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Full-time Employment Ads in TESOL: Identifying What Employers Seek in Potential Hires

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ABSTRACT

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Within the professional field of TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages), it is not unusual for highly qualified instructors to teach several part-time jobs in order to support themselves. Despite advocacy efforts carried out by the international TESOL organization, finding rewarding full-time employment in the United States can be very challenging. In addition, with the current state of the economy and high unemployment, TESOL professionals like others in various fields are seeking stable employment. Although this research will not solve the lack of full-time jobs, the intention is to help jobseekers better prepare themselves for today's job market by knowing the skills, knowledge, and personal characteristics that employers are looking for in potential hires. To identify this information, a 12-month review was conducted of three well-established employment websites in an effort to capture advertisements seeking to hire TESOL professionals full-time for ESL related positions in the U.S. A total of 169 job advertisements were collected and reviewed to identify the skills, knowledge, and personal characteristics employers were seeking in qualified individuals. Data from the advertisements were organized into a 42-category coding scheme in an effort to delineate the skills, knowledge, and job characteristics mentioned previously. In addition, a second coding scheme containing 12 categories was created for analyzing the personal characteristics listed in the advertisements Results from this data revealed that employers seek applicants who have knowledge and experience in curriculum development, teacher education, and program administration. Top skills include written and oral communication and basic computer skills. With regards to personal characteristics, employers are most interested in individuals possessing strong interpersonal and teamwork skills. In addition to these skills and qualifications, the data provide important insights concerning the distribution of jobs by job type, degree, institution type, and salary across five regions of the United States.

Keywords: TESOL, employment, full-time, employers, profession, career, jobs

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Introduction

Working as a teacher of English to speakers of other languages can be a rewarding and fulfilling experience as individuals who struggle to communicate in a new language begin to gain confidence and skill. While being employed as a teacher in the field of TESOL allows a person to provide a necessary service to those inside and outside the United States who seek to learn English, it is oftentimes difficult to obtain consistent full-time employment. Tanner (2003) describes the teaching schedule of a TESOL professional who works several part-time jobs in order to earn sufficient funds to support himself. Crandall (1993) and Pennington (1995) also indicate that many TESOL professionals in the U.S. find themselves working several part-time jobs without benefits, yet they would prefer to have one satisfying full-time position (Pennington, 1995).

One possible reason why there are fewer full-time positions in academic institutions in disciplines including TESOL, is because these programs rely on a growing contingent of part-time faculty to provide English instruction (Brickman & Costas, 2001, p. 15; Finder, 2007). By hiring adjunct faculty, institutions need not take on the additional costs of benefits that must be paid to full-time faculty (Segota, 2000). Adjunct faculty also provide more flexibility to programs when enrollment grows or shrinks. Because of the difficulty of these types of working conditions, some professionals have considered leaving the field of TESOL despite sincere intentions to permanently stay (Longmate, 2010).

In an effort to help TESOL professionals and students in TESOL degree programs better prepare themselves for the demands of a changing marketplace in today's economy, this research project sought to identify the qualifications and characteristics that employers are seeking in

individuals they wish to hire and then inform both TESOL professionals and students by publishing the study's results. Four main questions were addressed: (1) What kinds of knowledge, experience, and skills are employers seeking in candidates for positions advertised in the United States? (2) What duties are frequently mentioned in advertisements for full-time positions? (3) What personal qualities are emphasized in the job postings? (4) What documents do employers require in the application process?

Review of Literature

The review of literature will first provide a review of previous research and published resources aimed at helping individuals with their job preparation. The next several sections will discuss general job preparation, what employers are seeking in new hires, job preparation through education, and employment after graduation and training. Finally, a more thorough explanation will be given for the rationale of this research project, which investigated 169 full-time online ESL job advertisements collected over a period of 12 consecutive calendar months.

General Job Preparation

A number of excellent resources available to job seekers provide general career preparation information and identify lists of qualities and characteristics that are important for the workplace. One such resource includes university career placement centers that can provide a wealth of information just for the asking. For example, a career placement center may suggest resources such as *What Color Is Your Parachute?* (Bolles, 2011). This well-known job-hunting and career-changing handbook was first published 41 years ago with updated editions published each year. The 2005 edition (Bolles) contains a chapter based on the point of view of the employer. In a job interview, employers may evaluate abilities or skills, what job seekers know, and years of experience. The handbook also gives 23 tips in general job searching with the best

and worst ways to find a job. In addition, the handbook focuses on doing personal inventories to discover personal skills and abilities, where (geographically) job seekers would like to work, and salary negotiation. This handbook is an excellent resource for job seekers, but it does not address individual fields such as TESOL, which is the focus of this employment project.

The international TESOL organization is another source of assistance for job seekers with the purpose being to assist those affiliated with TESOL. The TESOL website (www.tesol.org) has an online career center devoted to both job seekers and employers. The Career Center contains several resources for those new to the field and also those continuing professional development. The Career Center provides an employment bulletin that lists current job openings as well as allowing professionals to post their resumes. In addition, employers can take the opportunity to advertise their positions and search the posted resumes to find a qualified candidate. TESOL has also created the Job Marketplace at its international convention, which allows employers to pre-schedule job interviews online with potential hires and in turn conduct the interviews during the convention.   As shown from these resources, TESOL is making efforts to assist job seekers with general information about the field and advertising relevant positions. On the other hand, the Career Center does not give specific information on how to enhance employability, whether it be through education or becoming an expert in a particular area or skill.

In 1997, Florez published a general article of guidelines drawing from experience and other published resources. Florez focused on two audiences – those just starting out in the field as novice teachers and seasoned professionals in TESOL. Florez (1997) lists various positions such as administration, research, areas of policy, and non-profit organizations that support ESL programs. Florez also lists different employment locations that may include community-based

organizations, non-profit groups, correctional facilities, private educational institutions, workplace sites, and community colleges. These various programs bring forth different learner groups, requiring different specialized skills. Besides teaching or tutoring individuals to help them develop English skills, teachers must have knowledge in content beyond language instruction. These areas include survival skills, cultural information, American history, and citizenship facts. Teachers also need experience in materials development, lesson planning, curriculum development, and assessment. The last section of this article discusses how and where to start in the field of TESOL. Florez (1997) gives contact information for various organizations such as TESOL Inc, and the National Clearinghouse for ESL Literacy Education in order to help novice teachers to learn more about the profession. The author also encourages novice teachers to volunteer to teach or tutor in public schools or community-based programs that can give practical experience to those interested in teaching ESL. Finally, Florez suggests those interested in learning more about TESOL to join professional organizations and listservs, as well as read ESL related publications. Because this is a general article, it does not go into depth in any area it discusses. Still, Florez does give a nice overall picture of the TESOL profession and directs individuals in the right direction towards employment.

What Employers are Seeking in New Hires

Various organizations also publish useful information allowing current students and job seekers to know what employers seek in future hires; for example, findings of particular importance for new college graduates are reported in the yearly survey performed by The National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE). This yearly survey focuses on employment issues in the current job market and projects the market for new college graduates. The most recent survey collected data from NACE employee members located throughout the

United States was gathered between August and October 2010. There was a 20.7% response rate with a total of 172 surveys returned. The article did not state how many people received the survey, but the response rate was low since NACE claims a membership of more than 3,100 colleges and universities and employer organizations nationwide (NACE, 2011). The results of the survey were published in the *Job Outlook 2011* report. The survey reports that the top five skills/qualities employers are seeking in new hires include (a) Communication skills (verbal/written), (b) Strong work ethic, (c) Teamwork skills (works well with others), (d) Analytical skills, and (e) Initiative. Employers had a mixed response when they were asked about their satisfaction with college graduates possessing the five key skills. For teamwork and analytical skills, employers reported being "very satisfied" whereas in the areas of communication skills, strong work ethic, and initiative, employer ratings of college graduates dropped to a range between "very satisfied" and "somewhat satisfied." These characteristics reveal that employers are less concerned with employees having specific technical knowledge or skills as long as they communicate well, work well with others, self-start, demonstrate critical thinking skills, and work hard. This general information is not only beneficial for new college graduates, but it can be used by current TESOL professionals seeking employment. Personal qualities are often overlooked, yet they are quite important in the TESOL field, especially communication and teamwork skills. A self-evaluation of personal qualities and making them a focus in personal development is quite beneficial in seeking new employment.

Another useful source that conveys employer expectations for TESOL professionals and students, a study carried out by Tanner (2003) in 2002, provides employment tips based on a review of 250 ESL and EFL job advertisements. Tanner provides seven specific tips for finding employment in TESOL, such as gaining advanced degrees and certification and taking advantage

of opportunities in the work place to develop specialized skills because they will enhance employability. A wide-range of specialized skills and areas of expertise were listed, such as language teaching and assessment skills, teacher training skills, study and test-taking skills, curriculum areas, administration, and grant writing. Other suggestions Tanner gives to enhance employment opportunities include international teaching experience, seeking professional development, and having a current resume, CV, and teaching portfolio. While this information is useful, it is now eight years old. With the changing economy and competitiveness of the job market, it is important to know if there have been changes in employment trends such as the necessity of advanced degrees or required specialized skills sought by employers.

Job Preparation through Education

Obtaining advanced training in the field of TESOL is a definite advantage for those interested in teaching English to speakers of other languages (Tanner, 2003). Out of a total of 100 full-time ESL positions advertised in the U.S. and Canada between September 2001 and September 2002, 87% of the advertisements required an MA or a PhD in TESOL or a related field. Florez (1997) agrees with the importance of graduate level education when she states in her general article regarding the pursuit of a career in TESOL that having a master's degree offers the most varied employment options.

For more than two decades now, TESOL has published a directory, now available on its website, listing certifcate, BA, and MA programs in TESOL throughout the U.S. and Canada. The directory is designed to provide those interested in teaching English to speakers of other languages with knowledge about the various programs of study available to them. This specialized training then assists people in competing for jobs requiring more knowledge and skills than simply being a native speaker of English. Specifically, the 1992-1994 directory

(Kornblum, 1992) contains guidelines for certification agencies and educational institutions in establishing standards and designing ESL teacher education programs. These guidelines suggest that TESOL professionals should develop cultural sensitivity, demonstrate high English proficiency, experience learning a second language, gain knowledge of language acquisition, understand the principles of language pedagogy, and develop the ability to assess students effectively. All of these skills, knowledge, and qualities are integral in TESOL career development. Nevertheless, while the TESOL directory of programs lists comprehensive information regarding American and Canadian programs, its purpose is not to evaluate each program.

To identify directly what components should be included in a BA TESL program, Henrichsen (1983) conducted an international survey of TESOL teacher educators and employers. The focus of the survey was to determine the curriculum content that TESOL teacher educators and employers felt should be included in a TESOL preparation program. Henrichsen's goal was to use this information in redesigning the BA TESL program at Brigham Young University-Hawaii.

Out of 500 surveys that were sent out, 153 were returned from 30 different countries (a low 31% response rate). The survey included a total of 60 possible teacher training items under eight categories that respondents could select: education, linguistics, grammars, literature, TESL/TEFL methods, materials, specific training in TESL, and special skills (e.g., The item of curriculum development was categorized under education). After responding to the specific items under each category by using a scale between 3 (extremely important) to 0 (no opinion), the participants evaluated four general areas: education, literature, linguistics, and TESL methods and materials using the same scale.

The analysis of the data was performed according to two moderating variables on two subgroups: geographic location and institutional affiliation. First, the mean responses were arranged to show a rank ordering of responses from most important to least important for the overall group (153 respondents) and for certain subgroups.

In the rank ordering, the majority of the top 10 most important items for the 153 respondents were from the category of special training in different language skills, especially listening, reading, and writing. Other items such as intercultural understanding, an understanding of the language learning process, and a knowledge of general, introductory linguistics were also found in the top 10. The bottom 10 least important items were dominated by literature training and learning about specialized methods, such as suggestopedia.

To move beyond a rank-order comparison of respondents and test for significant differences within and between the geographical subgroups, an ANOVA was performed on the general items to determine the variation of mean scores. Both literature and TESL methods and materials showed scores at the $p < .01$ level with TESL methods and materials exhibiting the greatest amount of variation among groups. Still, in a comparison of overall mean values between geographical subgroups: TESL methods and materials came in with the highest score, with linguistics next, followed by education, and finally literature. The results of this study were noted as being exploratory looking at areas with varied degrees of importance and to point out the occurrence of responses with statistically significant variation, yet the results also provide helpful information for TESOL teacher educators who are seeking to change curricula to better help novice teachers obtain the knowledge and skills necessary to help them become qualified professional in the field.

Employment after Graduation and Training

In 1984, Day examined and compared initial and current job positions of MA graduates to determine the effectiveness of educational programs. Day sent out a survey to 137 University of Hawaii graduates, who were students there between 1967 and 1979. Originally, 375 questionnaires were sent out with a return rate of 46%. Results of the survey showed that first positions (67%) and current positions (72%) held by the graduates were mostly full-time and the majority of respondents stated that the MA program was very beneficial to them.

Duties and responsibilities with initial jobs after graduation included teaching (91%), materials preparation (38%), curriculum design (33%), and administration (24%). Numbers from the 1980 survey were not remarkably different, yet the above percentages did increase in all categories except for teaching, which stayed the same.

Full-time respondents to Day's survey reported that for their first jobs, they were employed by universities (42%), private schools (19%), and the government (19%). For current employment, the majority worked in university settings (54%), private schools (22%), and junior colleges (20%). At the time of the study, Day (1984) pointed out that universities seemed to be the most viable option for graduates as they continued in the ESL field because of the increase from 42% (initial positions) to 54% (current positions).

In regards to the value of the MA degree, 72% of the survey respondents commented in a positive manner towards the education they received. A total of 19% felt that the program had either helped them a great deal or to a very great extent, 19% indicated that the program had helped a fair amount, 7% indicated the program was somewhat helpful, and only 3% reported that the program had been no help at all.

Focusing on employment after completing graduate school, Day's (1984) survey covered some very important areas with regard to programs in the TESOL field. He examined different areas including the types of positions they held, job duties, and locations where graduates found employment. The topic of salary was discussed in the article, but it does not seem useful to include the outdated amounts; however, it should be noted that respondents did receive a higher salary after they received a master's degree. An updated replication study would be quite useful for current TESOL students and those who may consider furthering their education.

Challenges. Even though specialized training is available and programs of study continue to help their graduates prepare themselves for the marketplace, for those wanting to work in the United States, the reality is that there appear to be few regularly available full-time positions in TESOL. Unfortunately, many qualified teachers find themselves working in a series of part-time jobs in order to earn the money they need to support themselves and their families (Tanner, 2003). In Pennington's (1995) discussion of past research on work satisfaction, motivation, and commitment of ESL teachers, she discovered some disparity on the topic of part and full-time positions in two different surveys conducted in the early 1990's. Kammerer (as cited in Pennington, 1995) conducted a demographic survey using the 1991 TESOL membership resulting in a 11% response rate. According to this survey, over 80% of the respondents held full-time jobs. Of those who held part-time jobs, the majority stated that they preferred their part-time status and would not accept a full time job. On the other hand, Brown and the TESOL Research Task Force (as cited in Pennington, 1995) sent a survey to 334 members of the TESOL organization in 1992. One of the single biggest problems faced by ESL/EFL teachers in the survey was employment. More specifically, the following were listed by respondents as areas of

concern: pay or salary, part-time employment or lack of full-time employment, lack of benefits, job security, and working conditions. In response to these results, Pennington (1995) states:

> It seems likely that many of those who hold full-time jobs--the majority in TESOL-- might express concern about the small number of full-time positions, and, conversely, that even those who are satisfied with their part-time status might recognize desirability of more full-time positions (p. 123).

The effects of part-time status bring added challenges for some TESOL professionals and to the image of the profession. Pennington (1995) strongly believes that in order to improve full-time employment opportunities and the image of TESOL, individuals must qualify themselves through education, skills, professional development, research, and maintaining high standards in their work.

During late 2008 and early 2009, a survey focusing on employment in the TESOL profession was conducted by TESOL's Employment Issues Committee (EIC). It was sent to 1,100 TESOL members, but the article failed to mention further information on the analysis of the data. Longmate (2010), who was the EIC chair in 2009-2010, shared several observations from the survey in a Forum for Fair Employment (FFE) newsletter.   The first observation focused on income levels. According to the survey, a section of respondents between the ages of 26-30 earned less than $10,000 a year. EIC speculated that the reported income reflected the high frequency of part-time jobs. The article did not state if the respondents' jobs were the main source of income for their families.   Another observation showed almost half of the respondents (49%) were looking for full-time employment. This included professionals who already had a full-time job and those who were part-timers looking for full-time. This survey was able to shed

some light on current challenges TESOL professionals face, such as salary and searching for full-time employment, but the article failed to supply enough details in each shared observation.

In response to the various challenges faced by TESOL professionals, Pennington and Riley (1991) examined job satisfaction in ESL by using the Job Descriptive Index (JDI) and the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) in two separate studies. In the JDI study, surveys were sent to 100 random TESOL members. Although 45 members responded, the researchers used 36 in the final sample. The main results of the JDI survey suggested that people in the field of ESL like what they do and the people they interact with: however, they were dissatisfied with opportunities in job advancement and salary. Similarly, the MSQ study (as cited in Pennington and Riley, 1991) revealed that 32 ESL practitioners were "most satisfied with internal rewards and values of the work itself, which they felt were inherently satisfying" (p. 2). This research shows that many TESOL professionals are not in the field for money, but rather there exists a strong intrinsic motivation. For those who desire to obtain more stable, full-time employment, however, more research is needed that identifies specific training, qualities, and characteristics that current employers are seeking in new hires. Armed with this information, TESOL professionals wishing to change their employment can be better prepared for the marketplace.

Project Rationale

With current high levels of unemployment in the U.S. (U.S. Department of Labor, 2011) and the fact that there are more than 400 university programs throughout the U.S. and Canada, producing TESOL professionals who hold certificates, bachelor's and master's degrees, the competition for full-time positions is fierce. As seen from the review of literature, it is possible to find employment information on the Internet, but it is more general in nature. Also, attending professional conference sessions based on employment is helpful, but unfortunately the

information shared with attendees is rarely published. The majority of research investigating employment issues and concerns in the field of TESOL were published a decade or more ago. Although past publications hold valuable information, updated research into the current marketplace will not only help those presently seeking positions, but it will help students in degree seeking programs to know the types of knowledge, skills, and qualities they should be developing.   As a follow up to Tanner's (2003) study, this research will seek to discover how employment trends have stayed the same and changed from the perspective of employers.

Four main questions were addressed: (1) What kinds of knowledge, experience, and skills are employers seeking in candidates for positions advertised in the United States? (2) What duties are frequently mentioned in advertisements for full-time positions? (3) What personal qualities are emphasized in the job postings? (4) What documents do employers require in the application process?

The data for this project were gathered through posted job advertisements. The advertisements were gathered and analyzed, data from the ads were categorized into a coding scheme and entered into a spreadsheet, interrater reliability tests were completed to ensure coding accuracy and agreement, and a publishable manuscript (See Appendix A) was prepared describing the study and its results.

Delimitations

There are literally hundreds of different websites listing job openings throughout the world in teaching English to speakers of other languages. In order to carry out a project that was in keeping with the constraints imposed by BYU's Linguistics and English Language Department for those completing a two-credit MA project, the scope of my online employment search was limited to job postings listed for the United States and to three separate employment

websites. It should be noted that another MA TESOL student is reviewing website postings that focus on positions advertised in Asia.

Research Design

Data Sources

In the 21st century, employment searches have moved almost entirely to the Internet (Chavez, 2011; Kerka, 2001). The Internet contains a multitude of employment websites that cater more to the general public (e.g., Careerbuilder.com and Monster.com), but also to an ESL audience (e.g., ESLemployment.com and ESLjobs.com). In seeking qualified candidates, most institutions and businesses now use the Internet in an effort to reach the widest possible audience with their job postings and to also facilitate the collection of documents verifying the applicants' qualifications and skills (Chavez, 2011). Given that the majority of open positions are now advertised on the web, it would seem natural that any study investigating the knowledge, skills, and qualities that employers are seeking in new hires would be wise to review online postings of job advertisements for this information. For this project, I chose three websites among a large number of popular sites. It was with this purpose that I chose websites that are well known among TESOL professionals and post ESL openings in the United States. A set of criteria was established to help in identifying websites that provided regular postings of full-time, ESL related positions in the U.S. Those criteria were: (a) The websites contained a large number of advertisements focused on ESL employment in the United States, (b) The websites contained a majority of full-time advertisements over part-time, (c) they were common and credible among TESOL professionals (e.g., my TESOL professors), (d) the websites received a notable amount of visits (e.g., 1,400) per day, and (e) employers paid a significant fee (e.g., $125) to place their

ads on these sites. In other words, these advertising venues were utilized by institutions demonstrating a serious pursuit of qualified and professional individuals.

The first website investigated was the well-known site Dave's ESL Café.com. This site was originally created in 1995 by Dave Sperling whose main purpose was to connect teachers and ESL learners in a friendly environment (Oliver, 1996). Back in 1996 when the ESL Job Center was added to the website, Dave's ESL Café was already quite popular in providing several resources (the idea cookbook, teacher forums, resources for students, etc.) for its wide audience. At that time, the website received 2,000 hits per day (Oliver, 1996). Sixteen years later, this website continues to thrive with approximately 21,000 visits per day (Biz Information, 2011). I originally planned to include this website in the study because Dave's ESL Café is well established, receives a notable number of hits per day, charges $75 per ad, and has a seemingly endless list of job postings.

While reviewing this website for three months though, I found that the majority of the ads posted were EFL advertisements. Very few were for ESL positions. During that three-month period, I gathered only one ESL advertisement that met the criteria of being full-time, ESL related, and located in the United States. Thus, I stopped looking at Dave's ESL Café.

Through continued searching, three other websites were chosen as resources. All three of these websites were easy to search as they had dedicated sub-listings for positions in ESL or TESOL. They also met the requirements of listing full-time positions located within the United States. The three sites selected were TESOL.org, HigherEdJobs.com, and Linguist List.org. Table 1 illustrates the traffic information and the job posting costs for the three sites.

Table 1

Traffic and Job Posting Information for the Three Selected Websites

Website	Page Views	Daily Visitors	U.S. Users	Cost	Posting Length
TESOL.org	2,851	1,419	31%	$230	45 days
HigherEdJobs	45,162	12,212	84%	$170	60 days
The Linguist List	17,855	3,311	44%	$125	Up to 6 months

TESOL.org. The first website I used for data collection was TESOL.org. It was appropriate to gather ads from this website as the TESOL organization represents the worldwide TESOL profession with 12,701 members and is designed as a resource for professionals (TESOL, 2011). TESOL.org was created in 1997, attracting many employers from educational settings to post their advertisements (Biz info, 2011). According to Biz Information, as of December 2010, TESOL.org received 2,851 daily page views and 1,419 daily visitors. Users from the United States made up 31%. Also, In order to post advertisements on TESOL.org, it was suggested that employers read about the association and other posted ads to see if their advertisements would attract an appropriate audience. A single job posting costs $230.00 and runs for 45 days. Some employers post multiple advertisements for different positions; TESOL charges $620.00 for three job postings. Out of the three websites, TESOL.org charges the most for employers to advertise.

HigherEdJobs.com. The second website I used was HigherEdJobs.com whose purpose is to be a central gathering place on the Internet for higher education employers and professionals to connect. This site was created in 1996 at a time when the founders believed that the Internet had the power to revolutionize higher education recruitment ("HigherEdJobs.com," 2011). HigherEdJobs (2011) claims to be the leading source for jobs and career information in academia. In 2009, HigherEdJobs was named one of the top 100 employment sites on the Internet by WEDDLE's LLC. Biz Information (2010) showed daily page views as 45,162 and

daily visitors at 12,212. An overwhelming percentage of 84% were users in the United States. A reason for this may be that the majority of jobs advertised were located in the US. HigherEdJobs did not give specific criteria for advertising on their website, but they did offer several recruitment product options. A single posting for 60 days with unlimited text costs $170.00. A pack of three jobs cost $420.00.

   The Linguist List. The final website that I used was The Linguist List, which was created in 1990 at the University of Western Australia. A year later it was moved to Texas A&M University and then finally it became its own website in 1997 (The Linguist List, 2011). The purpose of The Linguist List is to act as a forum where academic linguists can discuss linguistic issues and exchange linguistic information. The Linguist List is similar to TESOL.org in that it provides a wide variety of information for professionals. The visiting traffic was higher than for TESOL.org, but lower than for HigherEdJobs. Biz information (2010) showed 17,855 daily pageviews and 3,311 daily visitors. The percentage of U.S. users was 44%. The cost of posting an advertisement is $125, and the ad stays onsite until the date specified or six months if "open until filled" is chosen.

   All three websites have varying target audiences and purposes that affect the number of visitors to their sites. For example, TESOL.org appeals to individuals interested in TESOL while The Linguist List attracts both theoretical and applied linguists. In addition, both sites provide various information beyond employment. On the other hand, HigherEdJobs has a wider audience that includes anyone involved in higher education, and the purpose of the website is to advertise employment opportunities. Despite the varying numbers of visitors to these sites, job seekers go to them because they have a focus on ESL related positions.

Data Collection Procedure

Upon the advice of my committee, I collected job advertisements for a period of 12 months from October 29, 2009 to October 29, 2010. My committee felt that this length of time would better capture the full annual cycle of jobs available to TESOL professionals. The longitudinal time period was also chosen due to the fact that some ESL positions such as materials developers, administrative positions, and instructors in short-term programs could be posted throughout the 12-month period while other positions would be more dependent on the academic calendar. Advertisements seeking school instructors would likely appear in the spring and summer months, several weeks before the start of the new school year. From previous viewing of the websites, it appeared that most online advertisements were actively posted for a period of 45 to 60 days. Given this time constraint, I checked the websites for new postings every two weeks during the 12-month period. As I previewed advertisements, I searched for jobs that were associated with TESOL, full-time positions, and located in the United States. If a duplicate posting was noticed on more than one website, only one of the advertisements was selected for the analysis. Each advertisement was saved and a hard copy was printed to highlight pertinent information and make notes. My initial analysis of the job ads was based on a categorized coding scheme created by Tanner in 2002 .An Excel file was created that contained 40 different categories in which data from the job advertisements would be placed (See Appendix B). In the analysis, each job was analyzed for its demographic characteristics (title, location, etc.), duties and responsibilities, employment documents required, and the personal qualities the employer was seeking in the new hire. In the process of carrying out the study, modifications to the initial coding scheme took place in accordance with the nature of advertisements (See Appendix C).

The process of analyzing the advertisements and entering the information into Excel was very detailed. First, I read through each advertisement and highlighted key information before filling in the cells on the spreadsheet. The length of an advertisement varied from less than a page to several pages, but the majority were about a page. In addition to length, some gave more details than others. For example, the process of applying varied from complete instructions to being directed to a website for further information.

Each Excel cell was filled in with *yes, no, preferred*, or *not mentioned* (NM) depending on the category type. For instance, if the advertisement stated that materials development experience was required, then the cell was marked with a *yes*. The cell would have been marked *no* or *NM* if the requirement was not stated in the advertisement.   If materials development experience was a preferred qualification, I marked *preferred*. The *not mentioned* code was generally used only for certain categories where the information could not be determined. For example, this code was used for the *salary* category when information was not mentioned by the employer.   In addition to the general *yes*/*no* code, I added some more detailed information if it was provided. To illustrate, several advertisements not only stated that teaching experience was required, but they also clarified the extent of experience by indicating a certain number of years required. I filled in the category with the number of years experience requested to supply more information to enrich the results. Lastly, there were some categories in the spreadsheet for more open-ended information like salary, duties, and contract length, which I filled in accordingly.

Initially, a total of 179 ads were collected and analyzed. In an effort to avoid including duplicate advertisements in the data analysis, the collection of ads was carefully reviewed. For each advertisement that had the same employer, the ad was reviewed to make sure it was for a different position. While doing this, I found that some of the duplicate advertisements changed

in their requirements from the original to a reposting of the position. For example, one college re-advertised the same position with more details. Some additions included that the candidate should be a native speaker or have near-native English proficiency. The advertisement also stated a desire for a candidate familiar with CALL and interested in teaching adults from diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds. The original ad was placed in November of 2009 and the second one was in March of 2010. After going through this process of locating duplicates, eight duplicates were found and deleted from the coding document. Additionally, two job advertisements from Canada were deleted since U.S. jobs were the focus of this study. As a result of this process, 179 advertisements were originally analyzed and recorded, but in the end only169 were used for the results of the investigation.

Interrater Reliability Test

The nature of the data collected for this study required some different coding of the results. For example, the demographic and document information, such as location of the position, term of the contract, salary amount, and employment documentation required (e.g., cover letter, resume, etc.), was fairly straightforward and could easily be tallied. Data in the ads describing the qualifications, experience, and skills being sought were a bit more difficult to code and categorize at times. In an effort to correctly categorize the elements within the job ads, I created a spreadsheet that was used to classify data from each of the 169 advertisements. The list of categories used in the initial interrater test is given in Appendix B. Once this analysis was done, I collected a 10% random sample of the advertisements by selecting every 10th ad from the collection to have a second rater analyze and classify the statements included in the advertisements. Basic instructions were given to the second rater, but no specific details were given on how to code each category. The rater was directed to mark *yes* or *no* unless the

category was open-ended. I did not explain how to code each individual category for two reasons. First, I was afraid that I might give too much information and sway the rater in his coding. Second, I was curious to see if the rater might have a better way of coding some of the categories. When the coding was complete, I met with the rater twice. During the first meeting, we discussed the rating experience and the rater provided me with some helpful insights into his rating process. I learned that the rater's initial impression of how the coding should occur was misunderstood; the rater was under the impression that he was going to read the ads and come up with his own list of categories rather than going through a set of established categories. The lack of clarity between certain categories caused him to guess for various categories. In addition, coding became somewhat problematic when assumptions were made by the second rater as to information not explicitly stated in the advertisements. For example, some of the advertisements were for administrative positions, but administrative experience may not have been explicitly stated. In such cases, is it appropriate to mark *yes* or *no* under the category of required administrative experience on the spreadsheet? Despite this apparent difficulty, the initial interrater reliability results had an overall average agreement of 83% based on 35 categories. Six of the categories could not be compared because they were coded differently due to individual interpretation. Also, the *notes* category was also not used in the test. After reflecting on this experience, I realized that the categories needed further defining and a more complete training session would have to be produced.

During a second meeting with the rater, I presented a list of 15 categories in which we had agreed less than 80%. We discussed each category and came to an agreement of how the information should be coded. To assist in this decision, we reviewed some of the advertisements and looked more closely at the wording used in the ads. It was decided to focus on the ads as

objectively as possible by coding the explicitly stated information. Furthermore, any categories that were listed separately as experience and duty were combined into one category to avoid making assumptions. Another positive gain from the interrater test was incorporating some of the second rater's ways of coding. This coding made the data more informationally rich. For instance, the category for program type was originally coded as private, public, or company. The rater coded the information as university, community college, sales, etc. The more detailed coding scheme was clearer and more helpful for job seekers inquiring about specific program types and locations. With the useful information from the interrater reliability test, the categories were clearly operationalized to improve consistency and accuracy of the coding, which was an earlier issue.

Second Interrater Reliability Test

In the process of making modifications to the coding scheme after the first interrater reliability test, some categories were discarded while others were added to better capture the data from the advertisements. After adjusting the original coding scheme to 43 categories (See Appendix C), I went through all 169 advertisements a second time to make sure my coding was accurate and complete before performing an additional interrater reliability test with my project advisor on the revised coding scheme. It should be noted that 41 categories were used in the second interrater test. The other/notes category was not included and the sample work category was added after the test was completed.

Once the second interrater reliability test was finished, I went through the 17 advertisements used for the reliability test and checked for agreement between my coding and my project advisor's coding. The majority of the categories (35) had an agreement level between 82% and 100%, with six categories under 80%. Some categories required discussion on

either the interpretation or the accuracy of information where we disagreed. After reviewing

each item, we came to an agreement on the categories in question and ended with job title, field

number (job type), and program type left to be reviewed and if needed re-coded by the rater,

which in the end resulted with an overall agreement of 90%.

Personal Characteristics

The original coding scheme focused on experience, skills, and job duties. However, it

did not include personal characteristics. Nevertheless, not only do employers seek hires with

knowledge, skills, and experience, but they also want employees with positive character traits.

An additional coding scheme was prepared using the same original advertisements. I read

through the first 76 advertisements and made a list of frequently mentioned personal qualities,

skills, and abilities (See Appendix D for complete list of categories). I created another Excel

spreadsheet with new personal characteristic categories and recoded all of the advertisements for

an additional piece of the study. While going through all of the advertisements, I added newly

mentioned qualities to the *other* category. After finishing the coding, I went through all of the

traits listed under *other* and made new cells for the frequently mentioned ones. In the end, I

finished the coding with 20 different categories. Depending on the wording of the

advertisements, very similar qualities were combined together under one category. For example,

the category of *motivation* also included the qualities of *self-starter* and *independent*.

Once the coding scheme had been clarified, an attempt was made to gather interrater

reliability data. An interrater reliability test was prepared on this coding scheme using the same

10% sample of advertisements used for the other interrater tests. To avoid repeating making the

same error made with the first interrater reliability test, I went through one of the advertisements

with the rater, who was my project advisor. After looking at one advertisement together, we

both decided that more clarification was needed between the wording in the advertisements and the category descriptions before proceeding. In obtaining more clarification, we decided to narrow the focus of the original list of personal quality categories by focusing on "being" (e.g., enthusiastic) rather than "doing" (e.g., organized). As a result, the categories of *analytic organized*, *budget*, *oral* and *written communication skills*, *classroom management*, and *professional development* were removed and incorporated into the original coding scheme leaving 12 categories for personal characteristics (For a full description of both category lists, see Appendices C and D).

Personal Characteristics Interrater Reliability

The interrater reliability test completed on the personal characteristics resulted in an overall agreement of 90%. My project advisor and I had agreements of 80-100% on all categories except for two. We found some discrepancy between two similar categories found in both coding schemes: the interpersonal skills on the original scheme and the collegial/team player on the personal characteristics scheme. After conducting the interrater reliability test, both categories had a 76% agreement. Because of this worthwhile information, we combined the two categories of interpersonal and collegial to the personal characteristics scheme where it was best suited.

<div align="center">

Results

</div>

This study yielded a wide range of results that addressed the four research questions of this study. There were also some unexpected data that emerged from the advertisements. For example, I was able to evaluate the distribution of job types, degrees, institutions, and salaries

among five U.S. demographic regions. This valuable information will be very useful for TESOL professionals as they look for jobs in particular regions within the United States.

Job Ad Demographic Information

Distribution by Region. The 169 advertisements collected as part of this project were first sorted into the regional locations for these positions.   Rather than creating my own regional divisions, I looked at several sources (library.thinkquest.org, hornell.wnyric.org, and national nationalgeographic.com, dembsky.net, and webquest.org), which often divided the U.S. into five areas: West, Midwest, Southwest, Southeast, and Northeast. Figure 1 shows a map of the United States and the distribution of advertisements by region. The number and percent frequency of the jobs is identified within each region on the map.
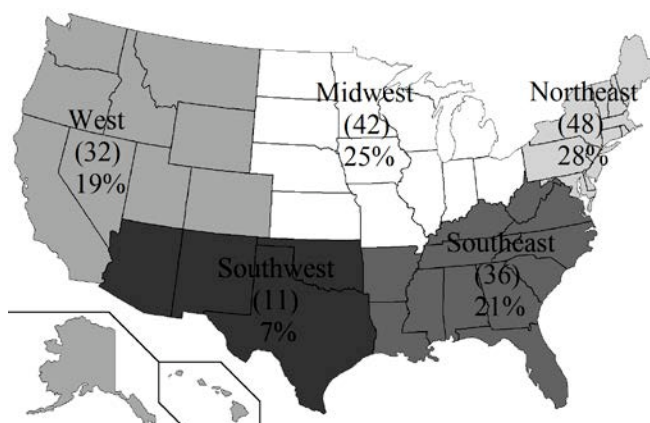
Figure 1. Regional US map showing distribution of TESOL jobs

Note: From http://reegnum.co.cc/blank-us-map-920.html

The region posting the largest number of TESOL positions was the northeastern portion of the United States. In taking a more careful look, the majority of the jobs were located in New York. One possible reason for this finding is that New York is a highly populated area that is extremely diverse. Individuals from all over the world live in New York and due to the large immigrant population, there are a number of enclaves where individuals speak dozens of

languages other than English. The Midwest was second in frequency with a large majority of jobs found in Ohio. Followed closely behind was the Southeast with several jobs in the DC area, and the West came in second to last with most advertisements located in California, which is similar to New York in it's large population of immigrants on the coast. The Southwest had the fewest with only 11 full-time positions in the database having been advertised from this location. The majority of the positions in the Southwest were located in Texas.

  Distribution by Job Type. The advertisements were next analyzed according to the type of position for which the employer was advertising. I was able to easily organize all of the advertisements into five main groups. As shown in Table 2, just over half of the jobs were identified as instructional type jobs. Administrative jobs were the second most frequent job type. These positions included jobs such as program chairs, directors, and coordinators. The third most frequent category was that of teacher education. This job type included positions seeking teacher educators that would provide in-service as well as pre-service training in TESOL. There was a high number of positions that were largely focused on day-to-day teaching of ESL (instructor positions). There were several positions though, that while they were advertised as instructor positions also required the teachers to carry out administrative type duties like supervising fellow teachers, assisting in student recruitment, or mentoring students.

Table 2

Frequency and Percentages of Job Types for the Selected TESOL Job Advertisements

Job Type	Frequency	Percentage
Instructor	87	51%
Administrator	56	33%
Teacher educator/trainer	19	11%
Curriculum developer	3	2%
Testing/Assessment	2	1%
Publishing representative	2	1%

Distribution by Degree Type. Educational requirements listed in the job advertisements ranged from bachelor's degree up to a PhD. Only four advertisements did not mention a required degree. The most requested degree was a master's degree. Sixty-five percent of the positions required a master's degree as the minimum level of education required. The second most requested degree was a PhD or those individuals who were ABD (All But Dissertation) at 22%. Positions requiring a bachelor's degree made up the final 10% of the ads. It should be pointed out that these percentages are based on minimum and not necessarily preferred qualifications.

Distribution by Institution or Organization Type. Another way in which the positions were analyzed, was to identify the type of institution or organization in which the position was housed. Table 3 shows that 64% of the positions advertised were in university locations. Colleges and community colleges came in second and third respectively. These results support the idea that institutions of higher education are drawn to advertise positions in the three websites that were used for the data set in this study. The question that is left unanswered is are there just fewer full-time jobs available in companies, private programs, and in public education or are there different websites that are regularly advertising these types of positions. Clearly this is an area for further study.

Table 3

Frequency of Institution and Program Types Found in the Selected TESOL Job Advertisements

Institution/program	Frequency – n=169	Percentage
Universities	108	64%
Colleges	22	13%
Community Colleges	21	12%
Companies	7	4%
IEP Programs	6	4%
K-12	5	3%

Distribution by Salary. Only 42 (25%) of the 169 advertisements provided salary information. The positions listed salaries ranging from $22,000 up to $120,000. To better contextualize this information, I found it important to link the salary information with the regions from which the positions were posted. People are well aware that different locations throughout the U.S. have different costs of living and as such salary levels are often higher or lower depending on the costs of housing, transportation, food, etc. in these locations. Table 4 illustrates the cost of living for the states with the highest job frequencies, the percentage of jobs located in each region and salary distribution in median, mean and standard deviations.

Table 4

Percentage, Mean, Standard Deviation, and Cost of Living Index for Jobs Located in the Five U.S. Regions from 42 Selected TESOL Job Advertisements

	Midwest	Northeast	Southeast	Southwest	West
Percentage	24%	21%	10%	14%	31%
Median salary	$36,000	$66,000	$58,000	$37,000	$59,000
Mean salary	$37,405	$71,028	$56,373	$38,190	$58,514
Standard Deviation	8509.66594	21500.4795	11365.0275	6705.36388	10788.3809
COL index	93.85 (OH)	128.29 (NY)	139.92 (DC)	91.04 (TX)	132.56 (CA)

As shown in the above table, the regions with the highest advertised salaries were located in the Northeast, West, and Southeast. These regions also have states with a higher cost of living in comparison to states in the Midwest and Southwest (MERIC, 2011). For postings in the Northeast that reported salaries, the range for the various positions was from $42,000 to $120,000. For the West, the range was smaller with the low and high salaries ranging from $24,000 to $82,000. The Southeast is another diverse area with large numbers of immigrants. The salary range for the jobs posted in this location was $36,000 to $76,000. For the 75% of jobs that did not provide numerical salary information, many of the jobs either said that the

salary was "competitive" or the advertisement simply referred the applicant to an online website for further information or actually apply for the position.

For the 42 advertisements that posted salary information, I also looked at the mean, median, and standard deviation for each job type found. Table 5 shows the salary information for instructors, administrators, and teacher educators along with the frequency of each job type being advertised.

Table 5

Mean, Median, Standard Deviation, and Frequency information for Three Stated Job Types Found in 41 Selected TESOL Job Advertisements

	Instructor	Administrator	Teacher Educator
Mean salary	$54,626	$55,594	$46,071
Median salary	$56,000	$55,500	$46000
Standard Deviation	12853.42	11691.4278	6498.09778
Job type total	25	11	5

In the list of duties, teacher trainers are also instructors, but their primary duty is to train English teachers rather than ESL learners. Under the instructor job type, one position was identified as an outlier with a salary of $120,000. Even after discarding this position, the instructor category still carries a higher mean salary amount than that for the teacher educator. With several of the instructor jobs being located in California, the salary information is slightly skewed above average for this job type.

The data also confirms the notion that administrators are generally paid more than instructors. However, the difference between salaries is not as large as one might expect. One reason for this could be the range of duties that teachers often have. In reviewing the advertisements, it was clear that many instructors also carry out some administrative duties, which could in turn increase their salary. One of the challenges in making this type of analysis is that only a quarter of the job advertisements shared salary information, thus preventing the

opportunity to look more carefully at salary as a critical factor in people's employment decision making process.

The range of salary for master's degrees carried a wide range from $22,000 to $82,000. This wide range can be explained by the variance of salaries by region. It is also important to mention that so few positions advertised for positions outside of educational institutions, that reviewing salary across institutional type was not possible in this study.

Experience and Expectations

As stated previously, due to the way the job advertisements were written, it was sometimes difficult to distinguish the types of experiences that the new hire should have from the expectations that employers had of someone applying for the position. Due to the difficulty of separating out these factors, the advertisements were reviewed for the qualifications that employers had identified. In some cases, these qualifications included a range of different types of experience or involved a detailed list of duties that the new application would be expected to perform. For example, in one job ad, the employer explicitly stated that the applicant needed testing experience. In another job ad, testing was listed as one of the areas for which the applicant would have responsibility. For this reason, therefore, if a condition of employment was listed as either a required type of experience and/or as a duty, it was coded into one rather than two separate categories, to avoid having to try and interpret what the employer was thinking. Table 6 displays the fourteen categories of experience/and or expectations that were identified in the job advertisements.

Table 6

Frequency and Percentages of Experience and/or Expectations Stated in the Selected TESOL Job Advertisements

Experience/Expectations	Frequency	Percentage
Teaching experience	157	93%
Curriculum development	82	49%
Teacher Education	79	47%
Administrative	78	46%
International/cultural experience	75	44%
Instructional technology	70	41%
Testing/assessment	69	41%
Productive scholarship	46	27%
Materials development	40	24%
Professional development	40	24%
Foreign language	27	22%
Budgeting/finances	19	11%
Grant writing	14	8%
Visa knowledge	8	5%

The most frequently mentioned category of experience was that of teaching with 93% of the advertisements requesting teaching experience, which is also reflected in the large number of teaching positions found in the data. Fifty-one percent of the ads that required teaching experience also stated a specific length of experience. The majority of the ads (53%) required three to five-years experience. A total of 41% of the ads required one to three years experience, and only 5% of the ads required five to ten years experience.

The second most frequently mentioned category of experience or expectation was that of curriculum development. Forty-nine percent of the ads required either curriculum development experience or identified it as one of the responsibilities of the new position. This area was closely followed by teacher education. The teacher education category included experience in or the responsibility of conducting teacher and tutor training programs. Given that nearly half of the ads requested experience in curriculum development and teacher education, job seekers might be well advised to develop some expertise in these two areas. Instructional technology

and testing/assessment experience were identified with equal frequency (41%). Instructional technology was defined in the ads as experience with or knowledge of how to use multimedia and/or CALL in the classroom. With the continual advancement of technology, classroom teaching and learning is constantly changing. Thus, keeping up to date with current technology is an advantage for increasing employability in the job market.

The administrative experience and/or expectation was listed in 46% of the job advertisements. Duties such as coordinator, director, student recruiter, leadership, and student mentor were included under administrative experience category. Several advertisements were quite specific as to the duties that the new hires were to perform. When this occurred, they listed multiple duties within one job advertisement. Additional areas of expertise that were identified in the ads included budget and finance experience (11%), grant writing (8%), and visa knowledge (5%).

There was also types of experience noted in the ads that were specific to the TESOL field. The first was international/cultural experience. International experience can be defined as exposure to other cultures through living and/or working abroad, while cultural experience might involve experiential interaction with multicultural groups but does not necessarily include traveling abroad. Close to half (44%) of the TESOL ads stated international/cultural experience as a qualification of employment. Of these advertisements, international experience was specifically mentioned as a requirement or a preferred requirement 47% of the time and cultural experience was stated 53% of the time. It is clear from these numbers that employers expect TESOL professionals to have had experience working and interacting with individuals from other cultures.

The next four areas of experience and/ or expectation were all in the 20% range. Productive scholarship (27%) was distinguished from professional development as active involvement in conducting research, publishing, and giving professional presentations; professional development (24%), on the other hand, included reading research articles or attending workshops and conferences. Both productive scholarship and professional development were placed in the bottom half by employers, yet they are a focus in most MA programs. Foreign language experience was another area mentioned in the ads. Of the 169 advertisements, 22% stated as a condition of employment that the person have experience with learning a foreign language (meaning learning a language other than English). It has been long thought that learning additional languages helps TESOL professionals to be more empathetic to the challenges that new language learners face both in the classroom and in adjusting to a new culture (Brown, 2007).

Skills

In addition to investigating the types of experience and duties required of the new hires, I also investigated the types of skills that employers were seeking in job applicants. *Skills* can be defined as the ability to do something well. It is possible for an individual to have experience in teaching children, but they may not have the desirable skills needed for teaching children (e.g., patience, creativity). In short, skills were distinguished from experience in the data collected for this study.

Figure 2 shows that there were four general areas of skill identified in the advertisements. The most frequently mentioned skill involved effective written and oral communication skills (25%). Basic computer skills were a close second at (24%). Employers identifying the need for computer skills specifically stated that applicants should be well able to use software programs

like Word or Excel and they should be able to use the Internet. A third area of skill involved organizational skills. This skills area encompassed time management skills, being able to meet deadlines, plan, and manage multiple tasks. The final area included analytical skills such as problem solving and critical thinking.
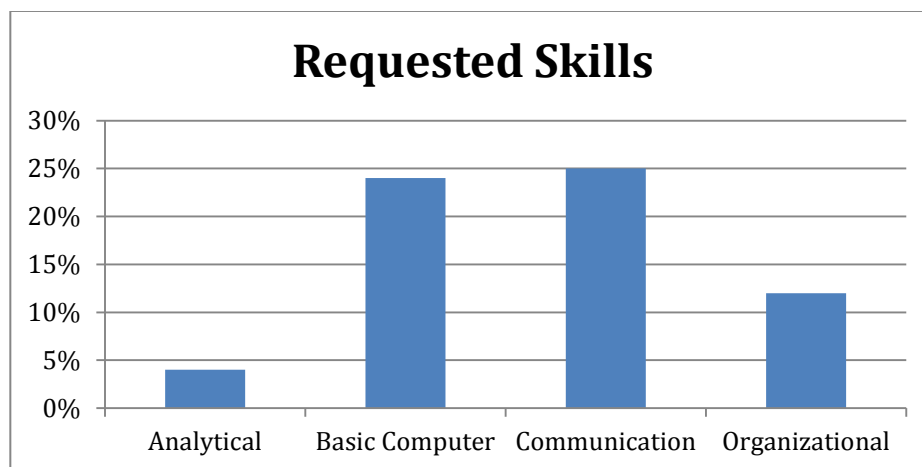
Figure 2. Frequency of requested skills stated in the selected TESOL job advertisements.

Application Materials

In reviewing the advertisements, I thought it would be useful to also identify the types of application materials that employers were seeking from new hires. In the early stages of the study it was discovered that 70 of the 169 advertisements did not include any information specifying the types of application materials that new hires should complete or send. However, 13 of these 70 advertisements referred applicants directly to an institutional or company website for more application information and to apply online. Furthermore, both TESOL.org and HigherEdJobs.com allow applicants to apply for positions through their websites and if interested, employers can personally contact these individuals about furthering the application process. Of the 99 advertisements that did supply application information, seven categories were

created to show those accompanying materials that employers most frequently mentioned.   As seen in Figure 3, references and letters of recommendation were most often requested by employers.

Requested Application Materials
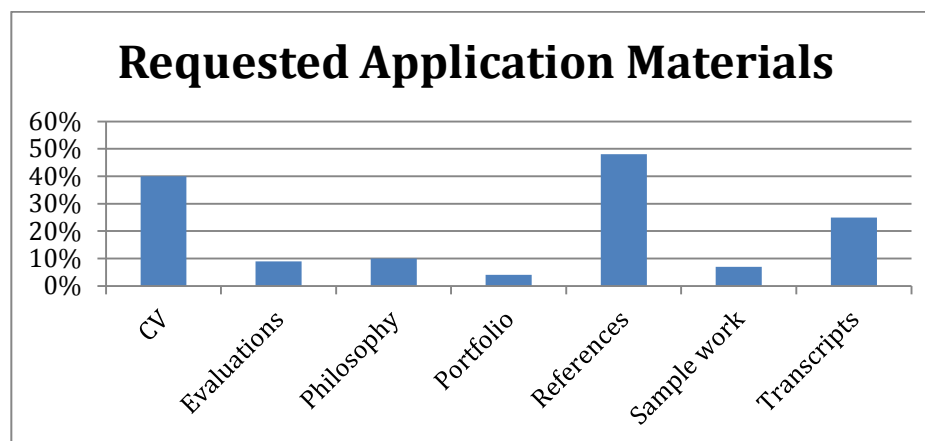
Figure 3. Frequency of requested applications materials stated in selected TESOL job advertisements.

Rather than adding a résumé category, which is a very standard type of application material, I included the category of curriculum vitae (CV) which is often requested from individuals applying for educational positions. The CV provides more detailed information than a résumé regarding the applicant's scholarly and creative works such as publications, presentations, and professional development. A total of 68 ads required a CV be sent. School transcripts were the third most requested form of material (25%). Other materials such as a personal teaching philosophy, sample work (e.g., such as publications, writing samples, and lesson plans), teaching evaluations, and portfolios were all requested less than 10% of the time. The mentioned materials are portfolio type items, yet employers often failed to explicitly request a portfolio even though a number of universities, including Brigham Young University, are encouraging their TESOL graduates to complete portfolios as a requirement of the program of study. Portfolios are also a direct means that universities are using to measure the effectiveness

of a program's learning outcomes (BYU, n.d.). From my analysis of the job advertisements, it seems that many employers may not expect a formal portfolio at this time.

Personal Characteristics

The final area that was researched in the TESOL job advertisements was that of personal characteristics. The purpose of this analysis was to determine the types of traits that employers were seeking in TESOL professionals. The coding scheme used for this analysis came from a series of online articles supplied by Richard Ang, an advisor from BYU's Career Service Center. He gave me a list of 16 different resources that the center directs students to in identifying the personality characteristics that employers are seeking in general from applicants in the 21st century. I reviewed and organized all of the characteristics identified from these 16 online resources into 22 different categories and then noted the frequency for each one in the TESOL job announcements (See Appendix E for a complete list of websites). Table 7 shows the top 10 characteristics identified first from the online articles and second from the 169 TESOL job advertisements.

Table 7

Top 10 Personal Characteristics Mentioned in General Employment Articles and the TESOL Ads Database

Articles	Total	%	TESOL Ads	Total	%
Interpersonal skills/team player	14	86	Interpersonal skills/team player	54	32
Motivated/independent	11	69	Sensitivity to cultural diversity	38	22
Hard worker/strong work ethic	11	69	Loyal/committed	31	18
Adaptable/flexible	10	63	Adaptable/willingness	20	12
Analytical/problem solver	6	38	Creative/innovative	15	9
Responsible/dependable	6	38	Interest in professional development	13	8
Honest/has integrity	6	38	Professional manner	10	6
Intelligent/smart	6	38	Motivated/self-starter	9	5
Leader/decision maker	5	31	Enthusiastic/passionate	9	5
Organized/efficient	5	31	Detail oriented	7	4

One possible reason for the difference in personal characteristic percentages between the employment articles and the TESOL ads may be that the articles are for general job seekers and the emphasis is placed on general characteristics whereas the ads are specific to a TESOL audience and focus not only on personal characteristics, but on skills, experience, and knowledge. It is interesting to note that both groupings have interpersonal and team oriented skills listed at as the top traits requested in new hires. This ranking points once again to the importance of good communication skills and a willingness and ability to work with others in the workplace. The qualities identified for the TESOL professional seem to speak more directly to those traits that would be valued in a cooperative and creative environment like the classroom. Teachers are often expected to be sensitive, committed individuals who themselves continue to grow and develop in their respective discipline's skills, abilities, and knowledge. They are also expected to act professionally, be self-starters and be passionate about their field of study. Being detail oriented is also important in order to keep appropriate grade and attendance records, and to be able to deal with the diverse collection of duties and responsibilities they have in managing the demands of a multicultural and multilingual classroom.

Discussion

This study explored employers' expectations of new hires in today's TESOL job market through analyzing full-time job advertisements collected over a period of 12 months from three reputable online employment websites. A wide range of results addressed different aspects such as job ad demographics, experience and expectations, skills, application information, and personal characteristics. After analyzing 169 advertisements, coding the data, and performing interrater reliability tests, common trends emerged from the data along with new additional information.

The results gained from this study can assist job seekers and students in their search for fulfilling full-time work. There are several factors to consider when searching for a new job including location, job positions, and salary. The information given in the Job Ad Demographic section can give a good general picture for today's job seekers as they decide which direction they want to go in terms of finding a fulfilling full-time job. The frequencies and percentages of experiences, expectations, and skills create a general picture of what employers are seeking. Attention should not only be paid to items with the highest frequencies, but there should also be attention given to the items of lower frequency since these characteristics are ones an employer is seeking. For example, it is important to become familiar with curriculum development because it was mentioned most frequently under experience and expectations becoming more technologically savvy, though, which had a slightly lower frequency, would also be a very practical skill to possess in the 21st century. Not only is technology being used more and more in the classroom but online teaching is an emerging trend. In addition, job searching, electronic portfolios, and applying for jobs on the Internet continues to grow and all TESOL professionals should become comfortable with using the Internet in different capacities both professionally and personally.

The focus on personal characteristics was included because of the usefulness of the data. After comparing the characteristics found in the TESOL job advertisements and the online articles, some overlap became apparent between desired characteristics sought after by all employers. The characteristics of being a team player or someone who is highly interpersonal, motivated, and adaptable are all highly coveted personality traits. Employers are not only looking for a person with experience and skills, but someone with good personal qualities. Job

seekers should be aware of this perspective and evaluate their own personal characteristics to better market themselves.

In comparing several findings from this study with past studies (Day, 1984; Henrichsen, 1983;Tanner,2003), it appears that little has changed in many areas. Tanner's (2003) seven tips mention several areas that were confirmed in this study. In regards to education, it continues to be important to obtain higher education such as a master's degree or PhD in order to obtain a full-time job. These current results also support Day's (1984) conclusion from over 25 years ago. Having an interest in professional development and getting involved in professional organizations was a focus in both studies. Both studies identify the importance of developing a specialized skill in at least one area: technology, assessment, teacher training, curriculum, or administration. In addition, Day (1984) also found both curriculum design and administration to be common job duties after graduation. Other areas of expertise such as gaining international and cultural experience and learning a second language were also important. In regards to the application process, having an updated curriculum vitae is vital. Although the current study did not find many mentions of having a teaching portfolio as a requirement, many of the ads listed requested items that could be part of a portfolio.

Henrichsen's (1983) study found that TESL methods and materials with specific training in various areas of ESL teaching, materials development, and intercultural understanding were found to be very important to TESOL educators. Although the Day (1984) and Henrichsen (1983) articles were written over 25 years ago, the findings are still important for those who may consider furthering their education in TESOL and for TESOL MA programs. The types of courses (e.g., TESOL methods and materials and linguistics) that are offered in MA programs reflect the training needs of current students as they prepare for future employment.

As can be seen, several years separate these past studies from this current one and yet much is the same; The current study though does provide updated information for both TESOL professionals and job seekers. These insights include the importance of personal characteristics and demographic information on jobs, institutions, and salary that addresses today's job market. In addition, teacher educators can be better informed regarding areas of specialization in which students need further professional development within the field of TESOL.

Developmental Steps in Preparing the Manuscript

Introduction

The main purposes of this project were to first discover employer expectations through the study of TESOL advertisements and then share those discoveries with TESOL professionals and students through a publishable manuscript. This section will cover the process I took in first producing the write-up that served as the main source for the manuscript, choosing a publication to submit the manuscript to, and finalizing the manuscript through the feedback I received from my committee.

Producing the Write-up Portion

During the Fall 2010 semester, I took the Research in TESOL (Ling. 620) course. One of the course requirements was to produce a review of literature and a brief research design section. These sections became the first initial portion of my project write-up. As the project progressed, I continued adding information on the process of my project in the write-up. I also completely revised the review of literature through further research and organization. Once the collecting, analyzing, and interrater reliability testing of advertisements were complete, I proceeded to draft the results section and conclusion, which included creating several tables and figures to display

the findings of my study. After completing the initial draft, I sought feedback from my project

chair and began revisions. During the next two months, I received additional feedback from

other members of my committee to assist me in making more revisions to the write-up.

Selecting the Publication Venue

Before creating the manuscript, I first thought about possible peer-reviewed journals in

which to publish the manuscript. I recalled what I learned from my Research in TESOL course

that gave us the opportunity to report on different journals. I then discussed several possible

journals with my project chair such as the *TESOL Quarterly, TESOL Journal, ELT Journal,*

TESL-EJ, and *System*. All of these publications are top tier TESOL related journals and they

attract a TESOL audience with an interest in becoming more qualified for full-time employment.

After reviewing these options, we decided to create a manuscript that would be submitted to the

brief reports section of *TESOL Quarterly*. This journal is the premier journal for those in the

TESOL profession. While it is difficult to have an article accepted for TESOL Quarterly

(acceptance rate is at 19%), this venue would provide the best opportunity for disseminating the

results of the study. In the Brief Reports and Summaries section of the *TESOL Quarterly*, short

reports can be shared that are based on any related TESOL topic, results of a larger study, or

present preliminary findings. Guidelines for submission state that a manuscript is to be no more

than 3,400 words including tables and references and the manuscript must also be in APA

(American Psychological Association) format. A cover letter containing the author's contact

information and a required short biographical statement of 50 words has been prepared.

If the *TESOL Quarterly* does not accept the manuscript, other options have been

identified. The second most favorable venue would be the *TESOL Journal* since this publication

also has a research component to it, the journal is top tier, and its direct audience is that of TESOL practitioners.

As I began the manuscript, I looked at examples of brief reports that had been published in previous issues of the *TESOL Quarterly* and I reviewed a manuscript draft that had been produced for the *TESOL Journal* by Dr. Henrichsen and Dr. Tanner on Learning Outcomes. In addition, I recalled in my mind the journal articles I read over the course of my graduate studies. These resources provided further information on the structure and format of a manuscript. My project write-up served as the main source for producing the manuscript. The main challenge during this step was taking the write-up and framing it into a shorter piece of work. The manuscript included five main sections: introduction, research design, results, discussion, and conclusion. The introduction was kept brief with a few sources and a short rationale. The research design gave information about the criteria used in selecting the websites and how the advertisements were collected and analyzed. I wanted to focus more on the results of the study because I felt that this information would be of most interest to job seekers. Deciding what information to exclude was a difficult process, especially in regards to narrowing down 12 pages of results. First, I thought about what results would be the most useful for a TESOL professional or a TESOL student. I decided to focus on a majority of the demographic information, experience and expectations, skills, and personal characteristics. The discussion and the conclusion stayed very close to the versions in the write-up. I read through the manuscript several times to ensure coherence and I submitted the manuscript to my committee chair for constructive feedback. Revisions on the manuscript will continue through my project defense at which time it will be finalized through input and assistance from the advisory committee and sent out for review.

Receiving Feedback and Finalizing the Manuscript

My committee members gave me several helpful suggestions and insights on the write-up and manuscript drafts that helped in adding details to the description and helped me in creating a more organized presentation of the information by adding subheadings and greater specifics in the description of the process. I received much guidance on the review of literature from my project committee, focusing on a more cohesive and relevant manner in regards to the research questions and the rationale for my project. I was encouraged to be more thorough in reviewing past research by asking more thought provoking questions to discover the gap between past research and my research questions and rationale.

Conclusion

This project aimed to explore employee expectations with the purpose of informing TESOL students and professionals how to better obtain full-time employment. Results from the project revealed high frequencies of desired experience and required job duties in curriculum development, teacher education, and administration. Top skills desired by employers included written and oral communication skills and basic computer skills. The area of personal characteristics conveyed ideas that employers are most interested in individuals possessing strong interpersonal and teamwork skills. In addition to these skills and qualifications that employers are seeking, the results of this study revealed information concerning distribution of jobs by job type, degree, institution type, and salary across five regions of the United States. Through future publication, these findings will assist TESOL professionals in their search for full-time employment. The following sections will review the limitations of the research, suggestions for future research, and lessons I learned from my completing my project.

Limitations

In this study, 169 full-time TESOL employment advertisements were collected from three popular websites over a 12-month period. The purpose of the study was to discover common trends in employee expectations of potential new hires. It is important to recognize that the results described in this study are reflective of the advertisements collected during the 12-month period in which the study was conducted. While few studies have taken a longitudinal approach to looking at job advertisements, a longer period of time for data collection would provide additional ads that could help stabilize the findings in the present study.

In addition to collecting ads over an extended period, adding information from other websites could provide a greater range of ads for different types of positions, particularly positions in the K-12 area, or in private companies. One additional possibility for analysis would be to go beyond the United States to focus on specific regions of the world to see what employment trends characterize these areas. For example, a colleague of mine is investigating the TESOL job market in Asia. Additional data may also provide the opportunity to use more robust statistics.

Another data analysis challenge was posed by the salary category because only a quarter of the job advertisements shared salary information. This small sample size limited the generalizability of results and prevented the opportunity to look more carefully at salary as a critical factor in people's employment decision-making process.

Suggestions for Future Research

As suggested in the limitations section, one way of bolstering the data in collected in this study would be to establish a database in which job posting information could continue to be added. Another possibility would be collect data every 10 years, as is done for the U.S. census to

see demographic changes that are occurring and to identify changes in employer demands.

It is possible that this study could be ongoing by continually adding jobs to the database that has already been created. By having an ongoing study, the data would always stay current and any changes with the types of experience, duties, skills, and personal traits employers are seeking may be evaluated. Also, additional websites could be added that are known to advertise full-time TESOL positions to explore more information based on job types, skills, and institutions and programs. One other possibility for further research would be to create an employer survey based on the data collected from this study. This survey could then be sent to a wide range of TESOL employers to confirm specific information gathered in this study about the knowledge, skills, and characteristics they are seeking in TESOL professionals. This information could then be made available on TESOL's website as a means of assisting professionals in their personal development and in their job searches.

Lessons Learned

Research. My project supplied me with a new understanding of how to conduct a research project. While completing my project, I gained notable experience during the steps of advertisement coding, carrying out the interrater reliability tests, and analyzing the results. Coding the advertisements proved to be a long and tedious process. In the beginning, it was difficult to determine how the coding should be done, but the initial interrater reliability test gave me insights to better clarify and operationalize the categories used in the coding scheme; furthermore, the speed and consistency of the coding process improved along with the results of the additional interrater reliability tests. I also learned how to better train raters when performing the interrater reliability test by taking time to review an advertisement together, so questions can be addressed before the coding begins. The most exciting portion of the project was analyzing

the results of the advertisements. The most challenging portion was trying to figure out the most useful way to present the demographic information. I had some ideas, but Dr. Tanner helped me to use the best ways to compare and present the results.

   The write-up and manuscript. Along with conducting a research study, producing the write-up was another learning experience. The process of writing and revising was very long and painstaking. Writing in general has always been difficult for me, so the expectation of written academic discourse was extremely challenging. Drawing up the manuscript was a great experience for me to practice higher order skills such as analyzing, selecting, and synthesizing information. Narrowing down large amounts of information into a shorter manuscript that was still cohesive and informational proved to be challenging. My project gave me the opportunity to stretch and improve my academic writing skills, which will help me in my own future employment.

   Working with a committee. I also learned how to work with a committee of professors who have different opinions, personalities, and expectations. Meeting their expectations and openly accepting their feedback, all designed to improve the quality of the project and manuscript, was quite challenging, but I appreciated the suggestions and constructive feedback. For example, I originally planned to collect advertisements for nine-months, but through a committee meeting, it was suggested that I collect for twelve-months. Looking back, I am glad that I received this instruction, which strengthened the credibility and results of my project.

   Motivation. Completing my MA project was the most challenging undertaking of my educational career. I made effort to set aside time to work on my project amongst other demands of taking classes, teaching, and having other responsibilities (Please see Appendix F for my project timeline and hours). The demands of time were not the only challenges for me.

Motivation was also a trial, especially when I felt moments of frustration and discouragement. Still, I never gave up and I pressed forward with determination! I suggest to other graduate students to work on their project/thesis on a regular basis. By setting aside a certain amount of time or a certain day, it is much easier to stay motivated and remember what you had worked on previously. At moments when it was difficult to work on my project, I tried to think ahead to graduation day as it represents a day of completion and achievement.

Final Remarks

This project came about as a result of my advisory committee chair suggesting that I do an update on the review of advertisements that he did back in 2002. It seemed appropriate given today's challenging economy and competitive job market that it would be beneficial for TESOL professionals to have current information on the knowledge, skills, and personal characteristics that employers were seeking in recent hires. This information would be particularly helpful for those seeking full-time employment. Given the results of this study, it is now incumbent on TESOL prospective employees and students to prepare themselves so that they can fulfill the expectations that employers have in today's marketplace. With the valuable information gained from this study based on TESOL job advertisements, a manuscript has been written. It is hoped that it will be publishable and it will be able to reach the wide range of TESOL professionals that can benefit from its findings.

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Appendix A: Manuscript

Full-time Employment Ads in TESOL: Identifying what Employers

Seek in Potential Hires

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Introduction

Working as a teacher of English to speakers of other languages can be a rewarding experience as it is fulfilling to help individuals who struggle to communicate to gain confidence and skill in English. While providing valuable to English learners, teachers of English to speakers of other languages (TESOL) often find it difficult to obtain consistent full-time employment in the United States. TESOL professionals often work several part-time jobs without benefits in order to earn sufficient funds to support themselves. Tanner (2003) and Crandall (1993) also indicate of course, many would rather have one satisfying full-time position (Pennington, 1995). Because of the difficulty of finding full-time positions these types, some professionals who entered the filed of TESOL with the intention to stay in it permanently have been forced to consider leaving it (Longmate, 2010). In order to enhance employability under these conditions, candidates need to know what employers are seeking in candidates for

full-time positions.

In an effort to help TESOL professionals better prepare themselves for the demands of a changing marketplace in today's economy, the research reported on here sought to identify the qualifications and characteristics that employers seek in individuals they wish to hire to in full-time TESOL positions. The review of literature will look at published materials aimed at helping job seekers with their employment preparation and outlook. Next, a description will be given for the rationale of this research study which investigated nearly two hundred full-time online ESL job advertisements posted online over a period of 12 consecutive calendar months. Finally, important results from the study will be revealed and discussed.

Review of Literature

A number of excellent resources provide general career preparation information and identify lists of qualities and characteristics that are important for the workplace. For instance, career placement centers at universities such as BYU, can provide a wealth of information by providing job fairs, books, articles, and employment websites. One commonly recommended resource is *What Color Is Your Parachute?* (Bolles, 2011). This well known job-hunting and career-changing handbook was first published 41 years ago with updated editions published each year. The 2005 edition (Bolles) contains a chapter that presents the point of view of the employer. In a job interview, employers may evaluate candidates abilities or skills, what candidates know, and years of experience. The handbook also gives 23 tips in general job searching with the best and worst ways to find a job. In addition, the handbook focuses on doing personal inventories to discover personal skills and abilities, where (geographically) you would like to work, and salary negotiation. This handbook is an excellent resource for job seekers, but does not address individual fields such as TESOL.

More specific to the TESOL field, the international TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages) organization has an online career center at TESOL.org devoted to both job seekers and employers. The Career Center contains several resources for those new to the field and also those continuing professional development. The Career Center provides an employment bulletin that lists current job openings as well as allowing professionals to post their resumes. In addition, employers can take the opportunity to advertise their positions and search the posted resumes to find a qualified candidate. As shown, TESOL is making efforts to assist job seekers with general information about the field and advertising relevant positions. On the other hand, the Career Center does not give specific information on how to enhance employability, whether it be through education or becoming an expert in a particular area or skill.

In 1997, Florez published an article in response to the emerging profession of teaching ESL. The guidance offered was focused on two audiences – those just starting out in the field as novice teachers and seasoned professionals. Florez (1997) lists various positions in the TESOL field such as administration, research, areas of policy, and non-profit organizations that support ESL programs. With these different positions come different employment locations that may include community-based organizations, non-profit groups, correctional facilities, private educational institutions, workplace sites, and community colleges. These various programs bring forth different learner groups, requiring different specialized skills. Besides teaching or tutoring individuals to help them develop English skills, teachers must have knowledge in content beyond language instruction, such as survival skills, cultural information, American history, and citizenship facts. Other required duties may include materials development, lesson planning, curriculum development, and assessment.

Another useful source that conveys employer expectations for TESOL professionals and students, published by Tanner (2003), provided employment tips based on a review of 250 ESL and EFL job advertisements in a study carried out in 2002. Tanner provides seven specific tips for finding employment in TESOL, such as gaining advanced degrees and certification and taking advantage of opportunities in the work place to develop specialized skills because they will enhance employability. A wide-range of specialized skills and areas of expertise were listed, such as language teaching and assessment skills, teacher training skills, study and test-taking skills, curriculum areas, administration, and grant writing. Other suggestions Tanner gives include international teaching, seeking professional development, and keeping a current resume, CV, and teaching portfolio. While this information is useful, it is now nine years old. With the changing economy and competitiveness of the job market, it has become pertinent to discover any changes in employment trends such as the necessity of advanced degrees or required specialized skills sought by employers.

With current high levels of unemployment in the U.S. (U.S. Department of Labor, 2011) and the fact that there are more than 400 university programs throughout the U.S. and Canada, graduating TESOL professionals who hold certificates, bachelor's and master's degrees, the competition for full-time TESOL positions is fierce. The majority of research investigating employment issues and concerns in the field of TESOL a decade or more (Day, 1984; Henrichsen, 1983; Pennington, 1991). Also, attending professional conference sessions based on employment is helpful, but unfortunately the information shared with the attendees is rarely published. As a follow-up to Tanner's 2002 study, updated research into the current marketplace will not only help those presently seeking positions, but it will help students in degree seeking programs to know the types of knowledge, skills, and qualities they should be developing.

The purpose of this study was to gain vital current information about employer expectations and in turn become an informational guide to TESOL job seekers. This article will focus on three questions: (1) What kinds of knowledge, experience, and skills are employers looking for in candidates in the United States? (2) What duties and expectations are frequently mentioned in advertisements for full-time positions? (3) What personal qualities are emphasized in the job postings?

Research Design

Data Sources

In the 21st century, employment searches have moved almost entirely to the Internet (Kerka, 2001). Given that the majority of open positions are now advertised on the web, a set of criteria was established to help in identifying websites that provided regular postings of full-time, ESL related positions in the U.S.. Those criteria were: (a) The websites contained a large number of advertisements focused on ESL employment (b) The websites contained a majority of full-time advertisements over part-time, (c) they were common and credible among TESOL professionals (e.g., TESOL educators), (d) the websites received a notable amount of visits per day (e.g., 1,400), and (e) employers paid a significant fee (e.g., $125) to place their ads on these sites. In other words, these advertising venues were utilized by institutions demonstrating a serious pursuit of qualified and professional individuals. In the end, TESOL.org, HigherEdJobs.com, and The Linguist List met the criteria and were chosen for this study.

Data Collection Procedure

This longitudinal study was descriptive in nature through the identification of key information found in 169 TESOL job advertisements. Over a 12-month period, I gathered advertisements that were associated with TESOL, full-time positions, and located in the United

States. The advertisements were analyzed and organized into a spreadsheet of categories based on those used by Tanner (2003). Each job was analyzed for its demographic characteristics (title, location, etc.), duties and responsibilities, employment documents required, and the personal qualities the employer was seeking in the new hire.

Interrater Reliability Test

After the 169 advertisements were analyzed and coded, an interrater reliability test was performed with a 10% sample where every tenth advertisement was analyzed and coded by a second rater. The two sets of coding were compared and contributions to low agreement (less than 80%) were discussed between the researcher and the second rater. Modifications were made to the low agreement categories to provide more consistent and useful results. An additional interrater reliablility test was performed with a different rater to recheck the reliability (an overall agreement of 90%) before reporting the results.

Results

This study yielded a wide range of results that addressed the three research questions of this study. There were also some unexpected data that emerged from the advertisements. For example, I was able to evaluate the distribution of job types, degrees, institutions, and salaries among five U.S. demographic regions. This valuable information will be very useful for TESOL professionals as they look for jobs in particular regions within the United States.

Job Ad Demographic Information

Distribution by Region. The 169 advertisements collected as part of this project were first sorted into the five U.S. regional locations for these positions. Rather than creating my own regional divisions, I looked at several sources, which often displayed the U.S. into five: West,

Midwest, Southwest, Southeast, and Northeast. The number and percent frequency of the jobs is identified within each region on the map in Figure 1.
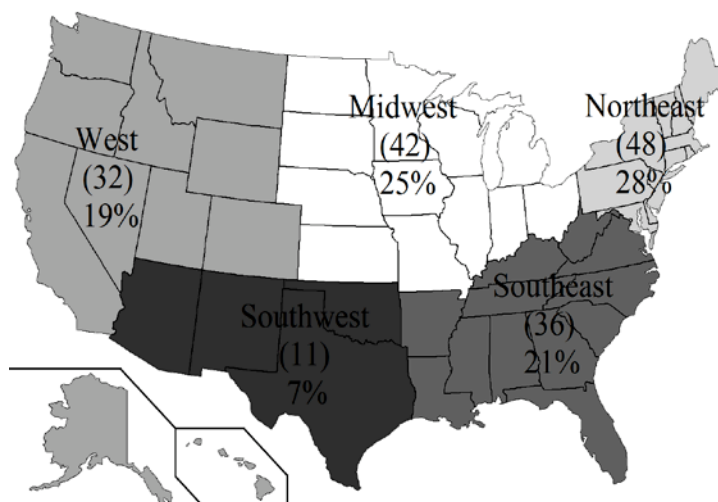

Figure 1. Regional US map showing distribution of TESOL jobs

Note: From http://reegnum.co.cc/blank-us-map-920.html

The region posting the largest number of TESOL positions was the northeastern portion of the United States. In taking a more careful look, the majority of the jobs were located in New York and Pennsylvania. The Midwest was second in frequency (mostly Ohio) followed closely by the Southeast, then the West (mostly California). The Southwest had the fewest with only 11 full-time positions (mostly Texas) in the database having been advertised from this location.

Distribution by Job Type. The advertisements were next analyzed according to the type of position for which the employer was advertising. As shown in Table 1, just over half of the jobs were identified as instructional type jobs. Administrative jobs were the second most frequent job type. These positions included jobs such as program chairs, directors, and coordinators. The third most frequent category was that of teacher educator. This job type

included positions seeking teacher educators that would provide in-service as well as pre-service training in TESOL.

Table 1

Frequency and Percentages of Job Types for the Selected TESOL Job Advertisements

Job Type	Frequency	Percentage
Instructor	87	51%
Administrator	56	33%
Teacher educator	19	11%
Curriculum developer	3	2%
Testing/Assessment	2	1%
Publishing representative	2	1%

Distribution by Degree Type. Educational requirements listed in the job advertisements ranged from bachelor's degree up to a PhD. Only four advertisements did not mention a required degree. The most requested degree was a master's degree. Sixty-five percent of the positions required a master's degree as the minimum level of education required. The second most requested degree was a PhD or those individuals who were ABD (All But Dissertation) at 22%. Positions requiring a bachelor's degree made up the final 10% of the ads. It should be pointed out that these percentages are based on minimum and not necessarily preferred qualifications.

Distribution by Institution or Organization Type. Another way in which the positions were analyzed was to identify the type of institution or organization in which the position was housed. Table 2 shows that 64% of the positions advertised were in university locations. Colleges and community colleges came in second and third respectively. These results support the idea that institutions of higher education are drawn to advertise positions in the three websites that were used for the data set in this study

Table 2

Frequency of Institutions and Program Types Found in the Selected TESOL Job Advertisements

Institution/program	Frequency – n=169	Percentage
Universities	108	64%
Colleges	22	13%
Community Colleges	21	12%
Companies	7	4%
IEP Programs	6	4%
K-12	5	3%

Distribution by Salary. Only 42 (25%) of the 169 advertisements provided salary

information. The positions listed salaries ranging from $22,000 up to $120,000. To better

contextualize this information, I found it important to link the salary information with the regions

from which the positions were posted. People are well aware that different locations throughout

the U.S. have different costs of living and as such salary levels are often higher or lower

depending on the costs of housing, transportation, food, etc. in these locations. Table 3 illustrates

the cost of living for the states with the highest job frequencies, the percentage of jobs located in

each region and their salary distribution through median, mean, and standard deviation.

Table 3

*Percentage, Mean, Standard Deviation, and Cost of Living Index for Jobs Located in the Five
U.S. Regions from 42 Selected TESOL Job Advertisements*

	Midwest	Northeast	Southeast	Southwest	West
Percentage	24%	21%	10%	14%	31%
Median salary	$36,000	$66,000	$58,000	$37,000	$59,000
Mean salary	$37,405	$71,028	$56,373	$38,190	$58,514
Standard Deviation	8509.66594	21500.4795	11365.0275	6705.36388	10788.3809
COL index	93.85 (OH)	128.29 (NY)	139.92 (DC)	91.04 (TX)	132.56 (CA)

As shown in the above table, the regions with the highest advertised median salaries were

located in the Northeast, West, and Southeast. These regions also have states with a higher cost

of living in comparison to states in the Midwest and Southwest (MERIC, 2011). For postings in

the Northeast that reported salaries, the range for the various positions was from $42,000 to $120,000. For the West, the range was smaller with the low and high salaries ranging from $24,000 to $82,000. The Southeast is another diverse area with large numbers of immigrants. The salary range for the jobs posted in this location was $36,000 to $76,000. For the 75% of jobs that did not provide numerical salary information, many of the jobs either said that the salary was "competitive" or the applicant was referred to an online website for further information.

Experience and Expectations

Due to the way the job advertisements were written, it was sometimes difficult to distinguish the types of experiences that the new hire should have from the expectations that employers had of someone applying for the position. Due to the difficulty of separating out these factors, the advertisements were reviewed for the qualifications that employers had identified. In some cases, these qualifications included a range of different types of experience or involved a detailed list of duties that the new application would be expected to perform. For example, in one job ad, the employer explicitly stated that the applicant needed testing experience. In another job ad, testing was listed as one of the areas for which the applicant would have responsibility. For this reason, therefore, if a condition of employment was listed as either a required type of experience and/or as a duty, it was coded into one rather than two separate categories, to avoid having to try and interpret what the employer was thinking. The top 10 most frequently mentioned experience and expectations are found in Table 4 showing 93% of the advertisements requested teaching experience, which is also reflected in the large number of teaching positions found in the data. The majority of the ads (53%) required three to five-years

experience. A total of 41% of the ads required one to three-years experience, and only 5% of the

ads required five to ten-years experience.

Table 4

Top 10 Experience and/or Expectations Stated in the Selected TESOL Job Advertisements

Experience/Expectations	Frequency	Percentage
Teaching experience	157	93%
Curriculum development	82	49%
Teacher Education	79	47%
Administrative	78	46%
International/cultural experience	75	44%
Instructional technology	70	41%
Testing/assessment	69	41%
Productive scholarship	46	27%
Materials development	40	24%
Professional development	40	24%

The second most frequently mentioned category of experience or expectation was that of

curriculum development (49%). This area was closely followed by teacher education. This

category included experience in or the responsibility of conducting teacher and tutor training

programs. Administration was listed in 46% of the job advertisements. Duties such as

coordinator, director, student recruiter, leadership, and student mentor were included under the

administrative experience category. Several advertisements were quite specific as to the duties

that the new hires were to perform. When this occurred, they listed multiple duties within one

job advertisement such as grant writing, recruiting, or visa experience. International experience

was defined as exposure to other cultures through living and/or working abroad, while cultural

experience might involve experiential interaction with multicultural groups but does not

necessarily include traveling abroad. Close to half (44%) of the TESOL ads stated

international/cultural experience as a qualification of employment.

The bottom-half of the top 10 list, include instructional technology and testing/assessment experience and were identified with equal frequency (41%). Instructional technology was defined in the ads as experience with or knowledge of how to use multimedia and/or CALL in the classroom. The last three areas of experience and/ or expectation were all in the 20% range. Productive scholarship was distinguished from professional development as active involvement in conducting research, publishing, and giving professional presentations; professional development, on the other hand, included reading research articles or attending workshops and conferences.

Skills

In addition to investigating the types of experience and duties required of the new hires, I also investigated the types of skills that employers were seeking in job applicants. Skills can be defined as the ability to do something well. Also, in terms of skill areas, items identified in the ads were placed in this category if there was explicit mention that the applicants have as skills rather than experience in the respective area.

The most frequently mentioned skill involved effective written and oral communication skills (25%). Basic computer skills were a close second at (24%). Employers identifying the need for computer skills specifically stated that applicants should be well able to use software programs like Word or Excel and they should be able to use the Internet. A third area of skill involved organizational skills (12%). This skill's area encompassed time management skills, being able to meet deadlines, plan, and manage multiple tasks. The final area included analytical skills (4%) such as problem solving and critical thinking.

Personal Characteristics

The final area that was researched in the TESOL job advertisements was that of personal characteristics. The purpose of this analysis was to determine the types of traits that employers were seeking in TESOL professionals. The coding scheme used for this analysis came from a series of 16 online articles identifying the personality characteristics that employers seek in 21st century applicants. Table 5 shows the top 10 characteristics identified from the online articles and from the 169 TESOL job advertisements.

Table 5

Top 10 Personal Characteristics Mentioned in General Employment Articles and the TESOL Ads Database

Articles	Total	%	TESOL Ads	Total	%
Interpersonal skills/team player	14	86	Interpersonal skills/team player	54	32
Motivated/independent	11	69	Sensitivity to cultural diversity	38	22
Hard worker/strong work ethic	11	69	Loyal/committed	31	18
Adaptable/flexible	10	63	Adaptable/willingness	20	12
Analytical/problem solver	6	38	Creative/innovative	15	9
Responsible/dependable	6	38	Interest in professional development	13	8
Honest/has integrity	6	38	Professional manner	10	6
Intelligent/smart	6	38	Motivated/self-starter	9	5
Leader/decision maker	5	31	Enthusiastic/passionate	9	5
Organized/efficient	5	31	Detail oriented	7	4

It is interesting to note that both groups have interpersonal and team oriented skills listed as the top traits requested in new hires. These skills point to the importance again of good communication skills and a willingness and ability to work with others in the workplace. Teachers are often expected to be sensitive, committed individuals who themselves continue to grow and develop in their respective discipline's skills, abilities, and knowledge.

They are also expected to act professionally, be self-starters and passionate about their field of study. Being detail oriented is also important in order to keep appropriate grade and attendance records, and to be able to deal with the diverse collection of duties and

responsibilities they have in managing the demands of a multicultural and multilingual classroom.

Discussion

This study explored employers' expectations of new hires in today's TESOL job market through analyzing full-time job advertisements collected over a period of 12 months from three reputable online employment websites. A wide range of results, addressed different aspects such as job ad demographics, experience and expectations, skills, and personal characteristics. After analyzing 169 advertisements, coding the data, and performing interrater reliability tests, common trends emerged from the data along with new additional information.

By clearly identifying what employers are looking for in candidates the results of this study can assist job seekers and students in their preparation and search for fulfilling full-time work. There are several factors to consider when searching for a new job including location, job positions, and salary. The information given in the Job Ad Demographic section can give a good general picture for today's job seekers as they decide which direction they want to go in terms of finding a fulfilling full-time job. The frequencies and percentages of experiences, expectations, and skills create a general picture of what employers are seeking. Attention should not only be paid to items with the highest frequencies because all skills have some merit if an employer is seeking them. For example, it is important to become familiar with curriculum development because it was mentioned the most under experience and expectations, but becoming more technologically savvy, which had a slightly lower frequency, would be a very practical skill to possess in the 21st century. Not only is technology being used more and more in the classroom but online teaching is an emerging trend. In addition, job searching, electronic portfolios, and

applying for jobs on the Internet continues to grow and all TESOL professionals should become comfortable with using the Internet in different capacities both professionally and personally.

The focus on personal characteristics was included because of the usefulness of the data. After comparing the characteristics found in the TESOL job advertisements and the online articles, some overlap became apparent between desired characteristics sought after by all employers. The characteristics of being a team player or someone who is highly interpersonal, motivated, and adaptable are all highly coveted personality traits. Employers are not only looking for a person with experience and skills, but someone with good personal qualities. Job seekers should be aware of this perspective and evaluate their own personal characteristics to better market themselves.

In comparing the findings from this study with Tanner's (2003) study in 2002, it appears that little has changed in nine years. Tanner's seven tips mention several areas that were confirmed in this study. In regards to education, it continues to be important to obtain higher education such as a master's degree or PhD in order to obtain a full-time job. Having an interest in professional development and getting involved in professional organizations was also a focus in both studies. Both studies identified the importance of developing a specialized skill in at least one area: technology, assessment, teacher training, curriculum, or administration. Other areas of expertise such as gaining international and cultural experience and learning a second language were also important. As can be seen, nearly 10 years separate Tanner's study from the current one and much is quite the same; additionally, the information from the current study can provide additional valuable insights through publication in which TESOL professionals should be paying attention to such as demographic information on jobs, institutions, and salary.

Conclusion

This project came about as a follow-up study done by Tanner (2003). It seemed appropriate given today's challenging economy and competitive job market that it would be beneficial for TESOL professionals to have current information on the knowledge, skills, and personal characteristics that employers were seeking in recent hires. This information would be particularly helpful for those seeking full-time employment. Given the results of this study, it is now incumbent on TESOL prospective employees and students to prepare themselves so that they can fulfill the expectations that employers have in today's marketplace. With the valuable information gained from this study based on TESOL job advertisements, a manuscript has been written. It is hoped that it will be publishable and it will be able to reach the wide range of TESOL professionals that can benefit from its findings.

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Bio-statement

Caprice Bailey is a MA TESOL student at Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah, USA. She currently teaches at BYU's English Language Center. Her areas of interest include employment and refugee concerns.

Co-authors bio-statements will be forthcoming.

June 9, 2011
Dr. Ali Shahadeh
Brief Reports and Summaries Editor
TESOL Quarterly

Dear Dr. Shahadeh:

I have enclosed a manuscript for consideration in the Brief Reports and Summaries section of the *TESOL Quarterly*. The title of the manuscript is: Full-time Employment: What Employers Say they are Looking for New Hires.

This manuscript reports the preliminary results of a research project I conducted as an MA TESOL student at Brigham Young University. The purpose of this project was to explore employer expectations of new hires in TESOL in the current job market. A total of 169 advertisements were collected from three reputable online websites over the course of 12 months. Given that many TESOL professionals are working in part-time positions, the data reveals information about the experience, skills, and personal characteristics that employers are seeking in applicants who are applying to full-time ESL positions in the United States. Demographic data regarding the location of the positions, job type, salary, and educational training will also shared.

Very few publications have investigated employment issues in TESOL. It is clear, however, that this topic is garnering greater attention in the profession as evidenced by an increasing number of presentations on employment at the international TESOL convention. With today's challenging economy and competitive job market, there is a need for current employment information. The information in the manuscript will help both degree-seeking students and current professionals in their search for full-time employment.

Thank you for considering this manuscript. I hope to hear from you soon regarding its possible inclusion in the journal.

Best Regards,

Caprice L. Bailey

Appendix B: Original Categories for Coding Scheme 1

1. Institution name (added)
2. Field number (added)
3. Date of ad posting
4. Region
5. Job Title per advertisement
6. Program Type: private, public, company
7. Native speaker
8. Degree
9. Educational degree: BA, MA, PhD
10. Contract length
11. ESL training
12. EFL training
13. International experience
14. Teaching experience
15. Age group experience
16. Foreign language experience
17. Computer/Internet knowledge
18. CALL experience
19. Skill area experience
20. Materials development experience
21. Administrative experience
22. Testing/assessment experience
23. TOEFL experience
24. Multimedia experience
25. ESP experience
26. IEP experience
27. Research/publication experience
28. Visa/immigration experience
29. Duties
30. Content area to teach
31. Teach foreign language
32. CALL
33. Write grants
34. Develop curriculum
35. Conduct research
36. Teacher training
37. Salary/wage
38. Curriculum Vitae
39. References/letters of recommendation
40. Transcripts required
41. Student ratings of teaching
42. Notes

Appendix C: Final Categories for Coding Scheme 1

1. Institution/company name
2. Field number : (1) Instructor (2) Administrator (3) Testing/assessment (4) Teacher trainer (5) Curriculum developer (6) Publishing representative
3. Date of ad posting
4. Region/state: Northeast, Midwest, Southeast, Southwest, West
5. Job Title per advertisement
6. Program Type: college, university, community college, company, etc.
7. Native speaker/ high English proficiency
8. Educational degree: BA, MA, PhD
9. Contract length
10. Effective written and/or oral communication skills
11. International/cultural experience
12. Teaching experience/years
13. Class management
14. Analytical
15. Organized
16. Age group experience
17. Foreign language experience
18. Computer/Internet knowledge
19. Instructional Technology: CALL, multimedia, online teaching
20. Skill area experience
21. Materials development experience/duty
22. Curriculum development experience/duty
23. Budget and finance experience/duty
24. Administrative experience/duty
25. Testing/assessment experience/duty
26. TOEFL experience/duty
27. ESP experience
28. IEP experience
29. Productive scholarship experience/duty
30. Visa/immigration experience/duty
31. Professional development experience/duty
32. Teach foreign language (duty)
33. Write grants (experience/duty)
34. Teacher education
35. Salary/wage
36. Curriculum Vitae
37. References/letters of recommendation
38. Transcripts required
39. Teaching/student evaluations
40. Portfolio
41. Teaching Philosophy
42. Sample Work: materials, publications, writing sample, etc.
43. Other/notes

Appendix D: Categories for Coding Scheme 2 (Personal Characteristics)

1. Motivated: self-starter and independent
2. Interest/commitment to professional development, productive scholarship
3. Collegial: team player, cooperative with others, ability to work collaboratively, contributive, etc.
4. Moral and spiritual values
5. Loyalty: a commitment to students, quality, teaching, the program, school, etc.
6. Creative and innovative
7. Sensitivity/awareness of other cultures and global perspectives
8. Willingness to… adapt (to technology), comply (with policies), meet student needs, contribute to the program, flexible etc.
9. Results driven/oriented: focus on productivity, assessment, gaining rather than losing
10. Professional manner: punctual, prompt, thoughtful responses to all inquiries
11. Detail oriented: accurate
12. Enthusiastic/optimistic attitude

Appendix E: List of Online Sources Used for Personal Characteristics

1. Interviewing for Jobs & Internships: Qualities Employers Look For

http://www.ccsf.edu/Resources/VOICE/trmfiles/sectionone/scans4/qualitiesemployerlook.pdf

2. Hellum: Employers Top 10 Qualities

http://www.helium.com/items/183668-top-10-qualities-and-skills-employers-seek

3. Job Interview and Career Guide: The Qualities of a Good Employee

http://www.job-interview-site.com/the-qualities-of-a-good-employee.html

4. Do You Have What Employers Want?

http://www.monmouth.army.mil/monmouthmessage/stories100110/news_story_05.html

5. University of New Haven: Top Characteristics Sought by Employers

http://www.newhaven.edu/cdc/21793/

6. Blog by Tom Denham: What Employers Expect in New Hires.

http://blog.timesunion.com/careers/424/424/

7. University of California: Life Skills

http://www.danrpeoplelinks.ucr.edu/nb3/lib/ls_1_3.pdf

8. Managing for Dummies: Defining the Characteristics of Desirable Candidates

http://books.google.com/books?id=TkDwzBcL0yYC&pg=PA85&lpg=PA85&dq=book+on+top
+qualities/characteristics+that+employers+are+looking+for+in+employees&source=bl&ots=Jh4
8SKzvqh&sig=_BwixgjQH0T5-2OuyH6gb6vPcCM&hl=en&ei=h5ZZTbLCNIi-
sQOIo82cDA&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=6&ved=0CDUQ6AEwBTgK#v=one
page&q&f=false

9. Profiling Performance: Can we prepare our workforce for future?

http://www.croke-schoenherr.com/hr-newsletters/2009/prepare-workforce.htm

10. New Year, New Qualities Employers will be Looking for in Candidates

http://en-gb.facebook.com/note.php?note_id=195794360434989&comments&ref=mf

11. Career Solutions Training Group (Davis School District)

http://www.davis.k12.ut.us/schools/nhs/advisory/files/97DD41536C0A47CA8904723686AACD01.pdf

12. University of Cincinnati: What we Know about the Future

http://gocinci.net/future/page4.html

13. Great Characteristics for Retail Employees

http://retailminded.com/retail-employee-skills/

14. Paula's Special Education Resources: Good Worker Character Traits

http://www.paulabliss.com/stw4.htm

15. Beloit College: The Top Characteristics Employers Seek

http://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&q=cache:ZNeeUSrXf_MJ:www.beloit.edu/careerservices/assets/internship_search.pdf+top+qualities/characteristics+that+employers+are+looking+for+in+employees&hl=en&gl=us&pid=bl&srcid=ADGEESgjLynAVerUJ7h-rG3W6tqCbt5ocy2_7e3LGuv_70SlSJfxgDZCv21hOj8B8wLajyejXvYP58AuXFSNYkGzNQpVGt3YGCcMBxQcqHw3ATOfqgM8BQTIJThajNnHm2VqPzSRn1XP&sig=AHIEtbQUhoDBGCASxLZNsZWfv8vv9i_ZYg

16. Employer Secrets Revealed Vital Traits Employers are Yearning for

http://www.fastjobresume.com/2010/08/employer-secrets-revealed-vital-traits-employers-are-yearning-for/

Appendix F: Summary of Project Hours

Activity	Timeline	Total Hours
Data collection of job advertisements over the course of a year	11/2009 to 11/2010	15
Printing, analyzing, and entering ad information into Excel	11/2009 to 12/2010	24
Reviewing advertisements for duplicates and adjusting Excel spreadsheet	12/2010	5.5
Interrater reliability test: preparing test for rater, checking agreement, meetings with rater, and revising coding scheme	12/2010 to 02/2011	15
Re-coding of job advertisements	02/2011 to 3/2011	21
Second interrater reliability test	04/2011	5
Personal Characteristics: reviewing ads and online sources for second coding scheme, coding advertisements, and checking agreement after interrater reliability test	01/2011 to 02/2011	17
Analyzing results, creating graphs and figures	04/2011	7
Review of literature and write-up	10/2010 to 06/2011	50
Manuscript	03/2011 to 06/2011	10.5
Weekly meetings with advisor/committee meeting	09/2009 to 06/2011	22
	Total	**192**