THE INFLUENCE OF BELIEF SYSTEMS ON ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING IN STATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN NEW ZEALAND: AN ECOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

State secondary schools in New Zealand are tasked with managing significant numbers of English language learners (ELLs) (Jeurissen, 2020). Analysis of international and national testing of ELLs shows that minority students such as ELLs are disproportionally represented in lower levels of academic achievement (Poskitt, 2018; Song et al., 2014). New Zealand management, research, and professional development initiatives in English Language Learning (ELL) have largely responded by focusing on immediate pedagogical and teaching demands, with little recognition given to the underlying influence of belief systems on ELL. This article uses an ecological perspective and a qualitative, case study paradigm to share an understanding of the layered contexts within and around ELLs in secondary schools (Spolsky, 2004). The findings reveal that the beliefs of free-market choice and bicultural status contest and overlap the inherited settler beliefs of egalitarianism and homogeneity. Combined, the four beliefs combine to compromise ELL in various ways. Concluding implications are intended to enhance awareness of national and local belief norms and expectations and their effect on ELL.

Keywords: English language learners, belief systems, ecology, secondary schools

Introduction: An ecological perspective

ELL provision in New Zealand state secondary schools lends itself to research explorations from wide-ranging theoretical perspectives. One investigation is the examination of beliefs, personal convictions held to be true, which influence ELL (Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2017; Pettit, 2011). Kalaja, Barcelos, and Aro (2018, p. 225) outline contextual approaches towards belief systems as being dynamically co-constructed with others, embedded in ELL socialisation, and "connected to the macro-context of ideologies, power structures, and statuses in a given society." As such, the adoption of an ecological perspective allows for acknowledgment of the interplay of multiple macro-micro influences in ELL (Bronfenbrenner, 2005). This article aims to use an ecological perspective to

provide an understanding of the depth and complexity of the role of beliefs within ELL contexts and reveal their consequences for ELL management and practice. In the last 60 years, language researchers have moved extensively from input-output cognitive models of language learning (Krashen, 1978; Swain & Lapkin, 1995) to include a focus on previously underutilised, socially-informed contextual perspectives (Block, 2003; Sfard, 1998). Within this movement, Einar Haugen (2001, p. 57) borrowed the ecological model from biology to offer an early notion of language ecology as "the study of interactions between any given language and its environment." Crichton and Murray (2014, p. 35) outline that an ecological view of language learning "signals an interest in gaining a holistic understanding of the nature of language(s) that foregrounds the complexity of interrelationships between them, their speakers and their social, institutional and cultural environments." These layers from different spatial and temporal contexts include the "distant and proximal, past and present, real and imaginary" (Kramsch & Whiteside, 2008, p. 667), and contain constraints and affordances that condition the emergence of successful ELL learning outcomes (Bronfenbrenner, 2005; van Lier, 2011).

During the 1980s, language ecology perspectives filtered into nation state language policies, which were gradually adjusted to affirm the resource value of all languages and their place in the ecosystem (Jernudd & Nekvapil, 2012). Language policy research favouring an ecological approach has similarly expanded into Applied Linguistics. Some leading notions have been the 'Reversing Language Shift' model (Fishman, 1991), ethnographic language policy (McCarty, 2011), critical language policy (Tollefson, 2013) and language rights (May, 2008). Spolsky (2004) also introduced a language policy which included ecological perspectives for family, workplace, and school contexts. Spolsky's educational language policy (2004, 2009, 2017) was chosen as the main theoretical focus for this study, and an ecological framework was central to data collection and analysis (see The Study). Overall, the strength of the model is that it is flexible enough to include any or all of the ecological factors affecting language to be recognised and accounted for in an educational community of any size. It can highlight the overlapping layers of local, national, and international influence, often contested and incongruent, which interact within, between and beyond each other to shape ELL provision. In the absence of national language policy in New Zealand (East et al, 2013), Spolsky's model can also provide a scaffold to allow the nebulous, complex layers of decisional power in educational institutions to be broken down into manageable, analysable chunks, with pathways to show why and how these layers interconnect.

Spolsky's language policy contains a broad framework of three independent but interrelated components: language practices, beliefs, and management. Practices include the use of languages and incorporates what people do and are observed

to do, using sounds, words, and grammar. Language beliefs are an ecological speech community's accord about the value of languages, which can be overtly or covertly expressed in systems and practices, with dominant beliefs potentially posing as normative (Johnson, 2013). Language management refers to explicit and observable efforts by those in authority to modify others' language practices. Of crucial importance to this theory are the interactions within and between all three components in each ecological layer. Spolsky (2004, p. 40) explains: "To study one component of language policy while ignoring the other two will provide a very incomplete and biased view." While accepting the traditional presence of top-down hegemony in language policy, Spolsky (2004, p. 8) incorporates it into a wider framework to include the manifestation of practitioners' responses whose observance of regulation may be "neither guaranteed nor consistent." In fact, in contrast to 'de facto' policy "'hidden' from the public eye" (Shohamy, 2007, p. 119), Spolsky (2012, p. 5) names language practices as "the 'real' policy of a community," giving some regard for the expression of top-down regulation through practitioners' daily lived experiences. When used in school contexts, Spolsky's language policy theory assumes the identity of educational language policy. He uses the term 'domains' to identify three key elements within schools: participants (their social roles and relationships); location (connecting social and political reality); topic (exploring the communicative function of language). Outside schools, government-based participants are crucial contributors to language ecologies; their decisions are affected by global historical and contemporary movements such as economic, political, social, and cultural factors (McGroarty, 2013). Government attitudes to education are also influenced by these factors within a country. Inside schools, a staff and student hierarchy of participants are led by principals (Riley, 2013). The second domain, location, includes a schools' wider and closer surroundings, including the placement and quality of school buildings (Siskin, 1994). For the third domain, Spolsky identifies three topics: 'The Language or Language Variety', 'How Early' it should be taught and 'Other Languages.' Overall, these domains can encompass both an ecological perspective and the specific ELL context within state secondary schools in New Zealand.

The New Zealand context

In 1989, 'Tomorrow's Schools' legislation (Gordon, 2015, 2016) embedded competitive, quasi-free market conditions for education, deregulating state secondary schools to become semi-autonomous (Spence, 2004). Consequently, richer urban schools with wealthier parent populations became very popular, with overcrowding alleviated with housing boundaries established through zoning (McCulloch, 1992). Less affluent schools with poorer parent populations tended to lose more talented, aspirational students and retain those who were less academic and from minorities (Woodfield & Gunby, 2003). Today, an historical

evolution of these conditions forms the basis of the state secondary education system which extends in an ecological hierarchy from the democratically-elected government to the youngest student.

Government agencies such as the Ministry of Education (MOE), Education Review Office (ERO) and New Zealand Qualifications Authority guide curriculum, building, staffing and management in schools. Agencies' authority is backed by regular assessments of schools (ERO) and direct funding to schools which is based on their decile status (of one to nine, one being the lowest) derived from the educational and socio-economic status of students' parents. Decile status is reviewed every five years (MOE, 2021a). Discussion to replace deciles with an Equity Index is ongoing (MOE, 2021b). School management personnel adjust government agencies' guidance to local conditions, influenced by the expectations of local parents expressed through the governance of Boards of Trustees (BOT). Following guidance from the New Zealand Curriculum (NZC) (MOE, 2007), school administrations manage subject departments organised into eight Key Learning Areas (KLAs), which are resourced to produce high-status academic results. Non-KLAs have less academic status. Within subject departments further staff hierarchies are based on leadership, qualifications, and experience, while student hierarchies are governed by age and ability.

Ecologies illustrating beliefs about language that exist within state secondary education are bound to New Zealand's place in the Western world, its colonial history, and its peoples. The 1840 Treaty of Waitangi is a founding document between indigenous Māori and the British government which declared equal partnership status, but is yet to achieve this (Clark, 2005). 19th century British colonisation focused on settling large numbers of white, English-speaking settlers of mainly lower-middle class origins into a "Britain of the South Seas" (Phillipson, 2012, p. 207); they established ethnic and political dominance (Belich, 2000). Spoonley and Peace (2012, pp. 85-86) observed that from the 18402-1960s "around 98% of immigrants were British or Irish …similar…to a degree that was unusual in settler societies," contributing to a perception that New Zealanders were not only homogenous but populist. Nineteenth century framing of non-European ethnicities as 'other,' notably Asian, further reinforced expectations of settler ethnic similarity, encouraged by the country's relatively isolated island position, and a sense of belonging inside clear geographical island boundaries (Spoonley & Bedford, 2012).

Subsequently today, educational leadership and provision in state secondary schools is still largely Eurocentric and monolingual, though decreasingly so (May, 2014). Savant (2011) explained that in 2010 BOT elections, 70% of the candidates were New Zealand European Pākehā, of whom 74% were successful. The ethnicity of secondary school staff is also still largely dominated by New

Zealand European Pākehā with 70.7% fulltime staff, alongside 10.4% Māori, 3.1% Pasifika, 3.8% Asian and 11.8% Other/Unknown (MOE, 2017). The subject of ELL is established as a non-KLA subject (MOE, 2007) and unlike Māori and Pasifika learners, ELLs are not specifically named as priority learners, ensuring that in-school support for the latter can be ambivalent.

English is the dominant medium of instruction, with Sign Language and Māori as official languages (Māori since 1987). Learning an extra language is not compulsory in New Zealand. There has been a decline in language learning overall since the 1990s, as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1.   Changes to New Zealand secondary school language subject usage 2000-2017 (Ministry Of Education, 2018)

Language decrease	2000	2017	Language increase	2000	2017
French	22,862	16,634	Chinese	1147	5820
German	7,192	3,222	Cook Is Māori	57	265
Japanese	20,315	11,053	Samoan	895	2,277
Spanish	3,208	969	Tongan	31	619
			Te Reo Māori	18,992	22,924

Demands for specific educational support from indigenous Māori, refugee and migrant populations have been moderately accommodated by government agencies and local schools, while comprehensive assistance for ELLs remains a work in progress (Cardno et al, 2018).

The study
Research context

Material used in this article comes from a larger qualitative investigation into responses to linguistic and cultural diversity in state secondary schools in New Zealand. From a range of case study locations approached by the researcher through personal affiliations or conference contacts, three state secondary schools of different deciles, locations and ELL department structures were chosen and examined for their distinctive particularity (Yin, 2014). Their pseudonyms, which I chose, are Wordsworth (W), Patton (P) and Mountfort (M), with deciles of nine, five and three respectively. Entry was gained through the principal's permission and meeting ethical requirements. The study was conducted within nine spaced visits, from three to ten working days each, over eight months during 2017-early 2018 (McCarthy, 2020).

Participants and Data Collection

Information for this article is primarily taken from complementary primary data, individual and focus group interviews (see Appendix 1) combined for triangulation and verification purposes.

Interviewee participants were representative of the ecological hierarchies linked to case study schools, ranging from BOT members, principals, senior managers (SMs), Deans, ELL Heads of Department (HODs), ELL and mainstream ELL teachers and senior ELLs over 16 years of age. Participants chose their own pseudonyms, from which I later equalised gender identification for anonymity. They totalled 18 from Wordsworth, 30 from Patton and 21 from Mountfort. All student interviewees were chosen by the relevant HOD ELL; they represented three senior class learning levels, ten countries and an even spread of migrants, international students, and former refugees (six of each).

Interviews consisted of 42 individual dialogues and 13 focus groups, all conducted in or near the school sites. Up to ten semi-structured interview questions were prepared for the language level of respondents, based on social practice approaches which emphasise relational co-construction in context and allow for some flexibility (Talmy & Richards, 2011). With initial individual interviews, I used scenario cards to elicit initial responses. In second round interviews, I shared summaries and diagrams of ELL infrastructures to check validity and encourage additional interaction. Retrospective individual interviews reviewed the year's data.

Each of the one-off focus group interviews involved from two to five respondents from the same ecological levels. I used "grand-tour" topics to motivate initial involvement (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011, p. 202), then prompt and probe comments to alleviate possible status differences and answerability (White, 2016) and steer participants towards free-flowing expression of their own perceptions. Overall, my developing relations with interview respondents were characterised by respectful, 'friendly-stranger' approaches (Lyons & Chipperfiels, 2000), maintained through reflexive daily journaling and reciprocity in the form of food and professional support.

Data Analysis

I personally taped, transcribed and coded all interview data. Multiple rounds of interpretivist content analysis began, shown in Figure 1, beginning with descriptive codes (e.g. 'Curriculum') then deepening to pattern and simultaneous coding (e.g. 'Steady, Unhindered Growth' and 'Zoning' respectively) (Saldaña, 2016). Further analysis eventually developed more holistic conceptualisation.

Eventually the themes of 'Regulation,' 'Beliefs' and 'Practices' were chosen, which ultimately linked to Spolsky's theoretical framework.

Figure 1.   Coding rationale

CODING RATIONALE (Governed by an ecological macro-meso-micro design. Data sequenced by outer to inner, general to particular, past to present, top-down to bottom-up)			
Descriptive	*Pattern/Axial*	*Simultaneous/Axial*	*Thematic/Axial*
First focus of rounds of analysis	Second focus of rounds of analysis		Final focus of multiple subsequent rounds
• 21 descriptive items, colour coded • Placed around macro-meso-micro circles	• 3 case study locations analysed individually • School origins • School-wide features linked to ELL • ELL department systems and practices	• What all schools share • Settlement patterns in New Zealand • Secondary school systems development • ELL research	• Management at international, national, and local levels • Beliefs identified, analysed with consequences for ELL • Practices linked to ELL managers, ELL department leaders, ELL teachers and students

Findings

Community members irretrievably link beliefs and language, in that they share values about language varieties and practices and how certain languages should be used (Cameron, 2006). The interviews highlighted repeated references to four main national beliefs in relation to education affecting language use, (the second component of Spolsky's theory). They are outlined below in historical order.

Egalitarianism

New Zealand's smaller population, relatively recent settlement, labour market forces and relatively prosperous history have helped to foster a powerful "egalitarian mythology" (Thrupp, 2001, p. 305). Interviewees expressed a clear understanding that egalitarianism was an accepted belief in their school environment and New Zealand as a whole, firmly expressed by lower decile Mountfort and Patton staff. Egalitarianism was also used as an expectation for ELLs. Senior Manager (SM) Albert's beliefs about social justice were reflected in a cartoon hanging from SM Charlie's office wall (see Figure 2 below): "It's a social justice thing. If you have accepted those people into your community, then you treat them the same as the others" (AlbertP1).

Figure 2.   Cartoon on Senior Manager's office wall
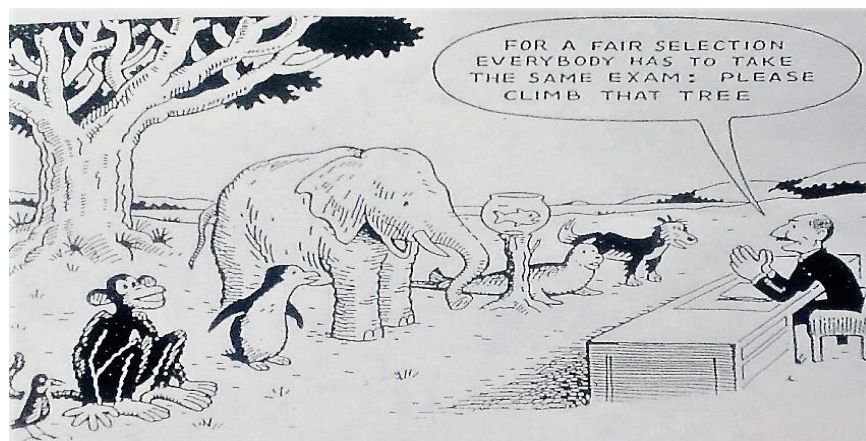
In practice, it required considerable effort for ELLs to be treated equally with others. HOD ELL Cynthia commented: "There was a lot of emphasis on Māori academic achievement … but there were lots of other multicultural students, especially at Mountfort … these students have complex needs, even pastoral needs, which I feel are not being addressed" (CynthiaM3). ELL staff accepted that egalitarianism meant extra resourcing to achieve it. Technology teacher Nugget commented: What I try to do is give that level playing field, so sometimes that does mean working with an ELL student to push him up a bit. In that way, we don't treat them equally" (NuggetM1). Rosie stated: "To be equitable, you need to have inequality. To get people up to where they need to be, you need to be unequal in the way you treat people. It's not about inequality, it's about equity" (RosieP2).

Some interviewees viewed equity for ELLs from another lens. For several Mountfort mainstream staff, extra ELL support meant elitism. Dean Laura perceived that ELL provision gave ELLs unfair advantage over local students who were also language poor. She disliked the firm bonding between ELLs that began in the ELL area but persisted in other classes and considered it to be "disruptive to their social development" (MTFGM1). At Patton, a review was conducted which exposed that international students felt "very resentful … they had paid for their education …to be lumped in with refugees who are getting the same benefits …it caused some friction" (CharlieP1). Subsequently the ELL department was divided into two, with very comfortable facilities provided for international students, while "New Kiwis" (former refugees and migrants) were housed in a standard classroom. This offended the egalitarian principles of some mainstream staff, who perceived that there was different treatment between the two units (RosieP1; AlbertP1).

Homogeneity

Another belief is homogeneity, expressed in societies through standardised uniformity of appearance, speech, or behaviour. Mountfort Dean Dysart reflected that ethnic and visible homogeneity used to be the norm in New Zealand: "New Zealand has traditionally been a very insular bunch of people … we live on a long island a long way from everybody. We were a very monocultural place in the past … a white sanctuary" (DysartM1). Case study BOTs attempted to represent their student ethnicities, but Boards were largely ethnically homogeneous. Mountfort Chairperson reflected: "Our Board is white, middle-class. Do we fully reflect our community? No." (RupertM1). Wordsworth SM, Betty commented: "We didn't get any applications or nominations from Pasifika. We co-opted two… I don't think they feel particularly comfortable there" (BettyW1).

As a first-generation New Zealander, Patton HOD Bob perceived that today, behavioural homogeneity is part of the Kiwi culture:

> I think it's a Kiwi thing. We are not actually always as aware as where people come from and what their cultural background is. The result of that is we don't tend to make a fuss of it. "Oh, you're from another country, let's get on with it. You're a Kiwi now." (MTFGP1)

Case study schools showed some desire for behavioural homogeneity for social cohesion, emphasised by Wordsworth. SM Betty commented: "The sooner we get them [ELLs] integrating into main classrooms, the easier for them to socially fit in" (BettyW1). In 2017 Wordsworth reconstructed the ELL curriculum from a language and literature focus into a literacy one, reducing classes and increasing student exit testing for prompt mainstreaming (CameronW2,3). Literacy Co-Ordinator Tara reflected on her lack of visible homogeneity:

> I have been here for nearly 30 years now; in New Zealand a lot longer than I have been in India. But I am still an outsider. I don't know how to overcome that. I was the International Dean here. Things didn't work out, so I just resigned from that position. I used to see a lot of these girls. If they were from Germany, you could see, they had no problem with making friends. But if you look different, if you have a brown skin or a yellow skin, the racism is there. (TaraW1)

Figure 3 shows the upper two beliefs contesting and interacting with the lower inherited ones. The upper ones have been systematised as virtual norms within state secondary education and where institutional compliance to them is expected as part of staff tenure.

Figure 3.   Contested beliefs influencing ELL
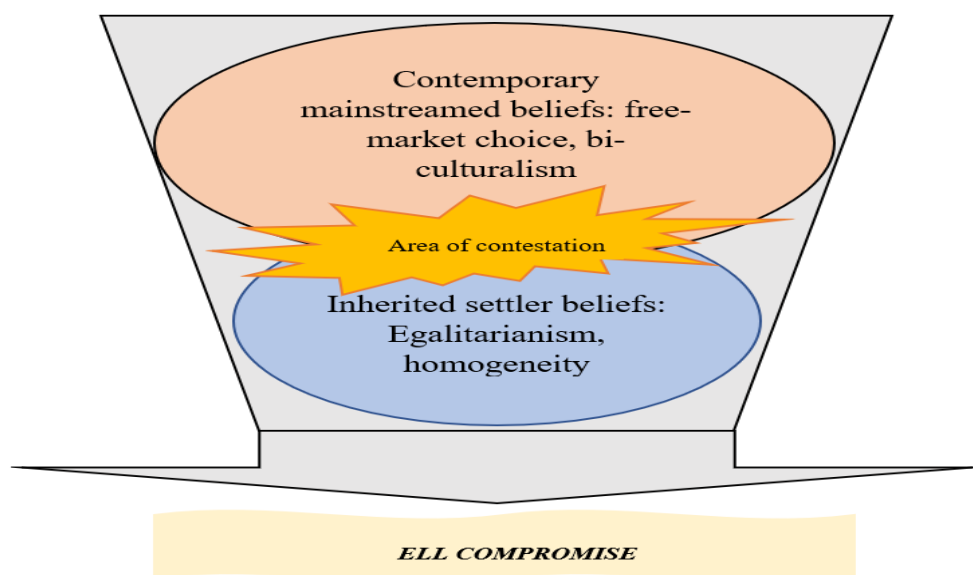
Bi-cultural partnership

Respondents verbally supported this belief as a fair and nationally accepted response to NZC guidelines (MOE, 2007). Chairman Rupert explained: " We are first of all bicultural in this country, so we've got to remember our Māori kids are right at the top of the list, and we've got to do the very best that we can for our Māori kids" (M1). SM Albert added: "If Māori is going to survive as a valid language, then it's going to happen here, so it does have to have some priority" (AlbertP1). Ethnic diversity was perceived by SM Sarah as Māori and Pasifika:

> a very clear message from all of the principals, and from all of the founding documents when the school opened, is empowering [students] and celebrating diversity. The school made way for Māori, Pasifika, and Pākehā, to come together and to all feel welcome and all entitled to a quality education. (SarahW1)

All case study schools gave evidence of extensive Māori government funding, Māori support, and performance initiatives such as Wordsworth's extramural cultural groups and Mountfort's Festival of Nations (BettyW1; Cynthia M1), but less of successful Māori academic achievement. "Colouring in the white spaces" is still an upward climb for Māori education (Milne, 2013, p1). This study has affirmed results from de Bres (2015) who suggests that in policy documents, there is a hierarchy of minority language in New Zealand, with Māori then Pasifika at the top, and other minorities, lower.

Free market choice

Free market choice belief is based on an economic view of deregulated supply and demand (Adams & Hamer, 2005). 'Tomorrow's Schools' reforms (1989) propelled this belief into state school educational infrastructure, framing education with a business perspective. Consequently, schools reflect the ethnic and socio-economic status of their catchments. In 2017, decile three Mountfort had 37% New Zealand European Pākehā students (Dysart M2); the school had experienced significant "white flight" movement during the 90s and beyond (RupertM1). There were three international students in this school, while high decile Wordsworth had 120.

In the study, data reflected school members' level of acceptance of free market choice belief. Low decile Mountfort's principal was pleased that "we are starting to move away from that total fiefdom [feudal management]; it has not been helpful to the health of New Zealand" (JosephM1). There, Acting International Director Bill bemoaned the consequences of insufficient decile funding (BillM1). Patton had successfully adapted business strategies with its international student market and government contract implementation. The international academic advisor stated: "We are becoming a very secure school financially. I think it is important that … we run them well, and that we are running them for a profit because the return is for the community" (HGP1). Wordsworth was already favoured with its location, wealthier student intake and access to financial networks. The school was proud to project a determination to sit at "the cutting edge of learning innovation" supported by consistent building enterprises and digital upgrades (Wordsworth School, 2017, p. 2).

Free-market choice has affected student choice between KLA/non KLA subjects. KLA ones are seen as higher-value, which also affects ELL staffing. Non KLA ELL staff have less status and promotion prospects. SM Charlie observed that staff who were promoted to management emerged mainly from KLAs: "It's rare to find a principal who comes from an ELL … background. If you could find half a dozen in the country, I would say "Oh." They are hugely focused on getting good [exam] results" (CharlieP1).

Successive government efforts and immigration have softened the harshest impacts of free market choice. Low decile schools, Māori, Pasifika, and other ethnic minorities have been granted extra funding and guidance and have been reviewed over the years, while school clustering initiatives through 'Professional Learning Communities' have endeavoured to collaborate (Edwards, 2012). As a whole, however, minority ethnicities have been disadvantaged with free market choice, as the "pattern of social differentiation already apparent in established schools" (Roberts, 2014, p. 4) has only expanded.

Discussion: Consequences for ELL

Although ethnic, socio-cultural, and economic diversity have markedly increased in New Zealand since the 1980s, the study indicates that egalitarianism and homogeneity survive in part today. The historically even playing field encouraged by these beliefs is contested by a sense of entitlement by those advantaged by free-market choice and bi-cultural partnership, creating a hierarchy of status. Combined, the beliefs cause compromise in ELL, expressed in potential suspicions of cultural difference based on minority ethnic status, lack of English language background and sometimes, ethnic visibility. Ultimately, ELL issues that need acknowledgement and committed responses are blanketed over by priority educational accommodation for majority European Pākehā, then indigenous Māori (Spoonley, 2017). Instead, speedy integration is portrayed as the route to ELLs' academic achievement, with minimal recognition of the influence of their first culture and language on their learning. Issues of marginality, staff recruitment and retainment and ELL resourcing were also identified in the study.

International student recruiters were careful to attempt recruitment of a wide range of ethnicities to prevent dominance by any one group, but with proximity and demand, Asian students dominated the ELL groups at Patton and Wordsworth. Dean Alex commented: "When you say ELL, in my head, Chinese comes to mind" (AlexW1). Signs of deeper social difference were present in Chairman Rupert's analysis of student relationships at Mountfort, where local students showed acceptance of ELL migrants, which he attributed to their assumed lower socio-economic status:

> I think there is a degree of naivety which I see as being open to other people, whereas sometimes there are kids who have grown up with certain attitudes and values, and perhaps in higher socio-economic communities, those attitudes, those values, will cause barriers around them, in terms of relationships with people who might be different from themselves." (RupertM1).

The study showed ELL desire to succeed academically because of strong family and personal motivation; within the school context, ELLs' methods tended to exacerbate social difference (McCarthy, 2016). Mountfort ELL students clustered at the back of the classroom using their first languages and collaborating together "cos we're here to learn not to mess around in class" (ELLSFGM1). Patton's academic advisor called ELL international-local student relationships their department's "Achille's heel" (HGP1), despite concerted efforts to encourage interaction.

Structurally and academically, case study ELL departments experienced marginality. Individual school managements are granted autonomy to transfer Ministry of Education guidelines about ELL into their own ELL systems, which evolve ad hoc by those who are employed locally. Mountfort HOD ELL was directly responsible to the principal, Wordsworth HOD ELL worked under the umbrella of the HOD English, then a SM. Patton ELL teachers worked with the HOD Languages then a SM. English HODs in all three schools were concerned to establish power distance from ELL departments. The Junior HOD English observed: "We don't really need a separate outpost of English" (ZaraW1). ELL teachers like Cameron calculated the ELL funding income based on ELLs' progress, but it was up to management how it was used within the school. She reflected: "When I look…at our classroom facilities, and I look at the facilities elsewhere in the school, I think "Where does all this money go to?" (W1). Combined levels of learning were common in ELL classes. With timetablers dependent on fitting specialist ELL numbers into a whole-school system (AlbertP1), ELL class sizes were unregulated. Cameron (W1) stated: "Last year I had 32 [students] in 10ESL [class]; sometimes we have the luxury of having smaller class sizes." There is no set curriculum in ELL, though English Language Unit Standards were used for assessments; ELL teachers used subject material from other areas, such as International English Language Testing System (IELTS), English, Literacy, English Achievement Progressions and Communications English. Curly commented: "If I looked at my classes, I'm offering probably about 12 or 13 programmes" (CurlyP1).

ELL staff tenure in the case study schools was fragile. At Mountfort and Wordsworth, both ELL HOD's resigned during 2017, so acting HOD's were appointed. At Wordsworth, the new HOD ELL announced for 2018 would be the fourth ELL leader in just over a year. ELL leaders Cynthia and Curly lasted less than four years, Jasmine one term. Historically, tenure was worse: at Mountfort from 2015 to 2017, six ELL teachers came and went. At Patton, Rosie arrived as the third New Kiwi teacher in three years.

ELL teachers' intercultural beliefs about ELL could diverge from the dominant monolingual beliefs of the local school culture, placing them in liminal spaces between contested cultural expectations, "between worlds" (Haworth, 2016, p. 240). Curly became increasingly isolated from mainstream staff social networks as her free time was spent supporting international student initiatives. ELL staff were pressured to socially integrate ELLs in classes where they placed less expectation on mainstream academic staff, using what Windle and Miller (2013, p. 199) call "strategies of integration." At Patton, Rosie directed New Kiwi students into "practical, literacy-based" subjects, "preparing for life" (RosieP2). In doing so, she prioritised New Kiwi students' financial and temporal realities

which positioned them as lower-level achievers. Senior staff responsible for ELL Departments were also paid to effectively manage ELLs' interests, but also contextualise their interests within the wider interests of the school, which generated significant compromises, such as with reduced effort to generate ELL provision for migrant students at Mountfort after HOD ELL Cynthia's departure. (BillM2).

Although the cognitive and neurological benefits of multilingualism have been well-established (Gray, 2012; Howard, 2010), the study showed little advocacy for bilingual affordances in case study schools. Davey and French (2018, p.167) highlight that in Auckland and Adelaide "the monolingual mindset stifles effective use of plurilingual resources," reinforced by both institutional approaches and teachers' attitudes. Part of the issue was a leaning towards homogeneity with employment of ELL teachers: in this study, out of the ten ELL teachers interviewed, seven were New Zealand European Pākehā, albeit some with international experience and/or European languages training. Ethnically matched staff were predominantly designated to ELL support roles as teacher aides or counsellors, who were much appreciated by ELLs (ELLSFGM1). Zahra's comments were representative:

> When I first came here, I had difficulties in my subjects … they gave us a teacher aid to help in classes. That helped me a lot, and I got better grades. Mrs M. speaks Hindi so I can speak [that] as well, so that helped me. (ELLSFGP1)

A final consequence has been the prevalent tendency to separate non-English languages from their cultures, while encouraging the latter as performance (BettyW1; CynthiaM1). Participation in group enhancing visual presentations can be uplifting and bonding for participants and audiences alike and can encourage some language. However, performance can encourage stereotyped perspectives of ethnicity, and view audience exposure to other cultures as fleeting diversions only (Johnson, 2015). This study maintains that cultural practices "need to go beyond the familiar level of multicultural food festivals, cultural festivals" (Kitchen, 2009, p. 71), to incorporate first language use into subject learning.

Implications and Conclusion

The discussion leads to suggestions for greater awareness of the way beliefs within language ecologies have affected ELL provision in state secondary education. The first implication is for a national language policy to be legislated which could improve the identity and status of ELL in secondary schools. To achieve this, policy initiatives could include Curriculum Document revision of the KLA/non-KLA subject status (MOE, 2007), the introduction of Achievement Standards for ELL and a compulsory extra language from Years 9-11.

Another could be the introduction of ELL-managed professional education programmes, with significant ELL researcher/practitioner input, for educators to gain an increased understanding of historical monolingualism, and the benefits of language and culture diversity, with discourses on relational strategies aiming to enhance socio-cultural interaction. Programmes on plurilingual pedagogy would expand existing literacy courses so that curriculum planning, teaching and assessment could provide a range of methods that encourage L1-L2 crossover. The final implications are to strengthen ELL resourcing within schools: for ELL Ministry funding to be spent exclusively on ELL departments and ELLs, for regulated maximum student numbers for ELL classes and for staff quotas for ELL scholarships.

This article is based on a small number of cases during an investigation over a selected eight months and has not involved Ministry or other political representatives. However, it has explored ecological theory in state secondary school contexts and revealed the underlying contesting belief systems that compromise ELL provision. It contributes new insights for practitioners, researchers, and policy makers in the under-researched New Zealand state secondary education sector. It calls for further implementation of ecological studies of English-speaking school systems, to analyse the impact of beliefs influencing ELL provision.

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Appendix 1.   List of abbreviated interviews used in this article

Mountfort

(ELLTFGM1)	ELL Department Teacher Focus group Mountfort 1
(MTFGM1)	Mainstream Teacher Focus Group Mountfort 1
(ELLSFGM1)	ELL Department Student Focus Group Mountfort 1
(CynthiaM1, M3)	Cynthia Mountfort: 1, 3 Interviews
(JosephM1)	Joseph Mountfort: 1 Interview
(RupertM1)	Rupert Mountfort: 1 Interview
(DysartM1, M2)	Dysart Mountfort: 1, 2 Interviews
(BillM1, M2)	Bill Mountfort: 1, 2 Interviews
(NuggetM1)	Nugget Mountfort: 1 Interview

Patton

(MTFGP1)	Mainstream Teacher Focus Group Patton 1
(ELLSFGP1)	ELL Department Student Focus Group Patton 1
(CurlyP1)	Curly Patton:1 Interview
(HGP1)	Head Gardener Patton: 1 Interview
(RosieP1,P2)	Rosie Patton: 1, 2 Interviews
(AlbertP1)	Albert Patton: 1
(CharlieP1)	Charlie Patton: 1

Wordsworth

(MTFGW1)	Mainstream Teacher Focus Group Wordsworth 1
(CameronW1,2,3)	Cameron Wordsworth: 1, 2, 3 Interviews
(BettyW1)	Betty Wordsworth: 1 Interview
(SarahW1)	Sarah Wordsworth: 1
(ZaraW1)	Zara Wordsworth: 1
(TaraW1)	Tara Wordsworth: 1
(AlexW1)	Alex Wordsworth: 1