

APPENDIX C: TRANSCRIPTS OF PARTICIPANT'S INTERVIEWS

1 Participant 1- transcript

2

3 Interviewer: Okay, please tell me roughly what year did you complete your TEFL?

4

5 Participant 1: I did two TEFLs, I completed the first in 2006 and the second
6 about 2012.

7

8 Interviewer: Roughly how many hours were the TEFLs for?

9

10 Participant 1: The first one was only 60... because that was the requirement
11 back then for 60 hours and the second one was for 120 hours.

12

13 Interviewer: Okay... perfect... and were they both online?

14

15 Participant 1: Yes, both were online.

16

17 Interviewer: Okay and please describe your first few months of teaching, after
18 the TEFL.

19

20 Participant 1: In China?

21

22 Interviewer: Yes

23

24 Participant 1: okay... uh... first few months of teaching in China was... very...
25 hectic because I had to change a lot of my plans. Because they didn't prepare
26 me enough for what was actually needed for the class.

27

28 Interviewer: Okay and um can you comment on how they prepared you for
29 actually teaching English like the grammar and the phonics and the actual
30 English side of it.

31

32 Participant 1: I did my TEFL after I got to China... so I was already in China
33 teaching and then I decided to do a TEFL and the first TEFL there was a lot of
34 grammar to do. **A lot** of grammar tests where you would sit down and you would

35 have like an hour or something and you would have so many questions to
36 answer um and they give you some reading to do and you'd do some
37 assignments on it. Some topics on classroom management. Quite a lot of
38 grammar. That was the main thing.

39

40 Interviewer: okay so they taught you the grammar um did they teach you how to
41 use it in the classroom, how to teach it actually.

42

43 Participant 1: Uh, not really, no. And it wasn't especially that the grammar was
44 taught. They told you... they gave you the information... basically... you taught
45 yourself so that's the thing with the online thing, cause it's not especially... you
46 didn't get a lot of tutoring that's the one thing I noticed, for TEFL you don't get a
47 lot of tutoring, What you do is... they give you the information to pass. They give
48 you all the information, you read it through, you digest it, take it in and then you
49 use it. And in that way you will pass the... certificate.

50

51 Interviewer: Okay and how did they prepare you for the culture, like the culture
52 of the students, the culture of the teachers, the culture of China itself, like how
53 did you feel prepared for that?

54

55 Participant 1: Um, it didn't prepare me at all. It's completely lacking the cultural
56 aspect. I guess because the tutor is in another country teaching many different
57 students in different countries so they don't really specify about culture. They
58 take culture completely out of the context. It's not even in there. You just have to
59 experience and adjust yourself.

60

61 Interviewer: Okay, what would you say the objective of a TEFL would be? Why,
62 are they there, what are they done for?

63

64 Participant 1: Personally speaking I think TEFL is just to show you have a
65 certain level of competency to think on your feet and adjust. That's the main
66 thing, I mean when teaching you have to think on your feet be able to take in
67 information and adjust it. I mean it doesn't really matter if you are teaching
68 history, English literature, English language or English kindergarten. I mean the

69 idea is that, the TEFL is just there to show a person's competency in life
70 whether they can take in information or not and use it.

71

72 Interviewer: And do you think they achieved this objective?

73

74 Participant 1: Um, for that purpose yes. For other purposes as in actually
75 teaching... um... no. To be honest, there is a lot more, there is a lot more things I
76 would like to see in a TEFL online course.

77

78 Interviewer: such as...

79

80 Participant 1: such as age-specific courses so if I am going to teach
81 kindergarten maybe something in terms of kindergarten, if I am teaching
82 university. So that's one thing, so in terms of the age range. The second would
83 be whether the subject I am teaching cause maybe I come and I want to teach
84 literature or I want to teach um PE or something like this they could be more
85 divided in that way. Um... The other things would be ... uh again culture like
86 you suggested, um just... management, classroom management could be
87 improved on, it was a lot of theory, there wasn't enough teaching involved in
88 how to actually deal with different students. It just tells you, there is a passage
89 on classroom management but it's very... broad. So it could be more detailed
90 maybe more one-to-one teaching, like a video course on that.

91

92 Interviewer: okay great and then um... the online part of it, um you said you did it
93 online, would you say that you found it user-friendly? Let's talk about the newer
94 one, the 2012 one.

95

96 Participant 1: Uh yes... The newer one was a lot more user-friendly because of
97 course the internet is a lot faster um had a lot more resources which is better
98 obviously back in 2005 when I first started learning it was slow, and they didn't
99 have as many resources. So the good thing is they had a lot of resources in that
100 way, of course, the bad thing is being in China ... some resources like YouTube
101 and this are blocked. So you know you can't exactly watch videos that they are
102 recommending because ... you know obviously they are blocked so you have to

103 try think of a way around it so you can't do everything, so when you tell them oh
104 I can't do this they will say find a VPN uh I don't have a VPN so... anyway
105 resources was good um and still not enough tutoring I would say you really need
106 to know how to be a teacher that's a totally different thing. And I know
107 everybody has there own style but.. as a general thing they should walk into the
108 classroom, there are things you need to know.

109

110 Interviewer: And did you feel supported during your um during your TEFL? Do
111 you feel like you got enough support?

112

113 Participant 1: Um I got a lot of support, enough support... umm... they replied
114 quickly and it was very... very straight to the point which was good. Um...
115 sometimes things were unclear but in general... yes I would say... mmmm yes
116 and no [laugh].

117

118 Interviewer: okay great and any like final suggestions that you would give to like
119 a TEFL company on how to improve these courses.

120

121 Participant 1: TEFL company, uh yes. One thing I'd say is make your
122 notarisation and legalisation areas very clear on your website. Or make it so that
123 they can be notarised anywhere or in China or in the country they're in, that's
124 the first thing. Second thing, teachers who are in the specific country you are in,
125 if you are in China have a TEFL teacher who is in China, who knows China. um,
126 what else, um TEFL course needs to be... more motivational, I think it's just, it's
127 very just, very simply laid out, do this and it starts slowly and it's easy to get into
128 that's good, but it's not especially.. it doesn't really motivate you to be a teacher,
129 and it doesn't tell you the positives and negatives of being a teacher. Also, like I
130 find a lot of TEFL websites have jobs but honestly speaking they don't have the
131 better jobs. And also they don't tell you how to get better, how to improve. So if
132 you want to be a, obviously when you are a TEFL teacher in China, there is
133 always that limit, it doesn't matter where you are it's all around the same pay,
134 where as you want to know where ther ones you can move up, wheter you
135 worked there five years or whatever. They don't have any suggestion like that,
136 so there's no growth. You're just set, TEFL teacher you get paid this much this

137 much this much [moves a flat hand, palm down, horizontally from left to right]
138 done. So, pay and job titles you know, obviously you want to move up, you don't,
139 maybe you don't just want to be a teacher, you want to be a headteacher or...
140 one day principal I don't know... There needs to be room for movement, we don't
141 just want to do... I know TEFL has a **masters** but what's after the **masters**? And
142 how's it going to be helpful? So... my friend, obviously [friend's name] has, has a
143 master in TEFL right so he gets paid higher, slightly, but he's still in the same
144 range [hand gesture again]. He is not really moving up, um. What else with
145 TEFL? There is a lot of grammar, but it's not **focused**... it's not **class** focused.
146 Like, there is a subject on the grammar and you do lots of grammar and there is
147 a subject on management, classroom management but there's not... um... how
148 to use this much of the grammar [index finger and thumb held parallel with a gap
149 in between] in a class and **this** much [index finger and thumb held parallel with a
150 gap in between] in **this** class. It's very... like you should know this, you should
151 know this but they don't put them together. So I think it's really missing that. So
152 for most teachers, especially when I see new teachers, I've been teaching
153 fifteen years, in China, uh and two years in England, and uh I just find that, I can
154 see the new teachers from the teacher who have been here for like three, four
155 years and you know there is no help, there's no support system after your TEFL.
156 Especially.

157

158 Interviewer: Okay, perfect.

159

160 Participant 1: That's quite a long part, yeah [laughs]

161

162 Interviewer: No, it's perfect I think I have everything, thanks so much.

163

164 **Participant 3- transcript**

165

166 Interviewer: Okay, so. Roughly what year did you complete your TEFL?

167

168 Participant 3: Um by complete you mean finished completely? Or... Ok... So I
169 started in 2010 and I did probably 80 hours and a weekend course and then I
170 just gave up... because I already had a job I didn't need to finish it and then two

171 or three years later my boss said you have to do 120 hours. So I paid a little bit
172 more to finish the 120 hours.

173

174 Interviewer: Okay so what year did you, would you say you finished it?

175

176 Participant 3: 2012, 2013 somewhere around there. I can't remember the year.

177

178 Interviewer: That's roughly that's okay. And you said that you finished it for a
179 hundred and twenty hours.

180

181 Participant 3: Yeah.

182

183 Interviewer: And was it all online.

184

185 Participant 3: Ah... No there was a weekend like 20-hour training thingy. Yeah...
186 like classroom setting... Not online.

187

188 Interviewer: Okay. And... How would you describe your first months of teaching
189 abroad?

190

191 Participant 3: Completely not... Anything like what... it'd readied me for, um I
192 was teaching in this school um in South Korea, teaching middle school and
193 elementary school um it was all new and exciting but... I got thrown in the deep
194 end on day one. You will teach in an hour. What will you teach? And... Um I
195 wasn't really prepared for anything on day one. So that was sort of the... Oh
196 crap. Invent a lesson within an hour which happens to be an amazing lesson
197 that I've used again and again. But... it sort of. Yeah. From day one it's sort of a
198 bit nerve-wracking because you didn't really know what to expect. And every
199 school is different. And the previous teachers, previous two teachers, had been
200 fired from my public school. So that was a bit nerve-wracking. So yeah.

201

202 Interviewer: Okay and so my next question was were you prepared? And said
203 that you felt like you weren't. Um the TEFL with the Grammar and phonics and
204 like English particulars. Do you think you were prepared to teach that?

205

206 Participant 3: Um..., I, to be honest, I haven't taught any grammar. I don't think I...
207 I pick up on the words and vocabulary and like expand what they already have
208 but I don't feel it is my role as a native English speaker to teach grammar. So I
209 haven't... only through the books that the school particularly wants you to teach,
210 have I taught grammar. It's normally actually up to the local teacher, the normal
211 English teacher.

212

213 Interviewer: OK, and like classroom management and discipline. Did you feel
214 that the TEFL prepared you for that?

215

216 Participant 3: Uhm... [pause]... I think they **tried**. But the way they... they sort of
217 talk about the classroom is; everybody in your classroom really wants to be
218 there and they **really** ...they're **really** excited about learning English. And in all
219 honesty, um you've got about three kids in your class that actually want to be
220 there, the rest actually **have** to be there particularly in elementary, middle and
221 high school. University is a different, university and polytech
222 is **different**... **but** there is a lot of the class, a major chunk of the class
223 that **have** to be there as opposed to **want** to be there. And that is where you find
224 the discipline problems. So yeah.

225

226 Interviewer: Okay and how do you think they prepared you for the culture, so
227 you said you were teaching in Korea first, so the culture the Korean students,
228 the Korean teachers, the Korean like Korea in general, how did you feel
229 prepared for that?

230

231 Participant 3: I don't think we were. I think, the lady, who taught us had taught in
232 Spain I think so ...um... her experience was completely different to ours. And
233 she had taught adults. So um we, I wasn't really prepared for Korean culture,
234 Korean language, Korean schools. I was **fresh** and new and **really** had no clue
235 what I was doing. [laugh] I couldn't even figure out where Korea was on the map
236 when we got the job. Sort of said, Oh it's there, okay yeah [laughs].

237

238 Interviewer: [laughs] OK. Perfect. Um... What would you say the objective of a
239 TEFL is like why does someone need to do it?

240

241 Participant 3: Um... I know that a lot of like industries and a lot of countries
242 expect some sort of basic knowledge. And [pause] I think they've just sort of
243 decided there is this sort of something physical like a piece of paper that we,
244 you know, we can put a stamp. Have they done this piece of paper? Yes, okay,
245 they've got some sort of training. Um... Whether it's relevant or not, if you've
246 done young teaching, young children. It is totally irrelevant to teaching them in
247 reality. Um, [laughs] And yeah I pretty much not used a single thing from my
248 TEFL but the weekend stuff gave me confidence. So with the weekend not the
249 online stuff with the weekend training gave me the confidence to be the teacher
250 that I am. So that's sort of [laughs]...

251

252 Interviewer: OK. And do you think this objective was achieved? You said to give
253 some sort of basic knowledge, was it achieved through the TEFL?

254

255 Participant 3: It gave you some basic knowledge. But I think it also... for me it
256 actually made me a bit more nervous to realize how little I know about my own
257 language that I speak and I don't think about where the noun and what the hell
258 is a gerund? I don't think about these things, when I'm speaking I just know from
259 experience that word goes in that order in that sentence. So as a native English
260 speaker we don't actually think a lot about structure of sentences and structure
261 of words. So, I think that it sort of made me go; Oh my God I can't do this, you
262 know as opposed to; oh this is easy. So that was the hardest thing.

263

264 Interviewer: Okay, and now, specifically the online part of it. Would you say that
265 this course was user-friendly?

266

267 Participant 3: Yeah, I would for what I remember of it um it was sort of like
268 reading through lots of information which had been written in a way that you
269 could understand it easy. And then completing small tests and assignments at
270 the end. So as you go through you actually were checking that you understood
271 what you were doing. Um... so yes it actually it was fine. It just I feel that, I still

272 feel like I could fail those courses if I hadn't done the same day as I was doing
273 the test. If you go back to it. So, yeah.

274

275 Interviewer: Okay and do you feel like you were supported enough?

276

277 Participant 3: Um [pause] I don't really know [laugh]

278

279 Interviewer: Did you like, get feedback on your like assignments?

280

281 Participant 3: Yeah we did get a little bit of feedback I remember um [pause]
282 yeah I was doing it with my husband, you know together. So I think we talked
283 about things together a lot more than asking others for help. So it was more like,
284 oh how did you approach this? or what did you said about that? So we were
285 going through this course together. Um... so I sort of feel like that sort of
286 eliminates the need for a third party to help.

287

288 Interviewer: Okay that makes sense, um... If you had to give any suggestions to
289 the TEFL companies that do these certifications, what would, would you have
290 any for them?

291

292 Participant 3: [deep breath out] um... I don't know. I think it's essential that you
293 do um an in-class part. I think um that will actually help you understand
294 who **you** are as a teacher. It's all well and good reading a book but if you have
295 to get up in front of someone and try and sort of implement what you've learned.
296 I think that, you know, that's the hardest thing, you know, actually being
297 confident enough to do that. And if you can do that in and amongst your peers
298 who all speak the same language, then you realize; hmmm ok, you know,
299 I **can** do this. So yeah it sort of gives you the confidence and also helps you find
300 out where your strengths and your weaknesses are. And I think particularly ours
301 we did a lot of teaching in groups and got a lot of ideas from each other and a lot
302 of **support**. So like some of the people we're still in contact with and have seen
303 where they're going what they're doing. So yeah.

304

305 Interviewer: OK. And the online part, would you give any... feedback.

306

307 Participant 3: Ummm nah, it was simple easy to use is just I think yeah it's,
308 written from the ideal perspective of a classroom of sixteen students or twelve
309 students who really really want to be there and are motivated to learn. And I
310 think that's, that is not reality for 90 per cent of people teaching, that you know,
311 90 per cent of your students are **not** going to want to be there and not wanting
312 to learn and you're **not** going to have a small class and you're going to have
313 discipline issues and you're going to have students sleeping. I think that may be
314 as important to deal with classroom management a bit more in these courses
315 and how to deal was some **actual** nitty-gritty. How to deal with a student who's
316 sleeping what can you do. Um and give lots of different advice and that sort of
317 sense because I think they give you how to teach but not how to teach. Yeah
318 more like what to teach. How to teach this part but not how to actually control
319 the environment within your classroom. Yeah.

320

321 Interviewer: OK. Thank you so much.

322

323 **Participant 4- transcript**

324

325 Interviewer: So. Roughly what year did you complete your TEFL?

326

327 Participant 4: I completed it in 2018.

328

329 Interviewer: All right. And how many hours was it for was for?

330

331 Participant 4: was for 130 hours

332

333 Interviewer: Okay and how much of it was online?

334

335 Participant 4: a hundred per cent of it.

336

337 Interviewer: Ok can you please describe your first few months of teaching
338 abroad.

339 Participant 4: Um. Very intimidating. I would say, um in terms of the TEFL
340 though because the TEFL doesn't really, um prepare you for the class
341 experience. I would say, um the 100 per cent TEFL doing it online is um quite
342 different to what you would actually experience in class. But you get used to it
343 as with all things that you do. So... first couple of months quite nerve-racking
344 then got used to it. Then you know it actually becomes quite enjoyable though.
345 So yeah that's I think that's the basic description of the first few months, yeah.

346

347 Interviewer: Okay and how do you think TEFL prepared you for like teaching
348 phonics or teaching grammar? Actually teaching English.

349

350 Participant 4: Actually teaching English. I would say, in terms of , **what to**
351 teach. Very well. Like the grammar, and the phonics, the basis of what to teach
352 is there. This is definitely it's well done. In terms of **how** to teach that is
353 something that also you know, it comes with experience, I would say that the
354 method that you need to use to teach. Um specifically I think with the school, the
355 one that I was at. The methods that they used, the methods that the kids were
356 used to. Are not necessarily taught within TEFL because there are so many
357 different methods. I think. Um, and also using a method is much different to
358 actually being taught about a method. I would say, say for instance you use a
359 game to teach something. Listening and reading about it seems quite easy and
360 straight forward. You know what you're doing, but having to actually apply it in a
361 classroom with kids. Some of them are running about, some of them are not
362 listening. Some of them are yelling and they are so excited about this lesson. To
363 bring all of that together is much more challenging than just **reading** about the
364 method. I hope that description was not too long.

365

366 Interviewer: No, it was perfect. And classroom management?

367

368 Participant 4: Hmmm [pause] I think the TEFL is adequate in terms of describing
369 what you could expect. But again. It's the hands-on experience of actually going
370 into the class and then. Being in contact with the kids and then there's many
371 different kids. I mean so the TEFL brilliantly outlines specific problems. And then
372 you would use this type of method to deal with it. But what happens in a

373 classroom when all of this all of the problems are present at the same time.
374 That's where it gets difficult. That's where the TEFL, I don't think in any way will
375 be able to prepare you for. Except if you actually do a practical, do a class. If
376 technology could advance where you would do like a virtual classroom even.
377 Where all of these issues are simultaneously running where you would have to
378 like scramble and deal with them. Like an actual classroom then I think TEFL
379 would definitely be, preparing you much better. I think you, yeah.

380

381 Interviewer: Okay and like the culture of the students, and the co-teachers and
382 the whole of China, how do you think you were prepared for that?

383

384 Participant 4: [pause] By the TEFL... um... No I don't think the TEFL goes into
385 too much detail about a specific culture that you are going to teach within. The
386 culture, let's say specifically, the Chinese culture to teach within, is a lot different
387 than the school that I was used to, that I went to. It's a lot more different than
388 what you would expect growing from a, sort like your, mindset is already, you
389 know, made up and... it's your high school or university mindset and then all of a
390 sudden going into... the classroom of the kids. No, it's not just the Chinese
391 culture. It's also the culture of the **kids**. I would say, like you know they are still
392 behaving differently they are still growing they are still learning. And then. It's
393 based within the larger culture that is the Chinese culture and the teachers I
394 mean that the environment that they create. So a TEFL preparing you for that
395 culture. No. But not that it's a bad thing, I think. Being open-ended that question
396 that's been open-ended. That's a TEFL didn't necessarily answer. It's maybe not
397 a bad thing because you go there with an open mind, open experience and then
398 everything is new you discover. So I don't think that's something that TEFL
399 really needs to prepare you for. But it could help. I don't know. There might be
400 some things in there that they could include, yeah.

401

402 Interviewer: So would you say you were prepared to be a teacher after the
403 TEFL.

404

405 Participant 4: Overall I would say, yes. But there's a lot more that needs to be
406 done if you are going to say that TEFL is the only thing that you need to teach. I

407 think there's a lot of room for improvement. One is, I would almost go as far and
408 say; that a practical class has to be mandatory for you to get your TEFL. Almost
409 in my opinion. That needs to be done, because... the preparation that you need
410 to do in terms of for a real class is **much** different that you do for a scenario that
411 you would be given in your TEFL exam. Um, yeah. A question that you ask of
412 your friends. I mean their help is almost **as** valuable as a TEFL. In my opinion,
413 their support. So I think there are definitely [pause] spaces within the TEFL that
414 can be upgraded, can be added to, can be expanded. To make it a more robust
415 certificate, if you want, and a more robust preparation of **actually** doing, you
416 know teaching, these young kids in a specific country in a specific culture, yeah.
417 Overall I think that's how I feel about the TEFL, yeah.

418

419 Interviewer: So you say they need to have practical classes, but you said there
420 is also other things that they need to improve on. Could you mention some of
421 those, do you have anything in mind, like other things that they need to improve
422 on?

423

424 Participant 4: Um... so yeah... um. One thing that I found a little bit difficult from
425 TEFL is, the TEFL describes teaching methods. So let's say, using flashcards,
426 and then it describes a couple of other methods of how to use it but I found that
427 actually using the stuff that the TEFL taught me, to use it a classroom is a much
428 better way of learning how to teach. Let's say the scenario is you're going to
429 teach. A couple of nouns, let's say animals and you're gonna use flashcards to
430 teach the animals. I would say that if the TEFL had a mandatory practical within
431 it and then you're going to say okay this is my scenario you wrote out your
432 essay you wrote out your lesson plan and now you have to go present that.
433 Present that specific lesson in a practical. You go and you make your flashcards
434 or you download them from wherever.. You prepare your lesson, you go through
435 your lesson, you have naughty kids in your class, you have, let's say another
436 teacher your class as well. All of these things that, are **real** in the classroom if
437 you can have that in a practical as well. That's sort of the best preparation you
438 could have before walking into the first class on the first day. I would believe, in
439 terms of real-world application of what you're going to do before you actually

440 enter the classroom. That's what I think, yeah. A little bit of a short-coming in the
441 TEFL.

442

443 Interviewer: Great, what would you say the objective of a TEFL is? What are
444 they trying to achieve?

445

446 Participant 4: What they're trying to achieve is definitely to, one lay a base of the
447 basic English that they're going to teach and then at the end trying to give you
448 as much tools and methods to be actually, to be able to, carry over that
449 knowledge in a classroom. Now, yes that's good theoretical knowledge. I think
450 that purpose is well fit for a TEFL, give you the tools and then you know how to
451 apply them. So in terms of the purpose of a TEFL I think that's fine. How far it
452 actually goes. That's another question.

453

454 Interviewer: So that is my next question. Do you think they achieve it? [laugh]

455

456 Participant 4: [laugh] yeah... Ummm... I would say if you're looking at me
457 specifically, because that was my, you know, I took my TEFL I used my
458 knowledge and my studying that I did and to actually go and teach. The TEFL,
459 like just, just, [holding thumb and index fingers parallel with a gap between] I
460 would say, does it. It gives you just enough courage to actually go ahead and
461 move to another country and then do it, it just it gives you just enough courage
462 to walk into that first classroom. But as I said, one the practical, two your friends
463 that can help you. People that have actually taught, people who are actually
464 teachers, who know this stuff. Working through the actual issues in a classroom.
465 If that in any way can be incorporated within a TEFL, then it'll be the best
466 qualification that anyone could need before going into teaching English as a
467 foreign language. If they're not, you know, if they're not a dedicated teacher. I
468 mean like a full-time teacher for the rest of their lives. They don't have a
469 teaching degree, the next best thing would be a TEFL, if it could incorporate all
470 of those things. Yeah.

471

472 Interviewer: Ok, perfect. The online part of it would you say that it was user-
473 friendly?

474

475 Participant 4: Yes, yes, yes. The online is definitely user-friendly. It's very well
476 thought through. It's concise, well laid-out. The exams are quite clear. Yes. So
477 the online version of being taught, this TEFL certificate and being taught how to
478 teach English, is a good way to do it. I wholly agree with being taught online and
479 being left to your own devices to know how quickly you're going to do it, how in-
480 depth are going to do it. All of that is placed on you. Which is fine. And the way
481 that they've created a tool so that you can study is 100 per cent. I totally agree.
482 It's a great system. I believe.

483

484 Interviewer: And do feel that you were supported, throughout the whole TEFL?
485 By the actual TEFL people? The admin.

486

487 Participant 4: I would say, yes. If I had to... seek advice or help while doing the
488 TEFL. I believe they would be there to answer those questions because the
489 response that I received when I submitted my final essay and my final lesson
490 plan was quite quick and the response was quite concise and nicely laid out.
491 The only reason, I didn't actually ask for any help during the studying so but I do
492 believe I feel that their response, and their help, and the assistance, **is** available
493 when you would ask for it. Yep.

494

495 Interviewer: Okay, perfect. I have no more questions. Thank you so much.

496

497 **Participant 5 transcript**

498

499 Interviewer: All right, so roughly, what year did you complete your TEFL?

500

501 Participant 5: 2010 accurately. [laughs]

502

503 Interviewer: Right, [laughs]. And how many hours is it for?

504

505 Participant 5: [Pause] It was one hundred and twenty-hour certificate. Which I
506 completed 80 hours initially and took three years to complete the final 40

507 hours. The reason being that it came with the quote-unquote 'guaranteed job
508 placement' and we got the job placements very, very soon after starting. And the
509 final modules were, I can't remember exactly, but one was young learners and
510 we found the job we'd got it wasn't applicable to that job. So we didn't finish it.
511 Thinking, we're not going to need it and we're only doing this for one year. And
512 we've already got the job. So eighty hours initially. Yeah and a hundred and
513 twenty hours total. So long-winded answer

514

515 Interviewer: And uh was it all online?

516

517 Participant 5: No. It was a hundred hours online and a 20-hour in-class
518 constituent.

519

520 Interviewer: Perfect. And could you please describe your first few months of
521 teaching abroad.

522

523 Participant 5: Um, a mixture between disastrous and completely overwhelmed.
524 Um, no that's about it disastrous and completely and overwhelmed or
525 overwhelming. [laugh]

526

527 Interviewer: [laugh] All right., okay. And how do you feel the TEFL um prepared
528 you for teaching English. So the grammar for instance.

529

530

531 Participant 5: Um... I feel the 20 hour in class was **fantastic**. I wish it'd been one
532 hundred and twenty hours in class. That prepared me simply because it was
533 more of a real-world experience. The teacher who we had, um I remember
534 specifically she did one day where she was teaching us Spanish, I think, which
535 everyone in New Zealand or everyone in that class had no concept of. And so
536 she taught us Spanish without using a single word of English. So it was all how
537 you use props, how you can actually communicate without using spoken
538 language. And that helped immensely... because we actually saw how it could
539 be done. The rest of it not so much a lot of it was very... Technical... I found the
540 online stuff not so much. I think the only thing that I've used was like lesson

541 planning and how to sort of structure a lesson. Um... There was a lot of very
542 detailed stuff which was good for, I guess, remembering English... like grammar
543 and so forth, but it's stuff that I've never taught. And in fact in Korea where I
544 went first, foreigners were **forbidden** from teaching they were like you cannot
545 teach this. So a lot of it was wasted but that's just on my experience. Some
546 people might have found it very useful, so.

547

548 Interviewer: Okay and things like discipline and classroom management. How
549 did the TEFL prepare you for that?

550

551 Participant 5: Zero. None... at all. I think there was a module on it but until you're
552 in a classroom setting it's impossible especially I've never been a teacher. Done
553 nothing like it. It was impossible to **visualize** what it could be how you could fix
554 it. Um... And especially Korea you are meant to have a Korean teacher in class
555 with you at all times. It's a legal requirement. So technically speaking they do
556 the classroom management and you do the English speaking which sometimes
557 that happens sometimes it didn't but the certificate didn't **really** prepare at all for
558 that.

559

560 Interviewer: Okay and things like culture so like the culture, the culture of the
561 students, the culture of the classroom, the culture of Korea. How were you
562 prepared for that?

563

564 Participant 5: Not at all. [laughs] Um... A certificate. There's so many different
565 countries. I don't think they can possibly do every culture cause they are all so
566 different. Even Korea to China. But... maybe I remember talking about this in
567 Korea with people maybe if they had a culture... a quick 10-hour culture module
568 and then it's a different country like this is a culture model module for Korea.
569 This ones for Japan. This ones with China. This one's from Chile. Whatever it
570 might be and you choose what you want. But I think most of the culture, if there
571 was any, can't remember much, was very inadequate.

572

573 Interviewer: Alright, then what would you say the objective of a TEFL would be?
574 What are they trying to achieve?

575

576 Participant 5: I guess. They're trying to achieve, I guess in my opinion, a lot of
577 the teachers I've met they've gone overseas to teach for one **maybe** two years.
578 It's more of a gap year thing. So I guess it's saying they're not going to invest
579 lots of time and money into this career because it's just a quick sort of bit of fun.
580 So it's basically trying to achieve. We need to show them as much as we can, in
581 a time frame that they can manage and that feels doable because if it's too long
582 or too expensive they're just not going to do it. So I feel it's an entry point. It's
583 like here's something to get you through your first year and if you decide you like
584 it then you might decide to pursue CELTA or other avenues of professional
585 development. So an introduction, almost.

586

587 Interviewer: Okay. And do you think this was achieved?

588

589 Participant 5: I guess overall yeah it was. As I've said I far more out of the 20
590 hour in class than the other hundred hours combined. Um, but as very brief
591 overall introduction to teaching ESL, yea I guess it achieves this goal, roughly
592 [laughs]

593

594 Interviewer: So would you say the TEFL was able to prepare you at least
595 somewhat for the classroom?

596

597 Participant 5: Somewhat, yes. I think it was able to prepare, um lesson planning
598 and an idea of how to teach people who cannot speak English or at least who
599 cannot communicate, um outside of that... No, but, I guess, you know, you can
600 learn on the job but that's sort of the basic thing. So roughly speaking yes.

601

602 Interviewer: And I want you to focus on the actual part that was online. Would
603 you say that it was user-friendly.

604

605 Participant 5: very user-friendly, and um very... [pause] easy in the sense that,
606 the impression I got was, um it gives you all this information you have
607 assessments to do but the assessments are geared strongly towards let's make
608 sure they pass. Um... Because if we fail too many people our company is not

609 going to get referrals. We're not going to get their money. So it's more like if you
610 pay your money, you get the pass. Is my take on it, unless you
611 are **completely** useless.

612

613 Interviewer: Have you heard anyone that's failed before, heard from anyone?

614

615 Participant 5: I've heard people who have failed a module but you get... what
616 was 12... If you fail you just try again until you finally pass. So not really not with
617 the one I did anyway.

618

619 Interviewer: Okay, and did you feel supported during the online side of it?

620

621 Participant 5: Um, kind of... so the the support we got was. You did an
622 assignment to the assessment a multi-choice test and you sent it off to whoever
623 was marking and then that person sent you back; this is your score and this is
624 what I think. Um... It was fairly obviously a pick and choose commentary but with
625 so many people doing it that's completely understandable. So support, not
626 overly but as much as I'd expect, if that makes sense, for a short, cheapish
627 certificate. [laughs]

628

629 Interviewer: [laughs] okay and uh with the like sequencing and the pacing of the
630 modules. Do you feel like that was, it was a well-paced and well-sequenced?

631

632 Participant 5: It was in the sense that we had six months to do it. So it's 120
633 hours and you do, well 100 hours and theoretically you've got six months, so
634 you can take as long or as short as you want. I remember one module was a 20-
635 hour module and I did it one afternoon. Because it was, I can't remember what it
636 was now to be honest, but it was very easy. So I was just sort of skim through
637 the material, do the test, pass, done, thank you very much. So, it was well-
638 paced in the sense that it was set up for people who were working they might
639 have a little time a lot of time. So yeah.

640

641 Interviewer: Okay, and finally if you had to give any suggestions to these TEFL
642 companies, like what suggestions would you give to them? I

643

644 Participant 5: In an ideal world, more face-to-face time, because that
645 was **fantastic**. However, of course, that's pretty unachievable and that's not a
646 good business model. So [pause] I guess [pause] that's a hard question
647 because you know what would be great to have. But as I've said that's not...

648

649 Interviewer: So what would, even if it's not necessarily completely realistic what
650 would great to have?

651

652 Participant 5: All of a face-to-face with an instructor who has taught ESL in the
653 past ... someone who can go in and they can say OK you know, you've done all
654 the of the things like grammar and all the lesson planning, that can all be online.
655 Read through it, understand it, **pass it**. Then go to a face-to-face session
656 because our face-to-face session was in the middle so you didn't **have to** have
657 completed things beforehand. And then even they go through it a little bit and do
658 more sort of; this is what a classroom will be like. Or if you going to teach
659 university in China. This is what it will probably be like. This is what the students
660 will be like. Here's some pictures, here's some videos, of what you
661 can **actually** expect. Um... and I guess more real-world... examples and more
662 real-world . Not the... uh yeah you sit in a room and everyone's there and they
663 really want to learn English. Yeah no they don't. [laugh]. And how to deal with
664 that and how to turn them around and actually still teach them whilst actually
665 providing some management and something worthwhile. Some more face-to-
666 face would be, I guess, that be my ideal and my recommendation.

667

668 Interviewer: Perfect. Thank you so much.

669

670 **Participant 6- Transcript**

671

672 Interviewer: So can you please tell me roughly what year you completed your
673 TEFL?

674

675 Participant 6: [counting] Beginning of 2016.

676

677 Interviewer: Okay. And how many hours was it for?

678

679 Participant 6: 120

680

681 Interviewer: All right. And was it online?

682

683 Participant 6: No.

684

685 Interviewer: None of it?

686

687 Participant 6: No, none of it. Fully in class.

688

689 Interviewer: Fully in class okay. And then... can you please describe your first
690 few months of teaching abroad.

691

692 Participant 6: First few months, I would say it was all about learning really and
693 just getting used to uh dealing with groups of kids and kids who don't really
694 understand what you're saying; how to simplify things for them. How to use body
695 language to get them to understand what you are saying. And how to overcome
696 that initial like student teacher fear. You're scared of the kids, the kids are
697 scared of you. I think the first two months are just getting over that little hurdle.

698

699 Interviewer: Yeah that about right, and then... Do you think you were prepared
700 for the classroom?

701

702 Participant 6: Uh... In some ways yeah, cause of the TEFL course, but in other
703 ways no. Like the good thing that I took from the TEFL was; having that
704 interaction with kids that don't speak English as a first language. So when I was
705 in the classroom for the first time I wasn't as nervous as say; someone who
706 hadn't done the course, or had done an online course. But, what I was not
707 prepared for was; just the amount of work that goes into, teaching kids.

708

709 Interviewer: Such as?

710

711 Participant 6: Such as turning your lessons. Making sure that you know you
712 have worksheets available for them, that you might have kids who are 10 years
713 old and 5 years old into the same class because the school thinks that they are
714 on the same level when actually they're not all or having kids who have never
715 learn English before but because they're much older they can't go in to say a 5
716 year olds classroom they got to go into an older class and they don't understand
717 what is going on. So you have to, you know spend time thinking about how
718 you're going to help these kids, as well as just teach your class and general.

719

720 Interviewer: Okay, so do you think a TEFL prepared you for like teaching
721 English like the actual grammar, phonics part of it?

722

723 Participant 6: Yes. Because. That's another thing that I got from my TEFL
724 course specifically was that there was a section on grammar, especially; tenses.
725 And I remember in high school when we studied tenses, I was like I don't
726 understand what's going on. But they put it in sort of like a simple way. For you
727 to understand and for the students to understand without going too deep into it.

728

729 Interviewer: Okay and like your classroom management?

730

731 Participant 6: Oh... I don't think the TEFL really helped with that much. There
732 were a few things that they said that; you can be strict with the kids, don't be
733 afraid to tell the kids they're crossing a line or something like that. But not, I
734 would say they could have gone into that a bit more.

735

736 Interviewer: Alright and then like the culture. The culture the students, the
737 culture the teachers that you probably will be working around, and the culture of
738 like China in general. Do you think you were prepared for that?

739

740 Participant 6: More so I would say than people who have taken a TEFL back in
741 their own country or online. Cause my TEFL course was done in China. So I
742 was interacting with Chinese kids. I was getting the cultural background from the
743 course instructor. You know things like don't like don't write the kids' names in

744 pens. And you know don't let the the kids lose face in front of their peers. That
745 sort of thing was explained during **my** course which was unique because it was
746 in China.

747

748 Interviewer: Ok, nice. And then what would you say the objective or like what
749 are they trying to achieve with this TEFL course?

750

751 Participant 6: I think they are trying to make sure that we can apply what we
752 know as English speakers into a classroom. So they're sort of bridging us
753 between just being English speakers and being able to explain how our
754 language words for speakers who aren't English.

755

756 Interviewer: And do you think they achieved this?

757

758 Participant 6: [pause] Tricky one. Because I think it **can** achieve that goal but a
759 lot of the times the industry itself is taken over by people who want to travel and
760 people who want to come and have fun, go out and party. And they don't really
761 take it seriously a sort of; I'm going to do this for a couple of years to see the
762 world and they kind of forget that you're working with people and people's lives
763 especially with children and that it is something that should be taken seriously.

764

765 Interviewer: Do you have any suggestions for a TEFL company? What would
766 your suggestions for improvement be?

767

768 Participant 6: hmmm... I think, definitely the classroom part should be a must. I
769 think that if you're not a qualified teacher that you can just go online and pull out
770 a couple of reports and suddenly makes you good at teaching English. I think
771 that, you definitely need exposure to a classroom whether it's kids or adults. And
772 that that classroom also needs to be Non-English speaking, so that you can
773 understand firstly what you're getting yourself into that it's not just fun and
774 games. I go in and I say hello and you say hello and we dance and sing. That
775 there's actual work that needs to be done. There are a lot of things that are
776 going to get in your way especially because they don't understand what you are

777 trying to say and that you need to be prepared for that. I think that is definitely
778 something that TEFL courses **need** to consider.

779

780 Interviewer: Okay and if we were only going to do it online, how do you think
781 they could prepare you for this?

782

783 Participant 6: Well, you could have online classes with one-on-one students and
784 groups of students. Or alternatively, you could work through organizations like
785 The British Council. They are represented in most countries and you could work
786 through them to maybe do; a demo class with people who are frequently visiting
787 their centres.

788

789 Interviewer: That's great. Ok... thank you so much.

790

791 Participant 7 transcript

792

793 Interviewer: So roughly what year did you start your TEFL?

794

795 Participant 7: In 2018, last year.

796

797 Interviewer: Okay and how many hours was it for?

798

799 Participant 7: It was a hundred twenty hours. Half of those 120 were online and
800 the other half was lectures and workshops.

801

802 Interviewer: Perfect. And can you please describe your first few months of
803 teaching abroad.

804

805 Participant 7: Ok so the first few months of teaching abroad was difficult. The
806 level at which the school was demanding the teacher perform was a bit absurd.
807 And there was no formal training given to the teachers. Instead one had to learn
808 on the go and got criticized for not knowing a school procedure when it wasn't
809 explained before-hand. Although there were many demonstration classes and
810 observations from mentors and managers the feedback was often harsh and

811 belittling. Also, the amounts of lying and deceiving that happens at schools
812 specifically in China to the parents is alarming. I soon realized that education is
813 financially driven and not necessarily student-centred.

814

815 Interviewer: Okay perfect and did you feel that you were prepared for the
816 classroom? Do you think TEFL prepared you?

817

818 Participant 7: So when I first started teaching, I didn't have a TEFL certificate yet.
819 So in that classroom setting, I felt prepared in my own right um and confident
820 and so luckily I knew what to expect. But, there are too many procedures and
821 rules for the teacher to follow. And that sort of hinders the learning process of
822 the students because you're always thinking about I need to do this or I need to
823 do that. But after the TEFL, I don't think it prepared me any more or any less. I
824 think it was just a prerequisite of getting the necessary documentation.

825

826 Interviewer: OK. And so TEFL for instance, like if you had to keep grammar or
827 phonics would you say that the TEFL helped you with that?

828

829 Participant 7: Not particularly so they explained the theory behind it, but they
830 never told you how to apply that theory. I think that's what's lacking. You sort of
831 learn on the go, [laughs] when you're teaching phonics you sound the word out
832 yourself; ok, I guess that's right, if I put this combination and that blend together
833 you get the word.

834

835 Interviewer: and like classroom discipline and classroom management?

836

837 Participant 7: There were some pointers but without the real classroom setting
838 there's no way to apply it when you're sitting in that lecture hall. Um and also
839 those things you sort of learn on the go. Each student is different and every
840 class is different so you sort of adapt your teaching style and your methods
841 according to the students you have. Certain triggers might work one class and
842 the triggers might not work for another class. You have to sort of always be
843 willing to adapt as a teacher.

844 Interviewer: Great. And the culture like the culture of China. So the students, the
845 other teachers, in general just being in China. How do you think you were
846 prepared for the culture?

847

848 Participant 7: I wasn't prepared at all. What do you think of China before you
849 come to China. It was **not real** China. Um but it's best to just come into China
850 with an open mind and take everything with a pinch of salt because it can be
851 very different and very upside down and to the world that you know. Yeah you
852 just sort of embrace it I guess. [laughs]

853

854 Interviewer: [laughs] okay. And what do you think the objective of a TEFL would
855 be? Why does this course exist?

856

857 Participant 7: So the main object, or what they **claim** the main objective is, is to
858 prepare you to teach to the students who don't understand what you're saying.
859 When you're coming from an English background they're Chinese and is to
860 provide you with the necessary tools needed to facilitate learning in the
861 classroom. However, I don't think they achieve that objective very well because
862 it's not applied practically. You can read a thousand books but it it's not applied
863 in the classroom setting it's not going to work in my opinion. Of course.

864

865 Interviewer: So the online part of it specifically, do you think it was very user-
866 friendly?

867

868 Participant 7: I think it was user-friendly. Yes. Although there were certain steps
869 you can complete the first parts you couldn't go to the next part. But understand
870 why. User-friendly? Yes. it was.

871

872 Interviewer: OK. And do you feel like you have enough support. We're you
873 supported during the whole online part of it.

874

875 Participant 7: Well my online part I had to complete really quickly because my
876 school signed up for it so I didn't have much time to actually complete the
877 assignments so just like go do do do do [shooing gesture]. But I think they were

878 support channels in place. I'm not quite sure, I can't remember, because I didn't
879 use them I just set out to get it done.

880

881 Interviewer: Well that's fine, okay and if you had to like give any suggestions to
882 these TEFL companies. What suggestions would you give them?

883

884 Participant 7: I guess I would suggest that you condense the theoretical
885 portion **down** only to the vital and relevant information and rather
886 demonstrate **how** this information is needed, through a practical way. So
887 through a practical means on how to implement this information. And allow
888 participants the opportunity to teach in a real class. Have them have mock
889 lessons and provide critical feedback on that, rather than have them read a
890 passage and answer questions. So apply the knowledge. They do say; practice
891 makes perfect to practice what's there. And if you're teaching how to teach; one
892 way to teach is to explain, demonstrate and then practice and they're missing
893 that practice portion of what they're teaching which is really strange.

894

895 Interviewer: Perfect OK. Thank you so much.

896

897 Participant 7: You're welcome.

898

899 **Participant 8- Transcript**

900

901 Interviewer: Roughly what year did you complete your TEFL?

902

903 Participant 8: about 2007.

904

905 Interviewer: And how many hours was it for?

906

907 Participant 8: I think it was 60 hours back then which was all you needed. Now I
908 believe you need about 120, depends on where you're applying.

909

910 Interviewer: Okay and how much of it was online?

911

912 Participant 8: None of it. It was all in class. Did it on weekends.

913

914 Interviewer: Okay. All right. And could you please describe your first few months
915 of using a TEFL to teach abroad. So after you got your TEFL you went abroad
916 and how was the teaching?

917

918 Participant 8: Well, I mean it depends. I am going to give a long answer. That
919 particular TEFL didn't really prepare me for what I was teaching. It gave me a
920 broad stroke but didn't give me any concrete examples which are things that you
921 will find on the job. So I went into a Korean [inaudible] or private school. And
922 the system there, you know, it's particular work that they want you to do.

923 Particular system that, some of the techniques in the TEFL won't prepare you
924 for. But I have taken an online course or I've studied other courses
925 which **do** teach things like TPR and various techniques and all of these kinds of
926 educational theory. So it really depends on what kind of programme you are in.

927

928 Interviewer: Okay focusing specifically on the TEFL though. Do you think it
929 prepared you for the classroom?

930

931 Participant 8: [pause] No [laugh] I'd say, I mean to a degree, obviously you have
932 an idea of what to expect but like most job training, I wouldn't isolate it to just
933 TEFL. A lot of job training is a lot of theory. [pause] It doesn't prepare you for
934 what you're **actually** going to do. You learn that as you go, and then later you
935 might reflect upon your training and go; oh yeah I know that applies here and
936 that applies here. But going in from one to the other immediately I'd say not
937 really.

938

939 Interviewer: So you say most like vocational training doesn't prepare you. What
940 do you think they could do better then, to prepare you?

941

942 Participant 8: Teachers programs will give you practicums right? Send you to
943 schools to do a lesson. If they had something like that incorporated into a TEFL
944 training versus just you know, write a lesson plan, for example. But if they send

945 you into a classroom. Or even an online component, there's a lot of teaching
946 online jobs if there is some kind of partnership or. I don't know, I'm not sure what
947 kind of system. But either way, some kind of practical classroom would be
948 optimal. More anecdotes from people coming back from various countries.
949 People who might give you real insights into what countries... will offer different
950 experiences. Someone in Asia or someone in the Middle East, someone
951 in Europe. You know, these kids will be different, they'll treat you differently,
952 they'll have different expectations of you as a teacher etc..

953

954 Interviewer: Ok. How do you think you were prepared for like grammar or
955 phonics or the actual English language, like how prepared were you for that, for
956 teaching that?

957

958 Participant 8: Not particularly, because... they might do some basics but you
959 know the art of teaching and learning grammar in the modern age is... pretty
960 bad. Again this is all dependent. My experience was that grammar wasn't a
961 focus. Maybe some phonics games it was more like here some ways to play
962 games and here's some education theory and here's... you know, how you might
963 approach a classroom. But nothing, like here's how to teach split infinitives. You
964 know, how basic, rudimentary grammar might look in the classroom. Not that I
965 can remember, was a long time ago.

966

967

968 Interviewer: [laugh] And classroom management, how were you prepared for
969 that?

970

971 Participant 8: Same thing, I'd say there were some tips, you know. You did have
972 ideas of how to manage a classroom. But again you don't really learn your own
973 style until you get into the classroom and do it yourself. The kids ran all over me
974 for a number of months before I figured it out.

975

976 Interviewer: And the culture, you said the first place you taught was Korea. So
977 how did they prepare you for like Korean culture, Korean students, just Korea in
978 general?

979

980 Participant 8: Oh not at all... because again, Korea was where I went but they
981 placed everybody anywhere right everywhere. They offered me a job in China,
982 they offered me a job in Korea. They offered me a job can't remember, I think I
983 was aiming for Japan. So it was primarily Asian but they didn't give you a
984 cultural run-down. Because you could go anywhere.

985

986 Interviewer: Yeah. okay. And what would you say the objective of the TEFL is?
987 What are they trying to achieve?

988

989 Participant 8: Well they want you to... Be certified and have a general foundation
990 of educational knowledge and well they can send you out. I mean I guess that is
991 the objective of any educational program is to give you the tools that they think
992 you need. And like I said it's program-specific I've gotten more out of an online
993 course that I did with my in-person course in a lot of ways. So it depends on
994 what TEFL programme that you're in. I think. Same as any degree.

995

996 Interviewer: How did that online course prepare you better? What did they do
997 differently?

998

999 Participant 8: Well again they just sort of went a little more in-depth and they
1000 had more videos and things that you could review. I'm not saying online courses
1001 are better or worse but some of the materials were good because you can
1002 review them and they have those tests and quizzes. Not things like group work
1003 or let's just chat about what we wanted. Those things are great, in person. But
1004 they're not like OK now you're going to study some real theory, you know, how
1005 to approach students how to get them engaged, things like that. I don't know. I
1006 know I am being general but... [laughs]

1007

1008 Interviewer: No, that's fine. So you said you think the objective of a TEFL would
1009 be to give you foundation and tools. Do you think they achieved this?

1010

1011 Participant 8: [pause] Again to a degree, half and half, it's not like they've failed.
1012 It's not like they did nothing for me, but I didn't feel, you know. After I got the job,

1013 I didn't feel oh boy I'm sure glad I took that TEFL, I took it to get a certificate, so I
1014 could get the job, right... But if I didn't need the TEFL and I could just get the job
1015 I probably would have figured it out regardless.

1016

1017 Interviewer: Okay, and if you had to give any suggestions to these TEFL
1018 companies, what would you suggest to them, to improve?

1019

1020 Participant 8: Again, same thing I'd say add more practicum style training. If you
1021 are an in-person program add some online component, if you are an online
1022 component... add some maybe interview... components or something where it
1023 has some kind of real-life interaction with either teachers or administrators or get
1024 in touch with an actual school. And say ok; how does it work? What's your day-
1025 to-day? Maybe two or three, so you can see the difference between say;
1026 teaching in a private school or teaching in a public school, teaching university
1027 and teaching kindergarten. It's what you're interested in. Focus a little bit on stuff
1028 like that.

1029

1030 Interviewer: That's great. Thank you so much.

1031

1032

1033 **Participant 9- transcript**

1034

1035 Interviewer: So roughly what year did you complete your TEFL?

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1037 Participant 9: 2017.

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1039 Interviewer: And how many hours was it for?

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1041 Participant 9: 120

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1043 Interviewer: And how much of it was online?

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1045 Participant 9: a hundred hours.

1046

1047 Interviewer: Ok.. and... please describe your first few months of teaching abroad.

1048

1049 Participant 9: Had to learn quickly. It was difficult. I had to rely a lot on
1050 colleagues to kind of explain what I had to do... Yeah... Had to learn and get
1051 good at it really quickly. The online TEFL didn't **really** set you up particularly
1052 well for a classroom environment.

1053

1054 Interviewer: Okay. That's my next question. Do think the TEFL prepared you for
1055 these challenges that you faced?

1056

1057 Participant 9: In theory, yes. But it's difficult to apply stuff you've written into a
1058 computer to a real-life environment.

1059

1060 Interviewer: Can you comment on things like teaching phonics. Because I know
1061 you taught in kindergarten, so teaching phonics, how did TEFL prepare you for
1062 that?

1063

1064 Participant 9: [pause] uh.. Not very thoroughly. It's a very basic course, the 120
1065 hours is a very basic course. So they don't really go too in-depth into **what** you
1066 teach more how you teach it. So. That's again. Ask questions on how best to do
1067 it and watch videos kind of make up my own sort of method for it. And kind of
1068 learn off other people's experiences. But the actual TEFL course didn't really do
1069 a lot of **what** you're teaching.

1070

1071 Interviewer: That makes sense and like classroom management?

1072

1073 Participant 9: Again, it gave you a lot of theories in what to do but with no
1074 practice on how to actually apply them you kind of have to try a lot of them out
1075 really quickly and see what works. And then you've got to apply that to what's
1076 socially expected and what the learning environment is in the country you're
1077 working in and then mold it around that. So anything that we did get taught had
1078 to be adapted to teaching in China where there are slightly different
1079 expectations on how classes should be run, and how teachers should behave,

1080 and how students should behave. So it's again semi-useful to have a little bit of
1081 knowledge there wasn't really any practical application.

1082

1083 Interviewer: That was actually my next question about culture. How do you think
1084 the TEFL prepared you for the culture of the students, the culture of the co-
1085 teachers, and the culture of China in general?

1086

1087 Participant 9: It didn't at all. Like it said to be aware of cultural sensitivities but it
1088 didn't really delve into what they are, how to approach them and how to kind of
1089 deflect questioning about it. Also the TEFL qualification, when you do your 20
1090 hours worth of practical tests you are working with other adults who are planning
1091 on being teachers so they're **the best** possible students. Yeah, so they already
1092 know the answer. They already know what you are trying to say, they really
1093 have to pretend, to find a different way of getting kids to understand it. It
1094 doesn't **really** translate very well.

1095

1096 Interviewer: OK. What would you say the objective of a TEFL would be?

1097

1098 Participant 9: As in? What do you mean like as in why you do it? Or why it
1099 exists?

1100

1101 Interviewer: Why it exists and why you do it? Ok, I know **why** you do it. But why
1102 does it exist? Why do you think it's necessary?

1103

1104 Participant 9: It's necessary as like a barrier to having just anybody rock up and
1105 start teaching. It's literally so that they can say that you put some effort into
1106 learning how to teach... Yeah... It's just a little check so that people can say
1107 you're qualified.

1108

1109 Interviewer: And do you feel that you were?

1110

1111 Participant 9: [laughs] After a year of practical application, I think I do now, yes.
1112 But I wasn't really prepared after doing a hundred and twenty hours of
1113 theoretical teaching for a foreign classroom environment. It really depends on

1114 how... quickly you can adapt to the surroundings and how quickly you can pick it
1115 up.

1116

1117 Interviewer: I want you to focus now on the actual online part of it. Did you find
1118 the online part to be user-friendly?

1119

1120 Participant 9: [pause] Yeah, it was **pretty** good. It was pretty thorough, all of the
1121 modules were really well explained and really well-paced. And the online
1122 assessment style was good. It kind of told you what you got wrong so you go
1123 away and re-learn it or re-revise it. I guess the downside is that you could take
1124 the test as many times as you wanted until you got the right answer. So... it
1125 probably negates the fact that it's a qualification. It's just an online test that you
1126 can take until you pass... But yeah. The actual modules were useful and well set
1127 out. But it was all theory, you didn't really have any kind of practical application
1128 towards it. So it just depends on how you apply your knowledge once you're
1129 qualified.

1130

1131 Interviewer: Do you feel you were supported by the people that you did your
1132 TEFL through?

1133

1134 Participant 9: [pause] We didn't really have any interaction with them. We had
1135 20 hours like lecture periods and the lady that ran that was fantastic.... She'd
1136 been teaching English teaching TEFL for a long time and had helped design the
1137 course. So, yeah, like she was really good... and when it came to doing the
1138 assessments, our adjudicators were really useful because we were on a really
1139 tight timeframe to complete the course. So, they allowed us to kind of fast track
1140 it and do the two assessments at the same time rather than one after the other.
1141 Like yeah. They were helpful. It was good. But actually doing the modules we
1142 didn't **really** have a lot of interaction.

1143

1144 Interviewer: Okay, if you had to give any suggestions to the TEFL company you
1145 did your TEFL through. What would you suggest to make it better?

1146

1147 Participant 9: It doesn't really work. The 120 hours course doesn't really work.
1148 It's a fast track to saying that people are qualified and prepared. And really they
1149 won't be. So it's probably, like, the hundred and twenty hours is almost pointless.
1150 So you **need** practical application. Whether that comes down to only running the
1151 courses over summer so that you can use like English summer schools as a
1152 practice ground for teaching or you have them do a placement in summer
1153 school so that they can watch how teachers do it.... Yeah, it needs to be more
1154 thorough, and you can't be that through in a course that is meant to take 120
1155 hours.

1156

1157 Interviewer: Okay, that's perfect. Thank you so much...

1158

1159 **Participant 10 transcript**

1160

1161 Interviewer: Roughly what year did you complete your TEFL?

1162

1163 Participant 10: In August 2017.

1164

1165 Interviewer: And how many hours was it for?

1166

1167 Participant 10: 120 hours.

1168

1169 Interviewer: And how much of that time was online?

1170

1171 Participant 10: a hundred.

1172

1173 Interviewer: Perfect. Um Please can you describe your first few months of
1174 teaching abroad.

1175

1176 Participant 10: Teaching... goodness um it was very different to what I'd
1177 experienced in TEFL because the kids are a lot younger. Um obviously TEFL
1178 prepares you for a number of ages. But in terms of actually, standing up in front
1179 of the classroom was very different. Um, the 20 hours that we did in class was
1180 probably a bit more beneficial in terms of getting up and doing something in front

1181 of the class but I would say, uh it was very different and difficult but um you can't
1182 really learn that you have to adapt yourself when you start.

1183

1184 Interviewer: OK. You said it was difficult. Why? What made it difficult?

1185

1186 Participant 10: Well I guess it was my first time teaching ever and so it was just
1187 remembering everything you learnt in TEFL and trying to apply that to the
1188 classes. Um, the lesson plan were obviously different. As each school is to what
1189 we've learned in the degree. So it's just learning to adapt. And also, you don't
1190 know these kids. And so. It becomes a lot easier once you know your kids and
1191 what their level is and how you can apply what you know to them. If that makes
1192 sense.

1193

1194 Interviewer: And things like teaching English so the phonics and things like that
1195 how did TEFL prepare you for that?

1196

1197 Participant 10: for phonics, um it actually, well it taught me a lot about my own
1198 language that I didn't realize. I didn't know beforehand uhm so phonics I was a
1199 bit, um of a stranger to, so that helped me at least prepare in terms of the
1200 appropriate sounds and how that can be applied in teaching.

1201

1202 Interviewer: Okay and classroom management?

1203

1204 Participant 10: Classroom management. Yeah. It gave a lot of variety in terms of
1205 how to deal with difficult kids and how to sort of what you can and what you
1206 can't say which is good, cause going in I had no idea about that. Um, it's
1207 obviously you can't really imagine it to you're actually there and it's happening,
1208 but it definitely gave an idea of what to be prepared for.

1209

1210 Interviewer: Okay, and the culture of the students, the culture of your teacher or
1211 like your co-teachers and the culture of China and in general, how were you
1212 prepared for that?

1213

1214 Participant 10: We weren't. [laughs] and I don't think anything can prepare you
1215 for that. Because it is so [laughs] It so foreign and it's so different. And you've
1216 just got to be open to accepting everything. And not trying to fight it. Because at
1217 the end of the day it's not your culture, it's theirs. And you're guest in their
1218 country. Um it was difficult but everyone was very lovely. And um... It took its
1219 time but you do adapt in the end.

1220

1221 Interviewer: Do you feel that you were prepared for the classroom? That TEFL
1222 prepared you? For the classroom in general for the teaching?

1223

1224 Participant 10: Ah you know what, more academically than anything. But um I
1225 don't think I'd find it difficult for them **to** prepare you for that kind of scenario. Um
1226 unless they have an example of anything before you, as far as I can remember
1227 no. I don't believe so.

1228

1229 Interviewer: What would you say the objective of a TEFL is, like why does it
1230 exist?

1231

1232 Participant 10: Um [pause] I guess to give the opportunity to people who, **do** you
1233 want to go abroad to teach but don't have the right degree. So, our purpose was
1234 that we wanted to go and teach in China for a year and we didn't have the
1235 experience. Um and TEFL is what we heard. And we were quite surprised that
1236 120 hours was all you needed. But it worked out perfectly for us. Yeah. It was
1237 just a way to get the degree. Quickly.

1238

1239 Interviewer: OK. And now the hundred hours online, I want you to focus on that
1240 for a second. Um do you feel that that was user-friendly?

1241

1242 Participant 10: Yes definitely. You weren't able to progress to the next level
1243 before you got a certain percentage on the previous level. So that was good. So
1244 it wouldn't give you an overall mark at the end they would make sure that you
1245 completed the first level before moving on so you had a proper understanding of
1246 it so. You can't cheat it. You have to know what you talking about. And the fact

1247 that it's all multiple choice and it slide show and it's not just lectural essays or
1248 stuff like that. Yeah. I'd say definitely.
1249
1250 Interviewer: And do you feel that you were supported during the online part of it?
1251
1252 Participant 10: I didn't need to speak to anyone. So, I had no correspondence
1253 with anyone apart from the teacher in the classroom but by that point we were
1254 almost at the end of our TEFL.
1255
1256 Interviewer: OK. That's perfect. And then. If you had any suggestions for a TEFL
1257 company. Like if you had to give the TEFL company some suggestions about
1258 how to improve, what would you say them?
1259
1260 Participant 10: Say the question that you asked which is how they prepare you
1261 for the classroom and if they had like, example videos or example stories from
1262 teachers; who **were** doing it or **had** done it. Just that you could get some hands-
1263 on advice. Sort of someone who's done it and it's honest and it's like this is what
1264 you're gonna get.
1265
1266 Interviewer: That's perfect. Thank you so much.