

### **Maher Sherif Interview Summary (PM)**

#### *[01:29] Background*

Born in the Middle East, moved to the US when he was 13, degree in chemical engineering, followed by Master's in business and finance. Has a CELTA, DELTA modules 2 and 3 and an IHCYLT certificate. In 2007 came to Kazakhstan as a Peace corps volunteer and realised he wanted a career change; started teaching full-time 2008-2009. Got involved with the British Council in 2012, when he answered an ad looking for a teacher trainer in a particular village. Enjoys teaching, but prefers working with teachers more than working on the language.

#### *[03:53] What makes a good English teacher?*

A combination of things: you have to enjoy it and you have to be willing to develop. MS has been training teachers since 2011 – initially unofficially, not full-time; officially since the 2012 British Council project.

#### *[05:29] What made you decide to use video as a teacher training tool?*

In May 2016 decided to have a competition for teachers for best English lesson; this was difficult to judge from memory and by going back to notes and there was some questioning of decisions. Also, giving feedback on lessons is difficult by just going back from memory.

1        IE:    in our project currently in atyrau the british  
2            council we decided to have a competition among  
3            the teachers for the quote unquote best english  
4            lesson. so it was me and our project manager. we  
5            were the judges during this competition and we have  
6            to watch i believe it was about 20 teachers give  
7            lessons and we have to judge which one was the best  
8            one. it was very difficult to come back and look  
9            at our notes and what we said about one teacher  
10          and what somebody evaluated what somebody said was  
11          good and wasnt good. and on the other hand we had  
12          some teachers who came back and they disagreed with  
13          our decision. but mainly for me thats one of the  
14          first things that i decided that we need to  
15          document this somehow or we need to work on it.  
16          and when i started also working with teachers i  
17          would give them feedback on their lesson but it  
18          was very difficult for them to realise what i was  
19          trying to say because we had no video nothing going  
20          back from memory and why did you do this why did  
21          you do that. so at that point i decided lets do

#### *[07:00] Any training in how to film people?*

No, just looked online, saw people using their smartphone. Got microphone later, as one of the most important things was to hear the teacher. Started to learn what worked. Purchased cheap editing software.

21            you do that. so at that point i decided lets do  
22            something a lot more how to say a little bit more  
23            interactive and so i would say about may when i

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24 decided and i started it in the summer. i just  
25 looked online. i saw a lot of people just using  
26 their smartphone and i did. im on almost a third  
27 different smartphone im using on this and im  
28 realising whats good and what doesnt work. another  
29 part this microphone i got it later because i  
30 realised that one of the most important parts of  
31 the lesson is if you can hear what the teacher says  
32 so i started to develop it a little bit better  
33 making better videos and i purchased a really cheap  
34 editing software. so no i just watched youtube.

### [07:43] *Equipment/software*

Smartphone, microphone (professional but not expensive –Tascam). Still has trouble capturing what teachers say, as teachers move a lot and the microphone is static.

34 editing software. so no i just watched youtube.  
35 currently i use my personal smartphone. i use the  
36 video capabilities on it. i use a microphone that  
37 people say it is a professional microphone but it  
38 wasnt very very expensive like its a cast cam so  
39 if you want to take a picture you can. but a big  
40 thing was capturing the sound having clear sound  
41 because a lot of times when i watch my earlier  
42 videos it was very difficult to hear the teacher.  
43 and i still have trouble right now because the  
44 teachers keep moving a lot and my microphone is  
45 stationary so i need to figure out what to do. it

### [08:28] *How do you introduce the idea of being filmed to trainee teachers?*

Comes as a surprise; really difficult to explain, teachers don't understand what's going on. Had no problems with any teachers, except re posting (after editing, videos are posted online) - 2-3 teachers requested not to post their videos, but nobody declined capture.

45 stationary so i need to figure out what to do. it  
46 comes to them as a surprise to be honest with  
47 you. one of the things its really difficult to  
48 explain it or even when i show them what will  
49 happen they still dont grasp they dont understand  
50 really whats going on. soive had absolutely no  
51 objections from any teacher with the exception of  
52 posting because after we finished the video and i  
53 edit it we post it online for all the other  
54 teachers to view it and see my comments. only two  
55 or three teachers requested not to the post the  
56 video but nobody declined actually capturing the  
57 videos so ididnt have any issues. at the beginning

### [09:09] *Permissions*

Teachers sign a disclaimer to follow the rules of the course or certificates will be withheld. Didn't specifically mention video, but also said that he had the right to change or add anything to the course. Never had anybody decline. Tells teachers it's

a free course, so at least he needs to take photos. Nothing specifically to capture video. Would not have an issue with somebody refusing. But this has given him an idea about signing a disclaimer.

57 videos so didnt have any issues. at the beginning  
58 of every course even before I started doing  
59 videos they have to sign like a disclaimer that  
60 they have to follow all the rules of the course  
61 otherwise they will not receive a certificate.i  
62 did specifically mention video but i did mention  
63 that we have the right to change and add anything  
64 we want in the course. and up to this point any  
65 teacher who ive never had anybody decline like  
66 fully decline say no do not take any pictures or  
67 anything. right now has four different

**[10:22] At what point in a training session would you use your filming equipment?**

Current course has four different micro-teaching sessions and a warm-up demonstration – all filmed.

67 anything. right now has four different  
68 microteachings or four different lessons that the  
69 teachers have to do. at every single microteaching  
70 we film it. sorry four microteachings and one time  
71 they have to do just a warmup a two to threeminute  
72 warmup which is a demonstration. we also film it.

**[10:55] What do you do with the clip?**

Edit the clip for sound and time, add a title – very basic. Match audio from microphone to audio from video. Then upload it to YouTube - posted as unlisted video, private, no one has access unless they have the link. Also posted on secret Facebook page, which only participants can see. Everyone see everybody's, unless someone has asked for their video to not be posted – they are then not part of the Facebook group, as it's not fair to watch others' if you don't post your own.

73 the first thing i do is i go back and i edit the  
74 clip for sound and just to get it within the right  
75 time. idont do too many different things. i put a  
76 title to it the names so its very basic and match  
77 the audio from the microphone to the audio of the  
78 video. thats the first thing. once i finish i  
79 upload the video on youtube. its posted as an  
80 unlisted video which means that its private. nobody  
81 has access to it unless you have the link. and  
82 after that we put it on a secret facebook page  
83 which only my participants can see. they could see  
84 everybody in their group correct. unless somebody  
85 has an objection where they say dont post my video  
86 then we dont put their video on there. what ive  
87 done in the past is if somebody says idont want  
88 you to put my videos there then they are not part  
89 of the facebook group because i believe its not

90 fair that you can watch other peoples videos but  
91 you cant have your own videos there. i would like

[12:19] *Evaluation*

Hasn't specifically asked – good idea. Did have one or two teachers who came back and said it was very useful.

[12:59] *Anything you would like to do?*

In the summer was trying to do something with Camtasia, where you can do a lot more (comments, annotation, voiceovers), but this proved very difficult and time consuming. Would like to give more detailed feedback and analysis. Constrained by both lack of time and lack of knowledge. Ideally, would like to have an extra 15-minute session with each participant to go over each lesson privately. Would be better/more practical to do this at home, but difficult and time consuming.

91 you cant have your own videos there. i would like  
92 to do this in the future where i can sit down with  
93 each individual teacher either in a classroom or  
94 in somehow some kind of an extra video private  
95 video to where i explain to them why the warmup  
96 didnt work or why this pair activity didnt work.  
97 so i want to get more details telling them slow  
98 down go faster whatever. ihavent done that yet.  
99 its just its very timeconsuming.

[14:59] *Would you consider other tools?*

Had use of a professional camera the previous week for personal use – much better in terms of sound and what it captured from the back of the room, but heavy, needs tripod and more work than what he is used to – but would like to use it on the next course.

[15:57] Happy to share his practice. Hasn't written any guidelines, as focus was on his course, and wouldn't know what to do with it – who to share it with, who would publish it. Interestingly, one of the teachers from the course has added him to their school's closed Facebook group, where they are posting mini-videos of their training – this is just like what he did, so maybe it is spreading. Would be happy to write guidelines if someone asked him. Is happy to send a sample if he gets approval from one of the teachers.

102 IV have you written any kind of guidelines to your  
103 practice  
104 IE no i have not not at all.  
105 IV why is that  
106 IE because my main focus here was just my course how  
107 to conduct a course and i just didnt have time to  
108 where i can write something and you know because i  
109 wouldnt know what to do with it who would i share  
110 it with who to publish it. but actually its  
111 something interesting you brought up. i found that  
112 one of our teachers who participated in this course  
113 and we took videos and put it on facebook now

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114           their school they added me to a closed group where  
115           i saw that theyre posting just very mini videos of  
116           their trainings. ididnt get a chance to see it  
117           but first time i opened it i was like wow that  
118           looks exactly like what i did. so maybe it is  
119           spreading. maybe some people are using it. im not  
120           really sure.

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