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## EDITORIAL

The articles selected for publication reflect the aims and scope of the TESOLANZ Journal, that is, to consider research, policy and practice directly relevant to the context of the teaching of English as an additional language in Aotearoa/New Zealand. Harvey's invited article provides an overview of an area of significant policy development that has absorbed many TESOLANZ members for more than two decades, The National Languages Policy for Aotearoa/New Zealand. The other articles chosen for publication address a range of issues in different contexts that will be pertinent to our readership: focus on form in secondary ESOL classrooms, the use of portfolios as links between mainstream primary and ESOL programmes, approaches to academic writing at tertiary level and the way different modes of communication can influence job interview outcomes.

In our first article Harvey provides an update on languages policy in Aotearoa/New Zealand by examining our languages policy history and considering the Royal Society's recent *Languages in Aotearoa* issues paper. She draws on the case of provision for additional languages in schools to illustrate the effect not having a comprehensive National Languages Policy has had on this sector.

In the second article Erlam investigates the range and different types of form-focused instruction interventions in NZ secondary school English language classrooms. She transcribed and coded 14 hours of teacher-led classroom discourse. Erlam found that there was a high incidence of interventions that draw students' attention to language form, including some that are used extensively and some that are less in evidence.

Using individual pupil portfolios to help students make links between what they were learning in the mainstream programme, and what they were learning in the ESOL withdrawal programme is the focus of Jeurissen and Newton's investigation. The researcher (Newton) introduced individual pupil portfolios and investigated whether these would facilitate meaningful communication between English Language Learners, their mainstream teachers, and the ESOL specialist teacher. Findings revealed that the portfolios provided an effective avenue for communication between all stakeholders. In addition, they proved a valid source of assessment information for teachers. Information in the portfolios was helpful for formative purposes, planning to meet students' specific language learning needs, as well as summative purposes, as teachers were able to more confidently and accurately make overall teacher judgements when reporting against National Standards.

In the fourth article Wette explores process- and product- oriented components of EAP writing courses offered by seven teachers in pre-tertiary and tertiary courses in New Zealand, documenting their strategies and priorities through a series of lesson observations and interviews. Findings indicated that most courses were genre-based, but inclusive of a focus on process and sentence-level grammar and vocabulary.

Rather than implementing a particular approach, the teachers' main priority was to connect the current developmental needs of a particular group of students with the academic literacy demands of undergraduate study.

The final article explores how different modes of communication (e.g. speech, gesture, gaze, written text etc.) work in conjunction to shape the outcomes of the job interview in a New Zealand context. With the help of Multimodal Interaction Analysis, Kuśmierczyk closely examines the interplay between different communicative resources as interview participants negotiate their interpretations of questions and answers, which ultimately contribute to the evaluation of the candidate as more or less suitable for the job. In particular, the article focuses on three critical points in the negotiation of understanding, namely clarification, reformulation and incorporation. The analysis points to the crucial role of the mutual uptake on actions such as speech-gesture-gaze or speech-gesture-object orientation in negotiating these critical points.

The book reviews that follow have been selected to cover a range of areas relevant to language teaching and research and to highlight current issues being explored in the literature.

In conclusion, it is important to thank all the contributors, those who submitted manuscripts for consideration in this year's volume of the journal. Part of the process involved in preparing a manuscript for publication involves responding to questions and guidance from experienced peers. In this respect, we are indebted to members of the Editorial Board for their perspicacity and generosity of spirit that characterize the reviews.

We encourage the many readers of the TESOLANZ Journal who have not yet contributed to the publication to consider doing so in the following year – either individually, or, collaboratively. You will find Notes for Contributors at the end of the journal, but always feel free to contact the corresponding Editor by email ([angela.joe@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:angela.joe@vuw.ac.nz)) if you require any additional information. The closing date for receiving manuscripts will be Monday, 1 September 2014.

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## ARTICLES

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# REVISITING THE IDEA OF A NATIONAL LANGUAGES POLICY FOR NEW ZEALAND: HOW RELEVANT ARE THE ISSUES TODAY?

Sharon Harvey, Auckland University of Technology

## Introduction

The year 2013 marks twenty one years since a framework for a New Zealand national languages policy was launched. *Aotearoa: Speaking for Ourselves* (Waite, 1992 a&b) was presented to government by Jeffrey Waite, the author, after considerable national and international consultation. Many of us remember taking part in meetings Dr Waite organised around the country. The expectations and optimism for such a policy across New Zealand's many and varied languages groups was high. As Kaplan (1994, p.156) wrote in 1994, '...a great many people in New Zealand, over a considerable span of time, have believed, and apparently continue to believe, that New Zealand needs a National Languages Policy'. Having been commissioned by the fourth Labour government, the framework was launched by a first term National Minister of Education, Lockwood Smith, in 1992. Following this, however, the policy was quietly ignored by National and subsequent governments. The decision was taken instead to separately consider and implement specific areas of language policy work within respective ministries. This disaggregation of languages into different policy areas, as opposed to considering them coherently across the policy spectrum remains and is startlingly apparent in New Zealand's languages landscape today. In the ensuing years we have seen the matter of English language criteria for migrants taken up by Immigration (now located within MBIE—the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment) (Immigration New Zealand, 2012), workplace English language and literacy funding and policy implemented through the Department of Labour (also now within MBIE) (Guy and Harvey, 2012), some adult ESOL and English literacy courses funded through the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC), the Pacific Languages Framework (Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs, 2012) drawn up by the Ministry of Pacific Affairs, and Maori language initiatives produced by the Maori Language Commission. Universities have autonomy as to what languages they will offer and to what level, and have no obligation to consider current and future national strategic requirements. Moreover, there is no institutional mechanism for the negotiation of transition and articulation arrangements for languages between the Ministry of Education on behalf of schools, and tertiary educational institutions.

Moreover, twenty-one years on, the issues that gave rise to a framework and proposal for a national languages policy seem far more pressing. New Zealand's public monolingualism in English is further entrenched despite the country's ethnic and linguistic profile becoming much more diverse over the period (Statistics New Zealand, 2006) and New Zealand's trade and diplomatic ties being considerably more varied. Numbers of students learning languages additional to Maori and English in

schools are declining markedly (see Table One below, Education Counts, 2013) and the principles by which we choose languages to be taught in schools have hardly been debated. New Zealand currently has limited, if any, ability through the formal education system, to retain and extend the bilingual and multilingual repertoires many children begin school with and *Te Reo Māori* continues to be designated as an endangered language by UNESCO (Moseley, 2010) with only around four per cent of the population claiming to be able to have a conversation in the language (Statistics New Zealand, 2006). In the adult education sector, an ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) strategy launched in 2003 (Ministry of Education, 2003a) was never fully implemented and has never been revised. Adult ESOL in New Zealand for both migrants and refugees is characterised by provider competition for scarce funding, a lack of human resource investment and fragmented pathways for students. One cannot help but wonder whether New Zealand would be a considerably different and more equitable place to live in today had *Aotearoa* been implemented fully, along with the ongoing policy discussions and deliberations that would have ensued. In this paper I would like to reconsider the issues circulating in the 1980s that gave rise to the rationale and support for the development of *Aotearoa*, and then examine the case of additional languages in schools as just one example of where a national languages policy might have made an important difference to the current situation. Finally, I would like to explain recent efforts by the Royal Society of New Zealand (RSNZ) to revive the debate around the need for a national languages policy (RSNZ, 2013).

### **Contextualising the development of a framework for a New Zealand national languages policy**

According to Emeritus Professor of Applied Linguistics, Robert B. Kaplan, a key contributor to and commentator on New Zealand language developments in the 1980s and early 1990s, thinking and planning for a national languages policy in New Zealand had been underway for up to 25 years prior to the launch of *Aotearoa* (Waite, 1992 a&b) in 1992 (Kaplan, 1994). Shackleford's account of the history of *Aotearoa* (1997) documents that the concentrated work happened during the latter part of the 1980s and early 1990s. The 1980s were a time of considerable upheaval and national redefinition for New Zealand. Many of the changes involved language shifts and highlighted the country's increasingly complex language landscape. The decade witnessed a renaissance in *Māori* language and culture and the designation of *Māori* as New Zealand's first official language in 1987 (New Zealand Government, 1987). The Springbok Tour brought issues of ethnicity and difference right to the heart of the New Zealand polity. In the wake of Britain's entry into the European Common Market in 1972, New Zealand continued its trade forays into non-Anglo markets, with Japan becoming its number one trading partner in the 1980s (Harvey, 1988). Meanwhile, increased technological and literacy demands in workplaces in tight financial times, the 1987 stockmarket crash and workplace restructuring, saw many Pacific migrants lose manufacturing jobs, in particular. While this situation increased the need for



employment-focussed ESOL courses, growing immigration from Asia in the late 1980s also created high demand for adult ESOL education.

An important element in the New Zealand government's move to commissioning a national language policy project was the launch of a comprehensive national languages policy in Australia in 1987 (Lo Bianco, 1990). Joseph Lo Bianco, the person most closely associated with the design and final shape of the Australian languages policy writes that it was the first of its kind in the world articulating national decisions and planning for languages, particularly in education, in a first world context. He observes that explicit language planning and policy at a national level had previously been implemented in third world countries attempting to arbitrate over language practices, in order to: raise the status of indigenous languages; and/or impose widespread language standardisation for nation building reasons, and/or preserve the status of the colonial language for standardisation reasons and in order to be able to communicate internationally. In a comparison of the language policy development processes in both New Zealand and Australia, Shackleford (1997) has observed that a comprehensive national languages policy was able to be enacted in Australia due to the widespread bipartisan commitment across federal and state governments. Through the early to mid-1980s a number of high-level committees and substantial reports were commissioned to examine different aspects of languages in Australia (Lo Bianco, 1990) and these formed the basis of the work Lo Bianco was able to draw on to draft the Australian Languages Policy in a relatively short period of time in 1986. Because of bipartisan support a substantial budget was allocated to the policy along with plans to review and update it in the future (Lo Bianco, 1990). By way of contrast Shackleford writes that the motivation for a languages policy in New Zealand really grew out of the activism and lobbying by language professionals and interest groups. Bipartisan political support, although secured to the extent that the first term National Minister of Education, Lockwood Smith, agreed to release and launch the framework in 1992, was not strong and the framework faded into disaggregated initiatives mainly within the Ministry of Education almost immediately (Shackleford, 1997).

*Aotearo* (Waite, 1992 a&b) was released in the wake of 'the mother of all budgets', Finance Minister Ruth Richardson's stringent cost-cutting first budget of the fourth National Government. In New Zealand, from 1984 the fourth Labour government had begun to implement a thorough overhaul of the welfare state. Neoliberal policies demanding economic efficiency meant a progressive move towards user pays and widespread cost cutting, the privatisation of national infrastructure, the marketization of government services, a shift from public to private funding, and a concomitant and substantive reduction in the public provision of goods (Harvey, 2006). As Shackleford (1997) observed it was difficult to see how a well-funded, adequately researched and comprehensive policy aiming to provide coherence and planning for languages in New Zealand was going to emerge in a context of deregulation, market forces and austerity. As we found earlier this year during the launch of the Royal Society of New Zealand

paper on *Languages of Aotearoa New Zealand* (RSNZ, 2013), a lot of groups, including media and politicians, are initially attracted to the idea of a languages policy, but the devil is in the detail, and the resourcing. Moreover, in an overtly monolingual country like New Zealand, where many decision makers do not have personal experience of bi- and multilingualism, commitment to the substantial work of researching and planning for New Zealand's future language practices, needs and capabilities is beyond the experience and knowledge base of many. The situation is compounded because most people, by virtue of their humanity and ability to communicate, consider themselves to be an expert on the topic of language.

While a comprehensive languages policy was not achieved in 1992, *Aotearoa* did serve to clearly identify the languages issues that needed to be broadly addressed in New Zealand. In many ways it has served as a talisman in the intervening years for what a national languages policy could and should attend to. Importantly also, it motivated focussed attention within the Ministry of Education on work in a range of languages areas. These included support of *Te Reo Māori* in schools, new learners of English and the development of new curricula in languages additional to English and *Māori* (Shackleford, 1997). Shackleford explains, however, that the *Māori* Language Commissioner, Timoti Karetu denied the influence of *Aotearoa* saying that any gains for *Te Reo Māori* were a result of sustained efforts by *Māori* themselves (Karetu, 1996). In the following section I follow up the case of additional languages in schools as just one example, among many possible ones, of where reference to a national languages policy would have been very beneficial.

### **The case of languages other than English and *Māori* in New Zealand schools (additional languages)**

Additional languages in schools is an area where the Ministry of Education did ostensibly pay heed to *Aotearoa* (Shackleford, 1997) and reportedly made efforts over a number of years to improve provision in schools (East, Shackleford and Spence, 2007). I argue, however, that the absence of a coherent national languages policy meant that these efforts were never based on transparent, consultative and principled decision-making that took multiple stakeholder views and requirements into account. Ministry of Education policies and the school-based practices that have followed have failed to bring about the kinds of changes in linguistic and intercultural skills and knowledge that New Zealand requires to function as a diverse, inclusive and plurilingually competent democracy.

For every country the question of what languages to teach in schools is an important one, as is their relationship with the dominant language (English, in New Zealand's case). The choices made at national, regional and school level speak to the cultural and economic status and perceived utility of languages in particular contexts. Potentially, additional languages in schools could be selected based on a number of criteria or a combination of these criteria. These include: the most widely spoken languages in the

world, the most widely spoken languages in New Zealand (for the ‘where numbers warrant’ argument see May, 2002), languages of New Zealand’s non-Anglo trade partners, languages in which New Zealand has historical and current teaching capacity, culturally prestigious languages, languages of historical importance, languages of regional importance, future national language competency requirements, heritage languages and/or community languages. Some languages fall into more than one category. Mandarin Chinese, for example, is the most widely spoken language in the world; it is a language of regional importance in the Asia-Pacific region, it is a widely spoken minority language in New Zealand and it is a community language in parts of New Zealand (Auckland, in particular) due to migration. Because some New Zealanders can also trace their heritage back to Chinese descendants who came to New Zealand as miners in the 1800s and formed a distinctive if not large minority, we can say that Chinese is also a heritage language in New Zealand, although the language in question is Cantonese rather than Mandarin.

An important observation is that the relationship between English, *Māori*, the bi- and multi-lingualisms of many New Zealand students, and further additional languages (also known as international and foreign languages) is a much more interested and entwined one than the separated policy initiatives emanating from the Ministry of Education would indicate. We know, experience and observe that languages flow into and out of each other; they are often fused and shot through with other languages at every turn in the most complex of ways, in both written and spoken forms. This is especially the case for bi- and multilingual speakers, including those in New Zealand schools. Research is steadily moving away from discussing proficiency in one language or another in terms of interlanguage continua and native-like norms (May, 2014), to a more composite and interwoven picture of plurilingual skills that make up the communicative and intercultural practices, knowledges and competencies that a person needs to interact effectively in their particular sociocultural contexts.

As May (2014) argues, the way academic fields of TESOL and Second Language Acquisition (SLA) are constructed and divided can seduce us into believing that languages and particularly English and ‘other languages’ are somehow hermetically sealed off from one another, that practices and policies for one language do not affect another. Indeed in New Zealand, educational language policies for supporting multi- and bilingual students in English, for example, tend to be devised and implemented quite separately from policies for teaching additional languages in schools. This bifurcated thinking flows through to in-service and pre-service teacher education as well. To illustrate this point I will recount one anecdote from our own evaluation research into the language and culture immersion experiences of New Zealand language teachers and in-service language teacher training programmes (Harvey et al. 2011, Harvey et al. 2010). During a research interview with a language teacher who had been on an immersion sojourn the teacher noted that one of the frustrating issues she found while she was on the sojourn was that she was expected to teach English in

the school where she was a visiting teacher. I could see why this teacher may not have wanted to teach English and perhaps did not see it as useful when she was trying to learn the language of the country she was staying in. But this was not what her grumble was about. It was related to the fact that she had never specifically trained to teach English and she therefore was being asked to operate outside her usual repertoire of teaching skills and experience. I was surprised that a trained and experienced language teacher who had recently undertaken an in-service language teacher training course, TPD (Teacher Professional Development Languages) (for an evaluation of this course see Harvey et al, 2010) felt she was ill-equipped to teach her own first language. When I pointed out to her that her experience and recent training in teaching an additional language also prepared her potentially to teach English and indeed any language she had proficiency in she thought about the connection and was pleasantly surprised. She explained that she had always seen the ‘foreign’ language teaching she did in her school as something quite different from the work that ESL teachers were doing, which she considered to be remedial academic work as opposed to language teaching per se. This is just one anecdote but it is instructive in highlighting language perceptions held by language teachers themselves. It also points to the need for connections and synergies to be made explicitly across languages and related professional development and policies in New Zealand.

In the wake of *Aotearoa*, Shackleford (1997, p. 8) discussed the activity within the Ministry of Education in promoting additional language learning in schools:

Considerable progress has been made on the development of policy advice on options for advancing language learning in the school curriculum, final curriculum statements for Te Reo Maori, Chinese, Spanish, Japanese and Samoan have been published within the last year and a curriculum statement for Korean has been undergoing development during 1997.

He noted the level of funding allocated to these initiatives (\$4.8 million 1995-1997) and provided a caution over “...the availability of suitably qualified teachers to deliver these programmes” (Shackleford, 1997, p. 9). He also argued that ‘international languages’ received more focussed policy attention and funding at the time because of their perceived relevance to “...international trade and business, particularly in the Asian region” (Shackleford, 1997, p. 9).

Ten years later East, Shackleford and Spence (2007) also traced the linkages between *Aotearoa* and ongoing curriculum developments in additional languages, specifically the Second Language Learning Project (SLLP) in 1995 (East et al., 2007), the Curriculum Stocktake (Ministry of Education, 2003b) and the preparations and discussions that were taking place as they wrote, for the publication of the 2007 National Curriculum (Ministry of Education, 2007). The latter document identified the learning of languages other than English and *Māori* in a new learning strand known as

Learning Languages (Ministry of Education, 2007). This strand emphasised the need for all students across New Zealand to have an entitlement to study a language additional to their language of instruction (*Māori* or English) from Year Seven onwards. The impetus behind the new learning strand was to equip students for living in a more ethnically and linguistically diverse New Zealand and also to prepare them for interacting effectively in international contexts:

Learning a new language extends students' linguistic and cultural understanding and their ability to interact appropriately with other speakers. Interaction in a new language, whether face to face or technologically facilitated, introduces them to new ways of thinking about, questioning, and interpreting the world and their place in it. Through such interaction, students acquire knowledge, skills, and attitudes that equip them for living in a world of diverse peoples, languages, and cultures. As they move between, and respond to, different languages and different cultural practices, they are challenged to consider their own identities and assumptions (Ministry of Education, 2007).

Languages taught under the new strand have simply been labelled 'additional' languages. This has obviated the need for the categorisation of languages under the somewhat outmoded labels of foreign, international, community and heritage, when languages in New Zealand can cross over into several of these categories, as previously discussed in relation to Mandarin. However what has not still been achieved with this new curriculum initiative is a wide-ranging discussion over what languages should be taught in schools, for what reasons, to what level of proficiency and how these interact with English and *Māori* in the New Zealand school system and wider society. The suite of languages currently taught (see Table One below) have arisen in a haphazard way and depend to a large extent on teacher proficiency and availability, school budgets, some parental choice and the school culture and history.

A disappointing feature of the introduction of the Learning Languages strand of the New Zealand curriculum is that the total numbers of students learning additional languages in secondary schools began to drop in 2009, the year before the strand was to be fully operational in 2010. The table below charts the numbers of students learning languages additional to English and Maori over the six-year period from 2006 to 2012. There has been a drop of 12,748 year 9-13 students studying additional languages in New Zealand since the peak of 71,730 in 2008.

Significant also is the lack of any national discussion with universities and polytechnics as to how secondary school languages education articulates with tertiary languages education. Certainly the lack of planned transition arrangements between the secondary and tertiary levels has adversely affected the ability and desire of erstwhile successful students of languages to continue their study at the tertiary level (see, for example Oshima, 2012 and Oshima and Harvey, 2013). A national languages policy would provide the framework to enable and even require that such discussions

and consultations took place and were revisited on a regular basis. They would also provide a framework within which to consider and resource the attendant logistical issues once decisions were arrived at.

Table 1:

*Numbers of students learning an additional language in Years 9–13*

<b>Language</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>+/- (2008- 2012)</b>
Chinese	1,728	1,687	1,891	2,077	2,119	2,632	2,849	958
Cook Island Maori	192	171	117	342	375	378	335	218
French	27,614	27,284	28,245	27,197	23,858	23,234	22,379	-5,866
German	6,686	6,623	6,251	6,085	5,554	5,200	4,663	-1,588
Indonesian	30	46	0	0	0	27	0	0
Japanese	18,489	18,440	18,157	17,304	14,506	14,398	12,473	-5,684
Korean	141	70	45	76	75	64	0	-45
Latin	2302	2196	2339	1895	1786	1689	1557	-782
Niuean	22	31	80	65	59	71	114	34
Other languages	465	1033	1174	561	387	421	430	-744
Russian	50	29	0	0	0	0	0	0
Samoan	2,168	2,142	2,311	2,161	2,047	2,181	2,257	-54
Spanish	8,100	9,531	10,900	11,167	10,970	11,309	11,372	472
Tokelauan	46	43	0	61	29	47	38	38
Tongan	65	126	220	340	376	414	515	295
<b>Total</b>	<b>68,098</b>	<b>69,452</b>	<b>71,730</b>	<b>69,331</b>	<b>62,141</b>	<b>62,065</b>	<b>58,982</b>	<b>-12,748</b>

Source: Education Counts, 2013.

Earlier this year the Royal Society of New Zealand released *Languages in Aotearoa New Zealand* (RSNZ, 2013), an information paper raising again the need for a national

languages policy in New Zealand. In this paper, the matter of additional language learning was referred to at different points. The paper discussed the need for languages learning in a now super-diverse New Zealand where plurilingual skills will help foster tolerance and intercultural competence; as a way of strengthening New Zealand's global relationships and ameliorating the effect of its geographical isolation and as a path to improving overall educational achievement, particularly in the case of Pasifika students and their access to their Pacific languages. It (RSNZ, 2013, p. 6) also noted:

...whilst the New Zealand Curriculum requires access to language learning for all students, the non-mandatory nature of entitlement means that significant numbers of students are still able to complete their compulsory education without encountering language study, and for many who do, time spent on language study is limited. This contrasts heavily with the current environment of language learning in the United Kingdom and Australia. There is little evidence that the provision of this learning area has increased long term interest in language learning, and numbers of secondary enrolments have actually decreased (Education Counts, 2012).

In the following section I provide an account of the process that led to the publication of the Royal Society of New Zealand's *Languages in Aotearoa New Zealand* (2013).

### **Revisiting the need for a national languages policy in 2013 – the Royal Society of New Zealand**

The background of the Royal Society paper (RSNZ, 2013) lies in the ongoing work of the Humanities Association of New Zealand (HUMANZ) which was constituted in 1993 as a national representative organisation for humanities organisations. As languages have always been considered to be at the heart of the humanities, languages education in New Zealand was a core concern for HUMANZ. In 2008 HUMANZ ran a national symposium at Victoria University of Wellington on languages education, inviting several politicians and Ministry of Education officials. One of the key factors, largely ignored, was the historical and ongoing underfunding of languages education in universities. When HUMANZ transitioned to the Council for the Humanities in 2009, languages, and particularly their underfunding and long-term sustainability, continued to be an important component of Council concerns. The Council for the Humanities entered the Royal Society of New Zealand in 2011 and was renamed the Humanities Panel of RSNZ. Because of the ongoing and unresolved issues with languages in New Zealand it was decided that an information paper providing a comprehensive overview of the state of languages in New Zealand along with a call for a reconsideration of a national languages policy would be the first work priority of the new panel. The timing seemed particularly appropriate considering that *Aotearoa* had been launched some twenty years prior. *Languages in Aotearoa New Zealand* (RSNZ, 2013) was developed over about nine months starting in June 2012 and finishing with the launch and publication of the paper in March 2013. In preparation

for writing and researching the paper a national languages consultation was held as part of the Human Rights Commission Diversity Forum on 20 August 2012 in Auckland at Auckland University of Technology. The consultation attracted more than sixty participants from across New Zealand representing most of New Zealand's languages sectors. Thirty written submissions were received by the Royal Society. Based on the submissions, further consultation with experts and a broad-based literature review, the paper presented an evidence-based review of the state of New Zealand's languages along with a cogent argument for a national languages policy.

An important starting point for the paper was New Zealand's status as a 'super diverse' society (Vertovec, 2007). According to the last census (Statistics New Zealand, 2006) more than 160 languages are now spoken by New Zealand's rapidly changing population. No doubt the results of the 2013 census will see this number grow. This private linguistic diversity was juxtaposed against the overwhelming dominance of English in the public sphere, including in education at all levels. The paper also addressed the lack of attention to and recognition of the benefits of multilingualism (including that of *Māori* and English), the potential of bi- and multilingualism to raise New Zealand's educational achievement particularly for disadvantaged groups like Pasifika learners, and New Zealand's rapidly diminishing formal (credentialised) language capacities. The paper summarised the major issues to be considered as follows:

- The position of the statutory languages of New Zealand, Te Reo Māori and New Zealand Sign Language.
- Access to English for the whole community.
- Consideration of the many languages used by the people of New Zealand.
- Language capability in a highly diverse society.
- The importance of language capacity in international trade connections.
- The ability for contemporary research to aid examination into language practice in society.
- The fragmented nature of language policy within New Zealand society and the opportunities for a national, unified approach.

(Royal Society of New Zealand, 2013, p. 1)

*Languages of Aotearoa New Zealand* (RSNZ, 2013) received wide television, radio and press coverage during and following its launch at the Auckland War Memorial Museum to an audience of over 100 on 3 March 2013. However, none of this activity has yet resulted in any sustained moves towards a national languages policy for New Zealand. Following the shelving of *Aotearoa* in the early 1990s, Robert Kaplan wrote this in the *1994 Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*:

It seems to be the case, then, that the sustained interest in a National Languages Policy in New Zealand has depended on an awareness that language education



is not adequately provided for, that the language situation is essentially not well understood, that an element of chaos exists in the various sectors that deal with language, and that language rights—indeed, the very existence of some languages—are threatened by the failure to deal systematically with language issues. These concerns have, in some respects, been offset by a degree of residual racism in society, by the belief that English is the only language necessary for New Zealand's development, and by the absence of real data regarding the domestic language situation. These offsetting considerations have militated against the development of the governmental will to deal with the matter. The absence of the will to solve the problem has been compounded by the economic situation. Because the government does not perceive the importance of the problem, it seems unwilling to invest limited resources in the solution of the problem. However, given that the matter has been left unattended for a quarter of a century and that the language issue is central to New Zealand's objectives in Asia and the world, the time is propitious to undertake a solution; indeed, not to do so may prove to be politically awkward. (Kaplan, 1994, p. 162)

These sentiments could just as well apply to the current situation. The fact is that language policy happens all the time in every sphere of policy making. Policy makers are continually choosing what languages will be used in what domain and to what effect. The absence of a national languages policy that provides a robust framework through which languages of Aotearoa/New Zealand can be discussed and debated, and future capacity planned for, means that decisions on the whole do not benefit from current research, community consultation and international best practice. Instead they tend to be ad hoc and do result in the ongoing marginalisation of people. Just two examples of marginalisation are the underachievement of Pasifika students and the underemployment of bi- and multilingual migrants and refugees. The current situation considerably limits New Zealand's potential to develop into a confident plurilingual society that sees linguistic diversity within the bicultural framework of the Treaty of Waitangi as a national strength and source of national identity building and productive capacity.

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## FOCUS ON FORM IN THE NEW ZEALAND ESL CLASSROOM

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### Abstract

*This descriptive study documented the form-focused instruction interventions used by three ESL teachers in three high schools in Auckland taking a macroscopic perspective rather than the microscopic approach which has tended to inform research to date. Fourteen hours of teacher-led classroom discourse were recorded and coded according to Simard and Jean's (2011) Intervention-on-Form(s)-Observation Scheme. Results showed a high incidence of attention to form with some remarkable similarities to Simard and Jean's study conducted in similar instructional contexts in Canada. Corrective feedback was, for example, the most frequently occurring intervention in each data set, followed by explanation.*

### Introduction

There is widespread support for the belief that some kind of form-focused instruction (FFI) is important in the language classroom (e.g. Doughty & Williams, 1998; Norris & Ortega, 2000; Ellis, 2002). The main purpose of form-focused instruction is to draw learners' attention to language forms (Ellis, 2001); as Schmidt (1994) claims, there is no learning without conscious attention. Language forms which have been made more salient for the language learner are more likely to become intake, thus making further processing of these forms possible (VanPatten, 1996), with incorporation into the developing language system the eventual long-term outcome. There is considerable evidence to suggest that attention to language form does not help learners 'beat' the natural route of acquisition (Ellis, 1989), but that it does allow them to progress more rapidly along it. In contrast, leaving language learners to their 'own devices' results in the sort of incomplete language learning that is documented extensively in Canadian immersion studies (Swain, 1984).

### Form-focused instruction – a definition

Form-focused instruction is defined as 'any planned or incidental instructional activity that is intended to induce language learners to pay attention to linguistic form' (Ellis, 2001). There are two major approaches to form-focused instruction (Long, 1991), widely referred to as 'focus on forms' (FoFS) and 'focus on form' (FoF). The key component of an FoFS approach is the pre-selection of a linguistic target for a lesson and awareness on the part of the teacher and students of what that target is (Ellis, Loewen & Basturkmen, 1999). In an FoF approach 'the attention to form arises out of meaning-centred activity derived from the performance of a communicative task' (Ellis, Basturkmen & Loewen, 2002, p. 420), that is, the learners are primarily focused on using the language communicatively rather than on learning it as an object.

### **FFI observational studies**

There is a lack of documentation about what occurs in second-language classrooms to draw learners' attention to form (Simard & Jean, 2011). Of all the many options that are available to teachers when it comes to incorporating focus on form into the classroom which are the most used and in which instructional contexts? While there is *experimental* research investigating form-focused instruction, research investigating form-focused instruction in *naturalistic* instructional contexts is under-represented (Borg, 1999).

Of the research that has investigated form-focused instruction in naturalistic classroom settings much of it has been conducted in a New Zealand context. The development of a comprehensive framework for the categorisation of focus on form (Ellis, Loewen and Basturkmen, 1999) was the impetus for a number of subsequent studies. In one of these, Loewen (2003) investigated incidental focus on form episodes (FFE) during 32 hours of classroom instruction in 12 ESL classrooms in a private language school in Auckland where teachers had been asked to work on meaning-focused activities. Loewen had to exclude some activities (totalling 3 hours and 46 minutes) because they did not meet his criteria of having a primary goal of exchanging information rather than learning about or practicing specific linguistic forms (i.e. they were typical of an FoFS rather than an FoF approach). The average rate of FFEs per minute was .69, although Loewen found considerable variation with one class averaging 1.24 FFEs per minute. His study highlighted the importance of also considering the underlying characteristics associated with FFEs – e.g. linguistic focus and type. Loewen found that vocabulary was the linguistic feature that received the most attention (42.7%) overall.

Ellis, Basturkmen and Loewen (2001b) chose to focus in particular on one specific type of focus on form, that is, pre-emptive incidental focus on form, which they defined as those occasions where the learner or teacher chooses to make a specific linguistic form the topic of the discourse without an error having been produced. They differentiated this from reactive focus on form which is in response to an error. The researchers found that in 12 hours of meaning-focused instruction there were as many pre-emptive as reactive incidents of focus on form. They also reported a high occurrence of focus on form, with one form-focused episode occurring every 1.6 minutes.

### **A macroscopic vs. a microscopic perspective**

Simard and Jean (2011) point out that these studies have all taken a microscopic perspective in investigating form-focused instruction. They limited themselves to an investigation of FoF only and ignored any instruction that incorporated FoFS (c.f. Loewen's exclusion of instruction that was not meaning focused). In their own study, Simard and Jean (2011) investigated form-focused instruction from a macroscopic perspective, first developing and then trialling an observation scheme used to

document all instructional practices related to form-focused instruction. The resulting intervention-on-form(s)-observation scheme (IFOS) was also designed, like the one included in Ellis, Loewen and Basturkmen (1999), to include information about the different characteristics that could be associated with the coded interventions (e.g., linguistic focus, initiator of FFI, etc.). The IFOS was identified and coded for three main types of FFI interventions. These are listed along with explanations in Table 1 below:

Table 1

*Types of FFI intervention*

FFI intervention		Explanation
Interventions-on-forms techniques	(IFT)	All interventions arising from meaning or language-oriented activities which do not necessarily use the support of a formal exercise.
Form-oriented exercises	(FOE)	Those interventions where teachers make students practice language features either orally or in writing.
Textual grammar interventions	(TGI)	Unlike the previous two interventions that target word or sentence level language features, this intervention relates to textual grammar organization and text types.

Simard and Jean (2011) investigated FFI in FSL (French as a Second Language) and ESL high-school classrooms in Canada. They documented an average of one intervention every 4.75 minutes in 60 hours of video-recorded class time (note that they also coded for FFI during lessons that were not exclusively focused on language instruction). The most frequently used IFTs were corrective feedback, explanation and targeted questioning. The linguistic features that received the most focus were vocabulary and syntactic structures. The vast majority of interventions coded were initiated by teachers and there was a definite tendency towards interventions that focused more on forms (FoFS) than on form and meaning (FoF).

### **The present study**

This paper reports on a study that aimed to replicate, on a smaller scale, Simard and Jean's (2011) research by conducting a macroscopic study of form-focused instruction (FFI) interventions in the New Zealand high school ESL classroom. It therefore aimed to contribute to existing research by investigating a new instructional context (i.e., a high school rather than a private language school) and by extending the investigation to include all instruction (rather than just message-focussed activities). It used Simard and Jean's observation and coding scheme (IFOS) but also coded all form-focused interventions according to whether they were FoF, FoFS, planned, incidental, reactive

or pre-emptive based on Ellis (2006). Coding for this additional information made comparison possible with earlier research (Ellis, Basturkmen and Loewen, 2001) but it also enabled more conclusive evidence about the relative proportion of FoFS and FoF. Simard and Jean (2011) were able to make tentative conclusions only about the relative proportion of attention to form in FoFS and FoF contexts, on the basis of the type of instruction that subcategories in their overall coding scheme tended to represent.

The research questions that the present study addresses are based on Simard and Jean (2011):

1. Do the ESL teachers in the present study induce students to pay attention to form?
2. If so, what types of FFI do they use?
3. What are some of the characteristics (language focus, initiators of interventions, context) associated with the FFI observed?

## **Method**

In order to explore the instructional practices that the ESL teachers used to draw students' attention to language form I obtained permission from each of the teachers to observe five language lessons. Care was taken not to let teachers know, at this stage, about the study's main objective in order to minimise the possibility of any bias in teaching focus. The teachers were simply asked to continue with their normal teaching program.

As part of the study each teacher agreed to be audio-recorded. A microphone was placed on their person and this recorded all teacher discourse and all interactions teachers had with individual students. Depending where individual students might have been placed in the classroom, it was not always possible to hear all student discourse, however, it was almost always possible to determine (usually from the teacher's response) whether, for example, a particular FFI intervention was in relation to a student error (i.e., reactive rather than pre-emptive) and what type of error it was.

## ***Participants***

Three ESL teachers in three high schools in Auckland participated in the study and each was observed teaching five lessons. For teachers B and C lessons were each of one hour duration, lessons in School A were of 50 minutes duration. A total of just over 14 hours of lessons (850 minutes) were observed and contributed data to the present study. The lessons observed represented a sequence, although for each school one lesson in the sequence was missed, due to my prior commitments. Information about the participants and their teaching contexts is given in Table 2. It is to be noted that all teachers had considerable ESOL teaching experience (10 years or over) but that there are some differences in context, including, for example, class size (ranging from 6 to 18), level of instruction and type of school (e.g. co-ed/single sex).

Table 2

*Participant information*

Teacher (all female)	A	B	C
ESOL teaching experience	12 years	10 years, HOD ESOL	18 years, HOD ESOL
ESOL qualifications	RSA/CELTA	Cert. TEFL, DipTESOL	DipTESOL
No. of students in class	18	6	15
Year level	9-12	9	10
Proficiency level (as reported by teacher)	Elementary	Lower intermediate & intermediate	Elementary & lower intermediate
Type of School	Co-ed	Co-ed	Girls
Decile rating	6	10	9

***Procedure***

As explained above, I observed and audio-recorded all lessons. At the same time I used the COLT (Allen, Fröhlich, & Spada, 1984) to collect information about classroom activities. I also documented any relevant information, such as interruptions or comments made by the teacher about the lesson.

A research assistant was engaged to transcribe all sections of the lessons that incorporated FFI interventions. I subsequently listened to all lessons and checked transcriptions for any omissions, in some cases adding to some of the transcriptions.

The intervention-on-form(s)-observation scheme (IFOS), described in detail in Simard and Jean (2011), was used to code all FFI interventions. Some adaptations were made in recognition of the different instructional context. For example, Simard and Jean (2011) designed their coding scale for use in French or English L2 classrooms where all learners had a common L1. Therefore, three of their IFOS categories (all under the ‘intervention-on-form techniques’ subcategory of explanation) related to use of L1 in the classroom, that is: 1. Contrastive analysis – comparing L1 and L2 features; 2. Translation – providing L1 equivalent and 3. Comparison – comparing one language feature with another. Because these categories did not suit a context where there was no or minimal classroom use of the L1, the categories of *translation* and *contrastive analysis* were removed and *comparison* was replaced with *paraphrase*.<sup>2</sup> As mentioned above, each FFI intervention was also coded as FoF/FoFS (incidental [pre-emptive/reactive], planned) according to Ellis, Loewen and Basturkmen (1999).



As in Simard and Jean (2011), the start of each FFI intervention was determined by the moment a linguistic focus began. It ended when the discourse returned to a focus on meaning or when a new type of intervention or focus on a different linguistic feature started. See example 1 below:

*Example 1 (Teacher A, Lesson 1):*

Teacher (T) is going around class looking at and commenting on individual students' written work.

T: If you're saying 'where is', you don't need 'the' here, so if you just say 'where is' . . .

S: Okay

T: Wellington

Coding: FoFS, incidental, reactive, (initiated by) teacher, (IFT) corrective feedback/explicit correction, (linguistic focus) syntactic structure

On some occasions more than one attribute of a linguistic feature was targeted within the one FFI intervention, necessitating more than one coding under linguistic focus. See example 2 below where the linguistic focus is coded both under vocabulary and spelling:

*Example 2 (Teacher A, Lesson 1):*

The context is the same as that described in Example 1.

S: Who is the Wellington's boss?

T: Ah the boss of Wellington is the mayor – m...a...y...o...r

Coding: FoFS, incidental, pre-emptive, (initiated by) student, (IFT) explanation, (linguistic focus) vocabulary, spelling

Both Example 1 and Example 2 were coded as FoFS because they occurred in interactions with the teacher where the primary attention was to language form. This was because the teacher had previously established a context (see Example 3 below) where students worked independently on a form-oriented exercise (coded FOE). It is important to note here that the types of interventions are not mutually exclusive. Interventions-on-forms techniques (IFT) were, at times, evidenced, as the example of the corrective feedback given above in Example 1 demonstrates, during exercises which had been set up with a form-focused intent (FOE).

*Example 3 (Teacher A, Lesson 1):*

In this context the teacher is referring to the textbook that the students have been working with.

T: Okay, I want you to take this section here. It's element 1.4 and I want you to make up a 'what' question, a 'where' question, a 'how' and a 'why' question about Wellington. One of each. What, where, how, and why.

Coding: FoFS, planned, (initiated by) teacher, (FOE) sentence construction, (linguistic focus) syntactic structures

FFI interventions were coded using NVivo 9 (<http://www.qsrinternational.com>). NVivo tools then allowed for analysis of the data in order to answer the research questions.

## Results

In the total of 14+ hours of observed lessons there were 413 (see Table 5) documented instances of FFI interventions where learners' attention was directed to language form (on average one intervention every 2 minutes).

The raw frequencies of the three main different types of FFI interventions (see Table 1) that the teachers used in their attempt to draw learners' attention to form(s) are presented in Table 3. IFT accounted for 91% of all the interventions coded (see Examples 1, 2, 5, 7). The other two types (FOE and TGI) accounted for 6% and 3% of the number of interventions coded respectively. (The total number of FFI interventions is greater here (552) than the figure given above (413), because, as has been previously explained, there could be more than one type of intervention for each episode (see Example 5 below which is coded for both corrective feedback (2 types) and explanation).

Table 3

### *Types of FFI interventions*

Types of FFI	
IFT (interventions-on-form techniques)	501
FOE (form-oriented exercises)	36
TGI (textual grammar interventions)	15
<i>Total</i>	<i>552</i>

Table 4

*FFI interventions analysed according to subtype*

FFI types and subtypes			
<b>IFT</b> interventions-on-form techniques		<b>FOE</b> form-oriented exercises	
<b>Corrective feedback</b>	<b>229</b>	<b>Labelling/classification</b>	14
explicit correction	74	<b>Conjugation</b>	0
recast	34	<b>Repetition</b>	2
clarification request	34	<b>Sentence analysis</b>	0
metalinguistic clues	46	<b>Syntactic manipulation</b>	2
elicitation	40	<b>Word/sentence reconstruction</b>	2
repetition	1	<b>Sentence completion</b>	1
<b>Rule presentation</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>Sentence manipulation</b>	7
<b>Rule discovery</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>Sentence construction</b>	5
<b>Enhancement</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>Dictation</b>	0
voice enhancement	5	<b>Translation</b>	1
textual enhancement	1	<b>Structured output/ guided composition</b>	1
<b>Explanation</b>	<b>169</b>	<b>Discovery</b>	0
example	46	<b>Error correction</b>	1
explanation	93	<i>Subtotal</i>	36
paraphrase	30	<b>TGI</b> textual grammar interventions	
<b>Input flood</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>Textual organization</b>	13
<b>Targeted questioning</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>Interventions related to text type</b>	2
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>501</i>	<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>15</i>

The most frequent type of IFT was corrective feedback (46%), followed by explanation (34%) and targeted questioning (15%). The most frequent type of correction was explicit correction, followed by metalinguistic clues and elicitation. (The present study drew on Lyster and Ranta's, 1997, classification of corrective feedback, as did Simard and Jean). To draw from the data an example of these most

frequent types of IFT we can refer to Examples 4 and 5 below. Example 4 contains both corrective feedback (italicised for reference) and explanation (bolded for reference) moves within the same FFI intervention. In terms of corrective feedback, the teacher first signals that there has been an error (No, China has population larger than Japan) and then uses two types of corrective feedback, firstly elicitation (China has a \_\_\_\_\_ population than Japan. . . Has a . . . . .?) and, as this fails to elicit a student response, explicit correction (Larger population than Japan).<sup>3</sup> Example 5 is another example of corrective feedback, but this time, the type of feedback given is a metalinguistic clue.

*Example 4 (Teacher B, Lesson 2)*

T: *No, China has population larger than Japan. China has a \_\_\_\_\_ population than Japan. . . Has a . . . . .? Larger population than Japan. So, that's gotta go in front of the word because it's the adjective so it goes in front of the word*

Coding: FoFS, incidental, reactive, (initiated by) teacher, (IFT) corrective feedback/elicitation/explicit correction; explanation, (linguistic focus) syntactic structure

*Example 5 (Teacher C, Lesson 4)*

Context: Teacher is going over exam with individual student and discussing errors in writing.

T: And look, third person (whispers).

Coding: FoFS, incidental, reactive, (initiated by) teacher, (IFT) corrective feedback/metalinguistic clue, (linguistic focus) flexional morphology

In terms of the most frequent form-oriented exercises (FOEs) used by the teachers, labelling and classification came first (39%), followed by sentence manipulation (19%) and sentence construction (14%). An example of a labelling and classification exercise is given below:

*Example 6: (Teacher A, Lesson 2)*

T: I am going to give you a matching exercise here. You have two pictures here of a computer station and the equipment that is needed if you want to use a computer – you've got a list of words here 1 to 11 and then you have to match the words with the letters in the picture – it is quite an easy exercise but there might be some words that you don't know about computers yet.

Coding: FoFS, planned, (initiated by) teacher, (FOE) labelling and classification, (linguistic focus) vocabulary

It is important to note that any homework that the teacher set during the class was also coded. This tended to account for a proportion of the data coded as FOE. There were a

number of types of FOEs identified by Simard and Jean (2011) in their data set, of which there was no evidence.

The majority of FFI interventions (82%) drew learners' attention to form in a context where there was a primary focus on teaching specific aspects of the language (FoFS; see Examples 1-6 above); a smaller proportion (18%) drew learners' attention to form in contexts where there was a primary focus on meaningful communication (FoF). An example of an FFI coded as an FoF is given below:

*Example 7: (Teacher A, Lesson 3):*

The teacher is talking with the students about their homestays.

S: hobby time

T: good – hobby time, that is really the leisure time when you can do what you want to

Coding: FoF, incidental, pre-emptive, (initiated by) teacher, (IFT) explanation/paraphrase, (linguistic focus) vocabulary

The majority of FFI interventions were incidental (84%; see Examples 1 & 2 above) rather than planned (16%; see Example 3); the incidence of planned FFI interventions was higher for FoFS (18%) than for FoF (8%). For those FFIs that were incidental, rather than planned, the majority for both FoFS and FoF (69%) were reactive (see Examples 1, 4, & 5), that is, in response to student error, rather than pre-emptive (see Examples 2 & 7).

Table 5

*Total number of FFI interventions analysed according to primary focus of lesson section (meaning or form)*

		FOF	FOFS	total
<i>Total</i>		<i>73</i>	<i>340</i>	<i>413</i>
Incidental		67	280	347
	reactive	48	191	239
	pre-emptive	19	89	108
Planned		6	60	66

Table 6 presents the language aspects that were targeted by the interventions. Vocabulary was the aspect of language that received most attention (38%, see Examples 2, 6, 7) followed by syntactic structures (23%, see Examples 1, 3 & 4) and inflectional morphology (13%, see Example 5).

Table 6  
*Language aspects targeted by the interventions*

Language focus	
vocabulary	151
syntactic structures	93
inflectional morphology	52
punctuation	30
spelling	28
discourse	19
pronunciation	14
sociolinguistics	9
derivational morphology	2
Total	398

Table 7 presents information about who initiated the interventions. The vast majority (87%) were initiated by the teachers (see Examples 1, 3, 4, 5, 6 & 7) rather than by students (see Example 2).

Table 7  
*Initiators of interventions*

Types of FFI	Teacher	Student	<i>Total</i>
IFT	310	48	<i>358</i>
FOE	33	4	<i>37</i>
TGI	13	1	<i>14</i>
<i>Total</i>	<i>356</i>	<i>53</i>	<i>409</i>

## Discussion

The first research question asked whether ESL teachers in this study induced students to pay attention to language form. The answer to this question is yes, that there was a high incidence of attention to form, one FFI intervention every 2 minutes. This is a crude measure because the data investigated was teacher-led discourse and so this figure does not reflect the time that students may have been working on ‘focus-oriented-exercises’. For example, only teacher instructions/explanations regarding such exercises were coded. Furthermore, it is important to point out that the high incidence of attention to form in the present study may also be under-representative in that it did not allow for any investigation of learner-learner interactions. The result obtained in this study was higher than that documented in Simard and Jean (2011) (one every 4 minutes 45 seconds in classes that were not exclusively dedicated to language instruction) but not that dissimilar to the one per every 1.6 minutes in the 12 hours of meaning focused instruction documented in Ellis et al. (2001a, p.311).

The second research question aimed to investigate the types of FFI interventions that teachers use in language classrooms. In a completely different data set, albeit in similar instructional contexts (i.e. second language classrooms in a high school context), it is surprising to note how similar the results are to those obtained by Simard and Jean (2011). They too found that IFT accounted for 91% of FFI interventions and in their data the proportion of FOEs (8%) was strikingly similar to that in the present data set (6%). However, the similarity in incidence of IFTs proportional to FOEs in each study is perhaps less remarkable than the similarity in the different types of IFTs evidenced in the respective instructional contexts. Simard and Jean also found that the most popular types of IFTs were corrective feedback and explanation with remarkably similar percentages indicating overall proportion of FFI interventions (i.e., corrective feedback: Simard & Jean, 44%, present study, 46%; explanation: Simard & Jean, 36%, present study, 34%). As in the present study, Simard and Jean also report a higher level of targeted questioning than other IFTs.

The high incidence of corrective feedback in both data sets highlights the potential that this type of FFI has as a way to draw learner attention to language form and the considerable use that teachers make of this in language classrooms, a finding that has been underscored in other research also (e.g., Loewen, 2003). There is, however, a notable difference in the way that corrective feedback was implemented in the two studies. Whilst recasts were the most common type of corrective feedback in Simard and Jean (2011), explicit correction (see Examples 1 & 4) followed by provision of metalinguistic clues (see Example 5) were most common in the present data set, with recasts accounting for only 12% of corrective feedback types. There was, on the other hand, a proportionally high incidence of clarification requests in the present study (15% compared to 2% for Simard and Jean, 2011) suggesting a willingness on the part of teachers to give control to the student. Ellis et al. (2001a) note that ‘whereas a recast assigns the task of remedying a problem to the teacher, a request for clarification transfers it to the student’.

Another interesting parallel finding in each study was the most preferred type of Focus-on-Form exercise, labelling and classification, followed by sentence manipulation in the present study and sentence completion in Simard and Jean (2011). Simard and Jean’s (2011) reported ‘near absence’ (0.3%) of Textual Grammar Interventions (TGIs) contrasts with a slightly higher proportion (3%) in the present study, although this relatively overall low proportion means that Simard and Jean’s (2011) conclusion may still be relevant, that is, that form still tends to be taught at word or sentence level rather than at textual level.

Data in the present study shows that at times teachers used a variety of methods to deal with the same language feature in the classroom (see Example 4 above), an encouraging finding, perhaps, in that Doughty and Williams (1998) suggest that

combinations of, rather than individual FFIs are likely to be most useful in terms of student learning.

The third research question investigated characteristics associated with the FFI interventions observed, in particular, context, language focus, and the initiators of interventions. There were a higher proportion of FoFS interventions (82%) than FoF interventions (18%). It is to be noted, however, in the current study, that data did not allow for an indication of time spent on FFI type, therefore incidence does not reflect time (Simard & Jean, 2011, on the other hand, were able from their video recordings to calculate time allocated to different FFI types). The high incidence in this study of attention to form in a context where the primary focus of the lesson was a specific language form or forms (FoFS) rather than in a context where the attention to form arose out of a meaning-centred activity (FoF), along with a high incidence of explicit corrective feedback and explanations (reported under IFTs), suggests a focus on explicit language knowledge in the classrooms observed. This result is not unlike that of Fröhlich, Spada and Allen (1985) who found a strong focus on ‘grammar and vocabulary’ in Canadian ESL classrooms and concluded that one possible reason for this could be that ‘the ESL learners ... had considerable opportunity for acquisition outside the classroom and that because of this, the ESL teachers may have felt that the language code was the appropriate focus for the classroom’. This conclusion could also be of relevance in this study, but is difficult to substantiate without interview data.

The majority of FFI interventions were incidental (84%) rather than planned (16%) suggesting that teachers are able to target attention to language form to the needs of students. One interesting difference in this study from that evidenced in Ellis, Basturkmen and Loewen (2001b) is the higher incidence of reactive FFIs (69%) relative to pre-emptive FFIs (31%). The fact that Ellis et al. found that pre-emptive FFIs were as numerous as reactive FFIs, may reflect the different instructional contexts – where students were given greater control of the discourse. In their study, Ellis et al. (2001b) only investigated instruction that was ‘meaning focused’ (i.e., FoF only).

The similarity between the proportional focus given to the different language features is again remarkable in the two data sets – both Simard and Jean (2011) and the present study found that vocabulary was the language feature most attended to and that it accounted for 38% of all language aspects. This finding fits with other studies (Ellis et al., 2001a; Loewen, 2003) where once again vocabulary received the greatest focus, followed by what is referred to in this body of research as ‘grammar’ and pronunciation. In the present study grammar is broken down into different components and it is specifically ‘syntactic structures’ in both data sets that receive the greatest focus after vocabulary (26% of all language aspects in Simard and Jean, 2011, and 24% in the present study). Inflectional morphology was in third place in both data sets (20% and 13% respectively).



In the present study, as in Simard and Jean (2011), the vast majority of interventions were initiated by the teachers. This is a different result to that obtained by Ellis et al. (2001b), who found that the majority of pre-emptive FFEs in their study were initiated by students. The different result in the present study and in Simard and Jean (2011) could perhaps once again be explained by the fact that the data in Ellis et al. (2001b) was taken primarily from meaning focused activities, where students had greater control of the discourse. The instructional context could also have been a determining factor; in Ellis et al., (2001b) students were fee paying and described as ‘highly motivated’; unfortunately the latter is not always the case in a high school context.

### ***Relevance of this study***

This study will most likely be of interest to the practicing teacher because of the opportunity it may provide for them to reflect on the ways in which they draw learners’ attention to language form in their particular teaching context. It may prompt them to wonder to what extent the data presented, in this and other studies referred to, may be congruent with or different from their own teaching practice. It may challenge them to consider alternatives, (e.g., from the range of options presented in Table 4), to their usual and established ways of drawing attention to form in the language classroom. For example, the fact that there was a higher incidence of form-focused interventions that were reactive rather than pre-emptive or teacher-initiated rather than student-initiated, might lead to reflection on how to encourage students to be more proactive in initiating and in directing form-focused instruction in relation to learning needs. Another interesting example, in relation to the high priority given to vocabulary as a language feature targeted in form-focused instruction, is the lack of attention to derivational morphology. It could be worth querying why, when vocabulary attracts such focus, there is so little attention to patterns of word formation. On the other hand, it can also be encouraging for practitioners to see, reflected in the data, evidence of form-focused instructional practice that is known to be effective. The high occurrence of incidental attention to form, in the form of corrective feedback, suggesting that teachers are adept at targeting instruction to student needs, is an obvious example.

### **Conclusions**

This study is the first to present a macroscopic perspective on the incidence of form-focused interventions in the New Zealand classroom. (Unfortunately space did not allow for any discussion of variation amongst the three schools). It is limited by the fact that it allowed for a small snapshot of classes only, that is, 3 teachers in 3 different schools, so that generalisation is not possible. However, it demonstrates a high incidence of FFI interventions in these instructional contexts; the fact that teacher-led discourse only was investigated suggests that the actual incidence, may, indeed, be higher.

Data shows that in these classrooms form-focused instruction occurred more in contexts where the primary focus of the lesson was a specific language form or forms

(FoFS) rather than in a context where the attention to form arose out of a meaning-centred activity (FoF). Teachers used a wide range of instructional techniques in ensuring a focus on form and many of these, including, for example, corrective feedback and explanation, were also evidenced, with strikingly similar results, in Simard and Jean's study (2011) in a similar instructional context in Canada.

Whilst this study has identified techniques that teachers use to draw learners' attention to language form, it has been unable to suggest reasons for the choices that teachers make. Perhaps further research will investigate why teachers make the decisions they do in the classroom to focus on language form and what may be contributing factors in explaining these choices.

### Acknowledgements

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### Notes

1. See Simard and Jean (2011) for a detailed description of all categories in IFOS.
2. Another adaptation of Simard and Jean's (2011) coding system was to change rule presentation from 'extensive teaching of a grammatical rule' to the more inclusive: '*teaching of or reference to a grammatical rule*'. The following explanation was, for example, coded in this way: 'they join two simple sentences together to make a compound sentence' (School 1 Lesson 1).
3. This is coded as explicit correction rather than recast because it has been made clear to the student earlier in this exchange that an error has been made.

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## MAKING CONNECTIONS BETWEEN WITHDRAWAL AND MAINSTREAM PROGRAMMES FOR YOUNG ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

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### **Abstract**

*This article reports on a research project which investigated whether individual pupil portfolios initiated as part of an ESOL withdrawal programme, and shared with mainstream teachers, would facilitate connections for both English Language Learners and their teachers. Previous research (Piper, 2009) found that these portfolios positively influenced English Language Learners' (ELLs) motivation. Furthermore, increased communication between withdrawal and mainstream teachers enabled ELLs to make meaningful links in their learning. The research reported here arrived at similar conclusions and also found that the portfolios afforded valuable formative and summative assessment opportunities for teachers and students, including enabling ELLs to engage in meaningful self-assessment. With the introduction in 2010 of National Reading and Writing Standards, teachers are required to report students' achievements in relation to standards for each year level (Ministry of Education, 2009) by making 'overall teacher judgements' based on a range of evidence. It emerged that the individual pupil portfolios provided a reliable and valid source of this evidence for ELLs.*

### **Background**

The first author of this article, Moira, is an ESOL specialist working with small groups of English language learners (ELLs) in a decile one South Auckland primary school. Most students speak at least two languages: a home language, which is one of the Pacific Island languages, and English at school. Moira works with students aged 5 to 11 years (years 1-6) but this research was carried out with 7–10 year olds.

During the three years Moira has worked at the school, anecdotal observations have suggested that when ELLs were able to make connections between the mainstream classroom programme and her ESOL withdrawal programme, their progress in English was enhanced or accelerated. Some students seemed to make these connections more easily than others which prompted the question: if ESOL withdrawal and mainstream teachers themselves could make links between their programmes would that enable students to make connections more readily? This project trialled the use of individual pupil portfolios (IPPs) to facilitate such connections for both ELLs and teachers.

Gibbons' (2002) pedagogy for teaching oral and written language in which the notion of scaffolding is central informs Moira's teaching practice. So, too, does the idea of

teaching language through meaningful curriculum content (Gibbons, 2002; Met, 1994). Being central to the research design, both concepts are briefly discussed here.

### **Scaffolding**

Vygotsky asserts that cognitive development occurs as a result of external talk between a skilled partner and a novice gradually becoming internalised. Vygotsky's 'zone of proximal development' (Gibbons, 2002, p.8) concerns the interstices between what the child can do by themselves and what they can do with the skilled and expert help of a teacher. In the context of language input this gap may be called 'comprehensible plus' (Gibbons, 1991, p.17). Interaction with an expert enables the child to reach beyond the known to learn new skills and knowledge. Such learning reaches fruition if the learner is able to go beyond the initial interaction to use the new knowledge in other situations. In the context of this study, it was hoped that both ELLs and teachers would participate in these learning relationships. As the students shared their ESOL classwork with the mainstream teacher, the mainstream teacher would benefit from a closer knowledge of the language and learning needs of the ELL; as the ESOL teacher and the mainstream teacher talked with the ELL they would help the learner to transfer that new knowledge to new contexts.

### **Language learning through content**

Gibbons (2002) emphasises the importance of teaching language through curriculum content so that children are not just learning language but learning *in* and *through* a second language. Met (1994) explains that this is essential for ELLs as they cannot wait until their English is sufficiently developed to learn content. Language learning is "best focused on in the context of authentic meaning making and curriculum learning" (Gibbons, 2002, p.12). This means that language learning in the ESOL withdrawal programme and language learning in the mainstream classroom should take place in the context of teaching mainstream curriculum content. As Met asserts, all teachers of ELLs (including mainstream and ESOL specialists) "must enable students to make academic progress *while* they are learning English" (author's emphasis) (1994, p. 160). If the subject matter is the same, even if the activities differ, the children may be able to connect the learning in the ESOL withdrawal programme to the learning in the mainstream classroom more readily, because as Gibbons states "language objectives and content objectives compatible with each other are taught concurrently" (1991, p.13).

### **Research design**

The research method was a limited 'case study' (Brown & Rodgers, 2002, p. 21) evaluating the use of IPPs with ELLs and their teachers. The case study approach was appropriate for the context of teaching small groups of ELLs, given that the project was limited by time and scope. The time available for the research (completed as part of a post-graduate teacher research course) was one school term, or ten weeks. In order to keep the project manageable the decision was made to focus on eight students and

three teachers. Although small, this sample size provided depth and richness of data collection enabling ‘thick descriptions’ (Geertz, 1973 cited in Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2000, p.22). The specific research question was: Would individual pupil portfolios help students and teachers to make better connections between the ESOL withdrawal programme and the mainstream classroom?

Both student and teacher participants took part in two individual semi-structured interviews, one at the beginning of term and one at the end. The interviews included both closed and open-ended questions, applying Rossett’s (1982) framework of five types of questions that cover the important issues in a study: “problems...priorities...abilities...attitudes...and...solutions” (Brown & Rodgers, 2002, p.229). The questions focused on participants’ understandings of the nature and purpose of the ESOL withdrawal programme and ways in which this did or did not match the mainstream classroom programme. The follow-up interviews not only repeated these questions, but also probed participants’ uses and perceptions of the value of IPPs. All interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed in full.

Data analysis took the form of matrices (Brown & Rodgers, 2002). The questions and interviewees’ responses were recorded on a matrix, so that the latter could be compared and contrasted. Analysis of the responses was interpretive — “a reflexive, reactive interaction between the researcher and the decontextualized data” (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2000, p. 282). Thus the themes emerged from the data, rather than being pre-determined.

### ***Participants***

Eight students, randomly selected from a total of 20 in the ESOL programme were all of Pacifica origin speaking at least two languages including English. Table 1 provides relevant details about the students.

Table 1  
*A descriptive profile of the student participants*

Name (pseudonym)	Year level	First language	Length of time in NZ
Winifred	5	Samoan	Born in NZ
Hector	3	Tongan	Born in NZ
Letty	2	Samoan	Born in NZ
Andrew	3	Samoan	Born in NZ
Eddie	4	Samoan	Six years
Harry	4	Tongan	Born in NZ
Alana	4	Tongan	Two years
Jeremy	4	Tongan	Born in NZ

The mainstream teachers of these students were invited to participate, and three volunteered. Eva was a year 2/3 teacher, Rachel a year 4 teacher, and Anita taught year 5. All names used are pseudonyms.

### ***Individual pupil portfolios (IPPs)***

IPPs were collated over the duration of the study, which was ten weeks. They were collections portfolios (Piper, 2009) and every piece of work the children completed, oral and written, was placed in the portfolio. In the withdrawal programme oral language comprised about 60% of the activities. The remaining 40% of the time was spent on writing. Reading was predominantly shared book experiences to prompt oral and written language. For oral language, it was not practical to include recordings or transcriptions of students' talk, and so the actual tasks used were included, for example 'say it' and '4/3/2' (see 'Esol Online' for examples). For written language, students' writing was included as well as form-focused activities on specific language features which supported the writing tasks (for example, highlighting simple past tense verbs in texts, information transfer tasks, selective cloze activities). Moira's approach to teaching writing was informed by a functional approach to grammar whereby language is seen as "a system of resources used to make meanings in order to achieve social goals" (Humphrey, Droga, & Feez, 2012, p. 1). The tasks themselves were designed to meet the specific language learning needs of the students while focusing on curriculum content.

### **Findings and discussion**

The data revealed four recurring themes in the research. Teachers' understanding of students' linguistic needs became more detailed. The IPPs facilitated connections and shared understandings between withdrawal and mainstream programmes for both students and teachers. Students were motivated to increase effort because the IPPs provided a forum for sharing work. Finally, and unexpectedly, the IPPs provided evidence which could be used for both formative and summative assessment purposes.

### ***Teachers' awareness of students' progress becomes more detailed***

Responses from all teacher participants at the beginning of the study indicated they believed they already had a good general understanding of their ELLs' proficiency and rates of progress. When asked to talk about their students' language proficiency and progress, all were able to comment on elements such as results of standardised testing, and oral language proficiency. For example, Anita said:

Harry tries really hard. His English is also very limited...limited in the sense that he is an absolutely beautiful speaker of Tongan and very proud of it, but with English, he is very shy and introverted.

This response does show some awareness of the student's language proficiency, but it also illustrates generalised and somewhat superficial understandings. Descriptors such

as ‘tries really hard’, ‘limited’ and ‘beautiful speaker’ lack detail in terms of the student’s specific linguistic learning needs. The generalised nature of comments was typical in the initial interviews.

However, after the intervention, responses indicated teachers were able to identify more precise language needs of their students. For example in her second interview Anita was able to explain that Harry needed to vary his sentence structures as he had an over-reliance on the conjunction ‘and’ in compound sentences. Anita was referring to writing completed as part of the ESOL withdrawal programme. She explained that she provided feedback to Harry about the writing he was showing her in the IPP:

Oh I really like how you are using those rich words there and then the next step would be using less ands and more full stops for the end of the sentence.

It seemed that IPPs assisted teachers to identify students’ specific linguistic learning needs. Moreover, all teachers commented that some students appeared to be able to produce more advanced work in the withdrawal class, than in the mainstream class. Eva said:

Looking at Hector’s ESOL book [IPP] he is producing slightly better work than he is in class.

Thus, teachers’ expectations of students in the mainstream class were raised.

### ***IPPs facilitate connections between withdrawal and mainstream programmes***

Prior to the intervention, only one of the teachers was able to talk about students making connections between the withdrawal and the mainstream classroom. Eva talked about students’ increased confidence while participating in class discussions as a result of prior learning in the withdrawal programme. After the intervention, all three teachers were able to talk about ways in which students made connections between the programmes. For example, Eva said:

The kids can actually show me what they are doing which means they have to talk about it.

Rachel asserted:

It [the IPP] was also an opportunity for the students and me to discuss what they are doing and how it related to the classroom...the discussion we have is really powerful and sends a message to them that what they do in your class is really important for me, for my class. It’s really useful for me for my planning.



It seems that IPPs facilitated the type of talk between teachers and students that might lead to effective scaffolding of new learning in the mainstream classroom. As Gibbons says, “external dialogue is a major resource for the development of thinking, and that interaction is also integral to language learning” (2002, p.9).

Following the intervention, teachers remained convinced that if the children made connections between the ESOL programme and the classroom programme, it would enhance their acquisition of English. Eva said:

If you [the ESOL teacher] are using all the language of the topics that are happening in the classroom, then it will be transferred into the classroom; for the children, the more they access those words the more they use them.

Anita claimed:

They need to make connections between the ESOL programme and the mainstream classroom programme because then they would understand that there is a reason they are learning the skills with you that they are. It would help in terms of the kids’ confidence to contribute to discussions. It would give them confidence in their ability to put their ideas into writing. You really want this [the ESOL programme] to be extremely relevant to their classroom learning. The idea behind ESOL is to give them the ability to cope with the classroom situation in terms of their ability to talk and write and get their ideas across.

Before the intervention one student, Winifred, explained that what she learned in ESOL withdrawal helped her to learn in class:

When the teacher in ESOL teaches me lots of stuffs and then I get a little bit clever.

After the intervention, the same child articulated the connections she was making more clearly:

When we do a lesson in class, when the ESOL people knows the lesson what we have done in class, the ESOL people know what to do. They understand.

Furthermore, Harry said the IPP helped him with:

my brainstorm and my writing.

IPPs facilitated connections for students, but teachers also found them invaluable for enabling shared understandings about what students were learning. In her initial

interview, one teacher, Anita indicated the need for communication about the topics being taught in each programme:

It needs to work both ways as well. We can support you in the ESOL classroom as long as we know what you are doing. You are trying to support us, but it can be a two way thing as well.

IPPs allowed the mainstream classroom teachers to see all the activities the students were undertaking in the withdrawal programme, thus enabling connections to be made without always being reliant on face-to-face discussions between teachers, which are often difficult to arrange in busy school schedules. Ellis (2005) talks about, “the highly connected implicit knowledge that is needed to become an effective communicator in the L2” (p.217). He also describes the importance of input for developing this highly connected implicit knowledge. It seems that when the input in the ESOL programme supports the input in the mainstream programme, there are many benefits for both students and teachers.

### ***Motivation***

Responses from both students and teachers indicated the powerful effect the individual pupil profiles had on motivation. Both Rachel and Eva noticed that the children were very proud of their IPPs. Rachel claimed:

They are quite proud to show their work.

In the ESOL withdrawal class the students were highly motivated to place items into the IPPs, working hard on each task to produce their best work. Rachel commented that the children may work harder on each task because they know it will be shown to a wider audience. One child was proud to show his IPP to other students in his class. Rachel explained:

He was really proud to show his friends, particularly a friend who is achieving and has a lot of success in writing . . . what their peers think of them is really more important than what their teachers think of them. Eddie is quite proud of himself.

Eva said:

I have noticed how much effort they put into products that are for example for their families...something they are going to present to others, they are very intent on doing a good job and that supports engagement and motivation.

This high level of motivation was confirmed by the students themselves. For example, Winifred commented,

[The IPP is] good because it helps me learn. I feel proud of my work because I think I work kind of hard.

The significance of motivation as an important factor in second language learning is evident in the literature (for example, see Nation 2010, Ellis 1985) and the current study clearly illustrates the role of IPPs in enhancing students' motivation.

***IPPs are valuable for both formative and summative assessment purposes***

IPPs were not initially designed as an assessment tool (the goal was primarily communication and making connections between the ESOL withdrawal programme and the mainstream classroom programme). However, the affordances the profiles provided for both formative and summative assessment purposes were a positive and unexpected outcome of the research.

The value of IPPs as a self-assessment tool, “the active involvement of students in their own learning” (Assessment Reform Group, 1999, cited in Clarke, Timperley, and Hattie, 2003, p. 12) was particularly evident. As Eva noted:

If they [the students] know what they are doing they can start realising when they are successful or not and when they know they are successful they can start thinking about what made them successful and they can repeat those skills.

Students' responses also indicated the role of IPPs in self-assessment. Winifred said:

In ESOL when I read the profile I can know when we do our lesson what we already done. I can read it all over again and I know what to write about it.

O'Malley and Valdez Pierce (1996) claim: “If we see ELL students as active learners who construct their own knowledge, then surely asking students to map their route and check their progress along the way are part of the learning process” (p.38). They go on to say that when students are actively involved in self-assessment they become more responsible for their own future learning. The pupil profiles provided a tangible springboard for such active involvement in self-assessment.

The formative assessment value of the IPP, that is “adjusting teaching to take account of the results of assessment” (Assessment Reform Group, 1999, cited in Clarke, Timperley, & Hattie, 2003, p. 12) was evident in all teachers' responses. For example, Rachel talked about using one student's IPP to plan future work for his group:

I was thinking of going back to what sentences are, with his group as a whole, based on observation of the child's overuse of the word, 'and' [in the portfolio].

As well as being used formatively, IPPs informed summative assessments by providing useful evidence for teachers to employ in their overall teacher judgements of students' achievement. Anita explained:

Because it is another indicator for me of what they are doing and the shifts...the discussion we have is really powerful...it is really useful for me for my planning and when I am doing overall teacher judgements.

Similarly, Rachel said:

It [the IPP] is really useful for me for my planning and when I am doing OTJs [overall teacher judgements] the more information and evidence I have the more reliable and useful my OTJs should be.

The value of IPPs as an additional source of evidence for overall teacher judgements cannot be overstated. The Ministry of Education emphasises the importance of using a range of sources to make decisions about students' achievements in relation to National Standards: "Teachers are required to use several sources of evidence in order to make a sound judgement" (Ministry of Education, 2009, p. 13). IPPs, which included a wide range of students' work collected over a period of time, enhanced the reliability of these judgements. Teachers' comments indicated that the evidence in IPPs also gave them increased confidence in their own judgements.

### **Implications and conclusion**

The purpose of this research project was to investigate the extent to which IPPs would help ELLs and teachers to make connections between the ESOL withdrawal programme and the mainstream programme. Interview responses from all teachers and students indicated the value of IPPs in facilitating such connections. Once the use of IPPs were in place, they became a part of everyday routines in the both the ESOL withdrawal and mainstream classrooms.

As well as helping students to see connections in their learning, IPPs enhanced their motivation by providing another avenue through which they could talk about their learning with teachers, classmates, and families. Students invested extra effort into activities which they knew would be included in their IPPs and therefore shared with others. It seemed that IPPs fostered intrinsic interest in the learning; as Ellis states, "it is the need to get meanings across and the pleasure experienced when this is achieved that motivates SLA" (1985, p. 119).

An unexpected finding was the value of IPPs for both formative and summative assessment purposes; they provided evidence of progress over time which was both reliable and valid. This is particularly valuable for teachers who need to provide evidence of ELLs' achievement and progress for a range of purposes: funding decisions, planning next learning steps, reporting to parents, and now also reporting against National Standards to the Ministry of Education. The ESOL Progress and Achievement Guidelines (Ministry of Education, 2005) advise teachers to use a range of sources to gather information about students' language use across the curriculum, including in intervention programmes such as ESOL withdrawal. IPPs enabled the same evidence to be available for the ESOL teacher, the mainstream teacher, and the ELL as a means of self-assessment.

When ELLs are engaged in intervention programmes such as ESOL withdrawal, it is important that their learning experiences are cohesive and complementary to mainstream programmes. Unfortunately, withdrawal programmes have often been "separate" or "sheltered" and characterised by instruction where learners have "little access to authentic meaning-based interactions" (Gibbons, 2009, p. 9). Findings here illustrate the importance and value of a much more integrated approach. Therefore, mainstream and specialist ESOL teachers need to work together to plan programmes which meet the content and language learning needs of the students. IPPs can provide one possible way to facilitate this integration. Moreover, they provide a learning scaffold which is able to be transported from one classroom to another.

Whilst this study has confirmed the value of IPPs as a means of helping ELLs to make connections between their learning in mainstream and withdrawal classes, it has also highlighted the value of meaningful communication between the teachers. It is important that this realisation is harnessed and strategies put in place to ensure such communication becomes part of the regular school routines. Ways in which this could occur might include, the ESOL teacher being involved in team/syndicate planning meetings, the ESOL teacher modelling strategies in the mainstream class, the ESOL teacher being included in reporting to parents along with the mainstream teacher, and the mainstream teacher observing/participating in the withdrawal class.

It would be valuable to investigate further the types of information that would be most useful in IPPs. For example, which specific information provides the richest opportunities for talk, and helpful information for grouping, planning, and reporting purposes? A larger scale and more long-term study is also recommended to probe more deeply the effect of IPPs on students' motivation and attitudes, and also their actual learning progress.

Although this study was limited to a small number of participants in one school, we think the evidence clearly suggests that teachers of young ELLs should consider carefully ways in which language and content learning can be integrated and

connected across mainstream and withdrawal programmes so that teachers and students have shared understandings about learning. The IPP is one tangible tool which can facilitate this.

The final words about the IPP come from one of the students:

It helps me here, then I go to class. It helps me there and it helps me everywhere.

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## **EAP WRITING INSTRUCTION IN NEW ZEALAND: PROCESS-PRODUCT BLENDS AND TEACHERS' PRIORITIES**

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### **Abstract**

*In contrast to the extensive scholarly literature on EAP writing, a real dearth of studies into actual curricula and teaching practices has been identified. This study therefore investigated the practices of seven teachers of EAP writing in pre-tertiary and tertiary courses through a series of lesson observations and interviews. It explored process- and product- oriented components of the curriculum and teachers' instructional practices and priorities. Key findings indicated that most courses were genre-based but inclusive of a focus on process and sentence-level grammar and vocabulary. They also revealed that instead of implementing a particular approach, the teachers' main priority was one that is fundamental to all teaching: meeting the challenges associated with connecting the current developmental needs of a particular group of students to the requirements of the curriculum, which in this case related to the academic literacy demands of undergraduate study.*

With substantial numbers of students from non-English speaking backgrounds (NESB) preparing to study or enrolled in New Zealand tertiary institutions and English now regarded as “less a language than a basic academic skill for many users around the world” (Hyland, 2013, p.54), there is a compelling need for teachers to have a better understanding of the academic literacy challenges that students face, and how English for academic purposes (EAP) writing instruction can maximise their chances of success. In recent years, New Zealand-based studies have explored the challenges of specific academic literacies for undergraduate students from non-English speaking backgrounds including taking notes in lectures (Behrend, 2011), reading academic texts (Skyrme, 2009), and writing literature reviews (Turner & Bitchener, 2006).

Other local studies have compared the task demands of mainstream academic assignments with written texts and tasks assigned in pre-university English for academic purposes (EAP) courses (Turner, 2005; Wette & Lessels, 2010), and the extent to which differences between the two are justifiable or helpful to students. One study investigated the benefits of a process approach in an EAP writing course (Barnard & Campbell, 2005), while another explored beliefs and attitudes of EAP teachers in New Zealand to the teaching of grammar (Barnard & Scampton, 2008). While these studies have enhanced our knowledge of the many difficulties students face, none has explicitly investigated instructional practices that aim to develop students' written academic literacies.

In the broader context, over the past 50 years research and scholarly literature has documented an expansion and enrichment of second language (L2) writing instruction

from an initial focus on sentence-and paragraph-level language patterns and texts as linguistic objects in the 1960s and 70s, to recognition of the importance of L2 writers' cognitive processes in the 1980s, to increasing interest in the 1990s in texts as genre exemplars, and in the socio-cultural contexts in which they are produced and received. However, empirical studies of how these components of the writing curriculum play out in actual lessons and courses are "conspicuously missing" (Hinkel, 2011, p. 531) and "the curriculum and instructional praxis [is]... a perplexingly overlooked and underrepresented aspect of research on L2 writing" (Leki, Cumming and Silva, 2008, p. 81). Not only is relatively little information available as to what constitutes "best practice", but, as yet, no particular approaches or techniques have been validated through empirical research (Hinkel, 2011). This study therefore investigated the principles, curriculum priorities and instructional practices of experienced teachers of pre-university and undergraduate credit-bearing EAP writing courses for credit as a contribution to knowledge on curriculum design and actual teaching practices.

### **Process and product emphases**

Theory-based literature on L2 writing has tended to emphasise either students' abilities, creativity and awareness of composing processes (how language operates in particular texts and disciplinary contexts) or writing as social practice (Hyland, 2002). Process-oriented approaches, which have been part of the L2 writing curriculum for nearly fifty years, emphasise particular cognitive processes such as brainstorming, mind-mapping, drafting and revising in response to peer and teacher feedback. They assign to teachers the roles of guide and facilitator of confidence, fluency and identity development in the learners they teach (e.g. Barnard & Campbell, 2005; Raimes, 1987). However, over the years, misgivings have been voiced about the value of the process approach, especially in EAP courses. In particular, critics (e.g. Johns, 1997; Leki & Carson, 1997) have drawn attention to the instructional effort required for each piece of writing, its neglect of context and audience factors, inaccuracies in the way writers' mental processes are depicted, and limitations on the transferability of key premises of the process approach to actual writing demands of mainstream courses.

Over the past twenty years, strongly influenced by interest in socio-cultural aspects of second language teaching and learning, genre-based approaches have become increasingly influential (e.g. Bitchener, 2010; Paltridge, 2001). This type of instruction draws on principles of systemic functional linguistics to include the communicative purpose, content and form of particular academic genres. Genre-based curricula are now widely used, and provide a way of linking micro-units such as structures and functions with the four macro-skills, of showing conventional patterns of organisation of academic genres and text types<sup>1</sup>, and of focusing on context and communicative purpose (Paltridge, 2001). While some scholars (e.g. Etherington, 2008; Leki & Carson, 1994; Johns, 1997) recommend genre-based courses in English for general academic purposes (EGAP) for practical reasons and to build general, transferable academic writing abilities (particularly with pre-admission students), researchers



increasingly argue for discipline-specific (ESAP) instruction (e.g. Hyland, 2000; Paltridge, 2001). However, critics of genre-based approaches per se (e.g. Badger & White, 2000; Benesch, 2001) point out that to overcome the inherent shortcomings of this type of instruction, teachers need to emphasise the subjective, situated, adaptable nature of genres, as well as actively discourage students from viewing models as templates to be copied. The need for curricula to usually blend product and process orientations in order to fully meet learners' needs has been pointed out (Badger & White, 2000; Flowerdew, 1993; Wette, 2011).

### **‘Best practice’ in EAP writing instruction**

Advocates of a socio-cultural view of teaching and learning draw on Vygotsky's (1978) theories to state that learning involves active construction of meanings through social interaction as well as acts of individual cognition, is mediated through peers and teachers, and is promoted if teachers provide support to assist learners to achieve a level of skill in advance of what they could achieve alone (e.g. Lantolf, 2000).

Following these general instructional principles, a number of scholars (e.g. Grabe & Kaplan, 1997; Hyland, 2003; Reid, 2001) have listed guiding principles for instruction that blend cognitive, socio-cultural, process, and product curriculum components. They recommend that teachers provide

- model text exemplars, explicit instruction and guided practice to assist learners to perform tasks independently and transform learned models
- a metalanguage with which students can discuss and analyse texts
- cooperative classroom learning activities
- activities that integrate writing with other language skills
- a variety of feedback options

They also draw students' attention to

- variability in genres
- processes involved in text construction as well as analysis of completed texts
- the need to be aware of reader expectations and to manage the information flow
- the shaping influence of social and contextual variables
- language features that indicate writing purposes and provide coherence (metadiscourse)

These recommendations, together with recent comprehensive guides (e.g. Ferris & Hedgcock, 2005; Hyland, 2002), provide invaluable information and advice; however, no over-arching theory of L2 writing instruction has ever been developed (Grabe, 2001). Small-scale studies by Alister Cumming and colleagues (e.g. Shi & Cumming, 1995; Cumming, 2003) emphasise the multi-faceted, blended and activity-focused nature of instruction, suggest that some practices may be shared by experienced teachers, and note (Cumming, Erdösy & Cumming, 2006) that the type of course and level of proficiency of learners will probably influence the focus of the curriculum.

These studies notwithstanding, it is generally acknowledged that (with the exception of the written corrective feedback) very little research attention has been directed towards actual instructional practices for L2 writing to date (Hyland, 2002; Leki, Cumming & Silva, 2008).

The aim of this study was to explore the instructional principles and practices of seven teachers of EAP writing in pre-university and university contexts in New Zealand in order to learn how, within time and context constraints, they went about the task of assisting learners to gain proficiency in complex academic literacies. It was guided by two main research questions:

1. Do teachers emphasise process, product, or blended approaches, and does this emphasis change across pre-tertiary, 100 and 200 level courses?
2. Do teachers share particular instructional priorities?

### **The study**

This interpretive inquiry used multiple case studies to gain a holistic, in-depth understanding of teachers' principles and classroom practices, and endeavoured to disturb the research environment as little as possible. It can therefore be described as qualitative in approach (Dörnyei, 2007).

### ***Participants and teaching contexts***

Sampling for the study was purposive, using generally accepted ways of establishing expertise in teaching (Tsui, 2003) to select information-rich cases from teachers who were well-qualified and experienced, of high standing in their departments, and with excellent references from managers and colleagues. Participants came from five different tertiary institutions in three main cities in New Zealand. All were well qualified and experienced teachers of EAP writing and TESOL. They were teaching pre-university and undergraduate courses to students from a variety of backgrounds and disciplinary interests. The study examined one complete course for each teacher. Summary information about teachers and their courses is presented in Table 1 (below).

Table 1: *Information on teachers, students, courses and data sources*

Name	EAP writing (TESOL) experience	Qualifications	Course type, level, duration, credit (class size)	Observations Interviews (totals)
Ann	20+ years (40+)	MA, Dip TESOL	Integrated skill (LSRW); pre-degree; 20 hpw x 10 weeks; (15)	6 (9 hours) 5 (2.75 hours)
Bob	6 years (20)	MA, PhD, Cert TEFL	Integrated skill (LSRW); pre-degree; 20 hpw x 10 weeks; (15)	6 (9 hours) 5 (2.75 hours)
Carl	3 years (6)	MA, Cert TESOL, Grad Dip Tchg	EGAP writing; full academic credit; 100 level 3 hpw x 12 weeks; (20)	4 (8 hours) 5 (2.75 hours)
Dale	12 years (15)	MA, Cert & Dip TESOL	EGAP writing; full academic credit; 100 level 5 hpw x 12 weeks; (25 per tutorial)	5 (10 hours) 6 (3.25 hours)
Ella	10 years (20+)	MA, Dip TESOL	EGAP writing; academic credit; 100 level 3 hpw x 12 weeks; (20)	6 (12 hours) 6 (3.25 hours)
Fay	8 years (20+)	MA, PhD (in progress)	EGAP writing; full academic credit; 200 level 5 hpw x 12 weeks; (30)	5 (10 hours) 6 (3.25 hours)
Gabi	15 years (40+)	MA, PhD (in progress)	EGAP writing; full academic credit; 200 level 4 hpw x 12 weeks; (20)	5 (10 hours) 6 (3.25 hours)

**Data collection**

The study collected information from three main sources (see Table 1 above). They were:

(1) Field notes from lesson observations: Since the study aimed to disturb the research setting as little as possible and due to difficulties obtaining ethical permission to record whole-class interactions, lessons were not recorded; however, detailed notes were taken for each observation. Between eight and twelve hours of observations were conducted for each teacher.

(2) Interviews: pre-observation interviews asked about the teacher's background, context, course and class. In semi-structured interviews after each observation, teachers were prompted to explore particular aspects of their lessons. Interviews after the final observation included reflections about the course in general and discussion of principles of best practice. Five to six interviews were conducted for each teacher. They were all audio-recorded and transcribed in full.

(3) Documents: Teachers provided or allowed me to view key curriculum documents (syllabus and lesson plans, teaching materials, assessment tasks, needs assessment surveys). These were used to corroborate and supplement interview statements.

### ***Data analysis***

In the first phase of data analysis, interview transcripts were studied in order to identify recurring patterns and themes related to the research questions. A coding scheme was developed that allowed teachers' statements to be separated into "episodic units", or "meaningful chunks [that last] as long as a participant continues to make the same kind of comment" (Brice, 2005, p. 163). Many responses covered more than one topic and were therefore allocated multiple code categories. For example, one utterance about *sentence level grammar* was also coded as *coherence at paragraph level*; one about *genres* also referred to *text content*; and an utterance about *students' learning needs* was also coded as *capabilities required for mainstream study*. Initial interview codes related to context, student and syllabus factors, post-observation interview codes focused on instructional choices and priorities, and final interview categories related to the course in general and teachers' principles for effective teaching. An independent coder (an experienced teacher of EAP writing) checked the coding for researcher bias. There were few disagreements about categories; however, the independent coder suggested an additional coding category for several responses.

From detailed observation notes, supported by lesson and course materials, I prepared summaries of instructional episodes (defined as units of explicit instruction or activity, usually 10-30 minutes in duration each) for each of the lessons observed, in chronological order. Similarities between the types of episodes that occurred in lessons across this cohort of EAP writing teachers allowed me to construct tables to compare their practices. Two sample lesson summaries are presented in Appendix 1.

### **Findings**

This section presents information about process and product emphases and teachers' instructional priorities. Both commonalities and differences in teachers' practices and priorities are reported.

#### ***Process and product-oriented emphases***

Information about process- and product-oriented pedagogies was sourced from detailed observation notes, supported by lesson materials and interview statements.

Table 2.  
*Process and product-oriented components*

	Course component or focus	Ann (pre)	Bob (pre)	Carl (100)	Dale (100)	Ella (100)	Fay (200)	Gabi (200)	Total
i	Notes on how to compose a text type are presented to or elicited from the class & written up; the teacher models the process of composing a text ( <i>process</i> )	4	3	2	3	3	1	2	18
ii	Students edit their own or a classmate's writing after sighting a model, after class composing of a model, or after receiving teacher feedback (oral interaction & writing) ( <i>process</i> )	1	1	4	0	1	0	1	8
iii	The whole class group constructs and edits a text facilitated by the teacher (oral interaction) ( <i>process &amp; product</i> )	2	3	3	3	2	3	2	18
iv	Focus on the macro structure of a/text type: analysis and critique of proficient and flawed models ( <i>product</i> )	3	3	2	3	5	4	5	25
v	Focus on the micro-structure of a text type: formulaic language patterns (phrases, clauses), paragraph elements, cohesion ( <i>product</i> )	4	2	2	4	5	3	0	20
vi	Focus on sentence level grammar relevant to a particular text type ( <i>product</i> )	3	2	2	5	1	2	1	16
vii	Focus on vocabulary items relevant to a particular text type ( <i>product</i> )	4	3	2	3	1	1	1	15
viii	Guided text construction (writing) using an outline, diagram or other prompt; in pairs, groups or individually ( <i>product</i> )	5	4	1	2	1	2	2	17
ix	Independent text construction (writing) in pairs, groups or individually ( <i>product</i> )	2	2	1	1	3	2	3	14

Table 2 (above) presents summary information about lesson components identified from observations as well as their frequency over the 4-6 lessons observed. As can be seen from the table, instruction involving analysis and construction of particular academic text types and genres (iv-ix), for example, *process*, *problem-solution*, *summary* and *essay* occurred more frequently than instruction in *composing or editing processes* (i, ii) in all of the courses except the one taught by Carl.<sup>2</sup> However, final interviews revealed that teachers actually viewed process and product as methodologically intertwined, as can be seen in their responses to a question about the course emphases: “the composing and editing processes required to produce particular text products” (Gabi), “the importance of writing processes, features of particular text types, language patterns, coherence, and reader considerations in the service of producing specific academic texts” (Dale), and “the product is always what they’re going to be assessed on, but the way to get there is a process, and that’s what students need to pay attention to” (Carl).

Process elements in lessons included instruction in pre- and post-writing strategies, steps for composing specific types of texts, and noticing and responding to written corrective feedback. When teachers introduced a new text type, they usually (18 instances) presented, elicited, and discussed with the class the best way of approaching the task of composing: in four of these instances teachers “thought aloud” and elicited from the class particular composing processes. Explicit instruction was used deductively (before students began to write), and also inductively (Bob, Ella) in response to difficulties students were experiencing with trying to compose a particular text. As teachers modeled composing processes, they drew attention to particular strategies, and the need for on-line editing and re-writing.

All teachers reported that a general focus on composing and editing processes had taken place at the beginning of their courses, and that they had distributed lists of editing symbols, drawn students’ attention to the recursiveness of academic writing, and emphasised the importance of understanding and responding to written corrective feedback. A strategy that appeared in observations of five teachers was for students to edit their own or a classmate’s draft after a text model had been constructed by the class by way of introduction to a new genre, or for students to compare and discuss responses to teacher written corrective feedback (ii).

Two teachers justified their attention to process by pointing out that if students used planning and composing strategies it “helped increase confidence” (Carl), and might make them less likely to feel “overwhelmed and afraid” (Bob) when assigned a writing task. However, they acknowledged that many students had product-oriented views of academic writing as “largely a matter of getting a certain number of words on the page” (Bob), and that students ultimately needed to decide which strategies suited them best, even though they admitted trying to “coach/steer them in the right direction” (Bob, Ella), and “develop their own abilities as self-reflective writers”

(Carl). As instruction in new text types progressed, teachers led and facilitated collaborative construction and editing of a class version of a text (iii) at least once for each new text type they introduced. They explained that they did this in order to replicate the way texts are actually constructed i.e. recursively, with simultaneous attention to composing processes and the requirements of the text product.

Product-oriented instruction in the macro- or micro- features of a range of text types involved analysis of proficient and flawed models (iv, v) in most of the lessons observed. Because of the likelihood that students would encounter hybrid texts in their academic studies and to develop transferable skills, Bob and Fay reported emphasising the need for clarity and coherence. Teachers preferred text models accessible to all students rather than exemplary published exemplars. They favoured texts contributed (with permission) by students from previous courses. Four teachers (Pearl, Bob, Dale, Gabi) reported altering these texts to introduce particular errors and weaknesses in order to raise awareness of areas of likely difficulty. Teachers emphasised to students that models were not to be regarded as templates, and that they needed to transform what they had learned when creating their own texts.

All seven teachers collaboratively constructed or revised texts such as summaries, paraphrase citations, and introductory or concluding paragraphs (iii) by calling for contributions from the class, which were then edited and redrafted by the teacher and class members on a document camera or whiteboard. Interview comments highlighted that teachers valued this type of instruction, believing that it drew attention to the blended nature of process and product elements and the recursive nature of academic writing, promoted a deeper understanding of the text type, and provided immediate, customised feedback for students. Two mentioned that it also gave the teacher valuable information about students' current capabilities and degree of confidence.

Other product-oriented components of the course included attention to common phrasal, sentence and paragraph patterns in particular text types (v), and specific vocabulary and grammar items (vi, vii). These course "threads" appeared in instruction across a range of text types and included formulaic language patterns used in particular text types, "front-loading" of key information, and a range of meta-discourse strategies. The need to draw on appropriate synonyms and superordinate terms for summary writing and paraphrasing was emphasised. Process-product blends were also evident in all courses through a strong instructional focus on clarity of structure, coherence, cohesion and conciseness: features of effective writing that were highlighted when flawed or proficient text models were being analysed or texts constructed collaboratively, as well as in discussions of composing and editing processes and in corrective feedback.

For the most part, instruction in the seven courses followed a deductive "presentation-practice-production" sequence that also resembled stages of the teaching-learning

cycle associated with systemic functional linguistics. Students were usually introduced to a new text type or genre through explicit instruction given to the whole class group and analysis of text exemplars before working (individually or in pairs) through guided (with support from an outline, diagram or other prompt) and independent (working alone or with a partner) text construction. Less frequently, students attempted a task (e.g. summarising) independently or in pairs as the first stage of the instructional cycle, with explicit instruction provided if needed. One example of blended process-product instruction can be seen in Carl's course when students were asked to draft short descriptions of a famous person in their home countries. They then worked in pairs to exchange texts, summarise their partner's text, and read the summary back to their partner (the original author) before working together to revise both drafts. Teachers noted a number of benefits of composing and editing in groups: that capable peers could often convey advice in a more accessible way to classmates (Gabi), that they helped build confidence in less confident or capable writers (Fay, Bob), and that group tasks involved a much larger number of students (Ann, Gabi).

### ***Instructional priorities***

The second research question for this study inquired about the extent to which teachers shared similar instructional priorities across course levels. Information was gathered from lesson observations and interview comments. Table 2 also presents information about shifts in emphasis between pre-university (Ann & Bob), 100-level (Carl, Dale & Ella) and 200-level (Fay, Gabi) courses, although since it is based on a relatively small data set, this finding can only be regarded as indicative. The teaching of academic vocabulary items (vii) and guided writing tasks (viii) featured more frequently in the two pre-university courses, while strategies such as how to compose a text (i), text micro-structure (v), and sentence-level grammar (vi) were emphasised in both the two pre-university and three 100-level courses. There were more guided writing tasks in the pre-university classes than the other two levels. Two other strategies: collaborative text construction (iii) and analysis of text macro structures (iv) appeared regularly in all seven courses, with the latter used most frequently in the 200-level course. One explanation for this might be that less attention to composing processes, scaffolded writing, sentence-level grammar and vocabulary items is needed as students become more proficient; so the instructional emphasis shifts to analysis (iv) and independent construction (ix) of text types that students need to become proficient in for their disciplinary courses.



Table 3.

*Key curriculum priorities (based on learners' needs and disciplinary requirements)*

	Ann (pre)	Bob (pre)	Carl (100)	Dale (100)	Ella (100)	Fay (200)	Gabi (200)
a. Maintaining a coherent line of thought throughout text	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
b. Establishing cohesion of sentence and paragraph elements	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
c. Becoming confident about expressing own ideas and establishing an authorial identity	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
d. Developing an awareness of the needs and expectations of the reader	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
e. Becoming aware of and including key moves in particular texts e.g. explanation, cause and effect			✓	✓		✓	✓
f. Paraphrasing sources accurately, especially when content not fully understood		✓		✓	✓		
g. Using "top-down" reading strategies to construct concise summaries and citations	✓	✓			✓		
h. Integrating source texts with own ideas smoothly				✓	✓	✓	✓

Teachers reported that their main overall instructional emphasis was building the capabilities that were needed for success in disciplinary studies, and those that learners had particular difficulties with. They acknowledged the additional challenges of teaching groups of students of mixed ability as writers, and reported also that students' difficulties were compounded if they had not had any previous tuition in academic writing, or if this instruction had had a different focus (e.g. the requirements of IELTS essays). Curriculum priorities emphasised in the lessons observed or explicitly noted in interview comments as important (by at least two teachers) are presented in Table 3 (above).

In all of these, teachers' stated aims were to develop students' declarative knowledge about key aspects of written academic discourse as well as achieving modest gains in procedural skill. When asked about the overall value of explicit instruction in writing skills, they all expressed a belief that it helped to advance natural processes of skill learning, and had a positive effect on confidence as well as knowledge and skill. However, they considered that motivation, perseverance, and reading ability were also highly influential in producing academic writing skill development.

### **Discussion and conclusions**

Through classroom observations and post-observation interviews, this study has revealed the multifaceted, responsive nature of EAP writing instruction. While teachers' practices were to some extent specific to the needs and abilities of a particular group of learners, the instruction offered by each of the seven teachers also had much in common, and was in accord with the general guiding principles outlined by scholars (e.g. Grabe & Kaplan, 1997; Hyland, 2003). Teachers' practices also confirmed theory-based advice about the need for process-product blends (e.g. Flowerdew, 1993) when they combined attention to construction and analysis of the content, staging and meta-discourse elements of particular text types with a focus on composing processes and reader awareness. Lesson activities varied from teacher-led or teacher-facilitated instruction to collaborative, guided, and independent writing by students. Differences between pre-university, 100-level and 200-level courses resembled those identified in Cummings, Erdösy and Cumming's study (2006) with less of an emphasis on process and teacher support at more advanced levels, along with increased attention to genre conventions and independent text construction tasks. Pre-university courses devoted more instructional attention to sentence and paragraph-level writing skills, grammar and vocabulary. Findings from this small sample also provide support for Hinkel's (2011) observation that L2 writing instruction in Australasia is more genre-focused than in the United States, where process approaches are still strongly influential.

The main goal of teachers in this study was one fundamental to teaching: to accurately identify students' developmental needs and to select the most effective means of connecting them with the requirements of the curriculum (Freeman & Johnson, 2005). To achieve this end they included a variety of process-product components and strategies including attention to cognitive processes and text products, teacher-led, group and individual (guided and independent) text construction tasks, feedback from teachers and peers, attention to macro- and micro- features of texts, and selected grammar, vocabulary, and discourse features. They noted also the need for students to start taking responsibility for regulating and improving their writing by becoming more aware of themselves as writers, of the purpose and audience of their texts, of the context in which they are produced, and of composing and editing strategies that might assist them.

Given the resources required for this type of research, it was possible to carry out only 8-12 hours of observation for each teacher. It is therefore quite possible that more or fewer instances of the components reported in Table 2 took place in other lessons, and that a larger number of observations might have revealed a stronger or weaker emphasis on process or product. However, observation data was supported by interview questions that captured teachers' views and practices in the course as a whole, and they reported not having changed their classroom practices at all for the lessons observed.

The practices of these experienced EAP writing teachers indicate the importance of being concerned with ways of opening up learning opportunities for, and meeting the needs of a particular class group, rather than implementing a theory-based genre or process approach, or rigidly adhering to curriculum or textbook specifications. Teachers in this study focused on supporting students' learning, breaking down and sequencing challenging skill components, developing genre awareness and knowledge of particular language structures and patterns, and raising awareness of writer, reader, text and context considerations. These would all appear to be important for an effective EAP writing course that assists students from non-English speaking backgrounds to achieve success in their mainstream studies – both those who have already met or are yet to meet the English requirements for admission to university. Generalization to the wider population is usually not appropriate for studies with small samples; however, transferability of findings to other similar contexts is feasible, and therefore I hope that other experienced teachers will be interested to see their own practices confirmed and articulated by their peers, and that novice teachers will find it informative. Further investigations will of course be needed to confirm these findings, to provide more detailed evidence about particular types of instruction, and to establish links between selected strategies and actual skill gains.

## Notes

1. Following Biber (1988), I use *genres* to refer to texts with similar external characteristics e.g. lecture, novel, and essay, and *text types* to refer to texts with similar linguistic features e.g. process, problem-solution.
2. All names are pseudonyms.

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**Appendix 1: *Instructional episodes in two sample lessons (Bob, Ella)***

	Course component (edited from Table 2)	Bob: writing process texts Observation 4 (sequenced)	Ella: writing a paraphrase Observation 1(sequenced)
i	How to compose a text type ...		(1) Discussion of key skills and basic steps: board notes compiled.
ii	Students edit their own or a classmate's writing ...		
iii	The class group constructs and edits a text...	(3) ...teacher facilitates whole class collaborative construction of the text.	(4) ...teacher facilitates whole class collaborative paraphrasing of a text.
iv	Focus on the macro structure of a/text type...		(2) Students evaluate paraphrases of a short text.
v	Focus on the micro-structure of a text type...	(1) Transition signals (diagram of making tapa cloth).	(3) Common language patterns used to introduce the source text.
vi	Focus on sentence level grammar...	(1) Reasons for present passive; when to use pronouns/nouns.	
vii	Focus on vocabulary...	(1) Vocabulary for tapa cloth text.	(3) Eliciting reporting verb options.
viii	Guided text construction...	(2) In pairs, guided writing using diagram. Due to difficulties... (3) (4) Homework: process text with diagram prompt (manufacturing tea).	(5) In pairs, students paraphrase a text orally for their partners.
ix	Independent text construction...		(6) Homework: written paraphrase of the text in (5).

Numbers (1) to (6) refer to the chronological sequence of components in the lesson

## **CRITICAL POINTS IN THE NEGOTIATION OF UNDERSTANDING: A MULTIMODAL APPROACH TO JOB INTERVIEWS IN THE NEW ZEALAND CONTEXT**

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### **Abstract**

*The job interview is a crucial stage in the decision-making process for employment or promotion. Research has pointed to the establishment of mutual understanding with the interviewer (Kerekes, 2006) as one of the crucial elements that can promote positive outcomes. In this face-to-face context participants rely on all available sources of information when making interpretations and judgements, including speech, gesture, gaze, space and objects. Achieving understanding in such settings is therefore an embodied process. It is, however, less than straightforward due to the game-like nature of the encounter. The rules of the 'interview game' are rooted in institutional practices and are culturally-embedded, and thus can become particularly challenging for minority candidates (non-native speakers in particular).*

*To this end, this article discusses three critical points in the negotiation of understanding identified in a set of job interview data video-recorded in New Zealand. I examine how candidates and interviewers make use of different communicative resources to navigate through clarification, reformulation and incorporation. I argue that paying attention not only to what is being said but also to what is being done with one's body, space and objects can help both interaction participants monitor the quality of understanding. In particular, I consider how becoming aware of ways in which certain actions can shape each of these critical points can assist minority candidates in their job interview preparation.*

### **Introduction – the interview game**

In the sociolinguistic literature, the job interview has been viewed as a gatekeeping encounter in which an individual is evaluated against a set of institutionally-derived categories to determine his/her access to a resource, namely a job (Erickson & Shultz, 1982; Roberts, 2000). As Erickson and Schultz (1982) assert, it is not a neutral and objective process in which assessment is based solely on one's abilities and/or knowledge. It is based on the 'hidden agenda' that indicates the unwritten, implicit and culturally specific rules by which the communication is governed (Roberts, 1985). This agenda underlies the inquiry into the candidate's work-related knowledge, skills and abilities, motivations, values and reliability that determine the selection of a competent and productive workforce (Eder & Harris, 1999, p. 2). It is a twofold process in which answers are expected to meet the institutional requirements, but it is at the same time a social encounter (Roberts & Campbell, 2006).

In other words, the job interview is a game in which the rules, although typically not spelled out, permeate the interaction on various levels including prior knowledge, processes of interpretation, co-ordination and management of talk, and means of expression (Roberts, 1985). The game is complex—the successful conduct of the job interview relies on more than factual information. It also depends on the rhetorical and interactive strategies that should frame the facts in such a way as to create a favourable image of the candidate (Gumperz & Roberts, 1991).

Successful negotiation of an interview, therefore, depends to some extent on the interviewer and candidate already sharing a definition of the situation. This shared definition guides the participants as to how formal or informal to be, when and how to take turns, how to move between phases of the interview, and how to repair misunderstandings. At a local level, mutual understanding becomes apparent when there is a converging interpretation of what is intended by a particular move and what is expected as a response (Gumperz, 1999). Where such a shared definition is lacking, the management of all these aspects of the interview becomes more problematic (Erickson & Shultz, 1982).

Issues with mutual understanding have been widely discussed in contexts where minority candidates (non-native speakers in particular) interact with majority (native speaker) interviewers. Most importantly, research shows that difficulties experienced by minority candidates in establishing shared interpretations with their interviewers often go beyond language proficiency. Gumperz (1992, 1999), for example, illustrates the challenges in achieving mutual understanding that ethnic minority job applicants face when interacting with majority interviewers. He traces the origins of the misunderstandings to diverging interpretations of a range of cues, particularly those associated with prosody. He makes a powerful claim that *in situations of differential power and interethnic stigmatization, problems that in other cases might pass as simple instances of lack of shared linguistic knowledge come to be seen as reflecting the speaker's ability, truthfulness, or trustworthiness* (Gumperz, 1992, pp. 326–327).

Longmire (1992) observed interviews between Cambodian candidates and US interviewers and found that misunderstanding was apparent from both sides—the candidates misreading the Western demands of the job interview, and the interviewers misinterpreting the candidates' display of deference and collective orientation as a negative display of their competencies and lack of genuine interest in the job. Similarly, Kerekes (2003) argues that misunderstanding is associated with the mismatch between the interviewer's preoccupation with assessing how reliable and trustworthy the candidate is, and the candidate's focus on displaying their job-related expertise.

The issue outlined above is particularly relevant to the local employment situation. Currently, the New Zealand government has a target of attracting 26,000 skilled



migrants per year (*New Zealand Immigration Act*, 2009). This group includes experienced professionals as well as international students who often stay in New Zealand to work after they gain their qualifications, thus becoming ‘brain gains’ (Statistics New Zealand, 2012). Interestingly, while government-led research tends to report high success rates of skilled migrants in gaining employment and successful settlement (Department of Labour, 2009), studies within the academic realm identify various barriers that skilled migrants experience in the selection process (Podsiadlowski, 2006; Ward & Masgoret, 2007). Most research in New Zealand, however, focuses on stakeholders’ perceptions of migrant employment in general (Basnayake, 1999; Bedford, 2003; Watts & Trlin, 2000), with virtually no insight into the interactional aspects of the job interview itself (but see Reissner-Roubicek, 2010). This study aimed therefore to gain an in-depth view of features that drive the outcomes of the job interview locally. Mutual understanding (or lack thereof) emerged as one of the most salient elements that shaped the outcomes of the job interview.

This is not to say that misunderstandings pertain only to interviews with minority or migrant candidates. Misunderstandings such as misinterpretations of certain aspects of the question or interviewer’s follow-ups can occur in any interview (Roberts & Campbell, 2006; see also Button, 1992). In fact, misunderstandings are common in everyday interaction (Coupland, Giles, & Wiemann, 1991). Their impact on the overall interview dynamic depends on when they occur (Roberts & Campbell, 2006), and whether they are acknowledged and repaired (Kerekes, 2003; see also Roberts, 2000; Sarangi & Roberts, 2004).

### **Multimodal perspective – the interview as an embodied process**

Most research investigating job interviews within linguistics has focused on spoken language as the major information-bearing channel. However, modes such as gesture, gaze, as well as written text all intersect with speech in meaning-making, and thus are also fundamental in establishing understanding in face-to-face interactions. Meaning negotiation is not limited to the spoken language, as participants can draw on any available information that can come from a variety of sources including speech, bodily movement, documents and so on (see DeGroot & Kluemper, 2007). Thus, in order to understand the dynamics of the job interview fully, one needs to take into consideration all meaningful actions that the participants orient to during the encounter. To this end, I employed a multimodal approach to data analysis with the aim of investigating how candidates and interviewers draw on different communicative resources in negotiating understanding at different points of the job interview. The Multimodal Interaction Analysis (MIA) extends the analytic outlook by considering the multiplicity of communicative resources that are involved in the process of meaning-making.

MIA applies the concept of *mediated action* as its unit of analysis (Norris, 2004). Action is seen as a dynamic and flexible unit that is made up of (i.e., mediated by)

multiple communicative resources (e.g. speech, gaze, gesture, objects). Within MIA, Norris (2004) distinguishes between different levels of complexity that actions can have, calling them *lower* and *higher-level actions*. Lower-level action is typically construed by the social actor's use of a single mode in constructing meaning. A gesture, a posture shift, a spoken utterance are all seen as lower-level actions. Lower-level actions are fluidly performed and build upon each other in multiple modes, constituting higher-level actions. Higher-level actions can thus be imagined as chains of lower-level actions, within each mode and across the modes which are in constant interplay (Norris, 2004). The interview interaction, therefore, can be seen as a string of lower and higher-level actions in which participants draw upon various communicative modes such as spoken language, gestures, posture and gaze in constructing meaning. Such an approach has allowed the analysis to go beyond language by breaking the interaction into a multitude of actions that can be observed on different levels of complexity.

### **The study**

The design of the study aimed at reflecting the approach that calls for naturalistic interaction data (Holmes & Stubbe, 2003). The data consisted of two types of interviews – graduate encounters with HR specialists collected at a careers centre (CC) at a local university, and real job interviews collected at a large recruitment agency (RA). The candidates in both groups included males and females with a range of cultural, ethnic and linguistic backgrounds, reflecting the local employment market. All interviews were video recorded in order to capture actions across various modes.

The application process in the graduate interviews (CC) was designed to imitate the real procedure. A fictitious position was advertised as part of an 'Interview Evening' with recruitment specialists. The candidates were recent university graduates seeking employment at the time of data collection. Individuals interested in attending the interview had to respond to a job offer and send through their CV and a cover letter. They were then selected on the basis of the quality of their application. The role advertised was designed to be relatively junior and generic and was expected to attract a wide range of candidates. The interviewers were three experienced recruitment specialists who agreed to take part in the encounter as volunteers. The event was part of a regular graduate employment process that takes place every year and is facilitated by the careers centre. Despite not interviewing candidates for a particular job, the interviewers described themselves as being 'on the lookout for talent', and the candidates were made aware of a real possibility of being invited to an interview based on their performance in the encounter.<sup>1</sup>

The nine recruitment agency interviews (RAs) were recorded during a period of recruitment for a large institution and included candidates applying for positions ranging from advisory to management roles. This was the first stage in the process, with consultants making a decision to recommend (or not) candidates for a final

interview directly with the employer. Both data sets were supported by recall sessions with the interview participants.<sup>2</sup>

### **Analysis and discussion**

The analysis below focuses on three critical points in establishing understanding identified in the data set, namely clarification, reformulation and incorporation. The first two examples, from the careers centre interviews, demonstrate situations in which meaning is unclear, and requires some negotiation. The third example, from a recruitment agency interview, illustrates actions that confirm the mutual understanding between the interview participants, and signals a positive evaluation.

#### ***Clarification***

Unacknowledged misunderstandings can have a great impact on interview outcomes, in particular the shared responsibility for missing opportunities to clarify meaning. One such critical point emerges when the interviewer signals to the candidate that meaning is not entirely clear or that more detail is necessary. The candidate's uptake on such a signal determines the achievement of mutual understanding. The analysis highlights the embodied effort of the interview participants as they work together to achieve shared interpretations.

In the extract below, Daniel (non-NZ, Asian, English L2), who was evaluated positively, is talking about his hobbies. He speaks quite fast, frequently cutting off words and repeating himself, with numerous gestures often directed at the interviewer (Fig.1a-f), perhaps because he is nervous. His use of a gesture that illustrates his hobby, and the interviewer's reference to the gesture later on, becomes one of the key elements that contribute to the achievement of their shared understanding.

Daniel's use of different terms to describe himself as a *fitness guru* (Fig.1a), a *mentor* (Fig.1e), and a *personal trainer* (Fig.1j) accompanied by discourse markers (*sort of* and *like*) suggest his uncertainty regarding the precise description of (or perhaps the most appropriate way of presenting) his hobby (see Stubbe & Holmes, 1995). He also marks the action of training with an iconic gesture that depicts lifting something, presumably weights (Fig.1c-d: BH<sup>3</sup> fists clenched lift and move towards torso). This action becomes an important visual reference in negotiating a shared meaning with the interviewer.

Figure 1.







Throughout Daniel's presentation, Adam, his interviewer, attempts to take a turn (Fig.1g-i). Adam's initial *so it's* (Fig.1i) may indicate an effort at confirming his understanding of Daniel's hobby. Adam's subsequent request for clarification (Fig.1k-l: *so what do you like what's what's YOUR particular*) is accompanied by a gesture that can be interpreted as an embodied completion (Fig.1m: LH palm up as if holding an entity; this gesture seems to replace a verbal expression such as 'type of fitness') (Olsher, 2004). These lower-level actions form an important message to the candidate

– an indication that the answer is not entirely clear, and a demand for a specific example (*particular* illustrated by a hand holding an entity).

In his response, Daniel immediately mimics three components of Adam's utterance - stress on a pronoun, a lexical item (Fig.1l: *what's YOUR particular*; Fig.1m: *MY particular*), and a gesture that completes Adam's utterance (Fig.1m). Such reciprocity reinforces their mutual effort at working out a shared meaning. Daniel also makes another gesture that completes his utterance (Fig.1o-p: RH indicates upper arm and left side of the chest then quickly traces along the chest and left arm). This action seems to moderate his earlier action (Fig.1c-d). Interestingly, at this point Adam mimics Daniel's initial gesture (Fig.1q: BH fists clenched lift and move towards torso) and completes his statement with its verbal rendition (Fig.1q: *strength*). Adam's actions seem to disambiguate Daniel's explanation – his initial gesture might have indicated a weight-lifting exercise, but the following actions provide conflicting information as Daniel claims to do a *cardio workout* (Fig.1n). By mimicking the candidate's actions, Adam actively helps resolve a potential misunderstanding.

The interviewer's request for clarification marks a crucial moment for the direction in which the candidate's response will go – in Daniel's case, the negotiation of meaning takes the form of an embodied exchange which helps establish common ground between the interview participants. The reciprocity of gesture-speech action facilitates this negotiation, and is also a sign of mutual involvement. This 'sharedness' becomes even more critical in situations where the candidate's response misaligns with the assumptions underlying the question. The following example illustrates one such case.

### ***Reformulation***

One reason provided by interviewers when evaluating a candidate negatively is that they did not provide answers that would satisfy the 'hidden' requirements of the question. This misalignment is often made apparent by the interviewer's use of reformulation, that is a repetition of the question, either in a similar form or with new phrasing (see Roberts & Campbell, 2006), which constitutes another critical point in the negotiation of mutual understanding. As the following example illustrates, various lower-level actions contribute important information about the state of the candidate's answer. The candidate's failure in providing a satisfactory response stems from the misinterpretation of the interviewer's actions, in particular the composite of speech and orientation to the candidate's CV.

Figure 2.1. Careers Centre











Keith (non-NZ, English L2) was an unsuccessful candidate who, according to Celia, his interviewer, did not show ‘any better understanding’ of what she was trying to find out. Keith’s narrative illustrated in Figures 2.1 and 2.2 follows Celia’s prompt regarding managing a heavy workload. In his initial presentation, Keith provides a general list of things he does to manage his own and others’ work (Fig.2.1a-h). Celia seems rather disengaged, focused on taking notes and providing limited and rather neutral vocal or visual feedback (Fig.2.1a-h). Her response provides a cue as to why this may be so. Celia’s question that follows can be interpreted as a reformulation (Fig.2.1i-j). Her response that indicates a required format and content for the answer (Fig.2.1i-j: *just + thinking of the specific example*) is also represented by a gesture that denotes an enclosed, contained entity (Fig.2.1j: BH palms open to the centre). These actions mark Keith’s initial presentation as misaligned and provide guidance as to how he is expected to demonstrate his time-management skills.

The attempt at aligning Keith’s narrative so that it fits with the expected format is an embodied process in which Celia utilises speech, gesture, gaze and written text. Altogether, these resources seem to provide a classic Western narrative ‘template’ for the candidate to follow (see Labov, 1997). Celia sets up a context of a possible story with a rhetorical question (Fig.2.1l-m) and provides a complicating action (Fig.2.1n-r). Keith remains a passive listener, sitting still, gazing at Celia with no backchannels. Perhaps reading his behaviour as lack of understanding, Celia reorients to a resource that constitutes a shared reference point for both of them – Keith’s CV (Fig.2.1s-u). She reads out from it the information that they both know. Celia’s orientation to the document and utilising written text are important actions that signal her effort at establishing common ground with the candidate. An extended reformulation that

follows (Fig.2.1i-w) bears features of hyper-explanation, apparent in a long stretch of description, explanation, and simplification (Erickson & Shultz, 1982). Celia increasingly narrows down her prompt to particular information presented in Keith's CV (Fig.2.1s-u). Her gestures follow this pattern as well – she opens her turn with an abstract gesture (Fig.2.1j: an entity held between hands, perhaps the assignment load), then makes an interactive gesture which acknowledges his earlier contribution (Fig.2.1m: palms opening up towards Keith) (Bavelas, Chovil, Lawrie, & Wade, 1992). This is followed by an illustrative (Fig.2.1n: RH outlines a list coinciding with *other stuff* in speech), then a pointing gesture (Fig.2.1s-u: RH and gaze pointing to the document).

Celia's actions gradually become less abstract in what appears to be her attempt at establishing a shared understanding of the expected answer. Keith's reaction, however, suggests a continuing misalignment as he interprets Celia's prompt as threatening (see Figure 2.2 below).

The two long unfilled pauses (Fig.2.2b, d), a conditional phrase directly addressing the interviewer (Fig.2.2c: *if you are comparing*) and a strong opposition between work and interests (Fig.2.2e: *face it with my interest*) mark Keith's misunderstanding of the interviewer's prompt. Celia's body language that accompanies Keith's response is quite telling. She sits back, tilts and rests her head on her hand (Fig.2.2e-j). The overlapping backchannels (Fig.2.2i-l) may indicate her readiness to move on. The rephrasing of Keith's response in Fig.2.2k (*okay + so work comes first*) as she is noting it down mark a less than satisfactory outcome of this negotiation. When asked about her evaluation of Keith's performance, Celia stressed her impression of lack of understanding on Keith's side of the underlying expectations driving the interview questions.

Figure 2.2.







Perhaps because of Celia's interpretation of Keith's insistence on the 'work comes first' stance showing his lack of understanding what was required, he is gradually being 'talked down to'. The 'talking down' phenomenon is evident in the decreasing complexity of the questions and an increasing intensity of closed questions that require a minimal answer (Roberts & Campbell, 2006; see also Holmes, 1983). The result is often constructing the candidate as less competent. The actions that mark the interviewer's transition into the 'talking down' mode are evident across various modes – speech, gesture, gaze and written text – and it appears that the candidate's lack of uptake on these crucial signals results in a rather negative outcome.

### *Incorporation*

As demonstrated in the examples so far, the interviewer can manipulate their institutional voice to either request clarification or reformulate the question in order to align the candidate's response to the underlying requirements. The following example illustrates another critical point in the negotiation of meaning, this time a situation in which the interviewer uses their institutional voice to endorse the candidate's presentation.

The most telling evidence of the achievement of mutual understanding that emerged in the data was the interviewer's 'translation' of the candidate's response into a positive outcome. Campbell and Roberts (2007) term this move 'incorporation' as it results in fitting the applicant's response into an institutional framework. Actions that contribute to the incorporating move include a verbal and/or written summary that contains a simplified, coherent version of the candidate's presentation. The point of difference with the interviewer's summary presented in Figure 2 (Fig.2.2k-n), however, is the use of gaze. Figure 3 below illustrates how an incorporating move materializes through the

interviewer's use of speech, written text and gaze orientation, and how the candidate's confirmation of the shared interpretation 'seals the deal' of a favourable evaluation.

Vincent (NZEM, English L1) was a successful candidate who was recommended by Elizabeth, his interviewer, for a final interview with the employer. The following extract deals with a question about teamwork. Vincent expresses his preference for working in a team and explains that such a setting facilitates finding alternative solutions which could otherwise be missed. At this point, Elizabeth signals that Vincent's stance is not entirely clear.

Elizabeth reads out her notes (Fig.3a below) and presents her interpretation to Vincent for feedback (Fig.3b-c: RH makes a circle, palm opens up, fingers spreading towards Vincent) (Bavelas et al., 1992). Together with the rising intonation and gaze directed at the candidate (Fig.3b-c), Elizabeth's actions function as a clarification request.

Vincent's response presents a similar dynamic to that of Daniel's in Figure 1. He mimics Elizabeth's actions (Fig.3d-e: BH palms open, fingers spread, circular movement on *or different to what I would have thought of as well*), tying their interpretations together while elaborating on his answer. Elizabeth marks her understanding with a backchannel and returns to note-taking (Fig.3e-f). Shortly after, she latches with a contribution that can be interpreted as an incorporating move. The summary of Vincent's narrative as demonstrating his preference for *intellectual stimulation* (Fig.3h-i) provides a concise interpretation that can easily be noted down.

Summarising has been identified as a strategy for 'doing power', used by superiors to control the development of the interaction (Holmes, Stubbe, & Vine, 1999). Here, however, Elizabeth is 'doing power' on behalf of the candidate. One action that supports this interpretation is her gaze. She looks up at Vincent directly after she makes the comment, waiting for feedback (Fig.3j). After a swift confirmation from Vincent (Fig.3j), she gazes back at her notes and continues writing (Fig.3k). The answer is thus negotiated between the candidate and the interviewer before it becomes processed on paper. Elizabeth's actions stand in clear contrast to those of Celia in Fig.2.2k-n, suggesting a functional difference between the interviewers' actions. While Celia's orientation to the document when providing her summary seem to close off any further negotiation, Elizabeth's gaze towards the candidate immediately before she notes down the answer suggests more shared understanding and a positive evaluation.<sup>4</sup>

Figure 3. Recruitment Agency (RA)



### **Practical applications**

Although the examples presented in this study illustrate job interview interactions in two different contexts - mock graduate interviews at the careers centre and interviews with highly-experienced professionals at the recruitment agency, the practical applications are relevant to both settings in a similar manner. They can be considered in three major areas. As the examples presented above have illustrated, achieving (or not) mutual understanding is a shared embodied effort of both interview participants. Developing an appreciation of a shared responsibility for the negotiation of meaning that is satisfactory to both the candidate and the interviewer is perhaps the initial step to be taken by both recruitment practitioners and applicants. Furthermore, it is also critical that interview participants develop an awareness of the consequences of the seemingly unremarkable situations illustrated in all the examples. This applies in particular to contexts where migrant and non-native speaker candidates compete against their majority (native speaker) counterparts, since misunderstandings can be interpreted as culturally-driven, reflecting one's ability, trustworthiness, and fit with the institution. Finally, enhancing interview participants' understanding of how actions carried out in various modes contribute to the negotiation of understanding can help them develop a wider range of resources they might utilise in situations where meaning is not entirely clear, and better monitor the direction in which the interview is progressing.

One possible way of implementing the solutions outlined above is through the use of multimodal interaction analysis as a tool for skill development. I have trialled this approach during a 4-week interview training workshop with a group of job seekers at a local organisation which provides employment support and settlement services to various groups of migrants. During that time the participants attended four mock interviews with volunteer employers which were video recorded. All participants watched the recordings after each interview. In a follow-up session each week, the candidates and the interviewers discussed their perceptions of and possible reasons for what went well and what did not go so well. These discussions were supported by a close analysis of video excerpts from the interviews chosen by the candidates, the interviewers, or myself. The analysis focused on the candidates' and interviewers' recognition of what they were doing, i.e. not only what they were saying but also their gaze, gesture, body position and orientation, and any other elements (e.g. voice quality, documents) that became relevant.

Watching their own recordings and having an opportunity to discuss features observed in their interactions provided the participants with useful insights into their strengths and weaknesses in terms of interview performance. Most importantly, the candidates commented on becoming aware of how different, seemingly unimportant, actions often contributed to the interviewers' evaluations of their responses. Inviting the interviewers to participate in the 'review and reflect' sessions also proved fruitful as they commented on developing an appreciation of the difficulties that some candidates

might face in the recruitment process. Interestingly, some even acknowledged that at times, they might have contributed to these difficulties (e.g., by providing potentially confusing reformulations).

In most cases, the practice-review-reflect process positively influenced the way in which the participants performed in the final interview at the end of the workshop, based on mutual feedback. Due to time constraints, it was impossible to examine in great detail the exact elements that contributed to this positive change. However, the trial demonstrated that providing interview participants with analytic tools which can help them gain more insight into their own interactional patterns as well as the demands of the job interview in general can provide them with resources from which they might be able to expand on their skills (Riddiford & Newton, 2010).

It is necessary to point out, however, that the process of ‘tuning in’ in one’s interview performance, be it for the candidate or the interviewer, is not a straightforward one. Factors such as personality and identity, for example, need to be taken into account as they can influence the perceptions formed of one’s performance as well as willingness to change. Therefore, the first step in applying this research would be developing ways to help individuals gain a better understanding of the subtle role of various interactional behaviours in evaluations of the candidate’s performance. This would provide the basis for an approach which aims to *empower* individuals seeking employment as well as recruitment practitioners in undertaking their own observations of interview interactions by providing them with analytical tools to help them reflect on their own experiences and wider practices in the institutions but also the society (Holmes et al., 2009).

#### **Notes:**

1. Two of the candidates were invited to be interviewed at the institutions where the recruitment specialists were employed as a result of the CC interview.
2. Candidates and interviewers in CC; Interviewers only in RA.
3. BH – both hands; RH – right hand; LH – left hand.
4. While the analysis of facial displays has been included in the analysis of the job interview data overall, facial expression does not emerge as a mode of high intensity (i.e., the weight put on this particular mode or its connection with other modes in structuring the message) in the examples discussed in this article. The focus was therefore on the most salient elements that contribute to the negotiation of mutual understanding.

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## REVIEWS

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**Fraser, G. & Davidson, C. (2012). *Analyze anything: A guide to critical reading and writing*. London: Continuum. ISBN 978-1-4411-0730- 5521-1652-04 (pbk). 216 pp.**

**Reviewed by Marilyn Lewis**

Compacted into six chapters, the content of this largish book had its origin in classes for first year writing students at the University of West Georgia. The writers move between suggestions for students' reading and for writing, with an ongoing emphasis on the link between the two.

Apart from Chapter 1 - the introduction which overviews the rest of the content - and the final analytical exercises in Chapter 6, there are four chapters packed with information and suggestions. Each of these concludes with one or more student examples to illustrate theoretical statements. Chapter 2 has advice on *Choosing a sign to analyse*, suggesting answers to the question "What should I write about?" For starters, students are urged to be specific in what they choose to analyse. Thus an examination of "representations of race on television" (p. 20) needs to be narrowed down in order to make a manageable essay. The advice could also be of interest to those who set essay topics. Chapter 3 considers *Questioning and staging the sign*, suggesting that there needs to be even more narrowing down of a potential topic. Support for this advice is quoted from many well-known writers, including Francis Bacon and Albert Einstein. Chapter 4 deals with *Generating ideas about meaning*. Here, as elsewhere in the book, when technical terms are introduced they are illustrated graphically, as with the "semiotic iceberg" metaphor for which a sketched iceberg appears twice. Games suggested as a means for generating ideas could form the basis of a lively university tutorial. Finally, Chapter 5 is about *Building essays around your ideas*. This lengthy (50 page) section offers different models for writing: the single-idea, the "umbrella" and the "bog frame". The sixth chapter is a collection of analytical exercises in which the reader is invited to examine closely ten concepts as varied as advertisements, slang, beauty and even "tomorrow".

Not surprisingly for material first presented in class, the book has a number of features which should appeal to students, one of these being links to everyday life. Its opening paragraph reminds the reader/listener of ways we look for meanings underlying such moves as "a sibling's decision to become vegetarian" (p. 1). In other words, the analysis referred to in the book's title is something we do every day rather than simply as an academic exercise. The authors also make use of metaphors throughout the book, including the iceberg mentioned already, and a ladder which students are encouraged to climb in their search for specificity and the suggestion of "becoming an idea machine" (pp. 95 -97). Throughout there is personal referencing to readers' experiences, as in "you have likely read this poem before" (p. 25) when quoting Robert Frost's *The Road not Taken*. Finally, the tasks look like fun.

One suggestion for a second edition would be to expand the short, one and half page index to include more of the technical terms. At the risk of nit-picking, about two thirds of the references are to works cited rather than words whose meaning a student might want to check on, such as *fusion*, *juxtaposition* and *specificity*. Despite this gap, the book is recommended for two groups: the students for whom it is intended, and teachers who could be interested in a fresh look at the topic of critical reading and writing. Specifically, teachers of English for Academic Purposes (EAP) classes could draw on many of the ideas here for their course content and process, although further examples across the disciplines might make the ideas even more widely relevant.

**Gruba, P. & Hinkelman, D. (2012). *Blended technologies in second language classrooms*. Basingstoke, England, UK: Palgrave Macmillan. ISBN 978-0-230-23261-7 (hbk.) 184 pp.**

**Reviewed by Patrick Coleman, Lincoln University**

Institutions often outlay at great expense the latest technology only to find that either it does not really meet their needs, or their staff have no idea how best to utilize it. This is where Paul Gruba and Don Hinkelman offer a clear way forward. Their book, which is grounded in solid applied linguistic research into blended learning, seeks to provide a clear framework for teachers who struggle with combining face-to-face interaction with online activities. The text layout is straightforward and has on average four subsections. Each chapter begins with useful definitions and finishes with a summary. For the busy researcher and teacher, these summaries are invaluable. There is an extensive list of references with all the sources listed together. However, this makes it harder for the reader to identify the difference between articles and books or web-based material.

This is one book where the preface is just as important as the rest of the book. Here the authors set out their *modus operandi*. Their main argument is: “blended technologies in second language classrooms can be facilitated through purposeful, appropriate, multimodal and sustainable considerations” (xii). The full meaning of this is outlined in the first chapter. A further point they make is that any implementation of a blended technology approach needs a climate that supports and encourages staff and realises there will be trial and error. Chapter 1, entitled *Theoretical Foundations*, is a crucial chapter as it backgrounds the development of blended learning from the corporate world and its transition into mainstream education. Gruba and Hinkelman expertly summarise debates around the rise of blended learning and the frustrations of instructors and students. They acknowledge Bonk and Graham (2006) who provided a useful handbook and a simple definition: “blended learning systems combine face-to-face instruction with computer-mediated instruction” (p.5). This simplicity is further

clarified by referring to Smith and Kurthen (2007), who maintain that blended learning should constitute less than 45% of the total instruction time, with the other 55% being face-to-face interaction (p. 457).

Chapter 2 focuses on understanding the technologies and emphasises an approach to “avoid being tool-centric”. Gruba and Hinkelman propose a pedagogical framework of actions, groupings, timings texts and tools. They list tools (physical devices or software) last, as they are intended only as part of the teacher-led process of creating an engaging and purposeful lesson. Chapter 3 covers the design of a blended learning programme. Some of the considerations in design are organised according to levels: micro-teacher and lesson plans, meso-institution level and macro-regional, national global demands of technologies used. Each stage is developed and used to inform any institution seeking to implement a blended learning programme.

Chapter 4 delves into blended language learning assessment. One of the major challenges that the authors acknowledge is the problem of aligning the use of technology for assessment purposes with pedagogical goals. Paper-based assessment is still seen by the authors as meeting many of the requirements of blended learning because of its portability and ease of use in many activities. Computer-based assessments have pitfalls such as software glitches and differences in students’ typing abilities. The authors discuss how learning management systems (LMS) can provide assessment tools able to create a variety of assessments to assist students in reporting on their progress. Chapter 5 focuses on action research, which the authors concede some see as “not proper science because it has weak methodology, lacks rigour and is self-referential” (p. 96). They provide suggestions to counter these claims, but noting action research in blended learning has its difficulties. A number of helpful suggestions are given to deal with these criticisms, but essentially they advise that following a sound ethical framework and making use of triangulation in the research process will avoid accusations of poor research practice.

Chapter 6 provides some case studies of blended learning in action which cover three lesson types: oral communication skills, process writing of paragraphs and international multi-class exchange. The authors describe each case study in turn and are quite open about any difficulties in the process. They use their framework, as proposed in Chapter 2, of actions, groups and so on as a basis for building in the variety or blend of lessons. This is an informative chapter, providing real-world examples of the authors’ pedagogical principles. Chapter 7 moves to the institutional level, and gives examples of two Japanese universities with fictional names that have developed programmes for EFL with many classes taught in purpose-built blended learning rooms. Collaboration between staff and the institution were considered important, but the development of a curriculum and resources for blended learning took almost twenty years for one and five for the other. This last point about materials development is important, as any institution wanting to provide a greater focus on



blended learning will need considerable time. The authors stress introducing blended learning incrementally in order to avoid burnout and rushed changes. Chapter 8 finishes with some “further consideration” (which are more like musings), where the authors comment on issues such as professional development and training policy and leadership.

Gruba and Hinkelman have provided a useful practical guide within the field of blend learning. By delving into the theoretical considerations and then moving to the practical applications of blended learning, the authors inform readers of the potential pitfalls and possibilities of this kind of technology. I would thoroughly recommend this text whether you are beginning to work in the area of blended learning or are already in the middle and need a clearer focus. Gruba and Hinkelman’s book contributes to their ultimate aim, which is that the integration of technologies should be “purposeful, appropriate, multimodal and sustainable, and...developed within a community of innovation” (xv).

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**Krzanowski, M. (Ed.). (2011). *Current developments in English for work and the workplace: Approaches, curricula and materials*. Reading: Garnet. ISBN 978 1 85964 653 3 (pbk) 170 pp.**

**Reviewed by Laura Haseley, Wintec**

This book is an IATEFL publication and a compendium mainly authored by members of the IATEFL English for Specific Purposes (ESP) Significant Interest Group (SIG). It focuses on English for work (E4W) and English for the workplace (E4WP), ever-growing sub-fields of ESP. It is difficult to get away from acronyms in this field, and in certain environments E4W and E4WP mean the same thing. However, in the United Kingdom, E4W tends to be aimed at highly-skilled professions (e.g. bankers, lawyers) and E4WP at less skilled professions (e.g. bus drivers, catering staff), hence the need for the two acronyms. Whilst this may appear confusing, it does not play out in this way in the book.

The main focus of ESP has always been on practical outcomes: preparing learners to communicate effectively in their work or study environment. There is a crucial difference in the teaching of ELT and ESP as outlined by Basturkmen (2010, p.8). In an ELT classroom the goals are generally linguistic, (i.e. widen vocabulary, improve oral competence), whereas in the ESP classroom the goals are real-world objectives that require specific linguistic competencies. Language development is therefore only a means to an end. ESP teaching, accordingly, does not follow one accepted pedagogy such as Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), rather it is an approach founded on learners' ultimate reasons for learning the foreign/second language (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). It is, however, important to note that although this book is sub-titled *approaches, curricula and materials*, it is not a book of ESP methodology. Rather, it is a collection of fascinating case studies from around the world of E4W/E4WP practice in EFL and ESL contexts. This is therefore not the starting point for someone interested in writing E4W/E4WP curricula; rather it informs a community of practice. The book consists of 12 chapters, and each chapter is written as an academic paper, with an abstract at the start. The chapters cover a range of interesting and unusual aspects of E4W/E4WP.

The first chapter discusses the Austrian perspective on E4W/E4WP and compares it to European trends. The second takes us to the Middle East for a discussion on the design of a programme for operating room technicians in Saudi Arabia and what made such a programme innovative. Rosinda Ramos focuses on needs analysis for IT companies in Brazil, a fast-growing field, and Bernard Nchindila writes on the pressure points for learners in E4W/E4WP in Africa, particularly with regard to the fact that English is not so much taught as a second language but as a “second-hand language” (2011, p.51). Chapter five looks at the role oral and written communication plays in the workplace in India and identifies the steps involved in business meetings and types of formal letters, with an emphasis on the Indian workplace. Chapter six critically examines the communication practices in the workplace of applied science, engineering and technology (ASET) and those used in higher education in ASET disciplines in South Africa. Chapter seven discusses a workplace communication programme for skilled migrants, a government-funded initiative run by Victoria University of Wellington, and evaluates the success of participants as they enter the workplace as interns. Chapters 8 and 9 take us to Nigeria and look at E4WP practices in Nigeria's academic and professional industries in the last two decades, and best practice in teaching E4WP to agricultural extension workers, respectively. Chapter 10 describes an approach to teaching a business English programme in Yemen and analyses the market forces that mean business English is essential for professional success; chapter 11 keeps us in the Middle East as it presents the development of a challenging ESP course for Omani Air Force Technicians. Finally, chapter 12 discusses a needs analysis of workplace language requirements in Botswana and the measures that could be taken to enhance workplace language use.

For an ESP curriculum developer, the book provides a welcome window into other people's worlds. Krzanowski states in the foreword, "E4W/E4WP offers ESP teachers an opportunity to engage in designing syllabi...for interesting, unique and unusual courses that pose meaningful but rewarding challenges" (2011, p.2). The opportunity to see how others have coped with those challenges is invaluable. Initially I was sceptical that reading about someone else's experiences in Nigeria would help me with curriculum development in New Zealand, but I find instead that I have uncovered a group of colleagues and mentors who are experiencing the very same issues all over the globe. I would strongly recommend this book to anyone involved in ESP curriculum development.

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**Pallant, A. (2012). *English for Academic Study: Writing course book*. Reading: Garnet. Course Book: ISBN 978-1-90861-439-1 (pbk), 94pp.**

**Reviewer: Margaret Bade, Unitec**

This book, from Garnet Education's well-known *English for Academic Study* (EAS) series which includes *EAS: Reading and Writing Source Book*, *EAS Extended Writing & Research Skills*, and listening, speaking, pronunciation and vocabulary course books, is aimed at international students with an IELTS level between 5.0 and 7.5+ who are preparing for academic study in an English-speaking environment. The course book, accompanied by the *Reading & Writing Source Book*, has been trialled by professionals at the University of Reading's International Study and Language Centre (ISLC). This updated comprehensive university preparation course reflects the complex demands of academic writing and will be welcomed by EAP and ESP teachers.

The course book has a contents page but also comes with an informative "book map", which provides the essay topics and unit titles (sustainable energy, the business of science, telemedicine, food security, human resource management, sustainable fashion, and *The Tipping Point*, referring to Malcolm Gladwell's best-seller of that name) as well as the focus for each. Unit 1 reflects on the process of academic writing, while Unit 2 concentrates on writing introductions. Unit 3 looks at using paragraph leaders (topic sentences) and the practice for a timed essay is in Unit 4. Units 5, 7 and

8 look at three specific genres of writing: SPSIE (solution, problem, solution, implication and evaluation), cause and effect and comparison and contrast. Unit 6 concentrates on developing ideas.

A detailed introductory chapter outlines the author's reason for the structure of the units ("an integrated approach to the teaching of writing contributes to the development of the critical thinking skills of the learner", p.10) and illustrates the process approach. The development of critical thinking skills, the micro-skills of writing and the importance of genre are also explained, and a section on timed writing and some practical points on typing out the drafts are included. At the end of the course book is a glossary, an appendix containing an *Assessing my progress form* to complete when the course is finished, and a series of peer evaluation sheets. The author guides the student clearly through the eight units with headings such as: "In this unit you will...", *Texts* (referring to the accompanying source book), *Tasks* and *Unit summary*. The exceptions are Unit 1, which is an introduction to academic writing in the form of a questionnaire, and Unit 8, which reads: "Unit and course summary". Unit 5 (*Food Security*, pp. 41-51) is a typical example, beginning with: "In this unit you will: make decisions about the essay title, and organise your ideas; consider one approach to problem-solving in your writing; learn how to end a paragraph with an effective concluding sentence; and practise effectively writing a conclusion". The *Texts* box refers to food security extracts in the separate *Reading and Writing Source Book*. The first *Task* for the unit is organising the essay using a problem-solving approach; this is followed by a variety of examples and practice activities.

Study tips are also offered throughout the units. The second *Task* is writing an essay on the topic with reference to the texts and a clear plan is given following the process approach to writing, with its drafts and evaluation. *Task 3* focuses on concluding sentences with examples and analysis. *Task 4* heads with "Micro skills: Writing your conclusion." The unit provides a thorough analysis of conclusions. Finally, a one page unit summary encourages the student to reflect on the unit with some task completion. Relevant web sources are given at the end of each unit. If teachers require ideas on how to teach the course, a comprehensive Writing Teacher's Book which contains full answer keys and model answers is available. Other components of the course are a Study Book for self-study, which also includes full answer keys and an EAS (English for Academic Study) website.

With this course book the author presents a successful recipe for preparing students for academic study. My only reservation is the amount of time required for the students to complete the tasks in the course book to the satisfaction of the teacher. Overall, however, this is an impressive, user-friendly course-book which can only add to success in academic writing.

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**Paltridge, B. (2012). *Discourse Analysis: An introduction* (2nd ed.). London: Bloomsbury Academic. 9781441167620 (pbk), 282 pp.**

**Reviewed by Karen Haines, Unitec**

If you are already familiar with Paltridge's *Discourse Analysis* (2006), then this new edition (2012) has few surprises. Its ten chapters comprise an in-depth perspective of discourse analysis, beginning with a broad description of the field (*What is Discourse Analysis?* Ch.1) and ending with suggestions on ways of *Doing Discourse Analysis* (Ch. 10). The intervening chapters discuss how discourse can be analysed from different perspectives such as genre, pragmatics and grammar as well as chapters on critical and corpus approaches to analysis. This second addition includes a new chapter on multimodal discourse analysis. If you want to use the book for yourself as an introduction to the field of discourse analysis or as a reference, Paltridge writes in a lively style that is very accessible. Each chapter ends with a brief summary. If you intend to use the book as a teaching text, then as well as giving a broad and up to date perspective of different aspects of discourse analysis, each chapter also includes discussion questions, exercises and ideas for data analysis projects and suggestions for further reading in the area. The final chapter includes a list of journals that have studies from a discourse perspective, as well as useful websites. The appendix gives answers to the exercises from each chapter, and the book concludes with a glossary of key terms, bibliography and index.

An issue faced by a book dealing with discourse analysis is the currency of examples given. As well as making reference to seminal studies in the area, Paltridge uses many illustrations from recent studies of discourse analysis by other writers. These include contemporary examples of discourse from political figures like Barack Obama, from TV programmes such as 'Sex and the City' and from newspapers and magazines (*Time*, *Cosmopolitan*). A bonus with the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition is a companion website. You need to register (this is free), although resources are not extensive at the moment. This gives access to the Lecturer Resources. For each chapter of *Discourse Analysis*, you can download a powerpoint, a list of references and extended reading suggestions. There are clearly plans to add further student and professional resources in the future.

Overall, this book is an easy-to-read introduction to the field, while its depth and scope make it a comprehensive reference point for those experienced in discourse analysis.

## NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

1. Contributions to *The TESOLANZ Journal* are welcomed from language educators and applied linguists within and outside Aotearoa/New Zealand, especially those working in Australia and countries in the South Pacific.
2. Contributions should in general be no longer than 5000 words.
3. Referencing conventions should follow that specified in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6<sup>th</sup> Edition). This publication is available in most university libraries. In the text, references should be cited using the author's last name and date of publication. If quotations are cited, the reference should include page numbers (Brindley, 1989, pp. 45–46). The reference list at the end of the article should be arranged in alphabetical order. The reference list should only include items specifically cited in the text.
4. As far as possible, comments and references should be incorporated into the text but, where necessary, endnotes may be placed after the main body of the article, before the list of references, under the heading Notes.
5. All graphics should be suitable for publication and need no change.
6. It is understood that manuscripts submitted have not been previously published and are not under consideration for publication elsewhere.
7. Enquiries and draft submissions should be sent by email to the corresponding Editor, Dr Angela Joe, Victoria University of Wellington, [angela.joe@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:angela.joe@vuw.ac.nz). The preferred format is WORD.
8. All submissions should be accompanied by a full mailing address, a telephone number and, if available, an email addresses and/or fax number.
9. Submissions will be considered by the Editors and members of the Editorial Board.
10. Those interested in submitting a book review should contact the Review Editor, University of Auckland, [r.wette@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:r.wette@auckland.ac.nz)
11. The closing date for the submission of manuscripts for 2014 is **Monday 1<sup>st</sup> September**.