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**NEW ZEALAND STUDIES IN  
APPLIED LINGUISTICS**

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## NEW ZEALAND STUDIES IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS

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## **ARTICLES**

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## **TUHINGA MĀHORAHORA: TRACKING VOCABULARY USE IN CHILDREN'S WRITING IN MĀORI**

**Jeanette King, Mary Boyce & Christine Brown**

*University of Canterbury, University of Canterbury  
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### **Abstract**

*Māori language and culture immersion programmes have been established now in Aotearoa New Zealand for about 30 years, however there is still not a great deal of research on the proficiency of the children who attend those immersion programmes.*

*The Tuhinga Māhorahora project has two goals. The first is to test ways of providing timely information to classroom teachers that they can feed back into their curriculum planning and classroom practice. The second is to build a corpus which can provide information of use to those producing curriculum resources in Māori.*

*The research project is collecting and analysing written texts written in te reo Māori by young learners in Māori immersion settings. The focus is on the vocabulary the learners produce during free writing sessions. These are sessions in which the writers choose their topic and write independently of the teacher. The researchers have collected writing samples into a corpus of approximately 67,200 words to date. We report on our methodology in establishing the database and results and challenges to date.*

### **Introduction**

Te reo Māori, the Māori language, a Polynesian language of the South Pacific, is the indigenous language of Aotearoa New Zealand. The language has been the focus of revitalization since the late 1970s when the results of a sociolinguistic survey revealed that very few children were being raised as speakers of the language (Benton, 1991). Initial revitalization initiatives accordingly focused on raising new generations of child speakers. Kōhanga reo (“language nest”) Māori immersion preschools were quickly followed by Māori immersion schooling.

Although these schooling initiatives have been operational for over thirty years, apart from work by Cath Rau (2005) and Maraea Hunia (2016), we know very little about the productive language of children in Māori immersion classrooms. However, we do know that there is a significant increase in student reading and writing scores when there is increased support and resources for Māori curriculum development, and teachers' professional development (Rau, 2005).

The Tuhinga Māhorahora project aims to assist teachers in Māori immersion schools by supplying them with information about the words their students are and are not using. The teacher can then lift exposure to underused words and phrases, and introduce alternatives to expand their vocabulary range. Accordingly, as the project continues the aim is to provide evidence based data to support literacy development in Māori immersion settings.

This support is especially important as most teachers are “new” speakers of Māori (Christensen 2003, p. 49), that is, speakers “with little or no home or community exposure to a minority language but who instead acquire it through immersion or bilingual programs, revitalization projects or as adult language learners” (O’Rourke, Pujolar & Ramallo 2015, p. 1). This means that those teaching in the medium of Māori require added support in order to provide a rich linguistic environment for students in their classrooms.

The Tuhinga Māhorahora project is named after the free-writing element in Māori Medium Education (MME) classrooms where teachers are encouraged to allow their students to write for ten minutes a day about any topic they wish (Ministry of Education, 2008). That is, the writing time is not directed by teachers. This writing gives us a window into the child’s productive repertoire. While written repertoires are different to spoken repertoires, for logistical and ethical reasons they are much easier to obtain. What children write is typically already within their spoken repertoire so these writing samples provide an insight into both written and spoken proficiency.

In MME settings it is important to ensure quality and quantity of input as part of planning for language success. This is especially important as for many students their only exposure to the Māori language is in school. Rau (2005, pp. 406-407) identifies five groups of children entering MME, ranging from those for whom Māori is their first and only language, through to children who will begin their Māori language learning at school. Despite the fact that most MME schools (including the one in our study) require at least one parent to be a speaker of Māori, Rau found that most new entrants to MME had low levels of Māori language proficiency.

The current project is based on a pilot project implemented by one of the co-authors, Christine Brown, in 2011 and emerged out of her Master of Arts research (2009).

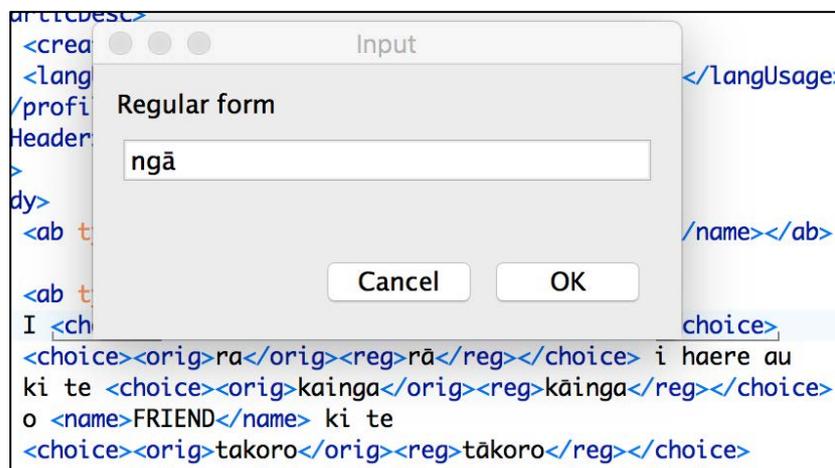
## **Data**

The data in the Tuhinga Māhorahora project currently comprises 1,329 pieces of writing collected from 70 children in year 1-8 MME classrooms during three terms in 2013. In total the database contains 67,168 tokens and 2,100 types. With funding from the New Zealand Institute of Language, Brain and Behaviour (NZILBB), these pieces of writing have been transcribed, tagged and entered into a database. The following is a brief overview of the data collection, transcription and tagging protocols.

At the end of each teaching term the children's writing books were collected and the texts were labeled with participant codes and item numbers and photographed. The photo files were then uploaded to Dropbox. An important feature of this process was that data collection did not disrupt the classroom environment: the writing was produced by the children during regular writing time, and collection occurred out of school hours. Thus the data collection process had a negligible effect on the day-to-day running of the classroom and the school.

The photo files were downloaded by the research assistants and the texts were transcribed and tagged using Xml TEI Editor oXygen (<https://www.oxygenxml.com/>). A transcription and tagging protocol was prepared and updated as the work progressed. The most current version of the protocol is available at <http://www.nzilbb.canterbury.ac.nz/graphics/TuhiMahora-manual-dec15.pdf>.

Figure 1 shows a screen shot illustrating the most frequent tag which was used to correct spelling errors, these mainly being incorrect use of macrons. The child's writing appears here in black print with both original and regularized spelling. The tagging appears in blue. As can be seen the original text quickly becomes obscured with the many tags.



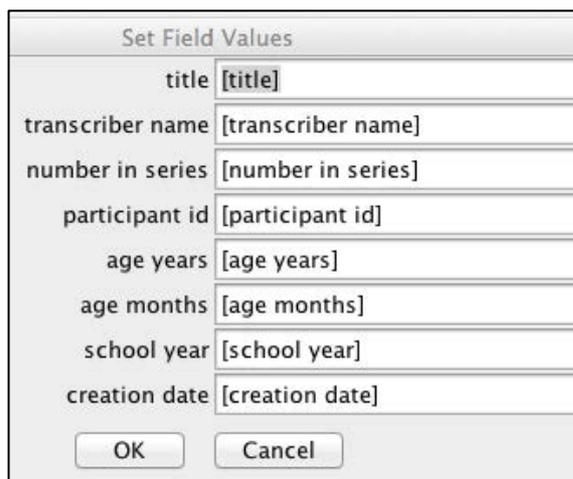
**Figure 1. Tagging in oXygen.**

Figure 1 includes the dialog box for a plug-in which was produced for the complicated <choice> tagging, used here in the text for the words "rā" and "kāinga", by entering the standard spelling in an entry screen. The <choice> tag was used to retain the child's spelling but allowed for counting forms according to their regular spelling.

It was important to anonymize any personal or place name which could identify the child or school. The bottom of Figure 1 shows how the names of the writer's friends have been replaced with the word FRIEND, as in the tag <name>FRIEND</name>.

The decision to use English words for these replacements ensured that frequency counts for Māori words would not be artificially increased.

Each piece of writing was transcribed into a separate file. We used Text Encoding Initiative (TEI) files as they are a commonly used standard for the encoding of texts in digital form (for more information about TEI see <http://www.tei-c.org/index.xml>). Information about the file and participant were included in the TEI header via a plug-in, as shown in Figure 2.



Set Field Values	
title	[title]
transcriber name	[transcriber name]
number in series	[number in series]
participant id	[participant id]
age years	[age years]
age months	[age months]
school year	[school year]
creation date	[creation date]

OK Cancel

**Figure 2. TEI header plug-in.**

When completed, the TEI transcripts and photo files of the children's writing were uploaded to LaBB-CAT. LaBB-CAT is a powerful corpus analysis tool developed at NZILBB and originally designed for working with speech files and transcripts (Fromont and Hay, 2012). The Tuhinga Māhorahora corpus is one of the first written corpora to use LaBB-CAT. LaBB-CAT acts as a repository for the corpus and is the platform from which we are able to conduct our analyses. Because LaBB-CAT is an online tool we can work on the corpus on any computer at any time. Access is password protected. The LaBB-CAT software is freely downloadable from <http://labbcats.sourceforge.net/>.

We can use LaBB-CAT to search for occurrences of words and view them in their context (see figure 3 below). The results of such searches can be exported as a csv file for further analysis. Once uploaded to LaBB-CAT the files (or groups of files) can be downloaded in formats appropriate for use with the WordSmith and Range programs.

In the future further functionality may be added to LaBB-CAT to facilitate additional analyses we may undertake with the Tuhinga Māhorahora corpus.

### **Analysis**

The present analyses use a combination of the various functionalities available in WordSmith, Range and LaBB-CAT. WordSmith enables us to produce frequency

lists, allowing us to identify words for further analysis. Range, developed by Alex Heatley and others, enables us to compare word usage by the children against frequency lists compiled by Brown (2009).

For this paper we have selected data from the Year 3 classroom as an example of the types of analyses which can be performed and how this information can be used to assist teachers. This year group has been chosen for two reasons. Firstly, the children have passed through the emergent writing stage and some are writing more extended pieces. Secondly this is the group for which we have the most data: 365 pieces of writing produced by twelve children aged from 6 years 8 months to 8 years and 1 month old at the time of writing. The texts ranged from 5 to 189 words, with an average length of 41 words.

### **Range**

Range is a computer program designed to analyze the vocabulary load of texts according to frequency bands (Heatley et al., 2002). This is achieved by the use of frequency lists which can be formulated by the user (Range comes with English frequency wordlists). Range can compare vocabulary use in up to 32 different texts at a time against the frequency lists.

For our analysis we compared the children's use of words in relation to eleven wordlists compiled by Brown (2009) which contained the most frequent words in Māori. Nine of the wordlists consist of content words, (1820 words in total), ranging from the most frequent (list one) to the least frequent of these words (list 9). In addition, there is one list containing function words (157 words) and one containing a list of names the children are commonly using. Range also collates the words used by the children which are not in any of the lists. This enables us to easily see the English words the children are using, showing the Māori vocabulary that the children need.

Wordlists 1 to 9 were constructed using several corpora of adult language use, totaling nearly two million words, including readers written for children in MME environments. These lists were then moderated for classroom language use by Christine Brown in consultation with teachers who identified common words in use in the classroom context.

Table 1 shows the results from Range for the Year 3 children. The largest proportion of words used by the children are function words (58% of the texts), a proportion which is roughly consistent with other Māori texts such as the Māori Broadcast Corpus (65% function words) (Boyce, 2006) and the texts used for Brown's analysis (62% function words) (Brown, 2006). Māori, as with most Polynesian languages, uses a large range of function words to indicate the various grammatical roles of content words (plurality, tense, etc.) (Harlow, 2006:24).

**Table 1** Range results for Year 3 students

<b>word list</b>	<b>tokens</b>	<b>tokens as % of text</b>	<b>types</b>
one	2980	20.86	114
two	421	2.95	87
three	360	2.52	62
four	350	2.45	75
five	140	0.98	40
six	66	0.46	23
seven	351	2.46	33
eight	55	0.39	27
nine	26	0.18	12
function words	8,264	57.85	99
names	539	3.77	58
not on lists	733	5.13	316
<b>Total</b>	<b>14,285</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>946</b>

The second highest number of tokens (21%) is found in word list one which contains the 134 most frequent words.

The higher than expected use of words in list seven is because this list contains the words for the months of the year and most of the Year 3 children begin each piece of writing with a formulaic date phrase which includes the month.

Table 1 also shows the number of types used from each word list so we can calculate what proportion of words on each list the Year 3 children are using. In this case they are using 85% of the words in list one, but only 43% of function words.

### **WordSmith**

Using WordSmith (Scott, 2004), we can also look at overall word frequencies amongst the writing of the children.

**Table 2 Raw frequency list for Year 3 students**

Number	Word	Frequency	%	Texts
1	TE	1559	10.2	12
2	I	1430	9.4	12
3	KI	689	4.5	12
4	ME	651	4.3	11
5	O	428	2.8	12
6	HAERE	421	2.8	12
7	RĀ	400	2.6	11
8	KA	366	2.4	12
9	KO	355	2.3	12
10	NGĀ	338	2.2	12
11	A	319	2.1	12
12	AU	229	1.5	12
13	AHAU	219	1.4	11
14	HE	179	1.2	11
15	PAI	150	1.0	11

As shown in Table 2, the top 15 words used by these twelve year 3 children are mostly function words, with only three content words (shaded).

The frequency column shows how many tokens of each word occurred in the children's writing. The far right column shows how many of the twelve children used each word. We can see that the top 15 words were produced by nearly all twelve children.

If we remove function words from the list (along with names of the months), we can see the 15 most frequent content words (Table 3). Again, these words appear in the writing of almost all of the children.

**Table 3** Most frequent content words for Year 3 students

Number	Word	Frequency	%	Texts
1	HAERE	421	2.8	12
2	RĀ	400	2.6	11
3	PAI	150	1.0	11
4	TĀKARO	121	0.8	12
5	KAI	119	0.8	11
6	WHARE	107	0.7	11
7	WĀ	89	0.6	12
8	WHAKATĀ	76	0.5	11
9	RUNGA	72	0.5	11
10	MAHI	70	0.5	11
11	MURI	69	0.5	10
12	MEA	66	0.4	10
13	ROTO	66	0.4	11
14	TIKI	66	0.4	11
15	WHAI	47	0.3	6

All but two of these words appear in frequency list one, the most frequent words (Brown, 2009).

### Feedback to teachers

The information obtained from these analyses can be used to provide insight for the teachers.

Looking at Table 3 one item that stood out for further analysis to those with a knowledge of Māori is the eleventh most frequent content word “muri”. “Muri” is a location word referring to “behind” (when talking about space), but meaning “after” (when talking about time). We can see from the frequency column that there were 69 instances in this corpus of year 3 writing, and the right-hand column shows that ten out of twelve children in the class were using this word.

We can use LaBB-CAT to look at how these students are using “muri”. Table 4 only shows ten of the instances (one from each child who uses the word), but they are indicative of all 69 instances. Note that while spelling mistakes have been corrected, grammatical errors have not.

**Table 4** Uses of “muri” by the Year 3 students.

Student code	Example
124	<b>Whai muri</b> i te kura kei te haere au ki te whare
125	Ka tiki te hōanga, <b>whai muri</b> , ka peita
126	I haere mātou ki te kai sushi. <b>I muri i tērā</b> i haere ki te warewhare
127	I moe ki tōna whare me <b>whai muri i tērā</b> ka kai
128	He pai tērā ki ahau. <b>Ā muri i tērā</b> i haere mātou
130	I kai ahau ngā rare maha. <b>Ā muri</b> te kura ka haere
131	Ka tākaro ki waho <b>whai muri</b> i te tīni kākahu
132	I tatari a Obi-wan Kenobi me a Qui-gon me a Darth Maul. <b>Whai muri tērā</b> i tapahi a Darth Maul i a Qui-gon Jinn
133	Ka haere ki te whare karakia. <b>I muri i tērā</b> i te wā i tiki aihikirīmi
134	<b>Whai muri</b> i te kura ka haere au ki te kauhoe

All of these examples refer to time, mostly in the phrases “whai muri” – equivalent to “following on”, and “i muri i tērā” – equivalent to “after that”. In other words, “muri” is being used exclusively for time and sequence cohesion. The use of these phrases is a good example of how formulaic expressions can be useful building blocks in language expression (see Wray’s “needs only analysis” 2002, and King, 2015).

This is an example of how there can be discussions with the teacher about how to model a wider range of cohesive devices.

Besides looking at words or phrases that the children are using, we can also look at words in the top frequency lists which are not being used by the children in their writing. Knowing which high frequency words are not being used assists the teacher to plan to lift learners’ exposure to these items.

As well as content words we can look at strengthening the students’ use of function words. For example, “kāore” is a word used to negate verbal and location sentences in Māori. In the year 3 texts there were only six instances produced by three of the twelve children. Four of these do not use the “kāore” construction accurately. Perhaps this is developmental, but it could be lack of exposure to correct forms. A discussion might lead the teacher to consider whether and how to address this in the classroom.

## **Reflection**

In the pilot conducted by Christine Brown in 2011 she transcribed the children's writing into a running text file at the end of each teaching term. She was able to use WordSmith and Range to provide timely feedback to teachers. In addition to feedback as per the types of analyses above, she was also able to give the teachers other useful information. For example, comparisons with the word lists indicated the high frequency words that children did not use. That information was used to encourage vocabulary growth in these "high value" words. In addition, words which the children used but were not on the high frequency lists were good indicators of children's interests, activities and experiences out of school. This is valuable information for teachers to connect with children's lives. Dialect preferences also become evident, and were able to be supported.

Teachers studied the English words used by the children when they didn't have a Māori word in their vocabulary. They were then able to incorporate the Māori equivalents as target words into shared writing sessions. This resulted in reference pieces of writing which were displayed on the classroom wall. These pieces were then referred to often throughout the year. Grammatical errors were also analyzed and resources were made to support correct use in both written and spoken activities.

The pilot encouraged teachers to think more specifically about the words their students were using and those that needed to be developed. Analyzing children's writing in this way provided a rich and diverse fresh evidence base which provides good direction and motivation for focused teaching.

When compiling the Tuhinga Māhorahora corpus in 2013 we severely underestimated the time it would take to transcribe and tag the texts. Accordingly we were unable to provide feedback to the teachers in a timely manner as in the 2011 pilot.

We are currently examining ways in which we could make the feedback more effective. One way would be to substantially reduce the amount of tagging. In particular we could regularize the children's spelling during the transcription process without retaining the original spelling since the analysis of spelling mistakes is not a primary aim of the project. This would greatly simplify the transcription and tagging process. There are pros and cons for all transcription and tagging decisions and while standardizing spelling during the transcription process would be quicker in the short term it is less flexible for later purposes.

In addition, in many classrooms students are now writing directly on tablets. Capturing digital data would also greatly expedite the formatting of text in preparation for analysis and allow us to deliver information to teachers more efficiently during the school year. We are also keen to identify other computational methods or tools that might assist.

## *Tuhinga Māhorahora*

Now that we have tested and adapted our protocols we intend to apply for funding from the Ministry of Education to enable us to achieve our aim of providing evidence based language support for teachers and students in Māori immersion classrooms. In this way we will be able to increase the database to a size where it can form a useful reference point to ensure curriculum materials are developed at the appropriate levels for students in Māori immersion schooling. A large corpus of children's productive language would be an excellent resource for language planning and curriculum development for this endangered language.

At present there is no national database of children's productive language in Māori and very little is known yet about the stages of language development for children in Māori medium settings.

### **Acknowledgements**

We would like to acknowledge the children, their families, teachers and school who agreed to have the children's writing collected. We are very grateful for financial support from the New Zealand Institute of Language Brain and Behaviour (NZILBB) as well as the support of NZILBB's Software Programmer Robert Fromont, and Research Technician, Scott Lloyd. The project could not have proceeded without the work of research assistants Roberta Tainui, Caitlin Swan and Niwa Wehi who transcribed and tagged the written material.

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# **TEACHER BELIEFS ON L1 USE IN MULTILINGUAL CLASSROOMS: A NEW ZEALAND UNIVERSITY LANGUAGE CENTRE**

**Cindy S. P. Tan**

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## **Abstract**

*This article, which is drawn from a larger study of teacher beliefs and student attitudes on L1 use in the English language classroom, reports on teacher beliefs about L1 use in multilingual classrooms in a New Zealand university language centre. A qualitative approach was employed to obtain a more holistic view of the participants' beliefs and attitudes. Findings indicate that, despite an English-only policy, teacher participants view L1 use in the classroom setting as a potentially beneficial language learning tool - especially at lower levels. However, the teachers also believed that English should be the preferred language of interaction due to the fact that their students were studying in a New Zealand university environment. Tensions emerged when the teachers perceived an over-reliance on student L1 use in the classroom. The article concludes with recommendations on how English classroom monolingualism can be modified to reflect a multilingual classroom environment.*

## **Introduction**

One of the salient controversies in foreign and second language classrooms is the question of first language (L1) versus second (L2) or target language (TL) use. English language teaching approaches that emphasise communicative learning in English language teaching contexts – not only English as a Foreign Language (EFL) but also English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and English for Academic Purposes (EAP) – have been dominated by beliefs and methodologies that “d[o] not fully recognise the value of L1 as a resource” (Cole, 1998, para. 22). So pervasive has the monolingual English-only approach been that the idea that the L2 is the “only acceptable medium of communication” (McMillan & Rivers, 2011, p. 251) in the classroom has been enthusiastically advocated by many second language education practitioners with the resultant implication that the language learners' L1 is of no value in the classroom (Vanichakorn, 2009).

This prevalence of an L2-only approach has been attributed to three reasons. The first is the fact that in an otherwise multilingual classroom, “the issue of ... the mother tongue hardly arises” (Atkinson, 1993, p. 3) as English is the lingua franca; by employing a common language, no one student would be placed at a linguistic disadvantage. The second is more of a practical necessity where, in linguistically diverse classrooms, the teacher either does not share their students' L1(s), or is monolingual (Cook, 2001). In such cases, classroom instructions are by default in English only with students often expected to maintain an English-only environment.

The final reason is the belief that English is best taught entirely in English (and by native speakers of English). This belief has since been referred to as the “monolingual fallacy” and “native speaker fallacy” (Phillipson, 1992, p. 185) and increasingly been challenged (Hall & Cook, 2012) because it is possible to learn another language in the L1. It is argued that compared to native speakers of English, trained non-native English teachers are possibly much better language learning models and teachers (Wardak, 2014) because they “know the terrain” (Seidlhofer, 1999, p. 238) of learning the target language.

However, perhaps a more pervasive rationale is the common belief that L1 use impedes or interferes with second language learning (Macaro, 2005; Mouhana, 2009). This is because errors in the L2 are believed to be the result of the ‘transfer’ of “tenacious and deeply rooted [L1] habits” (Mitchell & Myles, 2004, p. 19). Yet, in her re-examination of first language use in mainstream classrooms, Auerbach (1993) argues that evidence from research and practice strongly suggests that such rationale is “neither conclusive nor pedagogically sound” (p. 5) as the language produced by learners has “a linguistic system in its own right” (Mitchell & Myles, 2004, p. 38) where not all errors are the result of L1 transfer. Consequently, the belief that the English-only communicative L2 classroom environment is best is difficult to justify due to insufficient supporting evidence (Lee, 2012). Yet, L1 use remains contentious as many continue to believe that an English-only approach is ‘best practice’ that provides learners with a TL-rich environment where learning opportunities are maximised via increased interactions between teacher-student and student-student (Jacobs & Kimura, 2013).

### **Teacher beliefs about negotiating English-only policies**

Much literature on teacher belief strongly conveys how it informs teaching, content and classroom management skills (Kim, 2014; Borg, 2003; MacDonald, Badger & White, 2001). However, teacher cognition is “not a straightforward construct” (Feryok, 2008, p. 228) as belief and cognition are strongly intertwined, a position shared by Richards and Lockhart (1994) who claim that:

What teachers do is a reflection of what they know and believe, and teacher knowledge and ‘teacher thinking’ provide the underlying framework or schema which guides the teacher’s classroom actions. (p. 39)

In fact, Kagan (1992, p. 65) defines teacher belief as “tacit, often unconsciously held assumptions about students, classrooms and the academic material to be taught” and to Borg (2003, p. 81), teacher cognition is the “unobservable dimension of ... what teachers know, believe and think.” Teacher cognition also includes the evaluative and reflective qualities that teachers consciously and sometimes unconsciously believe to be true, while recognising and accepting that other teachers may have different or opposing views on the same issue (Borg, 2001).

Due to the complex nature of how belief affects practice, language teachers react to real situations in the classroom through an evolving process of planning and decision-making which is grounded in authentic classroom practice (MacDonald, Badger & White, 2001; Woods, 1996). This grounded perspective is especially pertinent as teachers' beliefs may be challenged in situations where existing beliefs lead to unsuccessful outcomes, leading to a change and adjustment in their existing philosophies and practices in ways which they believe will create an optimal classroom learning climate (Phipps & Borg, 2009). This is the case when teachers are context-dependent and flexible in order to anticipate, plan and improvise as required by the situation (Kim, 2014; Hattie, 2002). In both foreign language and second language teaching contexts, it is common to expect certain language policies – both classroom and institutional – to be in place for a variety of reasons, such as the belief that it is considered ‘best practice’ to learn English in English only. Yet if language teachers believe that judicious L1 use can be beneficial despite the existence of prescriptive English-only policies, some might feel conflicted about whether to ‘allow’ such L1 use or not as language teachers within their own teaching contexts “are not mere executors of policy but ... active constructors of practices” (de Jong, 2008, p. 353). If they believe it can be potentially useful, they may decide to override any institutional L2-only policy for the benefit of their learners.

### **L1 use in the New Zealand context**

The question of L1 use in the New Zealand context has been investigated to some extent. Walker (2004) researched L1 use in ESOL and EAP classes of international students (i.e. non-native English speaking students) in a private New Zealand tertiary college and her study highlighted the potential linguistic and affective benefits of L1 use in ESL or L2 classes. More recently, Newton (2014) presented a keynote address at the WATESOL mini-expo in Wellington in 2014 regarding how optimal L1 or own language use can enhance learning in the English (second) language classroom, citing studies by Lameta-Tufuga (1994) and Laufer and Girsai (2008) on how L1 use (i.e. translation) enhanced L2 learning. However, neither of these authors explored teacher beliefs about L1 classroom use.

In terms of the situatedness of ELT (English Language Teaching) institutions, the predominantly monolingual (i.e. English) environment in New Zealand could be a strong predictor of the establishment of an English-only institutional policy. This could be especially pertinent in classrooms where there are international students from different countries and who speak different L1s, i.e. ESOL courses or university bridging and EAP courses. Additionally in New Zealand, it is not uncommon to find native English speaker New Zealand students enrolled in university bridging courses alongside their international counterparts. However, despite this situatedness, would teacher beliefs play any significant role regarding L1 use in the classroom situation?

## **Research questions**

For the purposes of this study, I define teacher beliefs following Borg's definition of what English language teachers "know, believe and think" (2003, p. 81) about first language use in multilingual classrooms within a New Zealand university language centre context. My research sought to understand what factors influence teachers' decisions regarding first language use using the following research questions:

1. What do English language teachers believe about first language use while teaching in ESOL (General English) and university bridging courses in a New Zealand university?
2. What are the forces behind the beliefs?
3. How are these beliefs enacted in the classroom?

## **Methodology**

Due to the subjective nature of beliefs, multiple qualitative instruments were used to obtain rich data through triangulation as it strengthens and enhances convergences of findings, allowing for emerging themes to be identified and coded (Angouri, 2010). Data is collected from focus groups, classroom observations and follow-up discussions. Due to time constraints of teaching schedules, focus groups were deemed as being advantageous to elicit data from a group of subjects (Kamberelis & Dimitriadis, 2013). Focus groups are also flexible, enabling the researcher to act as both facilitator and observer, as well as being less formal compared to individual interviews ((Litosseliti, 2003; Wilkinson, 2004), thus allowing for potentially more candid responses. Classroom observations were also conducted as, unlike questioning which relies on self-reported accounts, observation is regarded as a useful tool in the field of research by providing direct information (Dörnyei, 2007: p. 178) of what is actually happening in the classroom.

## **Research context and participants**

This study took place in a New Zealand university language centre (hereafter referred to as 'the Centre'). The Centre offers ESOL courses to international students from a range of countries who are mainly seeking to transition to the university bringing/EAP courses offered by the Centre. If they pass their bridging courses, they will be able to commence their university course (both undergraduate and postgraduate) at the university. It should be noted that both domestic and international students attend the university bridging courses offered by the Centre. The ESOL courses were conducted within the Centre itself, located on a separate campus; however, the university bridging courses were conducted on the main university campus. The classrooms are multilingual and English is the language of instruction. No formal English-only policy was in place, but the Centre utilised visual reminders (e.g. 'English-only zone') both inside and outside classrooms of an English-only policy.

### **Teacher participants**

A total of three ESOL teachers and four university bridging teachers (three EAP teachers and one lecturer teaching a content paper within the bridging programme) teaching at the Centre participated in the study. The ESOL and EAP teachers are all trained and experienced English language teachers. The content lecturer was not a trained ESOL teacher, but was experienced in teaching international (i.e. non-native speakers of English) students at bridging and undergraduate levels. Table 1 summarises the teacher participants' profiles.

**Table 1 Teacher participants' profiles**

<b>Focus group 1</b>			
Teacher	Class observed	Highest qualification	Years of teaching English at Centre
WSJ	Bridging 1 (EAP)	MA TESOL	12
Margaret O'Connor	ESOL 1 (Upper intermediate)	DipSLT	19
Thelma	ESOL 2 (Lower intermediate)	PGDipSLT	6.5
Grace	Bridging 2 (EAP)	MA Applied Linguistics	22
<b>Focus group 2</b>			
Mary	ESOL 3 (Lower intermediate)	PGDipSLT	12
Robyn	Bridging 3 (EAP)	MA Applied Linguistics	12
Dr. S	Bridging 4 (Content)	PhD (Microbiology)	3

### **Data collection procedures**

After research consent was approved by the university's human ethics research committee, 2 focus groups and 7 class observations were conducted over the data collection period. For the focus group, a draft list of discussion prompts was piloted and subsequently amended to allow for more efficient use of timing and question styles. A revised list of questions/prompts was used in the focus group meetings. Following each focus group discussion, a summary of the discussion was made from the transcripts using thematic analysis for member-checking purposes which the teachers confirmed. Seven classes were observed (one content class and one university bridging class of both international and New Zealand students; two bridging classes of international students only and three ESOL classes of international students only) where field notes were taken of L1 interactions. Individual follow-up discussions were held with teachers after these observations to

clarify or further explore pertinent phenomena of L1 use in the classroom. All meetings (except the classroom observations) were audio recorded and transcribed. Focus group data is coded FG followed by the teacher's pseudonym (e.g. FG1, WSJ); classroom observation data as O plus the type of class observed (e.g. O, ESOL1) and follow up discussions with teachers as FU plus the teacher's pseudonym (e.g. FU, Robyn). Table 2 summarises the stages of the data collection process.

**Table 2 Data collection process by stages**

Early-mid December 2013	Mid-December 2013	Early February 2014	Late May 2014 - early June 2014
Stage 1	Stage 2a	Stage 2b	Stage 3
Recruitment of teacher participants	Focus Group 1 & summary of discussion presented to teachers for member-checking which teachers confirmed.	Focus Group 2 & summary of discussion presented to teachers for member-checking which teachers confirmed.	Classroom observations & follow up discussions  Bridging 1 ESOL2 Bridging 3 Bridging 4 ESOL 1 Bridging 2 ESOL 3

### Data analysis

The transcripts from the focus groups were initially analysed by reading and identifying units of meaning within each script. Prevalence and importance of themes were measured by the frequency the teachers articulated a theme and, following Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis, these units/themes were then extracted and placed in tables with extracts from other follow-up discussions illustrating similar themes to allow for constant comparison as a result of which a gradually more nuanced understanding of each theme was arrived at (Neal, Neal, vanDyke & Kornbluh, 2015).

### Findings and discussion

#### Teacher beliefs on judicious L1 use

All seven of the teacher participants shared the view that removing the L1 from the classroom was impossible. One of the teachers commented that the exhortation to speak English only was "unhumanistic [and] unsympathetic" (FG1, WSJ). I observed that L1 use was indeed a common occurrence in all the teacher participants' classrooms and, through our discussions, all the teacher participants believed that L1 use was an inherent feature of their classrooms because it reflects the students' identities, lowers language learning anxiety and aids comprehension in English.

However, the teachers also believed that too much L1 use could impede overall English progress, especially within the wider context of studying in a New Zealand university.

### **L1 use as a reflection of the students' identity as L2/bilingual speakers**

From the focus groups and follow up discussions, the teacher participants believed that the students' use of L1 is a reflection of their identity as the following comments illustrate:

“Student L1 use was done as a means of accentuating group solidarity and group identity. Even within my Chinese group they don't always speak in Mandarin Chinese with each other all the time. For example my Hong Kong student deliberately cultivated the Hong Kong accent [because] she refused to be identified with the mainland Chinese students” (FG1, WSJ).

“The students talked about classwork in English but when they organise their movie night they switch into Chinese, which is fair enough” (FG1, Grace)

“Being allowed to speak in their L1 is the essence of their being” (FG2, Mary)

“[The type of language the students use] cements some sort of larger tribal affiliation when needed” (FU, Margaret O'Connor)

This notion of L1 use as a reflection of the students' identity is supported by Levine (2003) who concluded that as de facto speakers of another language, second language learners use their L1 to manage the learning of L2. In a later study, Levine (2014) further claims that the L1 is already a normal feature of the second language classroom “serv[ing] many pedagogical, discursive and social functions” (p. 332) that, as Macaro (2005) argues, naturally happens between bilinguals, enhancing and maintaining communication strategies. So instead of stigmatising the L1, Cook (2001, p. 412) suggests that “students should be encouraged to see themselves as true L2 users ... in both languages” where the use of both their L1 and English are part of what is described as “identity performance” (Creese & Blackledge, 2010, p. 5) or their “multilingual competence” (Newton, 2014).

### **L1 use as a coping mechanism – affectively and cognitively**

During the focus groups, the teacher participants expressed belief that both student and teacher L1 use or translation was sometimes necessary especially when students lacked knowledge in the TL. The following comments illustrate this:

“Sometimes [teacher-initiated] L1 use would be useful. If you've tried in English and they still can't get it, and you know you can give them one little line in French and they'll understand” (FG1, Thelma)

“Student L1 use is sometimes helpful and necessary to discuss complex content” (FG1, Grace)

“I have a reasonable tolerance for L1 use [in the classroom] and I understand [that] this is necessary. There’s nothing worse than having a student who is completely bamboozled and confused and not able to progress because they’ve got this barrier and you’re not going to use their L1 to overcome it. I don’t see any benefit in doing that at all” (FG2, Mary)

“I don’t want [the students] to feel really uncomfortable, so if they don’t understand and their friend can quickly translate then I don’t have a problem with that” (FG2, Robyn)

“It’s ok if the students use L1 among themselves, but I don’t ask another student to translate as it could put the weaker one on the spot and embarrass them in front of their classmates. So I tell them they can talk to me during break or after class or email me if they have any questions. They might have to translate their email from their language to English but actually I believe that by doing so, they still learn and consolidate meaning and ultimately produce work in English” (FG2, Dr. S)

Teacher participants generally believed that translation and/or dictionary use aided in both consolidation and fluency in English. During my observations, students appeared to use their L1 to translate/unpack meanings of more complex tasks this included understanding content vocabulary and task instructions (O, ESOL 2). I observed some students consulting their dictionary/translator and writing copious notes in their L1 on the margins of their handouts or notebooks (O, ESOL 2; Bridging 3; Bridging 4). When discussing this with the bridging teachers, Robyn and Dr. S noted that as they knew these students were weaker in English and were using their L1 to cope with the content in English, rather than perceiving it as an impediment, they viewed these cross-lingual activities in the classroom as learning “strategies in their own right” (Stern, 1992, p. 295) and thus refrained from explicitly ‘banning’ the use of students’ L1.

Hall and Cook (2012) make a convincing argument that translation, code-switching and bilingual teaching are increasingly used in English language classrooms and university-level language teaching around the world. The notion of students translating to cope with a lack of linguistic knowledge in the TL is supported by Kim and Elder (2008). The efficacy of L1 use to enhance performance in the L2 was also evidenced in Lameta-Tugufa’s (1994) study of how Samoan students with limited English who completed their task in Samoan before translating it to English outperformed a similar group who completed the task in English only. In fact, Li (2014) reported that he used both English and Mandarin when teaching abstract or complex ideas because he believed it was less threatening for his lower proficiency students as, based on their feedback, his L1 use helped them “to avoid losing face [and] allay their fears and anxiety” (p. 37). Canagarajah (1997) coined the term “safe

house” (p. 174) to describe a non-threatening place for L1 use in instances where L1 use was seen as “behaviours that are not authorised or rewarded by teachers” (Canagarajah, 2004, p. 121). So when the teacher participants provided safe spaces for their students to use their L1 for learning purposes, this strongly reflected Polio and Duff’s (1994) description of how a teacher’s decision to allow on-task or judicious student L1 use can lead to successful completion of tasks.

As mentioned earlier, the teacher respondents clearly did not believe in an ‘English-only’ rule. Mary described this rule imposed at the Centre as a “misguided directive” (FG2). The visual ‘English-only’ signs had been introduced by an ESOL coordinator who viewed that the Centre should be an English-only establishment because in their belief, it aided English language learning, a view supported by the concept of immersive language learning (Swain & Lapkin, 1991). Whilst acknowledging that language use choice is complex, all the teacher participants agreed that code choice should be viewed as existing in a continuum of time and space which traces the extent to which one language is used to negotiate/facilitate tasks in another language. The teacher participants noted that compartmentalising language choice is not always straightforward, and as such did not believe that it was natural to enforce or penalise their students for using their L1s, especially if used judiciously in the classroom. Consequently, the imposition of an English-only policy was seen as potentially highly problematic and thus often subverted.

### **Too much L1: Why English use is also important**

Nevertheless, it became very apparent from both my focus group discussions and classroom observations that despite their belief that targeted student L1-use can be beneficial, the teacher participants strongly believed that student L1 use should be monitored. This tension was mainly attributed to the overall context where the ultimate goal of the majority of the students who were enrolled in the Centre’s programmes – including those in ESOL as passing this programme was largely viewed as a stepping stone towards bridging courses – was to learn English to successfully transition into their desired university programme in New Zealand. The following comments illustrate this tension:

“When my students are in my [bridging class] I expect them to use English because their English should be good enough” (FG1, WSJ)

“If [students use L1 to understand English] that’s good but if it’s chit-chat or idle chatter, I’m inclined to come down quite hard, it’s not a free-for-all (FG2, Mary)

“We are trying to immerse them in an English speaking culture when they come here to New Zealand. Too much L1 use can be counter-productive” (FG2, Mary)

“My students [in my bridging class] are preparing for university, for lectures in which they will only ever hear English being spoken. So I am trying to emulate that kind of environment for them” (FG2, Robyn)

Therefore, although I had not intended to explore this aspect, I felt it warranted further analysis as it emerged as a pertinent facet of my stated research topic regarding whether L1 use is appropriate within the wider context of studying in a New Zealand university.

### **The situated learning context**

The bridging courses offered at the Centre were geared towards English-medium courses of university study in New Zealand. Thus, the bridging teachers in particular emphasised that, as these comments illustrate, they had a higher expectation of their students interacting in English:

“[The students] didn’t come to New Zealand to learn Chinese or Japanese. We are talking about pre-university students who should have some decent level of English” (FU, WSJ)

“Our [bridging] course is highly structured. There’s certainly a set of objectives we need to get through. [The students need to be able to] achieve, demonstrate in English” (FU, Dr. S)

It was imperative to the bridging teacher that their students possess the required linguistic ability to be able to learn in fully English classes where opportunities in the L1 would be extremely limited. Thus, in order to generate an inclusive learning atmosphere, the teachers reported encouraging all their students, including those who shared an L1, to interact in English as they believed this would help foster a multilingual, English speaking classroom/community. I observed in all seven classes these ‘encouragements’ included explicit verbal elicitations in English as well as pairing students into groups that did not share L1. By explicitly promoting English as the common classroom language, the teachers explained that this also avoided excluding students who did not share a classroom prevalent L1 (FU, WSJ; Robyn; Thelma; Mary).

The teacher participants’ belief that English should be the preferred language of choice was influenced by what Ranta and Meckelborg (2013) posit as contextual surroundings: in the case of this study, as previously mentioned, it was the situated English speaking environment. Furthermore, English is viewed as a lingua franca in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) contexts, including EAP in university preparation courses, as these classrooms often consisted of students speaking different L1s (Csizér and Kontra, 2012). By encouraging English interaction, the teachers were adopting what term “pedagogical strategies of inclusive practices” (Gomes, Mortimer & Kelly, 2011, p. 748) which the teachers believed can help improve students’ overall English language development. Yet, tensions in resolving

the issue of L1-versus-English use were much more complex and not easily reconcilable due to the wider contextual background of my study. These were mainly attributed to the reasons discussed below.

### **Class make-up and linguistic proficiency**

The teacher participants noted that class make-up was a significant indicator of how much L1 was used (e.g. in my observations, two classes had a predominant East Asian L1 group). If there was a dominant L1 group in the class, especially if there were no New Zealand students, the temptation for students to stay in their L1 and not move into English use was significantly higher as the following comments from the teachers illustrate:

“We had pre-dominantly Arab students and they would just not stop talking [in Arabic], with the odd Thai or Japanese or Chinese left in the background (FG1, Margaret O’Connor)

“If it’s a discussion task in English, they’re supposed to be practising speaking in English but after a minute lapsed into Chinese. The aim was to encourage them. It gets annoying because then I think ‘what’s the point of being in this classroom?’ but it’s difficult as there are only three non-Chinese students here. When I asked my Chinese students why they didn’t use English to do the discussion, they said it was easier and faster [to do it in Chinese]” (FG2, Robyn)

“After the first four or five weeks they were using more and more Chinese so I really had to have a word, and a couple of [the students] agreed with me [that it was important to speak in English]” (FU, Robyn)

“Other students might feel cheated having paid all this money to come all the way to New Zealand [to attend an English speaking course] only to find Chinese or Japanese instead of English” (FU, WSJ)

However, a more pertinent factor was the lack of English language proficiency. Two university bridging courses I observed (Bridging 1 & Bridging 4) contained both international and New Zealand students and although student L1 use was considerably less due to a higher number of mixed-students, I still noticed that some students resisted their teacher’s instructions to participate in English (O, Bridging 1). Based on my observations in Bridging 1 and discussions with WSJ, the tension over L1 use was much more pronounced in these classes as WSJ did not see bridging courses as English language classes *per se*; rather, they were viewed as being designed for university preparation and thus pitched at more sophisticated levels of English usage. Due to some students entering with lower than expected levels of English, a consequent key concern for WSJ was achieving maximum English use in their classroom which the following comment illustrates:

“This [weaker] student did not understand [the lesson]. He always sat with the two other Cantonese students and spoke English only when explicitly asked to respond to a question. He avoided working with other students, especially New Zealand students, he did it to save face and I do feel somewhat sorry for him. But his behaviour also limited the two Cantonese students’ chances of interaction in English with other students” (FU, WSJ)

In another observation, I noted that one particular student relied heavily on their electronic bilingual dictionary and wrote notes in their L1 to the point where they were not actively involved in group discussions and one other student appeared to be translating for them (O, Bridging 3). When I discussed this with the teacher, Robyn noted that the student was the weakest in terms of English language proficiency and sometimes struggled to keep up with the pace of the class (FU, Robyn). Robyn explained that although the student appeared to be coping albeit slowly, Robyn was still concerned about the student’s lack of participation in class activities as a result of being preoccupied with translating due to their weak English.

This gap in linguistic ability caused the most concern because, as noted previously, the weaker students seemed more reliant on L1 use (Hamid, Jahan & Islam, 2013; Kim & Elder, 2008; LeLoup, Ponterio and Warford, 2013). Being enrolled in a formal English language course in an English-language environment in New Zealand does not necessarily guarantee linear improvements in English proficiency as low levels of proficiency itself is a potential hindrance to having more opportunities to interact in English thus improving fluency (Ranta & Meckelborg, 2013). Although the WSJ felt sympathetic towards their student’s face-saving tactic (FU, WSJ), they felt under pressure to ensure that all their students developed the adequate level of academic and linguistic fluency for university entry to be able to “compete on an equal footing with native speakers” (Collier, 1995). The bridging teacher participants explained that achieving “expert level” (Csizér & Kontra, 2012, p. 2) in terms of comprehension and fluency in English, as well as having developed a strong foundation in academic study skills, was key to their international students’ eventual successful participation at university level (FU, WSJ; Robyn; Dr. S). As such, they believed it was pertinent that their students were able to participate to their fullest potential in English.

Equally exigent, students should be made aware of what is expected of them in their future courses to avoid potential failure and/or frustration. In fact, Skyrme’s (2010) longitudinal study of a group of Chinese students at a New Zealand university strongly suggested that university bridging courses play a key role in providing preparation for the demanding academic skills required to succeed university level, a finding that would seem to reinforce the teacher participants’ belief.

## **Conclusion**

On the surface, despite the Centre's English-only policy, all the teacher participants believed that judicious L1 use can be beneficial. Such L1 use was viewed as a precursor to more successful L2 use, enabling students to cope with more challenging aspects of course content. The teacher participants also believed that the L1 was an inherent characteristic of a multilingual classroom. However, the teacher participants also believed that L1 use should be limited, primarily due to the situated nature of the courses but more importantly, due to the fact that the students were in preparation for entry into university courses in a predominantly English language environment. Nevertheless, what transpired in my research was that the teacher participants' best efforts to promote English use were undermined by two key factors: class make-up and proficiency. Unfortunately, neither of these factors were phenomena controllable by the teachers yet they were the main sources of tension for the teachers' due to the desire to balance 'allowing' judicious L1 use for learning purposes and avoiding over-reliance of L1 use.

This study has several limitations. To begin with, the duration of the study was short. It would be interesting to see if a longer period of study would yield similar or different results. Also, the teacher perspectives in this paper are limited to the small number of teacher participants. Finally, their perspectives are further limited as student perspectives about L1 use are not included here. Further investigation should be conducted to include students' perspectives to see if these diverged or converged with the teachers' perspectives.

To reconcile the tension of L1 vs English use in the classroom, there should be more open discussions for all teaching staff regarding L1 vs English use. English language use should be advocated but this does not have to exclude the students' L1. In this way, students' L1 is still acknowledged as being inherently part of the English classroom with positive pedagogical potential. There may also be an opportunity for language centres to reconsider their English-only policy to reflect this multilingual and international aspect in reality. This may mean rewording the existing English-only labels to perhaps 'Let's speak English' or 'English zone' to reflect domains or areas where more English use is encouraged without compromising the position or role of the L1. There may even be a cause to remove these labels altogether.

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## **LANGUAGE LEARNER AUTONOMY: TEACHERS' PERSPECTIVES IN A NEW ZEALAND TERTIARY INSTITUTION**

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### **Abstract**

*Learner autonomy is widely understood to mean “to take charge of one’s learning and to hold the responsibility for all the decisions concerning all aspects of this learning” (Holec, 1981, p. 3). Less is understood, or has been researched, about what English language teachers believe about their own learners’ capacity for self-direction (Borg & Al-Busaidi, 2012a). The case study reported here occupies this research space by investigating the perceptions of a group of English language teachers working in a New Zealand tertiary institute. Data were collected by open-ended items in a questionnaire and interviews adapted from those used by Borg and Al-Busaidi (2012a). In the present study, unlike previous investigations, there was a particular focus on the teachers’ views on the extent to which learner autonomy could be fostered with students with low levels of English proficiency. The findings suggested that while teachers thought most of the learners in the cohort were becoming independent and autonomous learners with their support, they also perceived that beginner or limited literacy learners were not very autonomous learners.*

### **Introduction**

Holec (1981) discussed learner autonomy in terms of a goal to be achieved, whereas Little (1991) and Benson (2001) explored the processes whereby learners gain autonomy. Benson considers that autonomy is a multidimensional capacity, which at different times and situations will involve the learner having control over their cognitive processes, their learning management and the learning content (p. 47). Little (1991) describes the process of learner autonomy as:

a capacity for detachment, critical reflection, decision making and independent action. It presupposes but also entails that the learner will develop a practical kind of psychological relation to the process and content of his / her learning. The capacity for autonomy will be displayed both in the way the learner learns and in the way he or she transfers what has been learned to wider contexts (p. 4).

The present study subscribes to Benson’s idea that learner autonomy is a capacity that learners develop, and it is one that teachers can encourage and foster. Barnard & Burns (2012) consider that teachers’ views or perceptions are an appropriate lens through which to view teaching and learning practices, as teachers are the “executive decision-makers of the curriculum: it is they who put into practice the principles and procedures devised and mandated by others” (p. 2). In the light of this, the present

study asked teachers to share their own perspectives about their learners' autonomy, which implied that teachers could apply a degree of evaluation or measurement to their students' ability to become autonomous.

Benson (2011) states that being a multidimensional construct, learner autonomy is difficult to measure. He says that although we may be able to identify and list behaviours that demonstrate control over learning and hypothesise certain relationships among them, we have little evidence to suggest that autonomy consists of any particular combination of these behaviours (p. 65). Little (1991) takes a more pragmatic view, stating that:

we recognise autonomous learners by their behaviours, but that can take numerous different forms depending on their age, how far they have progressed with their learning, what they perceive their immediate learning needs to be, and so on. Autonomy, in other words can manifest itself in many different ways (p. 4).

Benson (2011) observes that there are many ways to conceptualise different versions of autonomy. Smith (2003) makes a distinction between strong and weak pedagogies for autonomy. According to Smith, weak pedagogy sees autonomy as a capacity which students currently lack (and so need training towards it) and /or identify it with a mode of learning. Strong versions of pedagogy for learner autonomy are based on the assumption that students are, to greater or lesser extent, already autonomous and already capable of exercising their capacity.

Benson (2013) argues that when learners sense that their learning is relevant to their identified needs and purposes that this relevance will eventually lead to a sense of ownership of the language they have learned. He says "if we view learning to be an integral part of life, it is difficult to see how people lead autonomous lives without being autonomous in relation to their learning in more or less the same ways that they are autonomous in respect to their lives" (p. 25). However, Benson (2008) suggests that teachers sometimes perceive learner autonomy to be related to how the learner is performing in systematic ways pertaining to the course or programme such as completion of homework rather than in the learner's personal autonomy in terms of their life goals (p. 25). He also argues that this disconnect between the learners' broader context of their lives outside the classroom and the teachers' perception of desirable classroom behaviours or capacity for learning is justifiable from the teachers' perspectives. This is because they are seeking to "foster the learners' autonomy within the limits of the possibilities they see within the classroom" (2008, p. 30). He suggests that further enquiries into learner autonomy work towards a more complex view of the requirements for autonomy.

Recent studies of teachers' views about learner autonomy and its promotion include Chan (2003), who reported on a large-scale survey on learner autonomy with students and English teachers in Hong Kong. Results showed that "teachers perceived

themselves to be more responsible for the methodological aspects of language learning, and for motivating their students to be responsible for assessing and evaluating their learning” (p. 33). They felt themselves less responsible for their students' engagement and progress out of class. The teachers felt that institutional constraints hampered the development of learner autonomy and Chan recommended “a harder look at the curriculum, assessment systems, the teaching and learning process to allow more room for great room for greater motivation, negotiation, discussion and decision making” (p. 49).

Balçikanli (2010) investigated 112 Turkish student teachers' perspectives about learner autonomy. The pre-service students agreed with Holec (1981) that “students should be involved in the decision-making process concerning the objectives of the course, classroom management, homework tasks, and the selection of materials”, all of which place students at the centre of learning practices (p. 98). The researcher recognised that the traditional system of teaching imposed constraints on the development of autonomy, and recommended involvement of student teachers in the decision-making processes in their programmes.

Whereas these two studies were large-scale surveys, a longitudinal study of an experienced teacher in New Zealand promoting autonomy in his class was viewed through a sociocultural lens Feryok (2013). Despite the institutional constraints indicated in the above two studies, Feryok's study shows that, applying the principles of Vygotsky's zone of proximal development, the control the teacher has over the class can be used to scaffold learner autonomy. Through a nine-month period the teacher enabled the students through modelling and imitation to take more control of their class environment and class tasks, reinforcing the teacher's belief the students would gradually “adopt the models of activities, classroom management, learning techniques, and language samples” (p. 223). As the teacher relinquished control, the students were able to demonstrate their autonomy.

What is also interesting about this study is that teachers, like the one investigated, intuitively know more than they can state explicitly: “This teacher was reflective and articulate, but the research process pushed him to further reflect on and articulate his knowledge.” (p. 223). The implication is that research into teacher cognition about learner autonomy, as about any other aspect of teaching, needs to take into account that surveys alone are insufficient to bring out what teachers really think, and they need to be supplemented by qualitative approaches to data collection. As Zhang (2016) has pointed out, “As part of their metacognitive knowledge mediated by the metacognitive experiences, teachers' beliefs about learner autonomy need to be understood in the specific sociocultural context” (p. 158). He has recommended alternative approaches to the collection of qualitative data, such as think aloud protocols and stimulated recall, but interviews are a more frequently used procedure. This was the approach adopted by Borg & Al-Busaidi who followed up questionnaires with interviews and then with professional development workshops.

The same pattern was followed by the eight case studies in Asian contexts by Barnard & Li (2016).

The present study was intended to understand how teachers perceived their learners' autonomy and what strategies they were using to foster self-directed language learning. Within the cohort of learners investigated in the study there was a sub-group of learners, often with refugee backgrounds, who had interrupted schooling, which impacted their literacy levels. For the purposes of this study, this group of learners are called limited-literacy learners. The Common European Framework of Reference (Council of Europe, 2001) refers to these learners as basic users (A2). The Reading and Writing Descriptors for A2 are:

**Overall Written Production**

Can write a series of simple phrases and sentences linked with simple connectors like 'and', 'but' and 'because' (2001, p. 61).

**Overall Reading Comprehension**

Can understand short, simple texts on familiar matters of a concrete type which consist of high frequency every day or job-related language (2001, p. 69).

Tarone (2009) has argued that "there has been very little SLA research to date on the cognitive processes of illiterate or low-literate adult L2 learners" (p.1). The researchers wanted to explore teachers' views about this groups' development of autonomy. With these factors in mind, an overriding research question was posed: What perspectives do English language teachers at the institution hold about learner autonomy?

**The present study**

This study, conducted in 2014, is based on a larger study about teacher perspectives on learner autonomy. Teachers in this study were invited to express their views about the degree to which they thought their students were autonomous learners, to reflect on their role in that development, and to make judgements about the extent they thought that learner autonomy contributed to L2 learning.

**Setting**

This study is set in one of the tertiary educational institutions in Aotearoa New Zealand. There are approximately thirty-five teachers in the Centre and approximately 500 students of English language, including both permanent residents and international students. At the time of the study, students worked towards an institution-awarded Certificate in English Language at multiple levels starting with programmes for beginner speakers of English. Students at the exit level of these studies could apply to enter mainstream tertiary studies.

Students at this institution have a range of language backgrounds and prior education. International students have usually graduated from secondary school in their home

country and learned English as a foreign language. Domestic students who have entered as migrants have a range of educational backgrounds and most learned English as a foreign language before their arrival. Other students from refugee backgrounds often have had interrupted education outside their country of origin and some have only had three to five years of formal education. Most of these have learned English only since arriving in New Zealand.

The concept of learner autonomy is strongly encouraged in New Zealand educational institutions. In a Tertiary Education Commission document for teachers of adult beginner English language learners, one of the key principles of adult learning is that “adults are self-directed and are capable of independent learning and that motivation factors for adult learners are deep seated and internally derived” (Tertiary Education Commission, 2008, p. 10).

### **Participants**

Twenty teachers completed the questionnaires. Their background information is summarized in Table 1.

**Table 1 Respondents' backgrounds**

Teachers' L1		Origins		Qualification			L2 Teaching Experience	
English	Other	NZ/Europe	Asia	PhD	MA	PGDip.	10+ years	0-10 years
15	5	17	3	3	13	4	16	4

### **Procedures**

#### *Data collection instruments*

The data collection instruments were adapted from those developed by Borg and Al-Busaidi (2012, a and b), who gave permission to the researchers to adapt their questionnaire and interview schedule. The original questionnaire included three sections; only Section 3 was used here. Section 3 originally included two questions that are described as open-ended, which are answered through a five point response scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree, followed by an invitation to comment. The researchers felt that the under-researched group of limited literacy learners required an additional enquiry in this section. (See Appendix A.) The topic was then also added to the interview schedule in order to find out how this group was viewed by teachers in relation to their autonomy in language learning. (See Appendix B.)

### *Data collection*

The questionnaires were individually distributed to 20 teachers who had indicated they would take part in the research. The data from the three closed questions and their open-ended comments were collated manually and recorded.

Ten of the original 20 respondents agreed to take part in individual semi-structured interviews, each lasting approximately 20 minutes. The interviews were audio-recorded, and then transcribed using Dragonware “Naturally Speaking” ® and the transcripts sent to participants for member checking. These were returned without any changes.

### *Data analysis*

The data from the questionnaire were analysed quantitatively and qualitatively. The five point response scales responses were collapsed to agree, unsure, and disagree, counted, and percentages calculated. The open-ended comments were deductively categorised under agree, unsure, and disagree.

With regard to analysing the data from the interviews, we wanted to allow the interpretations to emerge from the data rather than be assigned to pre-determined categories. Therefore it was decided to take an approach to grounded analysis suggested by Charmaz (2006). Following a careful verbatim transcription of each interview, the process of comparing and contrasting data involved several steps. Firstly, the key words in each interview transcript were coded by colour to indicate their relationship to the research questions. When this was done, the next step was to interrogate the data to identify patterns in the main ideas according to the colour coding. Thirdly, from this axial coding we were able to perceive categories from the clusters of ideas that were appearing. Finally, we were able to form categories and identify key themes such as key characteristics of autonomous learners, issues about time and the role of the teacher.

### *Ethics*

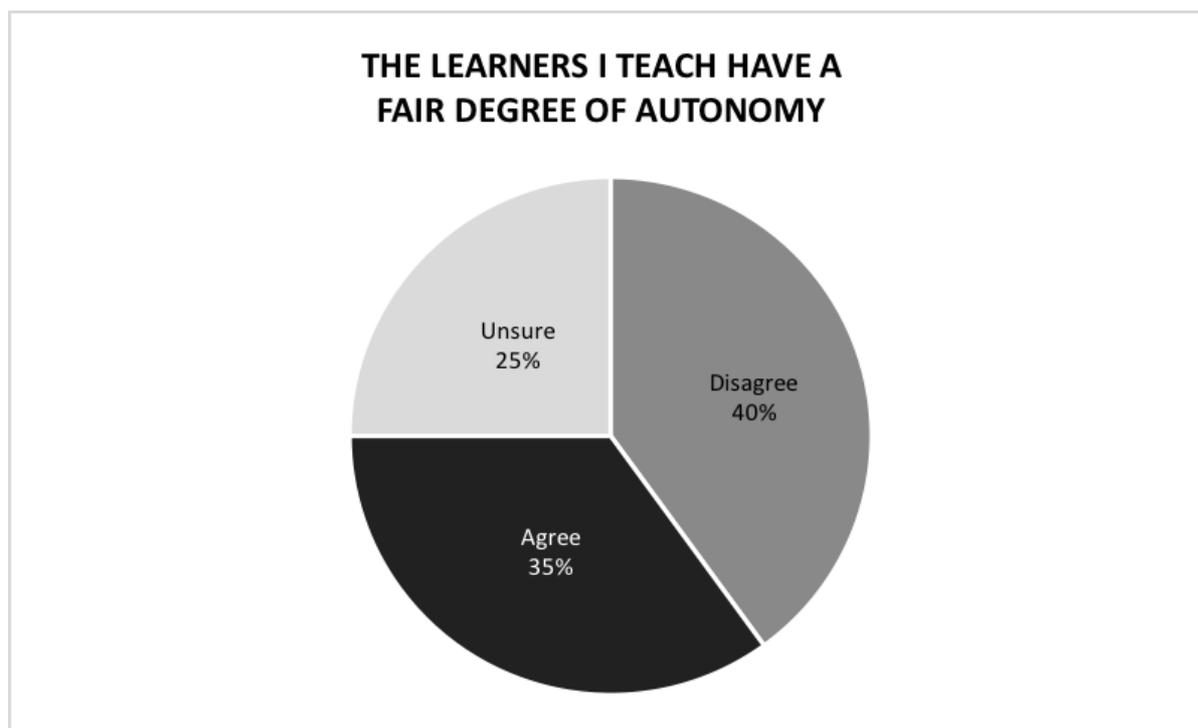
Permission was requested and gained to conduct the research from the Human Research Ethics Committee at the institution. Informed consent was gained from the participants after they had read the information sheet and had opportunity to ask questions.

## **Open-ended questionnaire results and findings**

This section reports on the three open-ended questions (see Appendix A) from the questionnaire. It reports the data both quantitatively and qualitatively.

### **Degree of learner autonomy in general**

What follows is a summary of the various responses to the query about the degree to which the teachers thought their learners were fairly autonomous.



**Figure 1 Teachers' view of their learners' degree of autonomy**

Seven respondents (35%) agreed that they thought their learners were fairly autonomous, but eight (40%) of the teachers disagreed, and five (25%) were unsure. The comments section captured more about these views. Two of the teachers who agreed with the idea that students were fairly autonomous said:

Generally speaking, they have clear goals to achieve and they like to take responsibility for their own learning.

The learners have a 'fair' degree of autonomy but there are many aspects of the academic work over which they have little or no control, e.g. choice of teacher, input into timetable, assessments.

Comments from teachers who disagreed with the idea that their students were fairly autonomous included:

Many are inexperienced learners who come from teacher dependent learning contexts.

They are not used to thinking critically, asking questions and challenging the teacher. They are used to studying for the sake of passing exams or getting a certificate.

Other teachers who were unsure said:

I'm reluctant to make judgements because of the difference of social and cultural backgrounds; age and other variables. My perceptions may or may not be an accurate assessment of their actions.

Most classes have wide-ranging degrees of learner autonomy. They range from very autonomous to low or zero autonomy. Also each class varies.

### **Degree of limited proficiency learner autonomy**

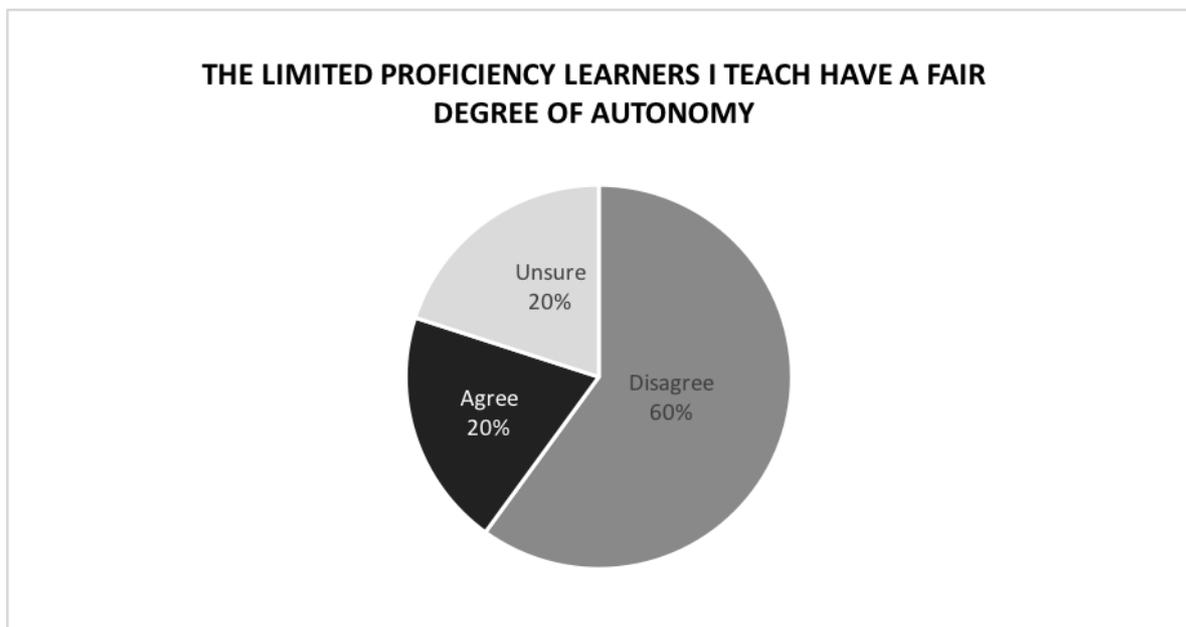
With regard to the particular focus of the study, results about learner autonomy and limited literacy learners (see Figure 2) revealed that 12 respondents (60%) considered that these learners were not autonomous, four agreed (20%) that these learners were autonomous and four (20%) were unsure.

Comments from teachers who felt that these learners were not very autonomous were similar to the following:

Some of my students have limited literacy. They find it hard to know how to work at home, or without the teacher's guidance. They need specific instructions and understanding.

Their lack of literacy makes them highly dependent on teacher input, at least initially.

As low literacy learners, they require teacher driven content.



**Figure 2 Teachers' views of limited literacy learners' autonomy.**

Teachers who perceived their learners with limited literacy to be fairly autonomous wrote comments similar to this one:

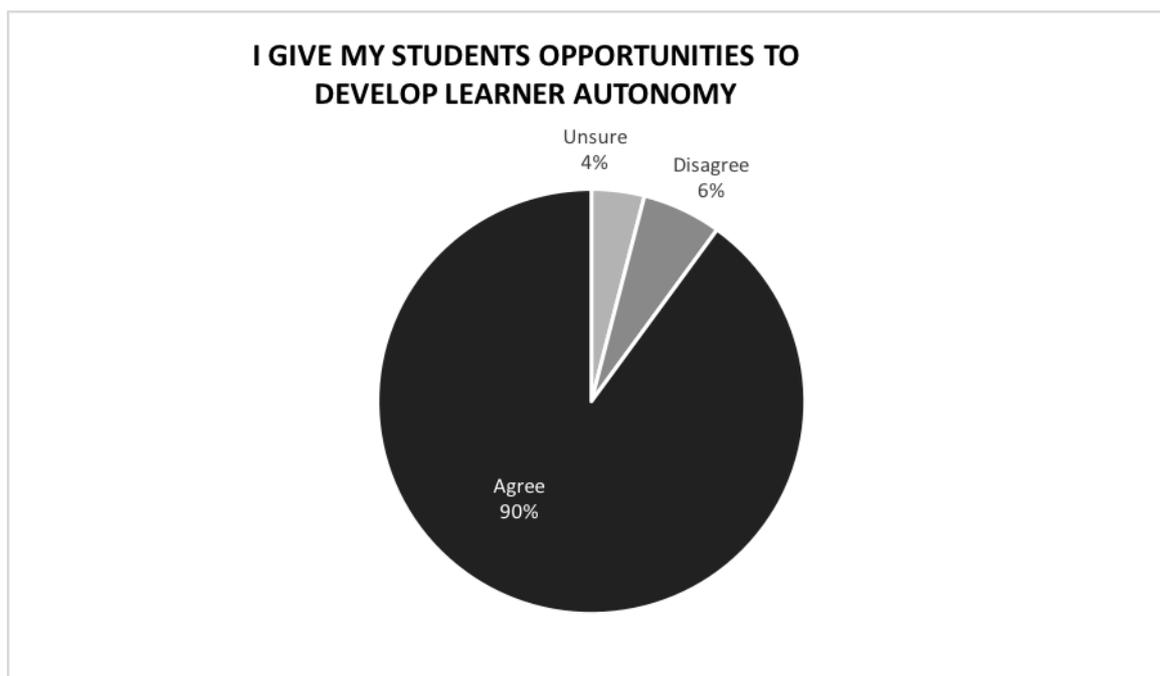
I think that level of students and level of literacy have no bearing on degrees of autonomy. I think that limited literacy students are strongly autonomous in that they are addressing their need knowing that they have a cognitive mountain to climb.

A representative of those teachers that were unsure their limited literacy learners had a fair degree of autonomy said:

It's impossible to generalise as each student is an individual. Some students with limited literacy are highly autonomous but some have no sense of autonomy because of their inexperience in learning or being in an educational setting.

### **Teacher development of learner autonomy**

When commenting on the degree to which they promoted learner autonomy with their students (see Figure 3), the overwhelming majority (90%) of teachers felt that they did, 6% disagreed, and 4% were unsure.



**Figure 3 Opportunities given for students to develop autonomy.**

The majority of teachers wrote comments similar to these:

I try to encourage students to notice language in their environment and to bring questions or observations about language with them to class.

I believe promoting learner autonomy helps them become learners that are more active.

I like to give students opportunities to find information themselves and they work in groups a lot to complete tasks with minimal support from me.

These results provided an overview of teachers' views of their learners' autonomy, and these were explored in more depth in the interviews.

### **Interview findings**

The interview was aimed at allowing teachers to further reflect on their perspectives about learner autonomy. The themes that arose are here presented to correspond with the order of the open-ended questions above. First are two related themes about learner autonomy: higher level learners and limited proficiency learners. Next are two related themes about the teachers' role in developing autonomy and the link between autonomy and language learning.

### **Teachers' views of higher level learners**

Teachers at the higher levels saw their role as often standing back from student activity and giving student choices in what they want to learn and then allowing them to work through the challenges by themselves. Students at this level are often preparing for study in mainstream vocational classes and so need to move towards being self-directed in their study habits.

I want to take opportunities to try to leave it to them and give them minimal help. If they have to stretch a little bit to reach the goal and if I see the possibility there, I leave them to try.

If learners are making decisions about what they want to learn then that buy-in will be there, so I think retention will be better, they will maybe explore it a little further, go deeper with something rather than just try and finish a task because the teacher set them a task.

Many teachers talked about the variety of flexible learning situations that were now available with almost all students having access to mobile phones that have visual and audio facilities and online learning in the computer lab. One teacher observed that with modern technology with wireless, the location of a self-access centre is now more likely to be the students' bedroom:

If the student has a book report due, they are able to go to a quiet place, follow instructions, and complete the book review.

I think students should be able to opt out of tasks. Students might say no, I'm not interested in this or I'm bored with this, and so they might sit with their dictionary or be doing something else.

These findings show that teachers recognised that it is desirable for learners to manage their own learning, and that they may have the capacity to do with some level of pedagogical support during the process. However, they also thought that with institutional goals to meet, it is often not feasible for students to manage all learning tasks, such as setting their objectives or assessing their own learning.

### **Teacher's views of limited literacy learners**

The views expressed about limited literacy learners were different from the views that were expressed about the rest of the learner cohort. The interviews revealed that the majority of teachers felt that learners with limited literacy were not very autonomous in their learning. Some teachers thought that due to very limited literacy skills that there was a strong reliance on the teacher, leaving little room for learner autonomy. For example, "Everything is coming from me and I am directing every single activity that they do. They haven't any opportunity to develop their own autonomy within that class."

Other teachers thought that there was a continuum for the development of autonomy for limited literacy learners and that teachers could support the process with scaffolding while learners gain L2 literacy skills. They thought that beginner learners with limited literacy demonstrated few autonomous behaviours; as one teacher said, "their ability to study autonomously is severely curtailed in an education system like ours. Most of our assessments are predicated on the ability to read and write. They are right back to being a beginner language learner. That toolbox which a student starts to develop - theirs is empty and they need to start from the beginning. So they can't be autonomous until they have the tools to do it." Another teacher stressed the role of scaffolding for these learners as they progressed. "As low lit learners they require teacher driven content, they need scaffolding and they need to have the process promoted to them, to be slowly built up, then through the groups and the peer work and interactive activities they become independent."

However, a contrasting view from another teacher thought that these learners were self-reliant and autonomous. "It would be patronising to assume that beginners are somehow less autonomous. I don't think it's a continuum that produces an autonomous learner at the end of the diploma course. I think learner autonomy begins at the beginning."

### **The teacher's role in developing autonomy**

Most of the interviewees thought that they had a key role to play in developing autonomy with their students. They could see the end goal, which is that their learners become independently functioning users of the language. They were also aware that their learners might falter or struggle without support so these teachers were trying to balance both learner needs at the same time.

While you want your learners to be autonomous, you probably have to do even more work as a teacher to make that happen because you can't just say go off and work independently, and then come back and do a presentation. You have to be accessible and set the task up clearly, so they know specifically what they are doing, and you have to think about some of the things that might go wrong along the way.

Most teachers felt they had “a lot of responsibility” that required taking an active role because “you're trying to encourage them to be independent, but it actually takes more from you for that to happen successfully” In particular, “you've got to be very clear about the outcomes and you've got to be monitoring that things are tracking along as they should.” These comments seem to suggest that teachers thought that their learners certainly had the capacity to become autonomous, but that scaffolding and support were also part of their role. These comments may also suggest that perhaps teachers position themselves somewhere between the weak and strong versions on the continuum of pedagogical views of learner autonomy suggested by Smith (2003). They also felt that time was needed for their students to develop a degree of autonomy:

As they get more and more used to the New Zealand classroom and style of education, they become more comfortable with that and with their classmates. That makes them more willing to take chances.

Teachers were asked to further reflect on the specific strategies they used to promote learner autonomy. Their responses supported the view that the teacher has a role in encouraging the development of autonomous learners. One way is through “the construction and preparation of activities that learners find engaging, that take off and have a momentum of their own.” Another focused on creating a positive environment for students:

I try to give them a lot of positive feedback as well. I try to make them feel safe and comfortable in the class. Some quieter ones become more active and that is a sign for me that they are becoming more autonomous.

Another teacher built on the idea of the need for engaging activities to create ownership of their learning. One teacher mentioned that small group discussion is a good vehicle for promoting autonomy because “they talk to each other and listen to each other and listen to more ideas and they learn to negotiate and accept each other's ideas” Another teacher used class discussions because “I like to keep things as near as possible to real life. I look for a situation that they can identify with and things that they can bring into the class if we are having a class discussion.”

### **The link between autonomy and language learning**

Teachers thought there was a link between autonomous learners and L2 learning. Most teachers agreed that it was closely related to success in language learning and

the degree to which students become engaged and responsible for their own progress. They also acknowledged that in a tertiary institution there are many decisions already made for students, so learners work within some constraints when compared with Holec's definition of fully autonomous learners who would "determine the objectives and select methods and techniques" (Holec, 1981, p. 3).

The words "confident" and "motivated" were used by the majority of teachers when invited to reflect on the main characteristics of autonomous learners and its relationship to L2 learning. Four examples are:

I think those learners that are motivated, that show initiative that are a bit more confident are going to succeed better in language learning. They are making steps on their own.

A motivated student or someone has a focus or a reason for why they're learning. Having an interest in what they are learning I think plays a big part.

To me learner autonomy is a student being confident enough and capable of seeking information that is necessary to their success in whatever they are studying.

Learners that have higher levels of autonomy tend to have a higher level of motivation. When they are motivated they are more likely to take things in a faster way.

Teachers mentioned that autonomous learners often had an end goal and a focus for their studies. The ability to be strategic and to be objective about their learning was also mentioned frequently. Other suggested examples about the characteristics of autonomous learners were that they take initiative for their own learning, identify their own weaknesses, and that they take decisions about their learning, which may or may not be tied to the teachers' directions.

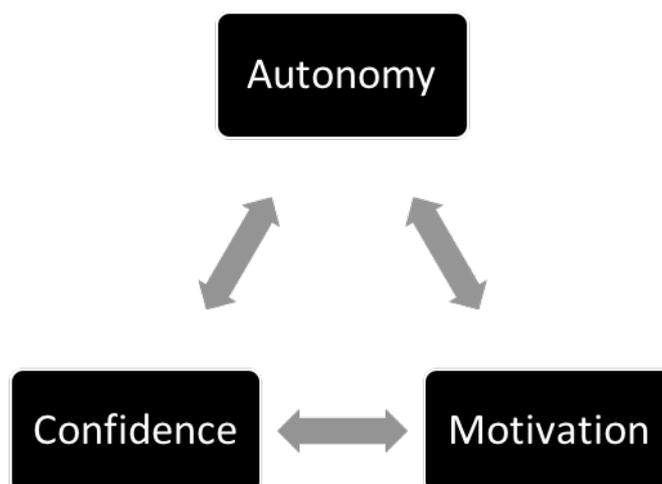
These comments from teachers reveal that they are aware of autonomous learners in their class and that these learners exhibit self-motivation and confidence.

## **Discussion**

There was agreement among teachers at this institution about their views on learner autonomy in all but one area, that of limited proficiency learners. This section will therefore first discuss the issue on which teachers agreed, beginning with the relationship between autonomy and learning, then the teacher's role, and finally the differences in autonomy between higher level and limited proficiency learners.

Teachers viewed autonomous learners as motivated and confident learners who had goals for their study. Almost all the interviewed teachers thought that there was a

strong relationship between confident, active and motivated learners, their level of autonomy and their L2 learning (Figure 4).



**Figure 4 The interrelationship between confidence, motivation and learner autonomy**

These views align with Benson (2013), who claimed that when learners sense their learning is relevant to their need then this will lead to ownership of their language learning. The affective area seems to be a key here to autonomous learning and was noted by many of the participants in the study, and by Little (1991) who described the relationship of the learner to their learning as a ‘practical kind of psychological relation to the process and content of his / her learning.’

Teachers also perceived that they had an important role to play in the promotion of learner autonomy and their students’ progress. They tried to foster autonomy in many ways, viewing it as something that developed over time. Chan (2003) also found that teachers were focused on students’ progress in their language learning. Both Chan’s respondents and the teachers in this study referred to the constraints imposed by the curriculum and other influences outside their control. However, their views about learners’ autonomy did not extend to views put forward by Holec (1981) and Balçikanlı (2010) who thought that learners should hold the responsibility for all the decisions concerning *all* aspects of this learning” (Holec, 1981. p. 3 – emphasis added).

All teachers agreed that a supportive environment seems to be essential with judicious use of scaffolding and careful staging of activities to enable task fulfilment. This perspective was similar to the point made by Zhang (2016), who called it a paradox when students “want independence, but at the same time they want the guidance they need in order to feel secure about what they are endeavouring to achieve” (p.158).

At the higher levels, teachers were giving space to learners to become more autonomous and take the lead in their own learning. These findings aligned with

those of Benson (2011) that showed when learners are encouraged to take control over the planning and assessment of their classroom learning, then they are able to exercise control over these aspects given the opportunity to do so and appropriate support (p.173).

The teachers' views about the autonomy of limited literacy learners is, however, somewhat different from the views expressed about higher level learners. To the best of our knowledge this is the first time this distinction between adult learners has been investigated and reported on in relation to their autonomy. Teachers were keen to support these learners to achieve their learning goals. However, they seemed to perceive that learners were initially very reliant on their teachers, but thought that they would eventually become more self-reliant and autonomous as they developed their literacy further. There may have been an underlying assumption that as learners become more competent they may also become more autonomous. Perhaps the limited-literacy capacity of the students in some way masked or hid their capacity for autonomy from most of their teachers, and contributed towards this deficit perception of their learners' autonomy. This idea suggests that some teachers could perhaps redirect their focus to understand that even with dependent learners, teacher direction can be used to develop learner autonomy as students gradually imitate, adopt, and even adapt modelled activities that promote self-direction (Feryok 2013). The development of learner autonomy through the support of a teacher is possible because the desire to learn is part of a person's capacity to become autonomous, as is their ability and freedom to learn (Benson, 2013, p. 4).

## **Conclusion**

The limitations of the study include the number respondents undertaking Section 3 of the questionnaire and the number of interviews undertaken for the study. However, this limitation was somewhat offset by the rich data gained from the ten interviewees when they shared their personal views of their learners' autonomy and their perceptions of their roles in fostering learners' development towards independence.

This study showed that there is a relationship between learner autonomy and language learning as teachers recognised the positive learning behaviours of the learners who exhibited confidence and motivation as they strived to achieve their language learning goals. Teachers willingly entered into a partnership to support and assist this process and perceived their own role to be one of fostering and developing their learners' autonomy by creating learning opportunities that encourage self-direction and self-reliance.

The study ends with a question worthy of further investigation with a larger sample of teachers and learners: how to more effectively foster those learners with limited literacy and limited opportunities to achieve their learning goals.

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## **Appendix A**

### **Questionnaire (adapted with permission from Borg and Al-Busaidi, 2012a)**

#### **Section 3: Your learners and your teaching**

This section contains three open-ended questions. These are an important part of the questionnaire and give you the opportunity to comment more specifically on your work in your own setting.

1. To what extent do you agree with the following statement? Choose ONE answer:  
'In general, the students I teach most often have a fair degree of learner autonomy.'

Strongly disagree  Disagree  Unsure  Agree  Strongly agree

Please comment on why you feel the way you do about your students' general degree of autonomy:

2. If you have current experience teaching learners with limited literacy backgrounds, please answer this question.  
'In general, the learners that I teach with limited literacy have a fair degree of autonomy.'

Adult English language learners with limited literacy often have little or no formal schooling in their native language. As a result, they need focused instruction to help them increase their reading, writing, and oral proficiency in English (Ellis, 2005).

Strongly disagree  Disagree  Unsure  Agree  Strongly agree

Please comment on why you feel the way you do about your limited literacy students' general degree of autonomy:

3. To what extent do you agree with the following statement? Choose ONE answer:  
'In general, in teaching English I give my students opportunities to develop learner autonomy.'

Strongly disagree  Disagree  Unsure  Agree  Strongly agree



Please comment. You may want to explain why and how you promote autonomy, if you do, or to explain why developing learner autonomy is not an issue you focus on in your work:

Source: Borg & Al-Busaidi (2012). Section 3.2. Adapted to include Question 3.  
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## Appendix B

### Interview schedule (adapted with permission from Borg and Al-Busaidi, 2012a)

1. Let's start by talking about what 'autonomy' means to you. In a few words, how would you sum up your views on what learner autonomy is?
2. What for you are the key characteristics of an autonomous learner?
3. In item 36 - "Learner autonomy has a positive effect on success as a language learner", can you tell me a little more about how you see the relationship between learner autonomy and language learning?
4. Focus on Section 2: Desirability and feasibility of learner autonomy.
  - a. In terms of decision-making, you were quite positive both about the desirability and feasibility of learner involvement. To what extent are learners actually involved in such decisions?
  - b. You were positive about the feasibility and desirability of students being autonomous learners. Does this mean you have a positive view of the situation you work in in relation to promoting autonomous learning?
5. Focus on Section 3. Question 1 – "In general, the students I teach most often have a fair degree of autonomy".
  - a. What is it that learners do to make you feel that they have a fair degree of autonomy?
6. You have stated that you work with learners with limited literacy. What have you observed about this group of learners in relation to autonomous learning?
  - a. Do you feel this group has similar or different concepts about autonomy in relation to the rest of the student body?

*Teachers' perspectives on language learner autonomy*

7. Focus on Section 3 Question 3 – “In general, in teaching English I give my students opportunities to develop learner autonomy.”
  - a. Firstly, what role if any, do you feel the teacher has in promoting learner autonomy?
  - b. Can you say more about what you do to encourage autonomy in your learners?







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*NZSAL* is a national refereed journal that is published once or twice a year. It welcomes manuscripts from those actively involved in Applied Linguistics/Applied Language Studies including second and foreign language educators, researchers, teacher educators, language planners, policy makers and other language practitioners. The journal is a forum for reporting and critical discussion of language research and practice across a wide range of languages and international contexts, but submissions are expected to have a connection to New Zealand. A broad range of research types is represented (qualitative and quantitative, established and innovative), including cross-disciplinary approaches.

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- a brief autobiographical sketch of the authors(s) (50-80 words)
- any references removed for the review process

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anne.feryok@otago.ac.nz

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It is stated by McCloud and Henry (1993, p. 238) that “students never ...” This, however, has not been the case (Baker & Thomas, 2001; Frank, 1996; Smithers, 1985).

Where the work of the authors of the article is cited, to avoid identification during the review process the reference within the text should be ‘(Author, [date])’, but there should be no entry in the list of references. Provide these references on the title page.

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## **References**

### **Books**

Lillis, T. M. (2001). *Student writing: Access, regulation, desire*. London: Routledge.

Wenger, E. (1998). *Communities of practice: Learning, meaning and identity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

### **Article in book**

Clark, R. (1992). Principles and practice of CLA in the classroom. In N. Fairclough (Ed.), *Critical language awareness* (pp. 117-140). Harlow: Longman.

### **Journal articles**

Lea, M. R., & Street, B. V. (1998). Student writing in higher education: An academic literacies approach. *Studies in Higher Education*, 23(2), 157-172.

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### **Unpublished manuscript**

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For other sources use APA (American Psychological Association) conventions.

If articles are not submitted in APA style, they will be returned during the review process for authors to revise.

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3.1 Articles should normally be between 3000 and 5000 words in length, exclusive of references, figures and tables, and appendices; please be reasonable. Articles over 6000 words will be returned without review unless prior arrangements have been made with the editor.

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