Interviewer Started Transcription

Interviewer:

Are you ready to go?

Participant:

Yep.

Interviewer:

Okay perfect. So my first question is, could you please tell me a bit about your day-to-day professional ESOL responsibilities?

Participant

Well, I, uh, mostly teach, I teach \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .hours in a week and it's not very evenly spread, so not everyday is the same. I have a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .hours teaching. Basically one is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ . hours and\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ . I've free from teaching. I do all my prep. So the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .hour days I'm finding them really, really difficult. As you can imagine \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ . hours. And that is at the moment it's \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .days, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .hours in front of a class and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ . day online. So, and I'm when I'm in the class, I find it's so tiring. I wish I could be online. And when I'm online, I think it's so annoying. I wish I could be in the class. So. We're never Happy. Yeah. So, yeah. So teaching is the is the is the main job obviously. But there is preparation, marking. We also are a tutors for our groups, which means there’s a lot of not quite pastoral but looking after them. All sorts \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .that could affect their academic performance, so that goes into the personal lives or financial backgrounds, all sorts of things we we aim to help them as much as we can. But that way we find out a lot of things about them too, so.

Interviewer

Yes, sure. And. So my next question is about feeling engaged. So can you tell me about any times when you feel fully engaged in your professional ESOL activities or any times, the opposite, when you're not engaged?

Participant

I think I am always 100 percent on. You know? With which no which is which is the exhausting bit cause the the there are million decisions to be made at any given time, who's speaks to whom? Why is he looking out the window? What is she looking? Why is she looking at her phone while you're presenting? I'm not presenting

It Right? Why? Why is she looking like she can't follow? Why is she laughing? Ohh, they're responding. Either so many things. And then when you go into pair group activities. Who's working well with whom? Who's not here today? How many students? We what’s best threes or fours? constant decision making. It is Exhausting. Which means the preparation has to be solid. You, you, you just have to go into the class and you have to know your, your, your\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .. What comes first, what comes next, how they lead into each other. So that's yeah, it's everything we do just has to be. Done properly, because you don't want to let the students down that you're standing in front of cause they've made the effort of coming in. Many of them have paid for the course. So yeah. Yeah.

Interviewer

Perfect. So my next question is, we've talked about being engaged in the workplace but do you have any activities that give a similar sense of engagement in your day-to-day life?

Participant

I garden, so in the months when it is possible to garden it, I I like to be out of gardening. I like \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .walking. I read. I'm an avid reader. And ever since I've had the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .

Interviewer

Okay, Can you tell me about any emotions you may experience while teaching and working in ESOL?

Participant

Well, there is a lot of. Optimism. Happiness, even. But a lot of anxiety and self doubt. So yes, I'll probably in equal measures. Self doubt that you could have done it better or you should be doing it better. Anxiety that they're not learning as they should that. Ohh yeah, and but a lot of happiness when things go well, the students will respond, and occasionally they do get better.

Interviewer

OK, so. What we're going to do now is. Switched back to the same question but just day-to-day life.

Participant

Probably very much the same. I'm I'm naturally. Probably quite a cheerful and bubbly person, but I do get anxious and I've been battling a a slight\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .

Interviewer

Yes, definitely. Thank you. Thank you so much for for your answers. Let me move on to my next question, we know teaching is a social profession, so can you tell me about your professional relationships when teaching ESOL at all levels?

Participant

Well, with students are like to base things on trust. I'm not an authoritarian or particularly strict person, which?

Yes, OK, occasionally. This backfires. Maybe when I'm a bit lenient with someone. But I tried to work on on the

understanding that it's a give and take relationship, so I wouldn't. I don't believe in discipline for the sake of

discipline. I believe that discipline has a place when everybody needs to listen to me, because otherwise they can't hear me. But while they're doing an activity well, there's, you know, I so. So the student relationship I like to. I like them to trust me and I like to trust them. Even though I sometimes make a point of it in front of the

classroom, never trust a student because of course. Yeah. Naturally, a student, should you know. Of course they cheat or try to get away with whatever. You know, I've we've been students. We know these things.

Yeah. Um. In in the work time, but the teachers cause I've been in, in, in the team for really long, almost \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .years. Which is almost the longest. So there is a lot of respect they they do respect that. I've been there a long time and I know so many things that you can't know unless you already know. You, you know, you wouldn't find them written down anywhere. They're not officially spoken about. They're just sort of, you know, things. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .Things like that. Hmm. But I also sometimes feel that I am getting older, that I'm getting maybe a bit. Sort of. I don't maybe have quite the same enthusiasm for for change in particular. Now with all the online and digital things as much as I embrace them. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .It's got to be all digitally. Students can read things on the screen \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ . Whereas younger teachers? They embrace that much better, they say. Well, everybody has a phone they can read on their phone, they've got apps \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .

Interviewer

Right. Let me get the next question up and. Yes. Okay and again. These are the wellbeing questions about your day-to-day life. So how would you describe the relationships you have in your day-to-day life?

Participant

I have um a not many but close and very good trusting relationships. Yes, so I'm not. Yeah, I don't. I don't have a Ohh. sort of massive band bunch of of friends. I'm not on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .and things like that. And and I don't have parties I don't like to go to parties but. I have a lot of one-on-one friendships and the odd things you know like like. People, we play music together, things like that. So yeah.

Interviewer

Ohh, that sounds, no social media sounds lovely. Ohh. OK. So back to ESOL and can you tell me if you find your ESOL teaching meaningful or not meaningful in any way?

Participant

I would say yes, but I do get the meaning not so much from what I do, but from the response I get from the students, they they. We have excellent attendance. They come they’re motivated, they do their homework, they they want to show what they've learned. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .And now with all the apps and and and Google Translate, I sometimes wonder what we're doing because. Ohh for example I give homework and it used to be really meaningful. Long types of writing they had to do at home. Now I get I get Google translates and they’re sometimes so good, but I don't. Click until maybe 3-4 sentences in that I think. And that is not what the student could possibly have written themselves. So. Yeah.I do. I find the the the meaning is changing a bit because. To learn ESOL, I think there are many other areas now as students could could go, but I really appreciate that they still like the personal touch. The personal teaching with a person to ask questions. And and so I hope there will always be a place for that. Yes, yes. Hopefully we're not all going to be reply. I know because I am in the back of my mind. I have a sort of, you know, timer ticking down like where are we headed?

Interviewer

Yes, can you tell me if you also have a sense of meaning in any other areas of your day-to-day life?

Participant

Yeah, this is where I struggle. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .

Interviewer

Yeah, yes. And let me move on to my next question. So back to ESOL and. And so can you tell me if you

experience a sense of achievement in your profession teaching ESOL?

Participant

Ohh, I think yes. When when students progress, when students it's not even just the the the improvement in their ESOL because I often say to my colleagues I think they learn in spite of us. Just. I love that. Because it's it's more the there is an international community. Many students who maybe were isolated before they came on to our course, and suddenly I, I I keep saying it's like it's like family, you know, we know so much about each other and yes, we don't all like everyone another but we are good together. We're friendly. We're we're helpful supportive and we have little cliques and little groups. But all were were all connected and especially in COVID times when we are we were online, I had 100% attendance most weeks, every single class. And I I

really I had to thank them for Ohh. also making my life so pleasant because I was on my own. I live on my own. So actually having all these students in my in my office and Yeah. and this interaction and them obviously also enjoying the interaction and us being together. So I think this is what I have a greater sense of achievement even than just from them getting better at English so.

Interviewer

OK. Can you tell me about your sense of health and in your profession while ESOL teaching and working?

Participant

Um, I think it's the good thing is that I can move about, I can stand up and walk about. Um. But that's about it.

I feel a strain on my voice very often. I have recently felt a real strain on my eyes. Possibly with getting older, I

don't know. And I have. Because of corvid. And there's a lot of online. I'm sitting, I've developed a a quite a bad \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .problem. But my biggest problem is that the rooms are often stuffy. The lighting is often not pleasant. Um. Yeah. Uh, so generally I find I mean, ohh I'm at the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .and there are better rooms on worse rooms. Hmm. So when we get the timetables were often not trying to change, but we know it's just a swap with another colleague. So you feel bad if you swap yourself into a good room and you colleagues got so. So generally I think it's not the worst job. I would really not like to be a bus driver or or a yeah, even a shop assistant Yeah. where there’s more standing. You can't sit down a lot. So yeah, it's it's not so bad. But when we're on on campus, I think it's quite healthy or healthy enough. Yeah. Yeah.

Interviewer

Perfect. OK, we are we are well over halfway. So, overall, how happy are you with your career in ESOL teaching?

Participant:

I am reasonably happy. I am sorry that at our college there isn't a progression within ESOL to maybe senior lecturer or mentor or something like that. I would have liked that the next progression would be curriculum

manager. You have not just ESOL. You have other teams like I don't know, like hairdressing or something and

you have to deal with all sorts of issues that are remote from teaching. Um, so I would have. I would have liked to see a progression in my career, but not in the college too. What what? What is there? Yeah.

Interviewer

Yes, definitely. OK, great. So that is the end of the wellbeing questions and now we just have a few emotions questions. Would you say that you naturally show the emotions you feel while you're teaching and working in ESOL?

Participant

Well, to an extent, So, if if I'm. Quite comfortable in myself and unrelaxed, and that comes across in in my teaching. If I'm if I'm stressed or anxious. Sometimes teaching helps even because it distracts me from my

personal anxieties, and I just have to go and and. I often actually feel better the moment I'm in the classroom

because the interactions start I'm I'm I'm immediately distracted. So like they say, you know, it's being social, is

good for your health. I really feel that when I go into a classroom. And. And because my role is defined, I don't have social anxiety either, which I might have when I go to a party and then there’s lots of people. It's.

Yes. So it's it's kind of perfect in that way. So I am, I am usually quite relaxed to to, to show emotions that. That are appropriate in the classroom, obviously. I might share the odd little thing. You know, if if my cat is sick at home, I might say to the students. Like I'm really sorry. I'm a bit. Yeah, I'm a bit unsettled cause you know, but I think most people would do that talk about their children or things that maybe happened. I'm. The emotions that I don't show as it was in your questionnaire now I'm not sure if it comes up later again is regarding student behaviour. Are you gonna ask more about that or will that fit…

Interviewer

Please go ahead.

Participant

Um, so I don't tend to. I mean, I don't get angry at students, full stop, because I usually think, well, they're adults. They have a reason for whatever they're doing. I I clearly give them the choice, you know, look. I would like to teach and could you maybe you know, or if that's not possible, you could maybe go outside to do your texting or play your game or whatever, you know, so. I do vent to that in the office often when I'm angry, but not in the classroom so. Yes. Um, yeah. Um, there's not much isn't a huge gamut of emotions in the classroom. I try, I tell students not to talk about the deeply upsetting things in our lives in the class. Keep them for for one to one situations. So we have a lot of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .students now and it is heartbreaking. It is absolutely heart breaking. What they what they tell you. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .Just nothing left. So there's a lot of individual tragedies. And so I try not to have too much of that coming in the classroom activities at a time maybe, but not not within the teaching activities.

Interviewer

Yes, I just to ask so when? And when they are telling you the personal things, the emotional things that happens in the 1 to 1 with you.

Participant

Mostly occasionally they will say it when it's just fresh for them, they might. So the one student should just came in. There's an she asked me just in front of everybody when is exams. I need to leave early \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .I need to go back and I am and and. But then in a way, because we're so late in the

year, everybody knows each other quite well. The whole group rallied round her. Everybody had questions for her and I was actually able to to sit back for a bit and let them talk about it. Listen and then answer questions as yeah, as it felt OK. So yeah. I Don't know if you want to. There was some. We had a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .in the class,\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .. A double \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .. That was one that was one time when I actually needed counselling to help me deal. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .in an accident. On a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .morning in class we we found out. And the whole class broke down and I broke down, of course and. Yeah, yeah. Yeah, I didn't know how to. I had to stop the class and and I had to to get counselling myself because I didn't know how to go back into the class after the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ ..

Interviewer

Yeah, I'm. I'm And yes, so. really glad that you got counselling. I've in my debrief which I send to everyone there are some links to some kind of educational support which I think is really good. So I will send that to you as well. And. But thank you.

Participant

The counselling didn't come from the college. I had to go privately. I know. I think \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .are very big at if you need anything? and then they put you on the waiting list with everybody else, but I needed counselling that\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .. I I didn't know how to deal with it on\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .. The the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ . couldn't have done that over the weekend. There was no way they could have gotten me in touch with someone. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .approved, what have you.

Interviewer

Yes. OK. I'm going to move on to my penultimate question, which is do you think you're wellbeing or emotions might affect how you teach ESOL in anyway?

Participant

Probably yes. Yeah, I. I probably need a an easy mind or to be at ease to teach well. If if there’s thing's really

distracting me, I probably that would probably show, but I would probably change my teaching approach. I would simply change the the lesson I'd planned and and and move the focus away from me and on to them, so I'll probably adapt.

Interviewer

Yes, that's a great that's. We're at the last question and which is.. And it's just a really a finishing off kind of closing question and that's to ask, is there anything that you feel about your wellbeing or your emotions in ESOL that you think might be relevant. Something that didn't come up in our interview or anything else you want to say that you think might be important in anyway?

Participant

Yea. Yeah, I think it's it's, it's really underappreciated, that the problems we deal with as tutors are so complex and and emotionally really, really draining. Yes, so. Um in classroom teaching, those things don't necessarily come up, but because. We have to have one to one meetings to find out what financial barriers there might be if we can help, what other barriers that there could be. And of course. We had a few years where we had mostly migrant students and they were just happy to be here and it was. It was a great time, but there wasn't many terrible problems. But now we have so many \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .again. with just unimaginable problems. Yeah. And the\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ ., of course. And yeah. So I think that is maybe a little underappreciated. And also the time it takes, I for some reason a few years ago, I volunteered to to teach elementary groups that we just started out. There were no real. blueprint. We just said all that's use these books, let's see how it goes. So I was sort of that was quite nice to get my Hmm. teeth into something new and challenging. You put like the programme together and got everything, but for some reason I'm now teaching elementary. I've now been teaching only early elementary for the last few years because everybody's like ohh let's \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .doing do it. She knows what to do and so I'm gonna stalk with it. And the the time it takes to speak to elementary students to actually find out what's going on. Because you actually conduct the conversation meaningfully when they don't speak English. Without upsetting them when they realise they don't speak English and without resorting to Google Translate, which is is just so impersonal and and and yeah, it yeah. It creates a sort of level between you I think. So yeah, it's it's it's extremely time consuming, time Yes. consuming and frustrating. Um, yeah, yeah, yeah. cause it is bizarre you ask them so about the war on your background and your family and your work and your and everything. And then you say now open page three in the course book I am. You are and you Think. this mismatch of real conversations and what they know was need to learn next is just insane. Yeah, so.

Interviewer

OK, I just want to say thank you so much for your Hmm. time today answering these questions and your insights have just been amazing. Thank you so much.

Participant

Yeah, cause I wasn't sure really where you were going with this and what exactly it's yeah. And really, really, you know when they're talking about now, and. teachers need more pay and our Union is pushing for this fantastical number of higher pay. And I keep saying that's not what I want. My pay. I mean, yes, I feel it. But can can we teach fewer hours? Can we have a smaller classes? Can you know? Can can we have a different approach to teaching I extra money in them my bank. It's nice, but it's not gone. It's not. It's not the problems I have. So. Yeah. Yeah, definitely. Definitely, yeah. And. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .