (I): ¿Cuáles son tus motivos o las razones por las que decidiste entrar en el programa de Mentoring?

Mentor 3: La principal fue que era una oportunidad para practicar el idioma en primer lugar y para enseñar; y compartir, cuando compartes aprendes más.

---

Therefore, the reasons that empowered Mentor 3 to be part of the mentoring program were fulfilled, and they became strengths of the program. Also, reasons for participation of Mentor 4 are presented in the following Excerpt 4.2.

#### **Excerpt 4.2 Mentor 4. Mentor's Reasons to Participate in the Program**

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I: ¿Por qué decidiste entrar al programa de mentoring?

Mentor 4: Porque me agrada ayudar a los chicos que están aprendiendo el Inglés, porque yo también fui un nivel básico alguna vez y hubiera yo querido tener ese apoyo. Entonces me gusta brindarles eso a mis chicos.

---

As can be seen in Excerpt 4.2, Mentor 4 mentioned that **helping other students with low English language proficiency** is a rewarding activity because they also were beginning language students once and they would have liked to have that kind of support. So, for both mentors the reasons for their participation in the mentoring program have become Strengths of the program.

#### **4.3.2 Mentors' Experience Satisfaction and Effectiveness as Mentors**

As stated before in Figure 4.3, mentors had a **positive perception** about their **experience** in the mentoring program. Also, Figure 4.4 shows the 8 mentors felt **effective** as performers of their **mentoring role**. In order to support this information, excerpts from the interviews carried out with Mentor 1 and 4 will be presented.

### Excerpt 4.3 Mentor 1. Mentor's Satisfaction

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I: ¿Cómo te sientes con tu progreso en el programa?

Mentor 1: Este programa me ha hecho una persona más paciente, porque muchas veces los alumnos tienen ciertas dificultades con el idioma y hay que cambiar la forma de enseñar a cada uno.

---

Mentors mentioned they were satisfied with their participation in the mentoring program; one of the reasons is because they developed certain abilities. As Mentor 1 stated in Excerpt 4.3, they learnt to be **calm and persistent** with mentees, since they have different learning pace and styles.

### Excerpt 4.4 Mentor 4. Mentor's Satisfaction

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I: ¿Cómo te sientes con tu progreso en el programa?

Mentor 4: En cuanto a mi desempeño y a los chicos estoy satisfecho, porque he hecho amigos, ya no son simplemente mis mentees.

---

Furthermore, the relationship that mentors established with mentees allowed them to work better. As can be seen in Excerpt 4.4, mentors felt satisfied with their performance and they were also able to make friends with the mentees.

In conclusion, mentors felt satisfied with the mentoring experience and with their performance because they were able to learn new things and develop new knowledge and abilities while they gain teaching experience, also they developed a strong relationship with mentees.

### **4.3.3 Mentor's Benefits from Mentoring**

Moreover, mentors mentioned the impact and benefits they receive from the mentoring experience, such as, what they learnt from their mentees during the Mentoring process.

#### **Excerpt 4.5 Mentor 1. Learning from Mentees**

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I: ¿Qué has aprendido de tus mentees?

M1: Bueno una cosa muy importante que he aprendido de ellos es que a pesar de que ven las cosas difíciles buscan salidas para mejorar en lo que ellos saben que están fallando.

---

From Excerpt 4.5 can be seen that mentors learnt many things not just from the mentoring process but from their mentees; for instance the will and motivation to become better and improve their lack of language knowledge by means of different strategies.

### Excerpt 4.6 Mentor 3. Learning from Mentees

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I: ¿Qué has aprendido de tus mentees? Alguna enseñanza que ellos te hayan dejado.

M3: Me ha impresionado la constancia de algunos chicos; de las ganas que tienen de crecer en el conocimiento del idioma, las estrategias que ellos van buscando para hacerlo y los deseos que tienen de mejorar.

---

The relationship mentors built with mentees provided them with several benefits, such as new learning strategies and a positive attitude through challenging situations.

#### 4.3.5 Recommendations to the Mentoring Program

Although there were several strengths and benefits mentors obtained from Mentoring, they gave some recommendations regarding the weaknesses they found in the program as well; such as the **evaluation of mentor's development by means of other mentors' observations.**

### Excerpt 4.7 Mentor 4. Recommendations to the Mentoring Program

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M4: En feedback, porque realmente la evaluación de tu desempeño no la conoces tanto porque no tienes esa evaluación que quisieras.

I: ¿Por parte del maestro mentor o por parte de quién?

M4: Si, del maestro mentor, o tal vez podríamos organizarnos para hacer observaciones entre nosotros mismos, los estudiantes mentores.

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In Excerpt 4.7, Mentor 4 mentioned that mentors are not aware of how well they are performing their mentoring role during their participation in the program, and a recommendation regarding this issue is given. Mentor 4 suggested that an evaluation of mentor's development by means of the Coordinator of the program or other mentors' observations is an option to take a record of mentors' development, and to help mentors improving their role performance.

The results of this research presented in this chapter shows the mentors' perceptions on several aspects of the Peer-mentoring program and their own performance, such as, the mentee matching process and their mentoring experience. Also, mentors explained the strengths and weaknesses they found in the program, and they made some recommendations to improve those flaws. The information presented in this chapter is supported with excerpts from the interviews carried out with mentors.

## **CHAPTER V: CONCLUSIONS**

In this chapter, a summary of the results and their main highlights are presented. In addition, the implications of the study, its main limitations, and some directions for further research are also provided.

### **5.1 Findings**

#### **What are the perceptions of mentors about the Peer-mentoring program?**

Mentors had a positive perception about the mentoring program; they assessed the Mentoring program in general as successful. Furthermore, mentors felt very satisfied with the mentee matching process because they were able to establish a good relationship. Mentors were not alone during their role development; they mentioned they received assistance from the Coordinator of the program, such as, material facilities, teaching advice, equipment and classroom facilities. Additionally, mentors considered that the mentoring program had given them several benefits as future English teachers, for instance, practice and review of different English topics and teaching experience. Also, they see the mentoring program as a great opportunity for mentees to improve their language abilities.

Suggestions to improve the mentoring program according to mentors' perceptions were provided. Mentors mention that they were no sure about their performance during mentoring process. So, they suggested that an every-week feedback session would a good opportunity to be aware of their performance and development of the program.

## **How satisfied are the peer-mentors with their own performance during the Peer-mentoring program?**

According to the results of this research, mentors felt very satisfied with their mentoring experience and their own performance in the program; all of the peer-mentors felt that their mentor role performance was effective. That was because mentors were able to enhance mentees' language skills, as well as they gained teaching experience, and built strong relationships with mentees. Also, mentoring participation caused a positive impact on mentors' personal life, because they learnt new things about themselves, felt more motivated and productive at school after having mentoring sessions, and they could understand better life situations.

### **5.2 Implications**

The analysis performed and the results of this research pointed out that the mentoring program is a good strategy to promote students' academic, professional and personal development at the Faculty of Languages BUAP. According to peer-mentors' perceptions, their participation in the program was a positive experience that gave them the opportunity to gain teaching experience, test and improve their language knowledge. Also, mentors helped novice students with language learning problems, and were able to build friendly relationships. Mentees received several benefits from mentoring as well. As can be seen, students from the first and last term were benefited with the mentoring program, and the evaluation of it can improve their participation, and bring more benefits to the Faculty of Languages community.

### **5.3 Limitations of the Study**

In the present study an examination of the mentors' perceptions about the mentoring program at the Faculty of Languages BUAP and about their own performance was developed. However, given the sample and the procedures used for the research, some limitations need to be outlined. First of all, the sample used was relatively small, given the nature of the research just a few amount of people fulfilled the requirements to be part of the participants of this study. Other limitation is that this research is only focused on mentors' perceptions, so the evaluation of the program is not taking into account all the participants of mentoring.

### **5.4 Directions for Further Research**

As stated above, the purpose of this study was to examine the mentors' perceptions regarding the mentoring program, but, it leaves many issues to be studied. Therefore, other research studies related to mentoring can be conducted that provide the perceptions of mentees or even perceptions of Target Language teachers about the mentoring program. In that way, a more extensive and comprehensive evaluation of the mentoring program can be given. Moreover, the application of the improvements to the mentoring program could be taken from all the participants' perceptions.

**APPENDIX I: SURVEY INSTRUMENT**  
**MENTORING PROGRAM EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE**

Thank you very much for taking a few minutes to provide this information. It will help to evaluate and strengthen the Mentoring program under your perceptions as a peer mentor. All the individual data from this survey will be kept anonymous.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Name of Mentor: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender: F\_\_\_ M\_\_\_ Nationality: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Institution/School: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Career: \_\_\_\_\_ School term: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Period of social work realization (e.g. from Autumn 2011 to Spring 2012):  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Total of Mentees in charge: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Where you in charge of the same students in both school terms? Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_

**Select with a cross (x) the option that most closely matches your perceptions in each statement.**

**A. Program Assessment**

What is your general assessment of the Mentor Program?  
 \_\_\_ Very Successful \_\_\_ Successful \_\_\_ Moderately Successful \_\_\_ Unsuccessful  
 How satisfied were you with your mentee match?  
 \_\_\_ Very Satisfied \_\_\_ Satisfied \_\_\_ Dissatisfied  
 Did you receive adequate assistance from the staff at your mentee's school?  
 \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No

Please explain your answer:

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Please rate each of the following program components:	Not Enough	Just Right	Too Much
Information about the program at the recruitment session			
Information about the mentee			
Mentor training			
Regular mentor support			
Interaction with the program coordinator			
Networking with other mentors			

Mention two weaknesses and two strengths about the Mentoring program.

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What advice do you have regarding the weaknesses of the Mentoring program?

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### **B. Mentoring Experience Assessment**

How satisfied were you with your experience as a mentor?

Very Satisfied     Satisfied     Slightly Satisfied     Dissatisfied

How effective do you feel as a mentor?

Very Effective     Effective     Not Very Effective     Not at All Effective

Please indicate the reasons for your feelings: \_\_\_\_\_

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How did mentoring affect you personally?	To a Great Extent	Somewhat	Not At All
I learned new things about myself.			
I found it easy to be a mentor.			
I have a better understanding of the education system.			
I felt more motivated at work.			
I was able to keep up with my work.			
I feel more productive at work after mentoring.			
I have a better understanding of diversity issues.			

What are the most important things you obtained of the program?

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**APPENDIX II: INTERVIEW INSTRUMENT**  
**Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla**  
**Faculty of Languages**  
**Individual Interview Guide**



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Buenos días, nos encontramos en la Facultad de Lenguas BUAP para llevar a cabo la entrevista a los mentores respecto a sus percepciones y participación en el programa de Peer-mentoring. La información obtenida será utilizada para fines académicos únicamente.

1. ¿Has viajado a algún país de habla inglesa? Si\_\_ No\_\_ Si tu respuesta fue si, por favor describe cómo te ayudó la experiencia de estar en contacto con la lengua inglesa en tu desarrollo del idioma.
2. ¿Cuáles fueron los motivos que te impulsaron a participar en el programa de Mentoring? Explica tus razones.
3. Hasta este momento, ¿has cumplido tus expectativas respecto al programa de Mentoring y tu desempeño como mentor?
4. ¿En qué nivel se ubican tus sesiones de mentoría (mentoría académica, personal y/o profesional)? Explica tu respuesta.
5. ¿Qué has aprendido de tus alumnos mentees?

Así llegamos al final de la entrevista, gracias por su participación.

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