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# THE TESOLANZ JOURNAL

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## CONTENTS

**EDITORIAL** .....i

### ARTICLES

Connecting with New Zealand: The effect of the online mode on student experiences of an English language training course.....1

*Tim Edwards*

Instant messaging and the facilitation of collaborative, student-led learning and teacher-support: The NZCEL EAP scenario.....17

*Anthea Fester & George Horvath*

Mainstreaming English language learners in state secondary school infrastructure in New Zealand: Some ways forward.....31

*Geraldine Anne McCarthy*

Warming up and activating mind, body and emotions in pronunciation instruction ....49

*Skye Playsted, Michael Burri & William Acton*

Using concept maps in academic L2 writing instruction.....56

*Ann O'Byrne & Rosemary Wette*

Academic single and multiword vocabulary in EFL textbooks: Case studies from Indonesia and China.....75

*Averil Coxhead, Yurieke Rahmat & Lu Yang*

Teacher beliefs and strategies for using L1 in adult ESP classrooms in Japanese companies.....89

*Andrew Thompson*

### BOOK REVIEWS

Lexical grammar: Activities for teaching chunks and exploring patterns  
*Reviewed by Ha Hoang*..... 105

Teaching and learning vocabulary in EFL  
*Reviewed by Aynur Ismayilli Karakoc*..... 107

The power of interest for motivation and engagement  
*Reviewed by Naning Tri Wahyuni* .....109

Being an interdisciplinary academic: How institutions shape university careers  
*Reviewed by Marilyn Lewis*.....112

**NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS**.....114

## EDITORIAL

With the global pandemic, 2020 has been a very difficult year across the world. Educators generally, and the TESOL community in particular, have been badly affected by the inability of students and teachers to travel. For both students and teachers, the pandemic has also meant a move out of the comfort zone of the classroom to online teaching. Language is particularly difficult to teach and learn online, yet TESOL practitioners have found a range of creative ways of achieving this as our first article in this year's issue attests.

Our first article, by Tim Edwards, responds to the problems raised by online teaching during the pandemic, and how students experienced this. His article concerns an ESP programme with a central focus on students building connections with New Zealand culture, society and people. It considers the impact on students' learning of a move to online teaching. Using interviews and a questionnaire, the study found that although students felt their experiences had not been as good as they had expected, they nevertheless did build some connections with and knowledge of New Zealand culture.

Our second article, by Anthea Fester and George Horvath, reports on a study of the language learning affordances of an online instant messaging app. Their study explores the benefit to language learners from additional communication and support outside of formal learning hours. Taking advantage of students' widespread use of instant messaging apps, they introduced the use of WeChat as an informal way for student-led interaction and support, as well as for students and teachers to interact. Findings were that the messaging app was used far more than envisaged, such as for sharing content, clarification of assessment details, technical support and for sharing social events.

Geraldine McCarthy's article investigates English language learners mainstreaming in New Zealand secondary schools. It used interview data from a larger, qualitative study on linguistic and cultural diversity. Findings were that subject and timetable choices for English language learners often prioritised mainstream integration over the academic support that ESOL provides. It also found that academic and social support were available for English language learners, but that that English language learners, as well as ESOL and mainstream staff all experienced difficulties with mainstreaming.

Pronunciation teaching is the subject of an article by Playsted, Burri and Acton. They report on haptic pronunciation teaching where a "pre-session" warm-up is seen as essential. The article usefully describes three warm-up techniques, and discusses how student responses, instructor observations as well as support from the literature point to the potential value of warming-up in the pronunciation classroom.

The use of concept maps in pre-writing planning is the theme of O'Byrne and Wette's article. Their study focuses on developing students' genre knowledge and procedural writing skills by using concept maps as a pre-writing aid. Students' essays at the end of

course showed evidence of greater knowledge of the discourse patterns and rhetorical features of the text type. An outline of the unit of instruction is provided.

Averil Coxhead, Yurieke Rahmat and Lu Yang report on analyses of vocabulary in general EFL textbooks used in Indonesia and China to prepare learners for academic studies in English. Results indicate that the textbooks contain higher proportions of Academic Vocabulary List (AVL) items compared to the Academic Word List (AWL), and low levels of general academic multiword units. This suggests that these general English textbooks need to be adapted to better prepare learners for university studies in English.

The final article, by Andrew Thompson, investigates ESP teachers' beliefs about the use of L1 in teaching and how these compare with previous findings in EFL and ESL contexts. His article reports on qualitative interviews with six ESP teachers in Japan which were used to identify teacher beliefs and their strategies regarding L1 use. The study found that many of the teachers incorporated L1 into their lessons in strategic ways and justified this in terms of helping lower proficiency learners, using class time efficiently, as well as other reasons based on their experience teaching English and/or learning a foreign language.

This issue's four book reviews cover a range of subjects of importance to language teaching. Ha Hoang reviews Selivan's 2018 book on lexical grammar, Aynur Ismayilli Karakoc reviews the 2019 book on vocabulary teaching by Nation and Gu, Naning Tri Wahyuni reviews a book on motivation and engagement by Renninger and Hidi and Marilyn Lewis's review concerns a 2019 book by Lyall on interdisciplinarity and its influence on the careers of university teachers.

My sincere thanks to all contributors, as well as to the editorial board and reviewers who generously gave their time and expertise to review contributions to the journal.

Notes for contributors to the TESOLANZ Journal are included at the end of the issue. Please contact the editor [jean.parkinson@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:jean.parkinson@vuw.ac.nz) if you require additional information. The closing date for submissions for 2021 is 2<sup>nd</sup> August.

Jean Parkinson

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## **ARTICLES**

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# CONNECTING WITH NEW ZEALAND: THE EFFECT OF THE ONLINE MODE ON STUDENT EXPERIENCES OF AN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TRAINING COURSE

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## Abstract

*During the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic many countries and their educational institutions went into lockdown with courses suspended or conducted online. This study examines studying online experiences of participants on an ESP programme, the English Language Training for Officials programme, at a New Zealand university during this period. The aims of the programme include building connections with and understanding of New Zealand society and culture. The study uses survey data and semi-structured interviews to compare the 2020 cohort's experiences with those of a 2019 cohort who were not impacted by the pandemic. Results indicate that while the 2020 cohort did feel that they had built connections with and understanding of New Zealand society and culture, the quality and amount of this were negatively impacted by the online mode. Suggestions are made about how to prepare staff and students better in future through preparation for and familiarity with using online interaction methods.*

## Introduction

This report uses an ESP programme taught at a university in New Zealand to demonstrate the effects of the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic which forced many education programmes to be taught online with little warning. The following sections outline the programme and COVID-19 disruptions in general. Literature related to language, culture and online (language) learning, and international research on learning online through COVID-19 is then reviewed. Then the researcher uses data gathered from surveys and interviews to examine how participants on this programme felt about programme elements designed to facilitate engagement with New Zealand people, culture, and society. Participants' experiences under COVID-19 online learning conditions are compared with those of an earlier on-campus cohort.

With uncertainty surrounding future cohorts of international students being able to take part in on-campus programmes, this research investigates the effectiveness of virtual interactions as a substitute for 'real life' interaction when building cultural and social understanding and experience. It aims to inform the programme staff and others in the international education community of the effectiveness of the activities and interactions which took place in this field for this cohort and offer recommendations for the future.

## Background

The New Zealand English Language Training for Officials (NZELTO) programme is taught by the English Language Institute at Victoria University of Wellington (VUW)

and develops English Language and Professional skills for government officials from developing Asian and African nations. The programmes run in New Zealand for between 10 and 26 weeks supported by the New Zealand Government Aid programme. The researcher teaches on the programme.

One of NZELTO's many goals is to build understanding of New Zealand culture and society, build positive connections with New Zealand and New Zealanders, and maintain those into the future (curriculum and activity design documents; MFAT, n.d.). Such understanding and connections are developed through various activities organised by both academic and pastoral staff. Activities include face-to-face interactions and experiences in class, guest lectures from local experts, visits to New Zealand workplaces, field trips to provincial towns, and interactions with conversation partners (volunteer locals who converse with the participants about life in New Zealand, often during visits to local sights). Participants spend the initial weeks of the programme living with homestay families and studying at technical institutes to develop knowledge of New Zealand society, culture and people and develop language skills prior to coming to Wellington.

During the COVID-19 global pandemic, associated public health emergencies and 'stay home' (lockdown) orders beginning in week 2 of the Wellington programme, many of these activities in Wellington could not take place or took place in a virtual form. Workplace visits did not happen and guest lectures took place via recordings or Zoom. The conversation partner programme was partially maintained through online communication. Interaction in this area increased somewhat as lockdown conditions were eased after eight weeks. Zoom-based casual and professional small-group conversation sessions were organised for several evenings during the lockdown period, led by a range of volunteers such as Ministry of Primary Industries staff, scientists, and a lecturer. Eight out of twelve planned weeks of on-campus teaching in Wellington took place online.

### **Language, culture, and online learning**

Language and culture are linked (Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013), with Newton (2009) going so far as to call them "intertwined and inseparable" (p.2), with learning culture an integral part of all language learning. Studying in a community that speaks the target language provides opportunities for engagement in associated society and culture(s). This concept informed the course aims outlined above, as have the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade's (MFAT) aid aims of developing country relationships (MFAT, 2015; n.d.), and the university's aims that graduates are able to demonstrate international perspectives (VUW, n.d.). While the NZELTO programme has several aims, including linguistic and professional, this study focuses on how students from developing South East Asian countries were able to achieve the aims of engaging with and learning about New Zealanders and their society and culture.

Online learning interactions, while allowing flexibility in study time and location, have a chequered history (Ragusa & Crampton, 2017; Harrell, 2013), with some literature demonstrating a negative impact (Taggart, 2017) from a lack of real-life connections to people. However, online interactions have been found to be effective for tertiary learning when building relationships, a sense of belonging to a community, and lifelong independent learning skills (Dhawan, 2020; Harrell, 2013), including for development of language and cultural knowledge (Carrió-Pastor, 2019). It is seen as especially important for online learning to plan opportunities to engage with peers and instructors to counter the effects of not being in the group's physical presence (Delahunty et al., 2014; Gómez-Rey et al., 2018). This article focuses on learning culture with language online—an area with little existing research.

### **Learning online through COVID-19**

The switch to teaching NZELTO online came with two days' formal warning, preceded by several days' university-wide advice to prepare for a likely switch. Staff on the programme had to find new ways of teaching and providing opportunities for students to build connections with the host society, culture, and people using Zoom, a platform experiencing a sudden surge in use in many fields (e.g., Paukner, 2020). This situation was faced by teachers worldwide with multiple news stories and collaborative networks discussing the situation and providing advice. Organisations globally accepted that less would be achieved and achieved less well than usual (Mahul-Mellier, 2020). They accepted that something is better than nothing, and good enough was an acceptable short-term aim (Pringle, 2020).

Although the COVID-19 situation is ongoing at time of writing, provisional results from monitoring the student experience of sudden switching to online learning do exist (e.g., WPRN, 2020; Matias & Leavitt, 2020). Douglass (2020) found surveyed students at all levels in North America appreciate the support they received and opportunities to keep learning and to learn a new way to learn, but express clear preferences for learning on campus with physical social interaction (findings echoed by Chiew Hong, 2020, and Vurdien, 2019). Reported issues (Douglass, 2020; Todd, 2020) included inequities with online literacy, access to technology and appropriate learning environments, and disparity related to demographics. Dhawan (2020) clarifies that online learning technologies can provide flexibility for communication with students but can also hamper communication depending on student and teacher skills, engagement, and facilities. Daniels et al. (2020), surveying students worldwide early in the pandemic, found reduced wellbeing especially for students away from campus or learning-conducive environments.

The survey of North American students, created by the SERU Consortium and discussed by Douglass (2020), was also conducted at the researcher's university (VUW, 2020) and produced comparable results. Students reported missing social interactions and appropriate learning environments or technology, but appreciated the university's support efforts and, in some cases, schedule flexibility. International students expressed

clear preferences for face-to-face educational experiences, again reflecting Douglass (2020) as well as IDP (2020). A range of other ongoing research is looking into the effects of COVID-19 on students, with results yet to be reported.

Online education has existed for some time and is usually planned from the outset to be delivered online. The literature reviewed above focuses on programmes not originally designed to be taught online but which switched to online modes with little or no warning (Douglass, 2020), and the experiences of staff and students on those programmes. In order in this article to investigate the experiences of the students on one such programme, the NZELTO programme, with a focus on aims of building students' connections with and understanding of their host society and culture, the following research questions were formulated.

### **Research Questions (RQs)**

1. How did the 2020 NZELTO student cohort feel about their achievement of goals to gain lasting understanding of New Zealand society and culture and connections with New Zealand and New Zealanders?
2. What activities and interactions helped develop this understanding and connection?
3. How does this experience compare to the most recent previous cohort (not affected by COVID-19)?

### **Method**

It is hard to measure, in quantitative terms, achievement of goals and outcomes in relation to gaining a lasting understanding of New Zealand society and culture, and establishing connections with New Zealand and New Zealanders. In the NZELTO programme this is usually assessed at the programme's conclusion by questions embedded within a secure online survey, and through comments made during evaluative discussions facilitated by tertiary education professionals from outside of the programme. Student comments in reflective journals can also indicate whether connections are being built. The survey provides some data both from open-ended and closed-ended questions about the aspects of the course in question.

### **Data collection**

Data for this report was collected in June and July 2020 from participants in the 2020 NZELTO cohort and the most recent 2019 cohort as the most comparable cohort which had experienced the 'usual' programme. Data was collected from a survey sent to all participants of the two cohorts and from semi-structured interviews (Friedman, 2012) with a sample of students from each cohort.

Since ethical considerations precluded the researcher from using data collected in 2019, relevant questions from the late-2019 survey were used to create a secure online survey covering only the aspects of the programme relating to gaining understanding of and connections with New Zealand people, society, and culture (this is hereafter referred to

as the 2019 survey). Students from 2019 were asked by email to volunteer to take part in the survey in order to provide ways of enhancing the course for its future participants who may include some of their colleagues. The 2020 cohort had the same questions embedded within their end-of-course survey. See Appendix 1 for survey questions. All answers are anonymised automatically.

The interviewees were volunteers and the interviews took place after all course assessment had been marked (see Appendix 1 for interview questions). The interviewee participants agreed to give a 10-to-20-minute interview. Interviews with students in New Zealand took place face-to-face. Interviews with students in their home countries were conducted online. Interviews were audio recorded. Ethics approval was gained from the university and pseudonyms were used for reporting.

Interview questions were informed by the programme goals and by in-course reflective journals by the students highlighting some of their activities and interactions. Once interviews had been transcribed by the researcher, the interviews were reviewed reiteratively for themes which emerged repeatedly (see Baralt, 2012, pp. 229-238 for more about reiterative analysis of spoken data).

### Participants

From the 2019 cohort, 41 of the 59 students (69%) took the survey, while 59 out of 63 students (94%) of the 2020 cohort completed the end-of-course survey. Participants are from Myanmar, Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam, Indonesia, Timor-Leste and Mongolia and work in government departments in their home countries. The pool of potential respondents has a roughly even gender split.

Table 1 describes interviewee participants. Interview data was collected from interviewing nine students from the 2019 cohort and eight from 2020.

Table 1:

*Demographic information on participants.*

*2019 cohort*

<b>Student</b>	<b>Nationality</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Gender</b>
Vi	Vietnam	43	F
Loc	Vietnam	33	M
Ratha	Cambodia	38	M
Va	Cambodia	32	M
Mee	Laos	26	M
Soyol	Mongolia	39	F
Tio	Indonesia	36	M
Salim	Indonesia	34	M
Arif	Indonesia	39	M

*2020 cohort*

<b>Student</b>	<b>Nationality</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Gender</b>
Panha	Cambodia	32	M
Fajar	Indonesia	38	M
Tok	Laos	29	M
Phout	Laos	27	F
Mya	Myanmar	40	F
Betu	Timor-Leste	46	M
Ngan	Vietnam	30	F
Huong	Vietnam	42	F

**Findings: 2019 Cohort**

The survey showed that all except one respondent felt that their understanding of New Zealand society and culture had improved and that they had formed positive relationships with New Zealand and New Zealanders. To get information about how and why they felt this was achieved the researcher looked at the open-ended questions and interview responses. Survey responses are presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2:

*2019 survey responses*

<b>Question</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>
My understanding of New Zealand culture and society has improved	75.6%	22.0%	0.00%	2.4%
I have formed positive relationships with New Zealand and New Zealanders	65.9%	29.3%	0.00%	2.4%

One participant responded *strongly disagree* to the questions above. While it is possible this respondent indeed felt they had not increased understanding or built relationships, it is also possible that they misunderstood the question or misread the direction of the scale responses. Due to anonymity we lack details to know which way to read this response, but it certainly goes against the grain of other responses now and in 2019.

For the remaining 40 respondents to the 2019 survey, the free-form answers regarding understanding New Zealand culture repeatedly list conversation partners, homestay, theme work, class activities, discussion with multinational class/flatmates, and Māori cultural activities several times. Apart from the one participant discussed above, there were no other negative comments in the survey, a few suggestions for more cultural interaction, and many appreciative comments.

Field trip and workplace visits were discussed by 34% of the 2019 respondents with several explicit references to a three-day field-trip, and to physical workplace visits. In addition, international food sharing and concert performances were mentioned by 37% of respondents. Finally, respondents also made four mentions of activities such as ‘walking around’ and ‘visiting museums’.

Interview responses revealed more details from individual participants. Analysis of the interviews revealed themes around New Zealand society, culture and personal connections, and around professional learning and connections. Each of these themes is discussed below.

### ***New Zealand society, culture and personal connections***

Every interviewee discussed conversation partners and activities with them as the main way they had connected with New Zealanders. Eight also discussed homestay families in this context. Example quotes referring to developing understanding of New Zealand society and culture and to maintaining connections include Tio noting repeated evidence of “truly custom of New Zealander because my conversation partner and host family do the same thing”, and Mee discussing his conversation partner’s lifestyle: “...he live alone, so he wants the people to talk to him every day...I learn about culture of New Zealand, especially Kiwi culture.”

There was also evidence of the participants noticing differences within the country and between New Zealand and participants’ home countries. Further commentary from Tio and Mee illustrate this:

When I was in Nelson when I say hello to the people...they say hello, where are you from. But while I was living in Wellington...when I say hello to the people sometime they don’t care. (Mee)

...[attending church is an] activity that I will never do in Indonesia because it’s hard to access church while I’m Muslim...so the open society when they open to everybody...we can build understanding. (Tio)

### ***Professional learning and connections***

Connections with professionals and learning from them during in-person workplace visits were also described positively. Example quotes discuss learning about the work environment (“I saw the New Zealand culture, how they work, how they activity, what they do”, Va), discovering a safety-first approach (“The most different things is about the safety...in my country in some places is not very concerned about the safety”, Arif), and maintaining professional connections into the future (“I try to write email to just ask him...any new project we can make the collaboration between Vietnam and New Zealand”, Loc).

### Findings: 2020 Cohort

Similar to data from the 2019 participants, all 59 participants from 2020 reported that their understanding of New Zealand society and culture had improved, and they had formed positive relationships with New Zealand and New Zealanders (as per Table 3).

Table 3:  
*2020 survey responses*

Question	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
My understanding of New Zealand culture and society has improved	61.7%	38.3%	0.00%	0.00%
I have formed positive relationships with New Zealand and New Zealanders	71.2%	28.8%	0.00%	0.00%

The free-text answers indicate how and why participants feel like this, with responses very similar to those from the 2019 participants. Conversation partners and activities with them were mentioned 16 times. Other activities receiving multiple mentions, including several undertaken pre-lockdown, were theme work, field trips or workplace visits, guest lectures, discussion groups, speed reading on New Zealand topics, Māori Culture/Marae, multinational classmates, and homestay. Individual quotations from the surveys include, “foods such as fish and chips have helped understand in New Zealand culture”. Interviews allowed greater details to be explored, analysis again revealing themes around New Zealand society, culture and personal connections, and around professional connections, but also feelings of missing aspects of these experiences because of studying online.

#### *New Zealand society, culture and personal connections*

All interviewees discussed learning about New Zealand society and culture and how they had done so. As with the 2019 interviewees, all discussed conversation partners and several referred to homestay families and moments of everyday life encountered on the streets either side of lockdown. Most comments about homestays had references to culture and society embedded, such as Ngan saying:

She took me to the beach, and I know about the weekend and the hobby of New Zealanders...sometimes they my host take us to participate in their parties with especially their relatives. So we also enjoy and know more about the life of New Zealanders.

An important element for cultural exchanges during lockdown was meeting conversation partners. Every interviewee said that they had met conversation partners online in various ways. Despite mixed levels of engagement, clear appreciation was still evident, with Fajar reporting:

I can know her family and know her habit. We can meet once a week, during the lockdown is online, but after the lockdown we met each other in real life.

There was also discussion of intent to maintain some connections built in New Zealand. This was generally through social media, but some hoped to meet again in person, with Betu saying,

...my homestay family they are very kind people...I also told them that if one day you are visiting Timor-Leste just let me know. We are like family, so we are keep in touch.

### ***Professional connections***

Building enduring professional connections with New Zealand was the other 2019 theme also present in in the 2020 interviews. Seven of the 2020 interviewees described interaction they had with people related to their profession in a New Zealand context, in regional locations or Ministry staff by Zoom in Wellington. There was also evidence that some interviewees hoped to maintain these connections in the future. For example, when discussing ministerial connections Fajar said, “I hope this connections and relations to continue. I hope in the future I can be a bridge between my country and New Zealand”; meanwhile, Panha seemed to have hopes related to immigration, saying, “we exchanged our contacts...he is also open to seasonal workers.”

### ***Online study impacting the experience***

All interviewees felt that aspects of the programme had been negatively impacted by studying online. Betu commented on finding New Zealand cultural information from YouTube rather than conversation partners, with whom he said several of his peers found difficulty interacting or even getting in contact with during lockdown. Other comments revealed feelings that professional connections were built online less effectively than in person. Some telling quotes from other interviewees on this topic include:

Zoom is quite not good but is really better than nothing. (Phout)

Virtual workplace visit also happened but I think it’s much better if we have the opportunity to get real experiences.” (Ngan)

...face-to-face meetings...much better than online, it is not very clearly condition. (Mya)

It was not only interactions with conversation partners and professional connections that impacted the students’ experience of engaging with New Zealand. As an example, Huong had to cancel Easter travel plans to Queenstown:

This is my regret about during the time in New Zealand...we don’t have snow in the winter, so I want to come to touch the real snow and discover the beautiful landscape in New Zealand.

The 2020 survey also revealed some comments regarding online study due to COVID-19 reducing ability to build cultural knowledge and connections. There were ten mentions of lockdown and use of Zoom making conversation practice less available and effective, four mentions of stress, and two of connectivity issues reducing opportunities. Six 2020 survey participants expressed negative sentiments around lack of opportunities to visit workplaces and New Zealand locations.

Not all impacts of lockdown were considered negative. Nine survey participants commented on developing new skills through the online learning experience and there was appreciation of effort made to maintain some level of learning and interaction. For example, Huong revealed:

This is a new method for me it is the first time I attended by and try by internet learning...I can learn...new techniques from this classes...I think face-to-face is better of course...but in this COVID conditions I think maintaining the online course is the best solution for us. I think all of us tried to adapt.

### **Results and Discussion**

Overall, RQs 1 and 2 (respectively, the 2020 cohort's feelings about developing lasting understanding of New Zealand culture and society and connections with New Zealand and New Zealanders, and how that was achieved), can be discussed together. The 2020 cohort felt that they did increase their understanding of New Zealand society and culture through interaction and experiences with homestay families, conversation partners online and eventually offline, online conversation groups, and occasionally the general public. However, the participants repeatedly commented that the quality and amount of interactions and learning was less than what they expected due to being conducted online or rendered impossible due to lockdown or technology issues. It is encouraging that the course's aims in this respect can be achieved, even if not as well as under 'normal' conditions.

Such findings are not unique, with access to and ability to use technology being a factor in the experience of students internationally (Education Endowment Foundation, 2020; Douglass, 2020), and a preference for in-person interaction that builds stronger communities being expressed (Taggart, 2017; Kauppi et al., 2020). Also following contemporary research (Douglass, 2020), the students in this study expressed an appreciation of the effort to keep some type of leaning and community available.

To investigate RQ3 (comparison with non-COVID-19-affected cohort), the researcher compared the 2020 participant responses with the 2019 ones. Many similar interaction types and activities were mentioned positively by both cohorts. However, the 2019 cohort made no negative comments, proportionally listed field trips and workplace visits more than twice as many times (activities barely available to the 2020 cohort), and 37% of 2019 respondents listed international cultural and food activities done as a group while only 1% of 2020 responses covered this. This difference also matched international findings from the studies referred to above, with learning experiences

which moved online unexpectedly found to be less varied and engaging than those on campus.

Both cohorts' surveys indicated 97.6-100% agreement or strong agreement with the statements My understanding of New Zealand culture and society has improved and I have formed positive relationships with New Zealand and New Zealanders. At a more detailed level, the 2020 respondents gave 5.2% more strongly agree responses than the 2019 respondents to the latter statement. In contrast, the 2020 survey and interview open responses indicated the experiences in general and the relationships built were of a lesser quality than those experienced by the 2019 cohort.

Two things could explain this contrast. Firstly, the difference between agree and strongly agree is subjective and no participant experienced both iterations of the programme, so this cannot be directly compared. Secondly, the interviews and free-form comments enabled participants to express their thoughts and experiences in words with qualifications; many added that they appreciated efforts to offer something rather than nothing and of conversation partners to keep in touch using often-unfamiliar technology. This may have (accurately!) led to feelings of New Zealand programme staff and community members caring for course participants and thus impacted the quantitative assessment of forming relationships, even if the experiences of the actual interactions were not as useful as expected. It may also be that choosing the strongly agree response option was a way to show appreciation for effort.

The 2020 cohort simply had less variety and quality of experiences available to them. They felt that while they gained an understanding of New Zealand society and culture, and established connections with New Zealand and New Zealanders which could last into the future, doing this mostly through online interactions was less effective than doing it in person. One quote from a 2019 interview participant sums up the desired experience, not had by the 2020 cohort:

I wanted to very much to go to New Zealand and explore the life, the custom and the culture in New Zealand, is very like a mystique for me...after this time I know much about that and it's a unforgettable time in my life, unforgettable experience, yes, I love this time very much. (Vi)

### **Implications and suggestions for further research**

Findings from this research included a perception that learning and interacting online was of lower quality than face-to-face, partly due to familiarity with and reliability of the technology involved. It is quite plausible that programmes worldwide will need to be run online again (Todd, 2020). It is recognised that external events often force switching to teaching online and that planning for this is often lacking, so it is worth preparing students, staff and resilient IT infrastructure for future online learning (Rieley, 2018; Dhawan, 2020; Tull et al., 2017). One option may be to have scheduled teaching-online days to keep students and staff familiar with practicalities, something the National University of Singapore has been doing for some years (Wong, 2020).

Encouraging others involved in the programme, such as conversation partners and workplace visit hosts, to be familiar with useful technology would also enable more meaningful interactions. Carrió-Pastor (2019) brings together many suggestions on how to do this. One such example, the use of videoconferencing to help language learners interact with target language speakers and gain different perspectives (Echevarría, 2019), where preparation by both ‘sides’ of the interactions is key. Programme staff, students and other participants therefore need to practice online interactions, become familiar with and test the reliability of the technology, and plan ways of engaging through this medium as effectively as possible. These suggestions of building familiarity with and being prepared for teaching online apply to teachers and students in all educational (and many other professional) contexts, not only adult and language learners.

With this present research, the 2019 cohort were asked to recall events from many months earlier while they were busy dealing with their own immediate COVID-19 situations. As a result, only 69% of the cohort submitted survey responses and participants from two countries did not volunteer for interviews. It would be useful for all participants in the end-of-course survey to be asked to allow use of their responses for anonymised research rather than simply internal reporting. Research on future cohorts, who may be expecting a blended mode of delivery, would allow comparison with the 2019 all-face-to-face and 2020 unexpectedly-online cohorts.

## Conclusion

Evidence from the NZELTO programme’s students and wider research revealed acceptance of the necessity of online learning, something likely to remain to some degree under the ‘new normal’, but a clear preference for face-to-face interactions. Course planners and teaching staff, whether on this programme or any other, need to plan for resilience and to have courses that can be effectively taught using different modes. This requires training, infrastructure, and practice for staff and students.

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## Appendix 1. Questions guiding semi-structured interviews

Apart from English, what else did you learn on the NZELTO programme?

What else would you have liked/did you hope to learn?

You mentioned that you learned/developed .....What activities helped you develop this?

Why and how do you feel you have a different level of understanding of New Zealand society and culture now, compared to before the programme?

(If necessary: can you remember how and when you developed this understanding?)

Please explain whether and how you developed any connections with New Zealand people that you hope will last after you leave the country  
(potential follow-up questions about classmates, and how this was done, any special effort made by students, etc)

What different types of connection with New Zealand or New Zealanders have you developed and why are these important?

Do you feel anything about the programme you experienced could have been done differently to help enhance your understanding of New Zealand culture and society?

If necessary: In last year's end of course survey, NZELTO students reported finding the conversation partner and workplace visit elements of the programme useful. Can you comment on these aspects of the programme from your experience?

**Pertinent questions embedded within standard end of course Qualtrics survey, June 2020 or completed by 2019 cohort as a stand-alone Qualtrics survey in July 2020.**

Which course activities in Wellington have helped you understand other cultures better, including New Zealand culture?

For each statement, choose the appropriate box for your experience during Part Two.

<b>Question</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>
My understanding of New Zealand culture and society has improved.				
I have formed positive relationships with New Zealand and New Zealanders.				

Do you have any other comments?

# INSTANT MESSAGING AND THE FACILITATION OF COLLABORATIVE, STUDENT-LED LEARNING AND TEACHER-SUPPORT: THE NZCEL EAP SCENARIO

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## Abstract

*In the last couple of decades, the increased use of technology in the education sector has led to smartphone use becoming more prevalent in supporting students' learning. Apart from applications (apps) specifically designed for language educational purposes, such as Duolingo, there are also instant messaging apps that are not specifically designed for education purposes, but that can be useful in supporting learners. These include instant messaging apps such as, WhatsApp and WeChat. Instead of relegating phone app use to merely a source of entertainment and distraction, teachers increasingly use them as a vital form of communication to enhance education, including language learning. Apps have thus shifted from a tangential position to the forefront of the learning space. For the purposes of this research project, WeChat was used as the messaging app. This article focuses on the initial findings of a pilot study and concentrates on the perceived purposes for the participants' posts as they relate to the use of the app as a tool for collaboration, peer-support, and knowledge sharing. Data was gathered through an online survey, semi-structured interviews, and an analysis of the WeChat posts. Analysis of the posts and comments made by students during the interviews suggest that the tool formed a vital link between them, their classmates and teachers, and, at times, served as a social platform underlying the key educational purposes of the programme.*

## Introduction

A considerable amount of research has been published on the use of smartphone instant messaging apps in language education. Despite the availability of this research, there remains a paucity of evidence on the benefits to language learners of using an instant messaging app as a tool for a supportive, collaborative and mainly student-led EAP environment. The main purpose of this article is to suggest how an instant messaging app, such as *WeChat*, can be used as an avenue for informal additional information exchange to complement the more formal classroom and Learning Management System (LMS) platform environment. The EAP tertiary environment described in the article is a New Zealand Certificate in English Language (NZCEL) Level 4 Academic programme.

A Vygotskian embedded socio-cultural (SC) approach was used to underpin this research. One of the key tenets of the approach is a focus on collaborative learning between learners and their peers. This study describes the use of an instant messaging app to promote collaborative learning. In this article the term *collaborative* is used to

mean working together to support learning and sharing information; the term *student-led* suggests student-initiated sharing of knowledge rather than teacher-initiated sharing.

### **Literature Review**

Three pertinent areas to this study will be discussed in this literature review. Initially, some aspects of the socio-cultural theoretical approach will be described as the underpinning theory for this study. Following that, the notion of incorporating social networking systems into second language teaching will be addressed and then some previous research on the use of instant messaging apps, such as *WeChat* and *WhatsApp* will be explored.

#### ***Socio-cultural perspective***

From a theoretical perspective, the research reported has a strong socio-cultural underpinning as the focus is on collaboration and support where learning occurs socially between learners, and with their teachers, in the instant messaging app space.

In his seminal work, Vygotsky (1978) elaborated on the notion of socio-cultural theory, where the emphasis was on the idea that human intelligence is initially developed in society and that learning occurs socially prior to individual learning. This theory highlights the point that social interaction is central to cognitive development. Several researchers (including van Lier, 2004, Lantolf & Thorne, 2006; Lantolf & Poehner, 2014; Gánem-Gutiérrez, 2018) have explored a range of aspects related to Socio-cultural theory (SCT). Lantolf and Thorne (2006, p. 4) addressed the relevance of SCT to learning additional languages, stating that SCT is “a theory of mediated mental communication, it is most compatible with theories of language that focus on communication, cognition, and the meanings rather than on formal positions that privilege structure”. With the use of a social instant messaging app as a tool (artefact) to promote informal language learning and support as in the study reported here, the communication that is highlighted in an SCT approach is evident.

In addition to the general benefits of using an SCT approach mentioned above, some research has focused specifically on collaboration or affordances of adopting this approach within the learning space. For example, the concept of affordances, as they relate to the use of technology tools and the concepts of ecological and socio-cultural theory, were investigated by van Lier (2004) and highlights the connection between the environment learners find themselves in, the ability to use what is in that environment (including technological ability/tools) and their perceived opportunities to act within the environment. More recent research by Gánem-Gutiérrez (2018) highlighted the collaborative nature of using the virtual world, with the research focused on using wikis, 3D virtual worlds (3D VWs) and 3D digital games. Gánem-Gutiérrez, (2018), in addressing the connection between a SCT approach and collaboration, highlights the key role that interaction plays for both mental and sociocultural engagement when learning a language. These previous studies provide insight into the potential of using an instant messaging app for collaboration, which is explored in this paper.

While addressing the SCT construct, Li (2018) asserts that all our activities are facilitated by using symbolic signs and language as tools (physically and psychologically). This suggests that there is constant interpreting and establishing of meaning so that learners are seen to be active meaning-making agents. Taking these tenets of SCT into account, it is a suitable approach to underpin the exploration in the research reported here. Furthermore, there does not appear to be any previous research conducted on the use of the *WeChat* app to promote student-led learning, collaboration and teacher support in a New Zealand (or another Western) EAP environment.

### ***Integrating social networking sites (SNS) into second language learning/ acquisition***

The benefits of using social networking sites (SNS) in language learning has been postulated by several researchers over the last decade (Dogoriti et al., 2014; Bull et al., 2008; Lai, 2016; Kacetyl & Klímová, 2019; Keogh, 2017). The emphasis on the idea that interaction in a socially constructed space between students and students as well as between teachers and students, promotes the concepts underpinning an SCT approach. For example, Dogoriti et al. (2014) investigated the use of *Facebook* to promote a sense of community amongst language learners while simultaneously using *Moodle*, a learning management system (LMS). In our study, both *WeChat* and *Moodle* were used. *Moodle* has many advantages, such as the fact that it is a platform to disseminate information and provide discussion forums. However, it does not allow for the ease of information dissemination that instant messaging apps do. The significance of this combination (LMS and instant messaging app) is a point of distinction in the research reported here. There does not appear to be any other research focusing on the use of *WeChat* as a supporting app while using an LMS in an EAP environment in a Western-based tertiary institution. Bull et al. (2008) suggest that with SNS, informal learning can occur as a support for more formal education. This means that students can be engaged in their academic studies, but not be tied to time constraints such as scheduled class face-to-face contact for some of their educational needs. Using an instant messaging app that is readily available on their phones also means students are more likely to interact and engage in collaborative and supportive activities in an informal environment.

Mobile phone apps have become an indispensable part of language learning today. The use of mobile phone apps has accelerated in the past decade and there is a growing body of literature on their employment as a tool to support English language learning (Lai, 2016; Klímová, 2018; Kacetyl & Klímová, 2019). Kacetyl and Klímová (2019) promote the term mobile learning (m-learning) to refer to the methodology that includes using mobile apps to enhance language learning. Apps that are suitable for language learning can be categorised into those that are specifically designed to support language learning, such as *Duolingo*, and other generally used messaging apps, such as *WhatsApp* and *WeChat*, that have the ability to be used to enhance or support language learning. This shift in Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) is not surprising as studies in the last decade have highlighted the value attached to mobile phone use. Keogh (2017) highlights the point that smartphone use is pervasive and perceived to be a cultural artefact by the younger generation to ensure constant contact between friends and

colleagues. Macalister (2017), while discussing language learning principles and MALL, advised that in order to ensure successful pedagogical outcomes, students must be motivated by teachers who are making the most use of the potential of mobile devices. This crucial comment needs to be considered whenever a teacher imbeds MALL into a programme.

### ***Instant messaging apps and its use in enhancing language learning***

Research into the use of *WeChat* as an educational support tool has largely centred on usage in China, which is not surprising considering that it is a China-based app. Some studies have related to the development of vocabulary in English. Lei (2018) conducted a study on the use of *WeChat* to enhance English vocabulary learning and to employ a system of self-regulated learning. In another study, Lai (2016) also concentrated on the development of vocabulary by creating a mobile immersion environment. However, for Lai's study, *WhatsApp* was used. In Lai's study, clear links were ascertained between frequency of use of the app and vocabulary gain. Both Lei's (2018) and Lai's (2016) studies focused on lexical development.

Furthermore, there have been few studies conducted on the use of *WeChat* to enhance English language learning. One example is a study by Liu (2014), who focused on using *WeChat* in ESP (English for policing) training courses, with the purpose of improving students' interests, motivation, and efficiency of vocational field training. Another study by Wang (2017) investigated the use of *WeChat* to improve the pronunciation of English for Chinese students at a business school in China. A study conducted by Jiang and Li (2018) at the University of Queensland, Australia, focused on measuring learners' perceptions on incorporating a *WeChat* task linking up learners of Chinese in Australia with native Chinese speakers in China.

Despite a range of studies on the use of instant messaging apps, such as *WhatsApp* and *WeChat*, to enhance English language learning, there does not appear to be any research on the use of these apps to promote collaborative learning in an informal, supportive (mainly student-led) environment and where the teacher was also present in the messaging app space.

### **Aims of the study**

The main aim of this project was to evaluate the use of an instant messaging app, in this case *WeChat*, to facilitate collaborative learning, student-led support and teacher support in an NZCEL Level 4, Academic programme, within an EAP tertiary context in New Zealand. Sub-questions covered that are the focus in this article include:

1. What did the participants in the NZCEL Level 4 cohort mainly use the *WeChat* app space for, specifically focusing on collaboration, student-led support and teacher support (key purposes for the posts)?
2. What are these language learners' opinions about using *WeChat* as a supporting tool for their programme?

## **Method**

This method section will initially focus on the setting for the project and the ethical considerations. After that, the project participants and the data gathering tools will be described.

### ***Setting***

The study was conducted in a language teaching centre at an institute of technology in New Zealand. The centre consistently offers all nine qualifications, across seven levels, of the New Zealand Certificate in English Language (NZCEL) programmes. These programmes range from NZCEL Level One (Foundation) to Level Five (Academic) on the New Zealand Qualification Authority (NZQA) Framework (NZQA 2019). The present study was carried out with students enrolled in a Level Four (Academic) programme in the first semester of 2019. Many of the students (a mix of local migrants and international students) choosing to study at this centre aspire to do further tertiary mainstream study after completing their Level Four programme. As the NZQA framework aligns their qualifications with the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR), it is worth mentioning that these students on entry to NZCEL L4, were mostly at an Upper Intermediate, High B1 level (Exam English, 2019).

The Level 4 Academic programme was 18 weeks long, with students receiving a minimum of 20 hours per week of face-to-face classes. In addition, they were expected to engage in a range of self-study tasks outside the classroom. The face-to-face classes were split into 10 hours for the Reading and Writing component of the programme (taught by one teacher) and 10 hours for the Listening and Speaking component (taught by another teacher).

Key resources and interactive activities were accessible to the learners via *Moodle*. The course also included two one-hour computer lab classes in which students could practice their pronunciation and Listening subskills taught in class earlier. For most of the students enrolled in the programme, the Level Four certificate was often the final formal EAP qualification prior to gaining entry to their mainstream study at the institute of technology.

### ***Ethical considerations***

This research was undertaken by two of the teachers on the NZCEL programme used in this research. Therefore, certain additional ethical considerations had to be established for the research project to ensure student safety. In addition to the regular ethical aspects, such as ensuring anonymity and completing consent forms, teachers (who were also researchers on the project), had no access to any data from the project until course grades were submitted and locked into the institution's student management system. Students were also informed at the start of the programme that the focus of the research was on their use of the *WeChat* app and that their assessment outcomes would not be affected by their use or lack of use of the app.

### ***Participants***

At the start of the study all 74 students enrolled on the NZCEL Level 4 Academic programme were invited to participate in the research study and all students agreed to have their *WeChat* posts used in the study. They were also provided with information sheets that outlined the research project as well. The students ranged in age from teenagers to mature students (some over 50 years old).

There were seven different nationalities represented across four streams, including, Chinese, Korean, Japanese, Colombian, Chilean, Indian and German. When students were asked at the start of the course about using the *WeChat* app, most indicated they were familiar with the app, having used it prior to enrolling in the programme (either because they were Chinese or because they had used it in a previous study in the centre).

### ***Data gathering tools***

A triangulation method was used with three data collection tools, including a survey, semi-structured interviews, and the *WeChat* posts. The first tool used was the *WeChat* group chats, with these groups being set up by the two Listening and Speaking teachers and the students. Altogether there were four *WeChat* groups—one per class (called Streams). As members of the *WeChat* groups, the Listening and Speaking teachers collected screenshots of all the posts over the semester for all four classes.

The second data gathering tool used was semi-structured interviews and although all the students were invited to participate only 17 chose to do so. The interviews were conducted by other teachers in the centre who did not evaluate the participants in the programme, thus ensuring participants' safety. The interviews were conducted in Weeks 15 and 16 of the 18-week course. Interview questions were designed to gain additional data related to the use of *WeChat* to promote student-led collaboration and support and to gauge how students felt about using the app. Interviews were recorded and later transcribed. The third tool used was a survey questionnaire that all students were invited to complete. To disseminate the survey, all students in the course were emailed a link to a *Google Form*. This ensured anonymity for all participants, and 16 participants chose to complete the survey.

### **Data analysis and discussion**

This article mainly reports on the research findings that focus on the purposes for the *WeChat* posts over the semester; some analysis of comments from the interviews and questionnaires will be relayed as far as they relate to the perceived purposes of the *WeChat* posts. Academic, technical, visual and social support will be described in the data analysis. The researchers chose to focus on the following key aspects for the *WeChat* post analysis as they perceived these to show student-led collaboration, student support and teacher support in the chat space:

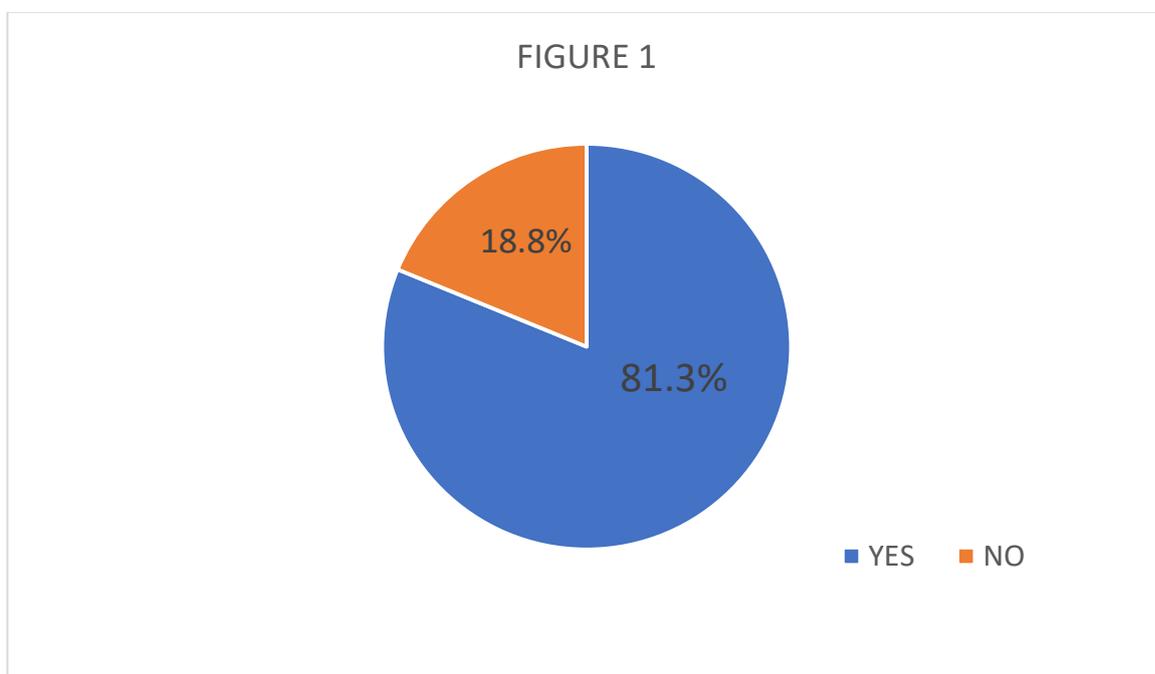
- academic issues or non-academic issues
- questions—direct to the teacher, open questions to the whole class or directed at one person

- shared information solicited (requested questions/responses) or unsolicited (information shared without a question/ request for the information)
- Visual aids used

Across the four class streams, there was a total of 3,419 posts over the 18 weeks, with most posts sent in the first 16 weeks. Total class post numbers were as follows: Stream A: 823 posts, Stream B: 478 posts, Stream C: 966 posts and Stream D: 1152 posts.

### ***Participants' views***

Figure 1 shows the participants' response to the survey question, *Did you enjoy using WeChat?* Over 81 % of students who responded indicated they enjoyed using the app.



*Figure 1:*

Responses to question *Did you enjoy using WeChat?*

In a follow-up survey question, participants were asked “*If you enjoyed using WeChat, why do you think you enjoyed using it?*” Students’ responses included the following:

I can communicate with my friends, teachers, and classmates easily.

...because it is easy to contact classmates and teachers.

...easy, quickly.

Convenient.

I enjoyed using WeChat because these applications is new for me. I never use WeChat in my country.

The responses above indicate that learners who responded to the survey, generally enjoyed using the app, and the speed and ease with which they could access information. In fact, for almost all solicited information, somebody in the chat would respond within a minute or two with the requested information. These comments highlighted the value of using an instant messaging app. The fact that respondents also mentioned that the information was easily available, further demonstrates the usefulness of the chat space. The comment made by a student who had not used *WeChat* before (see above) also suggests that at least one learner enjoyed using a new app.

In another question, which focused more on their learning, participants were asked *Which posts put on WeChat did you think benefited your learning on your level 4 course?* Some responses included:

Course tutors or some students would have to know and know what is the homework. What is the main, very useful information...

...some sharing, some pictures, uh, uh, just uh contain the content on the whiteboard.

...maybe the structure about the essay.

...there may be some grammar issues. Some grammar key points was provided by student, might be suitable for a student. And also the classmates can provide some exceptional ideas about that.

...a practical announcement: timetabling...scheduling...

The responses above suggest that learners found using the app useful for several aspects of their studies, some specific to course content and some meta-course aspects. The instant messaging app space affords students opportunities for collaborative support and social interaction for language development that the SCT approach espouses (Vygotsky, 1978; Lantolf & Thorne, 2006).

### ***Solicited and unsolicited information shared in the chat***

Table 1 shows the breakdown of the number of *WeChat* posts that indicated collaboration and support provided through solicited information. According to the table, the most posts were direct from students to specific teachers (187 posts). As can be seen, however, the total number of questions directed from students to students (either to whole class or to specific students) was 154 (83+71) posts. These numbers suggest that learners recognised both their classmates and their teachers as having played an essential role in supporting them in this informal instant messaging app space.

Table 1:  
*Questions - solicited (requested) information*

<b>Question interaction</b>	<b>Academic</b>	<b>Non-academic</b>
1. Direct from a student to the teacher (e.g., <i>Hello [teacher's name], where do we upload our interviews ...?</i> )	187	7
2. From a student open to the class (e.g., <i>Are there two compulsory orientation sessions...?</i> )	83	14
3. Directed from a student to specific classmates (e.g., <i>[student's name] which article can we use for Reading 1 assignment?</i> )	71	41
4. From a teacher to students (e.g., <i>Hi [student's name] can you call [student's name] to arrange your discussion, please?</i> )	27	9
<b>Totals</b>	<b>368</b>	<b>71</b>

In terms of academic-related support, specifically between classmates, many posts shared included photos of class activities and PowerPoint slides, technical support for *Moodle* and answering queries around assessment or encouraging comments related to assessment or workload (See Figure 2 below for example posts). Students also sent classmates meta-content information such as rooms allocated for induction sessions, meetings, or assessments. Interestingly, further data analysis reveals that for two of the classes, on several occasions, it was the class representatives who provided a substantial amount of the unsolicited information for the class. Getting students to be active rather than passive learners is one of the tenets of the SCT approach, and the findings indicated that learners actively supported and engaged with classmates in the *WeChat* space.

It is worth noting that there were 62 questions shared by classmates that related to non-academic issues. These shared questions suggest that several students felt comfortable requesting information or assistance from their classmates that did not necessarily relate to academic issues. This demonstrates how *WeChat* can be used as a platform for social communication and support in keeping with SC theory.

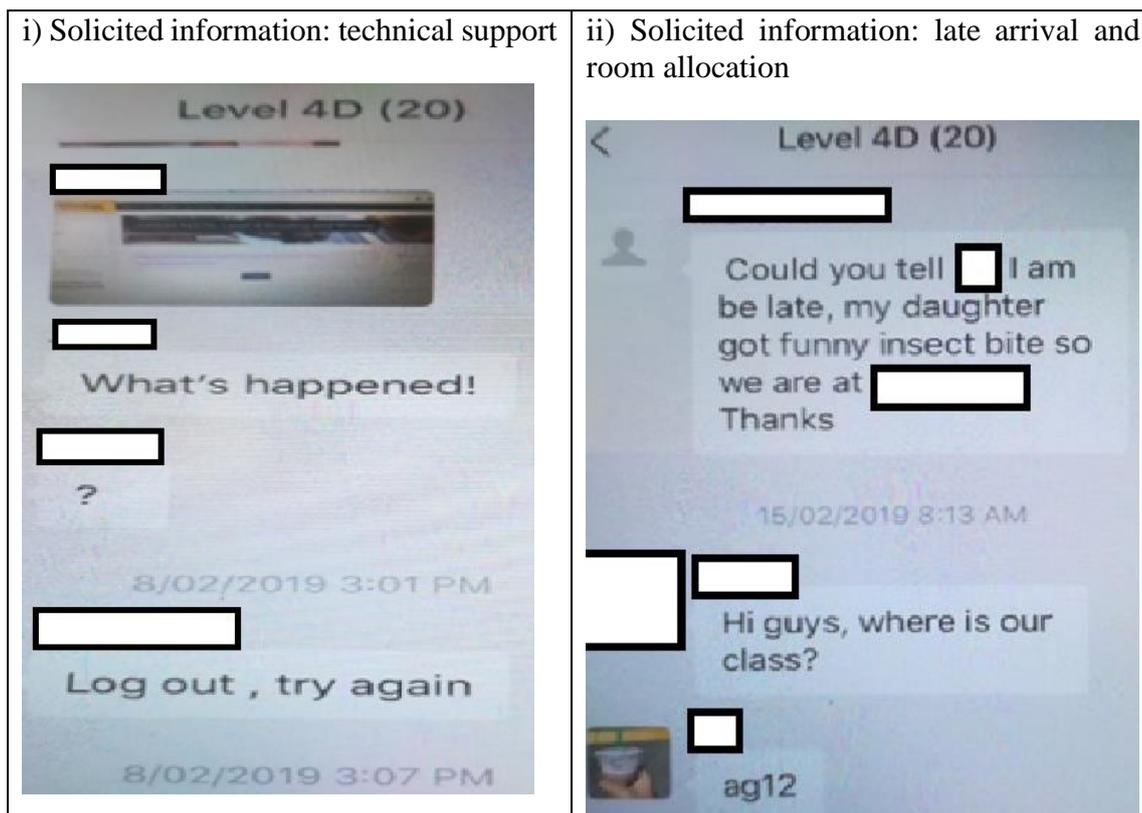


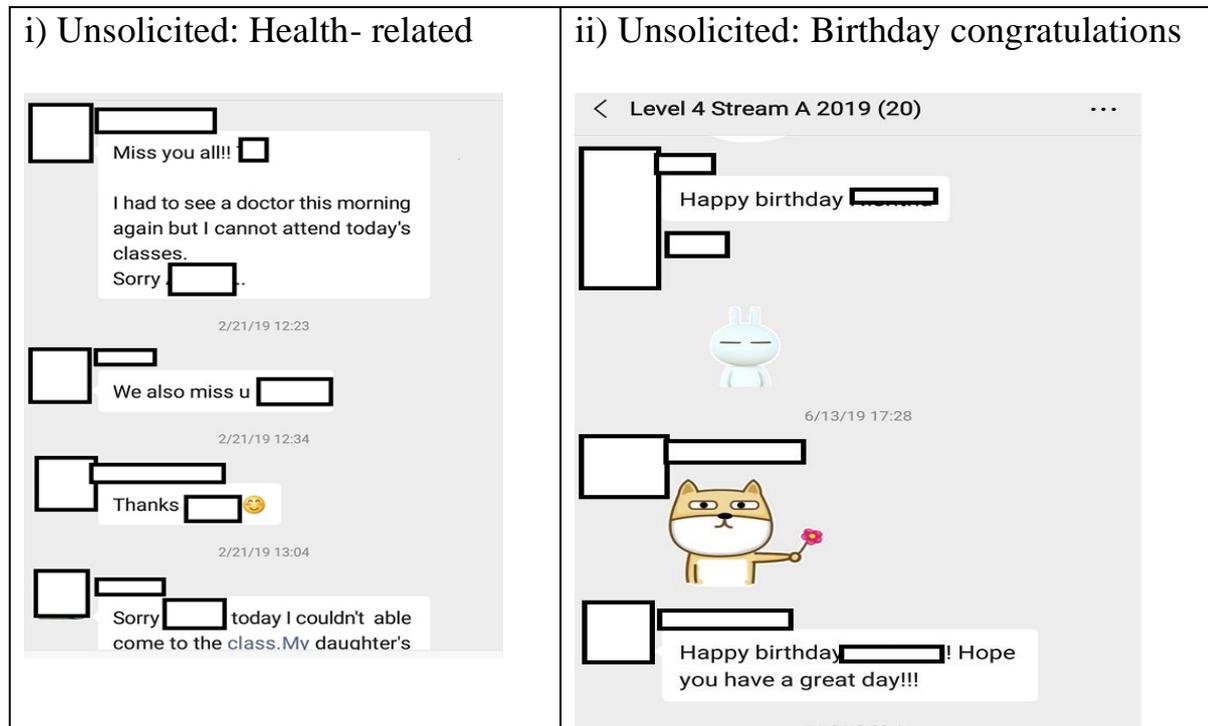
Figure 2:  
A sample of WeChat posts

Table 2:  
*Unsolicited (no question) information shared*

Interaction	Academic	Non-academic
1. From teacher to students (e.g., <i>Good morning L4, just a reminder that your discussion assessment is in Room xxx today.</i> )	334	21
2. From students to class (e.g., <i>This week you submit your Reading Assignment and your writing.....</i> )	315	156
<b>Total</b>	<b>649</b>	<b>177</b>

Table 2 (above) shows the number of unsolicited posts where no questions were asked. There was not much difference in the number of posts for unsolicited academic information between those posted by teachers or students. The posting of unsolicited information suggests a strong support and collaborative element to the use of the *WeChat* app between learners, as well as between teachers and learners. As indicated with the examples in Figure 3 (below), there were many posts that linked to personal or social events. It is interesting that the amount of non-academic posts from student to students was 156 posts, compared to those from teachers to students, which was only 21 posts. These numbers suggest that students were more inclined to reach out to their classmates directly rather than their teachers for non-academic issues. Based on anecdotal evidence (comments made in class), this supportive interaction led to

classmates feeling closer and friendships forming within some class groups. The use of a social application, such as *WeChat*, promotes this type of collaboration and support.



*Figure 3:*  
Examples of non-academic unsolicited information posts

In terms of social communication interaction, it is worth mentioning that in the survey, participants were asked whether they felt comfortable using *WeChat*, and if they did, whether they could say why they thought they felt comfortable using the app? Some responses were:

...to organize the group easily.

We have lot of friends.

I can talk to my classmates and teachers anytime.

...do not need to wait the response like with using traditional email.

...because it is easy to assess.

...video chat, share moments, talking.

So, several comments related to non-academic interaction. Based on these comments and many of the posts, it is fair to say that there was quite a bit of support for social, personal issues or celebratory events. These types of posts included supporting Muslim classmates with encouraging and sympathetic words after the 2019 Christchurch mosque shootings, celebrating the birth of a child, sharing photos of festivals or events

they attended over weekends, or encouraging each other when classmates were ill or running late (See Figure 3 on previous page).

### *Visual language support and other resources*

Table 3:

#### *Types of visual aid in posts*

<b>Visual aid type</b>	<b>Academic</b>	<b>Non-academic</b>
PowerPoint slides	183	0
Whiteboard notes	147	1
Photos (people)	0	136
Other (screenshots, pages)	161	22
<b>Total</b>	<b>491</b>	<b>159</b>

The number of visual aids included in posts are shown in Table 3 above with a total of 491 academic-related posts. As can be seen, pictures of PowerPoint slides, whiteboard notes, pictures from books and screenshots were all posted. As mentioned above, the space was initially thought to be a space to complement in-class activities, but as can be seen in Table 3, there were many occasions where pictures of in-class activities were shared. This, in a sense, created a merging of the out-of-class informal space and the in-class formal space. One of the advantages of all the posts related to class resources shared, was that students who were absent could use them to get information from the lesson. Another advantage was that those students who were in the class could review and reflect on the session content and bring any questions they had to class in the next session. Table 3 also shows that students shared 136 non-academic related photos with the class. This suggests that several students were comfortable sharing photos of their social experiences with their classmates.

### **Limitations**

The first point is that there was a discrepancy in the number of participants who engaged in the *WeChat* posts (all the students across the four classes) compared to the number of students who chose to be interviewed (17) or who chose to complete the survey (16). These low participant numbers for the interviews and survey participation could have been due to the timing of the interviews and survey completion requests as these happened towards the end of the course. Anecdotal evidence from a few students suggested that they were too focused on their upcoming final assessments. So, this was a timing issue for the researchers to consider with future research involving students. Some students suggested that they were concerned about speaking English in the interviews or completing a survey in English. So, these thoughts, although anecdotal, need to be considered when English language learners are asked to participate in interviews or surveys which are in English.

### **Recommendations and comments**

Based on comments made in the interviews it is recommended that students be allowed to vote on which instant messaging app they would like to use. The *WeChat* app was used, but another instant messaging app would also have sufficed.

One challenge for the teachers was that they were responding to student messages over weekends and in the evenings, which could cause workload issues. One way to address this would be to allocate fixed timeslots during which students could expect responses from teachers, e.g., only during the usual working week hours or only until a set time in the evenings during the week.

An interesting follow-up study would be to conduct a similar analysis with a group of learners at the lower CEFR levels and compare the support and interaction with that of this upper intermediate group. It was useful that students and teachers jointly decided that only English would be used in the chat space. This was to ensure that all students would have access to any shared information. It also meant students could engage in meaningful communication in English. We recommend teachers intending to use instant messaging apps with their students establish clear protocols in the use of these apps.

### **Conclusions**

The use of a social instant messaging app provided numerous occasions for students to interact with classmates as well as their teachers. Generally, it appears as though the use of the *WeChat* app to promote greater collaboration and support for these language learners was mostly successful, based on the amount of interaction (see the number of posts above) throughout the first 16 weeks. The data indicates that learners found the app option, as a form of disseminating information and providing support, to be useful. Learners indicated that they enjoyed having this additional *WeChat* space (in addition to the LMS Moodle) as it was instant and more accessible. Based on the interactions, it seems as if a strong rapport was built between students, while supporting each other.

As mentioned before, these messaging apps are no longer relegated to the position of entertainment only, or seen to be tangential; rather, they appear to play a vital role as a support mechanism for language learners. Students seem to enjoy having the additional communication source and the reality is that instant messaging apps will probably continue to act as a vital tool for language teachers and learners.

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# MAINSTREAMING ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS IN STATE SECONDARY SCHOOL INFRASTRUCTURE IN NEW ZEALAND: SOME WAYS FORWARD

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## Abstract

*The practice of English language learner (ELL) mainstreaming has been established in state secondary New Zealand schools for at least thirty years, along with its promised benefits of authentic cognitive and socio-cultural peer group interaction, specialised subject teaching and enculturation experience. In practice, ELL mainstreaming is fraught with complexity and ambivalence which bring its effectiveness into question. This article explores interview data from a larger study on responses to linguistic and cultural diversity in state secondary schools in New Zealand and analyses direct and indirect systems and practices used to assist ELL mainstreaming. It found that subject and timetable provision for ELLs could prioritise socio-cultural integration over academic advancement. It also found that although indirect ELL academic and social support was available, it was conditional and not sufficient to prevent mainstream staff resentment of ELLs in general classes. This article concludes with some implications for educational infrastructures so that ESOL staff and their diverse ELLs may be more clearly appreciated in the mainstream context.*

## Introduction: The issues

Over the last 30 years, researchers in Western societies have promoted a policy of mainstreaming, inclusion of ELLs in general classes, supported by collaborative relationships between mainstream and ELL teachers to enhance ELL learning (Creese, 2002, 2010; Leung, 2007). Australasian research has largely followed suit (Arkoudis, 2007; Franken and McCormish, 2003; Haworth, 2009; Hill and Allen, 2004; Leung, 2013). Today in New Zealand state secondary schools, ELLs spend nearly all their day in mainstream classrooms. Enthusiasts of mainstreaming emphasise the cognitive and socio-cultural benefits of interacting at the same authentic academic and social level as their proficient English-speaking peers. Mainstream staff offer academic specialisation and administer standardised curriculum activities and assessments. Mainstreaming also allows ELLs to learn the cultural expectations of the classroom which encourages whole-school integration and cohesion.

However, mainstreaming has not provided a particularly successful platform for ELL academic progress. The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) results for Australia and New Zealand indicate that both countries suffer the consequences of low grades for ELLs (though Australia has a greater gap than New Zealand) which is attributed to greater inequality in school resourcing for these students (Poskitt, 2018; Song et al., 2014).

In practice, ELL mainstreaming efficacy is muted and often compromised. There are inherent contradictions in combining “language and content integration” within academic classroom contexts (Davison & Williams, 2013, p. 51). The assumption that ELLs will automatically learn the Basic Personal Intercommunication Skills (BICS) that they need, belies the 7-10 years required to develop Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) (Collier, 1989; Cummins, 1989; Gearon, 2009). Mainstream classroom material mostly arranged at a uniform curriculum level sequenced from earlier material might be only partly decipherable by ELLs lacking linguistic, geographical, historic or contemporary knowledge that is assumed to be present. Though the New Zealand Curriculum Document advises all staff to take responsibility for ELLs (MOE, 2007), specialist mainstream staff are pressured by the need to prioritise “outcomes-based education and state mandated standards” (Arkoudis, 2007, p. 376) and may have limited expertise or interest in language learning to cater for ELLs. They may misjudge ELLs socio-cultural responses as cognitive deficits, introduce “trial-and-error” responses (Lewis, 2004, p. 16) or lower their expectations of ELLs academic success with “strategies of marginal integration” (Windle & Miller, 2013, p. 199). Moreover, mainstream staff efforts to differentiate lessons means that time is taken away from the main student group, so their learning may be compromised.

Further difficulty with mainstreaming is based around ELL socio-cultural relations. Mainstream students may mirror negligible staff responses to ELLs (Hamilton, 2004). ELL interactions may be affected by personal, ethnic or peer group indifference or language insufficiency. Also, ELLs may have built a fear of teachers from L1 cultural attitudes and refrain from asking for help from the best source (McCarthy, 2016).

Studies highlight the effects of mainstreaming on different kinds of ELLs. New Zealand studies of refugee migrant background (RMB) students emphasise that they need to balance mainstream deficits with personal agency and family support (Hamilton et al., 2007; McCarthy, 2015; Sobrun-Maharaj et al., 2008). Alternatively, Filipi and Keary (2018) examine international students who position themselves as academically competent but have marked gaps in their English acquisition. Other studies of international students emphasise the need for more extensive curriculum and pastoral support and investigate the difficulties of integration with local students (Collins, 2006; Kitchen, 2018; MOE, 2008; Ward & Masgoret, 2004).

ELL professional development (PD) for mainstream staff has often been advocated as a solution to the above issues, previously compromised by content and priority demands. In the drive for economic rationalisation, New Zealand, alongside Australia, has pursued a policy of generalised literacy acquisition and benchmarking minimum literacy grades not related to L2 acquisition theories (Miller, 2003; Scarino, 2008; Timperley & Parr, 2009). Indifferent mainstream staff uptake of ELL PD is recognised as a matter of limited time and motivation (Edwards, 2012, 2014). However, Feryok and Barkhuizen (2008) have shown that when ELL PD is activated by mainstream staff, it has beneficial results. More recently, calls have been made for a wider understanding of the impact of

teachers' beliefs systems on their subject areas before ELL PD is introduced (Gleeson & Davison, 2016). Nevertheless, to date there has been little support for PD encouraging a comprehensive mainstream staff understanding of ELLs.

### **The study: Methodological frameworks**

This article is derived from a larger enquiry which was a qualitative, case study investigation into the linguistic and cultural responses to diversity in three state secondary schools within New Zealand. Case study schools were chosen because of their different deciles, locations and English for Speakers of Other languages (ESOL) department structures. I gave them the pseudonyms of Mountfort, Patton and Wordsworth. All three schools had ESOL students who had moved into the mainstream, but their ESOL numbers in 2017 respectively were 150, 109 and 250. Low decile Mountfort's Head of Department (HOD) ESOL was directly responsible to the principal; high decile Wordsworth's HOD ESOL was responsible to the HOD English then a Senior Manager (SM). Mid-decile Patton's ELL was split into two: International and a New Kiwi department, with ESOL teachers in both responsible to the Languages Academy leader then an SM.

In choosing multiple case studies, I anticipated a greater degree of "confidence and certainty" in the findings (Yin, 2012, p. 9). Each case was examined for intrinsic particularity rather than comparison (Platt, 2007; Stake, 2005). Data was collected during three spaced visits of 3-10 school days at different points in time, spanning eight months during 2017.

This article focuses on material from 55 individual and focus group interviews which were conducted in the school sites (See Appendix 1). All interviewees were representative of the educational hierarchies of each school, ranging from Boards of Trustee members to principals, senior managers (SMs), Deans, ESOL Heads of Department (HODs), ESOL and mainstream ELL teachers and senior students over 16 years of age. Participants totalled 18 from Wordsworth, 30 from Patton and 21 from Mountfort. All participants used their own choice of pseudonyms, which I later tweaked into gender equivalents to protect anonymity. Participants also consented to ethics approval obligations as required by the selected schools and Massey University. All ELL participants were chosen by the relevant HOD ESOL following my suggestions for variation in ethnicity, background and gender. In all, ELL interviewees consisted of six migrants, six international students and six RMBs; they represented 10 countries and the three senior class learning levels.

Up to 10 pre-arranged, semi-structured interview questions were used, based on social practice approaches which emphasise relational co-construction in context (Talmy & Richards, 2011) and allow for elaborations that "spill beyond the structure" (Brinkmann, 2014, p. 285). My initial interviews used brief prompt cards to break the ice. I began the second rounds of interviews by sharing my interpretations of school infrastructures, my 'Summaries So Far' and asking for comments. I used journaling to self-monitor, to

maintain a “friendly stranger” persona throughout (Cotterill, 1992, p. 595). Reciprocity consisted of food for all adult interviews, movie or supermarket vouchers for ESOL students.

All interview data was personally taped, transcribed and coded. Manual data content analysis moved from surface to deeper enquiry, with descriptive coding followed by pattern, simultaneous and thematic coding, before writing began (Saldana, 2016).

### **The study: Conceptual frameworks**

Spolsky’s ecological language education policy was used as a framework for the larger study, a model that highlights interactive, widening layers of influence surrounding the ELL subject. Within each layer, the model categorises three interrelated components, practices, beliefs and management. It also focuses on the educational domains surrounding schools, headed by participants, location and topics; mainstreaming was one of the latter (Spolsky, 2004, 2009, 2012, 2018). The model refers to the decisions made in schools not just about language, but also around language and beyond it, the choices made by educators at different ecological levels and the actions of educators to interpret and redefine language policies through their everyday practice. The following outlines the ecological layers and their components surrounding ELL mainstreaming in state secondary schools.

#### ***a. International and national ecologies***

Management decisions around ELL mainstreaming within New Zealand are underscored by much wider historical global forces, interacting with and between economic, political, cultural and social factors, all with their own value systems (McGroarty, 2002). As part of a European drive for global expansion during the 19th century, New Zealand was one of the last land masses appropriated by imperialist Britain (Belich, 2000; King, 2003). Colonial expansion was accompanied by beliefs of homogenous and egalitarian nationhood and political assumptions that colonies needed tutelage (Blommaert & Verschueren, 1998). Alongside some recognition of Māori rights (Clark, 2005), settlers established a dominant Anglo-centric language and culture and instituted democratic systems of government and education adapted from British systems.

Post-World War II, economic stringencies pressured the Labour government to introduce ‘Tomorrow’s Schools’ legislation in 1989, which transferred economic beliefs about free market choice into education and embedded national educational infrastructures still existing today. A management hierarchy leads from centralised government with statutory and policy control, to its delegated agencies; Education Review Office (ERO), Ministry of Education (MOE), Initial Teacher Education (ITE) and the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA). Government funding to state secondary schools is organised through decile systems 1-10 based on socio-economic factors of the area, while zoning boundaries protect popular (inevitably higher decile) schools from overcrowding.

The foundational New Zealand Curriculum Document is closely affiliated with free market beliefs but modifies them with particular support for Māori and Pasifika students and some support for ELLs (MOE, 2007). It names eight academic Key Learning Area subjects (KLAS), not including ESOL. It urges schools to be forward-looking and inclusive, but does not include pathways to address language or culture disparities (Gray, 2012).

Since the 1960s, the New Zealand government has increasingly provided national provision for ELLs, to cater for increased diversity through permanent migrant arrivals, RMB quotas and the lucrative business of visiting international students. Today, a “modest” infrastructure of school funding, guidelines, staff-training and support are provided by the MOE (Spoonley & Bedford, 2012, p. 271). Though there is no national curriculum for ESOL, Unit Standards with English Language Learning Progressions (ELLP) and English for Academic Purposes (EAP) offer assessment opportunities, while ESOL classes ‘borrow’ material from a variety of other subject areas. These provisions offer some support for existing ELL education.

### ***b. Local school ecologies***

Local secondary schools have statutory authorization to operate with some autonomy (Spence, 2004). Individual schools are governed by Boards of Trustees (BOTs) who set and oversee “policies that will meet the goals of the school charter”, which enshrine dual responsibility primarily to the MOE but also the local community (Gordon, 1995, p. 59). BOTs appoint principals and staff, accept government funding and guide acceptability levels of language and culture in secondary schools (Spolsky, 2009). Members consist of students’ parents and organisational representatives voted in by other parents, though minority ethnic individuals can be co-opted to extend school representation. In 2010, Savant (2011) found that 70% of BOT candidates were New Zealand European Pākehā. Overall, ‘Tomorrow’s Schools’ legislation has encouraged perceptions of education as business through the professionalisation of Boards.

Within schools, senior administrations provide hierarchical management, led by principals who usually reflect traditional top-down policies to reify social reproduction (Hélot & Ó Laoire, 2011; Johnson, 2013; Shannon, 1999). Principals often emerge from senior management and are likely to have taught one of the KLAS (Wylie, 2013). Principals are a crucial determinant of school culture as school staff generally adopt a principal’s values and norms, including about linguistic and cultural diversity (Reyes, 2005). Though principals may introduce initiatives to assist multicultural minorities, their efforts are often “highly individualistic and context dependent” (Billot, 2008, p. 96). Below SMs are the curriculum leaders and deans, followed by Heads of Department (HODs), who are positioned to be conduits for senior managements and curriculum subject leaders (Cardno & Bassett, 2015; O’Neill, 2000). Below HODs are general staff who have the closest affiliation with students, who form the bottom level of the staff hierarchy.

Generally, teachers are “under a great deal of pressure from those in authority over them” (Spolsky, 2009, p. 114). Teachers who share similar social and socio-linguistic values with those of the dominant school community are more easily accepted into the school system (Cruickshank, 2015; Moloney & Giles, 2015). In New Zealand, in 2017, 70.7% full-time staff were New Zealand European Pākehā (MOE, 2017). Overall, Gorinski and Fraser (2006) observe that the dominance of an Anglo-European education system “works to disadvantage families from cultures with differing values, beliefs and first languages to the dominant culture, which all too frequently results in a disparity of academic achievement” (p. 1). Local mainstreaming infrastructure practices from the three case study schools are outlined below.

## **Findings**

The enrolment of ELLs, whether migrants, RMB students or international students, introduce a range of complexities for local managements in secondary schools, which are expected to be compliant with national educational hierarchies which are primarily geared towards the learning needs of dominant Euro-centric, monolingual, permanent residents.

### **ELL subject choices and the timetable**

One of the earliest, and most difficult aspects is the practical transition of minority ELLs into subject areas in whole-school timetables. An initial prerequisite was valid ELL testing so appropriate subjects could be chosen; Wordsworth found that English reports sent by agents could be different from actual student ability (BettyW1; see Appendix 1). Testing for ELL levels in the four basic ESOL skills of Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening could be cumbersome — ESOL departments emphasised vocabulary and written English levels in their individually-chosen test material. Further, ESOL staff did not always have a strong influence on which mainstream subjects ELLs would be placed in. Optimum decisions were reached when there were respectful, professional relationships between ESOL staff and those responsible. The Mountfort HOD ESOL had repeated issues with one level dean who misjudged BICS for CALP. ESOL teacher Bill commented: “It’s fair to say that we have had some difficulty with the deans. I don’t think they are totally aware of the needs of some of the migrant kids who have not got strong English” (ESOLTFGM1). Patton’s ELL departments took direct responsibility for subject choice by using the international academic advisor (HG) and the New Kiwi HOD ESOL.

Timing for initial testing could also be contentious. At Wordsworth, international students could “come in whenever they want” (BettyW2), so if students arrived after the term was underway, there was added pressure on ESOL staff workloads to complete results promptly. Patton international department adopted a firmer stand by emphasising term start dates with agents, conducting an agreement with a local private training establishment to manage students till school terms began and by employing an ancillary ex-teacher to test international students.

For international students particularly, subject choice could be a compromise between avoiding mainstream teacher resentment and overcrowded classes while deflecting ELL family pressure for accelerated academic progress. High-achieving ELLs could improve class academic output, but mainstream staff resented ELLs who, as a result of the limited resources supporting their understanding, dragged down results and lowered perceptions of teacher efficacy. Patton subject placement for newly arrived senior international students was tempered by a desire to encourage both integration and academic expertise. International academic advisor HG included some traditionally non-academic classes like Woodwork, Art, Dance or Drama where he considered that ELLs socio-cultural horizons could be widened, and they could adjust to New Zealand interactive learning methods. He assuaged class overcrowding by placing international students in classes at their academic level, but also just above or below if needed. He delivered extra Year 11 Mathematics and Science lunchtime classes himself, supervised Correspondence Mandarin to enable access for ELLs' language credits and made spaces for late arrivals in key subject classes with end-of-year timetable planning. If HODs objected to his choices, he could call on a vigilant SM liaison to negotiate resolutions. However, he considered 2017, the year of data collection, "my year from Hell" because he found it difficult to provide international students with all the subjects that they wanted (HGP2). At the end of 2017, mainstream Patton staff requested that the Board place a lower maximum on steadily rising international student numbers, which was complied with (CurlyP3; HGP2).

The Patton New Kiwis HOD also encouraged integration with junior migrant subject choices. She responded to the practical fact that limited English reduced academic progress, and that few New Kiwis had time or money to achieve at the highest academic levels. She emphasised Science and Mathematics to obtain basic literacy requirements and believed that most New Kiwis "want to be in the caring professions" (RosieP1). She remarked that Food and Nutrition was a beneficial subject choice for student females, where "they can go straight into there and enjoy what they are doing" (RosieP2). She was uneasy when students chose subjects that she perceived as above their ability. However, these choices could have repercussions since they excluded students from later entering senior academic subjects with pre-requisites.

If ESOL was chosen as a subject for ELLs, they and their parents could complain. At Wordsworth, parents sometimes claimed that their child's English levels were better than they were to avoid being associated with the stigma of low-status, non-KLAS ESOL. Evidence from tests or staff advice was not enough to persuade them otherwise, with the consequences that the students made little headway short-term (CameronW2). ESOL student complaints about inadequate marking were used to reduce and realign Wordsworth's NCEA literature and language ESOL classes with basic literacy initiatives. Wordsworth had also instituted a practice of accepting younger international students so by the time they reached the senior school they would be less likely to need the assistance of ESOL classes. One motivated Mountfort student, Herb, commented: "This year I really badly wanted to take Physics, but I couldn't cos of my ESOL classes"

(ELLSFGM1). ESOL staff needed to emphasise the benefits of learning English to those who were most advantaged from it. HOD ESOL Cynthia affirmed: “Kids didn’t want to come to ESOL cos that was for dumb students...no it is actually the clever kids that come to ESOL...how many languages they know” (CynthiaM1).

Mainstream staff could also resent the presence of ESOL as a subject. In early 2017, the HOD ESOL at Mountfort had priority rights to direct ELLs to go to ESOL if their test results indicated the need, which could split or delay their attendance within mainstream subjects. Mathematics teacher Eric stated: “I have taught students who are missing 50% of their classes because of ESOL, which is unfair on them” (MTFGM1). Further, ESOL students had special status even though they were at, or even above the English levels of many language-poor locally born students. ESOL students also bonded with each other, which dean Laura considered was “disruptive to their social development” (MTFGM1). In term three 2017, Mountfort ESOL/mainstream tensions decreased with the departure of the HOD ESOL and a softening of criteria for ESOL class inclusion.

In the study, all mainstream staff resented the arrival of new ELLs in their classes during the term, even if they had read their emailed information and the new ELLs proved to be “incredibly talented” (MTFGP1). Wordsworth SM Sarah stated: “The student was plonked in my classroom” (SarahW1). ELLs often behaved differently to local students in the classroom and pressured mainstream staff to be more adaptable. At Wordsworth, international students increased academic competitiveness and induced staff to be meticulous with authenticity and marking procedures as well as utilise skilful response strategies with ELLs who tried to pressure them to pass assessments. Cameron reflected: “We’ve got to have transparent processes, and we have got to make sure that we date and sign every piece of feedback we give, we have to be super-careful” (CameronW2). Multilingual physics teacher Mary adapted with bilingual classroom buddies and plentiful strategies to encourage ELL: Google classroom, bilingual handouts, photographic whiteboard notes, videos with subtitles, scaffolded templates, language games and multiple checkpoints for formative work with ELLs.

Other mainstream staff could be unaware that ELLs might not be acculturated to New Zealand staff-student relationships or curriculum pedagogy; staff resented the extra effort that was needed to explain them. Monolingual teacher Jane commented: “They will say they are fine, when they are not. I found it rude, continually giving me blank walls” (MTFGW1). HOD ESOL Jasmine explained:

If they [ELLs] come from a passive learning environment, they may seem not to be engaged, but in fact they are very engaged. The teacher needs to know how to read them but also how to encourage that shift, that transition. (JasmineW2).

Senior Dean Dysart reflected: “Generally, people love ELL kids...but they don’t feel equipped to deal with their specific needs sometimes” (DysartM1). Mountfort mainstream staff expressed the belief that ELLs needed English training so they could

manage subject work in mainstream classes. Nonetheless, they were reluctant to accommodate the direct and indirect consequences of that process.

### **Indirect mainstream support**

In the case study schools, a variety of local infrastructures were in fact present to support ELL mainstreaming practices, though in practice their effectiveness was conditional. Non-KLAS ESOL department staff were often approached informally to provide pastoral and academic support to KLAS staff, although Cameron observed that at Wordsworth this was declining (CameronW1). ESOL staff from all the schools recorded that they sometimes faced pressure from key-subject mainstream staff who felt that they had the right to delegate ELLs' mainstream subject marking to them. This meant that mainstream responsibility could be discharged for mainstream subject results as well as any upskilling for ELLs. ESOL staff could become time and status-poor, and their integrity compromised by marking material of which they had no subject knowledge (CameronW3). Ultimately, mainstream staff seemed to be connecting with ESOL staff to express their discomfort with ELL mainstreaming as much as requesting support.

Key-subject mainstream staff beliefs about ELL and attitudes towards lower ranked non-KLAS ESOL staff contributed towards Curly and Cynthia's withdrawal from wider staff relationships (CurlyP1; CynthiaM3), as well as the constant turnover of ESOL staff generally. At Mountfort there had been 6 ESOL staff changes from 2015-17. At Patton there had been 3 HOD New Kiwis from 2014-16. In 2017, Wordsworth had four HOD ESOL changes in just over a year; Mountfort had three.

More immediate ESOL department support for mainstream staff was provided with the use of teacher aides (TA). A proactive Patton SM was able to access funds for eight migrant TAs with first languages that were attuned to student needs. TAs helped students develop good classroom practices, encouraged careful listening, teacher/student interaction and overall, reduced classroom learning pressures. ELL Loko's comments were representative: "When I first came here, I had difficulties in my subjects, and they gave us a TA to help in classes. That helped me a lot, and I got better grades" (NKSF1). TAs were constantly in demand from mainstream staff. HOD Biology Walker attested: "There is a TA in there most of the time. That's so helpful for those kids; they are doing much better now" (MTFGP1). Ultimately, it was up to senior managements to decide on funding allocation details for ELLs.

Some opportunities for mainstream staff ELL PD were present in all the case study schools. Wordsworth included 3 ESOL presentations at their 2017 Teacher Only Day and had instituted two Professional Learning Group Literacy/ESOL mainstream initiatives. Patton's HOD Biology Walker expressed a desire for more ELL PD "so we have more skills" (MTFGP1). TESOL scholarships were advertised annually for secondary school staff to complete PD outside school hours; though Wordsworth had growing numbers of staff who had competed and appreciated these, other mainstream

staff like Dean Alex were preoccupied with their own subject demands and prioritised them when PD time was available.

Mainstreamed ELLs were able to access extra academic support after school (A/S). While Mountfort took an individual approach to encourage ELLs' work completion, Patton established homework hours for all ELLs, available twice a week. Patton ELLs could also attend weekly senior subject A/S classes throughout the year. Patton and Wordsworth also had academic deans at each class level who had individualised term meetings with ELL parents and students to gauge progress.

Case-study schools also encouraged ELL/mainstream social integration using co-curricular and extra-curricular activities to feed back into relational links in class. Wordsworth supported plentiful ethnic clubs which gave performances in assemblies and concerts. Mountfort ELLs were amply represented in student leadership roles. Sports activities were used very successfully at Mountfort and Patton to unite migrants and RMB students with local students. Visiting international students were less motivated; they bonded with each other more than with local students. Patton's HG called international/mainstream integration their "Achilles heel" (HGP1). Multiple interactive opportunities were provided such as Quiz night, shared Friday lunch, club buddies and concerts, engagement in Duke of Edinburgh award, chess club, the musical, and the Festival of Cultures. Despite this, mainly Asian students gathered on the veranda, creating a ghettoising effect during lunch till it was cordoned off; students then simply chose to gather together elsewhere. Curly commented: "I don't think you can keep pushing them, over and over again. They should be able to speak their own language...they do struggle" (CurlyP2).

## **Discussion**

This article attests to the influence of ecological interaction among and between layers of international, national and local management, beliefs and practices in New Zealand, which form an overarching context for ELL mainstreaming in secondary schools. Hierarchical infrastructures have been inherited to cater for the needs of majority Euro-centric monolingual settlers, backgrounded by their beliefs of egalitarianism and homogeneity, while 'Tomorrow's Schools' legislation and its associated New Zealand Curriculum Document has added free-market choice ideologies into education. While these regulatory foundations and values may have diminished somewhat, they still position secondary education within a society with a hegemonic, monolingual bias constructed as default that does have some support for mainstreamed ELLs (Johnston, 2003; May, 2014). The study found that mainstream and ESOL staff in state secondary schools were expected to accept considerable compliance with national educational hierarchies, reinforced by curricular, funding and policy regulations. Local school infrastructural adaptations to support ELLs in the mainstream have been measures to add-on or partially temper existing national educational foundations, not fundamentally change them to fully accommodate ELLs' actual learning needs.

Case study data analysis indicated that ELLs, ESOL and mainstream staff all experienced difficulties with mainstreaming. ELLs were under pressure to accelerate their social assimilation, linguistic and academic learning with limited recourse to their past lives. ELLs under family pressure to achieve academically or with parents unaware of the difficulties of timetabling could be compromised by staff allocation of ELL subjects into ESOL and vocational choices. Specialist mainstream staff were expected to accept all ELLs, sometimes with short notice and with help based on the goodwill of their varying ESOL departments. ESOL staff, under time and workload pressure to test and process new ELLs, could experience obstacles from mainstream work communities to prioritise their needs instead of ELLs ones, sometimes producing a conflict of interest, caught “between worlds” (Haworth, 2016, p. 240). The high turnover of ESOL staff in the study attested to the contested expectations on them. Case study schools seemed to be prepared to direct support towards individual ELLs’ academic progress without realising that it could not come without improved ELL/mainstream infrastructures and increased resourcing needed to maintain that progress—for ESOL staff, their status and workload and for mainstream staff needing specific, non-elective ELL PD.

ELL mainstreaming success was dependent on efficient ESOL communication systems and committed, collegial interaction between ESOL departments, SM and mainstream staff who had shared perceptions about the value of ELL. This required funding and expertise, factors that were not uniformly available. Patton SM Charlie commented on the International Department:

There are so many people to keep happy. You’ve gotta keep the student happy; you’ve gotta keep the parents happy; you’ve gotta keep the agent happy; you’ve gotta keep your International staff happy; you gotta keep the classroom teachers happy...Cos if your teachers are not happy, you are not going to get your results with your students. If your students...and parents...are not happy they are gonna walk. If you don’t have the team on the ground to help support, then you will not be going to get any further. (CharlieP1)

The study showed that permanent mainstream opportunities for ELL advancement cannot be achieved through only local, personalised responses; national and local managerial infrastructures and their accompanying belief systems need to be re-examined and realigned to more fully accommodate ELLs’ presence in state secondary schools.

### **Implications and conclusion**

This article incorporates a holistic understanding of how and why different layers of influence exist and interact within and between each other to moderate ELL/mainstream interaction in secondary education contexts. The chief implication is the need for wide-ranging PD programmes for initial teacher education learners, principals, mainstream and ESOL staff on inherited educational values and an understanding of cultural and linguistic diversity as a positive influence. Further implications involve requirements for local SM ELL leadership to be given the means to establish and maintain the

following: regulated bridging programmes between ESOL and mainstream staff; regulated mainstream staff quotas for TESOL scholarships and regulations for ELL funding to be spent exclusively on ESOL students and their departments. Further, qualified and bilingual ESOL staff could be given time and remuneration to embed efficient digital communication links with mainstream staff, particularly with initial and ongoing testing results.

This article from a larger qualitative study has limitations in the choice of the case study schools used, the spaced visits within one year and the selection of participants within each school. However, the rich data collected has succeeded in capturing the spirit of ELL/mainstream interaction and calls for an increased awareness that contemporary educational problems often need solving with new and innovative approaches rather than relying on past procedures.

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## Appendix 1

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### LIST OF MOUNTFORT ABBREVIATED INTERVIEW MATERIAL

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(ESOLTFGM1)	ELL Department Teacher Focus group Mountfort 1
(ELLSFGM1)	ELL Department Student Focus Group Mountfort 1
(MTFGM1)	Mainstream Teacher Focus group M1
(CynthiaM1, M2 M3)	Cynthia Mountfort: 1, 2, 3 Interviews
(JosephM1, M2)	Joseph Mountfort: 1, 2 Interviews
(RupertM1, M2)	Rupert Mountfort: 1, 2 Interviews
(DysartM1, M2)	Dysart Mountfort: 1, 2 Interviews
(BillM1, M2)	Bill Mountfort: 1, 2 Interviews
(FelixM1)	Felix Mountfort: 1 Interview
(NuggetM1)	Nugget Mountfort: 1 Interview
(PeneM1)	Pene Mountfort: 1 Interview
(JaneM1)	Jane Mountfort: I Interview

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### LIST OF ABBREVIATED PATTON INTERVIEW MATERIAL

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(ITFGP1)	International Teacher Focus Group Patton 1
(ISFGP1)	International Student Focus Group Patton 1
(NKTFGP1)	New Kiwi Teacher Focus Group Patton 1
(NKSFGP1)	New Kiwi Student Focus Group Patton 1
(MTFGP1)	Mainstream Teacher Focus Group Patton 1
(BFGP1)	Board Focus Group Patton1
(CurlyP1,P2,P3)	Curly Patton:1,2,3 Interviews
(HGP1,P2)	Head Gardener Patton: 1,2 Interviews
(RosieP1,P2)	Rosie Patton: 1,2 Interviews
(AlbertP1)	Albert Patton: 1
(CharlieP1)	Charlie Patton: 1
(VidaP1)	Vida Patton: 1
(AdaP1)	Ada Patton: 1

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### LIST OF WORDSWORTH ABBREVIATED INTERVIEW MATERIAL

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(ESOLTFGW1)	ESOL Teacher Focus Group Wordsworth 1
(ESOLSFGW1)	ESOL Student Focus Group Wordsworth 1
(MTFGW1)	Mainstream Teacher Focus Group Wordsworth 1
(CameronW1,2,3)	Cameron Wordsworth: 1, 2, 3 Interviews
(JasmineW1,W2)	Jasmine Wordsworth: 1, 2 Interviews

(BettyW1,W2)	Betty Wordsworth: 1, 2 Interviews
(SarahW1)	Sarah Wordsworth: 1
(ZaraW1)	Zara Wordsworth: 1
(SamW1)	Sam Wordsworth: 1
(SandyW1)	Sandy Wordsworth: 1
(TaraW1)	Tara Wordsworth: 1
(AlexW1)	Alex Wordsworth: 1

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## **WARMING UP AND ACTIVATING MIND, BODY AND EMOTIONS IN PRONUNCIATION INSTRUCTION**

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### **Abstract**

*Integrating pronunciation instruction into L2 lessons can be an area which teachers can find challenging and students, anxiety-inducing. Preparing students with an effective, quick warm-up can help by enhancing both physical and emotional connections and readiness prior to instruction. This article describes three warm-up techniques used in L2 classrooms. Drawing on a haptic approach to pronunciation teaching (one making strategic use of gesture and touch), the warm-ups focus on engaging students' attention, activating and releasing muscle groups, and moderating their inhibitions. For the moderately kinaesthetic instructor, the routines can be done as is, as presented on the linked videos, or tailored more to pronunciation issues relevant to a specific set of students. Suggestions for alternative types of warm-ups and further integration into pronunciation instruction are provided.*

### **Introduction**

Pronunciation has made a comeback in the second language (L2) classroom (Levis, 2015), even though many teachers report a lack of confidence and training in how to teach pronunciation. Teachers can find it challenging to make decisions about which features of pronunciation are a priority to teach, or which teaching approaches will most effectively meet their learners' needs (Darcy, 2018). One aspect common to all teaching approaches, however, is the need for learners to feel confident and relaxed during instruction; this can be key to developing intelligible pronunciation (Macdonald, 2018). How this can be achieved or maintained is an area of research that has not received sufficient attention in the field to date. This paper presents three warm-ups created specifically to establish a more positive physical and emotional 'connectedness' in the classroom prior to pronunciation instruction.

### **Pronunciation in the context of communication**

Before discussing pronunciation teaching approaches, it is helpful to situate pronunciation in the context of spoken communication. How we understand a message is affected by physical, social and cognitive factors, including:

- (a) The individual units of sound that make up a word and how those are articulated by the speaker,
- (b) The type of information being conveyed in the message and the role or attitude of the speaker in relation to the hearer,
- (c) The identities and backgrounds of the people involved in the interaction, and

- (d) The words within phrases or longer turns of conversation and how they are processed by those involved in the interaction.

Pronunciation plays an important role in communication, because it is the “initial layer of talk” (Pennington & Rogerson-Revell, 2019, p. 7) through which a spoken message is conveyed and understood. Among L2 teachers, if our approach to teaching pronunciation is underpinned by an understanding of its place within the communication of a message, this will guide our decisions as to what, how and why we teach in the L2 classroom. With this in mind, we present sets of teaching strategies in the form of warm-ups to help teachers and learners make better connections with the physical and emotional aspects of pronunciation, a small part of the big picture of how a message is communicated in an L2.

### **The brain, body, and emotions in L2 pronunciation teaching**

The body’s role in learning, well established in cognitive science research, is gaining increasing attention in the field of education (Tokuhama-Espinosa, 2011.) This promises to provide teachers with a more empirical basis on which to make decisions as to how and why to integrate movement into their practice. Whereas in the past, teachers may have used some physical movement in their lessons to, for example, engage students in an “ice breaker” activity, or as a short “warm-up” exercise prior to the main part of a lesson, research now suggests there are valid reasons for including movement in L2 teaching. Physical movement, for instance, increases oxygen and blood flow through the brain and can enhance attention, learning, and memory (Cozolino, 2013).

In L2 teaching, pronunciation is one specific area in which knowledge of how the brain and body work together to promote learning can be especially beneficial, in part because pronunciation is an extensively kinaesthetic and tactile activity (see, for example, Underhill, 2005). L2 learners can also benefit from a deeper understanding of the physical aspects of pronunciation (Carey, Sweeting & Mannell, 2015). However, while some pronunciation experts have described the importance of movement, gesture, breathing, and articulatory warm-ups in L2 pronunciation learning (e.g., Chan, 2018), there is still a tendency for teachers to view the body as coming last in the process of pronunciation teaching, often just to “reinforce what has been ‘taught’” (Acton, 2018, para. 2) through disembodied teacher-led drills and repetition.

In addition to the physical side of the process, emotions play an equally important role in pronunciation instruction (Sardegna et al., 2018). Emotions can be characterized as driving learning, affecting areas engaging memory, decision-making, and motivation (Immordino-Yang & Damasio, 2007). Research on the effects of emotions on learning in the L2 classroom has been discussed for decades, with Krashen (1982) exploring the relationship between emotions and second language acquisition in the ‘Affective Filter Hypothesis’. More recent research has examined the role of emotions in students’ motivation to learn an L2 (Saito et al., 2018), their identity development as L2 learners (Chevasco, 2019), and enjoyment and anxiety factors in L2 learning (Dewaele, 2019;

Nation & Newton, 2009). Emotions are also an important consideration for teachers working with vulnerable L2 learners who may have come from backgrounds of interrupted education, low literacy, and trauma (Bigelow & Watson, 2013). In that particular context, emotions feature strongly in L2 pronunciation learning as they are linked to identity and comprehensibility development (Kennedy & Trofimovich, 2019; Macdonald, 2015).

Considering the application of the physical and emotional aspects of pronunciation in a classroom context, it is important to note that pronunciation teaching and learning involves both “risk taking on the part of the learner and the ability of the instructor to ‘conduct’ the class in an atmosphere of genuine trust” (Acton, 2016, para. 2). Therefore, given the personal nature of accent and identity, pronunciation teaching which ignores “gesture, bodily movement, and facial expression as well as...psychological and emotional [factors]” (Pennington & Rogerson-Revell, 2019, p. 381) can easily be perceived as invasive and anxiety-inducing and not surprisingly, ineffective. In order to reduce such factors, students need to feel safe in taking risks in speaking in class. A teacher who provides opportunities for students to adequately prepare, or warm-up, their minds, bodies, and emotions for learning pronunciation can foster this more positive, relaxed classroom environment.

### **Warm-ups in L2 pronunciation teaching**

In athletics, understandably, an appropriate warm-up is critical. What constitutes the right warm-up is not only discipline-specific but subject to a wide range of individual and competence-related variability. Included among the important functions fulfilled by pre-exercise warm-up are the activation of individual muscles and warming up muscle groups for overall body coordination. Warm-ups can serve to lock in attention, stretch or extend range of motion, increase blood flow to target muscle groups or the entire body and, not least, encourage a sense of well-being and motivation (Jeffreys, 2018).

Having argued for the value of warm-ups in pronunciation teaching, we describe three warm-ups that we have used in L2 teaching, drawn from haptic pronunciation teaching (Acton et al., 2013) which incorporates a systematic use of movement, gesture, and touch to improve L2 learners’ pronunciation, confidence, listening comprehension, and vocabulary recall. Empirical classroom-based research on the effectiveness of haptics is currently being conducted by doctoral and graduate students in Australia and Canada. To date, more general practitioner-focused research on the haptic system has noted the overall positive responses of L2 English trainee teachers who have engaged in learning to use its techniques (Burri & Baker, 2019), as well as positive student feedback on its use in classroom practices (Playsted & Burri, forthcoming).

A warm-up stage prior to any haptic pronunciation teaching work has become a key element of the system’s approach, although the principles of using “a well-designed warm-up [to engage] the body and mind” (Acton, 2018, para. 10) can be beneficial in any pronunciation-oriented classroom activities. As described in the following section,

the first warm-up focuses on activating the muscles of the upper body and enhancing attention. The second warm-up encourages a wider range of motion and fuller muscle engagement, which can assist in reducing the typical anxiety and negative emotions accompanying pronunciation work. The third warm-up generates more optimal learner engagement and emotions.

### **Three warm-ups**

#### ***1. Activation Warm-up***

The demonstration video of the Activation Warm-up can be accessed here: <https://vimeo.com/438602833>

This 6-8 minute warm-up has been designed to gently activate the upper body, in this case specifically for pronunciation work, but it functions well as just a general “wake up” for anyone. The idea is to engage even the most reticent student in a graduated set of gentle, non-threatening exercises that serve to move key muscles of the upper body, stretching up to just short of the comfortable range of motion (i.e., not stretching the muscles beyond their current degree of elasticity). The aim is for students to loosen up the head, neck, shoulders etc. down to the hips through five to ten light repetitions of each of the following muscle areas:

1. Mandibular muscle/joint: gentle massage
2. Jaw: loosening of jaw muscles with side to side movement
3. Neck: easy isometric stretch in four directions
4. Trapezes: Forward and back light shoulder rolls
5. Rotator cuff: tight circles with arms extended
6. Shoulders: Light shaking loose of upper body
7. Laterals: leaning side to side
8. Hips: circling back and forth quickly
9. Nasal resonance and abdominals (plus core and abdominal breathing): focus on key nasals and area of articulation, along with activation of core, abdominal muscles
10. Back: reaching out, leaning forward
11. Chest: reaching back, arching back

#### ***2. Vowel Circle***

The demonstration video of the Vowel Circle (VC) Warm-up can be accessed here: <https://youtu.be/Z8xgRzrTOao>

The aim of the VC is, in part, to get L2 learners to experience and practice lip rounding in a fun, engaging, and exaggerated manner, ultimately helping them improve lip positioning in pronouncing monophthongs (short vowels). This is especially important for learners who find rounding their lips challenging due to the lack of it in their first language, such as Japanese speakers of English (Rogerson-Revell, 2019). The VC also offers self-conscious students an opportunity to work around some of their inhibitions, but teachers should never force learners to follow them. Generally, once the more

reluctant students notice how much fun others have with doing the VC, they begin to follow suit. Burri has used this warm-up not only with adult English learners of all ages, but also with graduate students in the pronunciation pedagogy course he teaches at the University of Wollongong. The VC draws on emotions and body movement, plus it adds some much-needed comic relief and an opportunity to stand up and move around. At the same time, the VC seeks to correspond with the monophthongs positioned in the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) vowel chart, thus contributing substantially to learning the vowel system.

### 3. *Vowel-o-fant*

The demonstration video of the Vowel-o-fant Warm-up can be accessed here:

<https://youtu.be/M6Rn5Di7ucI>

Playsted used this warm-up each teaching session with a class of preliterate, beginner level, Arabic and Kurdish L1 refugee background students. Students had experienced interrupted schooling, forced displacement from their homes and significant trauma due to conflict, and so establishing trust with the class while fostering positive classroom learning experiences was essential. This warm-up uses expansive, physical arm movements to emphasise vowel positions used in other haptic pronunciation teaching work. As in the VC, these correspond roughly to the IPA vowel chart positions, and so begin to establish a physical connection to sounds prior to introducing students to alphabetic symbols. During the warm-up, each vowel sound is preceded by a consonant, which introduces learners to vowel and consonant blends: an important step for preliterate adult learners who are making initial phonological and literacy connections.

Importantly, the Vowel-o-fant warm-up is fun! Doing a physical warm-up with sounds and movement encourages laughter and a connection in the classroom. From a mind, body, and emotional perspective, laughter, trust, encouragement, and enthusiasm in the classroom are all emotions which release chemicals in the brain to enhance learning (Cozolino, 2013). This is important for all students, of course, but it is a particularly important consideration for teachers working with students from refugee backgrounds.

### **Future steps**

Warm-ups can serve several functions, from releasing muscle groups, to reducing anxiety and activating readiness for pronunciation instruction. While the activities described in this article relate to pronunciation teaching, *per se*, the emotional and cognitive benefits of engaging the mind and body through a warm-up also apply to other areas of L2 teaching. As teachers we have used these warm-ups to help with voice preservation and stress reduction prior to delivering classes, webinars, conference presentations, or face-to-face lectures. For students, routinely warming up at the beginning of L2 speaking and listening lessons can help them relax and focus, as physical comfort and movement can reduce learner anxiety and improve learning (Cozolino, 2013; Nation & Newton, 2009). This can be particularly helpful for students as they prepare for assessment tasks, or prior to speaking in a high-stakes environment

(e.g., an interview or delivering a final presentation). Given the growing interest in applying principles from neuroscience to L2 learning and to education more generally, it is timely for L2 instructors to consider how they might incorporate such kinaesthetic activities and approaches in their classrooms.

## Notes

While a full description of haptic teaching techniques is beyond the scope of this article, descriptions and video demonstrations can be found at [actonhaptic.com](http://actonhaptic.com), or in published literature (e.g., Burri et al., 2019; Burri & Baker, 2016).

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## USING CONCEPT MAPS IN ACADEMIC L2 WRITING INSTRUCTION

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### Abstract

*International studies show that concept or visual mapping can help teachers distinguish linguistic issues from weaknesses in understanding of genres in texts produced by novice L2 academic writers. The aim of this study was therefore to elicit the prior knowledge of the problem-solution text type of a group of Intermediate/Upper Intermediate students (CEFR B1/B2; IELTS 5.0-5.5), and examine how useful mapping could be to develop their understanding of this academic text type, as well as their essay writing ability. The unit of learning offered to volunteer students comprised six one-hour sessions over a two-week period. Post-instruction essays composed by students were assessed using IELTS band score grading and by evaluation of discourse patterns in their maps and essays. On average, learners' grades for post-instruction essays increased by half a band score in the task response and cohesion and coherence descriptors of the IELTS rubric. There was also evidence of conceptual development in maps produced after instruction. Students' appraisals of their pre- and post-instruction maps indicated that they viewed mapping as helpful for analysing academic texts as well as for planning their own compositions.*

### Introduction

The student population of The University of Auckland has become increasingly diverse in recent years. This is partly due to admissions from traditionally under-represented Māori and Pasifika populations, but also from international students who may be migrants or refugees with some experience of the New Zealand school system, or those admitted to New Zealand on student visas to undertake tertiary study. As novice L2 writers of English, they are likely to have only a basic awareness of how to construct essays such as problem-solution, cause-effect, or comparison-contrast that require strong lines of reasoning or argument and that will, particularly in arts and social sciences disciplines, be the most common type of text they will write for assessment purposes (Wingate, 2012). Since concept maps are widely used in content-based teaching (e.g. Eppler, 2006; Shavelson, Ruiz-Primo, & Wiley, 2005) and are reported to have assisted students in a small number of L2 writing courses (e.g. Ferreira & Lantolf, 2008; Ojima, 2006; Wette, 2017), this study explored the usefulness of concept maps as a way of drawing on students' prior knowledge of essay conventions and helping raise their awareness of the content and structure of the problem-solution text type, so that they would be better equipped to plan and compose a problem-solution essay.

### ***EAP instruction for international pre-degree students***

International students from non-English-speaking backgrounds wanting to gain entry to the university in New Zealand need to achieve a specified level of proficiency in English (usually at least IELTS 6.0 across all four macro-skills or equivalent). However, the transition from writing in secondary education at home to tertiary study in an Anglo-Western environment can present several challenges. Firstly, it is a skill in which instruction in their home countries is likely to have been restricted to accuracy at sentence and paragraph levels, with little or no attention to text structure at the level of discourse through genre-based instruction (Holmes, 2004; Nam & Beckett, 2011), and it is therefore likely to be their weakest skill (Nam & Beckett, 2011; Zamel, 1998). International students also need to adjust to Anglo-Western writing practices (Huang, 2010) in which writers are responsible for considering readers' needs by providing texts that are concise, well-organised, and present a clear line of reasoning (Hyland, 2019).

Genre-based instruction currently predominates in instruction for multilingual academic writers, since it allows for the kind of accessible explicit teaching and text analysis that can help learners understand the structure of text types (Hyland, 2007; Johns, 2008). Although this type of formal knowledge is only one component of a comprehensive knowledge of a genre, it can serve as a foundation from which more nuanced understandings develop through practice and experience of disciplinary discourses (Tardy, 2006). This study therefore implemented a unit of genre-based instruction employing concept maps as a tool to support students' developing understanding of the conventional structure, language features, and rhetorical purposes of the problem-solution text type.

### ***Concept maps in EAP writing instruction***

Concept maps are one of a broad collection of diagrammatic tools that depict conceptual content as words or phrases (often in bubble or box "containers") placed within a hierarchic structure, with arrows or lines to show links between items (Wheeldon & Faubert, 2009). Their main purpose is to facilitate the learning and organising of conceptual content (Eppler, 2006), and they can therefore help students improve both the subject matter and organisation of their essays. Benefits of concept maps are that they are creative, easy to use, and not overly reliant on students' proficiency in formal syntax (Eppler, 2006). They have the potential to reveal to teachers the way students arrange their knowledge about a topic, as well as any changes that occur after instruction (Shavelson et al., 2005). Two powerful learning theories support the use of maps as an instructional tool: it fits the generally accepted view that knowledge is organized in long-term memory in non-linear forms (Knowles, 1998) and that, as one learns, prior knowledge becomes integrated with new mental structures to create more sophisticated schema (Ausubel, 1968; Kolb, 2015). The connection between a highly developed level of understanding and the ability to construct complex maps is therefore widely accepted (Novak, 2010). Although research to date on mapping in L2 academic literacy development is sparse, one study (Ojima, 2006) found that the quality of students' essays improved when mapping was used as a pre-writing activity, and another (Ferreira

& Lantolf, 2008) that maps and essays created by novice writers before and after instruction showed modest gains in genre knowledge and text quality. A similar study involving graduate-level writers (Wette, 2017) concluded that students' post-instruction maps indicated clear advances in aspects of their genre knowledge of the academic text types of the book review and literature review.

This study was therefore motivated by an awareness of the academic literacy needs of novice L2 academic writers in the New Zealand context and a desire to explore the potential of mapping tasks to help students reflect on and demonstrate their pre- and post-instruction understandings of the problem-solution text type. It was guided by these three research questions:

1. What development of understanding of the problem-solution text structure is evident in concept maps participants created before and after a unit of instruction that included attention to mapping?
2. What was the students' level of ability in writing a problem-solution text before and after the unit?
3. How did students evaluate concept maps as a tool to support their writing development?

## **Methodology**

The design of the study was qualitative. It collected data from concept maps and essays and used an analytic approach to examine these texts for recurring patterns, phrases, and themes to make conclusions based on consistencies within the data (Miles, Huberman & Saldaña, 2014). It was an action research study (Dörnyei, 2007) carried out by the class teacher (the first author) with the intention of improving the effectiveness of her teaching and advancing her knowledge of a particular instructional tool.

### ***Context and participants***

The study took place in a language institution offering preparatory IELTS courses to adult students. Twelve participants from English language classes volunteered to take part in a supplementary writing unit of instruction. Half the class were at an Intermediate level of English language and half were Upper-Intermediate. They came from countries in East Asia, the Middle East, and from Rwanda. They were 18-25 years of age; seven were female and five male. All planned to take the IELTS test, with the aim of gaining entry to a New Zealand tertiary institution. The use of mind maps as a brainstorming tool was familiar to them, but they had no prior experience of concept mapping as a way of linking and developing content items to help with planning an essay.

### ***The unit of instruction***

The aim of the unit was to develop learners' knowledge of academic conventions for problem-solution texts and enhance their ability to produce examples of this text type. Due to constraints related to time and access to facilities, the unit was limited to a one-hour lesson, three times a week for two weeks (six hours in total). Active instruction

took place in four of these contact hours, while the first and final sessions (Sessions 1 and 6) were diagnostic and evaluative. Participants created concept maps from their knowledge and understanding of the problem-solution structure in the first session, wrote a timed problem-solution essay of approximately 250 words in both sessions, and produced a written evaluation of their own maps in the final session. The four hours of instruction guided participants through pre-writing exercises using the problem-solution text type and concept maps to highlight discourse patterns and text structures. Content of the six sessions comprised:

- Session 1: Evaluation of students' level of ability in writing a problem-solution essay; students create a pre-instruction concept map; students compose a problem-solution essay.
- Session 2: Language patterns of the problem-solution essay; analysis of a sample essay; students create a concept map to represent its structure.
- Session 3: Evaluation of sample problem-solution texts; discussion of the rhetorical functions of each move.
- Session 4: Practice in identifying text structure and moves; students prepare a concept map for a problem-solution essay.
- Session 5: Further practice to consolidate skills in text analysis; brainstorming to generate content and vocabulary for an assigned problem-solution essay.
- Session 6: Students create a post-instruction concept map, compose a problem-solution essay, and analyse their own pre- and post-instruction concept maps.

The table in Appendix 1 gives a more detailed overview of the objectives and content of each of the six sessions.

### ***Concept maps and essays (pre- and post-instruction)***

In the first session of the teaching unit, participants were introduced to the use of concepts maps as a device to help with planning an academic essay. They were given examples of various types of visual maps and asked to discuss in small groups how these might be used to plan or evaluate a written text. Their ideas were then reported back to the whole group. During this lesson, participants were also given a problem-solution topic to discuss. As a whole class exercise, a concept map for that topic was created on the board from students' ideas by the teacher. After class discussion of potential solutions and consequences, subsections were added to the map, which were linked to the key ideas. There was no explicit instruction or explanation given on using maps as a means of organising concepts for writing beyond the teacher-led practice task. In the same session, participants were given the same problem-solution topic and encouraged to consider their own ideas to produce individual concept maps as a 15-minute pre-writing task. They then wrote an essay (200-250 words) on the problem-solution topic. No explicit guidance was given on the content of the essay. In the final session, students were again given 15 minutes to prepare a concept map of their ideas on the problem-solution topic that had been discussed in the previous session and were then given 30

minutes of class time to write their essays. They were not permitted to use dictionaries.

### ***Written evaluations of concept maps (pre- and post-instruction)***

In the final session, participants compared and evaluated in writing the maps they had produced in Sessions 1 and 6. They were asked to account for any changes they noticed between their two maps. Dictionaries were permitted, since these evaluations were not being assessed as a writing task.

### ***Data analysis***

Essays were assessed by the first author using the publicly available IELTS marking schedule, and 50% of the essays were also marked by an independent rater who is a qualified IELTS examiner. Correlation coefficients between the two raters were calculated as 0.98 for Essay 1, and 0.91 for Essay 2. Since 0.9 is equivalent to an 80% agreement, this indicated a good level of reliability (McNamara, 2000). Essays were also analysed to identify development in participants' understanding of the overall structure and key moves of the problem-solution text type. Pre- and post-instruction concept maps were examined for evidence of development in students' knowledge of the form and function of components of this text type, and themes in students' evaluative comments were summarised.

### **Findings**

In this section, the study's findings are reported in answer to its research questions.

#### ***Research question 1: Development of understanding of problem-solution texts***

The post-instruction concept maps produced by students in Session 6 were examined for evidence of the development of learners' understanding of problem-solution essays. This section presents the results of comparisons between students' concept maps before and after instruction. Sample pre- and post-instruction maps for Student B can be seen in Appendix 3.

In Session 1, the concept map was first introduced to the group as a collaborative mind mapping exercise preparatory to writing. For nearly all students, the ideas included in the first concept maps that they produced individually were almost identical to those that had been generated during the whole class task. Despite instructional input that demonstrated linking together subsections of concepts with possible solutions and consequences, these connections were not reflected in participants' maps. Their first attempts were, for the most part, simple list of ideas for a problem-solution topic, and very few included the solution component. These attempts showed that students were largely unable to expand upon and link concepts, possibly due to a lack of familiarity with the method and purpose of making visual maps. However, most participants appeared to have little understanding of how to develop concepts relevant to the topic in their pre-instruction essays, many of which showed little awareness of the role of discourse connectors or logical divisions between paragraphs.

The use of individual concept maps as a tool for learners to use to analyse texts was a feature of the teaching unit. Worksheets with exploratory questions, (see Appendix 2 for a sample), helped students to identify the key language features used to develop a problem-solution topic, and most visual maps produced by learners during the unit demonstrated a developing understanding of their role in composing a problem-solution text. Maps created by a small number of students included an understanding of cause and effect.

Post-instruction maps showed that some conceptual development regarding topic comprehension had taken place. Many of these maps included generic moves consistent with a problem-solution text; that is, they referred to solutions, and occasionally consequences, by including key words or points related to the topic question. For example, Student I's second map divided the causes of the problem and a series of solutions into two distinct sections, using keywords from the question. Student K's Map 2 presented a structural diagram suggestive of the order of textual stages in an essay and included question words and solutions. Thematic development of the topic question was particularly evident in the final maps of students C, D, E, H, I, J and K, who presented possible solutions, and sometimes included reasons. Student F pointed out reasons for the issue, but suggested no solutions. Students A and L composed very limited maps with little conceptual understanding of the topic demonstrated. Compared to students' final maps, their first maps showed little awareness of essay structure, with the notable exception of Student I, an Upper Intermediate student whose first language was French.

The construction of several final maps was suggestive of the paragraphing of an essay, and all post-instruction maps demonstrated a greater awareness of the problem-solution genre. For example, one of the weaker (Intermediate level) students (Student B), as can be seen in Appendix 3, demonstrated in his final map an understanding of rhetorical moves not seen in his first conceptual map. His final visual plan included possible solutions. Final maps, thus, provided a good indication of students' individual rates of development in relation to their ability to comprehend and demonstrate knowledge of the key elements of a problem-solution text.

***Research question 2: Advances in the ability to write a problem-solution text***

Post-instruction essays were examined for evidence of learners' expanded understanding of the structure and language of the problem-solution text type. Details comparing students' essays before and after instruction are presented in this section of the article. A sample pre- and post-instruction essay (Student B) can be seen in Appendix 3.

For many students, the conceptual limitations evident in their initial visual maps as part of essay writing preparation were mirrored in their first essays. Most sentences were very short, and simply listed a series of discrete ideas without attempts to link them into a coherent text. For example, Student K's initial map lacked the language of solutions

or consequences and the first essay also showed little evidence of development of ideas. The pre-instruction essay by Student B (see Appendix 3) revealed little in the way of conceptual development of ideas and relied instead on lists of examples. It was incomplete at both sentence and discourse levels. Students E, F, H and I, however, demonstrated an acceptable development of ideas in their initial essays. Student E's first essay and map reflect an awareness of rhetorical functions and included problem, solution and consequence moves. Although Student H's first map provided minimal evidence of developed ideas, concepts in the first essay were developed to some extent and showed good use of paragraphing and problem-solution phrasing: *If you face these problems, you should*. The initial essay by a particularly strong Upper-Intermediate student (I), who was clearly more experienced in academic writing, had a good introduction and appropriate paragraph divisions, as well as well-chosen topic sentences such as one that began: "A number of problems you may face when living abroad."

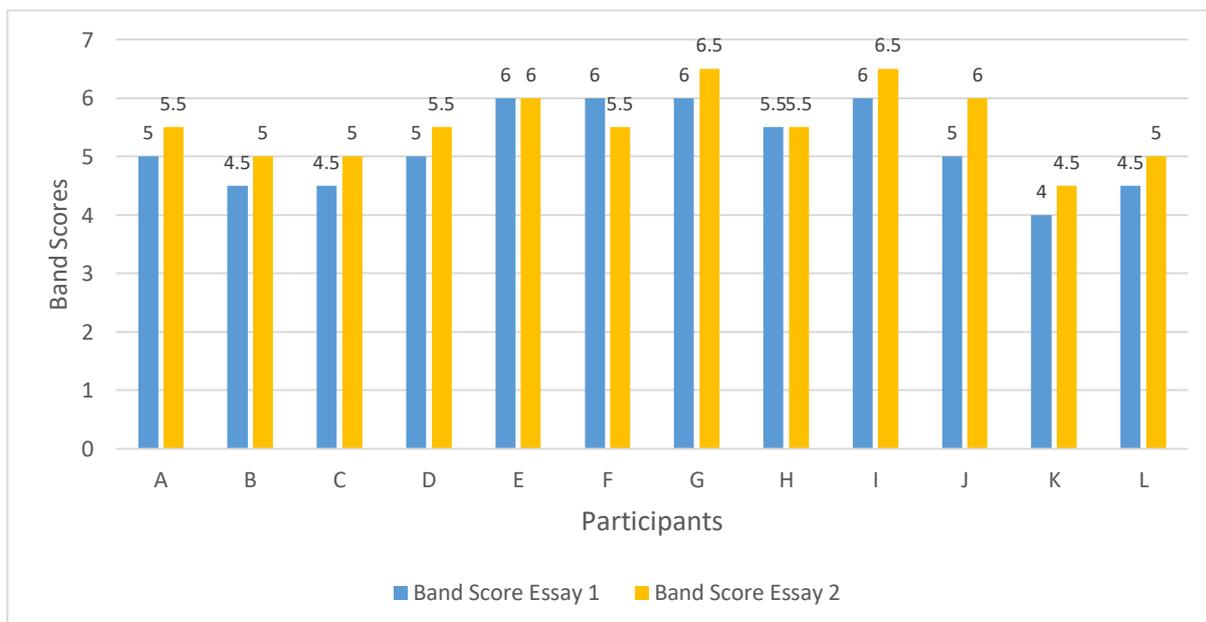
Post-instruction essays showed clear evidence of an ability to use some of the discourse patterns and rhetorical features featured in exemplar texts such as paragraphing and discourse connectors, and patterns of discourse that could be applied to any problem-solution text. Examples of problem-solution phrasing include: *To resolve these issues* and *If [you] do that, it could be effective*. Key phrases such as *play an important role* and *which results in* as well as language patterns that describe problems and present solutions were used by Participants E, G and J. In Student E's second essay, further examples of use of genre patterns included: *can take some effective measures to* and *teach them the means to protect themselves*. Student G's second essay lacked a concluding paragraph, but, overall, the text made good use of connectors. There was an attempt to discuss short- and long-term solutions for a complex issue, and most parts of the topic were addressed. Although Student J presented a list of undeveloped ideas in Essay 1, this student's second essay attempted to give an overview of the topic in the introduction and concluded with suggested solutions. A larger number of connecting devices were used appropriately, and further evidence of the inclusion of generic language patterns included: *should work to decrease* and *can work together to combat*.

Student B's post-instruction essay, as can be seen in Appendix 3, was still quite unsophisticated, but able to address the topic by presenting reasons for the issue and included possible solutions. An increased ability to write a coherent sentence that suggests a possible reason for a problem is evident when comparing "Secondly, there is [sic] no strict rules so some people who are teenegrs [sic] don't care about anything or [sic] afraid of something" with the grammatically and conceptually incomplete "Second, language problems" from Student B's pre-instruction essay. Overall, his essay structure showed a better understanding of paragraphs and their functions and had many more complete sentences. Attempts to address all or most aspects of the topic question (task response) were apparent in the majority of second essays, showing advances in students' understanding of the problem-solution text type. Many participants were able

to provide reasons for the problem outlined in the question, and issues were developed into possible solutions.

Pre- and post-instruction essays were marked using the four writing descriptors in the IELTS Academic rubric. Assessments of post-instruction essays and, to a lesser extent, the maps of the majority of participants, indicated a significant shift in task response (paying close attention to the topic question), and advances in cohesion and coherence (use of generic and structural discourse patterns and devices) had taken place. The only exception was Student F, whose work still showed only a limited development of the structural features of an essay. This may have been, in part, due to her more limited proficiency in English (Intermediate level) and the more challenging topic assigned for the second essay.

The second rater confirmed the assessment by the teacher-researcher of the specific IELTS categories in which progress could be demonstrated. Figure 1 shows the grades assigned to participants' pre- and post-instruction essays. Students' marks for Essay 2 improved by half a band score for eight students (two-thirds of the group) with marks distributed evenly across Intermediate and Upper Intermediate levels. Evidence of participants' second essays showing a greater understanding of how to construct a problem-solution essay is a development that is reflected in the increase of half-band score grades in a relatively short duration. Essays by Students E and H achieved the same scores as their first essays because they demonstrated the same good command of essay structure. One student's grade increased by a whole band (J); however, another's (Student F) dropped by a half grade.



*Figure 1:*  
IELTS Academic band scores pre- (Essay 1) and post- instruction (Essay 2)

***Research question 3: Students' evaluations of the usefulness of concept mapping***

Participants produced their final concept maps and second essays in the final session. They were given time to analyse their first and final concept maps, describe any differences they noted, and give possible reasons for changes. An evaluation by Student B can be seen in Appendix 3.

Few students provided explanations for their extended use of maps after instruction, although some suggested that their knowledge of how to create maps and further exercises had assisted their comprehension. In most cases, participants recognised that their first maps were primarily a list of ideas, with little to no conceptual development. Learners' comments indicated that they had become more aware of distinct features of text types during the unit. Student I discussed having an understanding of essay type (problem-solution vs advantages-disadvantages), and that his planning of ideas and essay structure had improved. Student E commented that her second map addressed the topic question with greater understanding, and this was reflected in her second essay. Student F noted that her Map 2 (which comprised several mini maps) had a better structure because she had developed her ideas. The mini maps she produced showed her awareness of possible reasons for issues, and a focus on parts of the essay topic. In most cases, the second maps made by participants demonstrated a better understanding of the topic question and, in maps produced by Students C, D E, G, and I, their layout suggested some awareness of logical stages of topic development.

Through verbal feedback during and after unit classes and during the feedback session that took place after the unit had been completed, students expressed an enthusiasm for visual mapping as an aid to help them understand texts and as a tool to generate ideas. For example, Student F showed the instructor the concept map she had constructed to examine in detail the essay question for an essay that was a requirement of her regular English language course. This post-course map also demonstrated some development in her explicit knowledge of essay structure and content.

Together, these findings show that for first maps and many of the essays produced prior to active instruction, most participants lacked crucial knowledge of text type and skills in essay composition. Their limited understanding was apparent in their initial texts, despite learners having demonstrated to varying degrees, an understanding of the elements in writing needed to produce an effective academic text in English during a group brainstorming exercise in Session 2. In relation to the first research question on using visual maps to develop conceptual knowledge of the generic patterns of rhetorical features needed for a specific text type, results were less conclusive, since conceptual development in learners probably took place as a result of activities that raised awareness of genre, and not solely because of practice in concept mapping. Evaluative comments by participants on the role of visual maps played in essay writing demonstrated a developing awareness of the value of mapping as a tool for writing.

## Discussion

This study was designed to examine and measure the academic English language writing knowledge of a target group of pre-admission international L2 writers, and to enhance their ability to apply acquired knowledge of content and structure to essay writing. Their level of proficiency (of at least Intermediate level) ensured they had some basic knowledge of writing in English, although not specifically of academic essays. Participants' understanding of the problem-solution text genre and of essay writing composition was investigated prior to and after a short unit of instruction in which concept maps were presented and practiced as a pre-writing task to generate and develop ideas, and also to assist students to deconstruct the language and structure of exemplar problem-solution texts. In Session 2 of the unit of instruction, a group checklist of the essential characteristics of effective writing produced by students demonstrated some prior knowledge of writing conventions in English. While only about half of the group had applied some of this pre-learned knowledge to their essays written in Session 1, they were at least able to answer exploratory questions (see Appendix 2 for a sample handout) during Sessions 2-5 that asked them to identify the language of rhetorical moves in problem-solution text exemplars, and examine the function of each paragraph.

The unit targeted two of the four IELTS band descriptors of academic writing: task response, and cohesion and coherence. After the unit, four students (two at Upper Intermediate and two at Intermediate level) achieved the minimum New Zealand degree course entry IELTS band score of 6 for their pre-instruction essays, as can be seen in Figure 1. Improvement in students' essay band scores in post-instruction essays was probably due to a combination of what they had learned from instruction and practice through the unit—in particular exposure to exemplar texts and the mapping of their key language features—as well as the other instructional activities they took part in during the course. Student F, whose band score dropped by half a point, would most likely have benefited from a second essay topic similar to the first, giving her a chance to consolidate her knowledge in written form without the need to address a more difficult question. Indeed, the same recommendation would probably apply to the other participants as well, although one of the aims of this short intervention was to raise learners' explicit awareness of the language and structure of rhetorical moves and their application to problem-solution topics.

Most post-instruction concept maps showed at least some evidence of conceptual development. This progress suggests that mapping has other equally valuable uses in the L2 writing classroom beyond its role as a generator of ideas in the pre-writing phase. Students' own evaluative comments about changes they had noticed between their pre- and post-instruction maps illustrate that by the end of the unit they were much more aware of the need to organise content into a coherent structure accessible to readers.

Any small-scale study based on a relatively short intervention can only draw very limited, non-generalisable conclusions about the impact of visual mapping on students' ability to compose a particular type of essay. However, teachers of similar courses and

participants may find its results useful. It is uncertain to what extent these learners will continue to make progress and build on what they learned from the unit in order to apply what they know to the construction of other text types. The still very rudimentary knowledge of structural features of essays that was evident in post-instruction maps suggests either that students found mapping was more useful as a tool for reading academic texts than as an aid for essay writing, or that students needed more practice in mapping than was possible in this short unit. While basic knowledge about the requirements of academic writing can be gained over a relatively short period of time, developing students' procedural skills in being able to produce quality texts requires sustained explicit instruction, feedback and extensive practice opportunities.

Further research into how visual maps can function in genre-based teaching, learning and assessment, especially after a longer unit of instruction, would be useful. Since concept mapping techniques can potentially facilitate integration of the language skills of reading and writing, learners could practise making visual maps of texts to examine patterns of discourse and textual moves, as well as using them to plan their own texts. If language students who intend to undertake tertiary level studies in English enter very challenging examination preparation courses without prior acquisition of the skill-set they need to analyse and produce academic texts, instruction that develops students' explicit awareness of the importance of crafting well-organised, logically-argued texts is likely to benefit the substantial numbers of international English language students who undertake tertiary study in New Zealand.

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## Appendix 1. The unit of instruction

Session overview	Content
<p><b>Session 1</b> Evaluating students' essay writing skills using a typical IELTS text type (problem-solution) question</p>	<p>Students were introduced to the purpose of using concept map types with a handout of examples of the kind of conceptual maps they could produce. The use of brainstorming problems and solutions using concept maps was presented. Learners produced a concept map (based on an essay question) and a short essay of 200-250 words based on the same problem-solution question.</p>
<p><b>Session 2</b> Identifying the typical language patterns of a problem-solution essay</p>	<p>Students completed exercises designed to help them learn how to identify and analyse discourse patterns occurring in a typical essay. They examined a sample problem-solution essay, made notes and created their own concept maps from notes. The concept of 'good' writing in English was presented and a group checklist was produced, based on students' contributions.</p>
<p><b>Session 3</b> Analysing and evaluating ability to apply knowledge of writing conventions to a sample text by analysing its attributes and deficits</p>	<p>After reviewing their checklist of 'good' writing, students read two texts in the genre and decided as to which was the better text (text A) and why. Students then discussed the function of each paragraph (text A only) including what they imagined the rest of the essay would contain. They analysed a sample essay (independently and in pairs), guided by a set of focus questions.</p>
<p><b>Session 4</b> Identifying language patterns, text structure, and specific moves in the problem-solution text type</p>	<p>Students completed analytical exercises as well as a list of the features of the problem-solution text structure: they identified the introduction, body, and conclusion, and the four generic moves: situation, problem, solution and evaluation of solution. (Paltridge, 2001, pp. 70-71). Patterns of discourse were also identified and students prepared a concept map as essay preparation for the same question.</p>
<p><b>Session 5</b> Further practice to consolidate skills, using a new sample text</p>	<p>Students were given a text and were asked to divide it into concrete, discrete paragraphs and to highlight key language features. A concept map was created to analyse answers to the topic questions and highlight key stages. Students discussed topic questions to generate ideas (and vocabulary) for the forthcoming essay question (for Session 6).</p>
<p><b>Session 6</b> Evaluation of skills: producing a concept map to prepare for an essay question, composing a problem-solution essay, and producing a written analysis of own concept maps</p>	<p>Students worked alone to prepare a post-instruction concept map of the basic structure of a problem-solution essay (topic was presented in session 5). Students were given an essay topic on a problem-solution question; they wrote a short essay of 200-250 words. Finally, students received their pre- and post-instruction maps back to compare, and they produced a written evaluation of the reasons for any differences. Named maps and essays were collected in.</p>

## Appendix 2. Example worksheet with exploratory questions based on a text

### Lesson 2

(Handout 3: Questions)

1. Read the essay. With a partner, discuss and answer these questions together and then make notes on your own:

- What is the main problem discussed in the essay and what kind of examples are given?
- How many solutions are suggested?
- What kind of solutions?
- Are there any consequences mentioned?
- How many paragraphs are there?
- What kinds of paragraphs are they? How do they help structure the essay for the reader?
- What are some key words and phrases that help to make it clear to the reader what each paragraph is for?



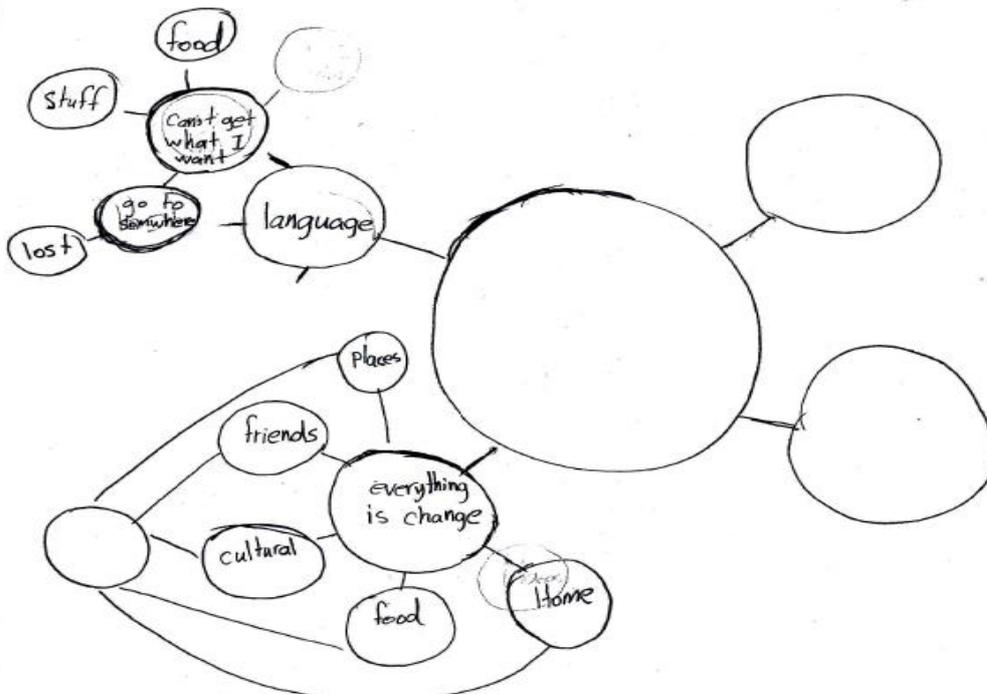
2. In pairs: What is the topic question for this essay? Write out an idea together with your partner.



(Now compare your answer with the original essay question.)

## Appendix 3. Pre- and post-instruction concept maps, essays and concept map evaluations

Student B. Pre-instruction concept map



## Student B. Pre-instruction essay

Imagine you are writing an essay for a magazine that international students will read:

What sort of problems do international students typically face when they go abroad for the first time? What are some of the reasons for such issues and how can students effectively deal with them?

Write 200-250 words



(Time: 30 minutes)

Studying abroad is one of the best chances but there are many problems.

First, everything is changed so it is hard to change yourself to adapt with the other place. For example: different cultural, food, friends, teachers and places. Sometimes, students feel homesick with these all changing. Second, language problems. Actually there are two ways. One of them is if the studying abroad is in some countries

## Student B. Post-instruction concept map

Levels of crime have increased rapidly in most cities around the world.

What are some of the reasons for crime in your hometown or in Auckland? (Choose ONE location).

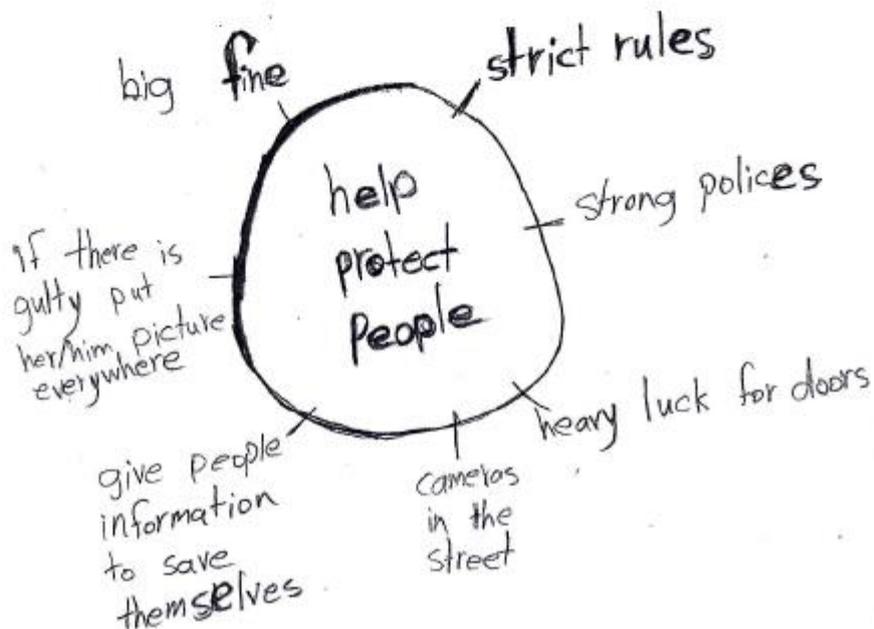
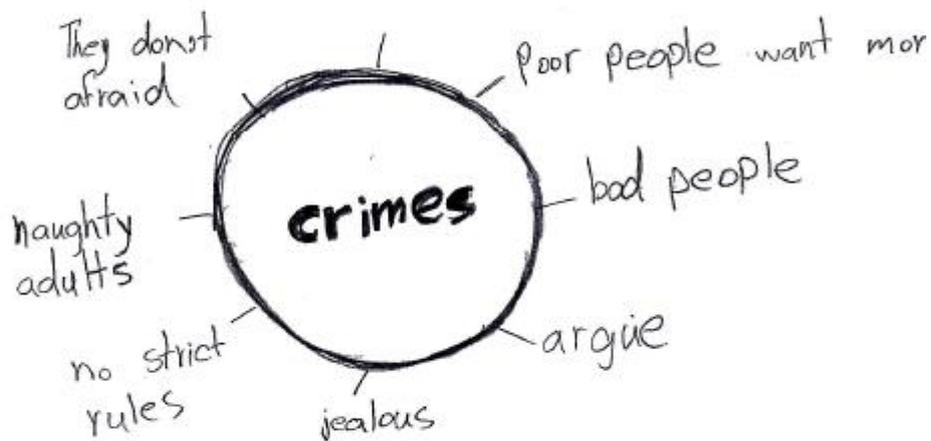
What are some of the ways the government and local communities can effectively deal with this issue and help protect people?



Draw a concept map (below) to help you plan an essay how you will answer this topic question. (Do not begin writing an essay).

Concept Map:

(10-15 minutes)



## Student B. Post-instruction essay

Levels of crime have increased rapidly in most cities around the world.

What are some of the reasons for crime in your hometown or in Auckland? (Choose ONE location).

What are some of the ways the government and local communities can effectively deal with this issue and help protect people?



Write an essay of 200-250 words (Time: 30 minutes)

There are many crimes all over the world. It's done by different people and reasons. In Saudi Arabia, there are a very high crime areas such as Jeddah in particula

There are many reasons of crimes. Firstly, most poor people are thief. They need money to alive so they always try to get money in many ways even if it is steal. Secondly, there is no strict rules so some people who are teenagers don't care about anything or afraid of something so they do what they want to do and sometimes they really enjoy doing bad things. Finally, arguing with someone or about something keep people angry so they have negative

## Student B. Post-instruction essay (continued)

feelings and maybe with this thought  
they make crimes. 4

However, the government should decrease all these  
crime by many strict rules. Firstly, try to find

some jobs, which does not need experience  
for poor people and after that give them a  
good salary so they will not think again  
how to steal to get money. Secondly, the

Saudi government must put strict rules  
to stop people doing horrible things.

For example: big fine and many years in the  
Prison it depends on the crim. Findly, make  
rules for people who have problems like arguing  
to tell them the best ways to solve  
their problems.

In my opinion, crimes are too dangerous  
but every country has to find solution  
to make their country safe.

## Student B. Post-instruction evaluation of concept maps

3. Write a description and an evaluation of any differences you can see between your two maps.

Consider: Do you think your use of the concept map as a planning method for essays has changed from lesson 1 to lesson 6?

- If so, in what ways are these changes clear in your maps?
- If so, how and why do you think that your use of concept maps has developed?

**Description and Evaluation of Concept Maps:**

(15 minutes)

There are many different. One of them that I can answer the question of the essay very well and I can organise my essay by drawing the concept map. Also the main different between my first and last concept map is that the last concept map has more strong points than the first one. Finally, I think concept map is very important before every essay so I keep improve my self and practice how to do it.

# ACADEMIC SINGLE AND MULTIWORD VOCABULARY IN EFL TEXTBOOKS: CASE STUDIES FROM INDONESIA AND CHINA

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## Abstract

*This paper reports two corpus-based studies of popular Indonesian and Chinese EFL textbooks which are often used to prepare students for English for Academic Purposes even though the textbooks target general English. The key question here is whether these textbooks expose learners to academic English vocabulary. The analysis involves four word lists: Coxhead's (2000) Academic Word List (AWL), Gardner and Davies' (2014) Academic Vocabulary List (AVL), Ackermann and Chen's (2013) Academic Collocation List (ACL), and Simpson-Vlach and Ellis' (2010) Academic Formulas List (AFL). The results indicate that neither the textbooks from Indonesia nor the ones from China provide learners with sufficient exposure to academic lexis from the four lists. The AVL has higher coverage and contains more high-frequency words, proper nouns and compound words than the AWL. This is unsurprising because these lists were developed in different ways. Very few academic multiword units appeared in the textbooks. Some implications for textbook designers and teachers are discussed, and suggestions for future research are made.*

## Introduction

The focus of this article is an analysis of academic vocabulary and multiword units in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) textbooks from two different educational contexts: Indonesia and China. There are several reasons why we are interested in academic vocabulary in EFL contexts. Commercial textbooks are extensively used in language teaching and learning (Richards, 2001), and are a main source of language input in the classroom (Guerrettaz & Johnston, 2013; Richards, 2001). They can influence teaching and learning content (Akbari, 2008; Neary-Sundquist, 2015). The three Indonesian textbooks in this study were selected because they are used by approximately 4.8 million senior high school students. The Chinese textbooks selected for this study are used in almost 90% of Shanghai cram schools, where learners receive additional courses after classes in public schools (Wei, 2012).

There have been changes in both Indonesia and China from a focus on teaching General English to teaching Academic English. In Indonesia, most universities have started prioritising studying in English (Masduqi, 2014). In China, several rounds of reform have moved the focus of the university English curriculum from English for General Purposes to English for General Academic Purposes (Yu & Liu, 2018). The textbooks in this study were originally developed for English for general purposes, but they tend to be used by teachers to prepare students for university education since no textbooks are specifically designed for English for Academic Purposes (EAP) in these contexts. The question is raised, then, about the suitability of these books for that specific purpose.

Investigating vocabulary in EFL textbooks is one way to respond to that question. Researchers have investigated the amount of vocabulary needed to cope with EFL textbooks (e.g. Alsaif & Milton, 2012; Nguyen, 2020; Sun & Dang, 2020), but few studies have investigated textbooks using single and multiword lists for general academic purposes. General academic vocabulary is used across a range of disciplines and is not specific to one particular area. It is supportive of academic content, not specific to it (see Nation, 2016; Coxhead, 2000). There are several lists of general academic vocabulary such as Coxhead's (2000) well-known Academic Word List (AWL). Other general academic word lists, including the Academic Vocabulary List (AVL) (Gardner & Davies, 2014), the Academic Collocation List (ACL) (Ackermann & Chen, 2013) and the Academic Formulas List (AFL) (Simpson-Vlach & Ellis, 2010), offer alternative and updated avenues of enquiry.

This article aims to (a) analyse the coverage of the single academic words in high school EFL textbooks used in Indonesia and China using the AWL and the AVL; and (b) examine the coverage of the ACL in the Indonesian textbooks and AFL and their functions in the Chinese textbooks. The high school textbooks in both contexts play important roles in learner vocabulary development because of limited exposure to English outside the classroom. This study provides valuable information into the extent to which EFL textbooks can help students with learning general academic vocabulary in English in the Indonesian and Chinese contexts.

### **Academic vocabulary in textbooks**

Several studies have investigated academic vocabulary in textbooks, mostly drawing on general academic word lists. Coxhead's (2000) AWL contains 570 word families (a headword, derivations and inflections; e.g. *analysis, analyse, analytical*, etc.) and is divided into ten sub-lists. It covers approximately 10% of university-level texts, as reported quite widely (see Coxhead, 2016). The AWL excluded the 2,000 word families of West's (1953) General Service List of Words (GSL). This decision is problematic, given that we now understand that academic vocabulary can be high, mid or low frequency in English (Nation, 2016). Nation (2013) states that teachers do not need specialised knowledge of an academic field to help their learners to pick up this vocabulary.

Coverage of the AWL over textbooks for EFL is lower than over university level texts. Matsuoka and Hirsh (2010) analysed the upper-intermediate New Headway book using Coxhead's (2000) AWL and found the mean coverage across all 12 units in the book was 2.1%. Miller (2011) found that the AWL covered 4.78% of three popular ESL textbooks compared to 8.4% over university textbooks, and suggested that the textbooks did not provide sufficient academic vocabulary for learners to develop successful comprehension of university textbooks. Ma (2013) examined the coverage of the AWL and GSL in three books of New Concept English textbook series (Alexander & He, 1997) (the same texts as in the Chinese case study in this article—see below) and found that the coverage of the AWL gradually increases from Book 3 (2.34%) to Book 4

(4.14%), but coverage was uneven in units. In Book 3 the AWL coverage in Unit 1 was 4.79% and in Unit 3 it was 8.02%. Note that Ma (2013) selected texts from the series for analysis, rather than carrying out a systematic study of the textbooks.

A more recent list of general academic vocabulary is Gardner and Davies' (2014) Academic Vocabulary List (AVL). It was developed from a 120-million word corpus of academic writing, a subsection of the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) covering nine disciplines: Business and Finance; Education; Humanities; History; Law and Political Science; Medicine and Health; Philosophy, Religion, Psychology; Science and Technology; and Social Science. The AVL was developed 'from scratch' meaning high frequency vocabulary was not excluded from the list. The coverage of the AVL over COCA Academic corpus is 14%, compared to 10% for the AWL (Gardner & Davies, 2014). The AVL is available as a word family list of 1,991 items; a list of 3,015 lemmas; or a list of 20,845 word types. In the current study, the word family list of the AVL was used as a counting unit to make the result comparable to that of the AWL. Durrant (2016) examined the coverage of the lemmatized AVL over the British Academic Written English corpus (BAWE) (Nesi et al., 2008) and found it covered 31% of the whole corpus. The coverage increased from undergraduate to taught postgraduate students' writing. We have yet to find a study that draws on the AVL for an analysis of textbooks. Since the AWL is widely used in EAP programs (Burkett, 2015), the present study uses the AWL for comparison with the studies above and the AVL to shed light on the performance of this list over different kinds of texts.

### **General academic multiword units**

The two lists of academic multiword units used in this study are Ackermann and Chen's (2013) ACL and Simpson-Vlach and Ellis' (2010) AFL. They were chosen because they are publicly available and carefully developed. Ackermann and Chen's (2013) ACL includes two-word collocations selected from a written corpus of 25 million running words from 28 academic disciplines. The list is large with 2,468 collocations (e.g. brief overview, conflicting interest, and conventional wisdom). It is categorised grammatically, according to each of the words in each academic collocation. Much of the ACL is made up of noun combinations, e.g. noun+noun (e.g. assessment process). Since the learning of the ACL can improve students' collocational knowledge as well as proficiency in academic English (Ackermann & Chen, 2013), it is necessary to establish whether these textbooks can help learners in developing their academic collocations. To the best of our knowledge, no research has investigated the ACL in EFL textbooks. The current study uses the ACL to find coverage of the ACL in Indonesian EFL textbooks and how many times ACL items occur over the textbooks.

The Academic Formulas List (AFL) (Simpson-Vlach & Ellis, 2010) was also developed using corpus linguistics techniques, including statistical approaches to identify three, four and five-word strings that were more frequent in written and spoken academic corpora than in a spoken non-academic corpus and a written non-academic corpus respectively. Simpson-Vlach and Ellis (2010) drew on the expertise of 20 experienced

EAP instructors and researchers to rate potential AFL items according to whether they were worth teaching. This method makes the AFL different from other lists of multiword units such as in the case of Biber et al. (2004) whose lexical bundles were criticized for failing to distinguish more psychologically salient items from others (Simpson-Vlach & Ellis, 2010). The items in the lexical bundles list by Biber et al. (2004) were selected based on frequency, and thus while some of them (e.g. on the other hand; I mean if you) have the same frequency in a university language corpus, they might not be seen as being equally useful by teachers, learners and researchers.

The AFL (Simpson-Vlach & Ellis, 2010) has three sublists: a core AFL with 207 items that are shared in writing and speaking; a 200-item written only AFL (e.g. due to the fact that); and a 200-item spoken only AFL (e.g. you know what I mean). Simpson-Vlach and Ellis (2010) also categorized the items in AFL, but by their discourse-pragmatic functions in academic contexts: referential, stance, and discourse organisation. This categorisation is helpful for teachers and learners because it can connect multiword units with functions in academic texts.

Some studies have examined collocations in high-school textbooks in EFL contexts. For example, Green and Lambert (2018) analysed a 16.25 million word secondary school corpus in Singapore, across eight different disciplines, and identified 7468 phrase types which they used to develop the Secondary School Vocabulary Lists (SVL). They found that two-word lexical combinations in the corpus were relatively limited, with only 2% (129/7468) of the phrases occurring across disciplines. Studies in Iran (Roohani, 2011) and in Taiwan (Wang & Good, 2007) found that EFL school textbooks also provided limited exposure to collocations.

According to Biber et al. (2004), formulaic expressions can provide structural frames for language stretches, which are vital for learning how to do academic work appropriately (Byrd & Coxhead, 2010; Durrant, 2019; Simpson-Vlach & Ellis, 2010). To the best of our knowledge, no published textbook research has focused on academic multiword units. The present research uses the AFL to examine how many items from the AFL are contained in the NCE textbook series and their functions.

### **The potential for learning vocabulary through textbooks**

Repetition is an essential factor in learning vocabulary (Vidal, 2011; Webb, 2007; Nation, 2013). Words that occur only once in texts provide less opportunity for learning than words that occur multiple times. To be familiar with academic words in textbooks, learners may need to encounter the words frequently. Words need to appear ten times or more according to Webb (2007) to increase the possibility for incidental learning to take place (Brown et al., 2008). Retrieval is also an important element of vocabulary learning. Retrieval takes place when learners perceive the form and retrieve the meaning of a word. Memory is enhanced when a learner's vocabulary comprehension is strengthened visually and linguistically (Nation, 2013). Investigating how often words reoccur in the textbooks matters because of these learning processes.

The aims of this article are to investigate academic vocabulary in two textbook series, one each from China and the other from Indonesia, using a corpus-based approach and four- word lists for general academic purposes. These aims can be seen in the following research questions.

### Research questions

1. What is the coverage of Coxhead's AWL over the Indonesian and Chinese textbooks?
2. What is the coverage of Gardner and Davies' AVL over the Indonesian and Chinese textbooks?
3. What proportion of the Indonesian textbooks does Ackermann and Chen's ACL cover?
4. What proportion of the Chinese textbooks does Simpson-Vlach and Ellis' AFL cover and what functions do they have?

### Methodology

#### *The textbooks*

The three Indonesian textbooks (Buku Bahasa Inggris Kelas X–XII, 2015–2017) contain 15-16 chapters each, and range from nearly 23,000 words (Buku Bahasa Inggris Kela 2) to nearly 32,000 words (Buku Bahasa Inggris Kela 1 and 3). The analysis included all written texts. The two Chinese textbooks, NCE Book 3 and Book 4 (Alexander & He, 1997), contain 60 lessons (in three units) and 48 lessons (in six units) respectively. The analysis included the reading passages in each lesson, excluding glossaries and exercises. There were 22,786 tokens in Book 3 and 18,109 in Book 4.

Both sets of textbooks needed to be cleaned carefully (Nation, 2016) in preparation for analysis. This included:

1. Changing the format from pdf to txt files.
2. Checking that there were no spelling errors or typos.
3. Ensuring all proper nouns in the texts which were not already in the proper noun list in the Heatley et al. (2002) BNC/COCA version of the Range vocabulary analysis programme were added to that list (e.g. *Qomolangma* and *Ferdinand*.)
4. Adding any words from the textbooks that were not in frequency lists in Range to the corresponding word family. For example, *disunited* was added to the word family of *unite*.
5. Replacing hyphens with *space hyphen space* because they can also occur as separate non-hyphenated words and the hyphen separates words (Nation, 2016) (e.g. *cat-like* and *horse-riding*).
6. Adding transparent compounds such as *echo-location* to the Range BNC/COCA compound list.

#### *Data analysis*

For the AWL (Coxhead, 2000) analysis, the Range programme developed by Heatley et al. (2002) for the GSL/AWL was used. For the AVL (Gardner & Davies, 2014),

AntConc 3.5.8 (Anthony, 2019) was used. Note that AntConc does not provide information on word families, thus coverage of the AWL and AVL is reported in tokens.

For the ACL (Ackermann & Chen, 2013) analysis, the following procedure was used:

1. Each Indonesian textbook text was inputted individually into the EAP Foundation website (<https://www.eapfoundation.com/vocab/academic/acl/>) and ACL items were highlighted in the textbox.
2. The highlighted collocations were manually counted and checked several times for frequency and range.
3. The following formula was applied to work out the proportion of the ACL items in each textbook:

$$\frac{\text{The number of ACL items found in the textbook}}{\text{The total number of words in the textbook}} \times 100\%$$

The AFL (Simpson-Vlach & Ellis, 2010) analysis used AntConc 3.5.8 (Anthony, 2019). PivotChart functions in Excel were used to count the frequency of each item from the AVL and AFL occurring in Chinese textbooks.

## Results and discussion

### *AWL coverage over the Indonesian and Chinese textbooks*

The AWL coverage over the Indonesian textbooks ranged from 3.62% to 5.99% (see Table 1). A total of 98 AWL words occurred in all three textbooks. Only 20 items were repeated ten times or more, and mostly in instructions for learners, for example, task, text, paragraph, create, structure, feature, and item. The coverage of the AWL over the Chinese textbooks went from 2.26% to 4.18%. Only two word families in Book 3 (*compute* and *assist*) and five word families in Book 4 (*individual*, *process*, *instance*, *invest*, and *mental*) occurred ten times or more.

Table 1:

*AWL coverage and word families in the Indonesian and Chinese textbooks*

Textbooks	Coverage of AWL (based on tokens)	Word families
Indonesian Textbook 1	3.62	205
Indonesian Textbook 2	3.78	235
Indonesian Textbook 3	5.99	274
Chinese Book 3	2.26	229
Chinese Book 4	4.18	303

AWL coverage over the textbooks is below the 9% to 12% figure observed in university texts (Coxhead, 2000; Coxhead, 2016; Miller, 2011), and is slightly lower than those noted in several studies on secondary school textbooks written for native speakers of English (Coxhead et al., 2010; Coxhead & Boutorwick, 2018). Only a few AWL words

in the textbooks are repeated sufficiently to allow for vocabulary learning acquisition (see Webb, 2007; Brown et al., 2008). This suggests that these textbooks do not provide enough exposure to the AVL to prepare learners for their studies at university.

### ***Coverage of the AVL over the Indonesian and Chinese textbooks***

The AVL coverage over the Indonesian EFL textbooks is nearly 15% for Textbook 1 and increases by nearly 2% from Textbook 2 to Textbook 3. The AVL coverage of the Chinese textbooks is 13.32% (Book 3) and 17.23% (Book 4). After checking the distribution of the words covered by the AVL in the Indonesian and Chinese textbooks using Range with BNC/COCA 25,000 lists, we can see that the AVL coverage includes a large amount of high frequency words, including day, am, and being, some proper nouns (e.g. Asia) and compounds (e.g. footnote, and southwest).

Table 2:

*AVL coverage (%) of the Indonesian textbooks across Nation's BNC/COCA lists*

<b>Word list</b>	<b>Textbook 1</b>	<b>Textbook 2</b>	<b>Textbook 3</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> 1,000	67.08	67.87	60.55
2 <sup>nd</sup> 1,000	17.08	17.43	18.99
3 <sup>rd</sup> 1,000	13.64	11.54	16.29
4 <sup>th</sup> – 9 <sup>th</sup> 1,000	2.13	2.8	4.03
10 <sup>th</sup> – 25 <sup>th</sup> 1,000	0.02	0.13	0.11
Proper nouns	0.02	0.03	0.43
Compound words	0.02	0.21	0.22

Table 3:

*AVL coverage (%) over the Chinese Textbooks across Nation's BNC/COCA lists*

<b>Word list</b>	<b>Book 3</b>	<b>Book 4</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> 1,000	41.62	33.68
2 <sup>nd</sup> 1,000	32	29.38
3 <sup>rd</sup> 1,000	19.46	24.88
4 <sup>th</sup> – 9 <sup>th</sup> 1,000	6.22	11.58
10 <sup>th</sup> – 25 <sup>th</sup> 1,000	0.23	0.2
Proper nouns	0.23	0.29
Compound words	0.23	0

Tables 2 and 3 show that the AVL clusters mostly in the 1st, 2nd and 3rd 1,000 word families of the BNC/COCA lists, and also appears in mid-frequency and low frequency

levels. In the Indonesian textbooks, 94 AVL items in Textbook 1 occur ten times or more, 81 in Textbooks 2, and 115 in Textbook 3 (e.g. task, following, read, know, and paragraph). In the Chinese textbooks, 36 AVL items in Book 3 occur ten times or more, and 36 in Book 4 as well (e.g. individual, problem, however, knowledge, and family). The high coverage of the AVL and these repetitions mean there are opportunities for learners to acquire these words incidentally or deliberately through intensive reading and vocabulary study (see Webb, 2007) as this may help students acquire academic vocabulary effectively.

### *The ACL in the Indonesian textbooks*

A total of 230 out of 2468 items of the ACL appeared in the Indonesian textbooks (9.32%). The proportion of ACL items varies, as can be seen in Table 4, with the 3rd textbook containing the most items from the list.

Table 4:

*ACL items and percentage of the list in the Indonesian textbook series*

	ACL items	% of ACL list
Textbook 1	49	0.14
Textbook 2	58	0.25
Textbook 3	123	0.37

The most frequent ACL items are learning process with 12 occurrences in Textbook 1 and collecting information with 18 occurrences in Textbook 3. Other ACL items that recur in the textbooks include *give information* (Textbook 1), *social function* (Textbook 2), and *modern technology* (Textbook 3). Each collocation appears fewer than ten times in total. These findings show that the Indonesian EFL textbooks have low coverage of academic collocations and do not provide enough support for vocabulary acquisition.

Here is an example of a reading text from Textbook 3 (Chapter 1, Six things to do if you visit Seattle, p. 2) with ACL items marked in bold.

See exciting and **experimental works** at Chihuly Garden and Glass. A visit to this site is an opportunity to take full advantage of the location at the Seattle Center, a premier destination for arts, entertainment, and leisure activities. Explore the Space Needle and Pacific Science Center. Experience Music Project and a variety of **cultural activities** offered throughout the year.

Similar results have been found regarding collocations in high-school textbooks in EFL contexts which have insufficient exposure (see Green & Lambert, 2018; Roohani, 2011; Wang & Good, 2007). Taken all together, these textbooks appear to include low levels of general and academic English collocations.

### *The AFL and the Chinese textbooks*

Both Book 3 and Book 4 contain AFL core, AFL spoken and AFL written items. Book 4 contains 118 different AFL items (e.g. *likely to be, the study of, it does not*), compared to 95 different formulas in Book 3. If we count individual words in the formulas in relation to the total number of words in the textbooks, the AFL covers 0.7% (159/22,786) of Book 3, and 1% (189/18,109) of Book 4. This means that there are ten AFs per 1,000 words in Book 4, compared to seven in Book 3, even though the total tokens in Book 4 are much lower than in Book 3. AFL core items occur 134 times in Book 4 and 86 times in Book 3. Spoken AFL items occur 39 times in Book 3 and 14 times in Book 4. Table 5 shows the distribution of AFL items in Books 3 and 4, categorized into three main functions: discourse organizing (e.g. *as well as, at the same time*), referential expressions (e.g. *part of the, at the end of*) and stance expressions (e.g. *according to the, and you can*) (Biber, 2006).

Table 5:

*Distribution of Academic Formulas across functional categories in the Chinese textbooks*

<b>Function</b>	<b>Book 3</b>	<b>Book 4</b>	<b>Total</b>
Referential expressions	112	132	244
Stance expressions	35	43	78
Discourse organizing	12	14	26
Total	159	189	348

Table 5 shows that referential formulas are more common in both Book 3 and Book 4, and the discourse organizing formulas are the least frequent. The most frequent AFL item is *be able to* (Table 6). It occurs 12 times in total in the reading texts of the two books, even though it is in the AFL Spoken List. Here is an example from Lesson 10 in Book 3 about the Titanic: “Even if two of these were flooded, she would still *be able to* float. The tragic sinking of this great liner will always be remembered”; and in a text on secrecy in industry (Lesson 15, Book 4): “...for fear the agents of other firms should *be able to* trace the kind of research they are likely to be undertaking” where it is used to describe the ability of the heroine and the agents. The highest frequency of the AFs is nine times in the total running words of 22,786 in Book 3, and seven times in 18,109 in Book 4 (Table 6). None occurs more than ten times in each book.

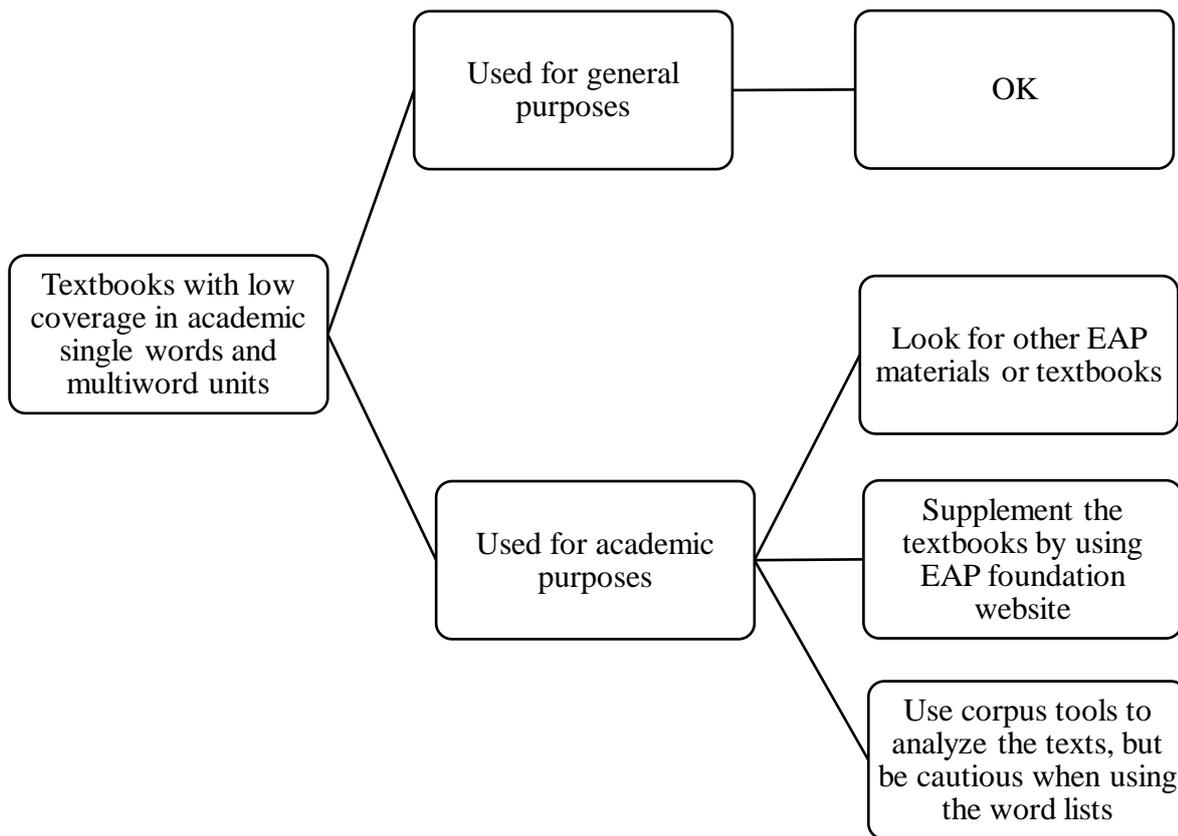
Table 6:

*The most frequent Academic Formulas in the Chinese textbooks—Book 3 and Book 4*

Academic Formula	Function	Book 3	Book 4	Total
be able to	Stance expression (AFL Spoken)	9	3	12
there is a	Referential expression (AFL Core)	5	7	12
part of the	Referential expression (AFL Core)	6	4	10

### **Implications for pedagogy and textbook design**

It is important to note that these two studies do not use the same general academic multiword unit list for analysis and it is difficult to generalise the findings from small-scale studies such as these. That said, there are several implications for teaching in this study. Firstly, it is clear that the coverage of academic single words and multiword units is low. This means the textbooks are not particularly suitable for EAP. If teachers are planning to use these textbooks for EAP, there is some evidence of repetition of AWL/AVL single words in the textbooks and ACL/AFL which is useful for learning. Teachers might need to select other texts which are academic in nature (Coxhead, 2000; 2016) as supplements to the textbooks. For example, teachers can look for other EAP materials or textbooks, or use the same tools as we have in this study to investigate the academic vocabulary in their texts to investigate academic vocabulary in context. Teachers should be cautious when using the ready-made word lists. For instance, they should know about the differences between the AWL and the AVL. Figure 1 illustrates decisions that teachers might make based on these implications.



*Figure 1:*  
Pedagogical implications drawn from the findings of this study

Teachers could develop their learners' knowledge and skills for using strategies such as word cards (Nation, 2013) to help with academic lexis growth, and the word lists in this study can be used for planning and goal setting (bearing in mind that the ACL and the AVL are particularly large). Learners need to learn about the importance of these units, to understand that these words do not just appear together by chance, and that the AFL has been categorised by function. For more on training learners to identify multiword units, see Bui et al. (2019).

Future research could focus on textbooks for EAP and carry out similar investigation into academic vocabulary for comparison with the results presented here. It would be useful to see how teachers use these textbooks, and how or whether they highlight any single or multiword academic lexis in any way. Perhaps any spoken language in the textbooks could be analysed using a spoken academic word list (Dang et al., 2017). A reviewer of this article suggested looking into the extent to which higher frequency AVL words were being used with academic meanings. Finally, research into the actual uptake of general academic vocabulary and multiword units from textbooks would be invaluable.

## Conclusion

This study has analysed the academic single word and multiword units in two EFL contexts (Indonesia and China) using the AWL, the AVL, the ACL, and the AFL. The results shed light on the coverage of these lists over the textbooks and suggest that they are perhaps not lexically suitable for preparing students for academic studies in English at tertiary level. Learners may struggle to develop their knowledge of academic single word and multiword units using these books.

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# TEACHER BELIEFS AND STRATEGIES FOR USING L1 IN ADULT ESP CLASSROOMS IN JAPANESE COMPANIES

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## Abstract

*Language teachers are often cautioned about the dangers of using their students' first language (L1), but studies on teachers' beliefs have revealed a range of opinions on the topic. Many teachers see the L1 as a valuable tool, particularly for ensuring student comprehension and helping low-proficiency students. This study investigated the beliefs of six English for Specific Purposes (ESP) teachers working in Japan to determine their beliefs and strategies regarding L1 use, and the degree to which these match previous findings in non-ESP contexts. Key arguments for and against L1 use were identified using qualitative interviews, with helping low proficiency students and efficiency being the two most common arguments made in favour of using L1. Four teachers described seven different classroom activities that deliberately utilize L1. Teaching experience, learning a foreign language, and the writings of several ELT authors were cited by teachers as influences on their beliefs. The author argues that constructive, strategic L1 use in ESP classes may outweigh any of its potential negative effects and makes suggestions for further research.*

## Introduction

The use of the first language (L1) in second language teaching is a controversial issue. While the current consensus seems to support its use in a limited and principled way (Hall & Cook, 2012), it still retains negative associations with the Grammar Translation method (Cook, 2009 in Kelly & Bruen, 2015) and sits uncomfortably with the Communicative Approach to teaching.

Translation and code-switching have been viewed negatively for reducing the amount of L2 input that students receive (Turnbull & Arnett, 2002) and reinforcing the habit of processing L2 in the L1, which could lead to un-idiomatic L2 production and inhibit the development of native-like processing abilities (Cook, 2009 in Kelly & Bruen, 2015). However, some authors have questioned whether complete exclusion of the L1 is justified, suggesting that judicious L1 use might be a superior approach (e.g. Rivers, 2011), and many teachers appear to support this view (e.g. McMillan & Rivers, 2011).

This study is concerned with the beliefs of teachers in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) contexts regarding the use of L1. What follows is an overview of the arguments for and against L1 use, a review of research into teacher beliefs on the subject, and a consideration of how these may relate to the challenges faced by ESP teachers.

## Literature Review

### *Views on using the L1*

Some of the strongest proponents for L1 use favour a bilingual, multi-lingual, or translanguaging approach to teaching. Butzkamm (2003) argues in favour of an unapologetically bilingual approach, stating that “the mother tongue is...the greatest asset people bring to the task of foreign language learning” (p.29). Levine (2014) argues that we should view the language classroom as a “multilingual social space”, and that L2 teaching pedagogy “would benefit from assigning the L1 a principled, sanctioned place in the L2 classroom” (p.333). Translanguaging pedagogies also challenge the separation of languages in the classroom and allow teachers and students to use multiple languages flexibly (Creese & Blackledge, 2010). This can include making comparisons between the L1 and L2 to help students learn and using the L1 as “an instrument of disambiguation” (Garcia & Vazquez, 2012, p. 588).

However, in EFL and ESL contexts where the Communicative Approach to learning languages is largely dominant, there is a wariness about dropping barriers to L1 use. Turnbull (2001) argued against Cook’s (2001) proposal to give teachers “license” to use the L1, seeing a danger in teachers overusing it. When teachers have been encouraged to use L1, they have been advised to do so judiciously (Turnbull, 2001; Macaro, 2001) and in principled ways. For instance, Macaro (2005) recommended limiting the L1 to only 10-15% of classroom language, while McMillan and Rivers (2011) suggested adjusting the ratio of L1 to L2 use in the classroom based on the students’ L2 proficiency levels. However, even if such limitations were set, studies have shown that teachers often use the L1 more extensively than is allowed by the policies at their institution (Turnbull, 2001), and also tend to underestimate how much L1 they use in class (Van der Meij & Zhao, 2010).

Another concern is that the teacher’s use of L1 could implicitly give students permission or encouragement to use it in class, reducing their motivation to use the L2. Although Macaro (2001) found no relationship between teacher and student use of the L1, a later study by Thompson and Harrison (2014) did in fact find that “the teacher’s decision of which language to employ in the classroom not only impacts the amount of input that the students receive but also influences the language that students choose to use in the classroom” (p. 332). They emphasized even brief code-switches by the teacher seemed to give students permission to use the L1, reducing their use of the target language.

While this reduction in L2 use is a concern, it may not necessarily lead to poorer learning outcomes. L1 use can be justified theoretically from a sociocultural SLA perspective if it improves scaffolding and negotiation of meaning (Turnbull & Arnett, 2002), which aid learning. Constructive L1 use of this kind has been observed between students in task-based classrooms (e.g. Swain & Lapkin, 2000), where most student L1 use was on-task and served important cognitive and social functions. In some contexts, where teachers claim it is impossible to prevent students from using their L1 entirely, encouraging productive L1 use may be an effective compromise (Carless, 2008). Moore

(2013) suggested that L1 could be encouraged during certain tasks, e.g. form-focused tasks, where it could ease the students' cognitive burden.

### ***Teacher beliefs and strategies for L1 use***

The amount of L1 that teachers allow in class varies greatly between individuals (Duff & Polio, 1990; Turnbull, 2001; Edstrom, 2006), but the functions the L1 is used for are relatively similar across different teaching contexts (Hall & Cook, 2012). While studying foreign language teachers in universities, Polio and Duff (1994) found that teachers used their students' L1 for:

...grammar instruction, classroom management and administration, to demonstrate empathy or show solidarity with the learners, to provide translations for unknown words and to compensate for learners' apparent lack of understanding and in response to learners already speaking their own language. (Hall & Cook, 2012, p. 286)

Studies have confirmed that teachers allow L1 use in principled ways. Lo (2015) found that Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) teachers who used the L1 did so in a way that was sensitive to their students' needs, language proficiency, and learning context. Macaro (1997) identified three common theories that teachers held regarding L1 use: a 'virtual position', where the teacher aims to make the classroom represent a real target language environment as closely as possible; a 'maximal position', where the target language is maximized and use of the L1 completely avoided; and an 'optimal position', which allows for selective use of the L1 to enhance learning.

In Samar and Moradkhani's (2014) study of four EFL teachers' uses of code-switching, teachers most often used the L1 to facilitate or check their students' comprehension. McMillan and Rivers (2011) reported similar results in their study of 29 university EFL teachers in Japan. The most common reasons given for the teacher using L1 were that it "facilitates and ensures successful teacher-student communication", is "helpful when teaching lower proficiency students", and is "helpful for building rapport with students" (McMillan & Rivers, 2011, Appendix C). The most common argument given against teacher L1 use was that there will be "more negotiation of meaning if students use English only" (McMillan & Rivers, 2011, Appendix D), and against student L1 use, that it is "due to laziness or connected with off-task behaviour" (McMillan & Rivers, 2011, Appendix F). McMillan & Rivers (2011) noted "all teachers who believed that L1 use could enhance L2 learning also strongly cautioned that the L1 should not be overused" (p. 258).

### ***ESP teaching***

The content and aims of ESP courses are determined by the specific needs of the students, which are often academic or occupational. While ESP teachers do not need to teach the content of their students' field as CLIL teachers do, they must still engage with their students' subject knowledge in order to address their specific English needs. When a teacher lacks the same level of subject knowledge as their students, they may face 'In-

class Subject Knowledge Dilemmas' while teaching, which can be a source of anxiety (Wu & Badger, 2009). When confronted with such dilemmas, ESP teachers in Wu and Badger's (2009) study either avoided the situation or took a risk with their response.

Specialized or technical vocabulary is an important component of ESP students' English needs, and one ESP teachers will be expected to understand and teach to some degree. Vocabulary teaching is an area where there is strong evidence that using the L1 may be superior to using L2 alone. Zhao and Macaro (2016) found that learners who were taught vocabulary with L1 translations performed better than the L2-instructed group on immediate and delayed post-tests. In another study by Tian and Macaro (2012), students who participated in a lexical focus-on-form activity that included code-switching learned more vocabulary than those who did the activity completely in the L2.

What follows is an empirical study that aims to address the following research questions:

1. What are the beliefs of ESP teachers regarding the use of their students' L1 in classroom teaching?
2. What strategies do ESP teachers use to decide whether or not to allow the use of the L1?
3. What factors influence teachers' beliefs and strategy use?

## **Methodology**

### ***Context***

The research was conducted with six ESP teachers working with adult learners in an EFL context in Japan, hereinafter referred to as T1–T6. The teachers were employed either full-time or part-time by a dispatch company that provides in-company training courses. These courses generally focus on business English and are tailored to address the specific needs the Japanese employees have for English (e.g. email and telephone communication, business travel, negotiations and presentations). Most courses are for groups of four to ten students, although some students receive individual lessons. Lessons are from 60 to 120 minutes long and are held either once or twice a week.

### ***Participants***

Four of the teachers worked full-time for the dispatch company and two worked part-time while also teaching EFL or ESP courses elsewhere. All the participants were male native English speakers and had between 7 to 15 years of teaching experience. They all possessed at least a CELTA or equivalent English teaching qualification. Three of them worked in Tokyo, two in Kobe and one in Osaka. The teachers' biographical information is shown in Table 1.

Table 1:  
*Teachers' biographical information*

Teacher	Nationality	Qualification	ESP experience (years)	Location	Japanese proficiency	Taught in countries other than Japan
T1	British	CELTA	7	Tokyo	Low-intermediate	Yes
T2	American	DELTA	8	Kobe	High - intermediate	No
T3	British	CELTA	8	Tokyo	Elementary	Yes
T4	American	CELTA	8	Osaka	Elementary	Yes
T5	Canadian	M.A.	12	Kobe	Low-intermediate	Yes
T6	Australian	M.A.	15	Tokyo	Intermediate	No

### ***Data collection***

The participants were invited to take part in individual, semi-structured interviews with the researcher, which were carried out in August 2019. Interviews were conducted in person with the three teachers in Tokyo, and by Skype with the three teachers in Osaka and Kobe. The interviews lasted between 12 and 45 minutes and were guided by a list of interview questions (Appendix 1) based on the research questions for this study. The teachers received the list of interview questions at least 24 hours before the interview to give them time to prepare. As the researcher worked for the same company as the participants and in a supervisory role with three of them, every effort was made to ensure their comments would remain anonymous. Participants were invited with the understanding that there would be no negative consequences for declining to take part. All interviews were conducted outside of working hours and off company premises.

### ***Data analysis***

The six recorded interviews were transcribed and analysed using the following process:

1. The researcher listened and read through the interviews to get a sense of the overall data, highlighting and making notes of key themes that emerged.
2. In each teacher's transcript, comments were categorized in relation to three broad themes: teacher beliefs, teacher strategies, and influences on beliefs and strategies. These three themes relate to the three initial research questions and formed a "start list" for coding (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 58).
3. The beliefs, strategies and influences were each grouped together and categorized by theme, then given an appropriate label. For instance, the following excerpt from Teacher 2's interview was highlighted in the first read-through.

*Interviewer:* And has your opinion on this changed over time since you began teaching?

*Teacher 2:* Yeah. I've started to view it as...there are times when it's extremely efficient, and over the years, especially teaching in an EFL context like we are, where we only have an hour or 90 minutes or two hours with our students a week, making the most efficient use of that time was one of the best things to do first.

This excerpt was then categorized under the theme of 'teacher beliefs' and labelled as 'using class time more efficiently'. Some of the labels chosen applied to statements by all six teachers, while others applied to statements by only two or three.

4. After labelling, the transcripts were read through again to confirm that the labels were appropriate, consistently applied, and to check whether further statements could be found that fit any of the labels.

## Results

This section presents the results of the study and discusses the seven themes that emerged from the data: low-proficiency students, time efficiency, affective environment, planned L1 use, better vocabulary learning, specialized topics, and risks with L1 use. These themes are based on the reasons that the teachers gave for or against L1 use, which are presented in Table 2 in order of frequency.

Table 2:

*Reasons given by teachers for and against L1 use.*

Why/How teachers used the L1	Teacher						Frequency (n=6)
	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	
To help lower-proficiency students	•	•	•	•	•	•	6
To use class time more efficiently		•	•	•		•	4
To reduce negative affective factors	•		•	•		•	4
To deal with lack of comprehension	•	•		•		•	4
To help with a specialized topic	•	•		•	•		4
For better vocabulary learning		•		•	•		3
Reasons given against using the L1	Teacher						Frequency (n=6)
	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	
Realistic risk students could become complacent or over-reliant on L1	•		•	•		•	4
Not proficient enough in their students' L1	•		•				2

### ***Low-proficiency students***

All teachers agreed that the L1 could be used to help lower-proficiency students, a common finding in studies on teacher beliefs (Hall & Cook, 2012). This was strongly related to concerns about students' comprehension and using the class time efficiently. Some teachers allowed low-proficiency students to use L1 for activities that they would expect higher-proficiency students to complete in the target language, e.g. discussing a task (T3). T3 believed that letting students use their L1 would reduce the cognitive load of an activity if students were "already expending a lot of mental energy on the language point in hand". T6 acted as a "human dictionary" for his low-proficiency students, letting them ask him for translations of vocabulary.

### ***Efficiency***

Four teachers believed that using the L1 could be justified if it allowed class time to be employed more efficiently. Two of these teachers (T2 and T4) cited authorities in relation to this claim. T2 recalled a quote by Paul Nation that often the most efficient route to meaning is by reference to the L1 (Nation (2003) essentially makes this point). He stressed that in an EFL context where lesson time is very limited, making efficient use of time becomes a priority. T4 recalled a talk he had heard by Penny Ur on this topic, and how he had been persuaded by her argument that translation was both faster and avoided potential misunderstandings.

The same teachers also took other considerations into account, including their students' own attitudes about L1 use. T2 said that his experience taking language lessons made him appreciate that students will often prefer their teacher to avoid using the L1 even when doing so might save time. "There are times when [using L2] may not be the most efficient thing, but it is respectful to the student to try and do it anyway," he said.

### ***Affective environment***

Four teachers mentioned using the L1 to reduce negative affective factors, including nervousness (T1), embarrassment or stress (T3), tension in the class (T4), and frustration (T6). Three of these teachers felt they could empathize with their students' feelings about learning English based on their own experiences of struggling to learn a foreign language. T3 and T6 both thought that letting students use their L1 gave them a "shield" (T3) and could allow them to give their opinions or "vent their frustrations" (T6) to their classmates in speech private from the teacher.

T2 and T4 said that they would be more lenient on L1 use at the start of a course in activities where L2 use was not a specific goal, e.g. when checking answers to an exercise. As the course progressed, the teacher would gradually introduce English into these activities when he judged the students were comfortable and capable enough to use it. T4 emphasized the value of L1 for enhancing the social nature of classroom learning and student interaction. Allowing students to use the L1 with each other in an activity "put everybody on the same page". Rather than activities being dominated by the most English-proficient students, all the students would be able to contribute,

communicate and work together. T4 also used the L1 himself at times to “ease the tension”, create a more relaxed class atmosphere, or to encourage students who were struggling. He would incorporate L1 into certain activities at the start of a course to help the students “build relationships and bonds with each other” that would be invaluable to their subsequent learning (see Test-teach-test 2, Table 3).

### ***Better vocabulary learning***

Vocabulary teaching was referred to far more often than grammar teaching in the interviews, which was mentioned directly only once (by T5). The three teachers who believed L1 could be used for better vocabulary learning (T2, T4, T5) all planned L1 activities into their lessons, often to focus on vocabulary differences between English and the L1.

T5 referred to research done in language immersion programmes showing that students allowed to confirm the meaning of new vocabulary in their L1 performed better on tests than those who only used L2. T5 emphasized the effectiveness of comparing and contrasting new lexical items, especially multi-word units, with similar language in the L1. T2 also made use of comparison between L1 and L2, especially when the pragmatic or idiomatic meaning of an L2 utterance did not directly translate into L1, or vice versa.

### ***Specialized topics***

Four teachers (T1, T2, T4, T5) said they would be more likely to allow students to use L1 when dealing with specialized texts or topics; for example, an engineering or scientific document containing a large amount of technical vocabulary. They emphasized how the L1 could help them with the meaning of technical language (T5) and how working together in L1 would enhance students’ cooperation (T4).

T3 said he would not feel comfortable allowing the L1 unless he could be confident that the students were translating the technical language correctly. Given his lower proficiency in the students’ L1, he would need to verify translations with a dictionary. T6 was also against allowing the L1 for this purpose, believing that it was important for students to practice explaining technical terms in simple language to prepare them for situations where they would need to communicate with people outside their field.

### ***Risks with L1 use***

While all teachers recognized there was a risk of students becoming complacent or over-reliant on the L1, they differed in how serious or likely they considered this to be. T5 believed that teachers should be able to manage this risk, particularly with adult learners. Although T2 had not encountered this problem in his classes, he still considered it a potential risk, and he made it clear to his students that they should “push themselves to the limit of [their] English” before switching to L1. He encouraged them to see using the L1 in the classroom as “a tool rather than a crutch”. T1 and T3 believed that their lack of proficiency in their students’ L1 made it difficult for them to confidently provide clarification on language or maintain control of the class while students were using it.

### Strategies

A key factor for allowing L1 in class was student proficiency level. All the activities mentioned in this section were more likely to be performed with lower-proficiency students. The teacher's proficiency in the L1 was not a strong factor, although teachers with elementary L1 proficiency (T3 and T4) were aware it limited how much they could monitor L1 student activities. Four teachers (T2, T3, T4, T5) described pedagogical activities that incorporated L1 in a strategic way. These are described in Table 3.

Table 3:

*Activities for planned L1 use.*

	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Teacher/s</b>
1	<i>Brainstorm:</i> asking students to brainstorm lexis in either L2 or L1 during the lead-in stage.	T2
2	<i>Paper Conversations:</i> students hold written conversations on paper that is passed back and forth, using L1 for any lexis they do not know. This allows the teacher to diagnose their lexical needs and better plan future lessons.	T2
3	<i>Text Reconstruction:</i> asking students to translate an L2 text into their L1 and then back into their L2 to help them to notice key language details.	T3, T4
4	<i>L1 Rehearsal:</i> asking students to perform a meeting role-play in L1 first before repeating it again in L2. This helps them prepare the content of what they want to say and to get them warmed up and familiar with the activity.	T3
5	<i>Test-teach-test 1:</i> using L1 in the first stage of a test-teach-test lesson by giving students a list of L1 phrases and asking them how to say them in English.	T5
6	<i>Comparison with L1:</i> asking students to compare and contrast English lexical chunks with similar lexis in their L1.	T5
7	<i>Test-teach-test 2:</i> asking students to tell each other about their jobs in their L1 in pairs, identifying and supplying the L2 lexis they need for the task, then asking students to repeat the task in L2.	T4

The two teachers who did not describe planned activities (T1, T6) said they would only use the L1 reactively in lessons when they judged it necessary. T1 said he would not go into a lesson expecting or encouraging L1 use, but he would sometimes look up technical language in the student's L1 when preparing a lesson so that he could use it in the event of student difficulties with the language. T6 limited L1 use to allowing students to ask him to translate L1 vocabulary into English when they needed help.

T1 and T2 avoided setting explicit rules about L1 use in class, preferring to use it when needed "on a case-by-case basis" (T2) or "reluctantly" (T1). For T2 and T3, the goal of the activity determined whether they would allow L1. When the goal was a non-linguistic one, such as building rapport between students or checking answers at the end of an activity, these teachers were more likely to allow L1, especially with low-

proficiency students. However, T3's lower proficiency in the students' L1 made him wary of using too much of it in class activities, even the text reconstruction and L1 rehearsal activities he mentioned, as he would be "in the dark" when the students were working in L1. T4, who also only had an elementary proficiency in the students' L1, did not have any reservations about doing text reconstruction activities, although he would more often do them with lower-proficiency students.

T5 prioritized building students' vocabulary, so a key factor in deciding whether to allow L1 was asking whether it would help with this goal. The Test-teach-test 1 and Comparison with L1 activities (Table 3) are examples that fit this purpose. T5 and T6 both allowed students to ask them for translations of new vocabulary, but less so at higher proficiency levels.

### ***Background factors***

There was little connection between the background factors given in Table 1 and the beliefs teachers held about L1. The three CELTA-qualified teachers (T1, T3, T4) all held concerns that students could become over-reliant on the L1, compared to only one of the teachers with a higher qualification (T6).

The teachers' proficiency in Japanese had some effect on the strategies for L1 they chose, but not on their beliefs regarding L1 use. For instance, T2, who had the highest Japanese proficiency, diagnosed students' difficulties or language needs by monitoring their L1 use at certain times. Other teachers with lower proficiency (T3, T4, T5) reported ways in which they allowed students to use L1 together without the teacher needing to use it much themselves, although T4 was happy to use short "quips" in Japanese to lighten the class atmosphere. T3 admitted that "If my Japanese skills were better, I think I would use it more", but he was still comfortable allowing students to use L1 in controlled ways.

Many of the teachers made direct links between their beliefs and their own experience learning a foreign language. For instance, being in situations where communication broke down due to a lack of vocabulary understanding was mentioned by T1, T3 and T4, all of whom used L1 to reduce negative affective factors in their classrooms.

Three of the teachers cited authors who had provided them with ideas for the activities in Table 3 or influenced their approach more generally. T2 said he had been influenced by Thornbury's Dogme approach to teaching (see Meddings & Thornbury, 2009), leading him to "work with student input, student-produced language as much as possible". T4 also cited Thornbury as an influence for the Text Reconstruction activity (Table 3), and on his overall approach to teaching.

Both T4 and T5 mentioned the influence of the Lexical Approach (Lewis, 1993), which T5 said directs teachers to focus on lexical chunks and have students compare them with equivalents in their L1. T4 contrasted the Lexical Approach to earlier versions of the

Communicative Approach, saying that the former “embraces the importance of translation and the use of L1.” He thought that this better reflected current understandings of L2 acquisition: “if we weren’t using L1 [in teaching], then that’s kind of assuming that L1 acquisition and L2 acquisition operate the same way, when they actually don’t.”

## Discussion

In discussing these findings, it is important to note that the research was conducted with ESP teachers in a linguistically homogeneous foreign language setting. Much of the literature on teacher beliefs about L1 use concerns EFL settings, where the classroom can be the students’ main point of contact with English. The belief that maximising English use in class is necessary to provide students with exposure to the language is more relevant to EFL than ESL settings, where teachers can rely on students encountering English outside of class. ESL teachers may therefore be less strict about students’ use of L1 to, for example, gloss the meaning of a word. Only one of the teachers in this study (T5) had taught in an ESL context, so the findings have limited applicability to that field.

All the teachers’ beliefs about using L1 had become more positive since they began teaching, matching previous findings (Hall & Cook, 2012). However, it was not possible to draw clear connections between the beliefs and strategies of these teachers with the background factors given in Table 1. The direct influence of learning a foreign language and reading on the topic of L1 use in EFL teaching was evident in the case of many of the teachers and appeared unrelated to their qualifications or years of experience.

How all the teachers used L1 was influenced by the proficiency level of their students. This finding is common in many EFL contexts (e.g. McMillan & Rivers, 2011; Samar & Moradkhani, 2014), while some studies (e.g. Kelly & Bruen, 2015) suggest it may not be as important in ESL ones. In McMillan and Rivers (2011), the teachers’ main concern was ensuring successful teacher-student communication, while in Samar and Moradkhani (2014), it was ensuring student comprehension of target language or classroom instructions. One teacher in Samar and Moradkhani’s research (2014) changed the amount of L1 used based on their students’ proficiency, allowing it to be used progressively less as the students’ proficiency increased. In a contrary finding, van der Meij and Zhao (2010) found that English teachers in a Chinese university rejected the idea that code-switching should depend on either the teacher’s or the students’ L2 proficiency, suggesting that this belief may not be universal.

T4 summed up the views of the four teachers who believed L1 could help use class time more efficiently when he said, “We have a limited amount of time and it’s very hard to afford those experiences [e.g. learning new language through context] to students because of the time constraints.” The value of L1 for making more efficient use of class time has been pointed out by Cook (2001), who argued that teachers could use it for explanations in class “when the cost of the L2 is too great” (p. 418). Butzkamm (2003)

gave a similar argument to the one cited by T5, namely that teachers underestimate how much students misunderstand from non-translation techniques of explanation, making translation both a faster and less ambiguous method of teaching vocabulary.

The time-saving advantages offered by the L1 have been noted by teachers in other studies. For instance, in McMillan and Rivers' study (2011), a teacher stated that "the expediency of a simple Japanese translation can save extensive time and considerable frustration on the part of the student" (p. 255). In Samar and Moradkhani's research (2014), a teacher suggested efficiency as a reason for code-switching in class, but the other three teachers seemed more concerned with ensuring student comprehension. In comparison, the teachers here seemed to place greater value on time-efficiency.

The students in this context are all adults, and although they work for the same company, many meet each other for the first time upon joining the class. This factor, along with the often-reported reticence of Japanese learners (King, 2013), perhaps explains why the teachers focused on reducing anxiety. Brooks-Lewis (2009) believed allowing the L1 can help reduce the stress experienced in mono-lingual classrooms and help students overcome any feelings of disadvantage in relation to the teacher. However, these advantages need to be weighed against possible demotivating effects from allowing L1 use, such as a resulting lack of challenge in the lesson (Rolin-Ianziti & Varshney, 2008).

Cook (2001) argued that once teachers were "free from their inhibitions about using the L1", they would be able to develop teaching techniques that combine L1 and L2 (p. 419). By planning how to use the L1 before the lesson, the teachers are following the advice of many authors (e.g. Turnbull, 2001; Butzkamm, 2003), who have suggested that if L1 is to be used, it should be done in a principled, judicious way.

Many of the activities that the teachers described (Table 3) are particularly relevant for ESP lessons and seem to focus on vocabulary learning. For instance, the Paper Conversations and Test-teach-test activities are forms of needs analysis focusing on the specific vocabulary students need to learn for their jobs. The Text Reconstruction activity would be used with a specialized text related to the students' field of work (e.g. engineering or insurance), allowing them to focus on relevant features of vocabulary, grammar and genre. L1 Rehearsal was used with specific scenarios in the students' context where they would need to use specialized English, e.g. a business meeting or telephone call. Although T3 did not cite an influence for the L1 Rehearsal activity, rehearsing a task in L1 was shown by Behan et al. (1997 in McMillan and Rivers, 2011) to improve students' performance when they subsequently did the task in L2.

Results from Zhao and Macaro (2016) and Tian and Macaro (2012) support T5's claim that letting students compare new language with their L1 gives them "a deeper understanding, and...a better chance to remember it" (T5). The same practice is followed in translanguaging approaches in some CLIL or bilingual classrooms, where teachers use the L1 to reduce ambiguity, explain complex ideas, or make cross-linguistic

comparisons (Garcia & Vazquez, 2012). T1 mentioned that he would prepare for some lessons by looking up technical language in the students' L1 so that he would be able to recognize it or provide it if he thought it was necessary. This kind of preparation is one way that ESP teachers might anticipate and avoid the In-class Subject Knowledge Dilemmas described by Wu and Badger (2009).

## **Conclusion**

The present study adds to previous investigations into teacher beliefs regarding L1 use by specifically addressing the beliefs of ESP teachers in an EFL context. It also describes activities used by ESP teachers that utilize L1, and how the teachers justify these activities. All teachers agreed that the students' English proficiency was important when considering L1 use, but time efficiency, affective factors, comprehension, specialized topics and vocabulary learning were also discussed. The main reason against L1 use was the risk that students would become complacent or over-reliant on it.

Many of the teachers provided well-reasoned arguments in support of L1 use, often citing authorities or literature on the subject, rather than deriving their beliefs largely from experience, as seems to be the case in similar studies in other contexts. This may reflect a growing awareness among teachers of changes in attitudes to L1 in their field. Many described how the L1 could be used to diagnose language needs, teach technical vocabulary, work with texts from a specialized genre, and rehearse language use in specific scenarios, all of which are important in ESP contexts. Further research into the effectiveness of these activities would be useful.

The objection that allowing L1 decreases the amount of L2 in lessons (Turnbull & Arnett, 2002) focuses only on the quantity of language used in the classroom. Some of the benefits related by teachers here, including efficient use of time, better vocabulary learning, and a more positive learning environment, may outweigh any negative effects from reduced L2 quantity. Slimani (1992 in Lo, 2015) points out that we cannot assume that increasing L2 input increases the learners' comprehensible input. In the same way, we should not assume that reducing the total amount of L2 in lessons by the strategic introduction of L1 will decrease comprehensible input; it may in fact make more of the input comprehensible, as Butzkamm and Cauldwell (2009) have suggested.

This study was conducted in a very specific context with adult ESP learners in Japan, which limits its relevance to other contexts. More importantly, the small sample size greatly limits the reliability of the findings and their generalisability. Data reliability could also have been improved by employing a second independent coder in the data analysis stage.

Similar studies should be carried out in other ESP contexts to investigate whether the views held by these teachers are truly representative. For instance, did these teachers value L1 for its efficiency because they spend only 90-120 minutes with their classes each week, or is this view common with most ESP teachers? Another limitation is that

this study relied on teachers' self-reports of L1 use. Future studies could follow Samar and Moradkhani (2014) by investigating how ESP teachers actually use L1 and whether this aligns with their beliefs by combining interviews with classroom observations.

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## **Appendix 1: Semi-structured interview questions**

### ***Background***

1. How long have you been teaching English for Special Purposes?
2. Have you taught in any countries other than Japan?

### ***First language (L1) use***

1. Do you use the students' first language when teaching?
  - How do you use it?
  - How do you decide whether or not to use it?
2. Do you let your students use their first language in lessons?
  - What do you allow them to do in their first language?
  - How do you decide whether or not to let them use it?
3. Has your opinion on the use of L1 when teaching English changed over time? How?
4. What do you think are the potential benefits with using the L1?
5. What do you think are the potential problems or risks with using the L1?

### **ESP-specific scenario**

If you were teaching students English related to a very specialized topic that you are not familiar with (e.g. electrical engineering) would you be more or less likely to allow the use of the students' L1 in class? Why?

### **Japanese Proficiency**

1. How proficient are you in Japanese?
2. Have you taken the Japanese Language Proficiency Test or a similar test? What was your grade?
3. Would you say you are able to discuss your students' work activities [specify an example] in Japanese?

### **Language learning experience**

Tell me about your experience learning a second language.

- How did you study?
- Did your teacher use your first language (English) when teaching you?
- Do you think your experience learning another language has influenced how you teach? How?

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## **REVIEWS**

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**Selivan, L. (2018). *Lexical Grammar: Activities for Teaching Chunks and Exploring Patterns*. Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press. ISBN 978-1-316-64475-1 (pbk.) 233 pp.**

**Reviewed by Ha Hoang, Victoria University of Wellington *Te Herenga Waka*, Wellington, New Zealand**

*Lexical Grammar* promotes the teaching of chunks and patterns, units of language that are not easily labelled as grammar or lexis (e.g. *Funny you should say that, I was used to..., put someone in a difficult situation, play a key/crucial/major role, look forward to + doing something*). In fact, the boundary between what is traditionally called “grammar” and “vocabulary” is not always clear. *Lexical Grammar* presents a solution for the patterns and units that straddle the worlds of vocabulary and grammar: teach both simultaneously.

The introduction is presented as a Q&A, introducing the readers to chunks and their importance in language processing and production, language acquisition, and language teaching. Drawing on recent research in corpus linguistics and second language acquisition, Selivan advances the argument that language production does not mean simply combining words and grammar rules, but rather involves a retrieval of the language we have been exposed to or primed for. This language has always come in chunks, making them fundamental and prerequisite to language processing and production. A growing body of research has evidenced that chunks are as essential to second language learning as they are to first language acquisition. Thus, chunks are the key to address the lack of exposure, the often-cited reason for learners’ poor grasp of natural grammar (despite their good vocabulary knowledge) and odd use of vocabulary (despite their strong explicit grammar knowledge). To this end, the book offers a collection of activities to raise awareness about chunks and to teach chunks explicitly.

The book has ten reader-friendly chapters: defining and identifying chunks, revising and recycling chunks, exploring text, chunks in listening, from words to grammar, from grammar to words, problematic structures, chunks in writing, adapting chunks, and playing with chunks. Each chapter is a collection of activities that serves the same purpose as outlined in its title. Each activity has a clear description of the purpose, targeted learners, time and preparation required. The step-by-step teaching procedure is complemented with variations and follow-up tasks as well as class management and teaching tips where relevant. Each chapter is supported with research-based rationale which communicates its theoretical background free of jargon.

The book is a welcome addition to the currently limited options teachers have to adopting the chunk approach to teaching English language fluency, comprehension and production. Many activities can serve as model tasks for awareness-raising activities or lend themselves as a framework for lesson planning. Many activities can be fun because

they require collaborative learning, encourage speaking and integrate different skills at the same time. The book also introduces teachers to a wide range of tools and resources to promote the learning of chunks, included both as learning tools in individual activities and as a compiled list at the end of the book. As a fan of chunks, I find the best part is how chunks have been demonstrated as effectively applicable in teaching productive skills, and creative use of language, both of which are usually challenging for second language learners due to the lack of exposure to chunks.

Selivan is cautious enough to say that the book cannot replace current grammar or vocabulary syllabi, citing learning style as a reason. There are other reasons, too. Many activities lack content and context, making them appear tedious and repetitive. While this lack of content and context is understandable in a book which aims at general activities for general teaching purposes, it leads to many activities that seem to focus on item learning, making the learning of chunks seemingly random and not motivated by usage as intended. To use these activities, teachers may need to either place them in the lesson context or combine them to create a learning cycle where the target chunks can be internalised and used effectively. In addition, many activities (e.g., using different dictionaries, using different web tools) may be too time-consuming to include in class. Given the need to balance the extra planning time against the potential learning outcome, they may be better embedded in independent learning or after-class collaborative learning programmes. The book would also be more helpful if, instead of referring to research in general, in the rationale for the activities, it includes a list of relevant readings, perhaps at the end of each chapter. Such a list could serve professional learning purposes. A related issue is that while the book has introduced many activities developed from the perspective of cognitive linguistics, it has not explicitly mentioned other books for teachers that are informed by this approach (Boers & Lindstromberg, 2009; Littlemore, 2009), which also promote chunks.

To sum up, keeping in mind the fact the activities are ready-made but not ready-to-use, the book has plenty to give—from item learning of a certain type of chunks to system learning of chunks, from an activity to fill class time to an approach to learn English, from raising awareness about chunks to playing with chunks. If as a teacher, you have wondered if *this thing* is grammar or vocabulary, this book is for you. *Lexical Grammar* has successfully made a case for the handy teaching of chunks and will make a worthy addition to your resource library.

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**Nation, I. S. P., & Gu, P. Y. (2019). *Teaching and learning vocabulary in EFL*. Beijing, China: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press. ISBN 978-7-5213-0821-1 (pbk.) 230 pp.**

**Reviewed by Aynur Ismayilli Karakoc, Victoria University of Wellington  
*Te Herenga Waka*, Wellington, New Zealand**

*Teaching and learning vocabulary in EFL* draws on research on the nature of vocabulary and vocabulary learning and provides an interpretation of teaching and learning vocabulary. The target readership of the book includes a variety of EFL teachers: pre-service and in-service teachers, and undergraduate and postgraduate Applied Linguistics majors. Each chapter ends with a summary and thought-provoking questions and exercises for teachers.

The book consists of nine chapters. Chapter 1 discusses five levels of vocabulary: high-frequency words, mid-frequency words, low-frequency words, academic words, and technical words. It further explains the roles of vocabulary in understanding texts. This chapter presents key components of knowing a word: form (spoken, written, word parts), meaning (form and meaning, concepts and referents, associations), and use (grammatical functions, collocations, constraints on use).

Chapter 2 explores how vocabulary is learned. For effective learning, it suggests doing vocabulary repetitions at intervals. It further argues that “rather than being concerned about how to present a word for the first time, teachers should be more concerned with providing opportunities for words to be repeated” (p. 22). The inclusion of word families (e.g., *amazed*, *amazing*, *amazement*) is also suggested to be important for vocabulary learning. This chapter gives useful tips for teachers on how to train learners to increase the quality of meetings (encountering the words), and recommendations for repetition and quality.

Chapter 3 focuses on the design of the vocabulary component of a language course. It offers tips for vocabulary learning in relation to the four strands (Nation, 2013) related to meaning-focused input, meaning-focused output, language-focused learning, and fluency development. It explores the use of graded readers, problem-solution scenarios, and speed reading for vocabulary development. The chapter finishes with a checklist of important focuses of a language program in relation to vocabulary.

Chapters 4 and 5 suggest a framework of learning tasks through guided tasks with the support of teachers, shared tasks with the help of peers, and experience tasks by integrating the tasks with learners’ previous experience. Chapter 4 looks at how learners can learn vocabulary through the receptive skills of reading and listening. It claims that unlike reading, a smaller vocabulary (around 6,000-7,000 words) is needed for most

unsimplified listening activities. Therefore, teachers are advised to give learners listening materials where the number of unknown words is not high. If there are unknown words, teachers are advised to quickly write their meanings without interrupting the flow of listening. Moreover, students should be encouraged to control the speed and repetitions of the input. One suggested activity is listening while quietly reading to connect spoken and written forms of words. The chapter continues presenting useful information about vocabulary and reading and suggests that around 8,000-9,000 word families are needed to read academic texts.

Vocabulary and the productive skills of speaking and writing are discussed in chapter 5. Teachers are advised to set up suitable conditions for vocabulary learning through speaking and writing. Hence, learners can be provided with a substantial productive practice of vocabulary through model examples, helpful feedback, and tasks encouraging the use of target vocabulary.

Chapter 6 focuses on learner strategies in vocabulary learning. The chapter refers to some other authors' classification of vocabulary learning strategies and discusses strategies for different stages of learning. These strategies include guessing, repetition, dictionary use, and encoding (memory, meaning-based, form-based, and context-based). Teachers are advised to consider the factors of learner attitudes, awareness, and capabilities when developing strategy training programs.

Chapter 7 explores the assessment of vocabulary knowledge. It starts by discussing the estimates of vocabulary size for different purposes. For example, a vocabulary size of around 9,000-word families is recommended for reading academic texts (Nation, 2006). This chapter refers to several studies and suggests that "learners need to know around 98% of the running words before they can have an adequate comprehension of a text" (p. 140). In such a case, there would be no more than two unknown words in every 100 words. The chapter discusses different tests for measuring vocabulary level and size, and recommends tips on how teachers can straightforwardly check their students' vocabulary learning. These include labelling or completing pictures, diagrams and tables, completing or evaluating sentences, and translating words into learners' first language.

Chapter 8 explains the fundamental meanings of words, tokens, word types, and word families. It provides outputs from different computer programs and explains how the vocabulary level or coverage of a text can be understood. The chapter lists links for a variety of computer programs and websites for vocabulary analysis.

Finally, Chapter 9 answers some common questions about vocabulary. Examples include whether a translation should be used to teach and learn vocabulary, whether words should be learned in context, how collocations should be taught, how much vocabulary is needed, and how words should be taught, among others.

On the whole, this book comprehensively explains fundamental questions about vocabulary in an easy-to-follow manner. The objective of the book is to encourage young teachers and researchers to learn practical tips built on a long history of research and discussions on vocabulary. Researchers whose specialty is not vocabulary can also learn a lot from this book thanks to its comprehensive explanation of core principles of vocabulary teaching and learning. The book could have expanded more on the productive vocabulary of learners across different proficiency levels, because that is a less researched area. Nevertheless, the authors achieve their goals throughout the book.

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**Renninger, K. A. & Hidi, S. E. (2016). *The Power of Interest for Motivation and Engagement*. New York: Routledge. ISBN: 978-1-138-77979-2 (pbk.) 178 pp.**

**Reviewed by Naning Tri Wahyuni, The University of Auckland, Auckland, New Zealand**

Research on interest started in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century with Dewey as one of the pioneers who investigated the significance of personal interest in education (Dewey, 1913). Since then, researchers and practitioners (Berlyne, 1949; Evans, 1971; Kay, 1982; Renninger, 1991; Renninger & Hidi, 2002; Hulleman & Harackiewicz, 2010; Rotgans & Schmidt, 2017) have been investigating and defining the power of interest and its implications for meaningful learning, encompassing any subject learning including language learning. To learn a language efficiently, learners need to be working on meaningful tasks and using the language to accomplish those tasks (Hudelson, 1994). Renninger et al. (2014) supported this view by highlighting that interest is believed to play a significant part in successful learning. Further, in their book *The Power of Interest for Motivation and Engagement*, Renninger and Hidi (2016) seek to conceptualise interest on more solid theoretical and empirical fundamentals.

Overall, this book offers much more profound and broader discussion about the topic than the previous books written by the same authors (Hidi, 1990; Renninger, 2000; Renninger & Hidi, 2002; Hidi & Renninger, 2006; Renninger et al., 2014). Through inclusive narratives, the authors explain the nature of interest and its development and provide rich analysis from decades of research findings. The book consists of six chapters. The first chapter focuses on clarifying definitions of interest and how it has been conceptualised and studied by previous scholars. The authors also start discussing the potential development of interest by giving a case-illustration of the four-phase

model of interest development. The second chapter extends our understanding of the power of interest by using evidence from neuroscience. This chapter theoretically establishes that interest, attention and curiosity are conceptually different but critically related. The third chapter explains how to measure the transformation in the person's interest by critically identifying the change using the four phases of interest development. In Chapter 4, the authors discuss the relationships between interest and motivation, engagement and other motivational variables (goals, self-efficacy and self-regulation). This chapter also explains the dynamic of these relationships as interest develops, and how it can influence learning. In Chapter 5, the authors bring up the possibility of interest declining as learners advance in schooling, and the implications of interest-driven learning both in school and out of school. This chapter also explains the relations between interest and content knowledge as well as interest and identity, and why they matter to secure interest sustainability. In the last chapter, the authors point out the implications of interest which can be developed, potential future research and emerging themes in this field of study.

Regarding content, the book provides a comprehensive explanation about interest, its development and its relation to other successful learning factors. The discussion is brilliantly elaborated based on critical analysis of existing definitions from various studies. The book also systematically incorporates its argument within a theoretical framework including cognitive development, psychological science, educational psychology, science of learning and neuroscience, to base the debate on theoretically and empirically strong foundations. Furthermore, since the principles of interest are common across disciplines, the authors have included case materials that refer to a variety of situations to provide context for a wide range of readers. Regarding organisation, the way the authors arranged the topics discussed in each chapter is also transparent and reader friendly. Annotated notes are added at the end of each chapter to enable the sections to be read without disruption by numerous citations and additional details. Key ideas are also repeated in each chapter, thus allowing readers to read chapters out of order if necessary. To cap it all, despite the limitations mentioned by the authors themselves in the last pages (pp.135 ff.), this book is an enlightening example of in-depth study, for not only does it show the authors' deep and up to date knowledge, but it also provides its own perspicuous insights into many other, related fields.

To conclude, the book describes the benefits for educators of integrating interest into the teaching and learning process. Considering this book contains elaborated discussion using comprehensive accounts from both educational psychology and neuroscience, it is an impressive resource for students, educators, psychologists and all those who want to create meaningful learning. The goal of teaching is to transfer knowledge to students and to interest them in what teachers have to say by the way they say it. In other words, teachers need to present learning materials in interesting ways. Learning a new language can be daunting for students. Therefore, language teachers need to work on creating an engaging, meaningful environment where students can discover the value in what they are learning (Stipek, 2002; Wigfield & Eccles, 2002; Rotgans & Schmidt, 2011).

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**Lyall, C. (2019). *Being an interdisciplinary academic: How institutions shape university careers*. Palgrave Macmillan. ISBN 978 3 030 18658 6 (hbk) 134 + xvii pp**

**Reviewed by Marilyn Lewis, The University of Auckland, Auckland, New Zealand**

At first glance Lyall's title may seem a strange choice to review for the TESOLANZ Journal, since it has no mention of the words 'TESOL' or even 'language'. However, it has strong interest for the growing field of EAP as more and more tertiary teachers of English are working alongside academics in a range of subjects to help with students' second language development. The author's experiences as a researcher at the University of Edinburgh plus holding a professorial position make her well placed to write on this subject.

The content comes from interviews with UK and northern European researchers whose completed PhD studies were interdisciplinary, funded by "studentships across the social/environmental sciences and the social/medical sciences" (p. 9). Other interviewees were vice-rectors of research in long established universities. The absence of references to language learning (or teaching) could be seen as disappointing or, more positively, as a gap waiting to be filled. For a great example of a related title see the Haworth and Craig (2016) edited collection of English language teachers' career paths.

Some interesting parallels through the book aim to describe interdisciplinary academics. One goes back more than 2,000 years to the allegory of the hedgehog and the fox, the first animal seeing the world "through a single lens" (p. 68) and the second drawing on "a wide variety of experiences" (ibid). Another parallel, related to our own field, claims that "acquiring facility in another discipline" (p.69) is similar to second language learning. Not everyone would agree, though, with the claim that in neither case would a person become "truly fluent" (ibid).

There are seven chapters and, unusually for a single-authored book, references are listed at the end of each chapter rather than at the end of the book, although a three-page Appendix with titles for selected topics could be a useful short-cut for busy readers. In the introduction we are told that the book does not aim to "build a grand theory of interdisciplinarity" (p. 6) but rather to report on people's practices. The second chapter describes career paths, and the third looks at the effects of their institution on those careers. The fourth mentions a mismatch between administrative and academic staff's views about the point when a career should become multidisciplinary. In the fifth chapter comes a reminder that communication across disciplines is sometimes organized and at other times happens naturally. How would EAP teachers at New Zealand universities answer the question about their opportunities to talk with subject lecturers? Lyall's interviewees pointed to gaps, including the demise of the staff club room which

was once a place for such conversations, and having “universities...situated across multiple campuses” (p. 81). The sixth chapter has two suggestions, one being that universities need to be intentional about promoting interdisciplinarity and the other urging commitment by a whole institution. The final short chapter summarizes earlier points and, for readers who would like to do their own research, has suggestions for ways universities can encourage more interdisciplinary links such as not valuing disciplinary excellence over interdisciplinary collaboration.

Reading this book brought to mind examples of cross-disciplinary teachers whom I have observed. In one country a science lecturer had decided to do a course in teaching English so that he himself (rather than someone with a language teaching background) could address students’ need to read English textbooks and access spoken materials online.

If readers find themselves disappointed at not finding a topic that they had hoped to see, then they will sympathise with Lyall, who felt the same way. In her preface she speaks of frustration at space limitations which forced her to omit some themes and not to “do full justice to the prior scholarship in this area” (p. vii). There may be gaps but it seems to me that the value of the content outweighs what is missing.

*Being an interdisciplinary academic* is recommended to three groups of readers: EAP teachers wanting to make connections with teachers of other subjects, researchers hoping to investigate current connections, and university administrators interested in organizing better interdisciplinary connections in the interests of students. Since the latter are unlikely to be readers of our journal, one task could be to introduce this book to them. The talking points that conclude each chapter could make an interesting start for discussion with colleagues.

## **References**

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## NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

1. Contributions to *The TESOLANZ Journal* are welcomed from language educators and applied linguists both within and outside of Aotearoa/New Zealand, especially those working in Australia and countries in the South Pacific.
2. **Articles** should in general be no longer than 5000 words.
3. **Reports** on research or practice should be 2000-2500 words. Reports should a) describe the context and motivation for the study, b) highlight gaps or issues, c) describe the innovation, action or research, d) report on and discuss outcomes, and e) include a reflection and future steps.
4. Referencing conventions should follow the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (7<sup>th</sup> Edition). The reference list at the end of the article should be arranged alphabetically. The reference list should only include items specifically cited in the text.
5. As far as possible, comments 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.
6. All graphics should be suitable for publication and need no change.
7. It is understood that manuscripts submitted have not been previously published and are not under consideration for publication elsewhere.
8. Enquiries and submissions should be sent by email to the editor, Victoria University of Wellington, [Jean.Parkinson@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:Jean.Parkinson@vuw.ac.nz). The preferred format is WORD.
9. All submissions should be anonymised and accompanied by a separate 'Author's details' document providing the full name, full mailing address, telephone number and email addresses of all authors.
10. Those interested in submitting a book review should contact the Reviews Editor, Victoria University of Wellington, [Katherine.Quigley@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:Katherine.Quigley@vuw.ac.nz)
11. The closing date for the submission of manuscripts for 2021 is **Monday 2 August**.