



A qualitative study into the role of initial teacher training courses in the professional development of experienced non-native speaker teachers of English

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...natives and non-natives have an equal chance to become successful teachers, but the routes used by the two groups are not the same.

(Medgyes 1992: 340)

Acknowledgements

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Abstract

This study aims to provide an in-depth understanding of the role of initial teacher training courses (ITCs) such as the Cambridge CELTA and the Trinity CertTESOL in the professional development and careers of experienced non-native speaker English teachers (NNESTs). 19 qualitative interviews (5 semi-structured face-to-face interviews, and 14 via email) were carried out with teachers of 13 nationalities to investigate why NNESTs enrol on ITCs, how they find the courses, and what impact they have both on teaching practice and career development. Given prior quantitative research I had carried out identifying significant differences between the needs of native speaker (NS) and non-native speaker (NNS) participants on ITCs (Anderson 2015), this study aims to shed light onto individual stories and career paths, while also noting shared themes of importance that allow tentative generalisations and recommendations to be made.

My findings indicate that most NNESTs are intrinsically motivated to enrol on ITCs, many envisaging a combined, closely intertwined outcome of improving career prospects and classroom practice. I also find that while NNESTs find ITCs useful, they are sometimes under-challenged, especially concerning explicit language awareness and pedagogic theory. Findings also indicate that ITCs have clear impacts on the classroom practice of NNESTs, with changes towards more communicative teaching practices being described by most respondents. However, more experienced NNESTs often face significant challenges when attempting to change habituated practices to conform to course requirements. Regarding career prospects, while some described life-changing career moves, others encountered repeated frustration at overt discrimination towards non-native speaker teachers when attempting to find work internationally. For this reason, respondents emphasised the importance of equity with native speakers through ITC qualifications to enable them to compete effectively in the international job market.

The conclusions provided, based partly on feedback from respondents, include recommending more developmental (rather than supervisory) approaches to observation during teaching practice for experienced NNESTs, and critical discussion on issues of methodological appropriacy for teaching in different contexts. Suggestions for making ITC syllabi more 'L1-inclusive' relevant to the contexts in which many NNESTs work are also offered. Further, course providers could usefully investigate how the extensive prior language awareness and teaching experience of NNESTs could be capitalised upon on courses to the benefit of all. The final recommendation suggests that a publicly accessible database of organisations offering equal employment opportunities to ITC graduates irrespective of L1 would benefit NNEST participants and the industry as a whole.

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1 Introduction

The vast majority of English language teachers worldwide are non-native speakers of English (Crystal 2003; Canagarajah 2005; Braine 2012). Most of these teachers work in primary, secondary and tertiary institutions in countries where English is either a second or foreign language, what Holliday calls the TESEP contexts (tertiary, secondary and primary education; 1994b). Their backgrounds, needs and teaching contexts are likely to be significantly different to those of the predominantly native speaker English teachers (NESTs) working in what Holliday calls BANA (Britain, Australasia and North America) contexts (Holliday 1994b; see also Canagarajah 1999; Braine 2005).

While such non-native speaker English teachers (NNESTs) constitute the majority of English teachers worldwide, it is notable that comparatively little research was conducted into NNESTs until the 1990s (Moussa & Llorca 2008), either regarding their teaching contexts (Holliday 1994a; Medgyes 1994; Canagarajah 1999) or their needs on teacher education programs, due partly to the Anglophone-centric bias of much research in ELT (Braine 2005), and partly to the general perception that it is from the Centre¹ itself that teacher education research must disseminate (Phillipson 1992; Canagarajah 1999; Holliday 2005). Indeed, nearly all such research conducted on NNESTs in teacher education focuses on their experiences on the program itself (most commonly in Centre countries), especially their “additional or different training” needs (Moussa & Llorca 2008: 319), challenges and self-image, often described in contrast to native speakers, and often failing to situate their experiences in their own professional and personal development that should incorporate their past experiences, current needs and future teaching contexts (Polio & Wilson-Duffy 1998; Braine 1999; D. Liu 1998; Canagarajah 2005).

¹ In this assignment I use Phillipson's (1992) term ‘Centre’ to refer to UK, North American and Australasian centres of power in the Anglophone ELT world.

As a native-speaking English teacher and teacher trainer with extensive experience working on initial teacher-training courses (ITCs), I have benefited greatly from working with, and learning from, non-native speaker teachers and teacher trainers as colleagues and students. However, I have become concerned over recent years that ITCs themselves have adapted little to the increasing numbers of NNSs, especially NNESTs enrolling on such courses. This concern prompted me, for a prior assignment, to conduct some initial, mainly quantitative research into differences in backgrounds, needs and future teaching contexts between native-speaker (NS) and non-native speaker (NNS) participants on ITCs such as the Cambridge CELTA and the Trinity CertTESOL, a context I know well, having trained teachers extensively on both courses. The significant differences found warranted publication (Anderson 2015) and included the discovery that, unlike NS participants, the vast majority of NNS participants (89%) were experienced English teachers, not pre-service trainees, often taking these qualifications mid-career. However, given that the questionnaire-based research was submitted anonymously, and included little qualitative data, it left me with more questions than answers with regard to my underlying aim, to understand the role such courses play in the careers of NNESTs. I concluded my article by suggesting that “...further research is needed to identify more specific recommendations to ensure that such courses are better able to cater for the needs of all participants in the future” (Anderson 2015: 11).

In order to understand the issues in question fully, I decided for this dissertation to conduct a qualitative study attempting to situate ITC courses within the individual careers of a variety of NNESTs from different backgrounds. I developed four research questions as follows:

1. What factors contribute to NNESTs with prior teaching experience taking the decision to enrol on ITCs?
2. How useful and productive do experienced NNESTs find ITCs (considering suitability to needs and envisaged future teaching contexts, and challenges faced on courses)?
3. What impact do ITCs have on experienced NNESTs, including impact on own teaching practice, and on career development?

4. With the benefit of hindsight, what suggestions/feedback do respondents have for other NNESTs and also for course providers and validators to ensure that ITCs are as useful for NNESTs as for other participants?

I chose to conduct detailed, semi-structured interviews with a small number of experienced NNESTs who had completed ITCs at least six months previously, supported by a larger number of email interviews with NNESTs to enable me to answer these questions both from individual and shared perspectives, drawing on as wide a range of teaching contexts as possible.

After initial clarification of important terminology, this study begins with a literature review including background to the study, discussion of the very limited literature on NNS participants on ITCs, and wider discussion of the four research questions, considering both mine (Anderson 2015) and other studies on NNS participants on TESOL programs. This is followed by a description of the methodology used in this study, presentation of findings and discussion of these findings. The conclusion offers a number of practical recommendations for ITC validators and course providers.

1.1 Key terminology

3 important terms used in the title and elsewhere in this assignment require clarification: *non-native speaker*, *initial teacher training course* and *professional development*:

1.1.1 *Non-native speaker*

There is extensive and important discussion in the literature as to whether the native/non-native speaker dichotomy is a valid one (e.g. Paikeday 1985; Rampton 1990; Medgyes 1992, 1994; Kramsch 1997; Jenkins 2000; Davies 2003). However, as Moussu and Llorca (2008: 318) point out “...all work based on the study of NNS teachers is implicitly accepting the

separation between NSs and NNSs”, which obviously includes the current study. Given that there is a small but significant number of individuals who cannot easily be categorised (Medgyes 1992; Moussu & Llorca 2008), it may be more appropriate to view a continuum between two extremities upon which individual speakers can locate themselves (Rampton 1990; Brutt-Griffler & Samimy 2001; J. Liu 1999a).

For both this and my prior study (Anderson 2015), rather than attempting to identify non-native speakers objectively, I have allowed participants to self-identify as either native- or non-native speakers, an approach supported by Medgyes (1994), J. Liu (1999a) and Davies (1991). Only respondents who self-identified as NNSs have been included in the data.

In agreement with Medgyes (1992, 1994) I believe the basic NS/NNS distinction is valid in the majority of cases. I also agree with Medgyes’ assertion that NESTs and NNESTs use different routes to become more proficient teachers (1992: 340), and thus, as a teacher educator, I believe that my ability to serve the needs of trainee teachers effectively depends on my understanding both the routes and the differences in question. Nonetheless, I heed Moussa and Llorca’s (2008: 319) recommendation to use the two terms with “extreme caution”.

1.1.2 Initial teacher training course

In this assignment I use the term initial (teacher) training course (ITC) to refer to short (c.120 contact hours), practical (c.6 hours of teaching practice) training programs designed to provide initial certification to teachers of English as a foreign language. The two most popular ITCs in the UK are the Cambridge CELTA (Cambridge English Language Assessment 2015) and the Trinity College London CertTESOL (Trinity College London 2016), for which independent organisations, called *course providers*, gain validation to run courses.

1.1.3 Professional development

My use of the term professional development in the title of this dissertation incorporates the 3 aspects of teacher development described by Hargreaves and Fullan (1992: 2):

- teacher development as knowledge and skills development,
- teacher development as self-understanding, and
- teacher development as ecological change.

Given that this study looks only at experienced NNESTs, who have different needs to pre-service trainee teachers (Johnstone 2004), this definition is potentially able to encompass the broad range of needs, motivations and influences affecting experienced teachers' reasons for enrolling on ITCs as described in this study.

2 Literature review

2.1 Background to this study

The first initial training course, the Cambridge CELTA evolved out of the International House Certificate of the 1960s (Haycraft 1998) to be followed, in 1980, by the qualification that was later to become the Trinity CertTESOL (UCAS 2013). Both qualifications were designed with the needs of native-speaker teachers of English in mind, aiming to provide them with the necessary practical 'toolkit' to teach their mother tongue to non-native speakers, both overseas and in the multilingual classes of UK-based private language schools, where both courses evolved (Ferguson & Donno 2003; Hobbs 2013). The methodology promoted on such courses was heavily influenced by UK-based theorising into language teaching (see: Haycraft 1978), which, as the situational approach evolved into communicative language teaching (CLT) in the 1970s and early 1980s, maintained an ostensibly monolingual approach suited to the multilingual classes in which it was practised, and to the native speakers it trained (Howatt 1984: 287-288). At that time it was generally presumed that the native speaker was the *de facto* authority on how to use English, and the pedagogy disseminated from the Anglophone centre was assumed to be the most progressive, and most appropriate regardless of context (Phillipson 1992). Both qualifications continued to remain popular, gaining validation by the UK National Qualifications Framework (now QCF²), and recognition by influential organisations such as the British Council through the 1980s and 1990s. With their later-developed, higher-level counterparts, the Cambridge Delta and the Trinity DipTESOL, ITCs became synonymous with native speaker expertise in English language education. Unsurprisingly, by the late 1990s they were also becoming increasingly popular among NNESTs, especially those working in the growing private ELT industry.

² Qualifications and Credit Framework

Meanwhile, the 1990s also heralded the first works in critical pedagogy in ELT by Phillipson (1992), Kachru (1994), Holliday (1994a), Pennycook (1994) and Canagarajah (1999), which pointed out not only the Anglophone-centric, monolingual nature of SLA research (Kachru 1994; Sridhar 1994), and classroom methodology (Holliday 1994a) in ELT, but also emphasised the need to develop culturally sensitive, locally contextualised teaching methodologies (Canagarajah 1999). Since then, significant changes in both content and methodology in English language teaching have been proposed. This includes explorations into a more internationally appropriate lingua franca English (Jenkins 2000; Seidlhofer 2001) that is no longer dependent on native speaker norms, proposals for a post-methods approach to language teaching (Kumaravadivelu 2001) with a heavy focus on context sensitivity, and, more recently, more multilingual approaches to language teaching that are L1-inclusive (V. Cook 2001; Cummins 2007), involving the use of code switching (Macaro 2005; Levine 2011) and translation (G. Cook 2010; Kerr 2014), especially in the foreign language classroom, where classes of learners often share their L1³.

Research into NNESTs was largely neglected until the 1990s (Moussu & Llorca 2008). Medgyes (e.g. 1992, 1994) brought important NNEST issues into the spotlight, including challenges and discrimination faced by NNESTs, and began what is now an extensive body of literature comparing the relative merits of NNESTs and NESTs, in the eyes of learners, observers and the teachers themselves (e.g. Pasternak & Bailey 2004; Mahboob 2004; Lasagabaster & Sierra 2005; Nemtchinova 2010; Ma 2012; Selvi 2014). There has been fairly general consensus among these studies that while NESTs often have higher 'linguistic proficiency'⁴, 'authenticity' and knowledge about target language culture (Medgyes 1994; Lasagabaster & Sierra 2005), NNESTs often have greater declarative knowledge about grammar (Pasternak & Bailey 2004) understanding of their students' needs (Braine 2004; Ma 2012), and ability to mediate learning through L1 and local cultural knowledge (Mahboob 2004; Tatar & Yildiz 2010). Studies have also been conducted that seek to

³ I use 'L1' here to refer to any language(s) that learners have a higher degree of proficiency in than English, recognising that such languages may be multiple (L2, L3, etc.), and may not be the mother tongue (i.e. one of the parental languages) of all the learners, similar to G. Cook's (2010: xxi-xxii) 'own language'.

⁴ 'linguistic proficiency' and 'authenticity' appear in quotes as native-speaker oriented constructs that are underproblematized in the studies in question.

understand NNESTs' status (Thomas 1999; Mahboob 2010), cognition (Ellis 2004, 2006), contexts (Braine 2005) and identity (Kramsch 1997; Pavlenko 2003; Ilieva 2010). This has led to the setting up of the NNS Caucus in 1998 within the TESOL International Association, which published a resolution on discrimination (TESOL 2006), itself the topic of a number of studies and papers (e.g. Mahboob 2004; Holliday & Aboshiha 2009; Selvi 2014).

Yet although these developments in critical approaches to ELT and concerns into the needs of NNESTs have prompted minor changes to ITC syllabi (Ferguson & Donno 2003), the courses themselves and the assumptions underlying them have changed little since the 1990s. ITCs continue to promote an ostensibly monolingual, native-speaker-oriented vision of English language teaching that fails to accommodate the needs of ever increasing numbers of non-native speaker participants (Anderson 2015). Surprisingly, there is an almost complete absence of literature on NNESTs on ITCs. Brief criticisms by Ferguson and Donno (2003), Hobbs (2013), and my recent study (Anderson 2015) being the only exceptions (discussed below).

2.2 A paucity of literature on NNESTs on ITCs

There is almost no literature focussing on NNESTs on ITCs such as the CELTA and CertTESOL. An interesting study conducted for Cambridge ESOL (Green 2005) tracked the career paths of 478 CELTA graduates. Unfortunately, it grouped NS and NNS respondents together, rendering it of little use for my research, although a single reference to 'L2-English speakers' indicates discrimination towards them when seeking work (p.10-11):

There was also disappointment for L2 English-speakers that their opportunities, particularly for work outside their own countries, seemed more restrictive than those of their L1 English-speaking peers.

A number of papers (e.g. Borg 2005) and doctoral theses (Borg 2002; Hobbs 2007) on the experiences of ITC participants have focused only on NS participants, or at least neglected to mention whether participants were NS or NNS (e.g. Brandt 2006) and discuss related issues.

Two articles on ITCs, both critical, mention NNSs briefly. Ferguson and Donno's (2003) article criticises ITCs for their brevity, arguing that longer courses would serve the needs of all participants better. They point out that ITCs evolved to provide for the needs of NSs, but are also taken by NNSs. They also note (2003: 29):

...implicit in the one-month course (which still mainly caters to native speakers), is an anachronistic privileging of the native-speaker teacher. The privilege flows from the assumption that because native speakers already possess intuitive proficiency in English, they can be certified to teach with the limited amount of explicit language awareness and pedagogical training a one-month course can provide.

Unfortunately, they do not address the significant implications of this assumption for NNS participants who are unlikely to have the same intuitive proficiency in English. Further, they discuss the increasing importance of contextually-appropriate pedagogy in the literature, but fail to make the point that NNS participants on such courses, coming from divergent contexts, may be able to inform discussions on this topic and may need opportunities to reflect on and rationalise differences between approaches in the Anglophone centre and in their prior/current contexts (Anderson 2015).

Hobbs' (2013) article also laments the limitations of the course, making similar points to Ferguson & Donno (2003) regarding the NS-orientation of the language awareness component, and the lack of awareness raising regarding context-specific pedagogy. She notes (p.173):

... the non-native, bilingual speaker with pragmatic competence in intercultural contexts is much more in demand than the traditional 'native speaker', who often cannot provide the skills needed to function within a global market.

However, rather strangely, she makes no reference to the presence of NNSs themselves on ITCs.

Fortunately, there is a more extensive literature on NNESTs on longer TESOL programs in Anglophone countries, especially MA TESOL programs in North America (e.g. England and Roberts 1989; Polio 1994; Polio & Wilson-Duffy 1998; D. Liu 1999; J. Liu 1999b; Kamhi-Stein

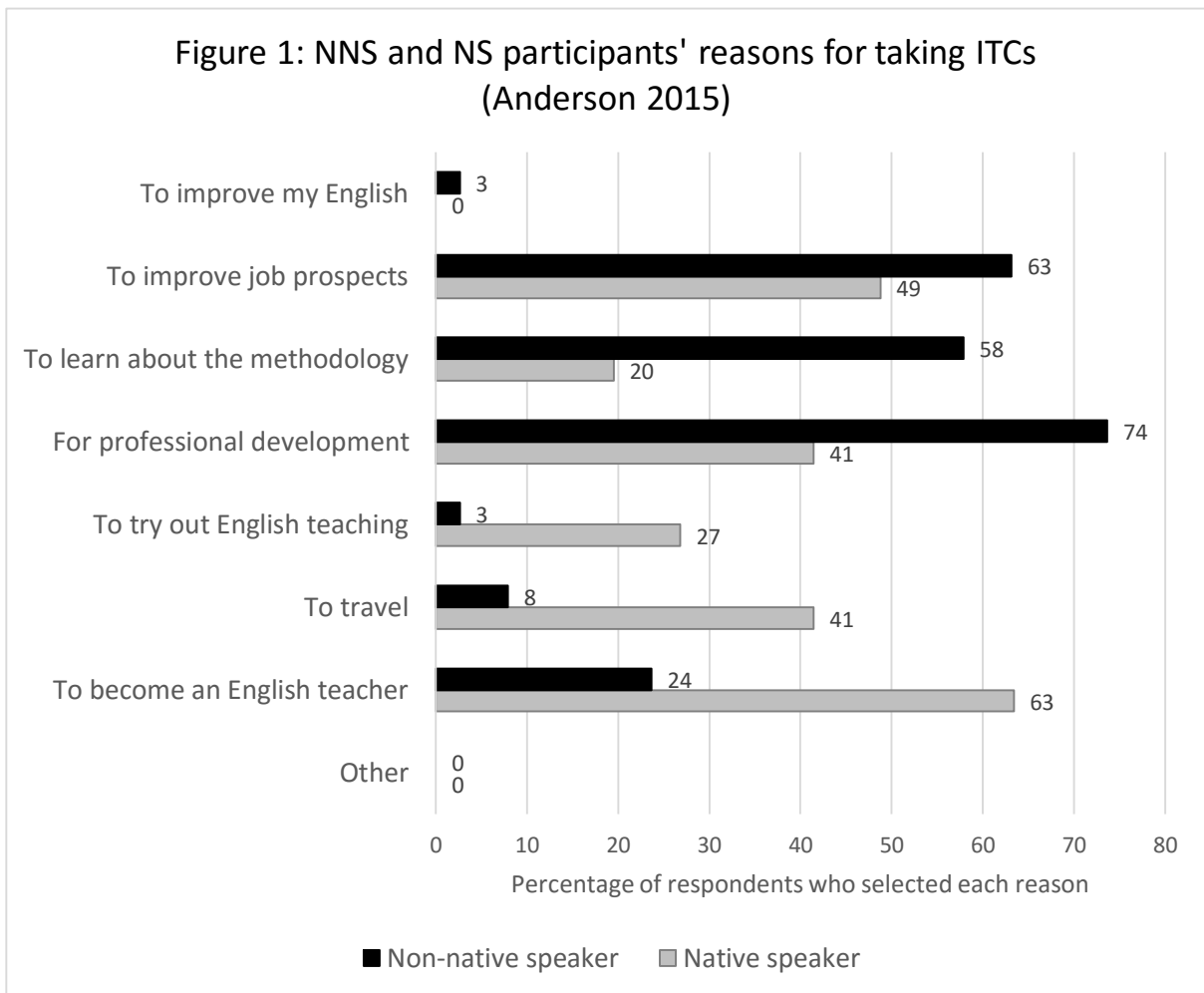
1999, 2000; Samimy & Brutt-Griffler 1999; Lee & Lew 2001; Carrier 2003; Llurda 2005; Ilieva 2010; Nemtchinova et al. 2010), which offer some relevance to my research. Such studies are potentially able to inform my research inasmuch as they often focus on the needs and challenges of NNSs who regularly constitute 30-40% of all program participants (Polio 1994; Llurda 2005).

With regard to this body of literature a note of caution should be sounded. Such studies have tended to focus on the challenges and concerns of the participants within the course itself (e.g. Carrier 2003; Kamhi-Stein 1999, 2000; Lee & Lew 2001), very often comparing their abilities and performance on practicums to NS participants in the N. American ESOL context (e.g. Llurda 2005; J. Liu 2005; Polio & Wilson-Duffy 1998). None of these studies focus on the relevance of the course content and learning for their future careers and teaching practice, my primary interest. Indeed, my prior study (Anderson 2015), which focused primarily on this, noted a number of differences between the priorities, needs and future teaching contexts of the NNESTs I surveyed and those on MA TESOL programmes (discussed below). However, in the absence of any other relevant literature, I have attempted as much as possible to interpret the relevance of this body of literature for my 4 research questions, comparing it with my own prior study where relevant.

2.3 Research question 1: What factors contribute to NNESTs with prior teaching experience taking the decision to enrol on ITCs?

My prior study (Anderson 2015: 4) noted significant differences between the reasons given by NNSs and NSs for enrolling on ITCs. While NNSs prioritized 'For professional development', 'To learn about the methodology' and 'To improve job prospects', NSs prioritized 'To become an English teacher', 'To improve job prospects', 'To travel' and 'For professional development'. While two of these priorities coincide, the quantitative differences are significant as Figure 1 shows. Although the study indicates that NNSs see methodology as important, and that the qualification clearly has an instrumental role in their own career progress, due to its quantitative nature, it sheds little light onto exactly

how the methodology is perceived, why it is important or how the qualification is likely to benefit participants, thereby prompting this qualitative study.



Despite careful analysis of a number of studies into NNS course participants on TESOL programs in North America (cited above), I found no direct discussion of NNSs' reasons for enrolling on such courses, although the following provides some insight into this question:

- Studies by Polio and Wilson-Duffy (1998) and Samimy and Brutt-Griffler (1999) indicate that at least some participants have a strong interest in the teaching methodology used on such courses, in agreement with participants on ITCs (Anderson 2015).
- Polio and Wilson-Duffy (1998) also note of two of their participants that they hoped to improve their English on the course, and also to learn more about target language culture, both of which are commonly cited as primary needs of NNSs on TESOL

programmes (see 2.4 below). This contrasts with my prior study (Anderson 2015) where improving English language proficiency was not prioritised by any respondents (see Figure 1).

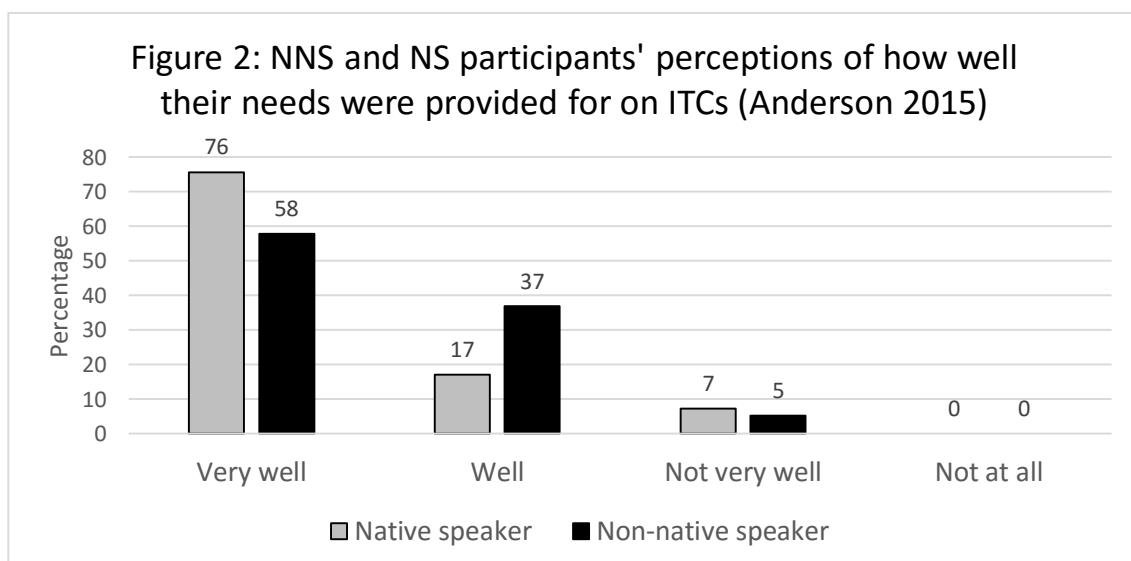
2.4 Research question 2: How useful and productive do NNESTs find ITCs (considering needs, contexts and challenges)?

My earlier research (Anderson 2015) indicated that most participants on ITCs feel that courses provide either 'Very well' or 'Well' for their needs, although NSs were more likely to select the former (see Figure 2). Participants who did not select 'Very well' (NNS n=16; NS n=10) were invited to comment on which of their needs were *not* provided for, and all did so. This provided a small amount of useful qualitative data. Among NNS responses, 2 themes were predominant: criticism of a lack of support in finding work, and disappointment that more time was not devoted to methodology (Anderson 2015: 7-8):

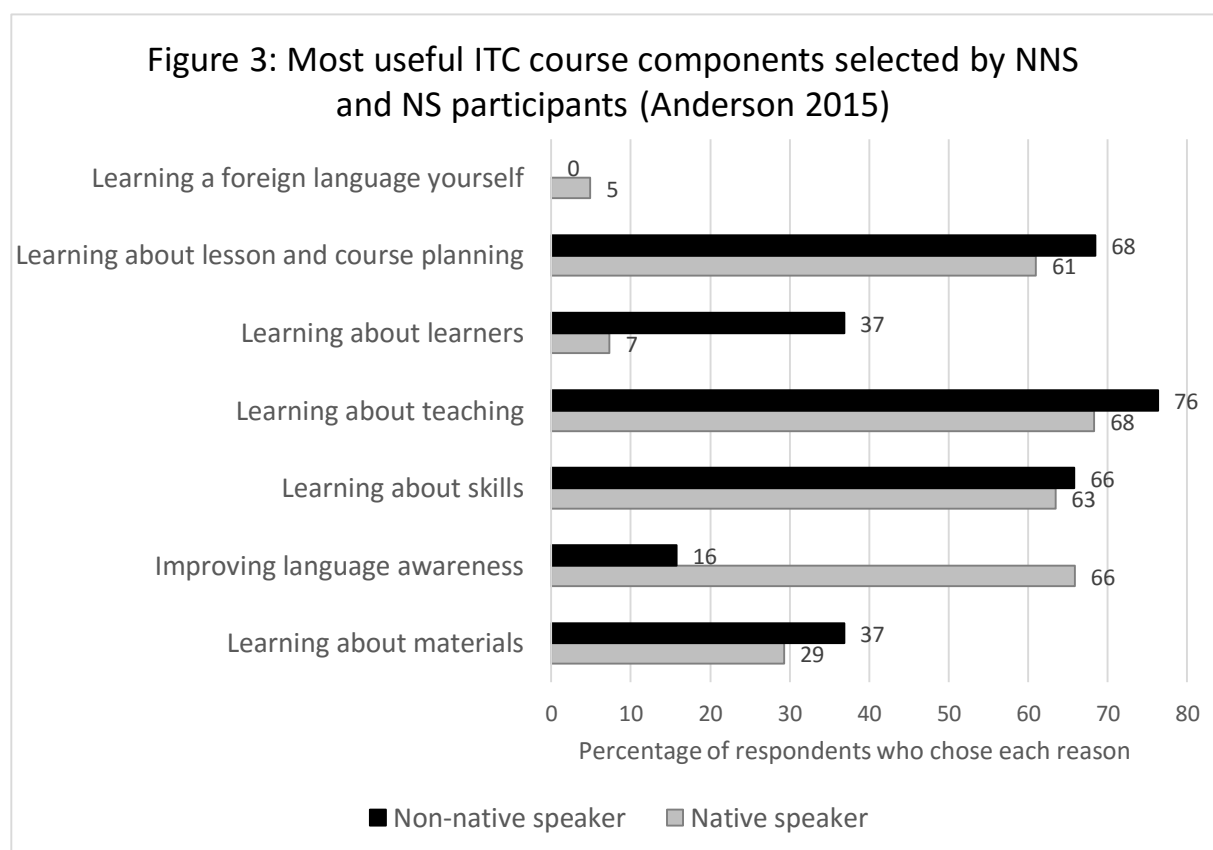
They didn't help us much with career path, future employment opportunities, professional development, etc.

I felt too much time was devoted to language skills and not enough to methodology.

While NSs also criticised a lack of career support, they also often felt more time could have been devoted to language awareness, a sentiment not echoed by NNSs.



In the same study participants were invited to select the most useful course components, with the choices available reflecting the units/modules on CELTA and CertTESOL courses. There was broad agreement between NSs and NNSs on several components: ‘Learning about teaching’, ‘Learning about skills’ and ‘Learning about lesson and course planning’ all ranked highly for both groups (see Figure 3). However, 2 very clear differences also emerged: while native speakers also ranked ‘Improving language awareness’ highly, non-native speakers ranked it much lower, instead prioritising ‘Learning about learners’. This lack of need for instruction in language awareness among NNSs on teacher education programs is well documented in the literature (e.g. Medgyes 1992, 1994; Llurda 2005; Pasternak & Bailey 2004), reflecting the fact that most have had to learn English as a foreign language, and are therefore aware of many of the explicit rules governing grammar usage (Medgyes 1994) that are most commonly taught in this course component.



A number of studies have been conducted into the specific needs and challenges of NNSs on TESOL programmes in North America, and have consistently identified two core areas of challenge: language proficiency and self-image. NNSs have often expressed a clear interest

in developing their language proficiency as part of the course (D. Liu 1999; Polio & Wilson-Duffy 1998), often needing help with both oral and written skills (Carrier 2003). To this end Nemtchinova et al. (2010) propose a number of suggestions for improving the linguistic proficiency and pragmatic competence of NNESTs. NNS participants also express an interest in learning about the culture of English speaking countries (Medgyes 1994; D. Liu 1999; Polio & Wilson-Duffy 1998).

With regard to self-image, NNS participants often find it challenging participating on courses alongside native speakers, and benefit from support with regard to their identity as NNSs and their self-confidence, in front of both NS colleagues (Kamhi-Stein 2000; Carrier 2003) and students on program practicums (Polio & Wilson-Duffy 1998), which both Kamhi-Stein (2000) and Carrier (2003) have suggested could be provided through supplementary courses/modules, and Barratt (2010) proposes a bank of training strategies and ideas to ensure equity on courses where NSs and NNSs study together. It should be noted that this need appears to relate only to their participation on the TESOL program itself, and is unlikely to influence the confidence of teachers in front of their own students, where they often felt capable and valued (Samimy & Brutt-Griffler 1999; J. Liu 2005). As Samimy and Brutt-Griffler (1999: 139-140) note: "Self-image or self-esteem as professionals, then, may be very context dependent."

Neither of these 2 areas (language proficiency and self-image) revealed themselves to be important by Anderson (2015), although this may be due in part to the quantitative nature of that study that did not allow participants to select such options. Interestingly, an unpublished study by Johnson (2001) based on interviews with 6 participants from 2 universities in the US identified a strong interest in pedagogy (concurring with my data), as well as developing their linguistic proficiency and cultural knowledge, although most saw this as a personal goal, rather than a direct responsibility of the university. The participants in Johnson's study also made little reference to self-image, although she notes that the issue of self-confidence "seemed to lurk just below the surface in many of the conversations" (p.22). Interestingly, in a study by Faez and Valeo (2012) on graduates of Canadian TESOL programs (including, but not specifically focusing on NNSs) the most useful feature identified by graduates was the practicum element (concurring with Anderson 2015). It

provided the opportunity to “develop a hands-on approach” and gave participants insight into “personal teaching methodologies” (p.463).

2.5 Research question 3: What impact do ITCs have on NNESTs, including impact on teaching practice, and career development?

To my knowledge there have been no studies carried out on NNESTs subsequent to their completing an ITC. My prior study (Anderson 2015) collected minimal data on expected future teaching contexts of NNESTs on ITCs, which revealed that most NNSs expected to return to their home country upon completing the course, in agreement with North American studies (e.g. Polio 1994; Llorca 2005). Interestingly, however, most of my NNS respondents expected to teach adults, not younger learners, in contrast to participants from North American studies (e.g. J. Liu 1999a).

A qualitative response from one NNEST in my study provides a graphic insight into how they perceived the impact of the methodology from their ITC on their subsequent teaching (Anderson 2015: 9):

I decided to use all the knowledge [learnt on the course] in my lessons of English. To my great disappointment, students began to complain and leave the group saying that my lessons are too complicated and they didn't understand anything.

While few conclusions can be drawn from this one comment, it appears to provide an example of what Holliday calls “tissue rejection” (1994a: 134), when an innovation is rejected by the educational environment. Similarly, Burnaby and Sun’s (1989: 236) early study into Chinese teachers’ views of western language teaching concludes: “The fact that these methods are effective in the teaching of ESL at home does not necessarily mean that they are exportable.” Thus, the absence of studies into the impact that ITCs have on NNESTs highlights the importance of this research question in the current study.

2.6 Research question 4: What suggestions/feedback do respondents have for other NNESTs and for providers of ITCs to ensure that courses are as useful for NNESTs, as for other participants?

Once more, I was not able to find any relevant studies on this question. In describing how they adapted MA TESOL programs for NNSs, neither Kamhi-Stein (2000) nor Carrier (2003) mention whether the adaptations in question derived from their own judgement or feedback from course participants. Likewise, Govardhan et al.'s (1999: 123) recommendations for making MA TESOL programmes more relevant to EFL contexts "are based on our own experience in TESL/TEFL abroad and on an extensive, though unstructured, collection of consensual views from a number of our colleagues who have taught abroad", apparently neglecting to consult NNS participants on such courses.

The only potentially relevant data collected during my prior study (Anderson 2015) is the unpublished comments of a number of respondents with regard to needs that their course did not provide for. A number of NNSs used this opportunity to offer constructive feedback. Of 11 such comments, 4 related to practical classroom issues, such as "solv[ing] different problems in class", or providing "tips based on [trainers'] experience", 2 requested specific training for teaching teens or younger learners and 2 noted that more inputs on career prospects or finding work would be useful. Others were varied but included one blunt recommendation from an NNEST who had experienced discrimination towards NNS participants on their course: "Won't recommend CELTA to ppl [people]" (unpublished data). While caution should be exercised before reading too much into these comments, they do reflect clear interests in practical methodology and career progression of many of the NNS respondents.

2.7 Conclusion of literature review

Before conducting this literature review I was well aware of the lack of studies into NNS participants on ITCs. However, I have been surprised by two related areas of apparent

neglect in the wider literature into NNS participants on ELT education programs. Firstly, many of the papers making recommendations for NNS participants appear to have based these recommendations on their own judgement as educators (e.g. Govardhan et al. 1999; Carrier 2003; Barratt 2010). Greater transparency about how the needs of NNS participants had been surveyed to influence their choices would have been useful. As the data consistently indicates, NNS participants are often practising teachers from a wide variety of contexts, requiring in-service development rather than pre-service training, which are obviously different (Freeman 1982; Johnstone 2004). They are unlikely to be homogenous among themselves (Moussu & Llorca 2008), and even less likely to share needs with NS peers. As such, a number of studies appear to be prioritising the challenges of the course itself (e.g. Kamhi-Stein 2000; Barratt 2010) over the challenges that NNESTs face in their own teaching contexts.

The second area of apparent neglect relates closely to the first. Given that such experienced NNESTs are likely to have differing backgrounds, competencies, experiences as teachers and reasons for participating in such courses, it is notable that none of the studies in question attempted to situate and understand the role of the teacher education program within the wider professional and career development of the individual participants. This provides a clear justification for the current study, which aims to do precisely that.

3 Methodology

3.1 Aims and rationale of the study

My prior study (Anderson 2015) had clearly indicated that there were significant differences between NS and NNS participants on ITCs, especially with regard to background, reasons for enrolling and future teaching contexts. However, given that it was mainly quantitative, it shed only a little light onto these differences, leading me to conclude that further research, especially into the role of ITCs in the career path of NNEST participants, was necessary.

I considered it appropriate to conduct a study that explored ‘the whole picture’ of before, during, and after the course from the perspective of individual, experienced NNESTs. Given my own status as a native speaker of English, I also wanted to provide them with an opportunity to offer their opinions and suggestions with regard to improving the ITC experience. Thus, I developed the following four research questions:

1. What factors contribute to NNESTs with prior teaching experience taking the decision to enrol on ITCs?
2. How useful and productive do experienced NNESTs find ITCs (considering suitability to needs and envisaged future teaching contexts, and challenges faced on courses)?
3. What impact do ITCs have on experienced NNESTs, including impact on their own teaching practices, and also on their professional development and career path?
4. With the benefit of hindsight, what suggestions/feedback do respondents have for other NNESTs and also for course providers and validators to ensure that ITCs are as useful for NNESTs as for other participants?

Strictly speaking, my prior research into this topic meant that the methodology I was using was essentially based on a “mixed methods” rationale of the Quantitative→Qualitative type (Dörnyei 2007: 169). My quantitative research had provided very broad answers which now

needed in-depth understanding. However, as I had collected my prior data anonymously I was not able to adopt a “sequential explanatory design” (Creswell et al. 2003; cited in Dörnyei 2007) in which specific respondents to the quantitative phase of the research are selected for the qualitative phase based on their initial responses. Thus, I was forced to recruit new respondents for the current study.

3.2 Developing the research instruments

While I was very much interested in individual stories, my research questions prompted a need to find some consistency among these stories to enable generalisations to be made. Thus, I chose to conduct semi-structured, face-to-face interviews to ensure a comprehensive understanding of a small number of subjects, the findings of which I hoped to corroborate through a larger number of email interviews. These email interviews were also important to ensure that I was able to ‘cast the net’ widely enough, giving a voice to respondents who were neither in the UK, nor able to participate in Skype interviews, whether this be for reasons of access to technology or potential time constraints (James 2007). A further advantage to email interviews of relevance to NNSs who are responding in English as a foreign language is identified by J. Liu (1999a: 161): “By using an email interview format, the participants [are] given sufficient time to think about and reflect upon the issues and questions raised...”.

My initial target estimate was to conduct 4-8 face-to-face interviews and to receive 10-20 completed email interviews. These numbers were necessarily open and flexible, appropriate to qualitative sampling (Richards 2005; Dörnyei 2007). If I was able to reach a degree of saturation with a smaller number of responses, I aimed to focus more time on describing these responses in more detail. Alternatively, given the comparative heterogeneity of the sample (the variety of backgrounds and teaching contexts), I was contingently willing to increase the sample size beyond this if no ‘levelling off’ occurred (Richards 2005).

Based on my initial research questions I first developed guiding questions for the semi-structured interviews, and then similar questions for the email interviews. The first few questions were fact-finding, both to make individual contexts clear and to relax respondents as recommended by Dörnyei (2007: 137). These were followed by my main research questions, which were open, given the importance of not leading respondents (see Appendix 5). As Moussu and Llurda (2008: 332) note: "...researchers should be very serious about not exerting any influence on subjects' responses...". Thanks to the insights of my prior research I was also able to script potential follow-up questions for face-to-face interviews to ask if certain topics or issues weren't mentioned, which helped to ensure consistency of coverage. As Dörnyei notes, this is "appropriate when the researcher is aware of what he/she does not know and can frame questions that can yield the needed answers." (2007: 135). Thus, while my interview schedule included both general and specific questions, the interview format remained semi-structured; I allowed myself and the respondent freedom to depart from the schedule whenever appropriate, especially when an unexpected direction in the conversation was proving fruitful, as recommended by Dörnyei (2007: 136).

In the case of the email interviews, my first 7 research questions (based on the research questions above) were also open for similar reasons (see Appendix 6). I would have the contingency of asking more specific questions in follow-up correspondence if required (James 2007). Two additional, more directed questions at the end of the questionnaire enquired about knowledge of a specific qualification (the Cambridge IELTS), and use of L1 on the course. Both questions were also posed in face-to-face interviews.

The final question in both interview types gave participants an opportunity to mention anything else that they felt was relevant given the aims of the research, as recommended by Dörnyei (2007: 138).

3.3 Recruitment of respondents

I hoped to recruit respondents from as wide a variety of nationalities and teaching contexts as possible (“maximum variation sampling”; Dörnyei 2007: 128). As Dörnyei notes (2007: 126): “...the main goal of sampling is to find individuals who can provide rich and varied insights into the phenomenon under investigation so as to maximize what we can learn.” Thus I opted to recruit both via official gatekeeper organisations (course providers of Cambridge CELTA and Trinity CertTESOL), and more opportunistic recruitment via teacher trainers that I knew personally who worked on such courses in different parts of the world. This combination of *quota sampling* and *convenience sampling* (Dörnyei 2007: 97), while not ideal, did at least enable me to ‘cast my recruitment net’ fairly widely. Potential limitations caused by this sampling method are acknowledged and discussed in the Discussion and Conclusion below.

My approach letter (see Appendix 1) explained the project aims and details, requesting that they forward it, along with the Information Sheet and Consent Form (see Appendices 2, 3 and 4), to appropriate former course participants so that interested respondents could contact me directly. My sampling criteria were also made clear:

Eligible respondents must consider themselves non-native speakers of English who had prior teaching experience (6 months or more) before starting their CELTA/CertTESOL.

Given the importance of recruiting a balance of respondents from both courses (CELTA and CertTESOL), and of recruiting respondents from courses not run in the UK, I contacted a balance of course providers as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Summary of course providers contacted

	UK centres	Non-UK centres	Total
Cambridge CELTA centres	6	5	11
Trinity CertTESOL centres	6	5	11
Total	12	10	22

Of the 22 initial recruitment emails sent out, I received 12 confirmations (three Anglophone CELTA; four non-Anglophone CELTA; three Anglophone CertTESOL; two non-Anglophone CertTESOL) that my email had been forwarded to appropriate respondents. Expressions of interest to participate were received from 21 respondents, 14 of whom requested to complete the email interview, three to participate in the face-to-face interview and four with no preference. Of these four, one indicated insufficient internet connection speed for a face-to-face interview. This left six potential face-to-face interviews, two via Skype and four in person. Of these, one was terminated early after the respondent indicated that she had no prior teaching experience before taking her course. Thus, five face-to-face interviews were conducted, four in person and one via Skype. Responses to 14 of 15 email interviews were successfully received (a bereavement prevented one from replying).

3.4 Data collection

Face-to-face interviews took 55-70 minutes each and were conducted in a private room. Audio recording began after an initial chat to relax respondents, explain my aims and provide useful background information (Dörnyei 2007: 140). In agreement with Tsui (2003: 76) I felt it was unethical to keep my objectives secret from teacher-participants in research projects that require them to make self-evaluations. While my primary aim was to treat the *interview as resource* (rather than *topic*; Seale 1998), given our contrasting statuses (as native and non-native speakers), I remained sensitive throughout the interviews, and during my data analysis afterwards, to the possibility that our relationship was often influencing the content of the discussion. During the interviews I tried to be supportive, without leading respondents (Moussu & Llorca 2008). When I sensed that a respondent was holding back something or unsure of themselves, I encouraged them to speak freely. As Seale (1998: 215) notes, it is possible to treat interviews as “both topic and resource”, as long as we remain aware of when we can rely on interview data as a resource, and when more sensitised discussion is necessary. During the interview I took notes on a copy of the guiding questions, including key points and any non-verbal data of relevance (e.g. interruptions, paralanguage, etc.).

For the email interviews, I produced a user-friendly interview form that indicated the project title, aim and briefly restated the confidentiality clause from the information letter as recommended by Dörnyei (2007: 140). The formatting of the form allowed participants to write as much or as little as they wanted in response to each question (see Appendix 6).

Ethical integrity was maintained throughout the data collection process in accordance with guidelines provided by Dörnyei (2007), and James and Busher (2007). Ethical approval was granted (King's College reference: LRU15/162438) and participants received an Information sheet clearly indicating that participation was optional, and assuring anonymity, confidentiality and secure data storage (see Appendix 2). Face-to-face participants signed a Consent form and online respondents signed a similar document electronically (see Appendices 3 and 4). I ensured that audio recordings, emailed interview documents and handwritten notes of interviews were stored securely. All names have been replaced with pseudonyms (Cohen et al. 2011: 537), and references to nationalities are only included when they do not risk compromising the anonymity of participants.

3.5 Interview respondents

Interview data from a total of 19 teachers were accepted for analysis, including five face-to-face and 14 email respondents. All were judged appropriate respondents: all self-identified as non-native speakers of English and had at least one year's prior teaching experience before their course. All also had at least six months' experience either working or jobseeking after their course. 10 had taken the Trinity CertTESOL and 9 the Cambridge CELTA.

A total of 13 nationalities are represented in the data⁵. Prior teaching experience ranges from 1-30 years, averaging 8.6 years. Prior teaching contexts include private institutions (13) teaching adults (9) and younger learners (5), secondary school (6) and higher education (2).

⁵ Algerian, Argentinian, Chinese, French, Greek, Indonesian, Italian, Moroccan, Romanian, Russian, Spanish, Ukrainian and Uzbek. These are not included in Table 2 to ensure anonymity.

All but two had a prior English language qualification, usually a degree, and 13 (68%) also had a pedagogic qualification. Respondent profiles are summarised in Table 2 (pseudonyms used).

Table 2: Summary of Interview Respondents

Name	Interview type	Course type	Course location ⁶	Year of course	Prior teaching experience (years)	Prior teaching contexts (YL=younger learners)
Sharon	Face-to-face	CELTA	Non-UK	2013	8	Private adult
Monica	Face-to-face	CELTA	UK	2006	5	Secondary, private YL
Andrew	Face-to-face	CELTA	UK	2015	6	Private adult
Lucia	Face-to-face	CertTESOL	UK	2012	1	Private adult
Farah	Face-to-face	CertTESOL	UK	2014	2	Private YL/adult
Nadia	Email	CELTA	UK	2011	8	Secondary, private adult
Habib	Email	CELTA	Non-UK	2013	16	Private adult
Nina	Email	CELTA	UK	2015	6	HE
Carla	Email	CELTA	UK	2015	8	Private adult
Patricia	Email	CELTA	Non-UK	2014	2	Private YL
Deniza	Email	CELTA	Non-UK	2013	6	HE
Isabel	Email	CertTESOL	UK	2015	24	Secondary
Olga	Email	CertTESOL	UK	2012	5	Private adult
Camille	Email	CertTESOL	Non-UK	2012	4	Secondary
Ofelia	Email	CertTESOL	Non-UK	2013	30	Private adult/YL
Angela	Email	CertTESOL	UK	2012	8	Secondary
Manuela	Email	CertTESOL	Non-UK	2012	16	Secondary
Sofia	Email	CertTESOL	UK	2013	3.5	Private adult
Sabina	Email	CertTESOL	UK	2014	4	Private YL

⁶ Non-UK countries are not provided to ensure anonymity of course provider (there is only 1 course provider in some countries involved).

3.6 Potential biases in the dataset

Unfortunately only two male teachers responded, representing a potential gender bias in the data. A potential bias may also exist in that the majority of respondents (63%) took courses in the UK. While this is representative of the percentage of CertTESOL course providers located in the UK (64%)⁷ it is less so of CELTA course providers, 32% of whom are located in the UK⁸. A wider range of overseas locations would potentially have provided a more useful balance of data. The most difficult potential bias to evaluate is the degree to which such voluntary respondents are likely to represent a balanced range of experiences on, and responses to, the course. It may be that course participants that had a positive, important or 'life changing' (as one respondent put it) experience on the course felt more inclined to respond than those who had more negative experiences. This is acknowledged in the Discussion and Conclusion below.

3.7 Data analysis

As soon as possible after face-to-face interviews, I listened again and typed up detailed interview notes (as advised by Rubin & Rubin 2005: 203) using a pro forma that followed the order of the interview schedule (see Appendix 8). With each comment, I also included relevant extracts, with time references for easy access during data analysis (see Appendix 8). After the first interview, I initially transcribed the data in full using basic transcription (see Appendix 7) and attempted to use this transcription to identify key themes (see 3.7.1 below). However, I found it easier to work with my typed-up interview notes than the transcription for two reasons:

⁷ Based on Trinity College London *Validated Course Providing Organisations* (2014), figure given is percentage of total CertTESOL course providers that are listed in the UK.

⁸ Figures for Cambridge CELTA are based on course providers listed on the Cambridge English Language Assessment online database (<http://www.cambridgeenglish.org/find-a-centre/find-a-teaching-centre/>) where of 353 listed course providers, 113 were listed in the UK.

1. Length of the interview (8400 words) made it difficult to find specific comments, given that relevant comments were interspersed with less relevant tangents and details.
2. The interviewee (as did others after her) sometimes addressed one research question during our discussion of another, or made a comment relevant to two research questions. In my interview notes, I was able to organise these comments according to research questions as recommended by Cohen et al. (2011: 552).

Thus I chose not to transcribe further interviews. Instead, when analysing the data, if I found an important comment, I re-listened to the relevant section (what Dörnyei calls “tape analysis” 2007: 249) to ensure that my analysis and interpretation was faithful to what was said and how it was said, rather than what had been interpreted through transcription or notes.

Soon after email interviews were received, I read through them carefully. I sent initial replies thanking respondents, and including any follow-up questions required which was necessary on several occasions when an answer was omitted or unclear. I’ve included such follow-up questions at the end of email interviews, followed by replies (see Appendix 9 for examples of this).

Initial analysis of both types of interview enabled me to judge the degree to which I was reaching ‘saturation’ (Dörnyei 2007: 127) with regard to answering my research questions. This began to happen approximately two thirds of the way through data collection. At this point I stopped attempting to recruit new respondents, although continued to accept responses from email interviewees and conducted all five interviews as planned.

My stages of data analysis broadly followed those recommended by Cohen et al. (2011: 555):

- generating natural units of meaning;
- classifying, categorising and ordering these units of meaning;
- structuring narratives to describe the contents;
- interpreting the data.

3.7.1 Generating natural units of meaning

First I re-read each interview, identifying key themes discussed and organising these relative to my research questions. As Cohen et al. (2011: 552) note: “This is a very useful way of organising data, as it draws together all the relevant data for the exact issue of concern to the researcher”. The fairly structured nature of both types of interview made it easy to do this, although I was also careful not to oversimplify the data or lose individual narratives in the process. I found it useful to compile an A3-size detailed handwritten summary table in which key points made by each respondent in response to each question were summarised. This allowed me, in the classifying stage below to notice how often a point was made, and in the subsequent structuring stage to access individual extracts to illustrate these points.

3.7.2 Classifying, categorising and ordering the units of meaning

For each research question, I colour-coded responses according to commonly discussed themes (e.g. teaching practice). These themes were then used to create headings that would guide the first draft of the findings, under which I noted more specific topics or opinions (e.g. references to instructions, references to ‘old habits’, etc.), with names of respondents in brackets. This enabled me to order the themes according to frequency of mention and also to retain the range of opinions, observations and suggestions made within each theme to ensure oversimplification did not occur.

3.7.3 Structuring narratives to describe the contents

After completing an initial draft of my findings, I read through each interview again (also listening to recordings of face-to-face interviews), and selected appropriate extracts to include in the findings. Initially, I included all relevant extracts, which enabled me to

compare these and select the most representative ones to retain in the final draft. This approach also enabled me to keep individual stories in mind. As Cohen et al. (2011: 555) note:

The great tension in data analysis is between maintaining a sense of the holism of the data – the text – and a tendency for analysis to atomise or fragment the data – to separate them into constituent elements.

The iterative process of rereading individual interviews and grouping extracts helped me to reorganise themes according to salience and also to notice specific subtexts arising (see Discussion) while nonetheless trying to remain as objective and descriptive as possible when describing the findings themselves.

3.7.4 Interpreting the data

Once this was complete, I began interpreting the data for significant themes that could be compared to my own prior research, and the wider research and theoretical literature, developing an initial draft of the Discussion that was revised on subsequent occasions after revisiting the data. Following Morrow (2005), I have chosen to keep the Discussion separate from the Findings below to allow the reader to compare the two and evaluate the validity of my interpretation for her/himself.

4 Findings

Given my primary aim to treat the interviews as resources, extracts from face-to-face spoken interviews are transcribed using what Oliver et al. (2005) call *denaturalized transcription* given that “accuracy concerns the substance of the interview, that is, the meanings and perceptions created and shared during a conversation” (p. 1277). This is consistent with advice by Roberts (1997) to use standard orthography if possible “to evoke the naturalness of their speech” (p. 170). As such, repetitions and false starts are removed, and standard orthography and punctuation are used. I have added additional information in square brackets where required, usually to clarify what someone is referring to, e.g.:

...the rules that apply here [in the UK] because...

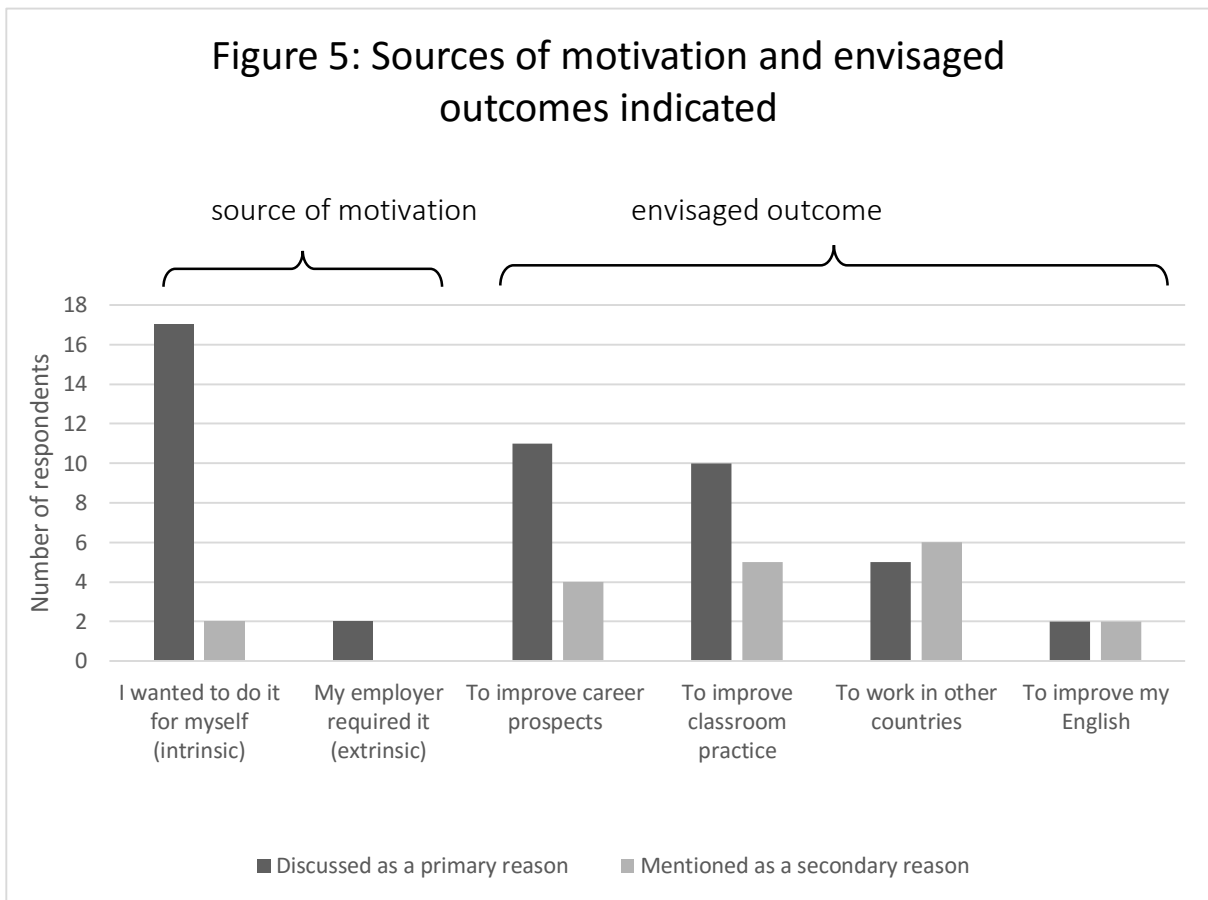
I have also used ellipses to indicate an extract from a longer sentence or utterance. All punctuation features used in email responses (e.g. underlining, use of brackets, etc.) have been preserved.

4.1 What factors contribute to NNESTs with prior teaching experience taking the decision to enrol on ITCs?

4.1.1 *General findings*

General findings, summarised in Figure 5, are consistent with the results of my earlier quantitative research (Anderson 2015), indicating a strong interest in both improving career prospects and improving classroom practice and less interest in seeing the qualification as a means to work in other countries, (although this was mentioned more than in my prior

study) or in improving levels of English. However, close links between these reasons were evident from the responses.



4.1.2 Sources of motivation

Both in face-to-face and email interviews, all participants made clear reference to whether their source of motivation was primarily personal (intrinsic) or from their employer (extrinsic). The vast majority (17)⁹ indicated that they were intrinsically motivated to enrol on the course. This included those who were doing it primarily to improve their classroom practice, such as Monica:

The reason I wanted to do it was just to become a better teacher, basically.

⁹ Numerals provided in brackets in Findings and Discussion indicate the number of respondents in question.

and those who were doing it to improve their career prospects, such as Sharon:

I just wanted to increase my employability worldwide.

Only two of the 19 respondents (Habib and Nina) indicated that motivation was mainly extrinsic – in both cases their employer required them to take it.

4.1.3 Envisaged outcomes of taking the course

Many respondents reported that their decision to enrol was a combination of two or even three primary reasons, with other, secondary benefits also mentioned by some. Primary reasons were considered to be those that were discussed first and/or at length. Secondary reasons were those mentioned briefly, in passing or upon being prompted. There were roughly equivalent levels of interest in the two main ‘hoped-for’ outcomes of the course:

- improving career prospects, including finding a new position, gaining promotion and/or a salary increase;
- improving classroom practice, including understanding of methodology and developing teaching skills.

15 respondents expressed an interest in improving their career prospects by taking the course, 11 discussing it as a primary factor. Most (10/15) expressed a hope of finding a completely new job rather than a promotion or raise. In five cases this was directly linked to a desire to work in other countries¹⁰. Angela was very clear on this:

There was one main reason for taking the course: become a world-wide recognised ESOL teacher and be able to be hired as one, abroad. I thought such an experience would be an important step forward in my teaching career (especially as a non-native speaker trained in an English-speaking multi-cultural environment).

¹⁰ ‘Other country’ here means outside current country of residence.

Closely related to improving job prospects, many respondents (11) referred to the ‘prestige value’ or ‘validity’ of the qualification, indicating the importance of their having qualified teacher status from a UK-based organisation that is internationally respected. Patricia’s primary reason given for enrolling was “To validate my abilities and to help me find a teacher’s job”. Likewise Sofia commented on the need to “have my qualifications certified by an English organisation such as Trinity”. This was often linked to the need to be on equal footing with native speaker teachers, something emphasised in four of the five face-to-face interviews (see Discussion and Conclusion).

15 respondents expressed an interest in improving their own classroom practice during the course, 10 discussing it as a primary factor. Monica’s comment above (in 4.1.2) is indicative of this. There was a strong emphasis on acquiring practical skills, as many often felt they had the necessary content knowledge, having taken a BA, MA or equivalent in English language or linguistics. As an MA linguistics graduate, Olga noted:

I hoped the course would help me look at the teaching process from a different angle. I would learn something new and then use it in the classroom.

While many respondents expressed a hope to work in other countries after the course (11), few seemed confident of this outcome. For two, this desire was described as a ‘dream’ (Monica, Sabina). Four respondents seemed unclear about the likelihood of them gaining future employment, including Andrew, who said: “It’s like a passport for teaching in London - I heard. I’m not sure whether it’s right or wrong.”

Only four respondents mentioned improving their English as an important reason for their taking the course, although it was never the first reason mentioned, and was often integrated with pedagogic reasons:

I really wanted to improve my skills when teaching, also I thought it could be a great opportunity to speak better English and learn something about the way of teaching it.

Sabina

4.2 How useful and productive do experienced NNESTs find ITCs (considering suitability to needs and envisaged future teaching contexts, and challenges faced on courses)?

4.2.1 *General evaluation*

All respondents were asked the open question: How useful did you find the course? Initial appraisals varied from 'extremely useful' (3) and 'very useful' (8) to the unmarked 'useful' (4). Two respondents chose not to use the word 'useful' in their answer, evaluating it as 'just fine' or 'enjoyable' (2). Two respondents avoided positive appraisal (Patricia & Isabel). Furthermore, two who praised the course as 'very useful' (Sharon & Nina), appeared to be referring to usefulness to the needs of others. Nina's complete answer is revealing in this regard:

I find this course very useful, especially for those specialists whose majors were not the aspects of the English language. They now became qualified teachers. For me it was more like sharing experience, observing the process of teaching, colleagues and students, comparing, enjoying the atmosphere.

4.2.2 *Useful elements of the course*

Practical elements of the course received positive appraisal from almost all respondents. First among these was the tutor-supported teaching practice (TP), mentioned by eight respondents, often linked to subsequent feedback discussion, self-evaluation or 'reflection':

...the course gives very practical knowledge and enables participants to use it immediately in afternoon classes to which feedback is provided by tutors.

Deniza

Six respondents also indicated finding the planning element of the course useful, and the individualised support often provided during planning:

...we needed to consult our lesson plan with the tutor before we actually teach, and every time I spoke to [my tutor], she kept giving me these new ideas in teaching and it helped me deliver good lessons.

Farah

Also discussed as useful by five respondents was the unknown language lesson/course. For Olga this was the most useful element:

I guess the most useful part was when we learned a new language. Being a fast learner myself I didn't realise different students learn in a different way and at a different pace.

The only other element mentioned as being useful by several respondents was the opportunity to study alongside NSs, with three mentioning learning more about NSs' accents, and two mentioning the exchange of opinions and cultural knowledge with NS participants:

...doing the course with native speakers helped in my spoken English and we had the opportunity to exchange different points of view and experiences.

Sabina

Other elements mentioned as being useful by one or two individuals included the pedagogic content knowledge (2), learning about how to build rapport with learners (1), teaching learners from a range of linguistic backgrounds (1) and learning new IT skills (1).

4.2.3 Suitability to future teaching contexts

The five face-to-face interviewees were asked how useful they felt the course was for their envisaged future teaching contexts. For both Sharon and Farah, who hoped to teach in international EFL and UK contexts respectively, the perception was that the course was generally suitable, although uncertainties regarding finding work were evident:

No-one promised me that I'm gonna get a job here [in the UK].

Farah

While acknowledging that it was not directly suitable to her envisaged context (her home country), Monica felt she could extract what she needed: “I felt I was able to differentiate and apply the methodology to different types of learners”. Lucia and Andrew were more critical, perceiving little relevance for their envisaged future contexts in their home countries of Spain and China respectively. Andrew mentioned both incompatibility of methodology and language choice, sometimes together:

...at first I thought much of the methodology, if I learned it here I could use it elsewhere. However now I know it's not for all contexts ... For example if I'm using CLT in the Chinese context, sometimes the students they do not talk in the target language.

Andrew

For Lucia the issue of first language use was prominent in her discussion:

...if the students feel uncomfortable when you speak to them in English you have to change to Spanish, sometimes, even if you don't feel very comfortable with that... You couldn't apply everything because it was like an ideal situation and it was not like the real situation where I teach.

4.2.4 Least useful elements and omissions

The area of the course most commonly mentioned as being of little or no use (by 9 respondents) was the language awareness component, especially inputs/lectures dealing with grammar:

The part I found the least useful was the grammar lessons... All my teachers used to focus massively on grammar rules so there was nothing new for me to learn during the course.

Sofia

Several of these also noted/implied that they found the teaching theory rather basic:

I thought some of the sessions were not challenging enough for me. This was due to the fact that some course participants had no prior teaching experience and therefore they took more time to understand some areas of training.

Nadia

Only two other elements were mentioned as being not useful by more than one respondent: having to complete 'so much paperwork' (Ofelia), such as planning and self-evaluation pro formas (3) and having to learn phonemic transcription (2).

With regard to omissions, respondents were asked how much L1 use was discussed or possible in TP. Eight respondents indicated that it was either not allowed (3), not possible (2), not discussed (2), or 'not advisable' (1) on their course. Two said it was only mentioned and two that it was discussed. Some were happy with this:

Although challenging (I had to speak English all the time, I never used my mother tongue, and I taught adult classes), it was what I wanted because I knew I needed that.

Angela

However, three were critical regarding this omission (see Lucia's comment above). Other omissions mentioned included guidance on teaching for exams (2) and a lack of focus on long-term planning (1).

4.2.5 Challenges faced on the course

By far the most commonly referred to challenge, discussed by 12 respondents, concerned the need for them to change or adapt their teaching style to bring it more in line with the methodology expected on the course:

Having prior teaching experience it gets you in a sort of teaching routine and it also defines your own teaching style which was difficult to change in such a short period of time... I had to make some changes in my teaching style, to adapt it during the teaching practice lessons.

Angela

Related to this, three of the most experienced NNESTs referred negatively to their prior teaching skills as "ingrained" or "wrong" habits:

During teaching it was difficult to change some of my habits as they had already ingrained e.g. while giving instructions I often forgot using ICQs.

Deniza

The workload expected of trainees was considered to be excessive by five respondents, emphasised strongly by two:

I didn't have enough time to absorb the massive and huge amount of theoretical information regarding the teaching theory and teaching methods.

Habib

Four participants discussed the challenges presented by teaching lexis, with colloquial language and teaching lexis to advanced learners mentioned specifically. Interestingly, only one respondent mentioned a perceived weaknesses in her own classroom language proficiency:

...I had to teach C1 students... And it was a bit uncomfortable because one of the big problems that non-natives have is that we don't have a lexicon that is that rich, so sometimes you confuse words or you have to study them. It's not that they come up naturally.

Lucia

Three participants discussed the challenge of meeting requirements with regard to academic writing in course assignments. Lucia admitted "I realised that I didn't have very good academic English", and Monica perceived conflict between academic writing conventions in her home country and "the rules that apply here [in the UK] because it's slightly different in [my home country], the way you write an essay."

Three participants discussed the difficulty of adapting their teaching from a monolingual context, in which they knew and could draw on the learner's first language, to a multilingual context in which this option was not available (see Angela's comment in 4.2.4 above).

4.3 What impact do ITCs have on experienced NNESTs, including impact on teaching practice, and on career development?

4.3.1 Impact on respondents' teaching practice

All respondents indicated that the course had some effect on their teaching practice, although this varied significantly, with 7 indicating that they had been able to implement the majority of what they had learnt, and 12 indicating partial or selective implementation.

Farah reports implementing everything that she learnt:

If you see me teaching you can see that I'm... a TESOL-trained teacher because I just implement all methodology I've learnt from the course, from A to Z, from lead-in and pre-reading, post-reading and activate, things like that.

Farah

At the other end of the spectrum, Andrew described having difficulty implementing the methodology:

Right now in the classroom I cannot use CLT all the time but I would try to use a little bit of CLT... Sometimes I think the CELTA is not very suitable for a Chinese context...

A number of respondents discussed the relationship between pedagogic theory and skills taught on the course and their prior Personal Practical Knowledge¹¹ (Golombek 2009), with four respondents indicating that they were able to bring these together effectively to improve their practice, and four indicating more difficulty reconciling the two:

Changes in teaching practices are really difficult to internalise. You need to fight with yourself constantly.

Manuela

¹¹ Contextualised, situated knowledge developed primarily through personal experience (Golombek 2009).

4.3.2 *Specific areas where change was reported in the classroom*

A significant number of strategies and principles that respondents described implementing in their classrooms were indicative of a communicative approach to teaching (12). This included mention of collaborative learning (groupwork, pairwork and mingle activities) (6), a wider use of teaching and learning resources (3), more interactive teaching (2), the reduction of teacher-talking time (2), more interactive classroom layouts (1) and more peer-teaching opportunities (1). Carla noted (underlining in original):

I have considerably reduced my TTT in class. I have a clear idea of the importance of teacher-independent students in a class and having them participating as much as possible... I try to make the lesson more dynamic, regrouping students differently and for different purposes.

Six respondents reported changes in their planning and lesson preparation and three indicated that they had made constructive use of the reflective practice skills gained on the course:

I devoted more time for planning and my reflection before and after the lesson delivery was well exploited in what came next.

Nadia

An increase in confidence was reported by eight respondents, with four mentioning the importance of having the certificate in this regard, and three linking this to being part of a wider community of practice among qualified teachers, implying that this change extended beyond the classroom:

It also increased my self-confidence, and I felt a bit more respected by my boss, a non-native speaker of English too and probably this certificate meant something to her as well- It was like saying "I do take my job very seriously and invest in my career".

Carla

4.3.3 Impact of course/qualification on career development

Table 3 shows career development changes of the 19 respondents since the course. It indicates differing fortunes among respondents. Of the nine who have either gained employment or received some kind of promotion since the course, five considered that the qualification was either important or instrumental in their getting a new job:

It was a life-changing course for me, you know, because of this I found my way back to teaching and I feel qualified now. And it helped my confidence a lot especially when realising that I'm now teaching for [Institute X], I feel like my teaching skills have been recognised.

Farah

Table 3: Individual career development changes since the course

Name	Position immediately before course	Year Of course	Attempts made to change position, gain promotion or salary increase	Changes noted since
Sharon	Private ESP teacher	2013	Initially none, then more recently applied for position in UK.	Successful. Currently private EFL teacher, UK.
Andrew	Private EAP teacher	2015	No attempt made. Returned to prior employer.	None.
Monica	Secondary school teacher	2006	Applied for position in UK soon after graduation.	Successful. Currently private EFL teacher, UK.
Lucia	Private EFL teacher	2012	None.	None.
Farah	Waitress, UK.	2014	Applied for volunteer job after graduation, and permanent position six months later.	Successful in both. Currently private EFL/ESL teacher, UK.
Habib	Private EFL/EAP teacher	2013	Unclear.	Received "modest promotion (salary increment)"
Nadia	Academic manager, private language school	2011	Continued in prior post. Later applied for training position in larger organisation.	Successful.
Isabel	Secondary school teacher	2015	Currently applying for teaching posts in China.	No success.
Olga	Private EFL teacher	2012	Attempted to find work in other countries.	No success.

Camille	Secondary school science teacher	2012	Attempted to find work in other countries as science teacher (MA and PGCE certified).	Successful. Currently science teacher, Asia.
Nina	University lecturer	2015	None.	None.
Angela	Secondary school teacher	2012	Attempted to find work as EFL teacher in at least four different countries.	No success.
Carla	Private EFL teacher	2015	Unclear.	Received temporary promotion (maternity cover).
Manuela	Secondary school CLIL science teacher	2012	None.	None.
Sofia	Sales assistant, UK	2013	Applied for position in UK language school three months after course.	Successful. Currently private EFL teacher, UK.
Patricia	Hotel receptionist	2014	Applied for position as private YL teacher, Spain.	Successful. Currently YL teacher, Spain.
Ofelia	Freelance teacher	2013	None.	None.
Sabina	Part-time private YL teacher	2014	Applied for several positions in home country.	No success.
Deniza	University EAP teacher	2013	None.	None.

Of the 10 who have not seen any change in their career, six have not tried to make any changes, leaving four who have tried unsuccessfully to gain employment, all as EFL teachers, three internationally. All three chose to mention discrimination towards non-native speakers as an inhibiting factor in their discussion of this:

I didn't have many options since most advertisements were very specific. You could read something like "Please do not apply if you are a non-native English teacher. We'll consider only applications from native speakers."

Angela

Even those that found employment were also conscious of issues of competition with NESTs:

...people think "Oh my God, you're non-native, but you're teaching in England!"

Monica

4.4 With the benefit of hindsight, what suggestions/ feedback do respondents have for other NNESTs and also for course providers and validators to ensure that ITCs are as useful for NNESTs as for other participants?

4.4.1 Recommendations to other NNESTs thinking about taking the course

14 of the 19 respondents recommended the course to non-native speaking colleagues. Of these, four did so with no provisos:

I would say that it is really worth to take this course no matter whether you are new to teaching or an experienced teacher, but without teaching qualification.

Nadia

10 other respondents recommended the course, but did so with cautions or provisos, four mentioning probable discrimination in competition for work with NESTs, three warning about the intensity of the course, and two recommending part-time courses. Five respondents did not specifically recommend it, either discussing advantages and disadvantages or providing warnings:

I would tell them that such a course is more appropriate for less experienced teachers who need to benefit from teacher training in an English-speaking environment. I would also advise them to think twice before taking this course because there is no job guarantee for a non-native teacher of English, no matter how successful you've been on the course.

Angela

Angela's warning was echoed by Farah, despite the fact that she did recommend the course:

I'm sure that my other non-native TESOL certificate classmates or colleagues feel differently about this, because I do know they haven't got a job.

4.4.2 Recommendations for course providers/course validators

Only three of the 19 respondents considered that their ITC required no changes, either to improve it in general, or to make it more suitable for non-native speaker participants. The remaining offered recommendations or suggestions. Recommendations offered were directed both at course validating organisations (Trinity TESOL and Cambridge English Language Assessment) and course providers. Four said that more help was needed with finding work, with two linking this to issues of discrimination towards non-native speaker teachers. One solution was proposed:

Create a network of companies hiring ESOL teachers and connect the newly qualified teachers to that network so that it becomes faster for them to get hired.

Sofia

Four respondents suggested that Trinity and Cambridge might investigate the possibility of developing more context-specific and/or culturally sensitive courses. There were also recommendations for supplementary or optional modules providing appropriate local cultural information on courses in the UK (2), assistance in finding work (2) and academic writing guidance (2).

However, the strongest shared recommendation, mentioned by six respondents, including all five face-to-face interviewees, was that the course should not make special allowances for non-native speaker participants:

I think it wouldn't be fair because with this qualification you are supposed to be the same, teach internationally. You shouldn't require any extra assistance or help because you are in the same classroom, you are the same trainees, you are assessed with the same criteria.

Sharon

Shared among those providing this recommendation was a clear sense that while all course participants may at times need individual help, it was the very fact that the qualification criteria required the same of all participants that made it useful as a means of demonstrating equity of status with native speaker graduates:

I feel like this certificate helped me to be in the same position as a native speaker.

Farah

All respondents were asked whether they had heard of the Cambridge In-service Certificate for English Language Teachers¹² (ICELT), designed specifically to meet the needs of in-service teachers in a wide variety of contexts. None had heard of it. Upon investigating the qualification, only four stated that they would have been interested as a potential alternative to the CELTA or CertTESOL. Most perceived that the CELTA and CertTESOL were the internationally accepted benchmark in the industry:

I chose the CertTESOL because this would help me to get the certificate to work more easily abroad.

Isabel

4.4.3 Drawing on the expertise of NNESTs

All five face-to-face interviewees were asked for suggestions as to how ITCs could recognise and usefully draw on the expertise of NNESTs on courses. Three mentioned that NNSs (experienced or not) can provide useful insight into the learner's perspective:

Non-native speakers they've learned the language so they know what their own students would feel... what's going on in the student's mind... that's why I said I could explain grammar better than a native speaker.

Sharon

Two discussed the possibility that experienced NNESTs could contribute to a wider understanding of different teaching approaches in different contexts. Monica suggested that NNESTs could "teach [a lesson] how they would normally teach and then compare and contrast".

¹² This qualification replaced the earlier Certificate for Overseas Teachers of English (COTE).

5 Discussion

This insight into the past and future fortunes of 19 experienced NNESTs who took initial teacher training courses provides a useful opportunity to understand not only the role of ITCs in their careers (the primary aim of this study) but also some of the challenges that they have faced as NNESTs, and the degree to which they have overcome these challenges. The following discussion attempts to interpret key findings described above and to situate more generalisable answers to the 4 research questions in the wider theoretical context, recognising that a sample of 19 voluntary respondents, many of whom took their courses in the UK, may only be partially representative of the target population.

The first three research questions are discussed here. Suggestions from the fourth are incorporated in the Conclusion, where recommendations are offered.

5.1 Why did they take the course?

All but two of the respondents were motivated to enrol primarily for personal reasons, with two distinct, yet often intertwined envisaged outcomes dominating these reasons: to improve career prospects and to improve classroom practice. Among those who sought to improve career prospects, many have either found work (6), looked for work (4) or already work (3) in the private sector where both the qualifications (CELTA/CertTESOL) and knowledge of the communicative methodology they promote are expected. Among those who sought to improve classroom practice, many also recognised that by so doing they were increasing their opportunities for employment in this same private sector, possibly internationally. This close relationship was consistent with the findings of Anderson (2015: 9), who notes “the majority of NNSs view initial training courses primarily as professional

development that may lead to improved job prospects”. The belief that such ITCs promote the most progressive methodology, often through association with assumptions regarding native speaker authority was evident in a number of comments, supporting arguments that *native-speakerism* lives on in the profession (Holliday 2006; Anderson 2015) through the close link between methodology and employability that ITCs provide. After remarking that his manager “imposed” the qualification on him, and noting “Either I take the CELTA or look for a new job”, Habib reflected:

What I hoped to learn from CELTA as a teacher is the art of teaching English by being trained by professional and near or near-native trainers.

Yet while this link between methodology and employability was often evident, it should be noted that five respondents were primarily interested in methodology, and one (Ofelia) did not mention career prospects at all.

Compared to findings in Anderson (2015), opportunity to travel turned out to be more important than expected but always linked to, and usually discussed after, career prospects. This may explain why it ranked lower in the prior study. The use of the term ‘dream’ and uncertainties regarding finding work internationally mentioned by several respondents indicates that this may be better understood as a hope than an expectation.

Consistent with Anderson (2015), and in contrast with studies on NNS participants on MA TESOL courses (e.g. D. Liu 1999; Polio & Wilson-Duffy 1998), the opportunity to improve language proficiency was not discussed as a major reason for taking the course (language proficiency is further discussed in 5.2 below).

5.2 How useful did they find the course?

The majority of respondents reported finding the course very useful, and 14 would recommend it to other NNESTs, yet there were also both shortcomings and challenges reported. There was significant consistency among responses regarding the most useful course element: teaching practice, with the practical nature of the course receiving most

praise, consistent with Faez and Valeo (2012), whose study included both NS and NNS respondents. It was often discussed in close conjunction with post-lesson self-evaluation and feedback discussion. Planning was reported as the second most useful element, indicating that the action research cycle of planning, teaching, observing and reflecting seemed to be helping many of these experienced teachers to develop their classroom practice:

All parts were useful and interesting to me, especially the teaching practice sessions and the feedback sessions we had afterwards. I also appreciated very much all the aspects we were forced to consider when building our lesson plans.

Carla

As suggested by Anderson (2015), it is likely that such experienced teachers benefit more from *development*, which focuses on “individual... reflection, examination and change” than *training*, aimed more at “building specific teaching skills” (Freeman 1982: 21), and this is borne out by the findings of this study. Indeed, while reflective practice and developmental procedures were reported on very positively, it is notable that the most commonly discussed challenges related to adding new teaching skills and procedures to their practice (i.e. training). This included changing how they give instructions, reducing TTT, eliciting more and using CCQs and sometimes led to conflict between course demands, and the practices that they had internalised over years of teaching. The language used to describe this conflict was revealing, often blaming themselves for these difficulties:

The biggest challenge was to overcome the old wrong habits I had in my teaching which I had to eradicate from my teaching practice.

Nadia

Similar comments were provided by Deniza, Manuela, Angela and Isabel. Because the course was oriented towards providing a new body of knowledge, participants may have been trained like ‘blank slates’, and those with prior experience expected to forget it:

I thought it could have been easier to learn how to teach successfully if I had not had any prior experience.

Nadia

These extracts highlight an important contradiction between the initial, pre-service nature of ITCs and the needs of experienced teachers. While the inevitably assessment-oriented nature of lesson observation on ITCs means that they are most likely to fall under what Freeman (1982) has called the *Supervisory Approach* where the observer is an *authority*, and one to whom many pre-service trainees may be willing to submit, it is also possible for trainers, when working with NNESTs, to draw more on Freeman's *Alternatives Approach*, more appropriate to teacher development, where the observer is a provider of alternative perspectives who "stimulate[s] the teacher to think critically and, thereby, to broaden the scope of what s/he will consider doing in that classroom situation" (1982: 23). This was even suggested by one respondent, who used Gebhard's (1984) terms¹³:

...maybe it would be better if the trainers or the tutors could have combined a more collaborative approach because [our course] was a more directive approach.

Sharon

As predicted by the literature (e.g. Medgyes 1994; Llurda 2005; Anderson 2015), many (but not all) reported learning little if anything in the language awareness inputs – not only are these respondents expert English language learners, they are also experienced English teachers, and in several cases, linguists too:

Regarding language awareness, I did not learn any new things compared to native speakers of English as I'm a linguist and I'm familiar with grammar, phonetics and so forth.

Isabel

Linked to this and consistent with Anderson (2015), several respondents expressed concern that having to study alongside completely novice teachers prevented course providers from including more advanced aspects of pedagogy:

Me and my other non-native English-speaking trainees feel it was a bit too basic, but they can't really teach advanced for the others otherwise it's really difficult...

¹³ Gebhard's (1984) five models for teacher supervision moved broadly from more to less supervisor control: 1) directive, 2) alternative, 3) collaborative, 4) non-directive, and 5) creative.

Likewise, there was only limited discussion of challenges relating to respondents' own language proficiency (contrasting with other studies, e.g. Carrier 2003; Brady & Gulikers 2004, where it was more prominent), and this discussion focused mainly on issues of academic writing, and one respondent's challenges when working with advanced learners. Given the prior teaching experience of the respondents (averaging 8.6 years), it is likely that many had already developed the language proficiency that they need to teach, at least in their own classrooms, and may need less focus on this than NNSs on MA TESOLs as recommended by D. Liu (1999) and Kamhi-Stein (2000).

With regard to suitability of the course to their future teaching contexts (asked only to the five face-to-face interviewees), uncertainty about finding work made it difficult for two of them to answer, although two that subsequently taught in their home countries were critical regarding aspects of methodology, particularly use of L1. Lucia indicated feeling guilt whenever she drew on her shared linguistic resources to teach Spanish-speaking learners since the course:

...you feel like you're being a kind of fraud if you are teaching in English and you have to speak in Spanish...

Lucia

As noted by Anderson (2015), ITCs tend to promote a monolingual methodology due to the multilingual classroom context in which they evolved, leaving little opportunity for exploration of use of L1. This is reflected in course syllabi where it is rarely mentioned¹⁴ and echoed in the comments of some respondents including Carla, who took the course in Spain:

...6 people in the course couldn't speak Spanish and that was definitely a big point in favour. All in English. We talked about different teaching methodologies

¹⁴ Neither Cambridge (2015) nor Trinity (2016) syllabi make any reference to first language when describing teaching skills or methodology. It is referred to only to describe learner background, learner errors and for teaching the Unknown Foreign Language on the Trinity CertTESOL, where "little or no use of the learner's first language" is recommended (Trinity College London 2016: 25).

and about the possibility of using L1 in class but they told us it wasn't the Cambridge style.

Only one, who also took the course in Spain, describes a more L1-inclusive environment, that she notes made the students feel “really comfortable”:

I was lucky in this aspect. Our students were Spanish so many times when they were lost in any part of the lesson we could explain something in L1 and they felt really comfortable. It's sometimes very important to feel your teacher understands you in any situation.

Sabina

5.3 What impact did the course have?

5.3.1 *Impact on teaching practice*

Just as most respondents reported finding the course very useful, most reported changes in their own teaching practice, with a noticeable focus on aspects of learner-centred pedagogy evident in the changes described. It is interesting that two of the respondents who indicated among the highest levels of implementation had both obtained teaching posts in the UK soon after (Farah and Sofia), where such methodology is likely to be both contextually appropriate and expected of teachers. Others who indicated extensive implementation (Carla, Olga) teach adults in private institutes in their home countries. Difficulties implementing the methodology were reported both from adult (e.g. Andrew, Lucia) and secondary (e.g. Angela) monolingual contexts, while others (e.g. Sharon, Isabel, Monica and Nina) indicated that they appropriated selectively from what they had learnt upon returning to monolingual contexts, aware of the context-dependent nature of methodology:

...our methodology in [my home country] is a compilation of different methods and techniques depending on the aspect of the language you teach and the age range of the students in the groups...

For one of the more experienced teachers, Manuela, the challenges she described when trying to incorporate new strategies and skills into her current practice have clearly continued upon completing the course: “...my old habits refuse to leave my brain.” Other experienced teachers (e.g. Deniza, Nadia, Olga) did not report such difficulties. Research from mainstream education strongly indicates that teachers need follow-up support after training in order to implement what has been learnt (e.g. Guskey 2002), and this certainly seems true in Manuela’s case.

5.3.2 *Impact on careers*

With regard to the career paths of NNESTs, this study has uncovered evidence both of ‘life changing’ opportunities and insurmountable barriers to finding international employment. In the cases of Farah, Sofia, Sharon and Monica, all of whom are currently teaching in the UK, the course has proven to be extremely useful, enabling them to realise their goals fully. In the cases of Angela, Olga and Isabel, the opposite is true, and despite repeated attempts, they have failed to find work internationally and met with discrimination and prejudice. Despite evidence indicating that learners do not necessarily prefer to be taught by NESTs (e.g. Lipovsky & Mahboob 2010), evidence of discrimination towards NNESTs has been provided by 12 of the 19 participants in this study, even though none of the questions addressed this issue directly. Isabel provides the following story:

One of my course partners was told they couldn’t hire her as she was Spanish, only when she was in the interview and just said her surname. She did not have this problem when she was on the phone and the employers did not even notice her accent, they took her as a “native” speaker.

Camille, an MA- and PGCE-qualified science teacher with five years’ teaching experience including in the UK, recounts the following episode, indicating that the prejudice extends beyond English language teaching itself:

Last year I applied for a job in a top International School in [an Asian city] and they openly told me they would only consider English native speakers for the position, even for the teaching of Science.

Nonetheless, this study also indicates that ITCs can provide the necessary qualification for experienced NNESTs to get new jobs and promotions, both in their home country and overseas, in competition with NESTs. Several respondents emphasised the importance of getting a qualification that, as it does not make special allowances for non-native speakers, demonstrates their equality with qualified NESTs, and their superiority over unqualified NESTs:

...[unqualified NESTs] are valued as better than you, and I really feel uncomfortable because I think it's not fair. I think [the qualification] is a good way to say: 'Well you're native, but I'm a teacher, you're not a teacher.'

Lucia

The fact that four of the seven respondents who had successfully found work since their course did so in the UK, often considered one of the most competitive contexts for all graduates of ITCs to find work, is encouraging, however, this may reflect a bias in the data set, especially given that four of the five face-to-face interviews were conducted in the UK. At least two of these five were aware that their achievements were atypical:

...people think 'Oh my God, you're non-native, but you're teaching in England!'

Monica

...I'm sure that my other non-native TESOL certificate classmates or colleagues feel differently about this, because I do know they haven't got a job.

Farah

If nothing else, the limited evidence provided by this study indicates that at least some employers in the UK are willing to employ non-native speaker teachers, but that discrimination is still largely endemic in the industry, in agreement with Kamhi-Stein (2016).

6 Conclusion - limitations and potential implications

It is important once more to mention the limitations of this study. While the findings do corroborate my prior quantitative research (Anderson 2015), sampling issues and the fact that respondents volunteered to participate may have distorted the data. If my respondents include a higher percentage of more successful NNEST participants than is typical, it may be that in reality a higher percentage of NNESTs are having difficulty finding work after ITCs, and that a higher percentage are having difficulty on the course itself. Thus, it cannot be concluded based on this study alone, for example, that the recommendations offered by Kamhi-Stein (2000) for supporting NNS participants on TESOL programs, should be ignored in the case of ITCs. As always, further research will help to inform this important question. It should also be acknowledged that as well as the high number of experienced NNESTs on ITCs (89% of NNS participants) that are the focus of this study, such courses also include other NNSs who lack prior teaching experience and are likely to have different needs. However, given that increasing numbers of NNESTs are enrolling on ITCs (Anderson 2015), this study has the potential to help both course providers and validating organisations make informed decisions to ensure that courses are as useful as possible for all participants.

Perhaps the most interesting finding, when compared to Anderson (2015), coming directly from the feedback of the respondents themselves, is the importance for these NNESTs of gaining the same, internationally-recognised qualification as NSs to enable them to compete in both international and national language teacher job markets with NESTs. As such, they see it as important that all participants meet identical assessment criteria, and that no special provision be made for NNSs. This also explained the low level of interest in an alternative qualification (the Cambridge ICELT) that is potentially adaptable to a much wider range of teaching contexts worldwide than the CELTA or CertTESOL.

Nonetheless, this study has revealed a number of areas in which course providers could potentially allow partly differentiated pathways to achievement of the same criteria, even on intensive courses:

1. First among these is the recommendation that TP tutors recognise that the prior experience of many NNESTs demands a developmental approach to supervision and lesson observation, possibly incorporating aspects of Freeman's (1982) Alternatives Approach to observation, rather than the Supervisory Approach more appropriate to training novice teachers. Such a collaborative approach can also extend to assistance with lesson planning, and is likely in the long-term to lead to more sustainable changes in their teaching practice.
2. Possible amendments could be made to ITC syllabi or timetables to make them more L1-inclusive. Trinity College London have already made one amendment based on the findings of Anderson (2015). It would seem sensible on all courses, especially those including NNESTs, to include appropriate reading and discussion of issues relating to L1 use. Also, for courses run in contexts where learners in TP classes share L1, course providers could be encouraged to help trainee teachers make effective use of L1 in planning, materials preparation and teaching as appropriate (see, e.g. Butzkamm & Caldwell 2009). While some NS course participants may be monolingual, they can also potentially learn by observing such lessons, and recognising that prior linguistic resources are an asset to teachers and not a handicap (V. Cook 2001).
3. Opportunities to engage trainees in discussion on critical evaluation and appropriation of methodology (rather than wholesale adoption) should be explored, employing the expertise of NNESTs to help raise awareness of potential challenges of implementing communicative methodology in different contexts (Hobbs 2013; Brady & Gulikers 2004). As well as being useful to NNESTs, this could also serve to prepare NS participants for diverse future teaching contexts.
4. Given that NNESTs may be learning little from language awareness inputs (especially grammar) as they are currently often delivered (i.e. to meet the needs of NS participants) course providers could be encouraged to experiment, firstly with how they can usefully draw on the knowledge of the NNESTs (e.g. by encouraging them to

give mini-presentations or lead group activities on aspects of language) and secondly by adapting syllabi (if required) to allow for an increase in focus on areas of lexis, which NNSs tend to find more challenging, especially idiomatic and culturally-situated language, and a decrease in (verb) grammar which tends to dominate ITC language awareness syllabi (Kerr 1996), and under-challenges NNSs.

5. Course providers could offer classes on academic writing for all participants, ensuring that these are 'democratic' as one respondent suggests, open to all participants who require assistance with assignment writing.
6. Finally, given the above-documented discriminatory practices towards non-native speakers that are apparently still widespread in the industry, as suggested by one respondent, it may be possible for Cambridge and/or Trinity to develop a publicly accessible database of organisations that employ recent ITC graduates, offer equal opportunities to all job applicants and welcome applications from non-native speaker teachers, possibly with the option for such organisations to also make public their hiring policy.

All of these recommendations see NNESTs as equal participants and useful resources to the potentially fruitful learning communities on ITCs. If adopted, they enable course providers firstly to foster richer environments for learning and secondly to help all participants develop their understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of both NESTs and NNESTs, and the importance of equity between them as colleagues. These recommendations also serve to raise participants' awareness of the complex relationship between context and methodology in language teaching, and to recognise that expertise itself is also necessarily context specific.

Word count: 15032

7 References

Note: Oxford Journals referencing style, as used in *ELT Journal*, is followed both here and in the dissertation text above.

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8 Appendices

8.1 Appendix 1: Approach letter

My research into non-native speaker participants on initial teacher training courses

Dear [name]

You may recall the research that I recently conducted into differences between the needs of native speaker and non-native speaker participants on CELTA and CertTESOL courses. I am pleased to report that the results of that research are due to be published in ELT Journal soon ([click here for Advance Access preview](#)). Many thanks for forwarding it to prior course participants. Thanks also to those that completed the questionnaire.

Following on from this I am currently conducting qualitative research to investigate in more detail why experienced non-native speaker teachers of English take courses such as the Cambridge CELTA and the Trinity CertTESOL, how useful they find the courses and what impact the courses have on their professional development and career.

For this research I'm aiming to conduct a number of interviews (including email interviews, face-to-face interviews and Skype interviews) with non-native speaker participants on CELTA/CertTESOL courses who had prior teaching experience. The email interview will require respondents to spend 30 minutes writing answers to 10 questions after providing some initial background data. The face-to-face and Skype interviews will require respondents to make an appointment for a 50-60 minutes discussion that will be recorded and transcribed. All data will be kept in the strictest confidence, stored securely, and all respondents' names and institutions will be anonymised in any reports or uses of the data, so that it will not be possible to identify respondents, tutors or course providers.

Would you be willing to forward this email, along with the attached Information Sheet and Consent Form to eligible respondents and request that they contact me directly if they are interested in participating in the research? Anyone interested can indicate whether they would prefer to complete the written email interview, or to arrange a face-to-face interview (if in the UK) or Skype interview (if not in the UK) in their reply.

Please note: Eligible respondents must consider themselves non-native speakers of English who had prior teaching experience (6 months or more) before starting their CELTA/CertTESOL, and should have completed the course at least 3 months ago.

Many thanks in advance for any assistance you can provide.

Kind regards,

Jason Anderson

Jasonanderson1@gmail.com

8.2 Appendix 2: Information sheets

INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARTICIPANTS: EMAIL INTERVIEWS

REC Reference Number: LRU15/162438 - 02/02/ 2016



YOU WILL BE GIVEN A COPY OF THIS INFORMATION SHEET TO KEEP

Project title: A qualitative analysis of the role of initial teacher training courses in the professional development of experienced non-native speaker teachers of English.

I would like to invite you to participate in this postgraduate research project, which forms part of my MA in English Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics. The aim of my research is to investigate why experienced non-native speaker teachers of English take courses such as the Cambridge CELTA and the Trinity CertTESOL, how useful they find the courses and what impact the courses have on their professional development and career.

You should only participate if you want to; choosing not to take part will not disadvantage you in any way. Before you decide whether you want to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what your participation will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask me if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information.

- If you agree to take part, please provide your email details directly to me. I will select a short questionnaire by email to a selected cross section of respondents. Most of the questions require open answers, so depending on how much detail you provide it will take about 20-30 minutes to answer them. You will then email them back to me. With your permission, I would like to retain your answers for analysis. If any of your answers are unclear, I may need to contact you briefly by email to request clarification.
- The questions will focus on your reasons for taking the training course, what benefits you gained from it, your challenges on the course, and what effect it had on your teaching and your career.
- If you decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to indicate your consent on a consent form by typing your name and the date in relevant boxes. Please note that your completion and returning of the questionnaire itself also indicates consent for your data to be included.
- The information you provide will be treated in confidence and I will keep all answers secure. It will be used in my MA dissertation assignment, and may also be used in possible future publications or conference presentations. The names of all participants, trainers and organisations will be removed from your replies and any other identifying details will be changed to preserve your anonymity. It will not be possible to identify any of the participants from the presented data.
- You are under no obligation to take part in this project. If you do decide to take part you are still free to withdraw from the study at any time and without giving a reason. You may also ask for your data to be withdrawn by contacting either me or my supervisor (whose contact details are given below). However, it will no longer be practical to withdraw your data after 17th April 2016, when I will begin analysing the data.

If you have any questions or require more information about this study, please contact me:

Researcher: Jason Anderson jasonanderson1@gmail.com

If this study has harmed you in any way, you can contact King's College London using the details below for further advice and information:

Supervisor: Martin Dewey Email: martin.dewey@kcl.ac.uk

INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARTICIPANTS: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

REC Reference Number: LRU15/162438 - 02/02/ 2016



YOU WILL BE GIVEN A COPY OF THIS INFORMATION SHEET TO KEEP

Project title: A qualitative analysis of the role of initial teacher training courses in the professional development of experienced non-native speaker teachers of English.

I would like to invite you to participate in this postgraduate research project, which forms part of my MA in English Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics. The aim of my research is to investigate why experienced non-native speaker teachers of English take courses such as the Cambridge CELTA and the Trinity CertTESOL, how useful they find the courses and what impact the courses have on their professional development and career.

You should only participate if you want to; choosing not to take part will not disadvantage you in any way. Before you decide whether you want to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what your participation will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask me if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information.

- If you agree to take part, I will arrange a convenient time to interview you, either in person or via Skype. The interview will take about 30-60 minutes. With your permission, I would like to audio record these interviews.
- The interview will focus on your reasons for taking the training course, what benefits you gained from it, your challenges on the course, and what effect it had on your teaching and your career.
- If you decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form.
- The information you provide will be treated in confidence and I will keep all answers secure. It will be used in my MA dissertation assignment, and may also be used in possible future publications or conference presentations. The names of all participants, trainers and organisations will be removed from your replies and any other identifying details will be changed to preserve your anonymity. It will not be possible to identify any of the participants from the presented data.
- You are under no obligation to take part in this project. If you do decide to take part you are still free to withdraw from the study at any time and without giving a reason. You may also ask for your data to be withdrawn by contacting either me or my supervisor (whose contact details are given below). However, it will no longer be practical to withdraw your data after 17th April 2016, when I will begin analysing it.

If you have any questions or require more information about this study, please contact me:

Researcher: Jason Anderson jasonanderson1@gmail.com

If this study has harmed you in any way, you can contact King's College London using the details below for further advice and information:

Supervisor: Martin Dewey Email: martin.dewey@kcl.ac.uk

8.3 Appendix 3: Consent form for face-to-face interviews

CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS IN RESEARCH STUDIES – SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

Please complete this form after you have read the information Sheet and/or listened to an explanation about the research.



Title of Study: A qualitative analysis of the role of initial teacher training courses in the professional development of experienced non-native speaker teachers of English.

King's College Research Ethics Committee Ref: LRU15/162438 - 02/02/2016

Thank you for considering taking part in this research. The person organising the research must explain the project to you before you agree to take part. If you have any questions arising from the Information Sheet or explanation already given to you, please ask the researcher before you decide whether to join in. You will be given a copy of this Consent Form to keep and refer to at any time.

- I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet dated LRU15/162438 - 02/02/2016 for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information and asked questions which have been answered satisfactorily.
- I understand that if I decide at any time during the research that I no longer wish to participate in this project, I can notify the researchers involved and withdraw from it immediately without giving any reason. Furthermore, I understand that I will be able to withdraw my interview data up until it is analysed for use in the final report, i.e. 17th April 2016.
- I consent to the processing of my personal information for the purposes explained to me. I understand that such information will be handled in accordance with the terms of the Data Protection Act 1998.
- The information I have submitted may be published as a report. Confidentiality and anonymity will be maintained and it will not be possible to identify me from any publications.
- I consent to my interview being recorded.

Participant's Statement:

I, _____, agree that the research project named above has been explained to me to my satisfaction and I agree to take part in the study. I have read both the notes written above and the Information Sheet about the project, and understand what the research study involves.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Investigator's Statement:

I, _____, confirm that I have carefully explained the nature, demands and any foreseeable risks (where applicable) of the proposed research to the participant.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

8.4 Appendix 4: Consent form for email interviews

CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS IN RESEARCH STUDIES: EMAIL INTERVIEWS

Please complete this form after you have read the information Sheet and/or listened to an explanation about the research.



Title of Study: A qualitative analysis of the role of initial teacher training courses in the professional development of experienced non-native speaker teachers of English.

King's College Research Ethics Committee Ref: LRU15/162438 - 02/02/2016

Thank you for considering taking part in this research. The person organising the research must explain the project to you before you agree to take part. If you have any questions arising from the Information Sheet or explanation already given to you, please ask the researcher before you decide whether to join in. You will be given a copy of this Consent Form to keep and refer to at any time.

- I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet dated LRU15/162438 - 02/02/2016 for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information and asked questions which have been answered satisfactorily.
- I understand that if I decide at any time during the research that I no longer wish to participate in this project, I can notify the researchers involved and withdraw from it immediately without giving any reason. Furthermore, I understand that I will be able to withdraw my interview data up until it is analysed for use in the final report, i.e. 17th April 2016.
- I consent to the processing of my personal information for the purposes explained to me. I understand that such information will be handled in accordance with the terms of the Data Protection Act 1998.
- The information I have submitted may be published as a report. Confidentiality and anonymity will be maintained and it will not be possible to identify me from any publications.
- I consent to my written answers being kept for analysis.

Participant's Statement (please TYPE in the yellow boxes to indicate consent):

I, , agree that the research project named above has been explained to me to my satisfaction and I agree to take part in the study. I have read both the notes written above and the Information Sheet about the project, and understand what the research study involves.

Signed:

Date:

Investigator's Statement:

I, Jason Anderson, confirm that I have carefully explained the nature, demands and any foreseeable risks (where applicable) of the proposed research to the participant.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

8.5 Appendix 5: Guiding questions for semi-structured interviews

Research question	Initial question to ask	Potential prompts for clarification, elicitation, details, summary, etc.
Preliminary details	Name	
	Nationality	
	Current position/job	
	Do you consider yourself a non-native speaker of English?	
	Which course type did you choose?	CELTA, CertTESOL or another?
	Where did you take the course?	Did you speak the L1 of the learners?
	What was the name of the course provider?	
	When did you take it?	(Year and month)
	How long had you been teaching prior to this?	
	What prior teaching qualifications did you have?	E.g. national primary teacher certificate.
	What was your prior position/job?	Was this in the primary, secondary, tertiary or private sector?
	What other languages did you speak then and how well?	
1a Time:	Could you tell me about why you decided to enrol on the course and how it fitted into your career path?	Prompts for more reasons: Any other reasons?
		Career-related reasons: Did you anticipate a change of career direction? Did you expect to get an advantage in the job market? At that time, where did you expect to teach after the course?
		General learning: What did you expect to learn from the course?
		Methodology: How important was the methodology?
		Comparing reasons: Which was the most important reason? Why?
1b Time:	Why did you choose (name of course provider)?	Was it a personal recommendation, general reputation, marketing literature, something else?
2a Time:	How useful did you find the course?	Prioritising course elements: What parts of the course were most useful?
		Relevance: Was it suitable to your needs? What about the needs of your learners?

		<p>Did it seem relevant to your expected future teaching context?</p> <p>Not useful: Were there any parts of the course that you didn't find useful?</p> <p>Omissions: What would you have wanted more of if you could choose?</p> <p>Marketing: How accurately do you feel the course was described in marketing literature?</p> <p>Native-speaker co-trainees: If appropriate: Was it useful training alongside native speakers? Why (not)?</p>
2b Time:	Could you talk about some of the challenges you faced on the course?	<p>Language: Any challenges related to language? (e.g. own ability or pronunciation, classroom language, grammar knowledge?)</p> <p>Students: Any concerns relating to the students?</p> <p>Self-confidence/identity: Any fears or lack of confidence?</p> <p>Co-trainees: Any challenges relating to your co-trainees?</p> <p>Not challenging: Were there any parts of the course that you found weren't challenging you at all?</p> <p>L1: How much did you discuss using the mother tongue / L1 for teaching? Was it possible to use it in teaching practice?</p> <p>Final check: Any other challenges?</p>
3a Time:	What impact did the course have on you as a teacher and your teaching practices?	<p>Focus on methodology: Did you implement the methodology on the course? How did it go? Was it successful?</p> <p>More details regarding successes: Why was this successful? Why did you see this as a success?</p> <p>More details regarding problems/inhibiting factors:</p>

		What problems did you have? What stopped you from implementing?
		Confidence: Did the course have any impact on your confidence?
		Final check: Any other impact you can think of?
3b Time:	What impact did the course have on your professional development and career path?	Did it lead to a change in job or position? Did you apply for any new positions? (Outcome?) Did you make any financial gain? Status? New responsibilities?
		Final check: Any other impact on your professional development?
4a Time:	With the benefit of hindsight, what suggestions or advice do you have for other NNESTs thinking about taking a similar course?	Prompts for more feedback: Any other advice or suggestions?
4b Time:	What feedback would you give to either providers of ITCs or to (Cambridge/Trinity) to ensure that future courses are as useful as possible for NNESTs?	Prompts for more feedback: Any other feedback?
		More support for NNSs: what about the needs of NNSs?
		Positive impact of NNSs: What about with regard to how non-native speakers can contribute more to the course?
		Feedback to awarding bodies: What about to Cambridge/Trinity who created the syllabus?
		ICELT: Did you ever consider taking the Cambridge ICELT, offered to in-service teachers? Why did you choose CELTA?
5 Time:	Is there anything else we haven't discussed that you would like to mention?	

8.6 Appendix 6: Email interview form

Thank you for participating!

Title of study:

A qualitative analysis of the role of initial teacher training courses in the professional development of experienced non-native speaker teachers of English.

Aim:

This is a study into short initial teacher training courses such as the Cambridge CELTA and the Trinity CertTESOL, which have become increasingly popular with non-native speaker teachers. This qualitative study seeks to understand how the course fits into your professional development and career, especially your personal reasons for taking the course, how you found it, and what you got out of it.

Time:

It should take you about 5 minutes to complete your background details, and anything from 15 to 30 minutes to answer the 10 research questions. The more detail you can provide in answer to the research questions, the better. Many thanks.

Confidentiality:

You will have received an information sheet and consent form. Please indicate your consent on the consent form by typing your name in the relevant space and emailing it back to me. As stated on the information sheet, all responses will be kept securely and anonymised in any subsequent usage. It will not be possible to identify you, individuals you mention, or course providing organisations from the data you provide.

Current details:	Please write in this column. If you need more space, keep typing. The box should expand.
Your full name:	
Your email address:	
Your nationality (please indicate if this was different when you took the course):	
What is your current position/job:	
Do you consider yourself a non-native speaker of English?	
Details of the course:	
Name of the initial training course you took (e.g. CELTA, CertTESOL, etc.):	
Geographical location of the course (country and city):	
Name of course provider (i.e. organisation):	
Year and month when the course was taken:	
Your background details when you took the course:	
Number of years of prior teaching experience before taking the course:	

What prior teaching qualifications did you have? (e.g. primary school teaching diploma):	
Prior position/job (e.g. secondary school teacher of English):	
What languages did you speak then, and how well? (e.g., Spanish, native speaker, etc.):	
Research questions:	
1) Explain in as much detail as possible your reasons for choosing to take the course. Consider both career-related reasons, and also what you hoped to learn from it as a teacher (if anything):	
2) How useful did you find the course? Please indicate which parts were most useful and which parts were least useful, with reference to your needs and expectations.	
3) Identify some of the biggest challenges you had on the course, indicating why they were challenging.	
4) What impact did the course have on you as a teacher, and your classroom practice? What changes occurred as a result of the course?	
5) What impact, if any, did the course have on your career path? Did you change job, position, or responsibilities?	
6) What advice would you give to colleagues from your country who are thinking about taking such a course?	
7) What feedback would you give to the course provider or the certificate provider (e.g. Cambridge) to ensure that future courses are useful for non-native speaker teachers?	
8) Did you ever consider taking the Cambridge ICELT , offered to in-service teachers? If not, why not? If you did, why did you prefer to choose the CELTA?	
9) How much did you discuss using the mother tongue / L1 for teaching? Was it possible to use it in the teaching practice lessons on the course itself?	
10) Is there anything else you feel is relevant to mention or discuss that you have not been asked about? (note my aim above)	

Thank you so much again for your time and effort!

Please email it back to me: jasonanderson1@gmail.com

8.7 Appendix 7: Transcription of first interview

Sharon (pseudonym) transcription (58 minutes)

Date & Time 06/02/2016 10:30am

Transcription Key:

//	phrase boundary marker
...	unfinished/interrupted utterance
XXX	unintelligible
[X]	anonymised data
(long pause)	additional notes / non-verbal communication

(0 minutes)

Jason: OK it's recording so first of all could you tell me your name?

Sharon: my name is [X]

Jason: and [X] is your English name isn't it?

Sharon: yes exactly

Jason: nationality?

Sharon: [X]

Jason: and what is your current position your current job?

Sharon: I'm an English teacher

Jason: and where do you work?

Sharon: I work at [X]

Jason: [X], and that's in London isn't it?

Sharon: yeah

Jason: and important question, it sounds like a strange question but it is an important one do you consider yourself a non-native speaker of English?

Sharon: I think so

Jason: the reason I'm asking that is because I'm only using data from people who self-identify as non-native speakers so if you were to say it's more complex or I'm a native speaker then it would be interesting to do the research but it wouldn't be the area the target area I'm looking at // thank you // which course type did you choose did you do CELTA or CertTESOL?

Sharon: done a CELTA

Jason: and where did you take the course?

Sharon: in [X]

Jason: [X] so the learners were mainly speakers of [X] or were they very multilingual?

Sharon: at that time its multilingual

Jason: multilingual yeah // were there any [X] speakers in there?

Sharon: not at all actually

Jason: none at all?

Sharon: you mean the students or the trainees?

Jason: yeah the students sorry I wasn't clear there was I? // great and what was the name of the course provider? // again obviously this will all be confidential

Sharon: called [X]

Jason: [X] in [X]

Sharon: which means [X]

Jason: mm hm // and which year and month did you do it? 2013 July

Jason: and how long had you been teaching prior to taking that course?

Sharon: yeah for me actually it's a bit different story cos usually the teachers or the people who would like to become teachers they take the course because its initial teacher training programme but I was teacher for // how many years // 8 years

Jason: 8 years in fact you're not unusual // nearly all the non-native speakers I got data from the majority of them did have prior teaching experience and whilst 8 would put you on the higher end of that even the majority still had over a years teaching experience so you're very typical // what prior...

Sharon: can I also tell you a little bit about this story cos my...

Jason: sure sure I was gonna ask you in a moment about that as your reasons cos that's gonna be one of the key questions

Sharon: so when my tutor interviewed me and you know she noticed I // kind of like you know have // 8 years' teaching experience the interview went really well my profile was kind of like above average so she actually wanted to put me on a Delta course not CELTA course in the beginning so she talked to Cambridge and then but you

know I've never had any really intensive training initial training, formal CPD so and Cambridge said yeah it's good it's borderline but it's better if I take the CELTA course first

Jason: interesting

Sharon: so I took the CELTA course first and the next year to the Delta // so it's like a very short gap between them

Jason: yeah that's a really interesting story yeah because it does link in to all of this so thank you for interrupting me there / erm interesting so / I've got that on there I'm just going to put here Delta points so I don't forget it / and what prior teaching qualifications did you have before doing the CELTA?

Sharon: yeah that's the real reason why Cambridge suggested I should take the CELTA first even though I'm kind of qualified to take Delta they said it will be better for me because if I just take the Delta directly it would be like too overwhelming for me so I've never had any sort of teaching qualification before

Jason: oh right so you had 8 years' experience but you didn't have the qualification OK

Sharon: oh no no no, actually if you say that I had

Jason: like a [X] one I was thinking

Sharon: no I had TKT / teaching knowledge test I think you know it's a kind of XXX

Jason: I know what TK is that is a qualification

Sharon: and then I had what you call a TEFL // a bridge TEFL in the state

Jason: so it's an organisation called bridge TEFL and they provide a certificate?

Sharon: yeah there is online one

Jason: mm hm do they have teaching practice in their course or is it just online?

Sharon: it's online

Jason: online yeah

Sharon: just an online program, but I had been taking CPD like every Wednesday at work like in these 8 years we had training every week teacher training so it's not formal like assessed any program but you know it's the career our employee provided that the weekly

Jason: so CPD also, brilliant and what was your prior job before doing the CELTA?

Sharon: I had always been an English teacher

Jason: English teacher were you teaching primary secondary tertiary, in private schools?

Sharon: ehm my first job actually I was teaching in a tertiary college like a college it's a private college specialise in aviation so I was training the // er air hostess candidates basically these students would like to become an air hostess so I was teaching them

Jason: you were teaching them English for the airline industry?

Sharon: yep yep

Jason: so that ESP is isn't it yeah English for specific purposes great and back then what other languages did you speak obviously [X] yeah?

Sharon: yeah

Jason: anything else?

Sharon: not really (laughs) I started with Japanese but I wouldn't say I can speak very well I mean I know some Japanese it was my 2nd foreign language and back then no but now I'm learning Italian no but it's still at a beginner level

Jason: exactly yeah so that's different yes that's taken me 6 minutes (mutters to himself) // great so we're now moving on to the kind of the questions and here anything that you feel is relevant to mention please feel free to go off track if you want to // the first question is and I've scripted it here just so I'm consistent with how I ask it and then I may prompt you if I need to could you tell me about why you decided to enrol on the CELTA and how it fitted into your career path?

Sharon: mm hm // the direct reason why it's actually I em I had been teaching for like 8 years and I realised that // you know if I want to really teach internationally to other coun... cos I like travelling so like in [X] it's said that that stage like you know even if you didn't have any teaching qualifications you could get a job because also within English major // my profile was kind of above average anyway even without // any teaching qualification but international wise if you wanted to go let's say find another job in another country like in the UK definitely you need one // or any other countries I want to travel to // and also it's like you know and I realised I had been teaching all these years may be teachings can be my career now so I'm not gonna do like changing to this another job another job so this is can be my career maybe it's good to get a qualification (laughs)

Jason: so to summarise the 2 reasons you point to there the first one you mentioned was kind of to be able to travel and to teach internationally but also because it was a career decision to finally get what you consider to be an important qualification for... as a language teacher... and TKT is more language proficiency and English major is more that as well // great // any other reasons?

Sharon: yeah if I wanted to now I realise if I want to step up while of course this is very open but back then I didn't really want to step up to take the Delta I want like you know now I wanna become a teacher trainer back then I didn't want to (laughs) I mean at least I was not aware of it I was not planning but now I realise it's very important for me to study the CELTA and then Delta I wanted to pursue the career path I'm pursuing now

Jason: now so important for career path // and at that point did you did you anticipate a change of career direction did you expect that after doing the course you would moving to a specific type of teaching or that you

would move out of you to move away from I presume you are in [X] at the time was it?

Sharon: yeah

Jason: did you anticipate any specific change as a result of taking the course?

Sharon: not er very I mean I didn't anticipate any er someone out of my colleagues they wanted for example to step up to another position or have a specific purpose for that // for me it was just like // I wanna go travelling you know I want to broaden my vision whatever so // it's not a specific position or direction I was pursuing I just wanted to increase my employability worldwide

(10 minutes)

Jason: OK // and in terms of em methodology how would you say methodology was on the CELTA? // at that point in time what did you anticipate? did you anticipate methodology would be important or not?

Sharon: yes actually I think it was very important and it did // open a new door for me I would say // not really a new door for teaching jobs but I started to understand more and why I did that way and also // I started to understand all this terminology what my boss was talking about before you know I didn't understand // and there was some of the rationales // and er everything like always when I had these 8 years of CPD's // it's like a piece of A piece of B piece of C and I didn't know which part should go with which part and then you know this course I actually put all of them together and then it becomes an organic system for me so it was // for me it's like now I know why this step should take at this place you know // before it was you know I had this prior knowledge there is somewhere // but maybe I was not aware of it or I was not aware of it systematically

Jason: interesting interesting // and I actually had a different question which maybe I should have asked before methodology what did you expect to learn from the CELTA course? You've mentioned methodology but is that the first thing you would mention if I were to ask that question first?

Sharon: um not really actually

Jason: no what would you mention first?

Sharon: I think CELTA in my opinion when I... I mean I expected to learn more hands-on skill // so like I always knew that like MA programme it's more like you know some more methodology and theory oriented so a course like CELTA or Delta later for me it's more like practice oriented

Jason: mm hm // so just to summarise that question and those answers then you mentioned several answers first of all there's a travel elements but there's also a teaching element which seem to come together you wanted to teach internationally you said then you said that travelling was important but that you wanted to define a clear career path for yourself and that the hands-on practical skill of the CELTA was part of the appeal // if you were to put those

reasons in order of importance just tell me again how would they rank for you in order of importance?

Sharon: I would say international employability is my first one // and then career path// and then hands-on skill //because for me like er when I say hands-on skill because that's what I know about this program like my my approach to this program // the reason why it ranks the 3rd instead of you know the other ranking because I was teaching for 8 years so obviously I accumulated some sort of hands-on teacher skills in the last you know before that for 8 years

Jason: so you weren't anticipating that there would be so so useful yeah...

Sharon: no I was anticipating that this is what the course is about // yeah so I knew that this was what the course was about and then // but it wouldn't be the most important thing yeah

Jason: I've got that thank you // excellent // now why did you choose the specific course provider you chose?

Sharon: yeah that was actually a personal reason because er my partner was er living there and then also // the first reason that prompt me actually to do this course was you know we wanted to spend some time together in [X] and then instead of wasting time and having fun it's better to do something more academically motivated for me some programme that is good for my profession

Jason: sure yeah was there a choice of other course providers in that city?

Sharon: no

Jason: just one?

Sharon: yeah

Jason: brilliant thank you // OK so will move on to question number 2 question number 2 is kind of focusing in on the course itself and // your learning and very open question to start with and ask you if necessary more specific questions how useful did you find the course?

Sharon: it was actually very useful for me // although like probably it would be more useful for others who didn't have any teaching experience before cos when I started the first time we have like 20 minutes like // and assess teaching in the beginning so like each candidate had like just 20 minutes just teaching a lot of XXX colleagues at that time they were really nervous because oh I've never taught before you know what should I do // so when I start teaching then all my other all my classmates at that time they said oh Sharon should be our trainer // they could see I was very much at ease when I was doing this course but still like // I learned a lot about // er like for example the // how you call it because when I was teaching before I didn't have you know there was no like specific requirement about writing lesson plan anticipated problem all this you know er format // all this forms

Jason: yes the lesson plan you could call it a pro forma or a template

Sharon: yeah a template I was not aware of that //em I like I suddenly realised all right there is something like like any process or any product you do there is like first you do this you know and you want to explain the rationale and then 2nd you do this and 3rd you do this you know and before I was just // I was not aware of this it was just going teach you know // and also I think what helped in other areas would be like // teaching was not only about teaching also it helped me to realise // it's also handling like a relationship with people // you know how to like for example error correction // you know like how do you prompt the error correction you know the language you use what approach would be the best // so that you don't // you reach the best result and without // for the what you call it the emotional aspect of that

Jason: the affective

Sharon: the affective side yeah

Jason: mm interesting so yeah the first prompt question I've got you've kind of answered it but let me ask it anyway so which parts of the course were most useful?

Sharon: which parts were most useful er I think the peer observation and the group observation and all the feedback you know // that was I never had that before // and you know being given the formal assess... Being formally assessed being in that mode // I have never had that before

Jason: you find that useful?

Sharon: yeah and then doing some reflection all the time you know // you really you you... // I mean reflection is supposed to be like something you do automatically but you know // if if nobody told me I like really have to do this reflection and like write it down what went wrong and how would you do it better I had never really done it before // so that really prompted me to think // which area I really needed to improve and how could I have done it better and you know that's // that's // I think it's like you know // prompting the inner force to grow you know to improve and before I didn't... I haven't thought about it

Jason: interesting em cool // the next er prompt that I think is useful is em how suitable did you find the course to your needs at that point in your career? // would you say perfect would you say very quite suitable not very not suitable at all if you had to evaluate it?

Sharon: the first one was what? perfect?

Jason: absolutely perfect exactly what I needed and the 2nd one would be very suitable for example

Sharon: mm hm I think it was very suitable for me

Jason: mm hm // and did it seem relevant to your future teaching context?

Sharon: yeah very much

Jason: were there any parts of the course that you didn't find useful?

Sharon: er no I don't think so

Jason: I'm going to prompt you here because I... There's one area where I'd be very surprised if you got much out of it but where the tutors went through what we might call language analysis or what we might call language awareness where they teach the participants about all the different tenses about the bits of grammar in English

Sharon: yeah

Jason: was any of that new to you? was that still useful?

(20 minutes)

Sharon: mm not really but yeah it was first time I did er you know formally written down writing down about language analysis you know I had to analyse you know which would be the // problem you know or the challenging part for students to analyse what would be the best way to teach this word you know CCQs and ICQs and you know which task you need ICQs all of those stuff yeah I had never done it before consciously let's say this way

Jason: yeah so it was good to formalise even that aspect of it?

Sharon: yeah I would say so // I wouldn't expect it to happen in daily life like every day I teach I have to do all of this but it's good to to have been through all those steps you know when you were in the intensive course and the purpose of that I guess is in the future you would have done that automatically so I think it's a very professional step

Jason: yeah so you found it...

Sharon: so you are always prepared to answer always basically to reach the best outcome in the classroom

Jason: interesting // what would you have wanted more of if you could have tailor-made that course what would you have wanted more of if anything?

Sharon: emm I would say maybe more // the analysis of more trainees' needs or trainees' learner autonomy I would say

Jason: mm // put those 2 things together for me those of different things the analysis of the learners' needs and learner autonomy just tell me a little more about that

Sharon: learner autonomy I think it involved like what you knew before because you know what's in the prior knowledge and then //

Jason: but also language analysing their needs this was something that was it new to you was it something you weren't sure about how to do what you were doing it instinctually

Sharon: er can you say that again please?

Jason: you mentioned analysis of the learners' needs

Sharon: actually when I mentioned learners' needs what I mean is trainees' needs

Jason: ah

Sharon: not students' needs

Jason: OK OK

Sharon: I mean like focusing more on... like that's why I said trainees' autonomy or trainees' needs not not my students it's like we as trainees yeah

Jason: so tell me what you mean by trainee autonomy?

Sharon: where students all the trainees before they like for example er before I started the CELTA course I had different prior knowledge from the other students who are in different contexts or with different teaching time and background er you know // different types of teaching you know I was teaching ESP and I was teaching in the tertiary training industry other teachers they they were teaching in primary school or they were in a state-owned er // high school so it's very different you know or maybe they hadn't worked before at all so // I think I remember I started last year it's important to start where they are // you know where the trainees are

Jason: mm OK so you...

Sharon: so you focus more specifically on trainees' needs cos obviously I had different needs // from other trainees what other trainees wanted to have

Jason: it's clear it's clear I just wanted to check that that's cos I thought that's what you meant so basically to summarise that answer if you could have had the choice you would've wanted the course to have either something a little bit more specific to each trainees needs or...

Sharon: yeah

Jason: or something tailored specifically to your teaching context?

Sharon: yeah

Jason: cool // next question a bit of a loaded question

Sharon: actually I want to add a little bit more for that part

Jason: yeah yeah

Sharon: cos last year I did this er teacher education module and I talked of all the supervisor roles, and one is directive and one is collaborative // so I would say I was actually I send that assignment back to my tutor so she read it cos I basically what I did for that module is for the assignment is I talked about // you know some theory I learnt on the main course and then how would I evaluate my CELTA course // so I said you know maybe it would be better if the trainers or the tutors er // could have you know combined more collaborative approach because it was more directive approach // I don't know if you

Jason: I understand completely yeah yeah

Sharon: so that's what I said it would be more probably more efficient or more // trainee motivated

Jason: mm hm there are so many different ways to talk about that difference aren't there in the literature yeah but collaborative approach I completely understand what you mean yeah and so in a way that would have made the course better suited to your needs if it had been less transmissive and more collaborative in the way they helped you to develop

Sharon: yeah I would I would think so because during the course a lot of students were // I mean a lot of trainees were // it's like they were suffering all the time you know like they're crying every day super stressed // and these affective factors were not taken into account I guess // I mean not really not taken into account not // paid much attention to I guess

Jason: was it an intensive course a 4 week course?

Sharon: yeah

Jason: yeah it's something that I I sometimes think that the tutors become immune to that because they consider it to be normal because it's so intense // very very interesting thank you again for adding that // and that is very typical of teachers who are in practice so in service trainee teachers need something which is a bit more transformative rather than transmissive // that's my personal choice of terms but there are many ways of describing it next question how accurately do you feel the course was described in the literature that you saw before the course the advertising the marketing literature

Sharon: mm I wouldn't be in a position to to really judge it // but let me say that I was not disappointed at all I was very happy with the course and I didn't really // pay much attention to the marketing whatever package saying this is what you are gonna get da da da da so er for me it was if you say that did that satisfy you yes it did // cos I didn't read much about the literature that's why I couldn't say whether they match or not you know

Jason: sure sure // how many native speakers of English were there on the course? rough idea

Sharon: there were 12 of them I would say there was one [X] that's me and there was Romanian there was Belgian // and the others were oh there was a Italian so there were 4 non-native and 8 native

Jason: uh hu was it useful training alongside native speakers?

Sharon: I think so yeah I felt like I learned a lot from them

Jason: can you be more specific?

Sharon: yeah I would say like may be in teaching in teaching itself part and like a lot of people felt like they learned a lot from me because I had more experience and but in language wise like as a non-native speaker it was possibly because of this self... how how do you... assessment I always felt like

Jason: self-evaluation

Sharon: self-evaluation I was a bit not as confident as native speaker so sometimes if I was writing like some er what do you call this

Jason: mm hm the forms yeah

Sharon: the forms LAs language analysis lesson plans with some structures some wording some vocabulary or or like grammar part you know if I was not sure it would be very helpful to sometimes even just to confirm like do you think this would be the right way to say it you know maybe I was

not very sure because because of non-native speaker status so and then they would say oh yeah yeah so you feel more confident about it // I guess for me (laughs)

Jason: sure sure great // OK I think that covers that question there // so the next one is could you talk about some of the challenges you face on the course?

Sharon: yeah timing is... I was er // it was intensive there was no weekend at all especially for someone who had never taken an intensive course timing the stress and all this paperwork I was like I'm not a big fan of paperwork that's why it was a... It was a huge challenge for me it's a really big challenge for me because writing I'm not very motivated or I'm not very strong at it so it's like writing all this assignment even at that time it was like 1000 words assignment now like after MA it's you know like a piece of cake but at that time it was oh you have to write this 1000 word assignments during your weekend so it's like a huge task doing all this little research

(30 minutes)

Jason: yeah yeah

Sharon: so yeah that was quite difficult for me quite challenging

Jason: so the paperwork did you feel that er that the actual kind of the writing the challenge of writing academic English was part of that challenge you describe or was it just the volume of the assignments themselves?

Sharon: I think both the volume it's obviously we had no weekend // apart from writing the assignment you know we had to prepare for our TP and there was a reading task so you know it was kind of very overwhelming

Jason: yeah right so that kind of links with the time issue that it was very intense

Sharon: yeah and the yeah of course another thing is not about just about academic writing cos that's kind of a style of writing and also as a non-native speaker you probably writing it's probably for me it was kind of challenging because you have to really make it accurate not like speaking you know speaking is more like oh you can go back and simultaneous correction you know and once it's on paper it's on paper you know you have to do all these checks you know oh this is right XXX this grammar check and this vocabulary you know it's kind of stressful

Jason: yeah I know exactly what you mean I find that same stress as I'm sure you do when you're writing in [X] but yeah it's even more challenging when you're doing it in a foreign language interesting so I've got some other areas here to find out if there were any other challenges for example were there any challenges relating to the language em for example your ability pronunciation classroom language or grammar knowledge were any of those particularly challenging or not?

Sharon: mmm // let me think about it // I would say maybe actually grammar knowledge I was better than the native speaker because I learned the grammar and most of the native speakers didn't learn it so if you need to explain to

your own students like I could explain better than the native speaker cause I learned the grammar itself and yeah maybe vocabulary part or let's say putting it this way to say it's more in a more natural way

Jason: colloquial English?

Sharon: yeah colloquial English exactly //

Jason: any concerns relating to the students?

Sharon: // mm what do you mean

Jason: some trainees doing that on the course they feel quite nervous standing in front of a group of students or the students backgrounds themselves and how they would perceive you I don't want to put words in your mouth but did you feel any challenges did you feel comfortable when you were in class with the students?

Sharon: yeah for me I was very confident and very comfortable // because I don't know I felt like I had a very good first trial and we had the same group of students obviously in 2 you know in the middle of the course you change to a higher level // so after the first trial when the students realised I was the best one in the group so I was very confident and my classmates my colleagues would ask me about teaching so I was the I was the confident one in the whole group so and to stand in front of students was you know a piece of cake because I had been doing that for years yeah the only difference you actually would be that for the past 8 years before that I was teaching monolingual and it was just [X] students um so it would be like I would have been... // I mean I was more confident with them because they were [X] students monolingual and with the multilingual no one was really like a [X] everyone had different backgrounds // I thought I would have been a bit intimidated you know and thought my god I'm facing all these foreigners to me they were foreigners because I was always teaching [X] students // but it turned out to be like I was not nervous at all

Jason: interesting // and that kind of answers the question about self-confidence co-trainees that you actually feel like you are a bit of a leader with your co-trainees is that a right interpretation?

Sharon: yeah in that case in that case yeah

Jason: and whether any parts of the course that you found weren't challenging you at all just put this on silent sorry

Sharon: er (long pause) some of the input sessions if like if by chance there was an input session which I was trained before already in my CPD some for example some topics about different... the // teaching listening you know in a craft model they show you how to teach listening and how to teach the like the lesson shape some of them I was... Like task-based learning I was trained before so it was kind of like overlapping but I wouldn't say it's not useful at all it's just not as challenging as the others but I still learned new things

Jason: thank you OK so that concludes question number 2 to more questions to go // um what impact did the course have on your you as a teacher and your teaching practices?

Sharon: mm // what impact just you mean like the outcome?

Jason: yeah I mean what changes happened in your teaching as a result of the course?

Sharon: yeah that's actually funny because I wouldn't say not I wouldn't say there are XXX any because I got a new job offer before I came to the CELTA course so and then after one month in a new job the reason why I agreed to take the new job because I told them that I would do this course and I would need this time gap and they agreed and they said yeah yeah yeah you can do it so and when I went back I just continued the job so there was there was no immediate change for me but I of course like now looking back CELTA Delta of course without the Delta without the CELTA I would have done the Delta the way I did it

Jason: mm interesting here is a question which is quite a closed one given your experience did you implement the methodology on the course?

Sharon: yes I think so not all of them but whenever it is relevant

Jason: can you explain more about that? what did you and what didn't you what did you find you did implement and what didn't you and why?

Sharon: I implement the for example the language analysis so I would and start doing the anticipating the problem you know when I was doing my lesson planning but there was like no formal way that you should write this lesson plan this language analysis write it down there was nobody checking me but I was kind of doing that in my mind anyway that you know why I would prepare lesson I would anticipate this probably would be the problem and you know and then the plan was to strategy to deal with this problem so I would take some notes again it's not as formal like I was doing this as same as CELTA course but it kind of trained me into a professional habit so I would say that's really important because for me if you're doing something new job you need to be as professional as possible so that may be more professional I think

Jason: was there anything you feel you didn't need to implement anything that comes to mind?

Sharon: not specifically anything like I didn't need to implement (long pause) no I think whenever it has to be contact like really contact contact bound you know whenever the situation happened I would it's kind of the knowledge pool in your mind you can draw and say you know I'll put it here

(40 minutes)

Jason: yeah so you found that in certain situations that was something you learnt on the course that came back to you and it was relevant?

Sharon: yeah another thing I wanted to add about the impact of the CELTA but although not for me there wasn't any immediate change but for for the employer it's kind of very good marketing like er // profile for them like oh they have a teacher with a CELTA like a qualification in the

company so // and in [X] because we are like very few of them like not many very few teachers who have like CELTA certificate and international qualification lets it this way so it's kind of very good for the company's profile for them to say to attract more students coming in like you have internationally Cambridge qualified teachers and for me there was not much impact because I was already among all the teachers at that time I was already having the best package and a higher salary and I was doing the best job so that's why but for I heard for others like you know even nowadays when I do research about the CELTA in [X] and they still say it's very rare for any teachers to have the CELTA

Jason: yeah that's very interesting that was gonna be my next question about career path but not quite so it's really good you put that in er but you mentioned that you had a new job lined up was the new job conditional on you getting the CELTA or had you already confirmed that you were gonna take up that job?

Sharon: actually it was my condition

Jason: that you get the CELTA? or...

Sharon: yeah because the situation is the situation is in [X] is very let's say at my employers at that time my current employer wouldn't allow me to take the time off because I had my 15 days annual leave already you know I didn't have any time off and I want to do this CELTA course so I wouldn't I couldn't have any time and then this new employer agreed and said yes you can take this time off to take your CELTA course so it's my condition is I will take this new job only if you allow me to take this course so it's kind of very opposite usually it's the employer says yeah I will offer you this job only if you take this course and finish this course so for me it's kind of opposite so I said OK only if you allow me to have this time off even though it's unpaid I would stay the status of being employed but I would be unpaid I would be an unpaid employee what I need is time off to take this course so they agreed

Jason: and can you tell me about a little bit about that employer who were they where were they was it a [X] organisation?

Sharon: which one do you talk about?

Jason: the one you secured the job with

Sharon: the one after the CELTA?

Jason: yeah

Sharon: oh it was // mostly they focus on ESP automotive English

Jason: so it was an automotive English company?

Sharon: yes

Jason: OK

Sharon: that you know even though it's automotive English with ESP you always start with general English until they reach a certain level and then you start with ESP

Jason: so that would have been teaching [X] speakers yeah?

yeah most of them are corporate so my title was corporate trainer already so I was doing corporate trainings for I done if you know the company bought London taxi it was called XXX

Jason: no

Sharon: so I was training the vice presidents for this company it was a very big company there was like 10 vice presidents so I was training I was doing one-to-one VIP training to the vice presidents and also I was doing group training to the other staff so there was VIP training one-to-one for the vice president and the staff like 20 students I had a group

Jason: it's interesting you came from an ESP context and that was both these jobs I presumed were in Beijing is that right?

Sharon: yes it is all the companies are in Beijing but they are how do you call it its company based so when I train them I would go to the companies I wouldn't stay my own company I would go to my client in a visit so I would

Jason: so you would travel around a lot?

Sharon: I would yeah it was something I liked

Jason: sure sure so that's very interesting the career path you've covered question 3b and just can I go back to 3a I've just got a few prompts hear you talked about some of the successes in terms of what happened in class so you mentioned the fact that you were able to anticipate problems and work out how to deal with them and to be more professional as a teacher // er anything you feel you want to focus on? anything on the course that you think wasn't useful wasn't applicable in your context?

Sharon: on the CELTA course?

Jason: yeah on the CELTA course?

Sharon: wasn't usual for me? //

Jason: that you felt wasn't relevant to your context?

Sharon: not any I wouldn't say like er not as anything I can remember although I would say that you know all these assignments but that's my personal view like all this writing about // I dunno sometimes I think it's too much writing it should be more for a course like the CELTA it should be more hands-on instead of focusing on the paperwork so it's kind of fulfilling the formality you know putting all this paperwork I think for Delta yes cos you need to understand more rationale you know because then you if you want to explain to your staff like why is this right why is this wrong but for CELTA course I think it would be better if it focused more on the hands-on teaching side instead of the writing assignments

Jason: something which I agree with about that they can't do that part very well so yeah did the course have any impact on your confidence?

Sharon: I think so yeah // and then I felt like I knew it's like I said you know everything was more clear in my mind like which lesson shape is it what kind of approach was using for this class before probably I was doing that but you

know I was not aware this is this lesson shape you know and also maybe I was not aware there were options of dealing with this problem yeah // so I was much more confident because I had a better understanding of the knowledge also I observed all these model lessons and another thing that can make you more confident it's also because now you feel you're a real qualified teacher and even international wise you have an official teaching qualification so that would also make it more confident // in terms of future application, of stepping up and making longer term plans like without CELTA probably I wouldn't have thought about oh no no I shouldn't do Delta you know because maybe I was I wouldn't be that confident to do it

Jason: so looking back are you happy with your decision to take the CELTA?

Sharon: yes I'm very happy

Jason: and you're happy with the impact it's had both on your career and the classroom?

Sharon: mm hm

Jason: yeah // great one more question to go through and then the final question will simply be is the anything we haven't discussed that you would like to mention questions 4a and b are talking about with the benefit of hindsight now that you've completed that course and you are here several years after looking back on it with much more experience from the Delta and the MA em what suggestions or advice would you have for another non-native speaker thinking of taking the Cambridge CELTA?

Sharon: em (long pause) yes I would say // do a bit of teaching like at least one year so you know what's XXX I think that would...

Jason: before?

Sharon: yeah before that so you would know what a classroom... It's kind of like you can digest better if you like to do some it's like a preview of a class you know because some of the other trainees in my group like for some of the trainees who haven't had any teaching experience before it was so it was really too challenging for them like they didn't know what was going on so that was even for native speaker for non-native speaker if you're just gonna start an intensive course like that I think it would be not as effective as if you have done like half a year or one year teaching so you know what you know what's the feeling like to stand in front of students so you have some kind of trial going on so you would digest it better I guess yeah do do it I think do take it

(50 minutes)

Jason: anything else?

Sharon: (long pause) the I think it would be also it would be also a good idea to take it in an international context see you actually do have multilingual students so you are not dependent on your let's say in your comfort zone cos if you're doing in [X] you feel like OK this is the students I'm going to teach all the time probably that's what you're going to do // anyway it depends I think still like it depends

on the trainees' needs though if they wanted to take the international step you know probably it's better to do it in an international context if they just want to stay in [X] you know this is what I'm going to do I'm gonna teach in [X] so obviously that context suits you better so like what I said going back to trainees' needs I think that's the important part it depends on what the student what the trainees want for their own career what's their purpose of taking that course

Jason: so you would probably if you were in that situation you would ask them what's your future plan? what's your future context?

Sharon: yeah

Jason: so it would depend on the future context?

Sharon: yeah I think context is really the key

Jason: and would you say that if they were saying I really want to stay in [X] and work in say Beijing would you what would you say to that person?

Sharon: yeah I think you know then take it in Beijing

Jason: but do take a CELTA?

Sharon: yeah I think so

Jason: or don't?

Sharon: yeah do take a CELTA I think so

Jason: last question last of my questions // what about feedback to the course providers or to Cambridge what feedback if they were asking you for feedback on your experience on the CELTA what would you say to them?

Sharon: yeah I would say not only about the course provider but also to Cambridge as Cambridge is the organiser I would say the Institute the assessment body

Jason: yeah that's right yeah

Sharon: so yeah I would say the program itself because sometimes the program itself is constraining the course provider the course provider has to do it that way because the whole course is supposed to be that way otherwise they would not be abiding by the rules so I would say the program should have been more context bound and focusing more on trainees' needs you know like...

Jason: should be more context bound and focusing more on trainees needs? I am just checking what you said // now I didn't want to say this at the in the initial question but what about the focus on the non-native speaker teacher? the prompts I've got here would be for example do you think is relevant for them to provide more support for the non-native speaking teachers?

Sharon: no I don't think so I think it wouldn't be fair cos with this qualification you're supposed to be the same teaching internationally you shouldn't require any extra assistance or help because you are in the same classroom the same trainees your assessed with the same criteria so I would say it's fair and it's your own... you have to be

responsible for your own language ability your whatever OK you're a non-native speaker maybe you should work harder I don't know but you shouldn't expect extra help from the train or tutor you can ask for it you know like doing you a favour but that's not supposed to be part of the package

Jason: what about with regard to how non-native speakers can contribute more to the course?

Sharon: yeah I think non-native speakers they have learnt the language so they know what students want their own students would feel like which part and they learn how they would have felt so they would properly understand students more the students approach what's going on in the student's mind because non-native speakers learnt learning the language while native speakers just picked it up I don't know // they didn't really go through the learning cycle so they... that's why I said I could explain grammar better than a native speaker oh why do you choose this because I learnt the grammar part it's the same because now if I'm teaching Mandarin sometimes I wouldn't know how to explain to my students because I didn't learn you know the teaching [X] part //so I couldn't really explain as well as when I explained to an English learner because I learned how to learn it

Jason: fascinating // OK that completes the 4 main questions but the important last question is is there anything else that we haven't discussed that you would like to mention bearing in mind the aim of the project? er where can I find that again? so the aim of the research just read that bit there and is there anything we haven't touched on so we can ensure I'm getting to the aim with regards to your personal story

Sharon: while I'm not sure but I think it's... If you would like to pursue this career let's say either way I think it's a good idea to take the CELTA course for me like what we said before // if you want to just become a teacher or if you want to step further it's an important qualification that would actually help you a lot in your career path I would say

Jason: do you think that in these questions I've got to the root of the role of that course in your career and in your professional development?

Sharon: yeah I think we covered that about everything you know which part we you applied in the teaching course and what's important part and what's your expectation yeah I think we covered all these aspects if there's anything you think we didn't cover you can ask me

Jason: sure good good thank you very much I will finish there

(58 minutes)

8.8 Appendix 8: Example interview notes

Initial interview notes Name: Farah (pseudonym)

Date & time 24/02/2016 13:00.

Notes: Preliminary details not included here. Extracts from interview in quotation marks. Interview times provided in brackets.

[X] anonymised data

<p>1. What factors contribute to NNESTs with prior teaching experience taking the decision to enrol on ITCs?</p>	<p>General</p> <p>Always wanted to be a teacher, moved to England (with husband, and had kids), missed teaching so much, was working as a waiter and hated the job and wanted to return: “at that time I felt like I would never be a teacher anymore because of my qualification” presumed that as a non-native speaker she wouldn’t be able to teach English here. Was planning to do BA in TEFL, but didn’t – blessing in disguise. “Read about this course”, got interviewed and accepted.</p> <p>Hoped but wasn’t sure she was going to get a job in the UK: (23:40) “at that time I wasn’t sure whether I’m going to get a job here or not.” (24:10) “to be honest I felt a bit worried at that time when I did the... I’ve paid like a lot of money for this course and it’s not guaranteed whether I’m going to get a job here or not and I also feel like the fact non-native English speaker is just like I do know I just did the course and then see what happens really”</p> <p>(7:40) “I felt like that probably 50% not quite sure because the fact that I’m non-native, you know, and the thought of me getting a job teaching English in England, it’s a bit, you know not sure, I’m not sure about that, but actually when I was interviewed by [X] and at the end of the interview I showed my uncertainty about this – will I be able to find a job in England and what is the job opportunity for me a non-native speaker teaching English in England and she said you will be fine you will be absolutely fine I mean you know more about grammar than other British people that we’ve taught in this place before, so that is a reassurance for me” “I felt I was going to be the only non-native trainee in the course but I was wrong. I think there were four of us in the class so I felt a bit OK... Easy with the course”.</p> <p>“Well what I was thinking, at least with this certificate if I can’t teach in England I want to teach abroad, that’s how I feel, but... I’ve read about this certificate before and most EFL TEFL jobs requires this certificate, this is why feel like I want to get this certificate, you know with the hope that I will find a teaching job.”</p> <p>Methodology: felt she already had some basic knowledge, but still considered it to be “very important” (13) “to give me this reassurance you know the fact that I’ve got these basic skills of teaching and I’m going to join this course of teaching English as a foreign language in England,... Having this you know experience of teaching methodology is very important and it helped me a lot actually during the course”; (11:20) “I mean the methodology of teaching I know before I started to do the course. The fact that I’ve learned a bit of TEFL and I’ve got a BEd in English education before, I feel that I know I know the basics of it. I feel that I can I can be fine on the course because I realise this course is not only for for people who are teachers it can be for anyone basically I think.” “I feel like the fact that I’ve got this teaching background, teaching English in [X], my BA my TEFL online course I feel like I got this basic knowledge of EFL.”</p>	<p>Location. Only course provider available in [X]. No CELTA option.</p>
	<p>Specific CP</p>	<p>Location. Only course provider available in [X]. No CELTA option.</p>
<p>2. How useful/productive do</p>	<p>Useful</p> <p>Course is so practical (6:30). “I’ve learned so much about the actual teaching, how to teach grammar, how to give feedback” (14:40) “The practical side of</p>	

<p>they find ITCs, incl suitability to needs and future teaching contexts, and also challenges on courses?</p>		<p>the course which I found really useful because I think I think you know when I learn I enjoy, I better learn practical things than theories and also the reflective assignment as well is very useful I mean like we were expected to do a few assignments after our teaching practice and reflect what we've done in the teaching and from that I could find my my weaknesses all my strengths in teaching really and then something new from it"</p> <p>she found the assignments in general useful. Was very happy with her personal tutor, who provided lots of support: (16) "as you mentioned about this one-to-one session with my tutor I found it really useful as well,... [X] was my tutor at that time and every time I you know I spoke to her about my plan my lesson plan we needed to consult our lesson plan with the tutor before we actually teach and every time I spoke to her you know she kept giving me these new ideas in teaching and it helped me deliver good lessons..."</p> <p>When asked to discuss and prioritise the five units, talked about:</p> <p>learner profile difficult but useful (17:40)</p> <p>(19:10) "the most useful is probably the teaching practice... The language awareness is probably the easiest for me.</p> <p>(21:10) "the unknown language it was useful as well because it gives us the opportunity to empathise, to share this empathy with students, how do students feel when they learn English, we know how that feels you know it was good"</p>
	<p>Not useful</p>	<p>(19:30) "The language awareness is probably the easiest for me.... Because I don't know when because language awareness I think it includes lexis and grammar and phonology right. I found all of them are quite like really basic things especially the grammar. With the phonology most of my peer at that time found really difficult but luckily I did my thesis on phonology so it was a bonus for me so it wasn't difficult for me at all." (20:20) "in my peers the non-native speakers found the language awareness are easy but the native one find it really difficult so when we did the grammar the grammar that we were taught it was really basic for us non-native speakers in the class we found, we've learned this like very easy but then to others like native speakers while it so difficult what is the past tense what is the negative you know they didn't know."</p> <p>(35:58) "when we actually do the language awareness module we were taught more about the language, more about teaching the language so this part I found really simple really easy to do but this is why we found ESA teaching grammar a bit difficult because it's not learning the language it's about teaching the language" language awareness exam was fairly easy, but (36) "it wasn't just about the language, it was an essay a few questions about how you could relate certain grammatical points in your teaching for example teaching present continuous things like that"</p>
	<p>Needs specific</p>	<p>Difficult to evaluate because she wasn't sure that she was going to find work in the UK. But felt it was relevant because it relates her degree (22:20) "yeah very relevant because it relates to my first degree this is what I've always wanted to do you know teaching English as a foreign language and yeah I feel like I'm back on track again because of this course"</p>
	<p>Future context</p>	<p>(22:50) "no one promised me that I'm gonna get a job here."</p> <p>(23:30) "even though I heard from many people you know what are you gonna do with this course you know teaching English as a foreign language in England, you know not many... It's OK if you teach English abroad but in England you know not many there aren't as many students who wants to learn English as a foreign language in England so yeah at that time I wasn't sure whether I'm going to get a job here or not."</p>
	<p>Anything missing</p>	<p>Not really. But then mentions: (25) "Me and my other non-native English-speaking trainees feel a bit too basic... But they can't really teach advance one for others otherwise it's really difficult"</p>

	Challenges	<p>(17:40) found the learner profile challenging, but useful “it kind of trained us to understand our student individual needs individual differences and it makes us realise that every single student has different needs in their learning because they come from different countries have different background in languages and things like that”</p> <p>(29:10) in response to question what did you find most challenging on the course: “probably giving feedback to my peers [after teaching practice peer observation tasks] “I this is something I need to learn more, giving feedback about the teaching on everyone”</p> <p>(30:50) “probably teaching grammar is a bit it was a little bit challenging it was a new thing for me actually ESA, teaching you know teaching ESA to us it was teaching grammar to be honest before I did the course I didn’t know anything about this ESA, I know about engage and activate, study I’ve heard about it from my online EFL TEFL course but I didn’t really understand how it is applied in the real situation, so it was a bit difficult to some of us” “learning grammar is easier than teaching it”</p> <p>(31: 50) “it is a new thing for me that students from different countries, multilingual class, but when I did my teaching before, before I did the course they were all [X] and it is quite challenging sometimes because I can’t speak I can’t speak their language and they can’t speak English,”</p> <p>(33:50) mentions PhD student who didn’t think you needed teaching specific skills.</p> <p>(34:20) self-confidence/identity “English is for everyone, it’s not owned by either British or American everyone speak English and everyone can teach at everyone can learn it this is how I this gives me confidence in my career”</p>
Course marketing literature – clear?		She only read briefly on the website, “to be honest I read it really quickly and feel like that’s the course I want to do”
Working with native speakers – challenging?		<p>(26:20) in response to the question: Was it useful training alongside native speakers? “difficult question, I think so yeah” “I don’t know I feel like there is a gap between native English speakers and non-native English speakers which I don’t really like to have this You know but...” [What type of gap do you mean?] (27) “I feel like there’s a difference between you know they feel they feel like all I’m none I’m native English speakers I know about English more than you do but that’s not the case and I feel like because of that you know... Sometimes I like we’re being looked down upon sometimes as non-native English speakers teaching English, and I feel like it’s not it’s not quite fair really that people judge us. I mean for example in [X] if you are an [X] teaching English in an international school with other native speakers of English teaching English you will get less money”</p> <p>later admits that they got on OK</p> <p>possible benefits: (28:30) “lexis like learning lexis, certain expressions you know like idioms and stuff like that sometimes we aren’t non-native English speakers didn’t think the same but then we learn something new from them”</p>
	Use of L1	<p>(31: 50) “it is a new thing for me that students from different countries, multilingual class, but when I did my teaching before, before I did the course they were all [X] and it is quite challenging sometimes because I can’t speak I can’t speak their language and they can’t speak English,”</p> <p>It was discussed but fairly minimal: (37:20) “I think it was when we learned about the teaching practice theories yeah we mentioned about we need to understand the students need because we teach English at different places different context yeah I think it was mentioned yeah”</p>
3. What impact do ITCs have on NNESTs,	Teaching practices	Feels like she’s implemented everything she learnt in the course and that it complimented her prior knowledge:

<p>including impact on their own teaching practices, and also on their professional development and career path?</p>		<p>(39) Confident that she implemented the methodology learnt on the course and that it went well.</p> <p>(39:40) "I'm doing this MA TESOL now and I found that the theories of teaching practice that I have learnt in my MA is not like the one I've learnt from the certificate TESOL and I don't know my lecturers always said there is no right or wrong answer with methodology, and when I teach if you see me teaching you can see that I'm TESOL trainer, em TESOL trained teacher cos I just implement all methodology I've learnt from the course from A to Z, from lead in, pre-reading, post reading and activate, things like that..."</p> <p>(40:30) regarding how prior methodology and learning on the course came together: "they complete one another, because what I've learnt previously it was just a basic thing it wasn't a detailed knowledge at all... When I started this course I know what elicit is I know what Realia is I know all of this but the basic knowledge of methodology I know already and kind of like this course kind of like complete my knowledge"</p> <p>impact on confidence again: (42:20) "I felt like I've learnt a lot from this course and as I mentioned before the knowledge I learnt on this course complimented the knowledge I've learnt previously like years ago from [X] and I feel like I am now a fully qualified ESOL teacher and I feel confidence in the fact that I'm now teaching in [X] Institute and doing MA TESOL as well so yeah it helps my confidence a lot and I think without the certificate I wouldn't have been able to do my MA TESOL"</p>
	<p>Career path</p>	<p>It led to a fairly immediate change in position as she got a job two months after, and then got a job with the course providing organisation six months afterwards.</p> <p>(38:20) "It was a life changing course for me, you know because of this I found my way back to teaching and I feel qualified now. And it helped my confidence a lot especially when realising that I'm now teaching for [X] Institute I feel like I skills my teaching skills have been recognised"</p> <p>(23) "A few weeks after I started the course I did this volunteering job at other places and then a few weeks after I started my volunteering they offered me a job so that the school wasn't as good as [X] Institute"</p> <p>(44:30) she got a distinction, and then got a job: "well I got the job a few maybe two months after I started doing this course and then the [X] Institute offered me a job six months after I finished the course so you know from working in a restaurant and then now I'm teaching in the classroom it has brought me big impact in my life"</p>
<p>4. With the benefit of hindsight, what suggestions/feedback do respondents have for other NNESTs and also for providers of ITCs to ensure that ITCs are as useful for NNESTs, as for other participants?</p>	<p>For NNESTs</p>	<p>(46:25) "Go for it, you know I would recommend this course to anyone... Well actually you have to love teaching first, if you love teaching and you know a bit about English language then you'll be fine... and also I think one more thing most people say that this course is quite demanding and really hands-on like because of the amount of the time we have to do, lots of people moan about it and you have two... If you want to do well on this course you have to be prepared to devote your time to the assignments... Cos I found it quite difficult at that time, at that time I had to work and earn money you know I've got two children, you know I did volunteering as well and time management was very important."</p> <p>Not recommending full-time: "no I wouldn't recommend that, it's just too, too much, unless you are single, carefree then yes go ahead but..."</p>
	<p>For providers and validators</p>	<p>(48:50) "I haven't got many bad things about this course really Jason, so..., but some people found this course here a little bit unorganised, even though it's a matter of opinion"</p> <p>Mentioned that some of the participants found tutors not so useful.</p> <p>(55) "I feel like the provider like Trinity can do more thing about this issue, like making us non-native speaker teachers being placed equally with other native English teachers really."</p>

<p>Support for NNESTs?</p>	<p>Considered many options, try to find something, but really didn't find anything specific, apart from re-assurance:</p> <p>(51) [Is there any need for specific support for non-native speaker teachers on such courses?]</p> <p>"No, I don't think so (intonation falling sharply on 'no'), no. I don't think so, I mean like everything is you know good. I had no problem at all in doing the course. Maybe the workload probably this is what most students of this course say, the workload is just too much, but I had no problem at all I could finish it."</p> <p>(52) "maybe more reassuring for us, within be alright, yeah, well actually I remember when I did the course, I'm sure that this non-native English teachers feel the same the same way how I felt at that time, they feel insecure, about paying lots of money and then won't be able to get a job, maybe em a bit more reassurance about this, you know, and then but I mentioned this worry to my my tutor but then she couldn't really say anything I mean she couldn't really help, it depends on I mean the thing is to students are the customers and if they feel like being taught by native English speakers more, advantages than being taught by non-native speakers then they can't do anything."</p> <p>[Jason mentions advantages of non-native speaker teachers]</p> <p>(54) "this happened to me actually Jason with the, not in this place but in the other place, I felt that I got this good knowledge of teaching skills I know I can teach I know I'm confident I'm confident teacher but then I got let down by this by my boss at that time, I was going to offer a student at that time but then she cancelled because the student asked for native English speakers and felt like it was quite discouraging really, because look I've got the skills like being native speakers doesn't guarantee at all you're going to be a good teacher, that's how I feel, and..." (Makes suggestion for Trinity – see above)</p> <p>(56:30) "I get this forwarded emails from [X] about teaching abroad, you know anywhere around the world, and it really upsets me if one of them recommends, looking for you have to be native English speakers, it's just like I never bother to look at that email"</p>
<p>Drawing on NNESTs expertise?</p>	<p>(57) mentions empathy – we can empathise with students more:</p> <p>"Maybe the feeling of empathy, that I feel like native English teachers don't have... How it feels to be, to be our students really and sometimes this feeling of empathy help us teaching because when we find these difficulties in teaching something for example I had one student come to... This is so difficult I can't do this, this present continuous but I always think how did I do it in the past, when I was a student learning English and because of that sometimes it help me. I think empathy is something that we can share, the importance of this to other course participants"</p>
<p>Have you heard of ICELT?</p>	<p>(59) she has never heard of it. Not interesting for her. "I don't think I will need that because... I've always wanted to do the diploma TESOL, and I was going to do this but then because I haven't got enough teaching hours I took my MA, but hopefully after my MA and more teaching hours I will definitely do the diploma TESOL, so I don't think the ICELT is really suitable for me I don't think." [Jason suggests that non-native speaker teachers may want to have the same qualification as native speaker teachers – something mentioned by several other interviewees]: "I feel like I feel like this certificate helped me to be in the same position as a native speaker" "and in reality like good if you want to get them good EFL or ESOL jobs in good schools which are recognised by British Council most of them ask you to have either CELTA or diploma TESOL or Delta, so this is why we are encouraged to do this."</p>
<p>Anything else?</p>	<p>(1:02) "I think it is because I'm in my position now I got my job in this place, but I'm sure that my other non-native TESOL certificate classmates or colleagues feel differently about this, because I do know they haven't got a</p>

	<p>job. It's quite tough competition I guess to be, I think the thing with me because I always I always tried to do my best in whatever I do and I don't moan and I did well on the course, you have to do you have to do really well on this course as a non-native English speaker teachers you have to do really well if you want to get a job I think, yeah." Then she refers to the privilege of native speakers, that some of them can easily get a job: "while native speakers yes definitely yes, some of them feel like we don't really need this we can speak English anyway you know and we don't need the experience and this is the and fair bit but we have to swallow it you know, but native speakers of English can just walk in school and teach English without any qualifications but first we have to prove this we got this knowledge we have the certificate we have been trained really well if we want to get the job"</p>
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8.9 Appendix 9: Example email interviews

Email interview completed **Name: Angela (pseudonym)**

Date received: 15/02/2016

Follow-up questions received: 19/02/2016

Notes: This was one of the more detailed email interview replies. Follow-up questions asked in subsequent email are included beneath the completed interview, and replies are included there.

[X] - Anonymised data

Current details:	Please write in this column. If you need more space, keep typing. The box should expand.
Your full name:	[X]
Your email address:	[X]
Your nationality (please indicate if this was different when you took the course):	[X]
What is your current position/job:	Upper-secondary school teacher of English
Do you consider yourself a non-native speaker of English?	Yes
Details of the course:	
Name of the initial training course you took (e.g. CELTA, CertTESOL, etc.):	Trinity CertTESOL
Geographical location of the course (country and city):	London, UK
Name of course provider (i.e. organisation):	[X]
Year and month when the course was taken:	October 2012
Your background details when you took the course:	
Number of years of prior teaching experience before taking the course:	8
What prior teaching qualifications did you have? (e.g. primary school teaching diploma):	A Bachelor's Degree in Foreign Languages (2004), Permanent Teacher in Education (2006), TKT (Teaching Knowledge Test) Modules 1-3 (2010), QTS (Qualified Teacher Status) (2010)
Prior position/job (e.g. secondary school teacher of English):	Upper-secondary school teacher of English
What languages did you speak then, and how well? (e.g., Spanish, native speaker, etc.):	[X] - native speaker, English – advanced, Spanish - advanced

Research questions:	
<p>1) Explain in as much detail as possible your reasons for choosing to take the course. Consider both career-related reasons, and also what you hoped to learn from it as a teacher (if anything):</p>	<p>There was one main reason for taking the course: become a world-wide recognised ESOL teacher and be able to be hired as one, abroad. I thought such an experience would be an important step forward in my teaching career (especially as a non-native speaker trained in an English-speaking, multicultural environment) and really hoped to learn more about my own teaching skills and knowledge, and be better able to self-evaluate myself. I also felt I needed an honest opinion from native English teachers with recognised expertise in teacher training, and benefit from their advice and guidance for further improvements.</p>
<p>2) How useful did you find the course? Please indicate which parts were most useful and which parts were least useful, with reference to your needs and expectations.</p>	<p>Overall the course was useful and interesting alike. There were some parts I enjoyed most, though: the unknown language unit and the teaching practice experience. Learning a language I didn't know as an adult and teacher was something I hadn't done before. Besides being something original, it was also helpful in that it made me more aware of a student's needs, expectations and issues about learning a foreign language by being in their shoes. It made me feel like a protagonist playing their part: on the one hand, I had to understand the part I was playing (a teacher acting like a student), on the other hand I had to play it too (become a student). The teaching practice part was the most useful, in spite of me having prior teaching experience. Although challenging (I had to speak English all the time, I never used my mother tongue, and I taught adult classes), it was what I wanted because I knew I needed that. Teaching is what a teacher does. So, I needed that kind of teaching experience to prepare myself as an ESOL teacher.</p> <p>I found less useful and more boring the phonology classes, though.</p>
<p>3) Identify some of the biggest challenges you had on the course, indicating why they were challenging.</p>	<p>Adapting my teaching experience to the requirements of the course was the biggest challenge. Having prior teaching experience it gets you in a sort of teaching routine and it also defines your own teaching style which was difficult to change in such a short period of time as the course lasted. I had to make some changes in my teaching style, to adapt it during the teaching practice lessons. I had experience in teaching in a state school, from a different education system, not in a language school which required a different teaching approach (more student interaction, more focus on teaching speaking while integrating the other skills too).</p> <p>Another challenge was to teach pronunciation during some lessons, without being told how to do that. The challenge was to integrate it within the other parts of the lesson and make it appealing to students, adult students.</p> <p>Finally, another problem I encountered during the course was putting my less experienced colleagues into the shade. Although I never intended it, (the only person I was going to compete with was I) some of them felt my</p>

	presence intimidating at the beginning. Luckily for me, things soon changed as we started to know one another better, communicate more, share what we knew and support each other as one big family.
4) What impact did the course have on you as a teacher, and your classroom practice? What changes occurred as a result of the course?	The course helped me better self-evaluate my teaching skills and knowledge and gain more self-confidence as a teacher of English. It also contributed towards making my classes more fun and enjoyable for me and my students too.
5) What impact, if any, did the course have on your career path? Did you change job, position, or responsibilities?	Like I said, it helped me feel more prepared for a career as an ESOL teacher, despite not having managed to be hired as one.
6) What advice would you give to colleagues from your country who are thinking about taking such a course?	I would tell them that such a course is more appropriate for less experienced teachers who need to benefit from teacher training in an English-speaking environment. I would also advise them to think twice before taking this course because there is no job guarantee for a non-native teacher of English, no matter how successful you've been on the course.
7) What feedback would you give to the course provider or the certificate provider (e.g. Cambridge) to ensure that future courses are useful for non-native speaker teachers?	Generally, courses that involve a teaching practice part besides language awareness are always useful for non-native speakers because they can be evaluated by native trainers while working. It's probably the most effective type of practice they could get and benefit from. However, the course/certificate providers should consider more the equality of chances for non-native teachers when guaranteeing finding a job after finishing the course. There is a lot of unfair competition on the job market for non-native ESOL/EFL/TEFL teachers.
8) Did you ever consider taking the <u>Cambridge ICELT</u> , offered to in-service teachers? If not, why not? If you did, why did you prefer to choose the CELTA?	I haven't heard of ICELT before. It's something new to me and I am not familiar with what the course offers. I decided to take a Trinity Cert TESOL/CELTA course because of its reputation among prospect employers.
9) How much did you discuss using the mother tongue / L1 for teaching? Was it possible to use it in the teaching practice lessons on the course itself?	I didn't use my L1, [X], at all during the teaching lessons. It was possible, but only towards the end of the course. There was only one student who spoke [X] and she only took part in one or two classes I was teaching. However, I did not use it. I was kindly asked not to by my tutors.
10) Is there anything else you feel is relevant to mention or discuss that you have not been asked about? (note my aim above)	I really enjoyed my time spent on the course at Training 4 TEFL London and I am grateful for everything I've learnt there from my tutors.

Subsequent email exchange – my question (bold) and her answer:

A) 'another problem I encountered during the course was putting my less experienced colleagues into the shade.' Do you mean because your extensive experience set very high standards that they found it difficult to meet?

Regarding your first question, that's exactly what I meant. I'm sorry the words I've used were not proper in that context.

B) Regarding question 4, can you be honest – exactly how much of the methodology were you able to implement in such a different context as a secondary teacher? Was there anything that was unsuccessful in this context?

I am not a figures person, so I can't give a percentage of how much of the methodology I was able to implement during my classes. Perhaps half of it or a little more. However, it's not a question of methodology. Failure is due to other causes: social background, lack of motivation, lack of trust in school and being accustomed to a more traditional teaching style. Building up vocabulary so as to develop speaking and writing skills were the biggest issues for the reasons I've already mentioned.

C) I am sorry that that you haven't managed to get the international job you are looking for. Can you give me some kind of indication of how many jobs you applied for, and in which countries?

As for finding a job, I sent applications in some European countries (such as Spain, Italy, summer schools in England) and China. I didn't have many options since most advertisements were very specific. You could read something like 'Please do not apply if you are a non-native English teacher. We'll consider only applications from native speakers.' Another obstacle was the fact that some announcements referred to specific teaching methodology such as task-based learning and project-based learning. Although experience was not considered a must, after the interviews I failed to pass I was told they preferred and finally chose someone more experienced.

(Maybe trainers should introduce and teach this type of methodology in their teacher training courses, at least focus a little more on it. It's only a suggestion.)

Email interview completed Name: Sofia (pseudonym)

Date received: 21/02/2016

Follow-up questions received: 22/02/2016

Notes: This was one of the less detailed email interview replies. Follow-up questions asked in subsequent email are included beneath the completed interview, and replies are included there.

[X] - Anonymised data

Current details:	Please write in this column. If you need more space, keep typing. The box should expand.
Your full name:	[X]
Your email address:	[X]
Your nationality (please indicate if this was different when you took the course):	[X]
What is your current position/job:	Contract teacher
Do you consider yourself a non-native speaker of English?	Yes
Details of the course:	
Name of the initial training course you took (e.g. CELTA, CertTESOL, etc.):	Trinity TESOL
Geographical location of the course (country and city):	[X] U.K
Name of course provider (i.e. organisation):	[X]
Year and month when the course was taken:	September 2013
Your background details when you took the course:	I had been living in England for 10 months before I decided to take the course. I was working as a sales assistant.
Number of years of prior teaching experience before taking the course:	3.5.
What prior teaching qualifications did you have? (e.g. primary school teaching diploma):	Cambridge Proficiency in English and a State Teaching Licence
Prior position/job (e.g. secondary school teacher of English):	Sales assistant
What languages did you speak then, and how well? (e.g., Spanish, native speaker, etc.):	[X] –native speaker English –Proficient level Italian – advanced level

	Bulgarian- Intermediate level
Research questions:	
1) Explain in as much detail as possible your reasons for choosing to take the course. Consider both career-related reasons, and also what you hoped to learn from it as a teacher (if anything):	I decided to take the TESOL course in order to gain UK teaching experience and have my qualifications certified by an English organisation such as Trinity. I had been trying to find a job as an ESOL teacher for months but the certificates I could provide were not enough to schools and recruiters.
2) How useful did you find the course? Please indicate which parts were most useful and which parts were least useful, with reference to your needs and expectations.	I found the course very useful , especially the pronunciation lessons as this was the part I lacked experience in. Another thing that I liked was the different teaching methods I was taught to use , depending on the nature of the lesson (receptive skills teaching demanded a different approach to productive skills teaching). The part I found the least useful was the grammar lessons but only because of the way I personally learnt English. All my teachers used to focus massively on grammar rules so there was nothing new for me to learn during the course. But at no point did I consider the course to be boring.
3) Identify some of the biggest challenges you had on the course, indicating why they were challenging.	Learning to transcribe sentences using the phonemic chart was the biggest challenge to me. I had never done it before and had to insist a lot on studying the details and work outside the lessons.
4) What impact did the course have on you as a teacher, and your classroom practice? What changes occurred as a result of the course?	The course had a great impact on the way I adapted my teaching methods and style from then on. I started using more materials and spend less teacher talking time than before. I also became better in writing lesson plans and as a result I was more confident in later inspections.
5) What impact, if any, did the course have on your career path? Did you change job, position, or responsibilities?	I found a part-time job at a language school in London three months after the end of the course. I got offered a contract position two months later and a senior teacher position seven months after that. I still work for that school.
6) What advice would you give to colleagues from your country who are thinking about taking such a course?	I would definitely recommend it. I would tell them to take as much advantage-in a good sense- of the lessons and the teachers as possible. Ask them to correct you as much as possible during feedback and at the end of the course start applying for jobs immediately.
7) What feedback would you give to the course provider or the certificate provider (e.g. Cambridge) to ensure that future courses are useful for non-native speaker teachers?	Create a network of companies hiring ESOL teachers and connect the newly qualified teachers to that network so that it becomes faster for them to get hired.
8) Did you ever consider taking the <u>Cambridge ICELT</u> , offered to in-service teachers? If not, why not? If you did, why did you prefer to choose the CELTA?	I did not consider it due to lack of time.

9) How much did you discuss using the mother tongue / L1 for teaching? Was it possible to use it in the teaching practice lessons on the course itself?	I did not use L1 at all, neither in the classroom nor during the course. That was not possible anyway because there were no other [X] students in my class.
10) Is there anything else you feel is relevant to mention or discuss that you have not been asked about? (note my aim above)	Nothing.

Subsequent email exchange – my question (bold) and her answer:

A quick background detail question: What teaching work had you done for 3.5 years, and where?

I used to teach English while still in [X]. The school was a small private language school and about 70% of the students were [X] and the rest 30% were students from Russia, Georgia, Turkey and Bulgaria. Using L1 though, was not allowed even though the students knew I was [X]. I worked full time all 3.5 years and left the school because I decided to move here with my husband-he's English.

One thing that I'm interested in you elaborating on is the impact of the course. You mentioned: "I started using more materials and spend less teacher talking time than before."

After the course I started including group work more than before, I also started naming a leader in every group so that the task would be monitored by the students themselves- of course I would always give feedback in the end. I was focusing more on pair work before the course.

Can you elaborate a little on what you mean by 'using more materials'? Was there a sense in which your teaching style adapted because of the new teaching context?

About the materials, I found out about some very useful websites that I hadn't heard of when I was in [X]. These provide teachers with ready-made games and published quizzes and that proved to be very popular in the class.