New TESOL graduates' employment experiences and views of teacher education.

Sue Edwards, Caitlin Feenstra, and Jill Musgrave

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Abstract

In 2003 a new 12-week full time Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) programme called Certificate in English Language Teaching (Cert ELT) was offered by the Department of Education at the Waikato Institute of Technology (Wintec) for the first time. While other TESOL programmes offered by Wintec are for teachers and teacher-aides, the new Cert ELT programme is for those with little or no previous teaching experience.

The curriculum development and delivery of Wintec's TESOL programmes are informed by a constructivist view of learning which has held a prominent focus in educational literature since the late 1980s. This theory of learning sees learners as active participants in the processes of incorporating, synthesising and constructing knowledge within their previous experience (Arlidge, 2000; Zepke, Nugent & Leach 2003).

Of particular relevance within TESOL literature is the social constructivist view which claims that a central feature of the learning process is that knowledge is socially constructed through dialogue and interaction with others (Randall & Thornton, 2001; Malderez & Bodoczky, 1999; James, 2001). Also relevant is the reflective model of TESOL teacher education as outlined by Wallace (1993) in which trainees participate in a continuous cycle of teaching, observation, reflection and discussion in order to become reflective practitioners.

A lack of information concerning what happens to Cert ELT students once they graduate from the programme motivated the research discussed in this paper. Data collection included a questionnaire and individual interviews. The three researchers gathered information concerning the graduates' employment destinations. Also of interest were the graduates' retrospective views of those components of the programme arising from a social constructivist view of learning. These components included experiential learning, reflective practice and collaborative practice.

It is expected that insights gained from this project will be of interest to other TESOL professionals and teacher educators.

1.

0   Introduction

Since the late 1980s there has been a prominent focus in educational literature on constructivism, a theory of learning which views learners as active participants in the process of incorporating, synthesising and constructing knowledge within their previous experience (Arlidge, 2000; Zepke, Nugent & Leach 2003). Social constructivism, most notably the Vygotskyian theory of learning, is of particular relevance within the literature for Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL). Social constructivists claim that a key element in the process of learning is that knowledge is socially constructed through dialogue and interaction with others (Randall & Thornton, 2001; Malderez & Bodoczky, 1999; James, 2001).

The curriculum development and course delivery of the TESOL programmes offered by the Department of Education at the Waikato Institute of Technology (Wintec) have been informed by this constructivist view of learning. These programmes aim to provide an appropriate environment in which knowledge can be constructed by individual learners.

The three main models of TESOL teacher education as outlined by Wallace (1993) are the craft model, in which trainees learn by observing and imitating an experienced teacher; the applied science model, in which trainees study theoretical courses in applied linguistics and related subjects and then apply this knowledge to the classroom; and the reflective model, in which trainees take part in a continuous cycle of teaching, observation, reflection and discussion in order to develop theories about teaching. This final model draws on Kolb's (1984) theory of experiential learning and also promotes graduates who are able to become, to use Schon's term, 'reflective practitioners' (Schon, 1983). While Wintec's TESOL programmes draw on elements of all three of the models of teacher education outlined above, they contain many elements of the reflective model, with a strong focus on experiential learning, reflective practice and collaborative practice.

In 2003 the Department of Education added a new pre-service programme to its established in-service TESOL programmes for trained teachers and for teacher aides. The new programme is called Certificate in English Language Teaching (Cert ELT) and is a 12 week full-time programme. The majority of the 39 graduates from the first year of the new programme had no previous teaching experience and gained their first teaching posts once they completed the Cert ELT programme.

This research project had two main objectives. The first objective was to collect information relating to the Cert ELT graduates' employment experiences once they had left the programme. The second objective was to explore the graduates' retrospective views of the programme once they had been employed, focussing in particular on their views of those components of the programme that involve experiential learning, reflective practice and collaborative practice. This report presents the preliminary findings for these objectives.

1.1   The programme

The Cert ELT programme is a NZQA Level 5, 40 credit, 12 week full-time programme consisting of three modules: Grammar for English Language Teaching, Teaching Practice and Theory, and Reflective Practice. During the Grammar for English Language Teaching module, students receive 60 hours of tuition and spend another 40 hours working on their own or collaboratively. *Collaborative learning* is central to the teaching and learning approaches of this module. The research focuses on the graduates' retrospective views of working collaboratively on some of the assessment tasks and of sharing and discussing their understanding of the tasks together before writing up their own answers.

In the Teaching Practice and Theory module, in addition to the classroom hours of tuition and the hours of self-study and/or collaborative study, students

spend 72 hours taking part in a Teaching Practicum where they plan lessons, teach and observe their peers teaching NESB learners of two different language levels under the guidance of experienced supervising teachers. The practicum brings together a number of aspects of *experiential, reflective and collaborative learning*. The practicum is timetabled for the second six weeks of the programme, providing students with opportunities to observe teaching, discuss and reflect on new ideas and approaches during the first six weeks before actually putting this learning into practice. During the practicum a constant process of experience followed by dialogue and reflection takes place. In the feedback sessions key issues are discussed and students give feedback and receive feedback from each other as well as receiving feedback from the supervising tutor. The research focuses on the graduates' retrospective views of giving feedback and receiving feedback from their peers.

During the Reflective Practice module, in addition to the classroom hours of tuition and the hours of self-study and/or collaborative study, students spend 36 hours observing and assisting experienced teachers in authentic primary, secondary and tertiary classrooms where non-English speaking background (NESB) learners are taught in the medium of English. *Experiential learning* and *reflective learning* are central to the teaching and learning processes of this module. The research focuses on the graduates' retrospective views of taking part in authentic classroom experiences and also their views of the assessment tasks, which included a reflective journal to both incorporate new insights and summarise and synthesise the learning at the end of the module.

1.2   The researchers

The researchers, Sue Edwards, Caitlin Feenstra and Jill Musgrave comprise the core Cert ELT teaching team. Sue Edwards is also the Programme Coordinator for the Cert ELT programme and Jill Musgrave is the Team Leader for Wintec's TESOL programmes. The research team members were motivated

to conduct this project by a number of factors. They share an enthusiasm for the programme and were interested in working collaboratively on research which would lead to benefits for the programme. They also had a strong desire to learn more about their graduates' experiences and views and to share their findings with other teacher educators.

2.0   Method

2.1   Participants

The potential participants for this research project were all 39 students who completed the Certificate in English Language Teaching (Cert ELT) programme in 2003, which was the first year the programme was offered. Around a quarter of the students enrolled in the programme were male, while three quarters were female. Three quarters of the students identified as NZ European/Pakeha; just over 10% identified as NZ Maori; 2% as Pacific Islanders and 6% as Asian. There were no international student enrolments in 2003.

2.2   Instruments

A questionnaire was used to collect information relating to the first objective of the research which was to gather Cert ELT graduates' employment experiences once they had left the programme.

An interview schedule was used to gather data relating to the second objective of the project which was to explore the graduates' retrospective views of the programme once they had been employed, focussing in particular on their views of those components of the programme that involve experiential learning, reflective practice and collaborative practice.

2.3   Procedure

The questionnaire was developed, piloted and sent to all 39 graduates of the programme. Once the questionnaires were returned, the information was put onto a spreadsheet, coded and analysed. A total of 15 questionnaires were returned.

A semi-structured interview guide was developed once the questionnaires had been coded and analysed. The interview guide was piloted and developed further including key questions to be used when probing for additional information. At this stage decisions were made about the procedures to be followed when conducting the interviews. This included procedures for establishing and maintaining rapport and managing the pace and direction of the interview. Consent for the interviews was received from a quarter of the graduates, each of whom had held at least one teaching post since completing the qualification.

Six semi-structured interviews were conducted in person while two were conducted by telephone as the interviewees were teaching overseas. The interviews were all taped and transcribed. The researchers then checked the transcripts against the tape recordings to fill in gaps and make corrections. Participants were sent two copies of the transcripts, one for them to keep and a second for them to edit before returning to the researchers in the envelope provided.

The edited transcripts were then analysed using the approach outlined by Johnson (1992) in a discussion of case study methodology. This approach required the researchers to search for meaning by sifting reiteratively through the interview transcripts in order to identify meaningful themes and discover how these themes are patterned.

2.4   Compliance with protocols

A third party (independent of the research but known to the participants) contacted all Cert ELT graduates by email and/or post explaining that they would shortly receive information about the research project and a request for consent or otherwise to participate in the project. This initial letter also explained that

consent was voluntary and refusal to participate would not result in any adverse consequences.

A second letter was then sent to all of the 2003 graduates. This letter contained a formal invitation to complete a questionnaire and be interviewed and a further explanation of the project's purpose and ethical considerations. The researchers' contact details were provided for any further questions. Included with this letter and consent form was the questionnaire form. All letters were co-jointly signed by the contact person and by the researchers.

During the research all data was securely stored during processing with access restricted to researchers and transcribers. Tapes, survey data and transcripts are locked away securely with access restricted to the researchers and transcribers. On completion of the research, data will be securely stored at Research Connections at Wintec for a period of ten years. Access to this data will be restricted to the research team and the Manager of Research Connections, Wintec.

3.0   Results and discussion

3.1   Questionnaires

Of the 15 participants in the survey, 13 (86.66%) were female and two (13.33%) male. This loosely reflects the overall ratio of male to female enrolments in the programme in the year in which the study was undertaken, which was 25.6% male and 74.4% female.

As shown in Table 3.1, the ages of participants varied, with two in the 25-30 range, three in the 30-40 age range, five in the 40-50 range, and four aged 'over 50'.

All except one of the participants in the survey hold tertiary level qualifications, with 12 of the 15 holding a three-year Bachelor's degree. As shown in Table 3.1, these qualifications were in a wide range of fields, with only five of the 15 having previously gained qualifications in the general field of 'Education'. Together with the fact that the participants tended to be in older age groups, this seems to indicate that a majority of those enrolling in the programme see it as an opportunity to take a change of direction in their lives.

Table 3.1: Participant details

Participant no.	Gender	Age	Completion Date	Previous Qualifications
1	F	>50	28/11/2003	B.A. (Education)
2	F	>50	18/07/2003	B.A(Anthr.), NZIM Dip.Managemt,
3	M	>50	11/04/2003	B.A. History, HNC Building
4	F	30-40	11/04/2003	B.Soc.Sci (Anthropology)
5	F	>50	18/07/2003	T.T.C.,Dip. Divinity,Dip. Religious Ed.
6	F	30-40	18/07/2003	B.A. (Hist., Pol. Sci.)Grad. Dip. Tchg.

7	M	25-30	11/04/2003	B.M.S.
8	F	30-40	28/11/2003	B.Soc.Sci. (Sociology)
9	F	40-50	11/04/2003	Cert. Adult Tchg, QTA in Haematology
10	F	40-50	18/07/2003	B.Ed., Cert Enrolled Nursing, Cert. Karitane Nursing, Cert.Adult Tchg
11	F	40-50	11/04/2003	B. Tchg
12	F	40-50	11/04/2003	B.A (Soc. Sci.)
13	F	25-30	28/11/2003	None completed
14	F	40-50	18/07/2003	B.A. Theatre Studies
15	F	?	18/07/2003	Cert Adult Teaching

As shown in Table 3.2, all except two of the 15 participants used the Cert ELT qualification to look for either paid or voluntary work. Table 3.3 shows that of these two, one found employment as a mainstream teacher using a previous qualification B.Ed, (as shown in Table 3.1), and one had other reasons for not using the qualification to seek employment. All of the remaining 13 sought paid employment, with only four also looking for voluntary employment.

Table 3.2 shows that there was a high success rate in obtaining paid employment using the qualification, with 11 of the 13 who were seeking paid employment being successful in doing so. One of the remaining two participants, one found voluntary employment (no. 9), with only one participant not being successful in obtaining either paid or voluntary employment (no. 6). Overall, these results clearly indicate that a primary purpose for undertaking the qualification was to use it as a means of gaining paid employment, and that most of the participants were able to successfully use the qualification for this purpose.

Table 3.2: Use of the Cert ELT qualification to gain paid or voluntary employment

Participant no.	Looked for paid employment	Found paid employment	Looked for voluntary employment	Found voluntary employment
1	No	No	No	No
2	Yes	Yes	No	No
3	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
4	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
5	Yes	Yes	No	No
6	Yes	No	No	No
7	Yes	Yes	No	No
8	Yes	Yes	No	No
9	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
10	Yes	Yes	No	No
11	No	No	No	No
12	Yes	Yes	No	No
13	Yes	Yes	No	No
14	Yes	Yes	No	No
15	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Table 3.3: Reasons for non-use of the Cert ELT qualification

Participant no.	Reason for non-use of Cert ELT
1	Life has taken some unexpected turns. I hope 2005 will provide a more equable (sic) climate for me to seek employment as an English Language teacher.
11	I have been relieving in primary schools and this has kept me very busy to date.

Table 3.4 shows the range of methods used by participants to seek paid employment, and shows which of these methods were successful for each participant. In some cases, participants supplied additional information, which is shown in the 'notes' column.

As shown in Table 3.4, 11 of the 13 participants who sought paid employment used two or more methods of seeking employment, with five participants using two methods, one using three methods, four using four methods, and one participant using five different methods of seeking employment before being successful. It is not known whether the methods used were undertaken simultaneously or sequentially, as the study did not investigate this. However, the results indicate that it is usually necessary to use more than one method of seeking employment as an English language teacher.

The methods which were used by participants were analysed for common features and seemed to fall into the following broad categories, with numbers of occurrences in order of frequency:

- Formal approach to potential (institutional) employers, including phoning, sending a CV, and going in person to a language school (16);
- Responding to advertised positions, including newspaper and internet advertisements (9)
- 'Word of mouth', including being told by others about employment, or letting others know informally of availability for work (6);
- Approach by students (English language learners) (3);
- Approach by an employer (1);
- Advertising availability for employment in the newspaper (1).

An analysis of these broad methods was then carried out to determine which method was the most successful in obtaining paid employment, and this is shown in Table 3.5:   Success of different methods of seeking paid employment. Although the numbers are not high, it may be possible to make some inferences from these results. Apart from being approached by students or employers, which are 'guaranteed' methods of obtaining employment, the highest success rate was with 'word of mouth' (83.3%), although it was not the most frequently used method. This was followed by 'responding to advertised positions' (55.5%),

and 'formal approach to an (institutional) employer (43.75%). Because the latter was the most commonly used method of seeking employment (16 of 36 attempts at seeking employment), the original responses were re-examined, and it was found that of the seven who were successful with this method, three made personal contact, either by phone or by going in person to the place of employment, and others may have also done this, but it was not possible to know for certain, as participants had merely responded that they had 'contacted', 'notified', or 'followed up' a potential employer. However, the use of these words perhaps suggests that a conversation took place between potential employer and employee, and that this was probably by phone and may have been in person. Only one of the successful seven reported that they had 'left' their CV at the place of employment, suggesting that no conversation about employment had taken place. Of the nine participants who were not successful using this method of making a formal approach to an employer, two had made personal contact with someone at the potential place of employment, and the others reported that they had 'left' their CV with an employer or, in one case, with an employment agency. It is interesting to note that of those who were not successful, only two reported that they had 'contacted' or 'rang' the employer. It may be that personal 'contact', suggesting a conversation about employment, with someone at the potential place of employment is a factor in a successful employment outcome. However, the data from this study are not adequate to conclude this.

In summary, the findings relating to which methods of seeking paid employment as an English language teacher can only be seen as tentative, as there were only 15 participants involved in the research. In addition the two participants who failed to find paid employment (participants no. 6 and 9) made two and three attempts respectively to obtain employment, and both used methods which were successfully used by other participants. This is perhaps an area for further study, with larger numbers of participants, and more detailed questions as to the nature of the contact between potential employer and employee.

Table 3.4:   Methods used by participants to seek and gain paid employment

Participant no.	Methods of seeking employment	Type of method *	Successful?	Notes
2	a) Notifying tutor of Cert ELT that I am available.	Word of mouth	Yes	Tutor forwarded to me positions available at a language school , I applied and was successful
	b) Put advert in local newspaper and local community newspaper	Advertising availability for employment	No	
	c) Notified local literacy and language agency that I was available	Formal approach to employer	Yes	Timing was right for applying.
	d) Word of mouth by meeting someone working in China	Word of mouth	No	Currently in discussions with agency
3	a) Phoned primary and high schools, then forwarded CV via email	Formal approach to employer	Yes	
4	a) Contacts at the Waikato Home Tutor Scheme	Word of mouth	Yes	
	b) Students from Cert ELT practicum group approached me for 1-1 tutoring	Approached by students	Yes	
	c) Friends of my NESB flatmate asked me to tutor them	Approached by students	Yes	
	d) Sent CV to a language school	Formal approach to employer	No	
5	a) Was approached by a	Approached by an	Yes	

	primary school where I had worked before	employer		
	b) Continued tutoring individuals privately, which began before the course started	Approached by students	Yes	
6	a) Replied to newspaper advertisements	Responding to advertised position	No	
	b) Repied to Internet advertisements	Responding to advertised position	No	
	c) Left C.V. at places of employment	Formal approach to employer	No	
7	a) Answered advert in paper	Responding to advertised positions	No	
	b) Contacted an employment agency	Formal approaches to employers	No	
	c) Followed up on visit from Shane English School during Cert ELT course	Formal approach to employer	Yes	
	d) Family contacts	Word of mouth	Yes	
8	a) Took my CV to several language schools	Formal approach to employer	Yes	
	b) Word of mouth	Word of mouth	Yes	
9	a) Answered two adverts in newspaper	Responding to advertised positions	No	
	b) Went to language schools in person	Formal approach to employe	No	
10	a) Left C.V. at places of employment	Formal approach to employer	Yes	
10	b) Answered advert in paper	Responding to advertised positions	No	
12	a) Answered advert in paper	Responding to advertised positions	Yes	

	b) Word of mouth	Word of mouth	Yes	
	c) Internet Job Board	Responding to advertised positions	Yes	
	d) Left or emailed CVs	Formal approach to employer	No	
13	a) Answered ads on web sites	Responding to advertised positions	Yes	
	b) Contacted various schools in London, Dublin and Rome to forward my CV and certificate	Formal approach to employer	Yes	
14	a) Left CV at Wintec	Formal approach to employer	No	No interview
	b) Left CV at another language school in Hamilton	Formal approach to employer	No	Got an interview but told not enough experience
	c) Left messages at two language schools in Auckland.	Formal approach to employer	No	No response
	d) Rang agency in Sydney which sends teachers around the world.	Formal approach to employer	No	Not interested in me because I had children
	e) Replied to six NZ Herald advertisements.	Responding to advertised positions	Yes	Only two interested, one in Mexico, and this one in China
15	a) Contacted Waikato ESOL Home Tutor Scheme	Formal approach to employer	Yes	

(* Analysis completed by researchers - Not part of the questionnaire)

Table 3.5:Success of different methods of seeking paid employment

Method of seeking paid employment	Number of participants who were successful using this method	Number of participants who were not successful using this method	Success rate (%)
Formal approach to potential (institutional) employers	7	9	43.75%
Responding to advertised positions	5	4	55.55%
Word of mouth	5	1	83.33%
Approach by students (English language learners)	3	0	100%
Approach by an employer	1	0	100%
Advertising availability for employment	0	1	0%

Table 3.6 shows the methods of seeking and obtaining voluntary work by participants in the study. The 4 participants included in the table were the only ones in the study who sought voluntary work (see Table 3.1), and all were successful. Although the numbers are small, this may indicate that voluntary work with English language learners is readily available. The table shows three main methods were used to obtain voluntary employment –a formal approach to

an employer, word of mouth, and use of a previous qualification. The latter method, reported by two of the participants, involved obtaining work as a volunteer ESOL Home Tutor, as will be shown in Table 3.7, below. By reporting the fact that they had previously completed the Home Tutor qualification, the participants clearly thought that the previous qualification was the key factor in obtaining the voluntary employment, even though they had subsequently gained the Cert. ELT. Of the four who sought and found voluntary employment, only one (participant no. 9) was not successful in also obtaining paid employment (see Table 3.1). It is not known why the participants 3, 4 and 15 chose to seek voluntary work in addition to paid work.

Table 3.6: Methods used by participants to seek and gain voluntary employment

Participant no	Methods of seeking work	Type of method*	Successful?
3	Phoned Hamilton City Council - had interview	Formal approach to employer	Yes
4	Had previously done a 10-week course at the Waikato ESOL Home Tutor Scheme.	Use of a previous qualification	Yes
9	I have a friend who is a Tibetan Lama. Friend found me a voluntary position teaching English overseas.	Word of mouth	Yes
15	Previously I enrolled in Waikato home Tutor Scheme as a volunteer, completing 12 weeks training and 12 sessions teaching.	Use of a previous qualification	Yes

(* Analysis completed by researchers - Not part of the questionnaire)

Table 3.7 below shows the number and type of paid employment positions held by the 11 participants in the study who were successful in obtaining paid employment. Several key findings are evident:

- 8 of the 11 participants had held at least two paid positions at the time of the study. The number of positions held ranged from one to four, with a total of 25 among the participant group.

- The length of time in each position ranged from very short-term (2 days) to more 'long-term' with the longest being 12 months, in the case of some who had been among the earliest graduates of the programme (participants 5,7, 12, 14,15 – see Table 3.1).

- The number of hours worked per week ranged from 1.5 to 30 (although this was only temporary – participant no. 8). Although the questionnaire did not distinguish between teaching hours and other hours, some participants reported on this, giving either 'contact' hours of combined 'teaching and other duties'.

- 17 of the 25 paid positions held by the 11 graduates were described as 'part-time' and 'short-term', with 6 being described as 'Part-time, long-term', and just two being 'full-time, long-term'.

- The participants worked in a variety of different places: Private Language School (7); Polytechnic (1); Students' homes (8); Own home (1); Church Hall (2); NZ Primary or Secondary School (4); Private Boarding School-China (1); Library (1).

- Most of the participants had found paid employment in NZ, apart from three who had found work in Japan (no. 7), Italy, Ireland and England (no. 13), and China (no. 14) participants. This indicates the acceptability of the qualification in other countries.

Table 3.7: Details of paid employment

Participant no.	Position no.	Length of time in this position	No. of hours worked per week	Type of employment	Place of employmt	Country

				Part-time short-term casual contract	Private language school	NZ
2	1	6 weeks	5-10 hours	Part-time short-term casual contract	Private language school	NZ
	2	6 weeks	10-15 hours	Part-time Short-term casual contract rolled over	Private language school	NZ
	3	4 mornings	3 hours per morning	Part-time Short-term	With a homestay agency that arranges trips to NZ	NZ
3	1	10 weeks	10-15 hours	Part-time Short term	Primary School	NZ
	2	6 months	5-10 hours/wk	Part-time Short-term	Pupils' homestay	NZ
4	1	4-5 months	8 hours /wk	Part-time Short-term	Students' home	NZ
	2	1 year	2 hours /wk	Part-time long-term	Church Hall (Social English Group)	NZ
	3	6 months	1.5 hours/wk	Part-time long-term	Church Hall (Korean language group)	NZ
	4	6 months	2-3 hours/wk (varied)	Part-time Short-term	Polytechnic Library	NZ
5	1	12 months	5 hours/wk	Part-time Long-term	Students' homes	NZ
	2	6 weeks	10 hours/wk	Part-time Short-term	Primary School	NZ
	3	3.5 weeks	16 hrs/week	Part-time Short-term	Secondary schools	NZ
7	1	2 months	2-4 hours/wk	Part-time short-term	Students' homes	NZ

	2	9 months which became a 1 year contract	Approx 25 hours/wk + planning	Full-time, Long-term	Private language school	Japan
8	1	6 weeks	5-10 hours/wk	Part-time Short-term	Private students - my home	NZ
	2	12 weeks, ongoing	30 hours per week initially, now 22 hours per week	Part-time Long-term	Private Language School	NZ
	3	2 days	10-15 hours	Part-time Short-term, relieving	Private language school	NZ
10	1	4 months	6 hours/wk	Part-time Short-term contracts	Polytechnic	NZ
12	1	12 months	6 hours/wk	Part-time Long term	Students' homes	NZ
	2	6 weeks	15 hours/wk	Part-time Short-term	High School	NZ
13	1	3 months	15 hrs/wk	Short-term Part-time	Students' home, students' work place	Italy
	2	2 months	30 hr/wk	Short-term Full-time	Private language school	London
	3	About to start	22 contact hrs/week	Short-term Full-time	Private Summer School	Ireland
14	1	7 months (of a 12 month contract)	40 hrs/week (teaching and other duties)	long-term Full-time	Private boarding school – primary, middle school	China
15	1	10 months	7 hours/week	part-time	Students'	NZ

				contracts	homes	

Table 3.8 shows the range of classes, language levels and details of students taught by the 11 participants who obtained paid employment. The following observations can be made:

- The number of 'classes' taught varied widely, with some participants working with only 1 or 2 groups of learners, and others teaching up to 30 different 'classes' each week.
- The language level of these classes varied from Beginner to IELTS preparation classes. However, the majority of participants worked with elementary, pre-intermediate and intermediate level learners.
- The number of students in each 'class' ranged from one to 70.
- The age of the students ranged from young children to adults of all age groups.
- The countries of origins of the students included countries from Asia, the Pacific, Africa, Europe and South America.

Table 3.8: Details of ESOL students taught by participants in paid employment

Partici pant no.	Position no.	No. of classes taught	Language level of each class	No. of students in each class	Age of students	Countries of origin of students	Notes
2	1	2	a)Upper Int. b) IELTS Preparation	a) small class b) up to 15 students	Young adults	China and Korea	
	2	2	a) Pre-Intermediate; b) Intermediate	a) Small group b) small class	Young adults with 1 mature student	China and Korea	

	3	1	Elementary	16 students	16-17 year olds	Japan	
3	1	2 classes each day	a) Pre-Intermediate; b) Intermediate	3-4 in each group	Primary School	Taiwan and Thailand	
	2	up to six each day	Intermediate	One student	High School and Primary	South Korea	
4	1	?	Pre-int; Int; Upper-Int	one-to one tutoring	Intermediate School (NZ)	Korea	
	2	approx 30	Beginner, Elementary	Small groups	Mixed adult group	Korea, China, Somalia, Congo, Indonesia, Cambodia	
	3	20	Elementary, pre-Int, Int.	Small groups	Mixed adult group	Korea	
	4	20	Int-Upper-Int.	One-to one teaching	Young adult	China	
5	1	?	Elementary - preint.	One-to one	Primary School; 1 adult	Korea	
	2	4 groups	Literacy Enrichment - years 5-8	4-5 students	primary school	New Zealand	
	3	2	Elementary -Int	14-15 students	8-16 years; 15-17 years	Korea	

7	1	1	Elementary	3 children - one- to-one tutoring	Primary	Korea	
	2	30 classes a week	Beginner to advanced. Majority are elementary and intermediate	1-8 students.	Approx 85% of students are children	Japan	working in Japan in Shane English School)
8	1	2	Pre-int; Int; Upper-Int	a) 15 b) 10	a) Primary b) Young adult	Korea	
	2	3	Intermediate	15	Young adult	Korea/China/Tonga/Japan	
	3	2-4 classes/wk	Elementary	5	High School/young adult	Japan, China	
10	1	2	Intermediate	Up to 20	Mainly young adult, some older	Korea, China, Thailand, Malaysia, Russia, Taiwan	
12	1			one-to one tutoring			
	2						
13	1	2	a) Beginner b) Pre-Int	2 in each class	a) Primary b) adult	Italy	
	2	4	a)	a) 8 b) 12	All	Hungary,	

			Elementary b) Beginner c) Bus. Beginner d) Bus pre-Int.	c) 7 d) 5	groups mixed adults	Italy, Ecuador, Brazil, Greece, Sth Korea, Croatia, Lithuania, Egypt, France, Poland, Peru, Tunisia	
	3	2	Don't know yet	approx 12-15	High School 12-17	Mostly European	
14	1	15	Beginner - Intermediate	25-70	5-18 years	China	
15	1	1	Elementary -Pre-Int	1	40's	China	
	2	1	Elementary	1	30's	China	
	3	1	Elementary	1	40's	Taiwan	
	4	1	Elementary	1	50's	Taiwan	

Table 3.9 shows details of the participants' voluntary work. Participants 3, 4 and 15 also had paid employment, with participant 4 having an additional four short-term paid positions (see Table 3.7). The length of time for each position varies from three weeks to six months. The hours vary from two to ten hours a week in New Zealand while the position in India is a live-in position with 20 hours worked per week.   The number of hours reported are likely to be teaching hours, although the questionnaire did not distinguish between teaching hours and working hours

Table 3.9: Details of voluntary work

Participant no.	Position no.	Length of time in position	No. of hours per wk	Type of employment	Place of employment	Country
3	1	3 weeks so far	5-10 hours	short-term	Primary School	NZ
4	1	6 months	5hours	Long-term	Primary School	NZ
9	1	3 months	approx 20 hours	live-in	Buddhist nunnery, India	India
15	1	6 months	2hour	long-term	Student's home	NZ

As shown in table 3.10, three out of the four participants provided details about the students taught in voluntary positions. All three participants taught learners at a beginner level and taught small groups and/or larger classes. Two of the participants taught adults while the third had mixed age groups. The origins of the learners were Tibet, Nepal, Bhutan, Cambodia and Vietnam.

Table 3.10: Details of ESOL students taught by participants in voluntary employment

Participant no.	Position no.	No.of classes taught	Language level (s)	No. of students in each class	Age of students	Countries of origin of students	Notes

					7-15	Mixed		
3	1	1	Beginner	students	adults	Cambodia	
4	1	? (not given)	Beginner, Elementary Pre-Int.	small groups and larger classes	Mixed adult groups	Cambodia/Vietnam - Khmer speakers	
9	1	3	a) Beginner b) Pre-Int . c) Upper Int.	a) 16 b) 5 c) 3	Mixed age groups	Tibet, Nepal, Bhutan	
15	1	?	?	?	?	?	No details given

Participants were also asked about their job responsibilities. There were significant differences between those who were in paid or voluntary employment. All respondents listed planning, preparing lessons and teaching as their main responsibilities. Other activities included marking, attending meetings and assisting other teachers.

3.2   Interviews

On searching for meaningful themes and patterning of those themes within the interview transcripts it was noticed that the responses of the interviewees fell into three main groups. The largest group contains comments which indicate that the graduates both understand and value the teaching and learning approaches of the programme. Many of these comments also illustrate particular ways in which individual graduates benefited from these approaches. The second group contains comments highlighting aspects of the teaching and learning approaches, which the graduates appreciated and benefited from, which the researchers had not been particularly aware of. The third group contains

comments indicating resistance by some graduates to the teaching and learning approaches.

In the following section, examples of the student quotes from each of the three groups described above are discussed, within the context of the three modules of the programme, as they relate to collaborative learning, reflective practice and experiential learning.

3.2.1 Agreement between the researchers' and graduates' views

There was a clear patterning of responses throughout the interview transcripts to indicate that in many instances the interviewees both understood the intention of the teaching and learning approaches used within their programme and also felt that they had benefited from these approaches.

In the *Teaching Practice and Theory* module, collaborative learning takes the form of collaborative feedback following each practicum session. During the feedback, key issues are discussed and students give feedback and receive feedback from each other as well as receiving feedback from the supervising teacher. When discussing this collaborative feedback process, the graduates' comments focused on a range of issues, including the value they placed on receiving feedback in order to improve practice.

> *"You need to be able learn to take criticism and advice [through collaborative discussion]…so you can become a better teacher and grow as a teacher…"*

They also commented that receiving feedback from a range of different people, rather than just the teacher, can increase the fairness of the process and they clearly felt that their fellow students had valuable insights to offer.

"Well it's more time consuming getting everyone to do it [collaborative feedback] but you get a lot of different points of view and I think it's perhaps fairer."

"So although the tutors are trained and skilled…sometimes other people pick up other things" [during the collaborative feedback].

Such comments are in accord with the roles of the learner and the teacher within a constructivist context where learners are active participants in the learning process and teachers are seen as one of the many resources within the learning environment, rather than the sole source of knowledge.

During the *Grammar for English Language Teaching* module, students spend several hours each week working collaboratively on open book tasks. The interviewees commented on the benefits of discussion with their peers for processing and consolidating new concepts.

"If you feel that you have grasped something and you explain it to someone else it makes it stronger in your own mind as well."

Knowledge construction within a constructivist setting can be seen both as an individual process of testing the viability of new concepts and as a social process where interaction with others is a very important component.

The social process of interacting with others during the construction of knowledge was also seen as a valuable way to model future behaviours and practice within the context of the learning situation. Within a constructivist learning environment value is placed on the authenticity of each learning experience.

"I think maybe with that grammar, that group approach, and like being able to sit down and discuss it, is important - … I think it develops skills for when working with other teachers – you can sit down and discuss things."

An important underpinning of the curriculum and delivery of the Cert ELT programme is the place of 'reflective practice' in each of the three modules. Given the complexity of the processes involved in classroom interaction, developing professional practice does not just involve applying the knowledge that has been learned in the programme of study. A vital ingredient when developing expertise in teaching is a constant process of reflection.

When discussing the *Grammar for English Language Teaching* module, some of the responses acknowledged the necessity and importance of ongoing learning and 'reflection', often within the context of interaction with others.

"I came away feeling I had a lot more to learn. Yeah, I didn't come away feeling – wow, yeah now I know grammar."

 "often I was trying to explain to other people and it got me thinking about … how the grammar worked and I had to have a good understanding to try and explain why I'd chosen a particular answer."

[Working on the grammar tasks] "really was collaborative and if somebody decided to change their answer, it was because they had thought [reflected] about it rather than just accepted somebody else's idea."

Likewise, graduates indicated that they came to recognize the value of the reflective tasks and processes that were an integral part of their *Reflective Practice* module.

"(I started off thinking it [the reflective journal] was a terrible waste of time…) but it actually did prove to be pretty useful really, because apart from anything else you forget and it's only by looking back on those words at the end where you've got to put it all together, that it makes any sense."

"… it was really, really good…having a [reflective] task for each visit because…unless you've got a task, most of it goes straight over your head. To have to look at specific things was incredibly enlightening for me…"

Several of the graduates also indicated that they still make use of the reflective processes in their teaching.

"I still reflect on lessons" [in Japan], "and particularly if I'm not so happy with a lesson I sort of think back and try and analyse what the problem was and how I went and make some notes and think about it for next time."

Wallace (1991) refers to the importance of teacher education including two kinds of knowledge development. He refers to these as 'received knowledge' which relates to theoretical and methodological issues, and 'experiential knowledge' which arises from 'knowledge-in-action'.

When discussing the opportunities for experiential learning during the practicum sessions for the *Teaching Practice and Theory* module, graduates spoke of the challenges involved but also the benefits.

"It was a real challenge…the first time teaching a class and they were quite big classes particularly the intermediate group. We really had to know what we were doing…it was a good…foundation for the teaching I've done since. "

[The teaching practicum] "was a challenge because I hadn't actually stood up in front of a class before… but I think you need to do that because obviously at some point you are going to teach and you have to stand up in front of a class."

They also commented on the value of observing their peers during the practicum experiences and that this continued through into their subsequent practice.

"…it was good watching your peers teaching as well, as you could see their teaching styles and things they did … I often think [about a particular student teacher]…and the way she used to use her fingers doing a contraction and I sort of pick up on that [in my teaching now]"

When discussing the opportunities for experiential learning during the *Reflective Practice* module, graduates focussed on the opportunities that were provided for observing experienced teachers working with their non-English speaking background learners. Some of the graduates explained that while they initially didn't understand the value of these experiences, they later recognised the value of being able to experience an authentic teaching and learning environment.

"(At first I thought it [the work experience] was a waste of time – oh for goodness sake I'm not learning anything here …and then I thought - oh, no, it was really good - What I liked was hearing all about the different students, where they came from and why they were there and all of that, it was incredibly interesting, especially some of the really young ones and why they come."

Other comments focused on the value of learning 'how to learn' and also the opportunity to talk with teachers about the realities of their classrooms.

> *"I really enjoyed [the work experience] sitting and watching and learning how to observe…seeing it work after reading about it, and you know I thought that was really a good way to do that."*

> *"We could speak to the [work experience] teachers as well…you get [a] different point of view…[such as] problems with going to the Casinos all night…you don't necessarily know what is going on [behind the scenes] unless you get to talk to the teacher."*

3.2.2 Aspects of the programme which the graduates benefited from which the researchers were not particularly aware of

The interview data also revealed a number of aspects of the programme, which the learners had valued and benefited from, which the researchers had not been particularly aware of. A number of comments revealed a depth of understanding and an ability to integrate the learning from various parts of the programme in highly beneficial ways.

For example, it was of interest to note that our graduates found the gap between their own efforts on the teaching practicum and what they observed happening in the work experience sessions highly motivating.

> *[Experiential learning] "made me feel like – oh, I want more practice in being able to do that…you know, I realised how easy it seemed for…a lot of these teachers and how difficult it was when I then tried to put it into practice."*

Another graduate commented on the value of the collaborative tasks in the *Grammar for English Language Teaching* module, not for the quality of the learning that emerged, but because this collaboration helped to develop the skills needed when working with a variety of people. The graduate had clearly identified this as an essential skill for the role of the teacher in any classroom.

> *"It wasn't always easy for me working with some of the people in that group, but …when you're in the classroom you're not always going to find it easy to work with certain individuals either, so yes I think that's another benefit of that"*

The following comments indicate that the experiences on the programme have led these graduates to consciously evaluate the benefits of various teaching and learning approaches and also to think of how these benefits can be applied to their future practice.

> *[The learning process including reflection] "has made me far more receptive to the idea of, you know – not the teacher just standing at the front but get involved in the groups and listen… because often times if you actually listen to someone's problem or question it is quite different than what you assume they were going to say."*

> *"I am not sure…if this…was the intention of [the reflective practice]…but [it] actually…helped teach me to think things through further than just the end of the lesson…and see how things connect…I use that in my teaching now. I try to think now how is this going to fit in what happened yesterday… You know I use the same basic technique."*

3.2.3 Resistance by graduates to the teaching and learning approaches

The interview data also revealed a number of instances where graduates resisted the learning and teaching approaches which they perceived to have negative outcomes. For example, when discussing the collaborative feedback during the *Teaching Practice and Theory* module, some interviewees indicated a lack of confidence in the ability of other students to provide feedback and in some cases a lack of comfort in being asked to provide feedback themselves.

> *"I don't know if some of them [peers] were totally…doing it [giving feedback] in the right way – if they were focussing on the right thing – it wasn't very helpful in a lot of ways".*

> *"…I felt uncomfortable telling them [giving feedback to peers] I didn't think it was my place."*

Likewise, when discussing the collaborative tasks for *Grammar for English Language Teaching* some of the graduates mentioned outcomes which they perceived as negative.

> *[Working collaboratively] "didn't work for everybody and I know some people didn't contribute as much, they'd just come and sit down and say 'what have you got' and write everything down and I know that annoyed some people"*

> *"Sometimes it [working collaboratively] confused it [working on the grammar tasks] because we'd have different ideas."*

Several comments focused on the fact that they didn't initially value the reflective and experiential processes of the Reflective Practice module but had later recognized their value.

"I started off thinking it [the reflective journal] was a terrible waste of time…"

"At first I thought it [the work experience] was a waste of time –oh for goodness sake I am not learning anything here…"

Another comment indicated that the interviewee's individual approach and preference for particular tasks made the reflective processes difficult.

"…I did find the reflective practice quite difficult…I didn't always see the relevance to the classroom situation…to be quite honest I wished I was able to spend the time…making teaching resources. But I'm a very practical type of person."

Affective factors were also mentioned in relation to the teaching practicum, often with negative results.

"…the practicum was going to be horrible whichever way you looked at it. It was nerve-wracking"

"Just the feeling – nervous, nervous, nervous feeling that everything you are going to do" [during the teaching practicum] *"was going to be under scrutiny – that in a way took away from…what you do with the students"*

4.0 Conclusions

4.1 Questionnaire

The data gathered through the questionnaire provides valuable information for those delivering the programme and other teacher educators in terms of understanding the employment market and the nature of positions which are likely to be available for future graduates.

4.2 Interviews

The interview findings show that the majority of graduates interviewed both understood and valued the intention of the learning and teaching approaches. While there was an overall congruence of views, the comments also illustrate a variety of individual responses to each learning approach. It was particularly important to note those comments which were not anticipated by the teacher/researchers and those student views which indicate a resistance to the learning approaches.

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