Shifting thinking, shifting approaches: 
Curriculum and facilitating change 
for secondary teachers 
of English language learners

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<thead>
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<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EAL</td>
<td>English as an additional language (term used to name a programme - used by me in preference to ESOL)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELL</td>
<td>English language learner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELLP</td>
<td>English Language Learning Progressions (MOE, 2008)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESOL</td>
<td>English for speakers of other languages (term used to name a programme, and sometimes, students - used by participants)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISTE</td>
<td>In-service teacher education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOE</td>
<td>Ministry of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCEA</td>
<td>National Certificate in Educational Achievement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NZC</td>
<td>New Zealand Curriculum (MOE, 2007)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NZCER</td>
<td>New Zealand Council for Educational Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLG</td>
<td>Professional Learning Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLD</td>
<td>Professional learning and development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TESOLANZ</td>
<td>Teacher of English for Speakers of Other Languages Association of NZ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TLRI</td>
<td>Teaching and Learning Research Initiative</td>
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Abstract

The purpose of this study was twofold: to find out how teachers of English as an Additional Language (EAL) conceived curriculum, teaching and learning and to examine how professional learning and development (PLD) might impact on changes in the teachers' thinking and approaches. The research was spurred by my own involvement in the revision of the national *New Zealand Curriculum* (NZC) and interest in the contested nature of curriculum related to English language learning. EAL teachers face challenges addressing the cross-Learning Area positioning of EAL and, at the same time, are afforded significant autonomy. PLD is needed to support teachers to make curriculum decisions that support English language learners’ (ELLs) to develop competency in English language with urgency. This is because ELLs need to manage the English language demands as they engage in the complex learning that is articulated in the NZC, along with their peers.

I adopted an action research methodology to explore both how EAL teachers conceived curriculum and how PLD about EAL teaching and learning might impact on shifts in teachers' understanding. I was a practitioner-researcher as I carried out PLD for two teachers over a period of six months. Those teacher-participants were teachers of EAL from different secondary schools with different professional contexts. Teaching-as-inquiry was the predominant approach of the PLD. This approach was consistent with my action research. The PLD comprised of a range of interruptions to teachers' everyday work that assisted them to explore their own practice. The research drew on records of these interruptions to provide evidence of changes in teacher-participants' thinking. The recorded conversations were captured through semi-structured interviews, video-stimulated recall and 'learning conversations'. This qualitative data was analysed in one cycle which explored teachers' thinking and actions about EAL curriculum. A second cycle focused my recorded reflections about my practice and on the impact of particular forms of PLD facilitation on shifts in the teachers' thinking and actions. I created a review of literature for each cycle. This recursive process allowed me to reflect on my role as a PLD facilitator in action.

Several themes emerged as the cycles were drawn together to examine how PLD impacted on shifts in teachers' understanding of curriculum for EAL. One theme that emerged was the value of a culture of inquiry, where my action research was linked with the participants' teaching-as-inquiry cycles. Another theme related to how PLD could influence teachers' reconceptualising of curriculum for teaching
multilingual English language learners. A third theme was how my PLD facilitation could impact on effective teaching and learning for Pasifika learners.

Findings can be drawn from my study for both teacher practice and for PLD facilitation. This research adds to New Zealand research about teaching ELLs, and Pasifika students in particular. It shows how giving attention to both students’ home language strengths and academic English language learning needs can change the way teachers see pathways and work towards improved outcomes for students. The value of inquiry for teachers was confirmed in this action research, as a useful approach for bring about change in teachers’ thinking and approaches to teaching. The PLD interruption process, which included analysis of rich information about students, challenging conversations and the maintenance of respectful relationships was confirmed as an effective combination for engaging teachers in shifting their foci. Self-reflections on my PLD facilitation role, using an inquiry approach, assessed through adult learning principles, provided a useful stocktake which I would recommend for other PLD facilitators.
Acknowledgements

To complete this thesis I have had assistance from my supervisors, my family and the teachers who were participants in this research. I am most grateful to everyone who has enabled me to complete this work.

My supervisors: Jane Abbiss and Susan Lovett and previously Jae Major, thank you for your helpful engineering advice and persistence through the construction process. Thank you especially to Jane for your steady hand from the beginning.

My family: for your patience with my absence and your encouragement, thank you. John: thank you for your touch of clarity.

To ‘Sue’ and ‘Anita’: I am most grateful for the enthusiasm that you gave to your involvement in the PLD, and for the insights you have given me.

I look forward to adding spring to the friendships that I have neglected. And a special thank you to Nicky, with whom I could talk both study and other heady stuff.
Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Background

The purpose of this study was to examine 'teacher-learning' relating to teaching English as an additional language (EAL) in professional learning and development (PLD) contexts during the implementation phase of the revised New Zealand Curriculum (NZC) (MOE, 2007). Within this action research study, I was a 'participant-researcher' seeking to examine what has supported shifts in teachers’ understandings and practice in teaching EAL as they explored ideas about curriculum. A specific focus and context of the research was my work with two teachers and facilitation of a particular PLD initiative. My broader purpose was to address the diverse learning needs of students from various linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

My thesis provided me with a welcome opportunity to closely examine my work with two secondary school EAL specialist teachers. These teachers worked in their schools, participated in PLD workshops and undertook their own teaching-as-inquiry over a period of six months. My action research and their inquiries into their own practice were interrelated.

The related theories that particularly influenced this thesis are socio-cultural, social-constructionist, social-justice and 'theories of the post'. Apart from the stimulation of finding out about the impact of theories on education, there were a number of reasons why I chose these theories. They helped me to be critically reflective, enabling me to see teaching and learning from different views and to illuminate some particular aspects of teaching and learning as well as of facilitation (Abbiss, 2012; Brookfield, 1995). These theoretical frameworks also helped to give explanatory power to my research (Preissle, LeCompte & Tesch, 1993). Additionally, according to Cummins (2000), by exploring the relationship between theory and practice, and relating it back to theory again, research potentially has more political sway than it would without theoretical foundation. These theories influenced my choices of methodology, both the choice of action research methodology and the way I designed the PLD that was explored in this research.

I was intentionally emphasising my own learning and changed actions as I engaged with teacher-participants. As a participant–researcher, I was an ‘insider’, rather than an external ‘other’ who was looking on. As I participated, I was involved in self-reflection, analysing and thinking about my own practice.
The teacher-participants were part of the study. Their ideas and responses were an important means to help me reflect on my own practice.

The teacher-learning that was the focus of this research comprised two cycles. In the background, the participating teachers were managing their PLD largely through inquiring into their own practice. Their shifts in thinking and practice are described in Cycle A. In the foreground was my own action research as a teacher-educator. This focus on my PLD facilitation is discussed in Cycle B.

The initial impetus for the topic for this thesis came from a Teaching and Learning Research Initiative (TLRI) project entitled *Shifting the conceptualisation of knowledge and learning in the integration of the new NZ curriculum in initial and continuing teacher education* (Andreotti, Abbiss & Quinlivan, 2012) in which I was also a participant researcher. This project constituted two years of participation in a professional learning group including College of Education pre-service lecturers and in-service PLD facilitators. In the TLRI project I examined shifts in EAL teachers’ thinking during an on-going PLD sequence which incorporated exemplification and discussion of different ideas about knowledge and curriculum (Fry & Abbiss, 2012). Twenty teachers were involved. Building on the TLRI research, in the subsequent year I began my research with two different teachers, expanding on my thinking about knowledge and curriculum in relation to EAL teaching and learning.

My thesis research was influenced by my experience of working as a teacher-educator in the EAL field for some time. At the time of the research, I had worked for eleven years as a secondary schools’ PLD facilitator, contracted by the Ministry of Education (MOE) through my College of Education employer. I was working both as an EAL and a general literacy PLD facilitator. For two years previously I had a PLD role in introducing the draft, and subsequently revised, NZC to both schools and other College of Education staff. In the process of curriculum revision, I represented the New Zealand EAL teachers’ association, TESOLANZ, in lobbying the Ministry of Education for greater recognition of the learning needs of English language learners (ELLs) to be articulated within the new document. Prior to my work as a PLD facilitator, I had taught English, Social Studies and EAL in secondary schools in Auckland and London.

### 1.2 Rationale

#### 1.2.1 Focus on EAL

A reason for focusing on EAL was that there are significant numbers of ELLs in New Zealand schools. Ministry of Education statistics about recent migrants
show that the ethnic and linguistic diversity within schools has grown significantly in the last decade. For example, there were students from 156 ethnic groups speaking 116 different languages in recent migrant groups identified by the Ministry of Education as being below cohort expectations in schools (personal correspondence). Change has happened rapidly. For example, the Ministry of Education statistics show that, in 2009, there were 9770 more migrant ELLs than in the 2002 Ministry of Education statistics when there were 23,260 (Franken & McComish, 2003, p. 10). These statistics only represent those most recently arrived. There are additionally many foreign fee-paying students in secondary schools.

That migrant children experience challenges in the New Zealand is apparent from the fact that there is a low achievement tail in literacy and that students from linguistically diverse backgrounds are over-represented in this tail. The National Educational Monitoring Project (Crooks, Smith, & Flockton, 2009) states that students from homes where the predominant language was English scored higher in reading and writing than students from homes where other languages were predominant. New Zealand has one of the widest “spreads” in literacy achievement associated with “ethnically stratified disparities” (Timperley, Wilson, Barrar, & Fung, 2007, p. 2) within the OECD countries surveyed. Similarly, ethnic disparity shown through the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) results had not changed significantly between 2000 and 2006.

A social action imperative for a focus on EAL comes from this picture of disparity. In this context of increasing diversity, there are challenges for teachers to teach not only of diversity but also for diversity (Alton-Lee, 2007). The direction set by the NZC is general, broad and inclusive. One of the underpinning Principles of the NZC is “inclusion”, ensuring that “students’ identities, languages, abilities and talents are recognised and affirmed and that their learning needs are addressed” (MOE, 2007, p. 9). Given the extent and increase of linguistic and cultural diversity, and the imperative from the NZC Principles, an exploration about different knowledge and ways of knowing was an integral feature for my research in this field.

I argue it is necessary and worthwhile to look at how such principles influenced EAL teachers as they made curriculum decisions, described by Bolstad (2006) as thinking about what, how and who they teach. As teachers work with increasingly diverse school populations in New Zealand, a rich understanding about such conceptualisations of knowledge becomes important. An exploration into the way in which such broad conceptualisations about diversity impact on
EALs’ teachers’ decision-making seems particularly warranted in the light of the low educational achievement associated with some groups of ELLs.

1.2.2 Focus on teacher learning

A reason for an examination of PLD for EAL teachers is that there is exceptional diversity in the student population that EAL teachers engage with. The diversity is not just in language backgrounds or cultures but also in prior experiences, including refugee backgrounds, migration and educational experiences. However, there is little research in the field of PLD related to developing pedagogical content knowledge and practice for teaching linguistically and culturally diverse students (August & Shanahan, 2008; Price 2008; Sleeter, 2011). As ethnic, cultural and linguistic diversity has recently increased in New Zealand, achievement statistics indicate a need to urgently adjust teaching to meet new needs. According to Franken and McComish (2003) in a report to the Ministry of Education, “teacher learning becomes the critical link in supporting this diversity, through educational reform and systematic improvement”. They go on to state that “Teacher learning – with well-planned systemic support and input – does seem to be a critical link to systemic improvement” (p. 72). The importance of teacher learning is perhaps particularly high for EAL teachers as they work closely with students from diverse backgrounds. Franken and McComish refer to Freeman (2001) who proposes some areas in relation to the nature of EAL support that are requiring research:

   How do teachers learn to teach [English for speakers of other languages] ESOL learners? How do various designs of initial and ongoing training and development support teacher learning? Specifically,... how do designs and practices in professional development support experienced ESOL teachers in different settings? (p. 608)

Franken and McComish add that “These [research questions] remain to be fully investigated in the New Zealand context, and will be an essential aspect of improving outcomes for [non-English speaking background] NESB students” (p. 72). My research attempts to address aspects of Freeman’s questions.

I would argue that there are particular reasons to examine PLD for EAL teaching. One reason for a focus on PLD for EAL teachers is that some guidance may be needed to help teachers to interpret the NZC, given the broad reference but lack of specific direction that it gives for teaching ELLs, as discussed. Through anecdotal evidence, I have found that some EAL teachers feel a lack of connection with the NZC. Further, I have observed that there are many teachers coming to EAL teaching from a range of teaching backgrounds, bringing a range of conceptualisations about knowledge that may or may not reflect the intentions of
the NZC. These additional challenges provide impetus for examining PLD for EAL teachers.

There are political and economic interests in the outcomes of PLD. Educational policy-makers and school leaders are vitally interested in PLD because they need to know that time, energy and financial resources are appropriately used. Also, there is political interest in educational achievement disparities. This research, then, to some extent, expands the reporting that I would normally supply to the Ministry of Education as part of my contract requirements, providing more depth to the analysis of issues relating to teaching ELLs. I argue that learning from this experience has helped me operate more effectively and with more clarity within the political and economic contexts which influence PLD decisions.

My research is one of very few research projects in New Zealand where researchers and language teachers have worked collaboratively. Erlam (2010) maintains that such collaborative practitioner research projects are seen as a way forward, particularly in the field of language teaching and learning.

Similarly, action research studies are relatively few in the international EAL field (Burns, 2005). Even within this limited field of research, Burns describes the majority of projects as being within a category of enhancing personal professional development and that there are few projects geared to “the production of knowledge about curriculum, pedagogy or educational systems” (section 6, para. 4). She suggests that an area for further challenge is to explore how action research in language teaching can “address broader issues of curriculum development, social justice and educational political action, thus contributing to the greater sustainability of effective educational practices” (section 10, para.1). Ortega (2005) also calls for “a socially responsible, politically self-reflective and epistemologically diverse field of instructed SLA [second language acquisition] that generates research inspired by societal needs” (p. 472). So the calls from both within New Zealand and the international research community for such research have clearly reinforced my decision to carry out collaborative research with a focus on the forces at play in designing EAL curriculum at school level.

So a rationale for this research is supported by social justice and political concerns, especially in the light of the relatively low performance of a proportion of adolescent English language learners. The newness of the curriculum and the general ideas in it that relate to EAL provision also provide reasons for undertaking this research. Impetus is provided through the call for PLD for EAL teaching and learning in New Zealand and the lack of international action research in relation to EAL teaching and learning. It therefore seems useful to
explore PLD that supports the capability of EAL teachers to be responsive to that diversity, at the same time as responding to the urgency for ELLs to acquire the language of their school learning.

It is my intention that teachers, school managers and developers of professional learning will benefit from this contribution to research about curriculum implementation, especially in relation to EAL teaching and professional learning for secondary teachers.

1.3 Research Questions

Main question:

How can PLD support shifts in teachers’ understandings and practice for EAL teaching and learning in relation to the revised NZC?

Sub questions:

1. How do participating teachers understand EAL curriculum, teaching and learning?
2. How do they respond to a PLD interruption?
3. How can PLD engage EAL teachers with ideas about curriculum, teaching and learning?
4. How might the findings and reflections on this intervention inform my practice as a PLD facilitator?

1.4 Thesis outline

The structure of this thesis is cyclical rather than linear, in keeping with the theoretical influences on this research and the related action research methodology. The cyclical nature incorporates theoretical exploration, action and reflection processes. The review of literature is integral to the whole research process. My developing understandings of the literature have influenced my understandings about EAL curriculum teaching and learning which, in turn, have influenced methodological decisions about the PLD interruption. The review of literature relates to both teacher knowledge of EAL curriculum (Cycle A) and to PLD approaches and efficacy (Cycle B).

The Methodology (Chapter 2) follows this Introduction. It includes both the methodology for my own action research and the methodology of the PLD interruption that was undertaken with the teacher-participants. The rest of the thesis is organised in two cycles representing interrelated processes of thought,
action and reflection. The two cycles are not sequential but rather cycles of inquiry that inform each other.

Cycle A is written in response to the first two research sub-questions, and is essentially about epistemology and the teacher-participants’ shifts in thinking. This section includes a literature review (Chapter 3) that focuses on knowledge, curriculum and EAL teaching and learning. The literature review is organised by starting with broad ideas and progressing to a narrowing of focus on EAL teaching. The chapter begins with developing ideas about epistemology which are examined generally. Then understandings of curriculum are looked at in more focus. Finally, literature about EAL curriculum, teaching and learning is examined, drawing on influences of ideas about knowledge and curriculum.

In Chapter 4, there is an analysis of shifts in teacher-participants’ epistemology as they take part in on-going PLD. Several aspects of the teacher-participants’ shifting understandings are described: their understandings about their learners; their ideas about curriculum and teaching EAL; and their shifting epistemological understandings about EAL.

Cycle B of the thesis is written in response to the third research question. This second cycle begins with a literature review about PLD (Chapter 5). The literature review of Cycle B, exploring the field of PLD is organised according to a problem-based methodology (Robinson & Lai, 2006). Firstly, problems and challenges with professional development are identified. Then the research into what is considered effective PLD for addressing the challenges is explored.

Chapter 6 draws on the literature review (Chapter 5) as I reflect on the action research into my PLD leadership. In other words, I analyse the relationship between my PLD facilitation and the participants’ shifts. These reflections are organised in three themes: the influence of contract responsibilities and research interests; learning together; the shape of PLD and using rich evidence to shift expectations for Pasifika students. Throughout, there is an effort to link different ideas across the two cycles.

The fourth research question is answered in Chapter 7. In this chapter I discuss implications for my practice in two themes: implications about EAL teaching and learning; and implications for my PLD practice.

1.5 Key terminology

The term English as an additional language (EAL) is used to describe teaching and learning programmes. It is used in preference to English for speakers of other
languages (ESOL) because in ESOL, the inference is that English is the norm and other languages being subsidiary. Moreover EAL implies that other languages are dominant and English is the extra dimension. I have come to think that EAL is also an inadequate term in the light of my reading of literature about multilingualism. I suggest there is a need for a new term to encapsulate the interplay of languages.

In this thesis research, I adopt Timperley's (2011) emphasis of professional learning in the term professional learning and development (PLD). Professional learning involves more than just sitting and receiving. Processes for active “inquiry, learning and experimenting” are involved as teachers are engaged cognitively, emotionally and practically (p. xviii).

Earl's (2010) term, interruption, is used in preference to the more commonly used term ‘intervention’, to describe the facilitation of PLD. Earl suggests that by interrupting and facilitating change, a lasting impact on practice may be achieved. The term interruption resonates with action research in which teachers are involved in analysing their own ideas and actions, while ‘intervention’ seems to fit a positivist approach where ‘professional development’ is presented and teachers’ reception is merely assumed. See Chapter 2, Section 2.3.1 for an elaboration of this definition.

Curriculum can be understood at a national level, a school level, within the actions of a classroom and also in what a student learns. It is sometimes described as the intended curriculum, the taught curriculum and the learnt curriculum. At times I discuss the national curriculum, the NZC (sometimes referred to as ‘Curriculum with a capital C” and at times I discuss ‘curriculum with a small c’. Teachers bring preconceived and sometimes tacit ideas about curriculum to their teaching. There is a range of understanding about curriculum, from a prescription at one end, and, some way towards the other end, curriculum can be discussed as a ‘platform for learning’ (see Chapter 3).

Teaching-as-inquiry is the term used to describe the teacher-participants’ investigations in to their own practice while ‘action research’ is the term used for my investigation. The difference between the two terms is developed in Chapter 2, Section 2.3.1.

The two teachers involved in this research are called teachers, teacher-participants and participants interchangeably.
The Samoan word *talanoa* is used to describe discussion about important issues. There is a sense of 'laying down the mat' to invite deep discussion from different people’s perspectives.

Abbreviations for commonly used terms are listed at the beginning of the thesis after the Lists of Figure and Tables.
Chapter 2 Methodology

This chapter describes the research design, decision-making and methods used in my practitioner inquiry into PLD support for EAL teachers. This research project fits under the umbrella of practitioner research or ‘practitioner inquiry’ (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009) in that it relates to my own work and practice as I worked with teachers. I designed the research to explore shifts in teachers’ thinking and actions and to examine the impact of the PLD on those shifts.

The different sections of the chapter cover aspects of the methodology. The first section is an elaboration of the connections between the theoretical influences of the research and the broad research design. It outlines justifications for using action research in relation to ideas about EAL curriculum and also to ideas about PLD. In this section there is also a description of qualitative research and action research methodology. Following that section, I describe the research decisions and then provide a section giving an outline of the PLD interruptions. In the next section of this methodology chapter, I describe the management of the data and finally I discuss ethical considerations.

2.1 The theoretical influences on research design

2.1.1 Theoretical underpinnings

The choice of action research methodology, located within a qualitative paradigm, was influenced by a number of related theories. I have chosen to be influenced by social constructionist, social justice and ‘post’ theories in particular. Cummins (2000) suggests that each discipline may highlight a particular focus, especially “when both ‘insider’ and ‘outsider’ research is considered” (p. 2). Given that I am researching my own practice, I am essentially an insider, while, in a sense, I am also an outsider causing PLD interruptions to teachers’ practice. I am an insider in the interactions between me and the teachers I work with that are the focus of this research. So it is fitting that I am influenced by a range of theories. A similar collection of theoretical ideas influence my thinking about knowing, curriculum and EAL teaching and learning (described in Chapter 3) and to my thinking about PLD (described in Chapter 5). So there is coherence between the research methodology and the subject of the research.

Social-constructionism, social-justice theories, ‘theories of the post’ and my own interests in social justice all challenge positivist research methodology, resist normative hierarchies and grapple with the complexity of real-world situations. These theoretical influences create a methodological stance, in which the
researcher is assumed not to be objective. Subjectivity will be integral and unavoidable and needs to be recognised in the research process. The stance assumes that the context is significantly influential on the meaning that is made from the research (Peters & Burbules, 2004). Social-constructionist theory leads to an interpretive approach to research in which the researcher can “describe and interpret social situations” (Mutch, 2005). The theories reject the notion that research methodology is a fixed process of data gathering and analysis techniques. The chapters of this thesis all exemplify a commitment to dialogue and reflexive engagement. I take the position from Noffke and Somekh (2009) that the methodology “is a process of interaction between theories about social practices and theories emerging from inquiry into social practices” (p. 25). The social-constructionist theoretical influences justify my choice of practitioner research within an interpretive approach.

These social theoretical approaches support research into PLD, providing an opportunity to look at the relationships between thinking and actions over time. The view that knowledge is socially constructed helps build a dynamic and process-oriented form of research. The social theories allow me to look at the way PLD events are perceived and constructed. They allow me to see PLD events as having productive and/or receptive elements. With the underpinning theories, I am able to reflect on interactions between participants and think about different types of consciousness at play in the individuals’ actions, including my own.

The theoretical influences on this research influence the practitioner methodology. Action research is an established research methodology for educational practitioner researchers, especially as practitioner-researchers look into their own work with the view to changing and making their practice better (Mutch, 2005). This methodology reflects the idea that PLD facilitation supports teachers to inquire into their own practice, learning from their own teaching experiences rather than from the stance that they have already learned how to teach (Reid, 2004). The PLD facilitation, then, is also scrutinised from the position of learning from my own facilitation. Additionally, action research is often used for collaborations between university-based educators and school-based educators. So action research is an appropriate research methodology for me in investigating PLD in the context of implementing a changed curriculum. Further, as this research spans a continuous professional education process, the action research methodology enables interrelationships between the theory, data collection, actions, analysis, and relationships between participants. There are opportunities for recursiveness and reciprocity. In other words, the participants and I can be researchers as well as practitioners.
There are also influences of the critical stance of ‘theories of the post’. ‘Theories of the post’ support hyper-self-reflexivity as a way to acknowledge how everyone has complicity with or investment in some beliefs that are coercive or repressive (Andreotti, 2010). This invites reflections on power. For example, while I am a constructor of my own knowledge, alongside the teachers who are also constructing their knowledge, I have had to be particularly careful in describing potential power disparities within insider-outsider researcher-participant relationships.

The theories which underpin my research stance link with the theories that influence my exploration of knowledge, curriculum and EAL teaching. With practitioner research, the complexities of relationships between knowledge and practice are acknowledged (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009). I was focusing on how teachers understand curriculum at a time when there was considerable change. A new curriculum was being implemented, the teachers were new in their roles and they were teaching learners with diverse and changing backgrounds. My choice of methodology was reinforced by the theories in that “action learning and action research are proven methods for responding effectively to shared challenges in times of rapid change” (Zuber-Skerritt, 2009, p. 6). Action research is commonly used by educators as they focus on change: changing curriculum; challenging standard school practices; and striving for social change (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009). The theories underpin research into learning and beliefs about EAL (Woods, 2003).

This research has a critical, social-justice and transformative intent with a particular focus on English language learning and who and how different groups of ELLs get support. It supports the belief that 21st Century education needs to shift from teaching about universal truths to helping learners build capabilities to generate new ideas and explanations, as they live in worlds that are characterised by complexity. Thus, because of the complexity of the students’ language, educational and cultural backgrounds, as well as the complexity of language purposes and contexts that students will meet, EAL teachers cannot use a one-size-fits-all methodology for teaching English. The research methodology then also needs to be responsive to the idea that contexts and purposes for EAL teaching will be different, multiple and changing. Further, if teachers are to teach students to have capabilities to think imaginatively and critically about learning and manage their own learning in complex contexts, their teachers must demonstrate these capabilities of thinking flexibly, creatively and critically (Reid, 2004). By problematising the arrangements of schooling, teacher-researchers are able to use their everyday practices as foci for critical inquiry. Then teacher-learning can “mirror the kind of curriculum that many agree is necessary for
learning in this complex, global environment” (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009, p. 47) by positioning ourselves as lifelong learners.

A complex interweaving of ideas about methodology, curriculum and PLD can be seen in much of this literature. The methodology of my PLD facilitator research must therefore have the elasticity to examine complex curriculum teaching and learning decisions as facilitators and teachers strive to achieve complex outcomes. The overlapping social-constructionist, social-justice theories and ‘theories of the post’ help justify the methodology of this research. This theoretical justification now leads to a closer examination of qualitative research.

2.1.2 Qualitative research

Qualitative, interpretivist research, according to Denzin and Lincoln (2000), can be described as,

... a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive material practices that make the world visible. These practices turn the world into a series of representations including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings and memos to the self. At this level qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that the qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of or to interpret phenomena in terms of the meaning people bring to them (p. 3).

Such a qualitative approach has implications for how the research is conducted, the nature of the research and participant relationships.

In terms of the relationship between a theoretical orientation and methodology, readers of qualitative research such as this thesis can expect rich descriptions and believability as an alternative to statistically valid and predictive findings of quantitative research (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Mutch, 2005). The suitability of my choice of qualitative research is confirmed by Burr (2003) who concludes that "the insistence of social constructionism upon the importance of social meaning and discourses often leads logically to the use of qualitative methods as the research tools of choice" (p. 24). In further confirming my choice of qualitative methodology for this research I used the four main characteristics of qualitative research methodology in the social sciences that Lamneck (1995) has identified: openness, communicativeness, interpretiveness and the naturalistic approach.
**Openness** was important in my research. I wanted to maintain an openness to theoretical concepts that I met in interaction with the research material including literature and social interactions. I also wanted to maintain an openness to the ideas and needs that the teacher-participants expressed. I resisted positivist scientific method. I could not go into a school with a formed hypothesis, ideas about the objectivity of the researcher and an intended distancing of researcher and participant. This would have been inconsistent with qualitative philosophy and with the social constructionism and ‘theories of the post’ that underpinned this research. In order for my research to reflect qualitative understandings, the teacher-participants needed to understand the purpose and aims of the research. They needed to be actively involved and contribute to the research. I needed to maintain flexibility and use multiple methods and techniques in order to work within the dynamism of an educational setting.

**Communicativeness** was important in my research. As I wanted this research to be transformative for myself and the teacher-participants, we all needed to be able to use the findings. Therefore, I needed to communicate with them clearly to enable them to have sufficient knowledge of the process and expectations.

By being interpretive, the teachers and I needed to be able to construct meaning together, rather than have a given, objective reality that I imposed on their classrooms. We needed to have shared and joint interpretations of the actions that we observed.

The **naturalistic** methods and communication that are part of the qualitative philosophy had implications regarding methods of data collection. I used observations followed by recorded conversations, video-stimulated recall, a reflective journal, documents and semi-structured interviews in the different phases or cycles of my research. The research was then located in the real-life world of schools and classrooms.

### 2.1.3 Action Research in Context

I adopted a broad view of action research that emphasised principles or characteristics rather than a strict technique. Action research has principles, as described by Somekh (1995) that both drove and fitted my intentions. The principles of action research relevant to this study are identified here as:

**Action research bridges the divide between research and practice**

The teacher-participants carried out teaching-as-inquiry cycles as I undertook action research into my work with them. Additionally, and in the foreground, I was exploring and adapting my practice as I researched. This research was, in a
sense, a development of my actions and research in the earlier TLRI Project (Fry & Abbiss, 2012) described in Chapter 1. So this thesis research paints a picture of my on-going development as practitioner-researcher. Stringer illustrates action research as a routine in which the participants identify possible solutions, act them out, observe them, analyse them and reformulate until success is achieved (2008). The teachers and I were all involved in such intertwined cycles. We were all developing as researchers and practitioners.

**Action research is carried out by people directly concerned with the social situation that is being researched**

I was directly concerned with evaluating my own practice as I worked with the teachers, just as they were directly concerned with their own teaching and its impact on the learning of their students through teacher inquiry.

**Action research is fed back directly into practice with the aim of bringing about change**

The intention was that I would develop and improve my practice as I analysed the impact of my work on the teachers. Similarly, the teacher-participants would be directly concerned with changing their teaching practice in relation to their own findings. We could not afford to wait for longitudinal studies to be completed. Neither could we afford very wide-ranging positivist research into many aspects of curriculum change. The characteristics of the students that the teachers worked with changed, for example, as their identities shifted or as the immigration policy and other external forces influenced who was in their classes. The research had to respond to the circumstances of the time.

Transformative intent was an identified characteristic of action research (Weis & Fine, 2005). There was a transformative or emancipatory intent to the School Support Services contract with the Ministry of Education at the time of undertaking this research. The contract stated amongst the outcomes that “teachers critically examine their existing beliefs, expectations and professional practices” (MOE, 2010). The transformative intent of action research does not only relate to teachers. The reading I considered as part of the literature review challenged my own thinking and demanded explicit changes in my practice.

**Action research has a highly pragmatic orientation**

A pragmatic way of working with teachers as they respond to the complexities of their situations is necessary and desirable. One way in which action research sat very pragmatically with my work was that the most influential of models that provide a foundation for School Support Services PLD were different renditions of action research (MOE, 2007, 2008b; Timperley et al., 2007). These models were also often understood by school leaders so there was potential for the
research that I undertook in schools to be understood alongside other school PLD initiatives. An additional pragmatic use of action research was its adaptability. The post-modern discourse provided the potential to do things in non-formulaic ways. The range of inquiry models exemplified the opportunity for us to engage in a variety of ways, adapting to diverse contexts.

**Action research is grounded in the culture and values of the social group whose members are both participants in the research field and researchers**

Action research is consistent with the current educational climate in New Zealand. In fact teaching-as-inquiry, which is a form of action research, is described in the Pedagogy section of the NZC as well as being an expectation of teachers as set out in the Registered Teacher Criteria (NZ Teachers’ Council).

Action learning and action research is described as a living experience (Zuber-Skerritt, 2009). It is not merely a learning and research methodology. Action research is additionally a general approach for problem solving within organisations and for leading and doing PLD. In action research, the intent is to effect change within one's own circumstances (Burns, 2005). The objective and distanced nature of other approaches may render research untrustworthy in the process of social change (Somekh & Saunders, 2007). The nature of my research, with the emphasis on learning through experience and reflection together with teacher-participants, is consistent with an action learning and action research approach.

### 2.1.4 Positionality

Brown and Jones (2001) argue that action research is a post-modernist construction. The researcher is part of the reality that he/she observes and as the research develops, the researcher is part of a creation and recreation process. Within this research, I positioned myself as a participant in terms of being a constructor of my own knowledge, alongside the teachers who were also constructing their knowledge. The context for me was my work with the teachers, particularly in exploring how I decided what to teach. The context for the teachers was their work with students as they decided what to teach. My positionality was evident in the experience, ideas and understandings that I brought to the research. My identity as a teacher educator and researcher influenced the action research process. However, this was also being constantly negotiated as I made sense of new experience. I was being influenced by the participants’ responses. I was also being influenced by ideas about theories that I read as part of the literature review as this study developed. So my voice reflected my developing understandings about social theories and 'traditions of the post' that I was exploring. As a participant-researcher I understood that it
was through my lens that the picture was taken. However, by recording the teacher-participants’ views from various angles, I was able to question my interpretations and thereby increase my understanding of those perspectives (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007).

According to Clough and Nutbrown (2002), social research is both “purposive and positional” (p. 25). I might be able to unearth both the participants’ and my positional differences, if I undertook this process in a ‘radical’ or ‘critical’ way. By searching for gaps in knowledge and the relationships between personal and public knowledges, I might find explanations and evaluations.

2.2 Research Settings, Participants and Time Frame

My decisions about when, where and with whom I would work in this project were informed by my experience in the TLRI project (Fry & Abbiss, 2012) that was a precursor to this study, described in Chapter 1. An example of the influence of the TLRI is that I had found that the observations and interviews with three participants provided richer data than the written-response questionnaires from twenty participants. I consequently chose to work with a small number of participants in this thesis research. Details relating to selection of settings and participants are elaborated below.

2.2.1 Settings

Because my own practice was the foreground of this research, the main setting for this study was, necessarily, my own work in the School Support Services contract to the Ministry of Education. However, as my work was not essentially in an office, the setting was often in schools, workshops, professional learning groups and conferences where I worked with the teacher-participants, both inside and outside their schools.

Three schools were selected and approached as potential settings for this action research. The selection was constrained because, in order to manage the bounds of the research, the opportunity was given only to schools where I had arranged in-depth work for 2010. The obligations set out in the Ministry of Education contract with School Support Services (MOE, 2010) dictated, to some extent, the schools chosen. The selection of schools depended on an alignment with the schools’ strategic plan detailing professional development needs. Amongst other requirements of my contract, I needed to work with schools in which the PLD interruption had the principal’s support, a needs analysis including achievement data, potential for sustainability, openness to cycles of observation, modelling and feedback. I was also charged with facilitating the uptake and use of the English Language Learning Progressions (MOE, 2008a) so I needed to work in
schools that would engage with using this document. While these obligations could be regarded as constraints, they also ensured supportive conditions for the research. These restrictions were part of my work within its natural setting, and did not conflict with action research methodology.

Additional constraints on the choice of schools had a number of influences. Given the social-justice intentions of the research, I wanted to work in schools where there were Pasifika students. Even though I was contracted to support teachers working with English language learners from a variety of backgrounds, including international students and migrant students, I chose schools with Pasifika students. This is because Pasifika students are/were represented as being amongst those most at risk of not achieving in New Zealand schools (Crotty, 2012).

Another decision I made about settings was that I would work with EAL teachers in the context of teaching EAL classes rather than mainstream teachers in mainstream classroom settings. Although a little over half of my workload was with teachers across all secondary school teaching to support literacy for all students I decided that in this study it would be valuable to explore teaching in specific EAL. This was for three reasons. Firstly, it would narrow the boundaries of the research making it manageable. Secondly, it would respond to the call for more research of this nature, as described in Chapter 1. Thirdly, I thought it would be pertinent to explore EAL teachers’ thinking about curriculum because EAL is not described within the eight Learning Areas of the New Zealand Curriculum. I was interested in how EAL teaching would and could be conceptualised in the absence of achievement objectives. A further consideration was that I had a range of requests for in-depth support from schools, particularly where there were new EAL teachers and EAL leaders in schools. I needed to be responsive to these requests.

Finally, I wanted to work with schools that would not require overnight travel. Time constraints rather than financial constraints influenced this decision. By being in relatively close proximity, I could work across school settings by including participants in workshops and other group activities, in schools or at my workplace.

The two participating schools were Year 9-13 co-educational state schools. The schools had significant numbers of both migrant and international fee-paying students with relatively high numbers of Pasifika students for the region. The participants were asked to identify a class that would be the focus of their reflections. In both schools, the focus class had a mix of migrant and international fee-paying students. One participant began with a class but decided
to change her focus for this PLD to look at herself as a leader of EAL teaching in her school, reflecting on her interactions with other teachers.

2.2.2 Teacher Participants

I wanted to work with two teacher-participants, but was hoping for three so that I would retain at least two participants if one withdrew. This small number of teacher-participants would allow me to get a depth of engagement to provide sufficient material for my analysis.

From the three identified schools I therefore invited three teachers who were also Heads of EAL Departments and one other EAL teacher to be teacher-participants. Of the four potential participants, two accepted the opportunity – one Head of Department (HOD) and one assistant EAL teacher. The two HODs who did not accept, cited workload as the reason for not participating. I gained the written approval of the relevant Principals and their Boards of Trustees, before confirming my participants.

There were some similarities in the teacher-participants, Sue and Anita (pseudonyms). Both participants were New Zealand-trained teachers and both had Masters degrees. Each had experience teaching EAL overseas in more than one continent. Within New Zealand they had both taught in more than one secondary school in mainstream classes, one in the ‘Subject X’ Learning Area and one in teaching English and Languages. Both were relatively new to EAL teaching in New Zealand secondary schools. While they had an understanding of National Certificate in Educational Achievement (NCEA) from their earlier teaching experiences, they both had limited experience of EAL Unit Standards and little familiarity with the English Language Learning Progressions (MOE, 2008a).

In relation to curriculum experiences, there were also similarities. Both had experiences of curriculum design outside New Zealand secondary schools. Neither teacher had been involved in EAL teachers’ lobbying for recognition of EAL learning within the development of the New Zealand Curriculum (NZC). Neither had been teaching full-time or consistently in New Zealand secondary schools during the introduction of the NZC.

The two teachers were in effect beginning ‘from scratch’ in terms of curriculum design because they were both teaching classes that they had not taught previously. In the case of both teacher-participants, there was little direction passed on from teachers previously in the role. However in Term I, before the research began, both had attended a PLD workshop in which I outlined key
documents guiding curriculum decision-making. The guiding documents included the

- New Zealand Curriculum (NZC),
- English Language Learning Progressions (ELLP),
- English Language Intensive Programme (ELIP) and
- ESOL Unit Standards assessment matrix.

One significant difference was that Sue was a part-time assistant teacher new to her school (School A), while Anita was a Head of Department who had been an assistant teacher in her school (School B) for the previous year.

2.2.3 Time frame

Data collection from the teacher participants took place during Terms 3 and 4, the period for which I had ethical approval from the Educational Research Human Ethics Committee. Also the participants understood I would be using this data as part of my study. While my personal learning is influenced before and after, by the TLRI as well as ongoing reading and reflection, the data collection phase was restricted.

2.3 The PLD interruption

2.3.1 Interrelationship between my research and the participants’ teaching-as-inquiry

In the foreground of this action research I was exploring my own professional learning as a PLD facilitator. I was the main participant as I examined my own practice. As I analysed and tried to improve my work, I drew on the reflections of two teacher participants as they undertook cycles of the professional learning themselves, in the background. The interrelationship between the foreground and the background can be seen in Figure 1. It should be noted that while the teachers’ reflections were included in the research, the achievement of any of their participants was not reported in this study’s findings.
The process model I use in Figure 1 was based on four-step models such those used by Kemmis and McTaggart (1998), Ministry of Education (2007) and Stringer (2008). While such models are criticised in some action research literature for being too rigid, Burns (2010) suggests that they provide a convenient frame and that they do not need to be treated in lock-step ways. It is still possible to be recursive and flexible.

I used different terms to label my cycle of research and the teachers’ cycles of inquiry. I considered my cycle as ‘action research’ and the teachers’ cycles as ‘teaching-as-inquiry’. The dimensions of action research distinguishing it from teaching-as-inquiry included the use of methodologies and methods that were valued in the research community, the foundation of literature, the accessibility to peer review and expectation of published findings which could be applied elsewhere (Reid, 2004 p. 8). The teaching-as-inquiry that the teachers undertook nevertheless had some overlaps with action research (MOE, 2008b).
Other models that significantly influenced my foreground inquiry were the *Teacher inquiry and knowledge-building cycle to promote valued student outcomes* (Timperley et al., 2007) and *Ki te Aotūroa A chain of influence: ISTE learning to student outcomes* (MOE, 2008b, p. 15). Both models were mindful and inclusive of the facilitator of PLD as a participant and an agent in school practice inquiry. I used these models as I developed the work with the two teacher-participants in my capacity as a professional learning facilitator.

In Figure 2, Timperley et al. (2007, p. 7) illustrate two ‘black boxes’. In thinking about curriculum, I suggest that the top black box marks what happens between the intended and the taught curriculum. The black box at the bottom shows what happens between the taught and the learned curriculum. In this action research I focused on the top row of boxes. The black box in between the top left and the top right boxes represents the nexus between PLD facilitation and the outcomes for teacher-participants.

![Diagram](https://via.placeholder.com/150)

*Figure 2. The black boxes of teacher and student learning (Timperley et al., 2007, p. 7)*

To organise my ideas for this research, I have created two cycles of action research that have a loose relationship with the diagram in Figure 2. Cycle A of my action research refers to exploration of teacher understandings about curriculum (relates to the top right box of Figure 2). Cycle B focuses on my own facilitation practice (connected with the top left box of Figure 2). The black box in the top row represents key relationships between PLD and change in teachers’
thinking, approaches and practice. These relationships are my conclusions. In the background the teachers carried out their own inquiries, represented in the bottom row of boxes. Their inquiries informed my PLD practice. I have reworked Figure 2 (above) into Figure 3 (below), to illustrate the organisation of this action research.

**Focus of my action research**

![Diagram showing the organisation of the research](image)

**Focus of teacher inquiries**

![Diagram showing the focus and outcomes of teacher inquiries](image)

*Figure 3 Focus of my research (adapted from Timperley et al., 2007, p. 7)*

For each cycle of my action research I have a chapter that reviews the literature. In Cycle A there is a review of literature that stimulated my thinking about knowledge, curriculum and EAL teaching and learning (Chapter 3). It is followed by an analysis of the data relating to the teacher-participants’ shifts in thinking (Chapter 4) about EAL curriculum. In Cycle B, the literature about effective PLD facilitation is reviewed (Chapter 5), followed by a discussion about the relationship of the PLD with teachers’ shifts in approach (Chapter 6).

Table 1 (below) shows the organisation of this thesis, with the two interrelated cycles, both contributing to the findings that I draw in the concluding chapter.
Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation of Ideas in Cycles and Chapters</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Cycle A:</strong> Focus on teachers’ understandings of curriculum and EAL teaching and learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter 3:</strong> Lit Review about knowing and EAL curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter 7:</strong> Conclusions about the relationship between teachers’ shifting understandings and effective PLD</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I have chosen Earl’s (2010) term of PLD ‘interruption’ to describe what might more commonly be called a PLD ‘intervention’. Here I develop the definition of interruption given in Chapter 1, Section 1.5. If intervention has a meaning associated with external forces fixing a disorder, then the emphasis is on the perpetrator of the action, in this case, the PLD facilitator. In such an intervention the PLD facilitator might provide activities which he or she hopes teachers will replicate. Earl suggests that an intervention may not have a lasting impact and may inadvertently reinforce teachers’ existing ways of teaching. In Earl’s view of interruption, there is an expectation that the teachers will engage in examining evidence and thinking through their own practice in some depth. Data is not divorced from challenging learning conversations. Facilitation as interruption also challenges facilitators out of a “culture of niceness” (Earl, 2010). Earl and Timperley (2008) place emphasis on the interrelationships between “relevant evidence”, “relationships of respect and challenge” and an “inquiry habit of mind” (p. 3). So interruptions, cycles of inquiry and relationships are embedded together.

2.3.2 Interweaving of events

Within the PLD interruptions that constitute the action in this research, there was an interweaving of PLD interactions between myself and the teacher-participants. Whether these interactions were one-to-one or in a group, they could all be categorised as ‘events’, as described by Woods (2003) in his framework for exploring the relationship between knowledge/beliefs and actions. Events have certain conventions. They have bounded time, specific participants, discourses, roles and props. However events, according to Woods,
can be both productive (taking actions) and receptive (interpreting actions). For example, an observation of a teacher teaching a class (an action) is an event and additionally a discussion afterwards is an event (a reflection). Events of this definition form a useful unit for analysing the teachers’ and my decision-making during this action research.

‘Events’ as described by Woods (2003), are dynamic. One element of their dynamism is that they could be seen on a continuum of length. A complete course could be seen as an event, but so could periods within that, such as a lesson, or the planning of a lesson. Within a lesson, a conversation could be seen as an event, or a participant’s reflection on a part of an interaction can be seen as an event. Events could also be understood on a different plane. They could be seen as both productive and receptive. On this continuum, the researcher could be the actor and the teacher-participants could be the receivers. At other times, they might be the actors and the researcher could be the observer or listener. These intersecting, sliding scales of description enable a dynamic and flexible view of data sources.

Events that occurred during the six month timeframe of this action research included: workshop situations, interactions in the teachers’ classrooms, small group and one-to-one interviews. A conference presentation that the participants and I contributed to is also regarded as an event. Less formal, unplanned events, such as entries in reflective journals, and conversations after more formal events, have the potential to be regarded as events.

In order to manage my workload (see Table 2) I was able to meet the needs of a wider group of teachers at the same time, by running some responsive workshop (RW) events that were triggered by the needs identified by the teacher-participants. Additionally, some of the work that I did with the teacher-participants was created in-school (IS). Whether my meetings with teachers were one-to-one or in a group, whether they were part of a series or a single purpose event, whether they were formally planned or an informal interaction, they could all be categorised as events. In the events, the different foci interrelated and overlapped with each other through the time sequence. The foci evolved from identifying the teachers’ learning needs in relation to their students’ needs.
Table 2

**PLD Series of Events Prior to and During the Action Research**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Main PLD 'events' for each participant</th>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
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<td>Main PLD 'events' for each participant</td>
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<td>Anita</td>
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<td>Prior to research</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 Mar</td>
<td>RW</td>
<td>New to EAL role – one off workshop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 Apr</td>
<td>RW</td>
<td>NZC/ELLP/model units of work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Various</td>
<td>IS</td>
<td>School visits, 1:1 conversations, observations, modelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 May</td>
<td>RW</td>
<td>Teaching-as-inquiry PLG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 Apr</td>
<td>IS</td>
<td>Pasifika Network Learning Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 June</td>
<td>RW</td>
<td>Teaching-as-inquiry PLG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 June</td>
<td>IS</td>
<td>Pasifika Network Learning Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Period of research</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>IS</td>
<td>Initial interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 July</td>
<td>RW</td>
<td>NZC/ELLP/model units of work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 July</td>
<td>IS</td>
<td>Initial assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Aug</td>
<td>RW</td>
<td>Meeting Literacy Learning Needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Aug, Aug visits</td>
<td>IS</td>
<td>Pasifika Network Learning Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Sept</td>
<td>RW</td>
<td>Teaching-as-inquiry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Sept</td>
<td>IS</td>
<td>ESOL units standards review workshop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Oct</td>
<td>IS</td>
<td>Conference presentation of Teaching-as-inquiry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Oct</td>
<td>IS</td>
<td>Conference presentation of Teaching-as-inquiry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Oct</td>
<td>IS</td>
<td>Pasifika Network Learning Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct visits</td>
<td>IS</td>
<td>Teaching-as-inquiry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov</td>
<td>IS</td>
<td>Pasifika Network Learning Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov</td>
<td>IS</td>
<td>Final interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Final interview</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The focus of the events in the two schools was similar. The multiple shadings of Table 2 show this, reflecting the fact that in many ways, the teachers had identified needs in common. However, as the two teachers developed inquiries of their own, their foci developed quite differently. Sue, the teacher from School A, and Anita, the HOD from School B, both drew on ideas from the professional learning opportunities as they developed their own inquiries. The teaching-as-inquiry focus for Sue was on ways to help ELLs in her EAL class to develop their writing. Sue decided to evaluate the impact of her teaching on five focus students. She used the *English Language Learning Progressions* (ELLP) to describe the students’ English skills and identify needs. Anita, from School B, also used ELLP but her inquiry focus was on her own leadership; on helping students, EAL teachers, mainstream teachers, HODs and Senior Management, parents, guardians and agents to understand about ELLs’ strengths and needs in developing English language.

It is consistent with the research methodology that the interruption does not begin and end at time points dictated by the research. In spite of this organic nature of action research (Stake, 1995), it is important to “have an organised yet open mind” (p. 25). The data collection period of June to November for which ethical clearance shown in Table 2 gave some structure. Although the collection of field texts occurred at irregular intervals within overlapping series of events, the cycle structure also provided a framing that helped the research remain organised but not restricted.

### 2.4 Data collection and processes

#### 2.4.1 Data Sources

It can be seen, in reference to Table 3 that my data collection occurred at all stages of the action research/inquiry process. I used and developed headings from the *Teacher inquiry and knowledge-building cycle to promote valued student outcomes* diagram (Timperley et al., 2007, inside front cover) to create an Action Research Data Framework (Table 3) to relate the organisation of the inquiry events to the data collection. Thus, the data collection methods occurred “in the service of [the] particular needs and purposes” (Clough and Nutbrown, 2002, p. 27) of my research. The methods of data collection in relation to stages in the inquiry cycles are outlined in Table 3.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inquiry process and reflection</th>
<th>Teaching and inquiry events</th>
<th>Data collection strategies</th>
<th>Field texts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What are the learning needs of the teachers?</td>
<td>Meetings within school In-class</td>
<td>Conducting semi-structured interviews Conducting unstructured recorded conversations between teachers and myself Observing teaching</td>
<td>Recorded and transcribed interviews Notes on observations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening to interviews Quiet reflective times in the library</td>
<td>Writing in reflective journal</td>
<td>Reflective journal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designing and engaging in learning experiences to address my inquiry</td>
<td>Teaching Conversing Preparing teaching Reflecting on teaching</td>
<td>Examining documents Viewing video and stimulating reflection Writing in reflective journal Conducting unstructured recorded conversations between teachers and myself</td>
<td>Documents Recorded and transcribed interviews Reflective journal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How has my practice changed as a result of my inquiry?</td>
<td>Teaching Conversing Preparing teaching Reflecting on teaching</td>
<td>Writing in reflective journal Examining documents Conducting and analysing semi-structured interviews</td>
<td>Reflective journal Documents Recorded and transcribed interviews</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The term ‘field texts’ is used to describe the specific instruments, rather than the word ‘tools’, which implies the collection of stored artifacts. A recorded interview is an example of one of my field texts. Different types of data are reflected in the different field texts.

‘Strategies’ are defined as “a subset of methods and usually focus on a specific process” (Mutch, 2005, p. 113). The choice of the word ‘strategies’ was deliberate in relation to action research methodology. The word ‘strategies’ implies the active role of data collection. My choice of strategies was linked to particular phases and their related purposes within inquiry cycles. In my action research I
used strategies to collect data in an on-going responsive process, not always waiting until the end of the interruption to analyse it.

As it was my development that is in the foreground of this research, I maintained the focus on collecting evidence about my own developing ideas. In the background, the teachers were reflecting from their own inquiries in a similar way. The teachers’ reflection on the evidence that they collected about themselves was relevant to this research in that it informed my learning about my work as a PLD facilitator.

**Semi-structured interviews**

At the beginning of the research I undertook in-depth semi-structured interviews with both participants. I chose this method because in the TLRI project I found the interviews provided a richer source of data than written responses from participants. The interviews were voice-recorded and later transcribed. With both teachers, I used similar questions, with the flexibility to probe further and to be responsive to the participants.

The questions were framed under the following headings:
- Part A – Participants’ stories
- Part B – Thinking about a class
- Part C – Professional learning

The guiding questions can be seen in Appendix III. Part A was designed to warm up the teachers and to enable me to develop an understanding of what the participants brought to their present teaching situation. I developed the questions for Part B to bring their current thinking into the context of a class that they would be teaching through the period of the research. Part C was to enable me to reflect on their prior experiences of professional development, to see if I could then learn what might be suitable responses on my part.

At the end of the period, I again conducted and recorded in-depth semi-structured interviews with both participants. The final interviews repeated some of the initial interview questions and also had some different questions. The interviews were all transcribed.

**Video-stimulated recall and learning conversations**

One of the reasons that the video-stimulated recall was used was that it arose out of Sue’s own inquiry into her teaching. Sue initiated filming herself teaching and was keen to view and discuss the footage with me. Another reason for video-stimulated recall was that I was using Earl’s (2010) idea “to use collaborative inquiry to ensure that participants make their tacit knowledge explicit in relation to their professional learning focus and think together to interrupt their ideas”
While I only used video-stimulated recall with one participant, I recorded and transcribed learning conversations with both teachers.

**Written documentation**
Field texts that I could access as evidence of teachers ideas included teaching-as-inquiry cycles that were written up by both participants. Sue developed several as she planned her teaching in response to the students’ identified needs. Examples of Sue’s inquiry cycles are included along with other documentation in her PowerPoint presentation for a conference that can be seen in Appendix I. An extract from Anita’s conference presentation documentation is in Appendix IV. From Anita’s I was also able to access the minutes of the Pasifika Professional Learning Group (PLG). An example from one of my own inquiry cycles can be seen in Appendix II.

**Reflective Journal**
It is suggest that “reflective writing plays an instrumental role beyond mere reflection” (Brown and Jones, 2001, p. 5). As the principal participant, my Reflective Journal has a central place in the data collection as I have reflected on interactions and observations. It has also been a place for planning in response to those reflections. Examples of entries include diagrams of inquiry cycles that I have drawn up in response to ideas that have sprung from interactions with the teacher participants. Lincoln and Guba (1985, p. 219, p. 301) suggest that prolonged engagement in the field is one way of developing the data’s credibility. As my Reflective Journal has been a constant throughout the research process, it provides evidence of my development over the research period. Examples from my Reflective Journal can be seen, showing development of ideas in Figures 4 and Figure 5.
2.4.2 Data Analysis

In quantitative research, the data collection and analysis occur simultaneously. Earl (2005) suggests that the opportunity to look at data in an on-going manner...

Figure 4. Excerpt from my Reflective Journal

Figure 5. Excerpt from my Reflective Journal

I was surprised in the interview about describing curriculum. She said something like "I've got the curriculum sorted" and immediately described unit standards as if they were the curriculum. Why was I surprised? Because I had done some PD with her already this year (2 workshops) where I'd gone over the big ideas but that hadn't presumably sunk in much.

Why has she picked up on some of my ideas esp those related to assessment, and not on the ideas about curriculum?
provides opportunities to look at growth in a more powerful way than using pre- and post-analysis. By interweaving data collection and analysis in an on-going way, I came to know what to focus on in a deeper way and was able to search further in interviews and to pursue leads and hunches as they occurred. I was taken with Somekh’s (2006) idea that “action researchers are always in the position of taking decisions on the basis of ‘prehension’ [author’s word] rather than apprehension of the situation” (p. 14). In terms of analysing ‘events’ through this interweaving work, Earl’s notion of using “time points” sits comfortably. She suggests that researchers/teachers might use ‘time-points’ to enable an “interrupted time series analysis” (p. 15). This means that one can discuss the data frequently and in relation to individuals’ learning pathways, rather than waiting for end points.

Nevertheless, there is a stage in the action research process when one will want to summarise the collected data so that the findings can be represented in a manner which has an air of reliability, accuracy and dependability (Mills, 2003). This thesis represents a summary point. The PLD is on-going but the research reported here represents a ‘time point’ within the broader PLD time frame.

2.4.3 Process of analysing the data

The systematic collection, processing and interpretation of data enabled me to search for meaning in the data and to attempt to answer “So what?” and to determine what I wanted to recognise as worth telling an audience and celebrating. As I again looked at videos and documents, read transcripts of interviews and my own Reflective Journal and questioned the voices in the research, I drew on my literature study in an attempt to systematically inform my understanding outside my normal vision (Clough & Nutbrown 2002).

Analysing data can be the most difficult aspect of qualitative research (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998; Mutch, 2005) as it requires the researcher to employ a process of inductive reasoning, thinking and theorising rather than following a mechanical or technical process. However, the task can become manageable by following a process for analysing qualitative data such as that described by Mutch (2005): browsing, highlighting, coding, grouping and labelling, developing themes and categories, checking for consistency and resonance, selecting examples and report findings (p. 131). Mutch suggests that there are a number of ways of analysing qualitative data and exemplifies how one form of analysis can be used in conjunction with another to probe the data (p. 178). Through linking thematic, discourse and semiotic patterns with the theories underpinning the topic of the research, concepts can emerge to be reported in the findings (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Coffey & Atkinson, 1996).
In this qualitative research, the data analysis began with browsing to establish a familiarity with the various recorded events and documents. The data was organised. The main recorded items of data that had been transcribed were identified according to participants (Anita, Sue, self), the event (interview, conversation, presentation) and the period within the research in which they were collected (initial, mid, final). The initial browsing established both a familiarity with the data and a way of organising it. Then events were read, reread, listened to and coded so that I, as the researcher, came to know them intimately.

As a way of grouping the data, the teacher-participants’ actions and voices were framed under the first two sub-questions of the research:

- How do participating teachers understand EAL teaching and learning?
- How do they respond to a PLD interruption?

The other two sub-questions are addressed in the presentation of findings:

- How can PLD engage EAL teachers with ideas about curriculum, teaching and learning?
- How might the findings and reflections on this intervention inform my practice as a PLD facilitator?

Certain sets of teacher-participant data were identified as being particularly useful for framing the analysis. The initial and final interviews with both teacher-participants were chosen as the framing set of data to analyse. This was because these semi-structured interviews had been specifically designed to draw out the kinds of shifts in understanding that may or may not have occurred. The data from the mid-interruption period is used to probe further into the participants’ ideas and actions. It is also used subsequently to help throw light on the influence of PLD on the teacher-participants’ thinking and actions.

Within this framing, concepts were grouped and regrouped both electronically and physically. In labelling the data, I was looking for ideas that went together. I was mindful of the ideas that I had been exploring in the literature review. I also used it to guide the analysis of the specific sub-questions.

The process of writing was integral to this interpretive, qualitative analysis. It was partly through writing that my ideas became organised, thoughts clarified, relationships across the data exploring and the analysis deepened (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996; Bogdan & Biklen 2007). Writing was therefore not merely the recording of the results. It was integral to the creation of the results.

Themes emerged and were progressively refined as meaning was sought through interpretations. The themes became apparent through noticing the
repetitions and relationships between what was seen, heard and interpreted by myself and the teacher-participants in the different events, and as I related these thoughts and actions to theories that had been explored in the literature review. The themes were clarified through the process of writing.

I was mindful of contradictions as the teacher-participants explained their developing thoughts and actions within the complexity of their contexts. Where there were inconsistencies or contradictions, these have been explored and sometimes used to modify or amplify interpretations. Thus, the reliability of the explanations was strengthened. Quotations from the teacher-participants were used to exemplify the understandings and explanations from the thematic analysis. In displaying the qualitative data for this research I aimed for a richness of description (Mutch, 2007) so have chosen to include selected examples of the participants’ voices to highlight the ideas using the analytical framework and sitting under the headings of the sub-questions.

Through the process of identifying the particular patterns, categories and themes within the data it was possible to make the reflections “relevant and reasonable” (Robinson and Lai, 2006, p. 61). The layering of the data that was collected, using multiple sources across many events within the five month period, makes it possible for others to search my analysis and reflections for something that might be useful in other contexts (Taylor & Bogdan 1998).

The shifts in teacher-participants thinking and actions are analysed in Chapter 4 as part of Cycle A. Findings of how the PLD supports engagement and shifts in teachers’ understandings and practice for EAL teaching and learning are reported in Chapter 5 as part of Cycle B.

2.5 Ethical Considerations

The issues relating to research process and reporting (including anonymity, confidentiality and informed consent) were addressed in an application to the University of Canterbury, College of Education Ethics Committee. Ethical approval has been given by the University of Canterbury, College of Education Ethics Committee for this thesis research.

2.5.1 Consent, participation, confidentiality and anonymity

Participation was voluntary and there was a right to withdraw at any point in the process. Steps were taken to ensure confidentiality of the teacher-participants, their students and their schools. Written informed consent was given by the teachers, their principals and Board of Trustees. The protocols of the Ethics Committee were followed in relation to the storage of data. Anonymity was
pursued by the creation of pseudonyms for the participants. The participants’ schools and the location of their schools were not mentioned in the reporting of findings. I was mindful that care must be taken with relationships and with the data from teachers. As data was collected and collated, it was respected in the same way that the relationships with the participants were treated with care.

2.6.2 Dilemmas in relation to positionality

There were ethical dilemmas particular to this research project. Possible ethical considerations in this action research are associated with power relationships, positionality and representation (Bridges, 2001; Harrison, MacGibbon, & Morton, 2001; McLeod, 2003). There is a power relationship between facilitators and teachers. My interpretation and re-presentation of the teachers’ reflections are filtered through my personal and professional experiences as a facilitator. There are potential issues associated with this. However, by being a participant myself, and sharing the process with the teachers, there is potential for this research to be viewed as collaborative and empowering for participants and researcher. By developing what Harrison et al. (2001) call “reciprocity”, I hoped to be able to empower teachers as well as help create an emancipation.

There is a similar power relationship between teachers and their students. It was hoped that the teachers’ engagement and collaboration with students in the reflective process about their learning would have positive outcomes on students’ learning. Data from the students was not gathered as part of this research. I collected reflections from the teachers about the impact they thought their teaching had on their students. Consent from the students was therefore not required.

Positionality is an important insider-outsider consideration. Even as I positioned myself as a co-constructor on the premise that we were all learners and we could all learn and teach more effectively, I was never in exactly the same position as teacher participants. What is more, our positions changed during the course of the research. It was necessary to recognise and discuss this factor. On reflection, the inclusion of middle leaders in the ethics and consent process would have been helpful in making sure that their positionality was recognised.

Representation of the truth is an issue for me as I have moved between being an insider and an outsider. From a post-modern perspective, there are many truths. I needed to represent the findings of the other participants as they described them, as well as describing what I found. I needed to understand that from different perspectives, everything is subjective.
In a professional learning context there is an ethical issue in the need for balance between different and potentially conflicting principles or motivations. I needed to balance a care for participants when I was also intending to challenge ideas and potentially discomfort thinking. The notion of care, then, in the context of educational action research, is juxtaposed with the idea of challenge. In my role as a professional developer and a researcher I needed to negotiate my way as I worked with teachers in their schools.

In order to address the power imbalance of positionality, the representation of truth and the relationship between care and challenge, I undertook several considered actions. When observing in a class I explained to the teacher that I would act like a teacher aide, helping in the class, rather than taking a distanced stance as an outsider. The power was then in the teacher’s role and we would have conversations after the class, analysing the lesson from insider perspectives. Our learning conversations were carefully constructed using protocols suggested by Robinson and Lai (2006) so that there was both care and challenge in the framing. A deliberate way to ensure that I represented the participants as truthfully as possible was to co-present our work at a conference. Our colloquium presentation was divided into equal parts so that their stories were as long as my introduction. The participant who was unable to attend, made her own PowerPoint and guided me in explaining how she wanted her inquiries to be portrayed. Another action with ethics was to include senior staff in my email communications, making sure school relationships were respected.

2.6 Tying the threads together

The methodology of this qualitative action research was informed by social constructionist, social justice and ‘post’ theories. The methodology both informed and was aligned with the theoretical underpinnings of ideas that I explored in the reviews of literature for Cycle A (knowing, curriculum and EAL) and Cycle B (PLD). The action research, observing my own practice while I was creating and enacting it, then sat comfortably with the ideas and processes that I was exploring. The characteristics of the methodology, of being open, communicative, interpretive and situated in the natural contexts of schools enabled me to look closely at myself as I interacted with two teachers in their own settings. Engaging the teachers in inquiring into their own practice as I worked with them was supported by the pragmatic, embedded nature of action research, enabling us all to feed new ideas directly into our practice. The organisation of PLD, with interwoven PLD events in different settings over six months, enabled data collection that contributed to both the PLD and my research. The semi-structured interviews, learning conversations, observations
and video-stimulated recall provided data that informed my PLD at the time and the subsequent analysis, as I reflected on the PLD for this research.

The close relationship between my PLD facilitation and the research meant that I needed to be careful with potential ethical issues and power imbalances. Pursuing the required ethics and consent processes for this research ensured that the school management and participants were informed about and consented to the research. Features of my chosen methodology enabled the teacher-participants to have some control of their own learning, shared ownership of analysis, joint presentation and respectful relationships while maintaining the challenge that was inherent in the purposes of the PLD.
Chapter 3 Review of literature

3.1 Introduction to the chapter

My purpose in Chapter 3 is to review literature to inform my understandings about knowledge and knowing, curriculum and EAL teaching and learning. The review then provides a platform of ideas for the examination of teachers’ thoughts and actions as described in Chapter 4.

In this chapter, I begin Cycle A by looking first at ideas about knowledge and knowing, starting with broad ideas that apply to education in general. I then look at changing ways of knowing that are of interest to the field of EAL teaching and learning. Next, I draw on these ideas about knowing to explore conceptualisations of curriculum, and *The New Zealand Curriculum* (NZC) (2007) in particular, as they pertain to EAL teaching and learning.

In this chapter I use a range of terms relating to epistemological understandings (about knowledge and knowing) that will be condensed under the distinctions of ‘realist’ and ‘relativist’ in subsequent chapters. The collective terms come from Clegg and Bailey (2008) and are cited in Abbiss and Quinlivan (2011). Realism is described by Clegg and Bailey as philosophical views that “things and events exist: that is they have being independently of the knowing subject” (p. 1356). Relativism is described by Clegg and Bailey as a “doctrine that truth or morality is relative to situations and not absolute or universal” (p. 1371). I use a range of terms in this chapter because I want to represent nuances of the ideas and the different routes of development through which they have emerged. It is important to note that the terms that I group in Table 4 represent positions on a continuum rather than two separate positions, but they are generally grouped under realism and relativism.
3.1.1 Theories of knowledge and knowing

In this section I highlight theories that have resonated with me and influenced my thinking about knowledge, knowing and curriculum. I place emphasis on theoretical explorations because they help me to explain why things happen as they do (Goetz & LeCompte, 1993). By exploring different theories I may be able to see "different ways of seeing as existing in a creative tension, presenting different views and understandings but complementary in their illumination of different aspects of learning experience" (Abbiss, 2012, p75). Additionally, the focus on theories helps me to be critically reflective. Brookfield (1995) suggests that reading about theories enables us to identify our practice, break the cycle of familiarity, engage ourselves in talking to ourselves or others about ideas and to locate our practice in a social context. To further justify my interest in underpinning theories, I draw on EAL academic Cummins (2000), who values a theoretical stance because of the political sway that theories wield. He suggests an important relationship between theory and practice: “theory [author’s emphasis] integrates observations and practice (‘facts’) [author’s punctuation] into coherent perspectives and, through dialogue, feeds these perspectives back into practice and from practice back into theory” (p. 2.). So as I explore ideas about knowledge, knowing and curriculum in relation to EAL teaching and learning, I make connection with some theoretical influences to understand how and why teachers and I think and act in complex and sometimes conflicting ways. I also use my developing understandings to help me reflect on my practice and to influence what I might do in the future.

The merging and overlapping theories that influence this research reflect relativist ideas in that they all resist notions of a single truth and reflect and contribute to educational ideas that acknowledge contextuality and diversity. They all acknowledge an interest in language and the importance of language in...
shaping understanding (Abbiss, 2012). They resist notions that are sometimes identified as ‘industrial-age’ or one-size-fits-all (Claxton, 2008; Gilbert, 2005).

Assumptions about knowledge and knowing, or epistemology, impact on how people in all layers of education view curriculum, teaching and learning. The range of people who view curriculum, teaching and learning includes researchers, politicians, curriculum developers, school leaders, teachers, communities, families and students. As a PLD facilitator involved in the interface between policy and implementation, I too bring assumptions about knowledge and knowing that will have a considerable impact on my work with teachers and curriculum. As I gain more understanding about epistemology through engaging with the literature and with teachers, I am able to reflect on the influence of assumptions about knowledge as I undertake this research. I am able to see how these ideas have implications for our understandings of curriculum and the way in which facilitators facilitate PLD and teachers teach EAL. The literature review that is part of Cycle A reflects my developing understanding about knowledge.

3.2 Understanding knowledge and knowing

Within this section some broad ideas about knowledge and knowing are explored. Some theoretical perspectives are used to look at how knowledge is influenced by social forces. Then some ways of defining knowledge are examined. While it is understood that knowledge is complex, some binary constructs are explored to focus attention on different interpretations. Relatively commonly understood constructs of knowledge are critiqued from a perspective that may have an influence on EAL teaching and learning. In the final section, I describe some ideas in the EAL teaching and learning field emerging from more recent theories about knowledge and knowing. As with the general exploration of knowledge and knowing, I concentrate on these newer ways of knowing in EAL teaching and learning because of their resonance with my questions and methodology. Finally, I describe how some of the key EAL theorists themselves have developed their ideas.

3.2.1 Social locatedness of knowledge

In looking at educational literature, it can be seen that ideas about knowledge are historically, socially and culturally situated. Societies and individuals all have different histories of experience. By examining our knowledge through socio-cultural and social-constructionist lenses we are able to see differences and take a critical stance towards knowledge (Abbiss, 2012, Gilbert, 2005, Burr 2003). Such researchers suggest that educators are influenced by, and sustain, a range of structures relating to knowledge, many of which we may be unaware. The understandings about knowledge that sit behind educators’ decisions may be
explicit but are often implicit (Shaver, 1992). It is also useful to be reminded that knowledge is a human construct, that our reality is constructed by people in social groups, shaped by language conventions and other social processes (Ortega, 2009). In thinking about constructs of knowledge in EAL teaching and learning, it is useful to be mindful of explicit and implicit historical, social and cultural influences.

It is useful to further consider how constructions of knowledge are bound up with power relations. Individuals participate within social orders and structural constraints which reproduce forms of power and dominance (Abbiss, 2012; Bourdieu, 2000; Cicourel, 1993; Lahire, 2003). Within the school setting, curriculum developers, teachers, communities, families and students are potentially all social agents. However, there is variance in the agency of different groups in having a say in what knowledge is recognised. For example, conceptualisations of knowledge about English language learning have been predominantly presented from a mono-lingual point of view, even though the learners are operating in bilingual contexts (Garcia, 2009a). So in looking at curriculum for ELLs, it is pertinent to be mindful of power relations within constructions of knowledge.

Knowledge (what is seen to count as knowledge and who is seen to have this knowledge) is influenced by interrelated cultural, political, economic and linguistic inequalities. Social justice theories remind us of the influence of social structures, including institutional organisation and social constructs such as culture. Social justice theories therefore are important in examining EAL teaching and learning. Relatively recent developments in social justice theory, labelled as ‘grounded social justice theory’, focus firstly on social injustice. Ethnocentrism, for example, is identified as a great obstacle to diversity. Social injustice is dealt with from the perspective of the oppressed (Tyson & Park, 2008). Looking at bilingual knowledge from a bilingual point of view, linguistic inequalities may lead to advocacy for “linguistic human rights” (Garcia, 2009a; Skutnabb-Kangas, 2009). In an example, Lin and Martin (2005) site how English proficiency continues to be an unreached goal in many post-colonial contexts, but the existing educational system remains functional for those already advantaged, as well as for international commerce. Similarly, Skutnabb-Kangas et al. look at “linguistic neoimperialism” and whether English functions “as a lingua franca or a lingua frankensteinia” (2009, p. 328). In other words, English can be seen as a means to economic success and from another perspective as a destructive influence on linguistic diversity or indigenous power. Cummins and Early (2011) discuss “the implicit devaluation of students’ abilities, languages, cultures and identities where students’ preferred ways of meaning making and home languages are ignored or treated with ‘benign neglect’” (p. 4). It is
worthwhile to consider whether, within New Zealand schools, students’ bilingual or multilingual capabilities are subject to this ‘benign neglect’, and that EAL is taught without due consideration of the injustice of ignoring home languages in favour of the ‘neoimperial’ power of English. Further, it would seem worthwhile to consider how some languages have come to be valued in schools for their traditional, western education connections, or their economic benefits.

3.2.2 Constructs of knowledge and knowing

The choice of the term knowledge and knowing is deliberate because in English we do not have a single word that captures what I want to discuss. It is an attempt to indicate that ‘knowledge’ itself does not seem to describe the depth, breadth and involvement that ‘knowing’ involves. Māori words may encapsulate the relationship between knowledge and knowing better. The verb ‘ako’ explains a reciprocity involving both teaching and learning and the noun ‘wānanga’ possibly includes a sense of wisdom. At times, I want the word ‘knowledge’ to incorporate all of these ideas.

Understandings about knowledge and knowing are not clear-cut. Individuals and institutions will express multiple kinds of knowledge and knowing. There are many layers of knowledge according to second language acquisition researcher, Woods (2003). He has constructed a term “BAK”, in which he describes “beliefs, assumptions and knowledge” on a cline, ranging from more publicly-accepted, demonstrable knowledge to more idiosyncratic, subjective, identity-related beliefs. He emphasises that our BAKs are dynamic, interconnected and “fuzzy” (p. 205).

Given, then, that knowledge is not clear-cut, it is useful, to explore a number of dimensions of knowledge, relating to the nature of knowledge and the process of knowing. Hofer (2004) suggests the following dimensions: what people consider knowledge is; how certain they think knowledge is; how simple they understand knowledge to be; and their relative views on sources and the authority of knowledge. Within each of these dimensions, there are ranges of understanding. For example, in relation to the source or authority of knowledge, Hofer suggests at one end of a spectrum, authority is seen as external, so textbooks and national exams would be accepted as having an external authority. Professional development facilitators would be seen as expert advisers. At the other end of the spectrum, Hofer suggests that authority is understood as internal and actively constructed in interaction with others, within the context. There would be self-generation of knowledge from multiple and changing sources. So teachers and students might source learning material, assessment might occur within the context of learning and professional learning would be seen as facilitated or co-constructed.
While being mindful of the complexity of knowledge, it seems useful to explore the binary classifications that a number of researchers have used to focus on different realist and relativist conceptualisations of knowledge, such as 20th/21st Century knowledge, content/process, noun/verb and reproductive/performative. These binaries might be criticised for being overly simplistic but they are useful for highlighting differences or contrast in ways of understanding knowledge and knowing.

A number of educational theorists frame a dichotomy of 20th Century knowledge and 21st Century knowledge. They argue that teachers need to make changes at an epistemological level from the kinds of knowledge required by the industrial age of the 19th and 20th Centuries to the fast-changing information age of the 21st Century (Andreotti, 2010; Gilbert, 2005; Reid, 2006; Skutnabb-Kangas, 2009). Knowledge is understood to be much more partial, fluid and contingent than earlier perceived (Gilbert, 2005; Cope & Kalantis, 2005; Claxton, 2008). Other researchers resist this binary framing by century and describe the debate as one which has existed from the beginning of public education (Wells 1999, 2000; Gibbons 2002). I am also inclined to see the debate as a development of ideas through time rather than an absolute change in direction at the turn of the century.

To further explore binary views of knowledge, I draw on Shaver (1992) to define knowledge as being about both subject matter (content) and how people learn (process). I focus on these particular views because they reflect recent and ongoing debate about the nature of knowledge as either more or less static or generative and changeable. According to Shaver, a content orientation can be thought of as “epistemology as knowledge building” (p. 2), focusing on content development and the production of new ideas and rejection of the old. A process orientation can be thought of as “epistemology as learning” (p. 2) or a focus on ways in which individuals acquire understandings.

I now expand the realist/relativist views to explore knowledge in terms of noun/verb and reproductive/performative constructs. From the realist view of teaching and learning, the ‘empty vessel’ is filled with knowledge. This transmission and reception view of teaching positions the teacher as the expert who ‘deposits’ knowledge in the minds of students (Friere, 1970; Gibbons, 2009). At the other end of the spectrum is the relativist construct of knowledge. Gilbert (2005), presents the idea of regarding “knowledge as a verb” rather than “knowledge as a noun” (p. 57). Gilbert challenges us to change our ideas of knowledge to conceptualise knowledge as ‘performative’ or generative rather
than reproductive - something we put into action rather than something we get and store.

... knowledge only becomes 'Knowledge' when it is used to generate something new, something that can be then used to generate something else. Castells says that Knowledge is now something that causes things to happen: it is no longer stored [learned?] as 'stuff' that can be learned and stored away for future use. It is something that is produced collaboratively, by teams of people, something that 'happens' in the relationships between people. It is more like a 'process' than a product; it is constantly changing, evolving, 'flowing' and regenerating itself into new forms (Gilbert, 2005, p. 57).

Drawing on the ideas of Lyotard, Gilbert (2005) talks about acquiring 'old' knowledge, not to add to it but to "pursue 'performativity': to apply it to new situations, to use it and replace it in the process of innovation" (p. 57). She explores the ways schools need to change to prepare students to participate in societies based on a different kind of knowledge and to support performativity in the application and use of knowledge. Gilbert's concept of performativity is different from that where performativity describes the acquisition of techniques and skills valued by markets. Her notion of performativity is more aligned with the development of personal autonomy and critical understandings.

Educationalists may appear to have a common call for change in understanding knowledge. However they have different ideas about why that change should happen and what that change should be. EAL theorist Cummins (2000) points to the socio-political context within which theoretical constructs are generated. He refers to the contradictory discourses in the discussion about the so-called 'knowledge society'. Andreotti (2010) suggests there are different motivations and visions within the call for reconceptualising knowledge. Influenced by theories that challenge taken-for-granted knowledge, Andreotti coins the term 'traditions of the post' in exploring post-structural, post-colonial and other related theories. She suggests a common interpretation of 'post' means 'after' and, in relation to education, she calls this interpretation “cognitive adaptation" (p. 6). ‘Cognitive adaptation’ is exemplified in the call for changing educational thinking in response to changing economic outcomes such as entrepreneurship, new consumer identities and exploration of new markets. There is generally push in society and by governments for students to be equipped for the workforce. Skills in creativity, adaptability and innovation can be seen as an economic drive (Hope & Stephenson, 2005). To Andreotti (2010), such a conception of knowledge represents “a more complex continuation of the '20th Century' ways of seeing things” (p. 9) and a continuation of 'post' thinking rather than a dramatically different way of thinking about knowledge and knowing.
Andreotti (2010) contends that by looking through a ‘traditions of the post’ lens, it is understood that there are many possible explanations about reality that can be created in different contexts. She suggests an alternative interpretation of ‘post’. Instead of ‘post’ meaning ‘after’, associated with ‘cognitive adaptation’, Andreotti suggests a meaning for ‘post’ as ‘questioning’. This questioning group of ideas she calls, “epistemological pluralism” (p. 8). Andreotti’s ‘epistemological pluralism’ is a vision that is influenced by indigenous, post-structural and post-colonial ideas. It calls for a decolonising of the imagination, the “pluralising” of future possibilities through the “pluralising” of knowledge (p. 7). She suggests teachers need to work in a number of ways that are different from those more commonly interpreted as 21st Century knowledge. Firstly, teachers need to actively shape change in society in a response to the violence of modernist universalities and colonialist influences. She additionally suggests teachers need to take on the role of cultural brokers in influencing change in culture for school students. Her third point about ‘epistemological pluralism’ is that we need to equip students to engage critically, to interact ethically, to analyse and to take responsibility for choices. The focus of “epistemological pluralism” (p. 9) in education is to create a diverse society supporting more equitably negotiated and sustainable futures (Andreotti, 2010), reflecting social justice concerns.

There are implications from ‘epistemological pluralism’ in thinking about teaching ELLs. We are reminded about the changing profile of students by the OECD (2006). Thus, in response to the increasingly diverse student populations we should perhaps be looking at diverse knowledges and ways of knowing. In thinking about teaching bilingual and multilingual ELLs, educationalists could reconceptualise the way we teach language. Instead of teaching about one language with an intention to develop native-speaker perfection, we could be thinking about how students can develop languages differently for a range of purposes. We could reconceptualise what we understand as English and view it as Englishes. We could challenge accepted understandings that arise from a monolingual, English-dominant perspective and consider language learning from a multilingual perspective.

In terms of frameworks for discussing multi-cultural teaching, Sleeter (2005) refers to Banks (1993) in defining five types of knowledge that can be used for curriculum construction. One type of knowledge, ‘transformative knowledge’, can be singled out as stemming from critical traditions of scholarship. Bank’s definition of transformative academic knowledge appears to be akin to the epistemologically plural conceptualisations of knowledge described by Andreotti and includes
concepts, themes and explanations that challenge mainstream academic knowledge and that expand the historical and literary canon .... Transformative and mainstream academic knowledge are based on different epistemological assumptions about the nature of knowledge, about the influence of human interests and values on knowledge construction, and about the purpose of knowledge (p. 9).

Such an epistemologically plural/transformational view of knowledge is examined by Milne (2009), in Colouring in the white spaces: Cultural identity and learning in school and exemplified in a review of literature commissioned by the Curriculum, Teaching and Learning Group of the Ministry of Education (Gorinski & Fraser, 2006).

A significant, and growing body of research supports the call for an alternative paradigm, in which all partners in the education process: parents, children, schools, teachers, and communities are involved in the co-construction of shared knowledges. Proponents of an alternative paradigm (Airini, 1998; Bishop, 2003; Podmore and Sauvao, 2003), propose a bicultural/multicultural perspective, which includes an equity pedagogy within an holistic approach that supports learners physically, emotionally, spiritually and communally. An integral part of such a perspective is support for first language maintenance, bilingualism and biliteracy (Gorinski & Fraser, 2006, p. 1).

In relation to EAL, these epistemologically plural ways of looking at knowledge encourage examination of the tacit assumptions of how English language is taught and should be learnt. Through such lenses, EAL can be understood as an extremely complex interplay between tacit and explicit assumptions of teachers and learners. Post-structural ideas suggest the notion that learning a language is “never just about language ... it is about succeeding in attaining material, symbolic and affective returns ... and it is also about being considered by others as worthy social beings” (Ortega, 2009). This complexity is further described as “the way in which people of different or mixed backgrounds use, play with and negotiate identities through language” (Makoni & Pennycook, 2012, p.449 cited in May, 2014, p. 2). In conjunction with this view that language learning is complex, there is a ‘turn’ towards considering multilingualism for a ‘super-diverse’, globalised world. However, it is suggested that the EAL teaching industry is lagging behind in grappling with these views of complexity, identity through language and multilingualism. (May, 2014, p. 2).

So, depending on the range of theoretical influences and contexts, conceptualisations of knowledge become contestable. Given this consideration of the complexity and contestability of knowledge in a period of change, it is not
surprising that there appears to be conflict in understandings about knowledge and learning in the EAL field.

### 3.2.3 Knowing and learning in the EAL field

A characteristic of the EAL field of study is that it is influenced by the thinking about knowledge in a range of disciplines including but not exclusively psychology, sociology, anthropology and applied linguistics (Walqui & van Lier, 2010). Senior (2006), points to a “pedagogic eclecticism” (p. 141). The field has always been “porous” and “interdisciplinary” according to Ortega (2009, p. 7). However, Cummins (2000) points to interrelationships as being deliberately hybrid.

Some consider that there has been a radical change in thinking about knowledge in relation to EAL teaching. A “social turn” (Block 2003 cited in Ortega 2009, p. 216), a “discursive turn” (Walqui & van Lier, 2010) occurred in EAL research in the mid-1990s and a “multilingual turn” has been discussed more recently (May, 2014, p 2). These shifts in thinking under the influence of social sciences and other human sciences, were led by researchers such as Hall, 1993; van Lier, 1994; Block, 1996; Lantolf, 1996; Firth and Wagner, 1997, as cited in Ortega. The social turn of the last twenty years switched focus from positivist theories and consequent inclination to focus research into teaching and learning language on linguistic and cognitive aspects. There has been a turning towards research that understands EAL as participatory and collaborative, as dialogic, devolving agency to the learner, locally-situated and socially mediated (Pennycook, 2001, Norton & Toohey, 2004; Thornbury, 2009). The discursive turn investigates language as an instrument of power (Strain, 1997). Prasad (2005) encapsulates these associated turns in describing a shift from the idea that “language describes reality” to the notion that “language creates reality” again linking to the association of ‘knowledge as a noun’ and ‘knowledge as a verb’. Pedagogies associated with the social turn are critical of “top-down, one-size- fits-all solutions” (Thornbury, 2009, p. 1). They are critical of the way methods have often been prescriptive, articulating “positivist, progressivist and patriarchal understandings of teaching (Pennycook, 1989, p. 589) . The literature suggests that methods are often inscribed with power relations and that teaching methods are not disinterested. The methods often impose dominant values of Western cultures on students who frequently are not of those cultures.

A survey of literature reveals several principles and theories about what constitutes valuable teaching and learning of EAL, as a means of knowing in language learning contexts. The principles of success proposed by Walqui & van Lier, 2010 rise from their idea that the elaboration of theory into carefully thought-through principles provides the foundation of informed practice.
Theories from sociolinguistics, cognitive psychology and the socio-cultural paradigm inform their principles. From sociolinguistics they suggest that “language is primarily social” (p. 4). From cognitive psychology they draw on the extensive research about the nature of learning, particularly in relation to ideas about prior knowledge, connecting ideas and metacognition (Bransford, Brown & Cocking, 2000). The sociocultural theories of Vygotsky (1962) and more recently, Lantolf & Thorne (2006) and Rogoff (1995) provide the following tenets for understanding effective teaching and learning:

- Development follows learning (therefore teaching precedes development).
- Participation in activity is central in the development of knowledge.
- Participation in activity progresses from apprenticeship to appropriation, or from the social to the individual plane.
- Learning can be observed as changes in participation over time.

Walqui & van Lier (2010, p. 6)

Transformative pedagogy within the EAL field, has recently been pioneered by Cummins. This is described as “using critical inquiry to enable students to relate curriculum content to their individual and collective experience and to analyse broader social issues relevant to their lives... It will strive to develop a critical Literacy.” (Cummins, 2000, p. 90). He suggests that the co-construction of interactions that feed the growth of students’ academic language proficiency is the most effective way for teachers and students to challenge coercive relations of power. Other ESOL educationalists have elaborated on the idea of transformative pedagogy. Manyak (2004) uses the term “identities of competence” and Walqui and van Lier describe a “pedagogy of promise,” in which teaching “is oriented toward developing students’ future potential” (2010, p. 1). They argue a teacher’s job is to provide students with “learning opportunities so that they can address rigorous academic content in a language they have yet to master” (p. 1). Cummins claims that “schooling that focuses on transformative pedagogy and student and teacher empowerment frequently reverses the pattern of underachievement in dramatic ways” (p. 109).

3.2.4 Reworking understandings about knowledge and knowing in EAL

When researchers themselves have described how ideas have emerged and eclipsed their earlier ideas, possibilities of changing thinking about EAL can be seen. Some of the more established EAL theorists have been influenced by the social and critical thinking in the field. They have shifted their thinking about what is important knowledge in teaching and learning additional languages, and in some instances, arguing against or adding to their own earlier ideas. For
example, Swain’s more recent publications have had a socio-cultural focus rather than a cognitive focus (Swain 2010; Ortega 2011). This shift in focus was exemplified in a keynote address at the Community Languages and ESOL Conference (CLESOL) in Dunedin in 2010. Swain analysed the same dialogue through four different theoretical lenses. Through the last lens, looking at emotions from a socio-cultural perspective, she concluded that a dynamic system of meaning-making existed in which the affective and intellectual united. She described how emotional and cognitive processes intertwined within collaborative thinking processes.

Cummins (2011) too, describes shifts in his thinking. He suggests that in the 1980s, his “perspective on the achievement of minority children expanded beyond psycho-educational considerations to incorporate the socio-political context” (p. 12). At the Language Education and Diversity conference at Waikato University in 2009, he argued against his own well-known construct, defining languages as first and second language (commonly termed as L1 and L2). He described this more recent shift to embrace Garcia’s term, ‘trans-languaging’. This shift is also noted by Garcia (2009a, p. 11).

Garcia’s understanding of ‘trans-languaging’ comes from a bilingual perspective rather than from a second language learning perspective, designed by EAL teachers for ELLs. Garcia describes dynamic bilingualism as accentuating “using/doing languages (“languaging”) to negotiate situations” rather “having” a language (2009, p. 9). Associated with transformative pedagogy for teaching and learning, the concept of trans-languaging also emphasises notions of ‘plurilingual’ literacy practices, emphasising the integration of social and cultural contexts in ‘doing’ literacy (Garcia, Bartlett, & Kleifgen, 2007). These ideas are based on a notion of hybridity, “an unending, unfinalised process …. [that] is dynamic, mobile, less an achieved synthesis, or prescribed formula than an unstable constellation of discourses” (Shohat & Stam, 1994). Like knowledge and identity, concepts of language use are not fixed and finite. As identities are fluid and multiple (Connell, 2002), so is language use. Within schooling, bilingual students can have opportunities to negotiate identities and to learn in contexts that are responsive to linguistically and culturally diverse experiences. Teachers can actively identify and value their learners’ home language practices as social and cultural resources. That linguistic knowledge can also be used as an educational resource (May, Hill, & Tiakiwai, 2004).

Cummins has been influenced to reconsider his well-known image of a competent bilingual person riding on two balanced wheels (L1 and L2). Garcia’s image of an all-terrain vehicle “where the wheels turn in different directions as
they adapt to the ridges and craters of communication” (Garcia, 2009, p. 4) puts the power of language choices in the students’ hands.

Two key ideas about recent considerations of theory about knowledge in EAL are that changes should be contingent and they should be purposeful. In thinking about his own shifts, Cummins (2011) cautions that he is not claiming absolute validity for any of his constructs and that they should be contingent on context. He also suggests that changes should be responsive to issues raised within education, and with the purpose to contribute to understanding about teaching pedagogy and “hopefully to change problematic practices for the better” (p. 2).

3.2.5 Tying knowledge and EAL threads together

While there is a common call for change in thinking about knowledge for the 21st Century, it is understood that knowledge and knowing is complex, changing and ‘fuzzy’. Many educational thinkers, including some in the EAL field, agree that there is a need to change from realist to relativist perspectives about knowledge, from valuing the transmission of knowledge, encapsulated in the term ‘knowledge as a noun’, to valuing ‘performative’ knowledge, expressed in the term ‘knowledge as a verb’. However, there are complexities in the underlying beliefs that give rise to the call for change. So what constitutes 21st Century knowledge/knowing is contested with notions that resonate with ideas about social justice and critical pedagogies: transformative pedagogy, epistemological pluralism, trans-languaging and ‘pedagogy of promise’, to name but a few. The ‘social turn’ in EAL that has occurred relatively recently has meant a considerable change in thinking in the EAL research field. Conceptualisations about knowledge will influence ideas about what EAL is, who EAL is for, and how it should be taught. These evolving ideas about knowledge influence developments in curriculum, discussed in the next section.

3.3 Understanding Curriculum

The discussions about knowledge and knowing in the previous section provided a basis for discussions about curriculum. As with the previous section, I begin with general discussion and then bring those ideas to focus in discussing EAL. I open with a consideration of contested notions about curriculum and then discuss the function, nature and positioning of curriculum and their application to EAL. These aspects are linked to the earlier discussion about knowledge and its theoretical underpinnings. Different ways of defining curriculum for EAL are explored. Then the focus shifts to some literature about the design of the official, national New Zealand Curriculum, followed highlighting by some issues with the implementation of the NZC. In the last section, two stories are told from my experience as a PLD facilitator with opportunities to observe and participate in
the design of both national curriculum and school curriculum. These accounts relate to contentions in designing official documents and how national assessment impacts on curriculum decisions. They provide some background to the analysis of the teachers’ thinking about curriculum described in Chapter 4.

3.3.1 Contested Curriculum

Contestation about curriculum is not surprising if there is contestation about knowledge. Both historical and social contexts influence this debate around conceptualisations about knowledge and consequent considerations of curriculum. In relation to the historical perspective, Pinar (1975) describes how curriculum discourses are situated within a temporal frame. The current discourses happen within discourses that they did not begin and they will influence discourses that they will not resolve (Pinar, 1975, p. 493 as cited in Grumet, 2009, p. 231). By acknowledging the socially-located nature of curriculum design, Kliebard (as cited in Sleeter, 2005, p. 122) suggests that “curriculum at any time and place becomes a battleground where the fight is over whose values and beliefs will achieve the legitimation and the respect that provides acceptance into the national discourse” (1995, p. 250). Generally, decisions about curriculum have been part of a selective tradition in which only some knowledge from the “universe of possible knowledge” becomes the “official knowledge” (Apple 1999, p. 10 as cited by Sleeter (2005). In applying different perspectives of knowledge to understandings about curriculum, it is possible to understand why Mutch considers curriculum to be a “hotly contested notion” (2009, p. 1).

The power of this interplay between knowledge and curriculum is important because it will influence the formal, national curriculum and the curriculum that teachers put into practice. The contestation of which kinds of knowledge are recognised means that curriculum is of high interest at multiple layers within education: political, school, enacted, learnt (Le Métais, 2002; Mutch, 2009) and hidden (Sleeter, 2005). The conceptualisations that people hold about knowledge and curriculum, often tacit, will influence their reactions and uptake of others’ ideas.

Within the New Zealand historical context, “a sturdy pragmatism, liberal sentiment and political slogans” (Snook, 1995, p. 167 as cited in Mutch, 2009, p. 1) have stood in the place of a tradition of curriculum theorising. These curriculum debates would seem to be important at national level and the school and teacher level. In the recent revision process for the NZC, there has been a higher level of consultation and debate than in the past. Wylie (2013) suggests that because of this extensive discussion and co-construction there is a relatively high level of acceptance of the NZC amongst teachers.
3.3.2 Function and nature of curriculum

In this and following sections, the function of curriculum in society is discussed in relation to curricula and then, more specifically, to EAL teaching and learning.

Curriculum design serves the important function of channeling school experience, by selecting from the vast array of possibilities the communally prized knowledge and understandings that otherwise might not be developed (Hlebowitsh 1992 cited in McGee, 1997). Thus it is recognised that curricula serve a normative function tied to public interest; what is considered to be worth achieving within a group, a school, an entire society.

Definitions of curriculum have changed as theorists (Apple, 2004; Bellack & Kliebard, 1977; Beyer & Liston, 1996), have wrestled with central questions relating to the purpose and broad nature of education and curriculum more specifically. Traditional curricula sought academic excellence, taught separate subjects, valued strict discipline, involved mainly individual work with students seated. Testing through formal examinations was the accepted norm and there was little student choice (McGee, 1997). Traditional curricula are exemplified by the following commonly-used guiding questions which mostly focus on methodology:

- What educational purposes should the school seek to attain?
- What educational experiences can be provided that are likely to attain these purposes?
- How can these educational experiences be effectively organized?
- How can we determine whether these purposes are being attained? (Tyler, 1969, p. 1)

It is argued that such a technical approach reduces curriculum to that which is measurable (Short, 1986; Sleeter, 2005).

3.3.3 Influences that reposition curriculum

A purpose of changing the inequities in society through curriculum policy and design are supported by recent socio-critical ideology. Social justice theory influences the understanding of curriculum in bringing about social change. So researchers are able to suggest changes. O'Sullivan, Merriman and Bishop (2009) for example, challenge the notion that the cause of underachievement is in the home suggesting that cause may be in schools. Milne (2009) also challenges commonly held assumptions suggesting that 'mainstream' is actually...
'whitestream' in curriculum ideas and practices. Price (2008) also challenges established ideas and, in particular the notion that all students should all be treated equally. Edwards, Lambert and Tauroa (2007) describe a "new agenda" (p. 139) that resists essentially Euro-centric educational philosophies and paradigms for knowing.

Within a curriculum driven by social justice ideology, students are engaged in critical reflection, social negotiation and the organisation of action. Curriculum knowledge is constructed through interaction and takes cognisance of cultural, social, political, historical and economic influences. Questions that define such a curriculum are more philosophical, expansive and less reductionist than the traditional curriculum questions outlined in Section 3.3.2. For example, Sleeter (2005) wrestles with the following questions:

What purposes should the curriculum serve?
How should knowledge be selected, who decides what knowledge is worth teaching and learning, and what is the relationship between those in the classroom and the knowledge selection process?
What is the nature of students and the learning process, and how does it suggest organizing learning experiences and relationships?
How should curriculum be evaluated? How should learning be evaluated?
To whom is curriculum evaluation accountable? (p. 8).

The repositioning of curriculum pertaining to relativist notions can be seen in the questions posed by de Alba (2000), the author of *Curriculum in the post-modern condition*:

What kinds of things should we be learning and teaching now in order to prepare learners as well as possible for what comes in the future and to be able to act better now as well as later on in order to create more viable futures (p. 12).

Curriculum is thus regarded more as a “platform” than a “package” (p. 9). In teaching EAL with this view, English language would be seen as a means to other learning. Perhaps the emphasis should be on language learning, rather than English language learning, given that we do not know which languages students will encounter in the global future.

Thinking about the intended curriculum and the unintended, hidden curriculum is also supported by socio-critical theory. There are unofficial expectations, unintended learning outcomes and implicit messages (McGee, 1997). Further, the received curriculum, that which may or may not be seen in the way students
react to learning activities, is an important aspect of curriculum. Within EAL teaching for example, by emphasising the value of English there could be unintended consequences of devaluing home languages. Unofficial curriculum may be derived from University Entrance requirements which may, for example, require EAL teachers to focus on teaching English literature, regarded as a measure of Literacy at the time of this research.

Notions about curriculum might come from a mixture of theoretical underpinnings. An example comes from Begg (2006) who suggests that in considering curriculum, we might also explore elements of knowledge that are concerned with “the emerging self in the curriculum” (p. 4), an idea which can be associated with wisdom, intuition, embodied knowledge and perhaps spirituality. Given that EAL is a porous field (Ortega, 2009), it is quite possible that any EAL classroom curriculum can draw on multiple theories about learning.

There can be mixed motivations getting people to think about curriculum. For example, the questions below that are posed in the Educational Review Office report on *Readiness to Implement the New Zealand Curriculum*,

- What is important and worth teaching?
- What are our students’ current strengths, needs and experiences?
- What approaches and strategies should we plan for and implement to develop specific skills, concepts and attitudes?
- What is happening for students when we implement these strategies, how do we know this and what should we do next to promote students learning?

These questions undoubtedly have socio-cultural influences. However they also have a measurement and accountability discourse.

When high stakes outcomes for ELLs are described as what is important and worth teaching, EAL teachers potentially face very difficult accountability pressures coming from school management, families, agents of international students and the students themselves. Drawing on international experience, Gibbons (2009) sites the increased external pressure on ELLs to meet the demands of the *No Child Left Behind* policy (Crawford 2004).

So curriculum can be understood very differently. At one end of a continuum, curriculum can be understood as a traditional, one-size-fits-all prescription. Towards the other end of a continuum, with equity of outcomes for students as a
central purpose, curriculum can be understood as one which rather gives direction in “channelling, focusing and professionalizing teacher judgment” Hlebowitsh, (2005, p. 13). On another dimension, curriculum can range from what is articulated by the government to what students learn from both the intended and unintended curriculum within a classroom. I now turn to look more specifically at curriculum for EAL.

3.3.4 Nature of curriculum for EAL

In this section, three approaches to curriculum for EAL, as identified by Gibbons (2009), are discussed: ‘transmission’, ‘process’ and ‘integrated’. The first two are seen as problematic for EAL while the integrated approach to curriculum is seen as fitting with my developing, underpinning ideas about knowledge. I propose a number of pedagogies that can be used in EAL teaching and learning that fit within an integrated design.

The *transmission* approach in EAL teaching would focus on correct grammar and vocabulary learning with an aim to replicate formal native-speaker correctness. The transmission approach is seen by Gibbons (2002) as problematic in EAL teaching because it does not engage students in the social interactions that are vital for learning. Of the four strands described as necessary for a balanced EAL programme by Nation (1996), the meaning-making output aspect in particular would be neglected by a transmission method.

The transmission approach is dismissed by Canagarajah (1999), Holliday (2005) and Thornbury (2009) and others, who suggest that such top-down views of teaching are generated in dominant, English-speaking countries. They argue such views lack culturally-sensitive methodologies that are locally-generated, validated and responsive to the needs of the participants. This literature also suggests that course books are often not culturally responsive and have a strong skill focus. Topics and material design reflect an ‘aspirational culture’ (Gray, 2002) of travel, consumerism and popular culture (Thornbury, 2009). Dialogic pedagogy, in which learners are agents of their own learning, rather than objects of the teaching process, is posed as one alternative to positivist transmission model of teaching (Freire, 1970; Thornbury, 2009).

The *process* or ‘progressive’ approach influenced curriculum, in the 1970’s and 1980's (Gibbons, 2002). With this approach, there was a focus on meaning rather than form. Teachers would aim for students to express themselves and there would be integrated thematic studies. The discipline would be flexible, with students often working in groups. Students would have considerable choice and there would be little formal testing (McGee, 2000). Progressive approaches are criticised as being too individualistic for effective EAL learning (Oakes, 1985;
Delpit, 1988; Gibbons 2009). According to the balanced EAL programme proposed by Nation (1996), the aspect of focused language teaching and learning would be missing in a progressive approach.

A concept that should impact on curriculum decisions about who gets to access EAL support is explained in the Introduction to ELLP (MOE, 2008a). There is a seminal construct which distinguishes between basic interpersonal communicative skills (BICS) and cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP) that Cummins developed from other research (Bruner, 1962; Cummins, 1979; Olsen, 1977; Vygotsky, 1962). That students often develop BICS before CALP is mentioned. This competency in social English can often mask the need for longer support for developing academic English. Cummins (2000) suggests students may gain social competency in two years but they gain academic competency only after five to eight years. English language learners (ELLs) who have come through an education system dominated by progressive ideals may have strong social language and need support to develop academic English.

An alternative, more integrated way of developing language knowledge is proposed by Gibbons (2002). EAL teaching and learning can be understood as a collaborative undertaking, involving teachers and students in the “socially-embedded process” of ‘scaffolding language’ (p. 6). This view draws on Vygotsky’s (1962) social view of learning. The approach of ‘high challenge, high support’ (Gibbons 2009) has potential application in EAL teaching and learning. In describing this approach, gibbons draws on Vygotsky’s socio-cultural idea that learning is seen as occurring within social settings. Gibbons argues that a high-challenge and high-support model (Figure 7) is a more suitable approach to use as a basis for teaching ELLs than either transmission or progressive approaches to curriculum.
Integral in the high challenge / high support approach is the idea of scaffolding. Scaffolding, as Gibbons uses it, has three characteristics:

- It is temporary help to assist a learner to move toward new concepts, levels of understanding, and new language.
- It enables a learner to know how to do something (not just what to do), so that they will be able to complete similar tasks alone.
- It is future oriented: drawing on Vygotsky’s words, what learners can do with support today, they will be able to do alone tomorrow. (Gibbons, 2009, p. 15)

Vygotsky’s idea of scaffolding is further developed by Walqui and van Lier (2010) in respect to EAL. They suggest that particular attention needs to be paid to teachers understanding the point at which to withdraw support. Walqui and van Lier suggest a principles-basis for EAL curriculum (see Section 3.2.3) that integrates the scaffolding and high challenge/high support notion of Gibbons. They promote the idea of a curriculum that integrates Learning Area, cognitive and linguistic learning framed with the principles of sustained academic rigour, holding high expectations, engaging ELLs in quality, and maintaining a focus on language (p. 81). So the combined ideas of Gibbons, Walqui and van Lier suggest an integrated approach to curriculum for EAL. Nation’s (2007) idea that EAL curriculum includes a balance of four strands (meaning-focused input, meaning-focused output, deliberate language focus and fluency development), could be sustained in the integrated approach.
Other aspects of EAL curriculum that should be considered are the bias towards norms of English “native-speaker” competency and the weight of the monolingualism that predominates in New Zealand. May (2014) suggests a need to shift in recognising “fluid and overlapping language uses, and related linguistic and sociocultural competencies, of multilingual communities” (p. 7). Learning opportunities can be created where home languages are actively valued and used. EAL can be shifted from a monolingual to a multilingual perspective, where ELLs are called bilingual learners or multilingual learners, and programmes of learning might be called multi-lingual studies. In the kind of learning identified in the Language Enhancing the Achievement of Pasifika students (LEAP) resource the importance of maintaining home languages is reinforced (Franken, May, and McComish, 2005).

3.3.5 The design of the New Zealand Curriculum (NZC)

In focusing on the essence of the NZC, the national curriculum appears to serve EAL well. The Principles, Values, Key Competencies and the introduction to the Learning Areas relate to diversity, inclusion, histories, participating and contributing, learning to learn and managing one’s own learning. By implication, through the principle of having high expectations, ELLs should be supported to reach the same outcomes as other students. With a sharp focus on these key ideas in the NZC EAL support can be seen not as an end in itself, but as a means to further learning.

There has been a considerable amount of thinking at a national level in New Zealand with the revision of the NZC. In the process of developing the curriculum, the Ministry of Education collaborated with many stakeholders in education. Within the last 20 years, there has been more contestation and challenge of assumptions as revisions of official policy and documents have been viewed through different lenses (Mutch, 2009). As a result, New Zealand is regarded internationally as having made some exceptionally forward-thinking curriculum decisions (Atkin, 2011).

However, there are elements of earlier, traditional conceptualisations of curriculum in the current version of the NZC. The traditional Learning Areas and the eight levels of learning have been carried through to the revised curriculum, to some extent appeasing and perpetuating the older ideas of curriculum. The current eight Learning Areas are The Arts, English, Health and Physical Education, Learning Languages, Mathematics and Statistics, Science, Social Sciences, Technology. In looking at power relations it can be seen that being
positioned in one of the Learning Areas has certain advantages. By having curriculum statements, Learning Areas have

- status
- developed assessment tools (Achievement Standards)
- “consensus” about what a subject is “about”
- a frame or reframing for the ways teachers think about their subject.

(Bolstad, 2006, p. 115)

The organisation of curriculum into Learning Areas has a significant influence on the understanding of EAL. In curriculum revision process the Ministry of Education took up the suggestion from Le Métais (2002) to split the previously conjoint curriculum of Language and Languages. English and Learning Languages were created as distinct Learning Areas and EAL was not represented in either. According to Bolstad’s conclusions, EAL then lost the potential to have the status, highly-valued assessment tools and framing as a subject that is important in secondary schools.

In the revised NZC, EAL is described, under the heading of “Learning areas and language” (MOE, p. 16), as an extension of a statement about literacy. The positioning of EAL is therefore cross-curricular, relating to language for all Learning Areas. It sits at the cusp of the student-centred ‘front end’ (popular terminology) of the NZC and the traditional Learning Areas. While this positioning of EAL support aligns with ‘social’ and ‘post’ theorising about curriculum, the power gained by fitting within the common Learning Area structures of secondary schools may be compromised.

3.3.6 Potential issues with uptake of the New Zealand Curriculum (NZC)

In the reduction of size of a curriculum, as with the revised NZC, Aitken (2007) emphasises the tension between prescription and flexibility. The revised curriculum has emphasis on mandated, broad aspirations and fewer subject-specific objectives. In terms of curriculum flexibility, Aitken suggests that as teachers are well-qualified professionals, their professional autonomy can be put to good use in response to the specific needs and interests of school communities. However, flexibility provides challenges. Workload may well increase, not all teachers have expertise in curriculum design, “and it may compromise entitlement as schools and individual teachers make idiosyncratic choices about what to teach” (p. 1). EAL teaching, positioned to support across Learning Areas and not positioned in a specific Learning Area with any specified learning outcomes offers an exceptional autonomy for curriculum decisions.
As teachers in general and EAL teachers in particular are exposed to possibilities in the revised curriculum, they are faced with tensions and can react in different ways. There are elements of conflicting conceptions (Brown, 2006) which, if recognised as contradictory, enable us to come to terms with the potential paradigm-shift that it offers. On the other hand, if teachers are not given support to rethink conceptualisations about curriculum, the potential that the curriculum has to transform the way we teach may be unrealised (Begg, 2008; Hipkins, 2007; Reid, 2006). Atiken (2007) refers to Beeby (1970) in saying that teachers must understand curriculum change if there is to be a change in practice. Teachers may well go along with socially accepted curriculum expectations within their schools, while holding different personal views (Hipkins, 2007).

There are implicit decisions about curriculum that may not reflect the intended curriculum. Bolstad (2006) suggests that one significant example of such implicit curriculum decision-making occurs at a national level in the New Zealand senior secondary school. Explicit decisions about assessment and qualifications are made by universities. Implicit decisions have been made in the development of Achievement Standards which are aligned with traditional, Learning Area subjects, and Unit Standards which are used for non-traditional cross-Learning Area subjects. Thus, qualification frameworks and related curriculum decisions maintain “the status quo of what we learnt at school” (p. 121). EAL in secondary schools, not having featured in most New Zealand teachers’ own learning experiences, may suffer from an implicit lack of recognition as a valued aspect of curriculum and assessment.

A particular danger for EAL, by being positioned across all Learning Areas, is that in a curriculum that provides a lot of autonomy, “freedom could well be curtailed by the assessment industry that still seems to operate in a paradigm of easily measurable objectives” (Begg, 2006, p. 1). From my observations over several years, NCEA Literacy requirements and University Entrance requirements have proved to be powerful determinants in how EAL is set up in schools.

Another concern in relation to EAL is raised by McNaughton and Lai, (2009). Even though there are nationally-articulated social justice ideals, teachers often convey low expectations on students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. In relation to observation of classrooms with a focus on Māori students, O’Sullivan et al. (2009) cite a dominance of “deficit theorizing by teachers”, matched by a “predominance of pathologizing classroom practices such as transmission teaching, remedial programs and behavior modification programs” (p. 3). Deficit theorising about students from particular cultural groups and related curriculum decisions is of interest in this research.
So while there is congruence in the direction set by the NZC and the kinds of integrated, principled, transformative EAL curriculum espoused by Gibbons (2009), Walqui and van Lier (2010) Thornbury (2009), Cummins (2000) and others (Section 3.2.3), there are new challenges to be met. The autonomy afforded to EAL teachers in curriculum design is considerable. The influence of the traditional Learning Area construct is strong in secondary schools, and curriculum such as EAL that sits outside (or across) that structure may lack credibility or power. There is an associated struggle for recognition when valued NCEA assessment pathways are closely associated with the traditional structures of curriculum.

3.3.7 Frameworks that guide EAL teaching and learning

Understanding curriculum as having multiple theoretical influences helps make sense of the complexity and contestation of EAL curriculum policy. This is especially the case because EAL has not been part of the ‘selective tradition’ of subjects. Over the last twenty years however, there have been calls within the EAL teaching community for a national curriculum. Conceptualisations of knowledge have very much been at the centre of those debates.

A debate about curriculum for EAL in the last decade in New Zealand can be seen in the development of the English Language Learning Progressions (ELLP) (MOE, 2008a). In 2004, a draft EAL guiding document was written by one group of academics based on international languages curriculum documents of the time. An advisory group brought together by the Ministry of Education roundly criticised and rejected this draft document for being prescriptive and reductionist. A completely different document, an early draft of ELLP, was produced, strongly resisting a prescribed curriculum. It described EAL learning in a series of frameworks on which students’ learning could be understood as diverse and variable. There was a deliberate move away from articulating what should be taught. Instead, ELLP was designed to help teachers identify what students could do in different modes of English language. The intention was that once teachers understood their students’ language learning strengths and needs, they could make curriculum decisions appropriate to students’ needs. Contexts were assumed to be from a range of Learning Areas. Metacognition was considered an important aspect of the learning for ELLs. The ELLP provided a radically different conceptualisation of language teaching from the lock-step prescription model that some teachers might have expected.

The debate about EAL curriculum can also be seen in the concurrent process of revising the NZC. There was no mention of ELLs or EAL in the draft of the NZC. A result of lobbying by the national body of ESOL teachers, TESOLANZ, was that the Ministry of Education funded a discussion for teachers at a national level
about inclusion of EAL within the national curriculum. This was a pivotal discussion because conceptualisations of EAL were considered by academics, teachers and Ministry of Education decision-makers. Papers were commissioned by the Ministry of Education to look at literacy and language in the phase between the draft and the final revision of NZC. These unpublished papers presented quite different responses, with one response upholding the idea that Principles of the NZC were inclusive of all students. The other two highlighted the lack of mention of ELLs. There were differences in views about EAL positioning between primary and secondary teachers. Amongst secondary teachers, there was not consensus. Some wanted EAL to sit with Learning Languages as suggested by Le Métias (2002) in her feedback to the Ministry of Education on the draft curriculum. Some wanted EAL to sit with English because the assessment of literacy for valued qualifications was associated with English at the time. Primary teachers unanimously wanted EAL to sit across all Learning Areas so students could be helped to access the language of learning across the school, and this positioning was favoured by some secondary teachers as well.

This difference in opinion exemplifies a tension for EAL curriculum. In one view, curriculum is inclusive of all students, and ELLs’ needs are covered. The other view is that there is a need to draw attention to particular groups of students whose strengths and needs are different from others’.

There were two main visible results of the TESOLANZ input to the NZC. One result was that students’ languages along with their cultures and identities received mention in the Principle of ‘inclusion’ (MOE, 2007. p. 9). The other main change was that the description of EAL was expanded as an addition to ‘literacy’ and moved from the Pedagogy section to the front of the Learning Areas on of the NZC (MOE, 2007. p. 16). The conceptualisation of EAL in the NZC therefore is that EAL is about accessing all learning. Now, a commonly used message from the Ministry of Education is that EAL support should be focussed to enable ELLs to make accelerated progress in learning English so that they can access curriculum at age-appropriate levels.

There are synergies between the general NZC and ELLP. The ELLP has strong links with the other constructs described in this chapter. There is congruence with the principles of quality teaching outlined by Walqui and van Lier (2010) and the Principles of the NZC (MOE, 2007, p. 9). In the introduction to ELLP, it is stated that the progressions are underpinned by the research cited in Quality Teaching for Diverse Students in Schooling: Best Evidence Synthesis (Alton-Lee, 2003). The same document influenced the Pedagogy section of the NZC. Both the NZC and ELLP retain levels (levels in the NZC and stages in ELLP) and divisions of
learning (*Learning Areas* in the NZC and *modes* in ELLP) where, theoretically, they would be integrated.

Both of these national documents, the NZC and ELLP, are open to interpretation and can be read and understood differently. It is possible that some readers will focus on and relate to parts of a curriculum document rather than the whole. It is possible that these documents do not feature strongly in teacher curriculum decisions at all.

The assessment system can subsume other ideas of curriculum when a curriculum is described in broad ideas (Begg, 2006). EAL teaching in secondary schools is vulnerable to this. In secondary schools, the National Certificate in Educational Achievement (NCEA) is important in terms of policy because it is the main national school qualification. Stakeholders, such as learners, employers, families and international agents have a better understanding of NCEA than either the NZC or ELLP. These stakeholders can provide pressure that links curriculum to assessments that matter them. Anecdotally, students can be heard asking, “Does this count towards my NCEA credits?”

Within NCEA there is differential valuing of assessment types: Achievement Standards and Unit Standards. NCEA Achievement Standards have recently been aligned with Achievement Objectives of Levels 6, 7 and 8 of the Learning Areas of the NZC and are called “curriculum-aligned” standards. The Unit Standards can be used by secondary and tertiary students. As EAL is not aligned with Achievement Objectives in a specific Learning Area, EAL does not have Achievement Standards but the lesser-valued Unit Standards. The English Language (formerly ESOL) Unit Standards are not aligned with ELLP either, because ELLP was written for schools, not tertiary institutions. Nevertheless English Language (formerly ESOL) Unit Standards do seem to operate as a quasi-curriculum for EAL in many schools because Unit Standards are better than no standards.

There is a tension between official conceptualisations of EAL curriculum and school-based teaching and learning decisions. At a national, official level EAL is understood, through the ideas in ELLP and its positioning in the NZC, as providing English language for learning across the curriculum, underpinned by social theories and ‘theories of the post’. However, with the traditional structures of schools and the pressures of NCEA, EAL usually operates as a subject in secondary schools, albeit without the status of having ‘curriculum-aligned’ Achievement Standards.
Another issue for EAL is that different languages have different values within the curriculum. The languages which have the Achievement Standards status have been traditionally taught (French and Latin), have economic power (Chinese, Japanese) or have political ties (Samoan, Cook Islands Maori). The power of this status can be seen in the fact that only Achievement Standards appear on the list of “approved subjects” for University Entrance. The English Language Unit Standards, then, have less status than Achievement Standards for learning ‘international languages’ which are described in the Learning Languages Learning Area. So in spite of the ‘front half’ of the NZC being influenced by relativist, social theories and ‘theories of the post’, higher status is accorded to subjects which fall neatly into traditional Learning Area boundaries.

Further, in spite of the 116 languages spoken in the homes of ELLs in New Zealand, see (Chapter 1.2.1), only a handful of those languages have the status which allows them to be assessed for NCEA. For a student-centred, principle-based curriculum that espouses principles of inclusion and diversity, there appears to be a disjuncture with opportunities for recognition through NCEA assessment. The richness and importance of home languages is not recognised in the assessment system. ‘Curriculum-aligned’ Achievement Standards equate with traditional curriculum notions, rather than aligning with the Principles, Values and Key Competencies outlined in the early part of the NZC.

There is one final issue that is related to assessment and curriculum documents. ELLP is a complex document and is difficult for non-specialist EAL secondary teachers to use. From my experience, it is not generally well understood by school senior leaders. By being complex and different, ELLP might not have high uptake.

The main policy documents for EAL teachers in New Zealand are the NZC and the ELLP. There are common understandings in both of them. They both have social-critical underpinnings. They both involved considerable consultation in the development, involving academics with articulated theoretical purposes and also teachers with pragmatic influence. They are both documents that have been modified to be challenging and acceptable at the same time. They both provide a student-centred approach, supporting difference and resisting notions of a one-size-fits-all curriculum prescription. With the positioning of EAL as cross-curricular, there is potential for EAL to be at the forefront of challenges to traditional notions of curriculum content, with rich opportunities for exploring new notions of curriculum. However, in reaction to the potential difficulty of dealing with such abstractions, many EAL teachers may shy away from them. Instead, the NCEA assessment system may dominate teachers’ decisions about teaching and learning. EAL may continue to be considered an extra, low-status
subject in secondary schools. ELLP, without connection to other highly-valued influences like NCEA, may continue to be an extra document to manage, rather than a ‘curriculum platform’ that it has the potential to be.

3.3.9 Tying the threads about curriculum together

Curriculum design is contested and political at a national level. It is deeply influenced by conceptualisations of knowledge and the theoretical underpinnings of those ideas. The revised NZC has a transformative potential that is not always realised in secondary schools.

The way the Ministry of Education has chosen to describe EAL is in line with the forward-thinking essence of the NZC. EAL, as described in the NZC and ELLP, is conceptualised in line with the more recent social theories and ‘theories of the post’. It challenges traditional conceptualisations of curriculum. However, as noted earlier, EAL is a porous field and there are many influences on EAL teachers’ conceptualisations of curriculum. The positioning of EAL in Ministry of Education policy documents was not universally accepted by secondary teachers. EAL in secondary schools has challenges within its own field that parallel wider national curriculum debates.

It is in this curriculum context of burgeoning ideas and the conflicting forces that my study is undertaken. I am particularly interested in EAL teachers because they have so much autonomy afforded by the NZC. The NZC, ELLP and possibly NCEA can be understood to prescribe and confine learning or they can be interpreted differently, as enabling and guiding in an ‘open’, less restrictive sense. In Chapter 4 I begin to examine the extent to which the intent of the NZC and ELLP is digested or ignored, accepted or rejected, understood or misunderstood and known or not known.
Cycle A continued: Knowing and curriculum in the EAL field

Chapter 4 Analysis of shifts in teachers’ understandings

4.1 Introduction

This chapter comprises the data collection and analysis part of action research for Cycle A with a focus on EAL teachers’ understandings of knowing and curriculum. The findings in this chapter have been derived through the qualitative research analysis methods. Thematic analysis of this data has allowed me to develop an insight into the shifts in the teachers’ ideas and actions. Findings were generated from evidence grounded in the teachers’ actions, interviews, documents and conversations.

In this chapter, the teacher-participants are in the foreground. Their understandings, responses and actions are the focus of the analysis. It is in Chapter 6 that there will be a strong reflective element relating to my facilitator practice, placing myself in the foreground, analysing my own ideas as I guided the teachers and responded to their ideas.

The organisation for this part of the analysis is broadly in response to the first two sub-questions of the research (see Chapter 1.3). The first research sub-question guided me to find out about the teacher-participants’ ideas relating to their understanding of EAL teaching and curriculum. The second sub-question guided me to analyse how their understanding of EAL teaching and learning changed as they participated in the PLD with me.

From the data, themes emerged about the participants’ understandings about students, their roles as EAL teachers, what they understood about curriculum as policy and what they did about curriculum in action. The themes emerged as I looked at patterns in what the teachers said and did, within and across the recorded PLD events. Recurring phrases or ideas enabled me to see such patterns within events. Within each broad theme there were sub-themes. For example, within the section exploring curriculum as policy, there were references made to, and understandings about, specific policy documents which could be treated as sub-themes. The themes sometimes overlapped. By looking at the themes over the six months, it was possible to identify shifts of different kinds and degrees of change in the teachers’ thinking and actions.
At the end of this section I draw the threads of the teacher-participants’ shifts together with the literature from Chapter 3. I discuss the teachers’ shifts in relation to historical, social and cultural contexts. I examine conceptualisations of knowledge and curriculum through some of the lenses that were touched on in Chapter 3.

Both participants were very keen to participate, to learn and were responsive to interrogating ideas. Their contexts at the time of the PLD were very different. Their beliefs and prior educational experiences also revealed themselves to impact on their ideas about teaching and learning.

I noticed tensions and contradictions. The participants’ own ideas and actions were sometimes inconsistent with each other. Sometimes the participants appeared to contradict themselves in what they said in one sentence and what they said a short time later. Given the nature of action research, it is possible the participants sometimes said what they thought I wanted to hear. However, I can provide some confidence in the conclusions by triangulating data from a number of events and integrating data from different sources, such as documents, semi-formal interviews, observations and recorded conversations.

Within the themes that follow, I analyse Sue’s data first and then Anita’s. I have chosen to organise this chapter under themes rather than as two separate case studies mainly because this reflects the analysis process. A theme that emerged for one participant would spark an exploration about the other participants’ ideas on the same theme. Additionally, the organisation under themes reduces potential repetition, even though some themes overlapped and some themes applied to one participant more than the other. Within each theme there are several paragraphs focusing on Sue’s ideas and understandings followed by Anita’s several paragraphs. At the end of the chapter I draw the threads back together by linking the teacher-participants’ epistemological shifts with ideas about knowledge, knowing and curriculum.

4.2. Teacher-participants’ understandings about their learners

How the two teacher-participants understood their learners emerged as a theme from the initial interview data. It was obvious throughout the research period that both teacher-participants had positive and caring intentions towards all of their students. However, significant shifts became evident in their understanding about which students should or could draw their attention.

During the course of the PLD, particular attention was given to shifts in thinking about Pasifika students’ EAL learning. Both their schools had been partly
selected for this research due to significant numbers of Pasifika students in them. Surprisingly, neither of the teachers included Pasifika students as being significantly within their teaching radar at the beginning. However, by the end of the PLD interruption, both teachers showed greater interest in addressing Pasifika students’ needs. Both teacher-participants showed developing awareness of how Pasifika students are often rendered invisible in EAL discussions and need to be made visible in these.

There were differences in what Sue and Anita expected students to do. Shifts happened differently for the teachers because, in the initial interviews, it became obvious that they understood ELLs’ learning very differently.

### 4.2.1 Teacher-participants’ understanding about who they teach

Initially, in describing her focus class, Sue tended to express a view of the class as a whole group. The students did not seem to be characterised as individuals, reflecting a one-size-fits-all, top-down approach. Sue talked frequently about “the class”, “the international students” and “they”, referring to the whole class (Initial Interview).

There is, though, evidence of a change in how Sue viewed her students over time. One example of the change for Sue can be derived from a semantic analysis of collocations with the word ‘students’. The first mentions of students in the initial interview generally related to whole groups, whereas in the final interview, most mentions of students were related to individuals or small groups within the class.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Collocations with the word <em>students</em> in initial interview</th>
<th>Collocations with the word <em>students</em> in final interview</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>international students</td>
<td>each individual student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>international students</td>
<td>one student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>very busy, on-task students</td>
<td>junior students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESOL students</td>
<td>ESOL students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other students [not ELLs]</td>
<td>particular students</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Further evidence of some shift in Sue’s thinking about students as individuals is revealed in the amount of prompting I offered in the recorded discussions.
There was no mention of individuals in the initial interview. In a video-stimulated recall discussion, it was me who prompted the discussion on individuals by name. I prompted, “Tell me about some of the kids in that group and what they were getting out of it. Tell me about the Japanese girl ... and the Pasifika boy ...” (Learning Conversation 1). In the second and third conversations, students’ individual learning was discussed quite frequently, unprompted. In the Final Interview, Sue also offered unprompted thoughts about individuals, saying, “I’ve got one student who ... and another student who ...”. Interestingly though, while Sue gave attention to individual students in the final interview, it was not by name. This could be because the final interview had a slightly more formal tone to it than the earlier learning conversations and Sue was more conscious of her talk being recorded. It could be that she was being respectful of students’ privacy in talking with me.

Of interest to me was a shift in Sue’s use of the term ‘international students’. In the early phase of the research, Sue described her students as “international students” (Initial interview, Learning Conversation 1). In the New Zealand school system, the term ‘international students’ generally refers to foreign, fee-paying students, rather than to migrants. Sue may have believed that her focus was on fee-paying students or she may have used the term ‘international students’ as encompassing all ELLs, including migrants. An alternative explanation might be that this term and/or focus may have been the common discourse amongst school staff or in her previous work or training. What is certain, is that in the later events with recorded data, Sue had changed her terminology and never referred to those students in her class as ‘international students’ (Learning Conversation 3, Final Interview).

Another shift in language use for Sue was in the use of pronouns. In the initial interview, Sue used “I” and “they” to refer respectively to herself and the students. By the final interview, Sue had started to use the pronoun “we” referring both her students and herself, saying, for example, “that’s what we’ve been doing” and “the journals that we’ve been working on”.

The shift in view from the class as a whole group, more to a collection of individuals is confirmed in Sue’s teaching actions, which will be discussed later in this chapter.

There is a contrast in Sue and Anita’s initial ideas about students. Sue was mainly drawing on a teacher-centred approach to teaching, whereas Anita espoused a student-centred approach. The kind of shifts relating to Anita’s understandings about who she taught were therefore quite different to Sue’s.
For Anita, the shift from a focus on whole class to individual students was not so significant because, from what she reported, she managed individualised learning from the beginning. Where Anita did mention a class, in the next sentence she would move to talk about individuals. In the Initial Interview, Anita began by saying, “I’m just thinking about my Intensive English class”, and followed this sentence immediately by elaborating, “I always think about where the students are at and using that as a starting point. I do some differentiated learning ...” She would frequently refer to particular students who I had met previously, regarding them as focus students. For example, “You know Mei [pseudonym], and how she is at Stage 1 on ELLP. I decided to ...” Nevertheless, sometimes Anita referred to teaching the class as a whole, in a discussion about teaching ‘word families’ (Learning Conversation 2). So it seems that Anita had a conceptualisation of individualised learning and taught with this most of the time, but not all of the time.

The shift in understanding for Anita seemed to be in her realisation about which students she could and possibly should reach. In her Initial Interview, she said that she would have a focus on her Intensive English class, a class of students who were all relatively new to learning English. By Learning Conversation 1 her focus had changed. Her focus did not shift to students that were in other EAL classes. Anita shifted to focus on her relationships with groups of teachers and students outside the EAL Department.

One group that Anita shifted her focus to were the teachers of the ELLs who migrated into other classes from her Intensive English class. Anita said in the Final Interview, “I think it’s not so much within my own class now. It’s actually really trying to get ESOL practices happening in other classrooms where my students are in mainstream situations”. She added, “also tracking, making sure that our kids who’ve graduated from the intensive class, how they are managing.”

Another focus for Anita became ELLs who were not in EAL classes at all. This group included Pasifika students. She set about analysing school achievement data in relation to language backgrounds and in relation to different kinds of support initiatives. For example, she looked at a wide group of ELLs’ success through EAL classes compared with mainstream English. She became interested in "building better communication, better relationships, and ways of gathering data about Pasifika students” (Final Interview).

A third group that Anita developed an interest in were ELLs entering the school, especially from contributing schools. She became keen to find out much more about Year 8 ELLs so that their pathways into and through secondary school
could be better provided for. She became interested in enabling better transitions for ELLs, setting up visits to contributing schools so she could talk with Year 8 teachers, and organising for extra introductory visits for ELLs and their families to her high school. Anita said in her Final Interview, “ESOL students coming into our school, I think that’s where I’m at too”. In this comment, Anita reveals a developing understanding about ELLs in a wider context of learning than just her school, let alone her classroom or her EAL Department.

In Anita’s Final Interview, when she was asked about changes to her thinking about EAL teaching and learning, her opening statement was, “Actually, my focus is more now on trying to get ESOL practices into other classrooms, not just in EAL classes … I need to have a role perhaps supporting teachers in their teaching of our ESOL students.” Anita had shifted from talking about “my” students in the Initial Interview to “our” students, suggesting a newly developed understanding of shared responsibility for ELLs’ learning. As well as shifting her focus to learners outside the EAL classes, Anita showed a developing understanding of shared responsibility for all ELLs.

4.2.2 Teacher-participants’ understanding about Pasifika ELLs

Emerging from the data for both participants was an exploration about teaching Pasifika students. The teacher-participants maintained an interest in all their students from all cultural groups. However, the focus on Pasifika students does stood out as new for both the teachers.

During the PLD period, Sue became more inclusive of the Pasifika students in her class. She shifted in her expectations of their developing English and she developed a greater sense of responsibility for their achievement. There were four Pasifika students in Sue’s classes, but other students appeared to be given priority in the first few events. Sue’s shift in the prioritising given to Pasifika students was noted from both conversations and observations through the research period.

It is not clear whether the early focus on ‘international students’ as opposed to groups of migrants in the EAL class was Sue’s choice, or a reflection of tacit school policies around ELLs. Once prompted to talk about individuals, it is evident from the earlier recorded conversations that certain students appeared to be more focussed on by Sue than others. In response to open questions, Sue tended to follow a pattern in who she spoke about first, and most. In our early discussions Sue predominantly talked about international fee-payers and migrant Asian students were discussed last. This is evident when, on my
direction, Sue selected a group of five focus students for an exploration of her practice. They were from a range of backgrounds but none were Pasifika. It was on my suggestion that a Pasifika student was also selected (Reflective Journal). When prompted to discuss these students early on Sue spoke about the two Asian girls first, then the two Asian boys and lastly, the Pasifika boy (Learning Conversation 1 and 2). Sue did not resist including the Pasifika student in any way and the order in which the students were discussed changed later in the PLD (Learning Conversation 3).

Expectations about the Pasifika students changed through the PLD period. Whether the early low expectations were conferred from other teachers or were somehow part of Sue’s beliefs is not entirely clear. It could have been a mixture of both. Certainly, external information contributed to Sue’s initial attitude. One of the Pasifika students was described by Sue in a sympathetic way, as being “such a nice boy” but as having “learning needs” (Learning Conversation 2). From her tone of voice Sue seemed to assume that there was a ceiling on his learning. I was interested to see where this understanding of the boy’s abilities came from. Sue told me that the boy's 'learning needs' had been identified through a number of tests that had been carried out by another teacher in Learning Support. It seemed the tests held a credibility that was not questioned. Sue seemed to assume that the tests were a reliable and appropriate source of information about the student’s ability to be literate in English. Thus as the EAL teacher, Sue initially appeared absolved of responsibility for helping accelerate progress for this student.

However, during the course of the action research, Sue changed in her expectations for this Pasifika boy. It was this boy who became part of the focus group. Sue observed in a video-stimulated recall (Learning Conversation 3) that he was equally engaged in the writing conferences (Video 2). Further, Sue chose the same Pasifika student’s writing as part of her conference presentation (Appendix I PowerPoint), showing how the students’ writing had developed.

Another example of a change can be seen in Sue’s attitude to Pasifika students when they left the class. When one of the Pasifika students withdrew from Sue’s EAL class in the early part of this action research, it appeared that Sue made no attempt to engage with the student’s new teacher to discuss her EAL needs or to follow her progress (Learning Conversation 1). However, later in the year, Sue made considerable effort to follow up on one Pasifika student when he returned to his country of origin, in order for him to complete a Unit Standard for NCEA (Learning Conversation 3).
While Sue focussed on Pasifika students within her EAL class, Anita’s focus was happening in the wider school for Pasifika students. Anita became more interested in the Pasifika students achievement in relation to the whole school cohort. She began investigating the impact of Pasifika students’ placement in particular programmes and she began to look at transitions for Pasifika students coming to her school from contributing schools.

There were no Pasifika students in EAL classes at Anita’s school. In Learning Conversation 1, Anita seemed a bit unclear and overwhelmed about a direction for Pasifika students in non-EAL classes. She said, “What is going to be my role now with them? I don’t know. Do I need to learn Samoan? Teach me Samoan! No!”

As part of the PLD, Anita did some investigation into the achievement data on Pasifika students in her school. She also looked at the pattern of achievement for Pasifika students in a contributing primary school. She looked at her school’s lack of success in getting Pasifika students to achieve on a par with other students in NCEA over a number of years. She became aware of a positive relationship of Pasifika success with the years when there was an earlier cross-curricular focus in the school on Literacy (minutes of Pasifika PLG meeting). She compared the NCEA Level 1 Literacy achievement of Pasifika students in non-EAL classes with those students in her EAL class and found that the students in her EAL classes had more success.

Anita began to question some of the current school practices, especially the placement of Pasifika ELLs in ‘Supported Learning’ classes along with students with a range of learning difficulties. The primary teachers in the PLG explained how the Pasifika students moving into ‘Supported Learning’ felt it was a blow to their self-esteem. It was questioned whether the pace of learning would be sufficient to support the Pasifika students’ accelerated learning and whether their pathways would be narrowed (Pasifika PLG Meeting Minutes, Learning Conversation 2).

Anita began to look at students from a long-term point of view. Through one aspect of the PLD, she worked with the network of teachers from a contributing school and began to develop an understanding of the young Pasifika students moving from the primary/intermediate school context. In particular she began to observe the expectations on Pasifika students who were regarded as successful ELLs when they were younger yet identified as unsuccessful students in the achievement data when they were older (Minutes of Pasifika PLG Meeting).
So through the PLD interruption, both Sue and Anita gained knowledge about Pasifika students. They both were drawn to focus on Pasifika students. For Sue the focus was on Pasifika students in her EAL class and for Anita the focus was on Pasifika students in the wider school.

4.2.3 Teacher-participants’ understanding about what students do

It appeared that Sue began the research with the idea that good learners were expected to do tasks, as directed. Observing a lesson, I noted that the students were relatively passive. Sue had a central, very active role: she was the teacher controlling, dictating content, language focus and activities. Even though the students were sitting in groups, there was little student interaction. The focus was on the whiteboard, the teacher and the worksheets (Observation). The students did things and then handed them to the teacher to be marked (Reflective Journal). When asked what a visitor to her class would see, hear, feel or smell, she replied “They’d see very motivated, busy, on-task students” (Initial Interview). The teacher directed the learning and the students did what they were told to do.

Sue seemed to think that students should behave well. Through her tone and enthusiasm, Sue expressed great delight with this class. According to her explanations, the reasons for this class being a pleasure to teach were situated in their behaviour. Sue said, “I don’t do any behavioural monitoring”. Sue compared teaching this class with teaching in other contexts, saying, “That [behavioural monitoring] which was 90% of my time as a mainstream teacher, doesn’t exist. It’s like a luxury.” For this reason, as well as “what the students bring and low class numbers”, Sue regarded the class as “easy” to teach.

In my interpretation of Sue’s teaching I noted that, at the beginning of the research period, students either functioned well or did not function properly (Reflective Journal). The teacher was understood to be the expert and the students were understood in some way to be ‘fixed’ or ‘improved’. This is borne out by her statement,

“You can take in evidence of their work; you can hear it, you can read it, you can talk about it ... you can find ways of measuring it and you can action something to attend to it.” (Learning Conversation 1)

As “you” is understood to be the teacher, then most of the action to generate improvement was the teacher’s action, not the students’. The teacher controlled the learning and the students’ learning would happen essentially as a result of the teacher’s actions.
In the course of the PLD, Sue gave more autonomy to the students. As part of the PLD, she decided to explore several foci through her own action-oriented research. The main focus for her inquiry was to get her students to improve their own editing. The action involved working in groups with the students, encouraging them to discuss each other’s writing, gradually giving them more autonomy and opportunity for interaction. So even though the emphasis was still on correction, there seemed to be a shift in Sue’s attitude about how students act, from a passive to a more active role. In her Appendix I PowerPoint about her inquiry she identified the outcomes for the focus students as:

- Talk,
- Quality of talk,
- Attitude: medium to excellent,
- Independence (PowerPoint, slide 12)

These outcomes appear to be very different from Sue’s initial intention to get the students to pay attention to editing their own work. Sue had gradually put the students in the steering seat. Sue could be heard in her teaching saying, “What can we do about that? ... Where are we up to? ...Ask each other. .... Are you happy with that?” (Video 2). Sue noted that the students were taking this control independently, using important interactive phrases like, “You start ... cross that out ... yeah that’s right”, and helping each other with their different knowledges about how English works: “Put plural ... Each team includes [student emphasis] ...” and spelling out “e a c h” (stimulated recall from Video 2). Sue noted that one quiet student who had very good knowledge of grammar gained in speaking confidence because that girl could contribute her grammatical expertise. It was not an easy or dramatic transition. In our conversation, Sue and I agreed that the students were all from educational and cultural contexts which emphasised roles of teacher-expert and teacher-authority (Learning Conversation 3 after both viewing Video 2).

By the end of the action research, Sue is very enthusiastic about individual learning. In the Final Interview, she describes some student actions that are very different from the description in her Initial Interview.

They will come and ask you what they want, something like this – I’ve got one student who’ll ask me for pages out of a grammar book because she wants to work on it and would I photocopy them; so I do. And that’s what she wants. And another one says I don’t want grammar pages. I want you to sit down and explain this particular point to me. So when you’ve got students like that – I think I am encouraging this.
Sue appeared to be much more responsive to individuals, noticing what they liked or needed and endeavouring to provide for each of them. She appeared to be significantly moving away from a ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach.

The metaphors that Sue used may shed some light on her developing understanding. Early on, she used descriptors about the students’ learning that might have reflected a view of a singular, linear route to success. Terms included, “a means to an end”, “a road” and “a pathway” (Initial Interview, Learning Conversation 1). Sue began to talk about students’ learning in more complexity. Near the end of the research, she described students being in “a web” of learning (Learning Conversation 3).

This shift in Sue’s thinking about her students’ learning is summarised in her own words, “I have found experimenting with ways of helping students learn how to learn, an uncertain science, but this uncertainty means the students are choosing their own paths to understanding – and that was the goal” (PowerPoint, slide 18). Sue seems to have become more accepting and welcoming of her students’ different strengths and needs.

Both Sue and Anita were positive about students’ bilingualism and encouraged students to speak their home languages inside and outside the EAL classes. While I did not see either of them actively getting students to discuss ‘trans-languaging’ at a metacognitive level, both seemed more actively encouraging of bilingual discussions than other EAL teachers that I have observed. In Sue’s class some languages were more dominant than others. The Thai and Japanese students spoke more loudly in their own languages than the Pasifika students. As there were no Pasifika students in Anita’s classes, there was not an opportunity to observe their Pasifika language use.

From the beginning, Anita tended to describe her students as ‘learners’ rather than ‘students’. Anita described ELLs as “learners of other languages acquiring English for a variety of reasons in different contexts” (Initial Interview). So, at the very beginning of the PLD, Anita acknowledged that students brought with them other learning in other languages. She also considered that their purposes for learning English were going to be diverse. Anita’s response to the interview question about what a visitor would encounter in her classroom, elaborates on the notion that her learners have roles as teachers.

“My class can be quite noisy. You’ll hear a mixture of home languages and English...sometimes the more experienced learners supporting the new learners from the same home language background (Initial Interview).”
This comment additionally reflects the idea that students have some autonomy in their interactions. This is supported in an observation of Anita’s class where there were many different activities going on at once, with opportunities provided for students to support each other.

An aspect of Anita’s teaching that I found revealing and different from other schools in which I have worked, was that she seemed to be regarding the learners as in her class as visitors’ rather than ‘permanent residents’. In other schools, and even in other classes within Anita’s school, it was assumed that the students would be there for the whole year at least. In the first interview, Anita described how she was “going to graduate eight students out” of her EAL class, conscious of their progress and changing needs. She wanted students to link the learning in her class with the “school-wide environment”, enabling them to “access the curriculum outside the English language course” (Initial Interview). While this notion did not represent change in response to the PLD, I thought it worth noticing the way that Anita regarded her students as ‘on the move’. It suggests a 21st Century, ‘knowledge as a verb’ understanding of EAL.

Anita identified some areas in which she developed her understanding about what students should be tasked with. Anita’s consciousness was raised in thinking about students developing in the Key Competencies. She was interested in her students and the Key Competencies of ‘Managing Self’ (Final Interview). She became keen to involve her students as much as possible in monitoring their own learning. Anita saw the potential in them tracking their own progress on the English Language Learning Progressions (Learning Conversation 2). Although there is no evidence of Anita helping students to do this during the research period, it was likely from our discussions that this was her clear intention.

Anita acknowledged that she was already “big on the ‘participation’ [Key Competencies] in class” (Final Interview). However, she said that spurred by Swain’s (2010) conference presentation, she had thought more about the Key Competencies of participation, pursuing ideas “about emotion and kids getting excited about things” (Final Interview). She gave an example of “a Chinese girl, Year 9, who doesn’t say boo to a goose in other classes, but she’ll put her hand up my class”. Anita suggested that by being relaxed, this student was able to participate, and thus develop in her English. To explain this Anita compared the situation to” having a couple of beers and you’re speaking to someone and you’re speaking in their language! ... You get more relaxed and you’re kind of using the language!” So Anita expected her students to be involved, to participate and to learn in a complex environment where her students’ emotions were acknowledged.
Anita also discussed the Key Competencies of ‘thinking’. She described positive experiences for students who were involved in the development of arguments. She gave an example of getting students thinking critically about the “advantages and disadvantages” of transport in the cities that they came from. She found that “with the right levels of support, students at different levels could do this”. So Anita found that she was increasingly getting students to think in a critical way.

4.2.4 Summary of shifts in teacher participants’ understanding about their learners

Both teacher-participants made different shifts in identifying which students might require their attention. Anita came to see a gap or injustice in not attending to the needs of ELLs, including Pasifika students, who were learning outside EAL classes. In turning her attention to students outside the shelter of her EAL Department, one of her focuses was on other teachers who might benefit from learning more about teaching ELLs. In a sense, other teachers were becoming her students too.

While neither teacher initially had Pasifika students keenly within their sights, both did by the end of the PLD. Both teachers supported their students as bilingual learners. Anita began to make changes in the wider school, seeing Pasifika students as more capable of achieving Level 1 Literacy in particular, with cross-curricular EAL methodology.

Sue made a significant shift from thinking about what her students ‘do’. She appeared to change from accepting that her students were well-behaved but under-performing, operating largely in a one-size-fits-all teacher-directed classroom. By the end, she expressed a goal of having students, “choosing their own pathways to understanding” in a classroom dominated by meaningful learning conversations between students and with the teacher. Anita’s focus developed quite differently from Sue’s. Within her class, Anita looked at students developing a greater range of Key Competencies.

4.3 Teacher-participants’ understandings about curriculum and teaching

The two main themes that emerged in the data about curriculum fall broadly into notions about curriculum policy (the ‘intended’ and ‘planned’ curriculum) and also what the teachers did in their teaching/curriculum practice (the ‘planned’ and ‘taught’ curriculum). There is some overlap in the two themes in relation to the planning of curriculum. For both teachers there were tacit understandings about EAL curriculum that were not official policies but which nevertheless influenced their decision-making.
The teachers in the project were trying to make sense of different policy frameworks and documents and the place of EAL in national curriculum frameworks. In analysing the teacher-participants’ conversations and documents, it is interesting to me to see which policy documents they choose to engage with and the way they choose to use them.

4.3.1 Teacher-participants’ understandings about curriculum in policy

In the beginning phase of the research, Sue showed an understanding of curriculum as being something that was set down, prescribed and to be delivered. This is ‘curriculum as policy’ or ‘formal’ curriculum. The idea about curriculum being an externally defined body of knowledge, was revealed in the first interview, where Sue described her earlier teaching of Subject X in New Zealand secondary schools. She said, “You just follow the curriculum blindly and hope the little dears will pick something up from it as you go”. So the curriculum was something that was decided by some external authority that teachers delivered. Sue also revealed her assumptions in the statement that, “the curriculum is laid down” (Initial Interview). To Sue, a curriculum seemed to be something that gave boundaries to learning outcomes. Sue talked about “in the confines of the goals of the curriculum” (Learning Conversation 1). It was apparent that Sue had not engaged previously with the revised NZC because she did not refer to the Principles that underpin decision-making, or about the importance of developing Key Competencies. Even though I modelled how to connect EAL teaching, underpinned by the Principles, developing Key Competencies and reaching for the Achievement Objectives of the Learning Areas, she did not take this up. For whatever reasons, Sue did not seem to want to engage with the NZC.

In contrast, while Sue showed some resistance to the NZC, she clearly favoured the Ministry of Education’s ELLP. She drew on this document, for example, to map her students’ progression in developing writing. This adherence to the ELLP could be seen in her mark-book, which had dated columns with each student’s ELLP stage. It appears that the ELLP document with its matrices of stages was more akin to Sue’s expectations of a curriculum document than the NZC. It may be that the EAL focus of ELLP meant that she related to this document. This is evident in the teaching-as-inquiry planning documents, where ELLP is frequently referred to (Appendix I PowerPoint, slides 4 and 6), while no language from the NZC can be seen. ELLP seemed to provide some security as it described specific measurable aspects of decontextualised English language. Sue found that she was comfortable in highlighting students’ language development on the matrices.
Curriculum, for Sue was conflated with national assessment demands. The national NCEA qualification, provided an external framework that Sue chose to regard as curriculum. When pressed about the goals of the curriculum, she talked about “a big goal of having to pass the Unit Standards”. This understanding of NCEA as the curriculum was reinforced in Sue’s statement, “the curriculum is laid down so I know, for example, Unit Standards” (Initial Interview). Sue seemed to superimpose the ESOL Unit Standards as a framework for her teaching. The outcomes for the students became the Unit Standards performance criteria. These Unit Standard outcomes were narrow and measurable, relative to any statement about EAL in the NZC. The use of NCEA as a quasi-curriculum is not unusual or unexpected. Sue talked about how her ideas about the use of NCEA assessment criteria as curriculum objectives had been “shaped by my involvement with ESOL outside the school, meeting with other teachers this year”. The literature (see Chapter 3) around curriculum development suggested that such super-imposition of an assessment agenda might occur with such a broad curriculum as the NZC.

How did Sue develop her understanding about EAL curriculum prior to my involvement? It seemed that in switching from teaching Subject X to teaching EAL, Sue felt assured by the idea that she could deliver EAL content knowledge. The evolution of this understanding about English language curriculum was revealed when Sue reflected on her experience of a Certificate in English Language Teaching Association (CELTA) course. She seemed horrified that she had previously taught EAL overseas without that English language expertise knowledge (Interview 1). She declared “My god, what a cheek I’ve got as a Subject X teacher to think that I can suddenly enter the world of English teachers with all their knowledge of how language develops!” It appears her conceptualisation of her role as a teacher was linked with having a package of knowledge. She was quite disparaging about the teaching in an overseas country, where she was asked not to focus on grammar as, “that was the role of local teachers”. Instead, she was asked to create resources and “there was this activity to practice and that activity to practice … I didn’t really slot into a picture as a whole … I was just flitting across the top” (Initial Interview). For Sue, there was a tacit understanding that grammar teaching was an essential and dominant component of EAL curriculum.

As Sue’s awareness of different views of curriculum policy developed within the PLD, a tension arose. In Learning Conversation 2, after a lesson observation, Sue and I had a discussion that appeared to “make [Sue’s and my] tacit knowledge explicit in relation to [our] professional learning focus” (Earl and Timperley, 2008, p. 17). I was saying that I was trying to “keep a focus on the NZC in terms of the big ideas” and Sue checked my meaning by asking, “The mainstream
approach?” I contested, saying, “Well, the NZC full-stop”, and Sue responded that “We haven’t got one for ESOL though.” So in spite of what I thought was my repeated explanation about how we were all working out of the same document, that the NZC set the direction for all students’, Sue was yet to realise this link.

By the final interview, Sue was able to articulate the tension about different understandings of curriculum quite clearly. This clarity represents a shift in her understanding about curriculum. She said to me, “I think you count the curriculum differently. I’m still facing the struggle between NCEA requirements and the more holistic approach to language learning.” There are contradictions in this comment because I would contest that a holistic approach can easily be inclusive of outcomes that fulfil NCEA requirements. Additionally, I had noticed that Sue’s approach had become more holistic as her involvement in the PLD continued.

To sum up Sue’s response to PLD about curriculum, the realisation that EAL does not fit neatly into one Learning Area with defined achievement objectives was very problematic for her. That she would have to make lots of decisions about what and how to teach her focus class appeared to be daunting. However, she tackled this task with enthusiasm. She was very open to guidance from me and chose opportunities which made sense to her.

Anita took great interest in curriculum policy and as part of her engagement chose to pursue a number of interests beyond the focus class that she identified in the Initial Interview. The idea that EAL teachers tend to have considerable flexibility in terms of processes and content they chose to use, seemed energising to Anita. However the complexity of the task did, she admitted, provide challenges for her.

The student-centred intent of the NZC was something that Anita seemed to grasp, relish and advocate. When asked to describe EAL in the first question of the first interview, Anita said, “ESOL is for English language learners acquiring English for a variety of reasons in different contexts”. In choosing the word “learners”, Anita demonstrated her understanding of an emphasis on the students, rather than on teaching the subject. Furthermore, in that sentence Anita expressed an understanding about difference. By noting “a variety of reasons”, she acknowledged that students have a diversity of aspirations. She added “I use the students’ backgrounds to help them access the language, but actually help them where they’re heading as well. I use where they are as a learner culturally and linguistically, and use that as a pathway to give them some direction to where they are going”. In this first interview, Anita’s ideas resonated with the NZC Principles of inclusion, cultural diversity, coherence and future
focus. The extent to which Anita did what she talked about is unknown, but her explanation showed a sophisticated understanding of the NZC.

Also in relation to the NZC, Anita described EAL as a “methodology that can be used throughout the curriculum”. This understanding of EAL as a methodology fits with the positioning of EAL in the NZC (p. 16), where EAL is described along with Literacy, as providing access to learning in all Learning Areas. On several occasions, Anita described the links with mainstream learning in her teaching of the junior Intensive English class: “you’ll see a lot of different subjects”, “my job is to introduce them to the school-wide environment”, “I support them in accessing different areas of the school”, and, “I look at what they are learning right across the curriculum”. By the end of the PLD period, Anita articulated that she saw her role as being more like an adviser to teachers in her school (Final Interview).

While Anita maintained her NZC-driven notions throughout the PLD period, she added strands relating to other Ministry of Education and NZQA policy. In Learning Conversation 1, Anita said, “I suppose there are three or four things [I want to develop].” Here Anita was coming to terms with several aspects of curriculum policy concurrently.

One strand of interest for Anita was the use of ELLP in negotiating different aspects of curriculum. Anita took ELLP as a policy with which she was somewhat familiar, not as something new. She said “perhaps looking at ELLP again” (Learning Conversation 1) and described two new purposes. She wanted to use ELLP to make sense of the initial English assessments used for ELLs when students first arrived at the school. She also wanted to “create a course outline that reflects the NZC and ELLP” (Learning Conversation 1). It is interesting to analyse Anita’s use of ELLP and think whether, in her mind, it was an enabler or a constraint or perhaps both. Also, to consider what kind of policy document Anita thought ELLP was: a curriculum document or an assessment document or both. In the Initial Interview, Anita had described a rich curriculum that was responsive to her students’ multiple backgrounds and futures. Where ELLP was to be introduced to organise initial assessments, Anita might have been considering whether it would really enable better understanding about students, or whether it was just a means of regulating the existing assessment procedures. Where ELLP was being introduced into the curriculum planning, Anita may have been considering the possibility that it was a compliance requirement for teachers and a frustration rather than an advantage. This is perhaps borne out in Anita’s comment, “I suppose it’s just changing some of the language of it, the mechanics of it”.

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Anita was negotiating multiple policies concurrently. The complexities and opportunities in NCEA were important for her, alongside other developments. She introduced discussion on NCEA assessment saying, “Oh and the other thing at the moment, there’s all sorts of things going on. We’ve got new ESOL standards, we’ve got gaining Literacy through other subjects now, we’ve got the Literacy standards”. While Anita seemed enthusiastic, she did sound overwhelmed by the range of opportunities saying, “I need a workshop on ESOL standards. What ESOL standards are you introducing next year? What are the best ones? What are the pathways for ESOL students? What are the pathways for Kiwi students?” Anita was thinking about different pathways as well as different assessments. This was a sign that she was negotiating a complex policy landscape that was not particularly clear for the ELLs that she was thinking about.

By end of the PLD period, Anita had a stronger understanding of the complex and interwoven nature of these documents. Evidence of this assurance comes in some statements from the Final Interview. Anita mentioned data gathering, course structures and NCEA assessments and then said, “I’m at the stage where I want to say – where does everything fit now?” It seems Anita now had sufficient overview of the policies to be able to evaluate some of the planning in her department.

4.3.2 Teacher-participants’ understandings about curriculum in practice

‘Curriculum in practice’ is interpreted here as how the teachers developed and constructed curriculum in their own contexts. It relates to the ‘planned curriculum and the ‘taught’ curriculum.

Sue was very keen to be involved in change at the practice level, even though she continued to want an external, prescribed, measurable curriculum. Her developing curriculum in practice, in the absence of a prescribed curriculum, produced some satisfying developments as well as some tensions.

The NZC inquiry cycle (Figure 9) became the main planning tool for Sue as can be seen in Appendix I, slide 6. This provided a means for her to explore individuals’ learning. Concurrently, Sue made considerable use of ELLP as a means of identifying where students were in terms of language acquisition and then to identify the next steps. She tracked each student closely, using different coloured highlighters on the ELLP matrices. She used information from ELLP to help her identify the student learning needs that she recorded on the teaching-as-inquiry cycle. Sue also took up the notion of scaffolding from the Gibbon’s book, *Scaffolding Language, Scaffolding Learning* (2002) and applied these ideas in her teaching. Evidence of this use of the concept of scaffolding language can also be
seen in the teaching-as-inquiry cycle in Appendix I, slide 6. This close attention to students’ needs along with the inquiry process that may have helped give rise to Sue’s shift in practice, from regarding the class as a whole to responding to individuals.

It became apparent towards the end of the PLD that Sue was not using the tabulated unit planning tool that her Head of Department (HOD) had supplied to reflect the school’s model formats. Nor was she using a format for planning that reflected secondary EAL teaching pedagogy accessed on the Ministry of Education website: (http://esolonline.tki.org.nz/ESOL-Online/Student-needs/Planning-for-learning/Course-planning-years-9-13). These unit models refer to the NZC including the Principles, the Key Competencies and the Achievement Objectives in the eight Learning Areas as well as ELLP. By not utilising such conventional planning methods, there was a potential danger for the teaching to go in idiosyncratic directions. The danger is exemplified in Sue’s overuse of a Unit Standard assessment activity that I had co-constructed with her. It was to be used as a summative assessment at the end of a brief unit that I had given her, aimed to get students comparing sports using comparative language and critical thinking. I found, ten weeks later, that Sue was instead using our co-constructed assessment formatively on many single texts instead. In Sue’s own words, “I keep reeling them out” (Learning Conversation 2). This inclination to provide a lot of formative assessment over a long period of time might have been better managed by using more conventional planning models, which generally have wider ranging learning foci, activities and a defined time frame. There would also be contextual advantages of using models that fitted with a school’s expectations of planning so that the students and other teachers felt the EAL class learning fitted with the rhythms and expectations of the school. Additionally, without Sue including Achievement Objectives from the NZC, there was a danger that the language learning would not be aligned with the intellectual potential and social competence of the students.

While Sue maintained her curriculum ideas about correct grammar being centrally important, her approach certainly changed over the six months. In her own teaching-as-inquiry, Sue identified a need to change because she was not seeing an improvement in the students’ writing. At the beginning, Sue had been doing much correcting of students’ writing. The students had completed writing, handed it in to her and she had corrected it. Sue later chose to focus on how to get students to edit their own writing more effectively. She initially expected a shift from teacher-to-student-correction of grammar to students’ self-correction of grammar. However, the change actually brought about was in getting students to work in groups to edit each other’s writing. This became student-to-student advice on editing. Sue told me that she was influenced by Gibbon’s ideas of
scaffolding and of providing ‘high challenge with high support’. Sue said, “I’ve gone away from deficit learning (focus on errors) sic – rather - sculpting the writing step by step.” (Appendix I PowerPoint, slide 3). By the time Sue wrote the text for her PowerPoint presentation, she clearly acknowledged this change.

Sue drew on a number of sources in making curriculum decisions. These sources tended to be external. As a PLD facilitator, I seemed to be regarded as an expert. It is noted in my Reflective Journal that I was surprised at someone taking up some of my models so completely. The ESOL Unit Standard assessment activity for the sports unit I had modelled was one example. Sue also used some commercially produced ESOL Unit Standards assessment activities quite extensively. In my experience, this reliance on ready-made materials is not unusual for EAL teachers, especially those who are new in the field.

NCEA became a driver for curriculum practice for Sue. This could have been for several reasons. One could be that outside expertise was available, from me and commercial sources. Alternatively, it could be that NCEA provided learning outcomes that were approximately aligned with ELLP. A third reason could be the influence of other teachers who also framed their teaching around NCEA. Further, the students who valued NCEA credits could have influenced the focus on Unit Standard performance criteria as curriculum outcomes. The NZC could have been too abstract for Sue to grapple with at the time. While the teaching-as-inquiry model, ELLP and NCEA were the most evident constructs in Sue’s teaching, there were elements that linked to other ideas in the NZC.

There were small signs of Sue changing the intent of her teaching to reflect a bigger purpose than merely language acquisition. This was to a position of language for other learning, rather than English language acquisition as an end in itself. Sue used a model unit of work that I had developed to demonstrate how ELLs benefitted from being given opportunities to think critically. She articulated the intention to involve students in “ideas; vocabulary; emotional; empathetic content through role play, academic writing ….. weaving the NZC values into the learning” (Appendix I PowerPoint). She later talked positively about how the students had got involved in discussion about ethical issues (Learning Conversation 3). Sue also attempted to develop academic rigour by contextualising some of the English language learning in contexts that the students would meet in other subjects. For example, she took up my suggestion that she use her Subject X teaching background, providing a context for English language development. Her students’ writing showed considerably developed sophistication with this topic. She also used a model unit that I gave her that involved students in debating about issues and injustices. She later reported that her students were “animated” in their discussions (Learning Conversation 3). So
it was possible to see a development in Sue's intentions that were wider in purpose than earlier in the year. The outcomes of this development were demonstrated in the Appendix I PowerPoint where a student's writing samples from early in the year were compared with later much more sophisticated writing.

In terms of Anita's curriculum practice, I have tried to unpack the EAL 'methodology' that she referred to in the Initial Interview. I drew on the recorded discussion about one of Anita's classes to understand her meaning of EAL methodology. In coming to understand Anita's ideas, I have referred to EAL methodology and pedagogy synonymously with 'curriculum in practice'.

Firstly, Anita emphasised finding out about students' language strengths by "drawing on their first language" and cultural experiences, looking at "where the students are culturally and linguistically ... and bringing all their experiences". Here, Anita acknowledged affective factors as well as students' learning. It appears that an important aspect of her methodology/ pedagogy was to map the students' English in order to identify "the kind of language to aim at" (Learning Conversation 1). Anita referred to ELLP, loosely grouping her class "from a linguistic perspective, sitting between Foundation and Stage 2" (Learning Conversation 1). This use of ELLP would help to identify individual language learning foci.

Anita concurrently investigated the learning experiences her students encountered outside her EAL class, saying, "I look at what they're doing right in other subjects. I am in contact with different teachers so that I know what is going on in their other subjects" (Initial Interview). Through this communication, Anita identified the kinds of English the students would need to learn most urgently and established her language learning programme outcomes that would enable the students to access learning outcomes in their different subjects.

From this point, having identified students' learning needs, Anita's methodology/pedagogy took her to designing differentiated learning activities. Anita said that, "you'll see a lot of different subject areas, students reading a variety of texts" (Initial Interview). The organisation of the differentiated learning was partly managed through "a list of what's going to happen on the right hand side of the board" (Initial Interview). Anita referred to students from the same language background supporting each other, using their own languages. She also told me that, "There'll be a variety of learners from different cultural backgrounds – exchanging conversations with each other" (Initial interview). Anita said, "You'll see a lot of scaffolding to build learners up to different tasks". She described how she gave her students dense, challenging
texts that they were likely to encounter outside the EAL class. The focus of the teaching was on dealing with dense texts. In terms of scaffolding writing, Anita described helping students to build increasing complexity. There were high expectations of involvement and of students engaging in high levels of thinking with differentiated types of support. These examples underlined an idea that there is not a one-size-fits-all approach.

However in Anita’s practice, there were some influences that were different from her espoused ideas about curriculum. The learning, according to Anita, was “sometimes quite structured” and she talked about teaching “step by step” in initial interview. A deep knowledge of grammar was understood by Anita to be essential for EAL teaching (Initial Interview). Phonological awareness was also understood as an important aspect of EAL teaching and learning (Initial Interview, Learning Conversation 1). At the beginning, Anita was teaching a phonological awareness programme once a day in her Intensive English class (Learning Conversation 1). It is interesting to me that towards the end of the research period, including the Final Interview, Anita made no mention of her cognitive content one-size-fits-all grammar or pronunciation teaching as separate from any other teaching and learning. It may be that she came to integrate and personalise these aspects of EAL learning, or it may be that Anita kept quiet about these teaching approaches because she perceived that I might challenge them.

In the middle of the research period, in a recorded learning conversation, Anita was anxious to come to grips with some of the expectations from the Ministry of Education about teaching EAL. She had already used ELLP relatively extensively. Anita had addressed a staff meeting prior to the PLD period in which she had tried to explain ELLP to the whole staff of her school (Learning Conversation 1). A more thorough use of the ELLP was particularly in her sights. For example, Anita was keen to see how the English language assessments for ELLs entering the school could be aligned with ELLP. Additionally, she wanted to see how this alignment could better inform the planning for teaching. She contemplated changing the classes to better align and said, “It would be a nightmare. I don’t. We’d have to do that pretty gradually.” By the end, she wanted to have the students engaged with monitoring their own progress on ELLP. It seemed that Anita saw lots of potential in the ELLP, but in practice it seemed like hard work.

The influence of NCEA appeared not to be dominating curriculum practice in Anita’s EAL classes. While NCEA changes were causing some anxiety for Anita, the assessments were referred to in terms of pathways, rather than as a force in curriculum design. Anita seemed to positively manage linking assessment with strong curriculum practice. She said “ ... I look at some of our Level 2 courses and
I think there are a number of [mainstream English NCEA assessments] there. But I look at some of them and think no, actually that course isn’t good for our ESOL kids, we should do something else.” So Anita clearly had a vision of what her students needed to learn and was determined that the assessment should match the learning rather than dictate the learning.

Anita seemed excited by learning that occurred outside the EAL classes. She was looking at accessing cross-curricular, ‘naturally-occurring’ evidence, tracking from a range of Learning Areas (Technology, Social Studies, Science, etc.) to provide evidence for ELLs’ Level 1 Literacy Unit Standards. I observed in a Literacy workshop that Anita had examples of work from these classes and had analysed the writing that the students had done. This was exceptional as all the other teachers had drawn samples only from their own English or EAL classes. This excitement was also apparent in Anita’s interviews. For example, although Anita did not teach any Pasifika students that year, she was showing interest in their learning, saying, “and the other thing was Pasifika students – you know, following their progress and supporting them – how can I support them with their literacy, and should I be going in – is it my job or is it Michelle’s [pseudonym, Literacy Leader’s] job. I don’t know, but I really want to be involved in that” (Final Interview). Anita was showing interest in students’ learning in a range of contexts.

It should be mentioned that some of the curriculum possibilities seemed somewhat overwhelming to Anita. When I told her that there were likely to be changes to University Entrance Literacy in the future, Anita’s response was, “Oh you’re joking! What are you working on now! Don’t tell me that!” followed by exhausted laughter (Learning Conversation 1).

4.4 Analysis of the teachers’ epistemological shifts in relation to knowledge, curriculum and EAL teaching and learning

In this section I look back at my thematic analysis of the teacher-participants’ shifting ideas and practices. I analyse them in relation to theoretical conceptualisations. I reflect on how contexts shape their ideas about knowledge, curriculum and EAL teaching. I highlight teachers’ shifting conceptualisations of knowledge and knowing through different realist and relativist theoretical lenses.

I return to the theoretical lenses (outlined at the beginning of Chapter 3) to identify distinctions between realism and relativism (Clegg and Bailey, as cited in Abbiss & Quinlivan, 2011). Thus, the ideas of ‘knowledge as a noun’, ‘positivism’ and ‘structuralism’ belong at the realist end of a continuum. In contrast, the
‘knowledge as a verb’ or ‘performative knowledge’ notion (Gilbert, 2005), ‘processual knowledge’ (Ortega, 2009) ‘transformative knowledge’ (Sleeter, 2005) and ‘epistemological pluralism’ (Andreotti, 2010) sit at the realist end. Within EAL teaching, a realist view would expect a national curriculum identifying what needed to be taught, and that English language learning was separate from knowing other languages and learning in other subjects, that the expert teacher’s key role was teaching grammar and vocabulary. Such a view would also expect a goal of achieving ‘native speaker’ proficiency and that students would be taught these skills through particular methods. Students would be expected to do what the teacher directed. Conversely, within a relativist paradigm, knowledge is seen to be generated in social and cultural contexts, to be subjective and dependent. Within EAL teaching, expectations from a relativist view would include a curriculum that was devised in relation to students’ prior experiences and existing languages, students’ needs and interests. It would involve co-constructed and self-directed learning. A relativist view would be underpinned by a pedagogy of promise, with expectation that students could learn utilising their multiple languages and identities. They could achieve this through English, a language they were using, but still learning.

I caution that any shifts in understandings that I attach to the participants about conceptualisations about knowledge, curriculum and EAL teaching and learning, should be viewed as tentative and not definitive. As mentioned in the Literature Review (Chapter 3), learners’ beliefs are unstable, not separable and not discrete (Woods, 2003). The teacher-participants’ conceptualisations in this study should be similarly understood. Given the interpretive paradigm of my methodology, which assumes multiple possible realities and interpretations, my findings also need to be regarded as tentative, interrelated and not impartial. The theoretical lenses that I look through are nevertheless significant in illuminating understandings.

4.4.1 Focus on conceptualisation of knowledge and influences on these

The teacher-participants’ conceptualisations of knowledge had many influences. As adults, they came to the PLD with their own well-developed values, prior knowledge and experiences. The teachers were influenced by the different contexts in which they worked. Their ideas reflected both their prior understandings and also newer views stemming from theories that were new to them. Therefore their ideas reflected some inconsistencies and contradictions.

The contexts within which the teacher-participants shaped their epistemological understandings were multiple and different (Shaver, 1992). The social contexts within both teachers’ schools had an impact on their approaches to teaching EAL. Both were quite new in their EAL roles, creating some similarities. I think that
their newness in their roles meant that they were keen to maintain their involvement in the PLD and maintained a positive and prolonged engagement with me. They were both willing and open to listening to and discussing new ideas even if they rejected some. For example, both maintained engagement using ELLP, both maintained their interest in inquiring into their own practice and both teachers continued discussion about EAL curriculum.

At the beginning of the research period, probably due to prior experiences, Sue had an apparent realist understanding of knowledge. I would suggest this was because of her particular conceptualisations of traditional Subject X teaching which would have had its foundations in quantitative research. In terms of conceptualisations of her own knowledge, that knowledge was fixed, certain and transmittable. She saw teachers as experts imparting knowledge, whether they were Subject X teachers who taught Subject X facts or EAL teachers who taught and corrected grammar. I do not know about the theoretical influences that provided a foundation for the CELTA course, but it appears this course could also have impacted on Sue’s valuing of ‘knowledge as a noun’, particularly knowledge of English grammar. At the outset, there was a ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach so all students had the same texts, activities and assessments. Assessment was expected to happen under strict test conditions and marks recorded in a mark book. In the earlier phases of the research, Sue appeared to strongly prefer an EAL curriculum in which a step-by-step teaching programme would be laid out.

So Sue made considerable shifts in her way of thinking about her own knowledge. Through the PLD, Sue shifted to develop some understandings and practices associated with EAL knowledge that reflected a ‘knowledge as a verb’ position. In creating groups of learners and supporting them to help each other with their learning of English, Sue was understanding that the construction of knowledge about learning was social (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006, Walqui & van Lier, 2010), and or ‘performative’ and ‘processual’. Sue even dipped her toe into ideas about transformative knowledge (Sleeter, 2005), engaging her students in some critical thinking activities. Additionally, having in mind Hofer’s (2004) dimensions of knowledge, especially the one about the source and authority of knowledge, I could see a shift in Sue. By the end of the research period, her understanding about knowledge had grown to a point where she could explain our different conceptualisations. When Sue pointed out our different views on curriculum, she was aware that knowing was not unproblematic, that it was contestable and subject to power relations (Abbiss, 2012; Bordieu, 2000; Lahire, 2003). Furthermore, it appears that Sue came to value the reflective, recursive nature and tentativeness of the inquiry process.
Anita, on the other hand, seemed to reflect a mix of understanding about realist and relativist ideas. In this articulating, she was influenced by various theoretical approaches to EAL teaching. In some aspects, there were strong cognitive approaches which she addressed with one-size-fits-all teaching, such as the phonological awareness practices. Concurrently, Anita managed her students’ “quite noisy” and multilingual learning, relating the language learning to the academic rigour of learning in other parts of the school. In this aspect Anita generally appeared to be operating from a socio-cultural (Lantolf & Thorn, 2006), social-constructionist base (Burr 2003). She was conscious that the students’ learning in her class was importantly social and set up commensurate learning opportunities. She identified her students as ‘learners’, attributing them with an active role in their title, rather than as potentially passive ‘students’. Moreover, developing language knowledge was understood to be in preparation for further learning, not as an end in itself. Language use was regarded as complex, multiple and purposeful in the context of activities that were designed to be social. Further, I identified ‘post’ and social justice influences as she questioned school systems and sought equitable pathways for English language learners, including Pasifika students. Anita was taking a more critical role, indirectly influenced by what Andreotti (2010) describes as epistemological pluralism. Anita was developing a growing understanding about power relations in language recognition and beginning to question why certain languages were taught and not others. She began to look at linguistic inequalities (Garcia, 2009a; Skutnabb-Kangas, 2009), questioning whether her school could be doing more to recognise particular students’ home languages. She questioned whether at school, students’ home languages were subject to the “benign neglect” described by Cummins and Early (2011, p. 4). She also questioned why, in her school, no Pasifika students were recognised as developing in English language competency. She questioned whether Pasifika students were understood to have issues, with associated low expectations, rather than having academic English language, or CALP (Cummins, 2000) learning needs. In beginning to address the way her school responded to different cultural groups, Anita’s role was emerging as a ‘cultural broker’ (Andreotti, 2010).

As the literature in Chapter 3 revealed, EAL teaching is a field having many theoretical influences. I suggest that Anita’s Masters’ Degree in this field would have provided a range of theoretical influences, supporting the realist and easily-measurable aspects of phonology, but also enabling her to know how to support more relativist notions, such as having high levels of interaction and differentiation in the language classroom. It appears to me that the ‘post’ influences for Anita came through this PLD. There is no doubt that her prior experiences would have laid the foundation for this thinking, but the active engagement in discussion about such ideas seems to have spurred on this new
critical, epistemologically plural way of looking at education. I suggest that Anita, through the various influences, was enabled to see language knowledge as tied up with power relations for her students. I additionally suggest that her epistemological understandings had developed in such a way that she was able to see EAL curriculum as a “platform” for learning, rather than a package (de Alba, 2000, p. 9) as students strove for “more viable futures” (p. 11).

4.4.2 Influence of concepts of knowledge on understandings and design of curriculum

In this section, in discussing curriculum, I refer to curriculum in a general sense, incorporating the idea that there is an intended curriculum (curriculum in policy), a taught curriculum (curriculum in practice) and a learnt curriculum (what students take from their learning). I suggest that behind all of these ideas are conceptualisations of curriculum that teachers carried but did not necessarily articulate. I call these sometimes tacit curriculum conceptualisations ‘curriculum in planning’. This notion is similar to, but different from, Sleeter’s ‘hidden curriculum’ (2005). The teachers’ evolving conceptualisations of knowledge impacted on their ‘curriculum in planning’ as they interpreted curriculum policy and made choices about the taught curriculum. In my interpretation of the research data, teachers’ ‘curriculum in planning’ changed, but in different ways.

With her early conceptualisation of the EAL class being a place where students learnt from the expert teacher, Sue clearly wanted an official document addressing curriculum in the way Tyler (1969) articulated curriculum expectations. Even though she had been introduced to broader ideas in the PLD about curriculum through discussions about the Vision, Principles and Key Competencies of the NZC, she did not take ownership of it, declaring “we [EAL teachers] haven’t got a curriculum”. Sue wanted a technical document which organised a learning programme. It appears that, to fill this perceived gap, Sue came to value the EAL-specific document that could be viewed most akin to a curriculum prescription, with its levels and modes. ELLP provided a framework, even though deliberately designed to show differences as much as consistencies. The NZQA matrix of ESOL Unit Standards also provided a framework. The individual standards provided common outcomes that Sue focussed on, as can be seen in her inquiry document (Appendix I PowerPoint, slide 6). As Sue now had something measurable (Short 1986, Sleeter 2005), she was able to declare “I’ve got the curriculum sussed”. I noted with surprise that “she immediately described Unit Standards as if they were the curriculum” (Reflective Journal, p. 30). In my journal I said I was surprised because I had recently run two PLD sessions discussing “big ideas about curriculum”. Further into the PLD period,
Sue’s understanding of curriculum developed so that she recognised and contested “a more holistic approach”, even though she rejected it as being in tension with NCEA requirements.

In Sue’s conceptualisations of curriculum, ELLP did serve a purpose. While it did not provide a prescription, ELLP did help her make sense of what students could do in terms of reading, writing and oral language. While the ‘where to next’, ‘how to’, ‘why’ and ‘for whom’ were not specifically stated, they could still be generated from ELLP. In this sense, ELLP was a curriculum platform. For Sue, in her desire for a curriculum prescription, the NCEA standards were seen to provide a legitimate de facto curriculum. By working ELLP and the NCEA standards together, Sue was able to work out what aspect of English language her students could already manage. She could then match assessment standards which provided some short term goals through the criteria that would be assessed. With the prop of ELLP and NCEA standards, Sue created a seemingly coherent curriculum that made sense to her.

With Sue’s involvement in the PLD, she came to a point where she could at least see and discuss different ways of understanding curriculum. Additionally, even though she contested that she did not see the curriculum in the “holistic” way that she thought I did (Final Interview), there is evidence of Sue teaching and thinking about teaching with elements of the ‘knowledge as a verb’ notion. For example, in my Reflective Journal I recorded after a video stimulated recall session that, “the group exercise that was set up as an error correction exercise turned into a learning PROCESS [Journal emphasis]. Sue said that she thought the students were gaining more through their explaining than by just picking up each other’s errors” (Reflective Journal). There was a sensitising to more relativist conceptualising of curriculum for Sue.

From my understanding, Anita was generally operating in the beginning from a socio-cultural (Lantolf & Thorn, 2006), social-constructionist base (Burr 2003). She was conscious that the students’ learning in her class was in preparation for further learning, not as an end in itself. Language use was regarded as complex, multiple and purposeful in the context of activities that were designed to be social. Anita began to be motivated more by the kinds of curriculum questions that are raised by Sleeter (2005) making her think outside the assumed structural confines of a secondary school. By the end of the research period, there are hints that Anita was taking a stance that is influenced by ‘theories of the post’. Anita was taking a more critical role, somewhat influenced by what Andreotti (2008) describes as epistemological pluralism. Anita was beginning to grasp the idea of “pluralising knowledge”. She began to look at linguistic inequalities (Garcia, 2009a; Skutnabb-Kangas, 2009), questioning whether...
Pasifika students’ home language strengths were being recognised, or were subject to the “benign neglect” of Manyak (2004) in Cummins and Early (2011, p. 4). Influenced by social-justice ideas, Anita had widened her thinking about which individuals she should reach, questioning the positioning of Pasifika students in Learning Support when their needs were often more in line with EAL learning. She questioned systems and redefining her role, in order to bring about change for advantage Pasifika students and other bilingual/multilingual learners in the school.

Both participants’ shifts in understanding curriculum can be linked with shifts in beliefs and ideas about knowledge. Their ‘curriculum in planning’ ideas about EAL teaching and learning were on the move.

4.5 Tying the threads together

In this Cycle A, Chapter 4 has provided a description and analysis of the teachers’ understanding relating to ideas about knowledge and knowing, about curriculum and about EAL curriculum in particular. In Chapter 4 I have attempted to relate the literature from Chapter 3 in analysing the shifts that the teachers appeared to make, were not made strongly or were not made at all. One participant, who had expectations of a prescribed EAL curriculum which could be taught uniformly, was probably influenced by realist theories in her prior experiences. Through the PLD, she became sensitised to different social-constructionist influences and changed her teaching to become more responsive to individuals and more socially-embedded. For her, the concepts of revised NZC remained distanced and the EAL-specific ELLP, with its descriptions of English reading, writing and oral language, proved to be a useful curriculum document. The other participant began with a mixed influence of realist and relativist theoretical influences. Her shift into challenging school structures, and into looking further at EAL curriculum as a platform rather than a package, reflect the influence of the ‘theories of the post’ in the PLD. I suggest that I have looked at ‘curriculum in planning’ as distinct from curriculum in policy (intended curriculum) and ‘curriculum in practice’ (taught curriculum). ‘Curriculum in planning’ for the two teachers was about bringing their prior understandings and experiences about EAL curriculum, the new learnings that they encountered in PLD and the challenging fusion that they explored. It is in Cycle B that the literature about adult learning and PLD is explored and interpreted, to see the relationship between the PLD facilitation and the shifts in the teachers’ ‘curriculum in planning’.
Cycle B: Effective professional learning and development (PLD)

Chapter 5 Review of literature

In this chapter, literature about professional learning and development (PLD) is explored. It provides background for the reflections on the specific PLD interruptions presented in Chapter 6. This section of the literature review examines research that problematises PLD, and then examines the nature and processes that are deemed favourable to the uptake of ideas in PLD. Throughout, there is a specific focus on helping EAL teachers to explore their understandings about curriculum and teaching in relation to students’ learning, and to shift their practices according to developing ideas. The need for exploring effective PLD for EAL teachers is highlighted by Thornbury & Meddings, (2009). They suggest that EAL teachers might have difficulty in changing their expectations, from teaching which uses planned and prepared material, especially in relation to teaching grammar, to a teaching methodology which draws more on meaningful interactions.

There is a considerable amount of current literature that addresses the challenge of bringing about change through PLD. Effecting the link between PLD and student outcomes involves two ‘black boxes’ (see Chapter 2, Figure 2), according to Timperley, Wilson, Barrar and Fung (2007). The ‘black box’ between teachers’ existing knowledge and their newly learned knowledge and actions is the focus for this literature review. The interface between the PLD intentions of a facilitator and uptake by teachers, denoted in this black box, is described by Timperley et al. (2007, p. 7) as “how teachers interpret the understandings and utilise the particular skills made available through professional learning opportunities, and about the consequent impact on teacher practice”. The other black box, between what teachers do and what students learn, is in the background of this review chapter. It is integrally related and the focus for the teachers’ inquiries of their own practice as previously presented in Chapter 4.
5.1 What counts as PLD

In this section, traditional professional development is described and a shift in emphasis to professional learning is explained. Having described these concepts, the term professional learning and development (PLD) will be retained as the currently accepted term used by Timperley et al. (2007) and others.

The traditional model of professional development was focused on an expert’s presentation. The professional development advisor was considered an authority, delivering expertise in a particular field of knowledge, often within one-off workshops. Teachers were expected to listen and then to apply the newly learnt knowledge. Associated outcomes for students were assumed. This professional development reflected the ‘knowledge as a noun’ notion, with individual teachers being ‘participants’, with no certainty of change apart from gaining “additive knowledge” Timperley (2011, p. 4). The idea that ‘knowing more’ would lead to ‘teaching better’ was a commonly-held understanding that influenced professional development policy (Cochran-Smith & Lytle 1999, McLaughlin, 2002). This traditional process is outlined by Guskey (2002) in Figure 7.

![Figure 7. Model of traditional professional development sequence (adapted from Guskey, 2002)](image)

This traditional model of PD is challenged by many recent researchers as being ineffective in bringing about sustained change in teachers’ beliefs and practices. Joyce and Showers (1988) suggest that too often, the change is not taken through to classroom practice or linked with student outcomes. Guskey proposes a reordered model of PLD whereby “significant change in teachers’ attitudes and beliefs occurs primarily after they gain evidence of improvement in student learning” (p. 383).

![Figure 8. Revised model of professional development to bring about teacher change (adapted from Guskey, 2002)](image)
The reordering of the process signifies a shift to a closer relationship between PLD and better outcomes for students. The aim of PLD should be to make teachers think about teaching, not just to adopt new practices or methods. Guskey (2002) suggests that by seeing the change in students’ outcomes, teachers will be convinced to change their beliefs.

In professional learning, teachers are challenged to examine their own assumptions and to make new professional knowledge for themselves through engaging with new information. McLaughin (2002) refers to Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999) in researching and recording the positive impact of PLD which explored multiple kinds of knowledge simultaneously: knowledge-of-practice, knowledge-about-practice and knowledge-in-practice. This emphasis on professional learning resonates with the reproductive - performative (knowledge as a noun – knowledge as a verb) conceptualisations as described earlier in this chapter.

In EAL-specific literature about PLD there is also a move to shift the emphasis from what to teach, to how to teach. It is suggested that PLD addresses the need to address both “declarative knowledge” and “procedural knowledge” (Bailey, Curtis, & Nunan, 2001). The focus on teaching ‘declarative’ knowledge is about teaching the things that people can articulate about language. The ‘procedural’ knowledge can relate to both specific EAL teaching and generalised teaching. This intertwined, double focus resonates with the ‘pedagogical content knowledge’ referred to by many educationalists such as Price (2008), Shulman (1986) and Carney & Indrisano (2013).

The nature of facilitation should serve the purpose of the PLD. If the focus of the PLD is linked with the relativist and transformative notions about knowledge, then the facilitation needs to reflect similar ideas. Earl (2010) repositions facilitation of PLD as a role, not a person. She describes the danger of PLD that supports the aggregation and confirmation of what people already do (reproductive and realist), and proposes facilitation as an ‘interruption’ of the status quo. She suggests a shift from ‘activity-based’ (reproductive) to ‘learning-based’ (performative and relativist) professional learning.

5.2 Challenges of effecting change through PLD agenda

In this section I will look at some of the different challenges in PLD identified in the literature. Some of the challenges of PLD are bound up with the nature of working with adult learners. Other challenges are associated with the kinds of change that are expected and for whom the change is expected. A further layer
of challenge for PLD is that it takes place within complex contexts. Table 6 shows the different challenges in the order that they are discussed in this section.

Table 6

Challenges that Impact on PLD for Teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenges</th>
<th>Specific challenges discussed in this section</th>
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<tr>
<td>Working with adult learners</td>
<td>• Adults bring many life experiences and these need to be acknowledged.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kinds of change that are expected and for whom the change is expected</td>
<td>• Adults need to be involved in decisions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLD happening within complex contexts</td>
<td>• Roles and relationships within a school affect participants’ ability to change, as do social relationships between facilitator and participants.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Adults need convincing reasons to change</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Teachers need evidence of the impact of PLD if they are to change.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• PLD needs to challenge the status quo in the light of seemingly ‘intractable problems’ that other teachers have not changed.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• A paradigm shift about culturally responsive teaching may be needed.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Challenge and engagement at the level of beliefs is needed.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• PLD happens in complex contexts with competing agendas.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The PLD is happening in an on-going context of change.</td>
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Facilitators need to be mindful that adults bring life experiences to PLD. For teachers to have the ability to grasp new learning, the PLD must first have established and acknowledged the teachers’ understanding of their own teaching in theory and practice. Teachers bring to their learning different knowledges. Prior knowledge plays a critical role in teachers’ capacity to absorb knowledge brought from an external source. By not taking cognisance of the existing knowledge that adults bring, PLD is subject to guesswork in where to pitch new learning. It may mean that teachers resist new learning if PLD facilitators have not taken into account what teachers already know, and still need to know, to be effective. Solutions to issues will not be easily accepted and used unless knowledge for learning, of learning and in learning is teased out and understood by teachers and PLD leaders (Hunzicker, 2011; McLaughlin, 2002).
It is helpful practice to **involve adults in decisions** about why, how and what they learn. This means diagnosing their own learning needs, planning their own responses, implementing their plans and evaluating their own shifts in practice. Engagement theory captures this intent by suggesting that adults learn best when there is an authentic project focus and when they are actively involved. Rhodes, Stokes and Hampton (2004) use the terms ‘relating’, ‘donating’ and ‘creating’, to convey that involvement. These terms suggest teachers like to work together in purposeful activity over which they have some control. Further, adults work best with learning activities that are open-ended. These ideas are reinforced by Lieberman and Pointer Mace, (2008) who add that adults like to have a say in setting both the direction and the pace of their learning.

**Social relationships** are another consideration for adult learning. Unless there is team-work and collaboration, purpose and interest, adults will not respond well to PLD (Earl, 2010; Lieberman & Pointer Mace 2008; Imel, 1998). Teachers benefit from conversations about practice and opportunities to observe others in action. The relationship between the PLD facilitator and the participants is also critical (Galbraith & Cohen, 1995). The learning approaches also need to be acceptable to adult learners. For example, Hawley and Valli (2007) suggest teachers need to be able to influence how and what they learn.

For adults to change the way they understand and do things, PLD needs to provide **convincing, compelling reasons to change**. Teachers need to trust, respect and have confidence in PLD facilitators’ ideas and learning approaches if they are going to consider devoting time and effort to implementing the new ideas in classrooms. This is first and foremost about “scholarly rigour”, according to Lieberman and Pointer Mace (2008).

To show **evidence of the impact of PLD** on a school’s own students’ learning is powerful but it is also difficult to achieve. Such evidence is powerful for school leaders and teachers because positive outcomes for students justify spending time and money on PLD. Seeing evidence of the impact of PLD on student outcomes is also a lever for change in thinking and practice (Joyce & Showers 2002). In *Kī te Aotūroa*, it is stated that “if teaching is the greatest system influence on student outcomes, then it seems reasonable to assume that effective professional learning opportunities for teachers lead to improved student outcomes” (MOE 2008b, p. 2). That this emphasis on student outcomes is articulated suggests it has not always been the case. One reason why it is hard to attribute success for students with teachers’ PLD is that there are many variables that influence student achievement. Another reason is that the teacher’s role in effecting student achievement, or more critically, students’ lack of achievement,
has often been seen as a “taboo subject” (Speck & Knipe 2005, p. 38). The distancing of PLD from students’ learning outcomes may have contributed to a lack of effectiveness of much professional development (Timperley, 2011; Loucks-Horsley & Matsumoto, 1999).

There is a challenge in challenging the status quo. Where there are issues of “on-going issues of underachievement”, however, the PLD needs to challenge the status quo. Timperley (2011, p. 3) suggests that for “intractable problems of underachievement ... tinkering around the edges or leaving teachers to it does not lead to the kinds of change that make a difference”. This challenge is reinforced by Milne (2009, p. 2), who quotes Middleton in saying, “If New Zealand does not address the achievement of those at the bottom of the pile, its international standing will not survive at a high level. ... New Zealand won’t have a successful education system until it is successful for Māori and Pasifika learners”. So for PLD to be effective in schools where there is on-going underachievement for groups of students which may include Pasifika ELLs, the PLD must examine Pasifika ELLs’ existing outcomes and find a way to change any pattern of underachievement. A number of educational theorists and researchers suggest that teachers must understand the principles that shape their teaching in order to ensure effective learning (Alton-Lee, 2007; Nuthall, 2004; Timperley et al., 2007; Walqui & van Lier, 2010). Given this premise, it can be argued that PLD about improving teachers’ teaching and learners’ learning must engage with teacher beliefs in order to make systemic change in practice. Timperley et al. (2007), include “a challenge to prevailing discourses” as a necessary component of effective professional learning and development. They cite the creation of dissonance in a number of effective interventions, especially around, “teachers’ social construction of students especially in relation to expectations of achievement for some students; what constitutes curriculum ... and how curriculum should be taught” (p. xii). They draw the conclusion that, “Effective professional development pedagogies provide teachers with opportunities to discuss and negotiate the meaning of new learning and its implications for practice” (p. xxxix). This emphasis on a need for critical engagement is supported by Andreotti et al. (2008) who argue that teachers critically engage with concepts about the “complexity, multiplicity and uncertainty” of knowledge. They suggest that teachers “will acquire more lenses to interpret (and relate to): the reality/society, their learners and their communities, their own identities (as learners and teachers), difference, conflict, problems and solutions” (pp. 2-3).

Another challenge is the critical need for PLD about teaching that is responsive to the learning strengths and needs of Pasifika students. Teachers’ low expectations of “Pasifika students in comparison to European students, is prevalent historically amongst teachers” (Gorinski & Fraser, 2006). A difficulty
however, according to Sleeter (2011), is that it is not easy to equate PLD about **culturally responsive teaching** with outcomes for students. Milne (2009) describes a **paradigm shift** that teachers need to make from a Eurocentric model to one in which students’ own cultures are at the centre of learning. To help bring about this paradigm shift, Price (2008, p. 110) suggests that PLD facilitation ”models and uses culturally responsive teaching approaches and resources”. Price adds that if PLD facilitators do not provide this modelling to teachers they may continue to ground their teaching within their own knowledge bases, rather than drawing on the students’ experiences.

A suggested reason why traditional professional development has not been successful in bringing about change for ‘intractable problems’ is that PLD has not provided sufficient challenge and **engagement at the level of beliefs**. Woods (2003) describes how teachers’ and learners’ beliefs about EAL and the roles their beliefs play in the teaching and learning of language have previously been regarded as being peripheral. A high percentage of the interventions that have failed to have substantive impact on student outcomes did not engage teacher theories as part of the learning process. Where dissonance is not created and new information appears to be congruent with existing understandings, with teachers saying “I already do this”, new practice tends to be superficial and little changes (Timperley et al., 2007, p. xxxix). In relation to ELLs, teachers’ underlying beliefs associated with ethnicity can influence their expectations and actions (Delpit 1995; Price, 2008). The belief of treating all students equally is challenged by Delpit who states “if one does not see colour, one does not really see children” (p. 177).

The PLD also takes place in a **context of change**. Learning is about change, and current PLD sits in a context of an unprecedented rate of change. Change in education needs to respond to the change happening in the wider world. For example, schools’ and teachers’ curriculum decisions need to change in response to the linguistic and cultural diversity of the migrant population in New Zealand. Another example is the need to adapt to changing technology. This is the context in which students will need to operate as life-long learners (MOE, 2007). Stoll, Fink and Earl (2003) position PLD in the context of a “fast-changing world [where] if you can’t learn, unlearn and relearn, you’re lost” (p. 41). Within a context of change, the sustainability of a PLD initiative becomes an important issue.

PLD is often juggled within **competing agendas** of time, resources and foci. The roles and relationships within a school can affect outcomes, as can different learning agendas. Thus PLD is necessarily shaped by context (Timperley, 2011). Adapting to new technology is something that teachers may acknowledge as a
need more readily than the need to adapt to teach more diverse group of ELLs. The effect of PLD will depend upon the way it is valued and supported by senior members of staff and other colleagues, not just by the participants.

So the literature identifies several challenges for PLD facilitators. Adults need to be understood, involved and convinced if their thinking and actions are going to change. For teachers of ELLs there is also the challenge of teaching their students differently, by being responsive to their cultures. There is a challenge in confronting systemic underachievement through critical analysis of outcomes for students. To gather evidence of students’ success that is attributable to PLD is not easy. When considering the complex environment of schools, more challenges can be seen. PLD is further made difficult when the complex personal characteristics of participating teachers and relationships are taken into consideration. The context of multiple changes and competing agendas provides further challenges. In response to these demands, the literature in the next section suggests processes by which these challenges can be met.

5.3 The nature of effective PLD

Responses to the challenges of bringing about change in schools are found in a body of literature about effective PLD. Interestingly, there is an emerging consensus between studies which use student outcomes and those that do not (Loucks-Horsley & Matsumoto, 1999). Influential publications include Ki te Aotūroa (MOE, 2008b) which, like this study, has a focus on PLD facilitation in New Zealand schools. The Teacher professional learning and development: Best evidence synthesis iteration (Timperley et al., 2007) identifies sets of principles or characteristics for effective PLD that had evidence of positive student outcomes. These two sources are considered so central that references to them are repeated more frequently than other sources. However I also draw from a range of sources where there are aspects of PLD that are particularly pertinent to this research. In Table 7 I create my own set of characteristics drawn from this literature to help me explore the nature of effective PLD in response to the challenges identified earlier in Section 5.2.
Different researchers have proposed sets of principles, characteristics, conditions or processes for effective PLD. I have chosen the word ‘nature’ for the title of this section because I wanted to keep the ‘performative’, ‘knowledge as a verb’, understanding of facilitation in the forefront of my thinking. The word ‘nature’, even though it is a noun, represents characteristics which are not fixed, but instead are ‘fuzzy’ around the edges and integrated.

There is consensus that success can be achieved when PLD involves teachers in doing their own research which is “collegial, job-embedded, and evidence-based” (Robinson & Lai, 2006, p. 12). To this list, Hunzicker (2011) adds “supportive”, “instructional-focused”, and “on-going” as characteristics of PLD which is successful. Joyce and Showers (1988) include a “shared vision” as an essential characteristic. There are two further characteristics that Timperley et al. (2007) include that I consider worthwhile examining in my study. They suggest that there needs to be an alignment between PLD and “wider trends in policy and research” (p. xxvii). They also suggest that “prevailing discourses” (p. xxvii), based on assumptions about learners and curriculum goals, need to be challenged. To these characteristics, I add that PLD should model cultural and linguistic responsiveness. As a final consideration, I use the recognised EAL
principles of scaffolding and providing multiple opportunities to learn, in examining the Joyce and Showers Five Step Model (1988). These overlapping principles or characteristics collectively serve to explain the nature of effective PLD. They are elaborated on below with references to a number of other researchers.

**PLD that is collegial and collaborative** engages teachers in the physical act of teaching, at an emotional level as well as cognitively. Again, such activities are responsive to adult learners. Such PLD is interactive, collaborative and teachers share views, ideas, responses and experiences. The opportunity for diversity of opinion to be expressed and heard is one of the qualities of groups that give power to professional learning. Further, by being able to voice their ideas, teachers are inclined to be actively engaged. So professional learning is more successful when it happens, not for individuals, but as ‘communities of practice’ (Timperley, 2011; McLaughlin, 2002; Stoll, Fink & Earl, 2003). Networked learning communities are stressed by Earl (2010) as important for giving teachers opportunities to process new learning with others. Earl describes “nodes, threads, knots and nets” that support learning within and across communities. Collaboration within and across schools is seen as valuable. However, while ‘communities of practice’ are often advocated as a way forward in PLD, Timperley (2011) suggests there is a danger of perpetuating existing practices, “thwarted by norms of politeness and the absence of challenge” (p. 19). She says that such professional learning groups must be focussed on becoming more responsive to students.

**PLD that is job-embedded** connects with the context of everyday activities and is integrated with the school routines and teachers’ existing responsibilities. Then it seems relevant, authentic and real. Timperley (2008) suggests that PLD that is specific to the context of the teaching enables translation into practice. Robinson (2011) advocates “integrating doing the work with how to improve the work” (p. 103). In her EAL research Price (2008) identifies that shared planning helped a focus on clarifying language outcomes as well as topic outcomes. Hunzicker (2011) suggests that follow-up activities like coaching, mentoring and study groups enable teachers to engage with trying new things, thinking critically about their teaching and considering different approaches. Further, context is an important element for leadership (Hallinger, 2011). The notion that this research is embedded in the context of my work as a PLD facilitator is a significant factor, alongside the idea that the PLD is located within the teachers’ everyday contexts.

**PLD that is evidence-based** is responsive to the challenges of using achievement data. Teachers need to understand the links between what is taught, how
particular students respond, and what these students actually learn. Timperley points out that success is not counted in terms of new strategies that teachers have mastered but, rather, on the outcomes for students. As an example, in her work about PLD for teachers of ELLs, Price (2008), drew attention to the use of data that helped focus and clarify teacher expectations for ELLs. A principle articulated in *Kī te Aotūroa* is that “Effective [In-Service Teacher Education] ISTE learning and practice is underpinned by inquiry and research evidence” (MOE, 2008b, p. 24).

**PLD that is supportive** is custom-made and responsive to the challenge of working with adults. It is when teachers feel well supported that they are able to risk new ways of thinking and teaching. The support includes responsiveness to the context and to the personal circumstances. Supportiveness includes good leadership. Loucks-Horsley and Matsumoto (1999, p. 268) state that PLD must be “tailored to the unique situation in which teachers work”. The learning activities should support teachers’ professional and personal needs, their preferred ways of learning and what they want to learn. An important consideration, according to Hunzicker (2011) is that teachers are also supported at the department and school level. Timperley (2011) and the Ministry of Education (2008b) also emphasise the role of school leadership and suggest that systematic support is necessary for effective PLD.

**PLD that is instructional-focused** involves learning about and using pedagogical content knowledge with a focus on student outcomes. So PLD should emphasise the link between the subject content knowledge and how to teach it (Hattie, 2003; Timperley et al., 2007). These authors suggest that PLD that is specific to the context of the teaching enables translation into practice. Timperley warns against set programmes of PLD which lack researched evidence of positive impact on student learning, and are not consistent with the approaches of a professional body or wider programme of PLD within a setting.

**PLD that is ongoing** has coherence, multiple opportunities to interact and a sufficient length of time. Teachers need multiple interactions with the ideas in order to understand them and embed them in practice. There should be a variety of activities that align with the learning purpose. Timperley (2008) notes that an extended time is necessary for teachers to learn and change. Sustainability depends on the professional learning that takes place during the period of the PLD, but also on conditions within the school that support the new learning once the external PLD support is no longer in place.

**PLD that develops a shared vision** so that all teachers see the moral purpose of their teaching, or the destination of their journey, helps to bring about a change
in beliefs. This idea is derived from Joyce and Showers (1988) who suggest that both teachers and students should understand what a fully-implemented outcome of the professional learning might look like in terms of the teachers’ teaching and the students’ learning. If everyone is reminded of the vision at intervals, there is an opportunity to assess progress. Hunzicker (2011) also asserts that if teachers can see a big picture, they will maintain a motivation and commitment.

**PLD that is aligned with trends in policy and research** is identified as an important characteristic by Timperley et al. (2007). There is an emerging influence of a “culture of inquiry and research” (Reid, 2004, p. 11) at national level and regionally. Reid describes an aim for an educational system is to have an “iterative dynamic between various layers of the system”. In such a system, he suggests the central Ministry of Education would be informed by findings of school-site inquiries, fed back through reporting mechanisms by PLD providers. The Ministry of Education would inquire into its own practice and feed this information out into how PLD was carried out by providers. Rather than being a bottom-up or top-down approach, the PLD contracts have recently reflected a desire for inquiry to be part of the “dynamics and logic” of the whole education system. This approach, according to Reid’s ideas, is preferable to a dominant approach, where the central office would tell districts and sites of education what to do. This idea is supported by Bishop, O’Sullivan and Berryman (2010), who suggest that “educational reform needs to happen at a number of levels including the classroom, the school and the education system” (p. 14).

More recently, Quinn-Patton (2011) has contested that a “single-loop” response (identifying a problem and finding a solution) is inadequate, and that a “double-loop” response is likely to bring about sustained positive outcomes. He describes a double loop response as going beyond the single loop to question “the assumptions, policies, practices, values system dynamics that led to the problem in the first place ... intervening in ways that involve the modification of underlying system relationships and functioning” (p. 11). Problems, having been identified, would then be prevented and a solution would be found within the system. Cycles of PLD would be iterative, adapting to new challenges and involving interfaces at different layers of the system. These iterative cycles of PLD, the literature suggests, would be preferable to recursive cycles which ask similar questions about similar problems, producing perhaps deeper knowledge but not necessarily taking teacher learning to the depth that might be necessary (Timperley, 2011, OConnell, 2009).

**PLD that challenges assumptions** is responsive to situations where ‘prevailing discourses’ may be problematic for students’ achievement. In their research,
Timperley et al. (2007) identify that such assumptions were often associated with teachers considering some groups were unable to learn as well as others. The ‘prevailing discourses’ were also sometimes to do with restricted curriculum expectations. Timperley (2008) addresses the issue of engaging with teachers who hold a range of beliefs that may be different from the PLD facilitator’s. The beliefs can be about students and their ways of learning, and about their understandings about knowledge and how it is best taught. She suggests that the approaches should be different according to whether there is a dissonance or congruence of ideas. Unless teachers’ existing beliefs are surfaced and discussed, new ideas are likely to be rejected. Begg (2008) and Andreotti (2010) reinforce the need for teachers to engage at the level of beliefs if PLD is to bring about change. Timperley suggests that an environment of trust and challenge can support potentially emotional responses and risk taking. Unchallenging environments lead to little change. Earl (2010) relates to the notion of engaging teachers with ideas about knowledge, knowing and curriculum. She describes a metacognitive approach, giving teachers the power to take control by developing their own goals and to monitor their progress towards reaching those goals.

PLD that models culturally and linguistically responsive teaching is mindful of content integration, knowledge integration and an equity pedagogy (Banks 2007, p. 145; Price, 2008). If culturally responsive teaching is to be “daily, in-depth and integrated” (Price, 2008, p. 18), then so should PLD. Valuing diverse cultural and linguistic capabilities of students is therefore integral in PLD for EAL teaching. This notion is supported in the principle identified in Ki te Aotūroa: “Effective ISTE learning and practice are influenced by and responsive to context and culture” (MOE, 2008, p. 24). In terms of linguistic responsiveness, the shift to thinking about “trans-languaging” Garcia (2009a) would suggest that PLD for EAL teachers should also encourage and enable teachers to support the development of students’ home languages as well as English. This shift in approach to supporting multilingual learning is reflective of the paradigm shift that Milne (2009) suggests is necessary in teaching Pasifika students. Given the limited nature of the research into effective PLD for EAL teaching in the New Zealand secondary school context, it seems useful to draw on studies that suggest conditions for effective culturally responsive pedagogy in relation to indigenous populations. Sleeter’s (2011) review of the culturally responsive Te Kotahitanga project showed a shift in teachers’ approaches from “didactic” to “discursive” and “relationship-based”. This shift in teacher practice is reflective of the shift needed in EAL practice as was suggested in Chapter 3. Sleeter identified other studies that explore specific culturally responsive PLD approaches, such as ongoing community-based learning (Fickel 2005). Studies into teaching indigenous students probe ideas related to different ways of thinking and understanding and the resultant impact on teaching (Macfarlane,
Culturally responsive PLD in indigenous contexts provides a pathway for EAL teaching; teachers may need to be challenged to look at diversity of thought and actions as a desired outcome.

**PLD that scaffolds learning through multiple opportunities** enables learner-participants to both learn and apply information. Timperley (2009) suggests there should be a variety of activities that align with the learning purpose, and notes that an extended time is necessary for learning and changing. Scaffolding is an analogy often used with EAL teaching but it has also been applied to PLD for EAL teachers by Price (2008). There is initial, strong support which is carefully withdrawn at points where the learner-participant becomes independent. Teachers need multiple interactions with the ideas in order to understand them and embed them in practice. Price also elaborates on the idea of co-construction as a valuable way in which she was able to bring about change in a teacher's understanding and actions. Price demonstrated that by co-constructing a unit of work with a teacher-participant in her PLD, she was able to help the teacher create language learning outcomes for students as well as content outcomes.

Given the many aspects that contribute to creating PLD that is responsive to the many challenges, it is useful to investigate some models which draw these together. It is in the next section that I describe models that are proposed in the literature as being effective for shaping PLD.

### 5.4 PLD models

In this section I describe two models that reflect the PLD facilitation that I analyse in Chapter 6. The first model is essentially linear and facilitator-directed and the second is more cyclical and participant-driven.

The first model shows a teacher-learning process that includes five steps. This model, described by Joyce and Showers (1988) fits with Price's (2008) idea of scaffolding PLD and the steps from *dependence to collaboration to support and independence* described in *Effective Literacy Strategies in Years 9 to 13: A Guide for Teachers* (MOE, 2004, p. 22). The five steps of Joyce and Showers’ model, *theorising, demonstrating, giving feedback, practicing and coaching* begin with a facilitator-dominant role and proceed to a point where the learner is increasingly independent and supported within his/her own context.
Table 8

Joyce and Showers (1988) Model of Five Steps to Better Teaching

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Coaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Demonstration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Theory</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The five-step model outlined in Table 8 provides a sequence of learning approaches for PLD which scaffold teachers’ learning. Joyce and Showers (1988) developed this model in reaction to the traditional model of professional development shown in Section 5.1, Figure 7. Joyce and Showers assert that the five steps are interrelated and that all the components are necessary to get teachers thinking about their practice and applying new ideas. One point of interest in the Joyce and Showers model is that they suggest an emphasis on the process of stepping rather than on the steps themselves. This again links with the idea of ‘knowledge as a verb’. I have deliberately drawn the model so that the order begins at the bottom of the table, the base of the scaffold.

PLD that integrates the theory to explain and justify the approach has been noted earlier by Andreotti (2010), Begg (2008) and others. The demonstration or modelling phase has also been noted as important by August and Shannahahan (2008) and Price (2008). In recent research related to PLD within the EAL field Price’s case studies suggested that positive effects on teachers were as a result of hands-on practice with approaches that were easy to apply in classrooms, in-class demonstrations and personalised coaching. These approaches were confirmed as effective in a synthesis of five studies on PLD for EAL teaching done in USA (August & Shanahan, 2008). The requirement to put the new learning into classroom practice and to monitor the impact on students is regarded as something that “schools are quite capable of” (Joyce & Showers (2002, p. 113). The art of giving feedback is elaborated on by Robinson and Lai (2006) so that learning conversations have a professional inquiry tone. Participants’ perspectives need to be recognised so the model of “Describe, Explain, Evaluate, Recommend (DEER)” is preferred to the common ‘Describe, Criticise, Recommend (DCR)’ model. Effective learning conversations are also explained by Annan, Lai and Robinson (2003) as having an inquiry process involving analytical talk, critical talk and challenging talk. The understanding of coaching has evolved over the past few decades and will continue to evolve. Joyce and
Showers (2002) suggest that coaching is much broader than conferences and observations. Coaching can include a variety of activities in which teachers “learn from each other in the process of planning instruction, developing materials to support it, watching each other work with students, and thinking together about the effect of their behaviour on student learning” (Joyce & Showers, 2002, p. 94). The role of in-school leaders in coaching is noted as critical in the sustainability of PLD changes. An elaboration of the Five Step Model is attributed to Joyce and Showers by Hord (1994), suggesting that a preceding step of *sharing a vision* was important for bringing about change. This is depicted in Table 9.

Table 9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Vision</td>
<td>share the purpose and intended outcome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.a Theory</td>
<td>explain and justify the approach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Demonstration</td>
<td>show/model how it can be done in practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Feedback</td>
<td>let the teachers try doing it in this new way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Practice</td>
<td>give the teachers feedback on their use of the new way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Coaching</td>
<td>help teachers work out what to do next to improve their new approach</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is in Chapter 6 that I discuss the parallels in my own action research with the synthesis of ideas encapsulated in the Five Step Model and the additional first step.

The second type of PLD model that I investigate involves processes that are described as cyclical rather than linear, because they involve continuous reflection and change. Teaching-as-inquiry, sometimes called ‘teaching inquiry’, is a model that was becoming more commonly used in New Zealand at the time of this research. ‘Teaching inquiry’ is defined by Reid (2004) as

> a process of systematic, rigorous and critical reflection about professional practice, and the contexts in which it occurs, in ways that question taken-for-granted assumptions. Its purpose is to inform decision-making for action (p. 3).

Reid’s definition clearly identifies the roots of teaching-as-inquiry in the critical, questioning, ‘traditions of the post’, associated both with curriculum design and with research methodology. It reflects social constructionist theories with their reference to context. Hipkins et al. (2008) also link teaching-as-inquiry with the group of social theories and ‘traditions of the post’, and perhaps to the epistemologically plural interpretations, in referring to the New London Group’s
“multi-l literacies pedagogy” (p. 26). This group highlights the usefulness and need for teaching-as-inquiry that “focuses on cultural diversity, literacy, student agency, and new technologies” (p. 26).

Inquiry frameworks are proposed in the literature as powerful common tools for PLD because of the complexity of possibilities and diversity of contextual characteristics. The inquiry cycle from the Effective Pedagogy section of the NZC (MOE, 2007) in Figure 9 provides one important framework for teachers to use. This NZC model, typical of teaching inquiry models, poses questions rather than statements, in order to make the inquiry belong to teachers in their own contexts.

![Teaching as Inquiry]

Figure 9. Diagram of teaching-as-inquiry from NZC

The following model below in Figure 10 (Timperley, 2008) provides an extension from the NZC model, to include questions about teacher and leader learning, as well as student learning. It thereby provides a potential framework for leading a process of PLD. My own addition of colour in Figure 10 emphasises the incorporation of teacher learning and leader learning.
5.5 Tying the threads together

Literature suggests that a range of factors support PLD. These tend to emphasise PLD facilitators and teachers in collaborative roles, where teachers are involved in deciding the focus of the PLD. Teacher inquiry is facilitated and supported by others. There is less of having PLD ‘done to’ teachers, but rather ‘done with’ teachers. Also supporting PLD are links between theory and practice. By bringing an analysis of student outcomes and theoretical discussions to job-embedded inquiries, EAL teachers can question the impact of current practice. The literature also suggests the value of challenge, especially in engaging teachers in...
thinking how they respond to the diverse cultural and linguistic strengths and needs of students. The literature gives backing to my PLD that seeks to interrupt the status quo and helps me to think, act and reflect on how PLD might best support teachers to enact a ‘pedagogy of promise’ for ELLs.

Informing the Ministry of Education PLD contracts at the time of this research were the inquiries that had been carried out and published in *Ki te Aotūroa* (MOE, 2008). This Ministry of Education document and the *Best Evidence Synthesis of Effective Professional Learning and Development* also published by the Ministry of Education (Timperley et al., 2007) refer to Reid (2004) and provide evidence of and confirm the Ministry of Education’s ideas about PLD. So at the time of my research, the Ministry of Education was also attempting to develop iterative processes of inquiry and research involving multiple layers. There was therefore awareness and intent at Ministry level to build a double-loop culture of inquiry and fertile ground for exploring the effectiveness of my PLD facilitation.
Cycle B continued: Effective professional learning and development (PLD)

Chapter 6 Reflecting on PLD leadership

In this second chapter of Cycle B (with its focus on PLD) I address the research question, “How can PLD engage EAL teachers with ideas about curriculum teaching and learning?” I foreground an analysis of my own work and thinking as a PLD facilitator, whilst the participants’ shifts (analysed in Chapter 4) remain in the background. My informed self-reflection on the impact of my PLD facilitation and the broader PLD framework is demonstrated through an action research methodological stance. Burns (2005) notes that action research is focussed on change within our own circumstances. This chapter then, focuses on how I managed to bring about change within my own circumstances, relating to my personal engagement in the PLD interruption, highlighting matters relating to my practice in PLD leadership.

The analysis for this chapter is presented around four themes that emerged from ideas that recurred in my reflections. These four themes were derived from my analysis of the research data relating to my own thinking about PLD planning, the Chapter 4 responses of the PLD participants (Sue and Anita) to the PLD itself, and the second review of literature in Chapter 5. Table 10 replicates and extends two tables which appeared in Chapter 5 to show the relationships between ideas.
Table 10

Relating Literature of Chapter 5 to Themes of this Chapter

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenges (Chapter 5.2)</th>
<th>Nature of effective PLD in response to challenges (Chapter 5.3)</th>
<th>Themes of my PLD leadership (Chapter 6)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Working with adult learners | collegial and collaborative, job-embedded, evidence-based, supportive, instructional-focussed, on-going, developing a shared vision, aligned with trends in policy and research, challenging assumptions, culturally and linguistically responsive, scaffolding learning through multiple opportunities | 6.1 Working under influence  
• contract influences  
• thesis research influences  
6.2 Working together  
• learning communities  
• social relationships  
6.3 Shaping PLD  
• Five Step Model  
• teaching-as-inquiry  
6.4 Challenging about teaching Pasifika students  
• evidence-base  
• learning conversations |
| Kinds of change that are expected and for whom the change is expected |  |  |
| PLD happening within complex contexts |  |  |

Table 10 also depicts the organisational framework for this chapter with a blue-highlighted right-hand column. The four themes each have two sub-themes. In organising this chapter, I deal with each theme in a similar way. Firstly the theme is described. Then the teacher-participants’ and my responses to those aspects of the PLD are analysed. Finally, for each sub-theme, I record my reflections, identifying successes and tensions that have been revealed to me, or that I had to negotiate in the PLD process.

In this chapter, I regard myself as a participant and include analysis of my own responses. I generally describe my contemplations about the PLD with Sue before that with Anita in order to keep the same pattern throughout the thesis. In some sections I concentrate more on the PLD with one teacher-participant than the other, when one particular PLD event illustrates a characteristic of PLD influence that was not evident or not significant for both of the teacher-participants.

Evidence from my Reflective Journal recorded whilst working with the participants is a special feature of this chapter. There are additional references to transcribed initial and final interviews and learning conversations and documents from the teacher-participants. My reflections draw on literature that I
read before the PLD commenced, but they are also informed by literature that I have read subsequently. This chapter is my sense-making of my PLD facilitation work. I now move to discuss the first theme.

### 6.1 Working under the influence of contract responsibilities and research interests

With my raised consciousness of contextual influences on PLD, it became apparent to me, through my action research process, that it is not only the school contexts that shape the PLD. In my case, there were contextual influences from my contractual obligations with the Ministry of Education. I became interested in how the Ministry of Education contract provided some parameters but also directives to my PLD decisions. An additional contextual influence was this practitioner action research which was conducted in tandem with the PLD. The contextual factors of my work and study can be seen as both stimuli for change and constraints on practice. I have used Table 11 to show the organisation of my ideas in Sections 6.1 and 6.2.

**Table 11**

*Influences of Agendas on PLD Foci*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Influence of PLD contract with Ministry of Education</th>
<th>Influence of this thesis research</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Multiple layers</td>
<td>Focus on ideas about knowing and curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergence of teaching-as-inquiry, using evidence-base</td>
<td>Focus on learning conversations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reference to key publications</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reference to theory</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**6.1.1 The nature of my work and research contextual influences on the PLD**

Multiple expectations were outlined in the contract with the Ministry of Education. My PLD design was therefore necessarily informed and shaped by the Ministry of Education contract. I was expected to evaluate the needs, processes and impact of my work in reports to the Ministry of Education at three points during the year, including a report at the end of the period of this research. This
was a fixed accountability agenda underpinning the PLD which would necessarily interconnect with my action research agenda. I have selected several aspects of the nature of the Ministry of Education contract to discuss.

A major influence of the contract came from the goal that I was expected to bring about change at multiple layers within a school, namely; at senior leader or school systems levels, with home-school partnerships, with teachers and for students (Ministry of Education contract guidelines unpublished). Reaching all these layers was not possible in Sue’s school but was achieved in Anita’s school. My analysis explains why.

Another major influence was the expectation to involve teachers in teaching-as-inquiry across a number of official documents, and not just those for the contract. A body of recent research about effective PLD had recently been published or funded by the Ministry of Education, including *Ki te Aotūroa* (MOE, 2008a) *Teacher Professional Learning and Development: Best Evidence Synthesis Iteration* (Timperley et al, 2007). At the time of this research, ideas from this research were impacting on the Ministry of Education expectations about PLD. Statements in the contract such as “student and teacher baseline and post-intervention data (Time 1 and Time 2 data) will be gathered, collated and analysed” could be understood and interpreted as accountability measures. However, they could also be regarded as important features of inquiry cycles. My PLD facilitation in both participants’ schools was responsive to this requirement.

A further influence of the contract was the expectation that “Advisors working in this Output are required to promote and support uptake and use of Ministry resources, materials and assessment tools”. The *English Language Learning Progressions* (ELLP) (MOE, 2008a) document was one resource that I was required to use, and other documents such as the *Pasifika Education Plan* (MOE, 2009) were mentioned as reference documents.

A requirement to base my PLD facilitation on theory was stipulated in the Ministry of Education contract. Such aspects sat comfortably with my research. I was able to include theoretical references in my end-of-year report (unpublished) to the Ministry of Education. However, more importantly, on-going reading about theory influenced my thinking and actions throughout and beyond the PLD period. My developing understanding of curriculum (Mutch, 2009 Gilbert, 2005) influenced me. Evidence could be seen in my journal of my planning PLD incorporating ideas like ‘knowledge as a noun’ and ‘knowledge as a verb’ (p. 28). Theorising about EAL (Walqui & van Lier, 2010; Cummins, 2000; Gibbons, 2009) was evident in much of my planning. Theory about PLD enabled me to shape the iterative inquiry processes that I used with the teachers. Ideas
from Andreotti (2010) and Garcia (2009a) helped me to see Pasifika students’ bilingualism in new ways, especially with the notion of “trans-languaging”. This theory about curriculum helped me to understand how the NZC and ELLP had similar underpinnings.

Apart from the Ministry of Education influence on the PLD, my research agenda played a significant role in influencing the shape of the PLD. As with many aspects of this research, the divisions are not clear-cut, but are rather overlapping. Two main influences are discussed here, namely, ideas about curriculum and the development of learning conversations as an integral element of the PLD.

My deep interest in EAL curriculum decisions was the catalyst for my thesis research. Therefore, the focus of the PLD on discussing concepts of knowing, curriculum and influence on EAL teaching decisions was relatively intense in the six months of 2010, the time of my research focus.

A further influence of my research was the repeated opportunities for learning conversations. I include the initial and final interviews in this general category of conversations. However, there were additional on-going learning-focussed conversations that were deliberately convened. For Sue, these generally occurred after observations or shared viewing of videos that she had taken of herself teaching. For Anita, the additional learning conversations happened in break-out sessions from the Pasifika PLG or the Level 1 Literacy Unit Standards workshops, or the learning conversations were held in deliberately established meetings in my office or her school resource room.

The influences of both the contract and the research meant the participants would begin their PLD upon a structure which was defined to some extent. I exercised some power in influencing the foci of inquiry, even though I explained to the participants that I wanted to respond to their needs, (Reflective Journal, p. 27) and help them to ensure their inquiry foci could be drawn from their students’ needs. The influencing process was evident when I ‘steered’ the participants away from some of their own initiated foci. For example, early in the research period, I recorded in my Reflective Journal that,

Anita wanted to look at word families from a second language development perspective and transfer that to an EAL context. I note I have steered fairly clear of this because of the negative idea of applying one technique to all learners. I suggested that she find out who needed this intervention and try it out on them ... [and to] look at individual vocabulary learning needs.

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This example is indicative of the ways in which my research focus was shaped by negotiation between me and the participants and by various policy and research agendas. However, in that negotiation it could be argued power was weighted towards policy (Ministry of Education) and the facilitator/researcher (me), and away from the participants.

The PLD contract and my research, which reflected my prior interests, both contributed to challenging what knowledge was valued in schools. This drew me to a focus on Pasifika students’ languages and English language learning. Evidence of this process of raising awareness of Pasifika students’ knowledges can be seen from thoughts in my Reflective Journal, where I questioned who EAL teachers were serving. For example, I reflected,

I’m thinking how I have been spurred to more action by my research e.g. being more involved in Pasifika stuff and taking the line of ‘whose knowledge’ is valued? (Bolstad, 2007)

The combined influences of the contract and the research meant that I was empowered to draw attention to Pasifika students as bilingual learners. The policy agendas can be seen to have at one and the same time both directed and empowered my focus on Pasifika students’ learning. The policy provided support for me to pursue issues relating to Pasifika students that had been emerging for me and increasingly became matters of personal concern.

6.1.2 Responses to identified contextual influences

As the key participant from her school, Sue (a new part-time teacher), was not professionally in a position to make changes through different levels in her school. Anita, on the other hand, undoubtedly rose to the challenge of helping to bring about change at multiple layers in her school. These layers are evident in her multiple inquiries that she reported in the conference presentation; with her class, her department, the whole staff, and the community (Appendix IV).

The Ministry of Education’s emerging emphasis on accountability / teaching-as-inquiry processes, with a requirement to provide evidence of accelerated shifts in student achievement, brought positive responses from the participants. However, teaching-as-inquiry processes also created some difficulties. Sue seemed to like having published inquiry frameworks such as the teaching-as-inquiry models in Chapter 5. She used these extensively as can be seen in Appendix I. Sue seemed to appreciate the external authority of them over the planning frameworks provided within her school. She preferred the focus on data. Sue’s use of inquiry frameworks, however, created some conflict for me. I
recorded in my Reflective Journal, “there is some tension being created here with Sue following me more than her HOD” (p. 30). I noted that this was partly because the cyclical nature of her teaching-as-inquiry planning was very different from the more traditional planning frameworks that were expected to be used in her school. Nevertheless, I recorded that I went to some lengths to show Sue how the ideas from her inquiries could be translated onto the more traditional grid-like planning templates. I was trying to dissipate my influence and avert conflict. Another possible tension was that Anita, in her enthusiasm for multi-layered inquiries, perhaps did not get to the depth that might have been achieved by a more focused collection of evidence and careful analysis of this.

In focussing on the participants’ reactions to Ministry of Education documents that I was required to promote, it became apparent that there were similarities and differences in the participants’ responses. The use of ELLP as a part of the inquiry process seemed to draw positive responses from both participants. Sue particularly used it to identify student needs and to inform her teaching, as can be seen in Appendix I (Conference PowerPoint, slide 6). On the other hand, the NZC document with its broad, albeit limited, references to EAL, was received very differently by the two participants. It was rejected by Sue while Anita embraced it. The NZC positioning of EAL as cross-curricular support appeared to be problematic for Sue. The conceptualisation of EAL teaching throughout the PLD remained inside her classroom. Sue did make small steps in acknowledging that a Subject X topic, for example, could be a context for EAL learning. However, it is also fair to note that she did not have the school position or the professional leadership responsibilities that Anita had. The NZC, on the other hand, seemed to fit with the EAL methodology that Anita espoused in the Initial Interview and the idea seemed to blossom through the PLD for her. While the Pasifika Education Plan (2009) undoubtedly influenced me, there is no evidence of Sue or Anita using it directly.

Both participants responded positively to my PLD that drew on of the research related to EAL. Sue, as discussed in Chapter 4, appeared to value this external authority and took the ideas into her practice with some dedication. Anita appeared to be stimulated by the conceptual ideas that I had introduced and as they were revealed in presentations at the Community Languages and English for speakers of Other Languages (CLESOL) conference that we attended together. Again, this was discussed in more detail in Chapter 4.
The participants’ reactions to obvious elements of my research (the focus on knowing and curriculum for EAL, and the learning conversations) were sometimes of surprise, but attitude remained positive throughout. I could evidence the participants’ engagement in discussions about curriculum when they questioned or disagreed with my ideas. Instead of putting challenges to one side, we were able to steadily pursue them. Under my ‘steering’ Sue, for example, set up learning activities which involved students in ‘participating and contributing’ and ‘learning to learn’ notions, supported within the NZC that Sue had previously dismissed. That she had internalised more ‘knowledge as a verb’ ideas about curriculum can be seen in her statement, that students were now “talking about how [Sue’s emphasis] to construct English and explaining it to each other” (Reflective Journal, p. 30). Additionally, Sue, towards the end, was able to articulate how we viewed curriculum differently. Initially, Anita expressed surprise using the phrase, “You’re kidding me!” (Learning Conversation 1), at the mention of addressing Pasifika students’ learning within EAL. Anita became a champion for the support of Pasifika students’ language learning (raising ideas in her school about valuing students’ home languages and addressing their CALP needs). This was also evidence of her change in attitude towards a more critical, epistemologically plural viewpoint.

The nature of the PLD enabled the participants to continue to respond to my ideas, even when they had initially questioned them or outwardly disagreed with them. The participants continued to be forthcoming and the tone of the conversations developed. Initially, I wondered whether the participants might be expressing what they thought I might want to hear. However, their development in understanding about curriculum, as described in Chapter 4, clearly deepened over time.

The two teacher-participants and I undoubtedly were influenced by the imperatives of my work and research. As we worked together, we fulfilled many of my contractual obligations and research interests. At the same time, the teacher-participants began to inquire into their own ideas and practices. The influence of the Ministry of Education contract was probably not as apparent to the teachers as it was to their principals and me, remembering that the principals had signed the Ministry of Education agreement. Nevertheless, once the teachers understood my need to report to the Ministry of Education without revealing identities of schools, teachers or students, they were happy to be involved in sharing and discussing their students’ achievement with me, knowing of their principals’ approval. This approval was in addition to the consent and ethics process for this thesis. The principals and the teachers consented to the Masters’ research.
6.1.3 Personal reflections about the contextual influences on the PLD

There are several ways to reflect on the contextual influences of the PLD. The contract that underpinned the PLD could be regarded as a lever for change. Likewise, the research could open possibilities. Conversely, the processes and outcomes outlined by the Ministry of Education in the PLD contract could be viewed and understood as constraints. Similarly, the research for this thesis could be seen to have limited the ‘freedom’ to do just what the teachers were interested in doing. Being mindful of both the constraints and possibilities, I now reflect on tensions and opportunities stemming from my PLD contract and research. In Table 12 below, I continue to show the order in which I discuss ideas in this section. They are not specifically Ministry of Education contract influences or research agenda influences, but rather a blend of both.

Table 12

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation of Reflections about Contextual Influences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shared influences of Ministry of Education contract and research agenda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Affordances and tensions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Iterative cycles of inquiry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Wanting approval – collecting the data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Positionality and steering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Need for reciprocity in sharing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Tensions between research agenda and Ministry of Education contract</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• My learning from the participants about EAL curriculum</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I believe that I was party to some iterative cycles of inquiry. At the time, I considered that I had a high level of trust in the intentions of the Ministry of Education PLD contract. This was probably due to my on-going work at contract and policy levels. As mentioned elsewhere, my ideas were congruent with the intentions of the NZC and I felt empowered by having it underpin the ideas with which I was trying to engage the teachers. In thinking about Reid’s (2006) idea that the whole education system could be involved in iterative inquiry processes, I suggest that the multi-layered approach to inquiry was working well, particularly in Anita’s school. There, we were modelling “inquiry at all layers of the system” (Reid, p. 16) with teachers inquiring into their own practice and me inquiring into my facilitation. There was also the opportunity for the Ministry of Education representatives to listen to my reporting and take what they required into future planning. With these notions of iterative cycles of inquiry, I was able to become more than a broker of the Ministry of Education expectations, and the teachers could become more than enactors of the PLD that I provided. We could hold ownership for our own changes, working within a system that supported and enabled that inquiry. This intertwined action research and teaching-as-inquiry is something I could seek to emphasise and articulate more clearly at all levels in the future.
An identified dilemma was that I wanted my facilitation to be approved of by the Ministry of Education contract holders and therefore fulfilled the accountability agenda by seeking the data that the Ministry of Education wanted to see. My reporting to the Ministry of Education to some extent dictated the data that the teachers collected and analysed for their own inquiry purposes. However, I consider this was very valuable data that assisted the teacher-participants to reflect on what would bring about change. So, through the research period, my accountability agenda, embedded within the teachers’ inquiries, became an enabler rather than a constraint.

The research within the PLD contract was, however, not without tensions. In writing up this research I reflected further on my positionality in the process, with a heightened awareness that I had been part of the reality that I was observing. I have since wondered about the processes that I used to bring about the changes. My reading of the literature about EAL curriculum had led me to think certain understandings of curriculum would be preferable. I suggest that I ‘steered’ participants towards some of my particular interests and agenda, related to inquiry processes and EAL curriculum. The word ‘steer’ has frequent mention in my Reflective Journal. I note in earlier drafts of 6.1, for the word ‘steered’ I used ‘manipulated’ and later recorded ‘I admit that I influenced … by stealth’. I was conscious of my positionality. Through this work with the two participants I became more understanding of the demands on teachers who were new to their EAL teaching roles. I similarly reflected,

I think by working as closely with a teacher, I am being more responsive to the constraints rather than zooming in with my ideas. (Reflective Journal, p. 38)

On further reflection, however, I hold to the idea that my facilitation role was primarily about finding ways to bring about change. If I accept that my positionality was an integral part of the context in which the PLD happened, then ‘steering’ can be seen an acceptable process. Also, as Earl (2010) pointed out, facilitation should not be passive. I would argue that it cannot be passive, given that all PLD takes place in context and all PLD facilitators (including myself) bring their own ideas, values and concerns to the PLD. For me, then, the challenge is in being aware of my positionality in the PLD, being able to discuss this with participants and being mindful of that weighting in any decision-making.
Thinking about positionality, I now consider that it would have been more beneficial to have revealed more about my contract and research to the participants in a more balanced, reciprocal manner. I could have expressed more of my thinking about curriculum when I first interviewed the participants (Appendix II, semi-structured interview questions). Conversely, too much discussion of my position might have created undue early influence on the participants. I had learnt about the participants’ past teaching experiences, which provided contextual information for me. Perhaps it would have been useful for them to have interviewed me with similar questions, not only to create a more equitable research relationship, but also to help the participants understand my contextual influences, especially my interest in the NZC and EAL curriculum. It would have highlighted for all partners in the research how important context was to us all. We could have surfaced how we all embark with expectations, and have requirements placed on us that influence how we ‘enter’ the PLD project.

I also consider the powerful influence of my own research agenda in tension with the Ministry of Education contractual expectations. Once I knew that the networked PLD and multiple layers of influence were not going to be possible in Sue’s school, I would normally have reduced the amount of involvement I invested into only one part-time teacher. This focus on one teacher was at odds with the expectations of my contract, and potentially would have led to criticism from the Ministry of Education had I not been able to show significant multi-layered shifts in other schools. An impact of my wanting the research to produce rich understandings over time was that I continued working with Sue for longer, with more intensity, in spite of the lack of congruence with her school’s wider involvement. Additionally, if I had not continued working with Sue, I would not have gained a range of significant insights.

From my work with Sue, influenced by a combination of contextual influences, I gained further insight into EAL curriculum. With my contractual requirement to use the ELLP document, combined with reading of literature about EAL curriculum and my scrutiny of the participants’ engagement with ELLP, I came to understand ELLP differently. I had previously perceived ELLP as a document which was an adjunct to the NZC, an unaligned add-on to the curriculum. Through this research, I came to see it was a student-centred curriculum document, not prescribing what should be taught, but providing possibilities to support English language learning for diverse learners. Through my reading, I came to see that ELLP and NZC were underpinned by similar theoretical ideas. Consequently, I came to better understand ELLP as a curriculum document and place greater value on it.
Through deliberating on and analysing my own reflections, I have come to see how the interplay of contractual requirements and the research agenda both constrained and enabled the participants' learning. I consider that these external forces generally had a positive influence. I have gained new learning about PLD by bringing these contextual influences to the surface.

6.2 Learning together - Social contexts and relationships

I refer back to the middle column in Table 10 at the beginning of this chapter, in which I showed the relationships between challenges of effective PLD, the literature on effective PLD and the themes emerging from this study. In this section, I look at the second theme: the impact of the social contexts that I created for the teacher-participants. In analysing the social contexts of my facilitation, I have drawn on the literature about adult learners bringing their prior learning and life experiences to PLD (Hunzicker, 2011; McLaughlin, 2002) and about social relationships fostering adult learning (Earl, 2010; Lieberman & Pointer Mace 2008; Imel 1998). I also reflect on the need for adults to be involved in decision-making in PLD (Rhodes, Stokes & Hampton, 2004). The social contexts in which I embedded the PLD included one-to-one situations, groups within schools and at a cross-school level. Many of these characteristics are social in nature: being collegial, collaborating, remaining on-going, accessing external expertise (Timperley, 2008; McLaughlin, 2002; Stoll, Fink & Earl,2003; Loucks-Horsley & Matsumoto,1999; MOE, 2008b). I was interested in the interplay of these social PLD traits in bringing about change for the participants.

6.2.1 The nature of the learning communities and social characteristics of the PLD

In designing the PLD I established that I wanted to be responsive to the participants’ needs. I recorded the participants’ self-identified needs and decided what might be appropriate foci for me in responding to them. These are displayed in Table 13 below.

Table 13

Types of Foci for PLD in Response to Needs Identified (Reflective Journal, p. 27)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sue</th>
<th>Anita</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General EAL programme development</td>
<td>Pasifika PLG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching-as-inquiry</td>
<td>Teaching-as-inquiry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELLP + NZC + model units</td>
<td>EAL leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrance tests</td>
<td>ELLP + NZC + model units</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I made decisions about events and social contexts in which to address these foci. I set up both group and one-to-one events, largely in response to issues and opportunities in the participants’ schools. One of the contexts, the Pasifika PLG, was set at the beginning of the PLD period because it involved several people. I often responded to requests and then developed them in social contexts that I thought were most useful. For example, Sue’s HOD asked for some help with ‘entrance tests’ for new ELLs and I responded by creating the assessment workshop for several people in her school. This social context within the school was my deliberate attempt to strengthen on-site collegiality. I created some such events such as the assessment workshop as in-school social settings and I created other social settings such as the Level 1 Literacy Unit standards workshops as cross-school events. The events that were cross-sector included a mix of primary and secondary, and in the case of the CLESOL conference, the tertiary sector as well. The different events and social contexts can be seen in Table 14.
Table 14

Social Contexts for PLD Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PLD events for Sue</th>
<th>Social setting</th>
<th># of facilitators and participants</th>
<th># of participants from own school</th>
<th>PLD events for Anita</th>
<th>Social context/learning community</th>
<th># of facilitators and participants</th>
<th># of participants from own school</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ELLP+NZC + model units workshop (one-off)</td>
<td>Cross-school</td>
<td>1:12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>ELLP + NZC + model units workshop</td>
<td>Cross-school</td>
<td>1:12</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job-embedded learning conversations (multiple)</td>
<td>In-school</td>
<td>1:1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Pasifika PLG (series of 5 meetings)</td>
<td>In-school, cross-school, cross-sector</td>
<td>2:6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching-as-inquiry (series of 4 meetings)</td>
<td>Cross-school</td>
<td>1:5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Teaching-as-inquiry (series of 4 meetings)</td>
<td>Cross-school</td>
<td>1:5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment Workshop (one-off)</td>
<td>In-school</td>
<td>1:6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 1 Literacy workshops (series of 2 meetings)</td>
<td>Cross-school</td>
<td>2:30</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Level 1 Literacy workshops (series of 2 meetings)</td>
<td>Cross-school</td>
<td>2:30</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>CLESOL Conference (one-off)</td>
<td>Cross-sector</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I now turn to relate my reading on social characteristics or conditions to show the extent to which they were realised in a range of social contexts. I tried to establish PLD that had characteristics of being collegial and collaborative, beyond mere congeniality. There were opportunities to express ideas and listen to diverse opinions, particularly in my learning conversations with the participants. Co-construction was an aspect of collegiality that resonated in my study. Price (2008) had identified co-construction as being a powerful process for bringing about change in culturally and linguistically responsive teaching. I spent some time with Sue co-constructing an ESOL Unit Standard assessment activity. The positioning of the participants as fellow researchers (Earl, 2010, Erlam, 2010) meant we worked as colleagues or small ‘communities of practice’ to achieve improved outcomes of better teaching (both theirs and mine). I also set up groups of teachers within the participants’ schools, such as the Pasifika PLG. This purposeful social management, along with between-workshop collaborative tasks, supported the working relationships between staff in the school, so they could process new ideas together. A further type of collegial opportunity was cross-school, in PLD events such as the teaching-as-inquiry workshops, where participants could sound out EAL specific ideas in some depth with other EAL teachers.

Another social characteristic worth examining of the PLD was on-going support (Timperley, 2008). In particular I attempted to maintain on-going custom-made support which was responsive to the participants’ contexts and personal circumstances (Loucks-Horsley and Matsumoto, 1999). While I was able to maintain on-going support with the participants, it was only in one school that there was the opportunity to have on-going support from leaders within that school. Such in-school support is highlighted as being necessary for effective PLD in some of the literature (Timperley et al, 2007; Hunzicker 2011; MOE 2008b).

‘Outside expertise’ included me and my co-facilitator colleagues for the Pasifika PLG and the Literacy Unit Standards workshops. During the research period and at my suggestion, the participants also accessed the expertise of fellow EAL in ESOL teacher cluster groups. In order to support some of the ideas about knowledge and curriculum that I was trying to communicate, I also gave participants what I called ‘virtual outside expertise’ back-up. This was expertise that was not face-to-face but included print and on-line material. I also encouraged them to attend EAL-related conferences. The teacher-participants were therefore connected to a wider learning context than that which physically surrounded them. This is worth examining in the light of the conclusion drawn.
by Timperley et al. (2007) that “external expertise was generally necessary but not sufficient” (p. xxvii).

Within the PLD that I facilitated, there were numerous forms of social context ‘networks and nodes’ (Earl, 2010) that provided the potential for both the teacher-participants and me to learn. The social characteristics of collegiality, collaboration, co-construction, having on-going support and accessing outside expertise were all evident to varying degrees in the PLD.

6.2.2 How the participants responded to social characteristics within the different social contexts

Responses to the social contexts and social characteristics differed for Sue and Anita. Through the PLD, Sue was very responsive in one-to-one contexts with me, and in groups with other EAL teachers. However, she did not appear to build strong collegial working relationships within her school. Anita had engaged in multiple working relationships within her school and across schools. These interactions sometimes led to challenging communication with different people within the school.

The PLD that I conducted with Sue evolved as a one-to-one, on-going, job-embedded experience with quite extensive discussions. Sue took up my ideas conscientiously. Evidence is found in my Reflective Journal, where I recorded that Sue responded to me, “really concentrating on what I give her” (p. 30). Further evidence of her uptake of my ideas can be seen after some particular one-to-one PLD. After observing isolated grammar and vocabulary teaching, I showed a model unit of work and discussed using whole texts from NZC Learning Area contexts. On a subsequent visit, I saw Sue conscientiously using the model unit of work. In another example, Sue identified that she wanted her students to get a particular Unit Standard for NCEA (Learning Conversation 2). I responded by co-constructing an assessment activity with her. In a visit to Sue’s school soon afterwards, I observed that Sue had adapted the model for different texts. I considered Sue responded very positively to the one-to-one, on-going PLD with me. Her uptake and use of models suggests that she found it sufficiently helpful and valuable to want to try and put this in practice.

Additionally, in response to the Assessment workshop, Sue showed use of a wider range of evidence to monitor students’ learning. It was after that workshop that she began involving her students in conferencing and using the student writing exemplars to direct her teaching. It is pertinent that even though I had deliberately set up the Assessment workshop as a collegial opportunity, Sue’s uptake of the ideas was individual, and not shared with others within her school context.
Sue was much more involved and enthusiastic in meetings with EAL teachers from other schools than in PLD collegial opportunities within her own school. In my Reflective Journal (p. 35), I wrote that Sue was “animated” in reporting to an EAL teachers’ workshop about one of her inquiries but this was not replicated in her own school. Sue seemed surprised when I set up the Assessment workshop in her school, in a deliberate attempt to foster collegial collaboration. She was very quiet in this situation. It seemed to me that she did not engage with, or had no opportunity to engage with, the support of leadership within her school. Although leaders in her school were aware that she was involved in this PLD and agreed to it, they appeared to keep some distance from it.

For Anita, a number of productive, collegial relationships were achieved in the social environment of the planned workshops series. In the on-going Pasifika PLG, Anita had developed work-related relationships. One example was with a teacher from a contributing primary school, in order to find out more about the Pasifika ELLs moving to her high school. In the second of the Level 1 Literacy workshops, Anita and an English teacher colleague from her school co-presented inquiries that they had undertaken after the first workshop (Reflective Journal p. 33). Although Anita was with different teachers in each workshop series, there were opportunities for networking between workshops. She talked about the same Pasifika students within different collegial relationships: with their ex-primary teachers, with the English HOD and Literacy Leader, with the Learning Support teachers and with parents.

In terms of on-going leadership, Anita had her Principal sitting alongside her in some of the PLD and took opportunities to discuss ideas together. With this on-going access to dialogue with her Principal, there was some tension as Anita brought ideas to the discussion that challenged the status quo. For example, in suggesting that she should visit the contributing schools to find out about Pasifika and ELLs’ language and learning strengths and needs, she could have been seen as undermining a different existing process. The suggestion that Pasifika students’ needs might be better met in EAL than in Learning Support was also quite challenging for this particular school.

The two teacher-participants both responded positively to external expertise in formal or semi-formal PLD opportunities, as well as in a wider community of EAL practitioners. In Sue’s case, she appreciated the support of the ESOL cluster group and used their wisdom to counteract some of my ideas about curriculum and assessment. She also valued the ideas from a text about scaffolding language that I gave her. She would sometimes quote ideas from it. Anita was also inspired by outside expertise. Anita valued the CLESOL conference and had made
particular mention of the keynote presentation by Swain (2010), who had described her shifting theoretical perspectives on EAL. Swain’s keynote address was on “The inseparability of cognition and emotion in second language learning”. This influenced Anita to explore such ideas in a subsequent inquiry in her classroom. Through my connections at the conference, Anita also communicated with people with EAL decision-making power such as MOE and NZQA representatives. This appeared to be inspiring for her.

6.2.3 My reflections about the learners’ relationships in their PLD contexts

Here I reflect on what challenged me to make PLD effective, both in creating social contexts and in developing social involvement to foster change. In particular I consider the need for a facilitator to be able to provide the necessary level of challenge and balance this alongside support.

I grappled with the tension between being responsive to teacher-identified needs and making the PLD happen within the constraints of the school context. There was no doubt that Sue needed support to engage with ideas and processes that my contract and my research suggested were desirable. However, in looking at the social contexts and social characteristics of the PLD for Sue, I know that several essential elements were missing, leading to change that was not necessarily fitting in context or sustainable. On-going support of in-school leaders was missing in Sue’s case, as was an apparent opportunity to collaborate with colleagues. A tension that arose as a result of Sue following my guidance rather than that of her HOD was possibly attributable to the absence of these characteristics. My efforts to “mitigate against” (Reflective Journal, p. 30) difficulties through the one-off Assessment workshop and to include the HOD in all emails probably came too late. The PLD for one part-time teacher was not far-reaching enough to impact beyond Sue’s classroom. This probably had some unintended and unarticulated consequences for Sue in her working relationships. This reflection confirms the ideas of Timperley et al. (2007) and Earl (2010) who identify characteristics of effective PLD as needing to be networked, on-going and socially-mediated.

Another tension was between being responsive to teacher-identified needs and being challenging at the same time. Looking back on my Reflective Journal I can see that a tacit technique for me was to pick up a request, build a relationship and then expand on the boundaries or deepen the response. However in reflecting on the Assessment workshop, Sue’s uptake of the ideas remained individual. I have no evidence that Sue fed back PLD learnings to others within her school context. Perhaps I should have ensured that there was collaboration within the workshop, rather than relying on collaboration to occur afterwards. My professional learning from this was that just by setting up the social context
and opportunity for collaboration, cooperative development is not necessarily achieved.

Yet I also realised that I did have some success with this approach of following up on identified needs and then ‘pushing the boundaries’. For example, in Anita’s school I set myself up as a co-presenter of the Pasifika PLG. I went along in support of the introduction about culturally responsive schools and then added the challenge of additionally being linguistically responsive. I strongly suggested that the EAL HOD (Anita) should be involved even though others were surprised at this recommendation. So the nature of the PLD involved me responding to requests but interweaving challenging ideas that I wanted to expose about EAL knowledge and curriculum. As well as being responsive, I was deliberately challenging, using the idea that effective PLD involved “challenging prevailing discourses” (Timperley et al, 2007 p 152.).

Nevertheless I also encountered challenges as a facilitator. Sue’s apparent dismissal of the NZC as a guiding curriculum document was an important realisation for me. I had come to value the broad ideas, especially the Principles of the NZC and saw them as powerful directives for learning. Deep down, I wanted Sue to share this vision. The tension here was that if I was to be guided by the relativist and epistemological plural ideas that I espoused, I should accept that we could have different views about curriculum. The challenge was therefore working out how I might do this; how to guide and facilitate whilst reflecting different views.

Another interesting aspect which this research has highlighted for me, was the changing relationship between me, in my facilitator role, and the participants. Sue’s and my relationship changed and developed. I was initially hoping that we would develop a co-researcher relationship, or at least an apprentice-master relationship, using Walqui and van Lier’s analogy (2010); realising that the relationship was unlikely to be equal. When I saw the assessment activity that I had carefully co-constructed with Sue, replicated several times as teaching and learning activities (Reflective Journal p. 30), I observed somewhat disappointedly that my models were being replicated quite precisely. Our relationship seemed to be more akin to that of a floor manager (me) and worker (Sue). Instead of independently making decisions about the teaching and learning prior to an assessment activity, I saw that Sue had developed a series of very similar assessment activities as teaching tools. I now reflect that Sue was operating with me in the same way that she expected her students to (as described in Chapter 4). I came to understand that Sue’s conceptualisations of PLD were similar to her initial conceptualisations about teachers and learners.
However, the relationship changed significantly when Sue and I began using an inquiry focus. Once Sue formulated her own teaching-as-inquiry, her enthusiasm in the video-stimulated recall learning conversations indicated that she was acting as an apprentice and fellow researcher. This shift in taking control of her own learning was paralleled in the shift that she enabled for her students, allowing them to take control of their own learning. It shows the translation of this teaching-as-inquiry approach into her pedagogy. This observation of increased self-efficacy gained by a teacher once she was given control of her own inquiry, confirms for me the value of teaching-as-inquiry as a methodology for PLD.

Opportunities for sharing ideas collectively were presented in the colloquium presentation at the CLESOL conference (involving me, the two participants and two other EAL teachers). That opportunity helped us to collectively manage, discuss and reflect on our teaching-as-inquiry/ action research as we shaped and developed our ideas. Though Sue was unable to attend the conference, the idea that her inquiry would be presented by me with the aid of her PowerPoint presentation created a collaborative venture, where she and I shared and shaped our ideas together. It was important for Sue that I represented her work accurately and for me that her inquiry had sufficient rigour to be received at a conference. Sue needed to shape her thinking to fit the abstract and I needed to understand Sue’s ideas well in order to present them. The final product therefore represented considerable collaboration that resulted in us both gaining a greater understanding of each other’s thoughts about curriculum. It would seem that the expectation to present teaching-as-inquiry to colleagues provided an opportunity to deepen the professional learning, especially through collaborating on a shared presentation.

While outcomes which I expected or hoped for were sometimes achieved when I supported participants to collaborate between workshops, there were also outcomes for the teachers that were not my expectations. These were not negative outcomes as they supported teachers to learn and follow their own interests and they also helped deepen my appreciation of how understandings are co-constructed and can be difficult to shift. An example came from conversations Sue had with other ESOL teachers I introduced her to. It is to these experienced EAL teachers that Sue attributed her criticism on the NZC. She cited that it was “not our [EAL teachers’] curriculum” (Learning Conversation 2). I recorded my surprise because I had thought Sue would have absorbed the notion that the NZC existed for all students. So there was an unexpected tension in fostering collaboration in contexts outside my control. It did not always lead in the direction that I was assuming and probably desiring. This realisation taught
me to consider that change in thinking (about curriculum or other concepts) could be partial, insecure and open to other influences.

In looking back, I see that there was value helping the participants to access the inspiration of others’ expertise. Sue’s reference to the EAL cluster group, as reinforcing her understanding of the NZC not being “our” [EAL] curriculum, indicates that this group stimulated her thinking about such ideas. That Sue chose to read the book, *Scaffolding Language, Scaffolding Learning* (Gibbons, 2002) I had given her as an additional source of ideas about knowledge and EAL curriculum was useful for me to observe. Her valuing the written word might be considered at a ‘knowledge as a noun’, realist end of a spectrum of ideas about the authority of knowledge (Hofer, 2004). Despite this, the book seemed to help Sue shift to developing some ‘knowledge as a verb’, relativist actions in her EAL teaching. It was partly due to the Gibbons text that Sue attributed her shift from focusing on ‘error correction’ to a ‘scaffolding’ pedagogy.

For Anita, the model of my co-facilitation with other experts in the Pasifika and Literacy workshops perhaps enabled her to envision a shared responsibility for cross-curricular EAL work in secondary schools. She developed this vision for her role as “a kind of in-school ESOL advisor” (Final Interview) and began to act on it. This was a considerable challenge and achievement for Anita because subject-based departments “exert enormous influence on the way professional learning in the [secondary sector] can and should be conducted” (Timperley et al. 2007, p. 206). That Anita was able to hear Swain’s conference address was exciting to me because Swain suggested ideas about co-construction and cultural mediation in language learning, reinforcing theoretical ideas that I had introduced in the PLD. At the conference I could see that Anita picked up some notions about the political nature of EAL curriculum and assessment through my introductions to MOE and NZQA representatives at the conference. This perhaps influenced her subsequent more intensive involvement in the EAL field. So while outside expertise, in itself, is not necessarily going to bring about change (Timperley et al., 2007), various sources through enriching understanding, helped the participants engage with ideas at a deeper level.

I turn to reflect on the nature of the social context of the PLD in Anita’s school, where I noticed the beginnings of systemic change. The changes that happened at a systemic level included the new way of looking at Pasifika students as ELLs rather than as needing Learning Support, the sharing of responsibility across departments for students’ Level 1 Literacy portfolios, the launching of a home-school partnership with Pasifika families through a *fiafia* celebration and the valuing of Pasifika students’ home languages enabling the school to begin to acknowledge these in NCEA qualifications. The complexity of bringing about
these outcomes could not have happened without the on-going support of the principal, or at least someone in senior management.

The networking of PLD that I enabled in Anita’s school meant that Anita could transfer some learning from one context to another, creating a spread of knowledge. Anita, her colleagues and her principal were all involved with some strands of the on-going PLD, ensuring that there were opportunities for collegiality. For example, Anita focused aspects of her teaching-as-inquiry on Pasifika students, taking ideas from the Pasifika PLD to the Literacy workshops. Additionally, she was able to network in between workshops with Technology and Subject X teachers to find examples of ELLs’ writing to take to the Level 1 Literacy workshop. The on-going support of a school leader was significant in the responses to the PLD. As the principal of Anita’s school participated regularly in the Pasifika PLG, she was able to discuss on-going matters related to Pasifika students with him. A trusting relationship between the principal and me also developed, so that the principal and I could also have conversations about complex issues. The significant shifts in this school were characterised by several of the elements of effective PLD. The shifts evolved through the socially-embedded, collegially-networked, on-going PLD that was supported by school leaders and outsider input.

In this section, the analysis of the PLD that I facilitated has revealed to me the complexity of the social contexts in which change might or might not flourish. I have explored certain social characteristics of PLD identified in the literature that are deemed effective. Through my reflections, I am led to concur with these authors on the importance of establishing PLD that is networked and has characteristics of being collaborative with the support of in-school leaders and outside experts. The recognition of teachers as adult learners and their need to be involved in decision-making has led me to touch on the effectiveness of teaching-as-inquiry. In the next section I will explore this further.

6.3 Shaping PLD

At this stage (regarding myself as a participant) I look at the impact of the shape of the PLD in relation to the change that I wanted to bring about. My goal was for the participants to have greater awareness about their EAL curriculum decisions and I wanted them to examine the impact of their decisions on their students’ learning. My action research is in the foreground in this section but it is interrelated with the teachers’ own inquiries in the background. I analyse the influence of the design of the PLD by looking at it in relation to two models which are both purported to bring about change: the Joyce and Showers (1988) Five
Step Model and ‘teaching-as-inquiry’ model (Timperley et al, 2007). Both models were job-embedded in authentic contexts (Hunzicker, 2011).

The Five Step Model has been applied retrospectively. I use it as an overlay lens through which I can evaluate different processes that I used. The teaching-as-inquiry model, on the other hand, was an integral part of the PLD and the research methodology. It enabled the teachers and me to examine the work while we undertook the teaching/facilitation (Robinson & Lai, 2006). There is more depth to the analysis of ‘teaching as-inquiry’ than the five Step Model because it was used in the design of the PLD, in the action of it as well. So there is no intention to treat the two models equally.

6.3.1 How the PLD was organised

On looking back at my reflections at the time of the PLD, I can see that the shape of the work with Sue fell into two phases. The first phase for Sue can be seen to have been shaped much like the Five Step Model. The second phase of the PLD was predominantly shaped by Sue’s own inquiries. For Anita, there were no distinct phases and I consider that she was involved in inquiring into her own practice from the beginning of the PLD.

The PLD for Sue began with theory, especially in the workshop for teachers who were new to the ESOL roles. Looking back at the agenda for this workshop I can see that I talked about the NZC: the Principles and the ‘front end’ of the curriculum. I began with theory (step 1). Then I demonstrated how an EAL teacher could design a course using Achievement Objectives from the NZC, along with Language Learning Outcomes identified through the ELLP and the companion MOE document, The English Language Intensive Programme. I was demonstrating (step 2) how to design a course with high expectations and high support. I then observed in Sue’s class and was able to give feedback (step 3) on what I saw. Next I worked on co-constructing an assessment activity which I expected to be understood as a summative activity, but which, in practice (step 4) turned into a teaching activity. I did not get to coach (step 5) Sue at this stage because I ‘changed tack’ to a different way of facilitating PLD.

In the second phase of the PLD that I designed for Sue, I introduced a deliberate teaching-as-inquiry ‘turn’. This phase for Sue began in a cross-school workshop for five EAL teachers which also included Anita. The participants were expected to find out more about their students’ learning needs and to examine and adjust their own teaching accordingly. There was the expectation that they would be able to report their experiences and reflections to an audience, possibly as part of a conference presentation. The nature of this PLD was that we were all researchers, looking at our job-embedded practice and dealing with EAL
curriculum. Our agreement was to feed our findings back into our work to bring about change. Sue chose to look at “Error correction” and although this is not what I would have chosen, I tried hard not to intervene.

Through making links between my action research and the participants’ inquiries, we explored a range of authors’ models to appropriate and/or adapt, such as Figure 10: *Teacher inquiry and knowledge building cycle to promote valued student outcomes* (Timperley et al, 2007, inside cover) and the Figure 9 model from the NZC Pedagogy section (MOE, 2007). The models helped shape the outcomes for me and for the teacher-participants/researchers. We all followed a general pattern of:

1. Noticing and gathering evidence of teachers’/students’ strengths and needs;
2. Using this to inform facilitating/teaching foci;
3. Analysing what I had already done and what I could learn to do;
4. Undertaking some new ways of facilitating/teaching;
5. Noticing the impact; and
6. Reflecting on the outcomes to inform the next steps.

The intertwined nature of the relationship between my research and the teacher-participants’ teaching-as-inquiry meant that my research informed their inquiries and their inquiries informed my research. The common use of teaching-as-inquiry models enabled the teacher-participants and me, the facilitator-researcher to problematise their identified issues and then to map my research onto theirs. We were working on issues collaboratively. The issues could be raised by the teachers or by me. The foci of inquiry arose from the contexts of the teachers’ work. The deliberate intertwining of the series of events can be seen in the questions recorded in my Reflective Journal (p. 30) as was previously shown in Table 2. The relationships between my own and the participants’ focussing questions, derived from the questions in the Timperley et al. cycle (Table 10) can be seen in the following table, Table 15. Both Sue and Anita were involved in this deliberate use of inquiry models.
Table 15

Questions to Structure my Thinking About Sue’s Class Teaching

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What are our students’ needs?</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teacher-researcher: Sue</strong></td>
<td><strong>Facilitator-researcher: myself</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>(about her students)</em></td>
<td><em>(about Sue)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What do the students already know?</td>
<td>What does Sue already know?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What sources of evidence have I used?</td>
<td>What sources of evidence have I used?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What do the students need to learn and do?</td>
<td>What does Sue need to learn and do?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do I build on what they know?</td>
<td>How do I build on what Sue knows?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What are our own learning needs?</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teacher-researcher: Sue</strong></td>
<td><strong>Facilitator-researcher: myself</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>(about herself)</em></td>
<td><em>(about myself)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How have I contributed to existing student outcomes?</td>
<td>How have I contributed to Sue’s existing outcomes?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What do I already know that I can use to promote valued outcomes?</td>
<td>What do I already know that I can use to promote valued outcomes for Sue?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What do I need to learn to do to promote valued outcomes?</td>
<td>What do I need to learn to do to promote valued outcomes?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What sources of evidence/knowledge can I utilise?</td>
<td>What sources of evidence/knowledge can I utilise?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.3.2 The teachers’ responses to the shape of the PLD

Having looked closely at both models of PLD and at my Reflective Journal, I can now describe with more clarity how and why the participants responded to different types of PLD. Sue responded positively to the first steps of the Five Step Model phase of the PLD that I delivered. As described in Section 6.2, she followed my demonstration attentively and recreated a series of assessment activities as teaching lessons. She used and reused the models that I had given her but had not adapted the ideas. I recorded this in my Reflective Journal (p. 33), where I stated that I felt uncomfortable, as if I was an outside ‘expert’ at this stage. When I did visit Sue’s classroom, I had felt it was inappropriate to coach further after the series of repetitive assessment practice lessons had already gone on for too long.
In looking back through my notes, the teaching-as-inquiry phase of the PLD that I had facilitated appeared to have been much more successful. It was in this phase, that I could see the teachers had understood teaching-as-inquiry-type processes. The use of an inquiry model had helped me explain my methodology and provided a model for their inquiries. I noted Anita’s grasp of this, evident in Learning Conversation 1. I said “In my Masters, I’m looking at my own practice, that’s the focus for me.” In response, Anita said, “Full on reflective practice – teaching-as-inquiry”. Thus I surmise that having a common design framework for my action research and the teacher’s inquiries probably helped to build a productive and respectful relationship between me as the researcher and the teachers as participants.

I noticed that the action research/teaching-as-inquiry was associated with an on-going motivation for myself and for the teachers. That I was motivated by using action research is evident in my Reflective Journal, e.g., p. 34 and p. 39 where I sketched cycles of thinking, action and reflection and in more formal detailed records such as the extract in Appendix II. The two participants appeared to be unerringly motivated with the PLD. Their enthusiasm is exemplified in their on-going and multi-layered cycles of inquiry. I wrote at the time that Sue had “written up three inquiry cycles” (Reflective Journal, p. 38). I also saw a development in their ideas. For example, while Sue began with a focus on “error correction”, by the end this had changed to “exploring ways to help learners develop their writing and become more independent in their production of writing”. Anita reported on the four layers of inquiry in the conference presentation (see Appendix IV for the front page of her hand-out) with her students, within her department, with teachers in her school, and within the community (parents, agents, guardians). That Anita recorded inquiries that would be on-going beyond the research period, is indicative of the idea that, for her, inquiry was becoming “a habit of mind” (Earl & Timperley, 2008).

6.3.3 My reflections about the two models of PLD

I now consider that the first phase of the PLD, which followed the general shape of a five-step model, had not been successful in shifting Sue’s realist, ‘worker: floor-manager’ expectation of PLD, even though it had been job-embedded. Sue continued to maintain her prescriptive conceptualisation of curriculum in her teaching. In this first phase of the PLD, it would have been difficult for Sue to understand and apply my ideas to new contexts because of the perpetuated novice-expert relationship. By being the sole participant in the PLD from her school, there was no colleague for her to readily seek direct feedback from. Being distant from her school, it was difficult for me to monitor the teaching through the stages of practice and coaching. As Joyce and Showers learned subsequently
to the development of their Five Step Model, there was a need for an additional and first step of developing a shared vision. On reflection, Sue and I had probably different visions about teaching EAL in the first place. Without a common vision, the steps I took did not really bring about significant enough change in thinking for Sue to change the way she taught. Further, without the close proximity of others in her school providing leadership through coaching, the more superficial changes may not have been sustained. So I consider that the somewhat linear Five Step model worked well with getting Sue to copy what I had given her. I wonder whether predicating the model with a shared vision would create the kind of change that I anticipated.

I consider that my use of the teaching-as-inquiry model of PLD was instrumental in bringing about significant change for both participants. It is interesting that Sue appeared to shift some of her thinking about EAL from a realist viewpoint towards a relativist way of thinking during the teaching-as-inquiry phase of the PLD. This shift was perhaps helped by using an articulated teaching-as-inquiry model. The articulated expectations of change constituted a vision which may have helped the shift. One such shift can be seen in the change of emphasis in the title of her inquiry. Sue began by saying that she would focus on “error correction” which carries assumptions of a product focus and right/wrong answers. The focus changed over time to become, “Students’ self-editing”, and eventually to, “Exploring ways to help learners develop their writing and become more independent in their production of writing” (Appendix I, slide 5). This suggests more process-oriented foci and a more flexible approach to learner support. Through this teaching-as-inquiry phase, Sue appeared to gain agency for herself but also to give agency to her students.

So another catalyst for the change may have been this shift in agency, or locus of control, away from me and to being centred on herself and her students. In having that autonomy, Sue appeared to change from doing what she thought she ought to do (Five Step Model), to, in her words, “experimenting” in the “uncertain science” of EAL teaching (Appendix 1, slide 18). Further, Sue took it upon herself to film her own teaching and to show clips to me. In the learning conversations that ensued, the power was in Sue’s hands. She led the conversations and perhaps felt empowered to analyse her own teaching in relation to the students’ learning. Enthusiasm for this process was evident in her tone of voice and the length of time she wanted to spend talking. This self-analysis, through our learning conversations, seems to have been much more productive in generating change than the more traditional notion of receiving feedback from an expert.

The intertwined nature of my action research and the teachers’ inquiries meant there were some obvious correlations between my interests and the teachers’
inquiry foci. What I had identified as a need for the teachers, in some instances, turned out to be a focus for their inquiries. The following example illustrates the interrelationship.

A question for me about Sue: What am I really wanting to change?
Answer to myself: Develop view that the aim is to apprentice students through learning so that they become independent learners. (Reflective Journal, p. 32)

Sue ultimately identified as her focus,

Exploring ways to help learners develop their writing and become more independent in their production of writing. (Appendix 1, slide 6)

I now consider whether I can celebrate this confluence in ideas or whether the power of my facilitator role provided a manipulation to think like me. I can see that I facilitated opportunities for the teachers to develop new perspectives. A justification for thinking that I did not unduly manipulate their thinking is that they took themselves to new places that I would not have necessarily gone myself. I also learnt from them. For instance, Anita’s focus on her role as “a kind of in-school advisor” (Final Interview) was her own idea. I had been expecting her to look at her own teaching within her classroom. Anita’s fast strides in her EAL leadership within her school were a surprise and her leadership provided a model for me to use in other schools. So, with the interwoven action research/teaching-as-inquiry, while the teachers were undoubtedly being influenced by me, I was also being influenced by them. The power relations in teaching-as-inquiry were significantly less obvious than in the Five Step Model. Nevertheless, a tension continued for me, of wanting to create change in the teachers’ thinking about EAL but also to support multiple views.

6.4 Using a rich evidence to shift expectations for Pasifika students

In this section I will describe and analyse the use of an evidence base in two situations that drew attention to different ways of responding to the language strengths and needs of Pasifika students. One context for using an evidence-base was in Sue’s classroom where a Pasifika student had been assessed as having some kind of learning difficulty. I look at how I was able to challenge this perception of the student and support accelerated learning for the same student. The second use for an evidence-base that I discuss is the work in the Pasifika PLG at Anita’s school.
6.4.1 The nature of the PLD which used an evidence base

In the first example of the use of data to stimulate shifts in teachers’ thinking and actions about Pasifika students, I look at Sue’s context. The PLD about the use of the *English Language Learning Progressions* (ELLP) enabled Sue to draw a picture of her Pasifika students’ English language development. Once we had this picture on ELLP, it could be and was used alongside the evidence of the testing done by Learning Support, to stimulate a learning conversation about expectations.

The ELLP document illustrates characteristics of English language development in speaking, writing and the kinds of reading and listening students might encounter in five stages (Foundations Stage and Stages 1-4). Within the PLD I guided Sue through the document so that she could use it to help her identify students’ English language needs, to direct teaching decisions and to monitor her teaching and the students’ progress. I showed Sue how to make overall teacher judgements about students’ stages and next steps, using a range of sources of evidence. Under my guidance, Sue highlighted individual students’ language strengths on a copy of the ELLP matrices (see Appendix I, slide 4). Following identification of language learning needs on ELLP, I helped Sue to identify next steps, particularly in her chosen area of interest, writing. From there, Sue’s teaching-as-inquiry took her to explore a number of ways of scaffolding students’ writing and to enable the Pasifika student’s accelerated learning.

In the second example of PLD that used an evidence base to trigger different thinking about Pasifika students, I look at the Pasifika PLG involving Anita. I asked that the NCEA Literacy data from four years was disaggregated for Pasifika students. In the discussion we identified a peak of achievement when there was a whole-school PLD focus on literacy and since then, a decline (Minutes of the Pasifika PLG). This gave an impetus for the inclusion of a language focus in this Pasifika PLG and a justification for the inclusion of Anita with her in-school EAL expertise. Additional types of evidence surfaced after the presentation of the student achievement data including primary teachers’ beliefs about the students’ potential, and students’ voices about negative experiences at secondary school. In the Pasifika PLG there was opportunity to tease out ideas using anecdotal evidence as well as student achievement data. There were discussions about values and the differences that Pasifika students encounter in Palagi-dominant (European-dominant) school cultures. The nature of the PLG Pasifika-style *talanoa* (discussion) incorporated both the challenge of thinking about student achievement data and the surfacing of beliefs about cultures.
6.4.2 How the participants responded to the evidence-base of student performance

Sue had initially taken the information from the Learning Support teacher about the Pasifika boy having SEN as a fait accompli, and presented it to me as such with a tone of pity. However, with the data gathering which was used to identify ELLP stages, it was easy for me to lead to a conversation in which we were able to question the SEN assumptions. We came to agree that his relatively low English literacy was likely to be about learning the language rather than any type of learning disorder. She changed to see that he was as capable of making progress in developing English literacy as any other student in the class. From this point Sue was happy to include this boy as a focus student for her inquiries and was excited to show the shifts in his writing (Appendix 1 Conference PowerPoint, slide 13, 14).

Sue’s uptake of ideas through analysis of achievement data is evidenced in my reflection:

I had done some PLD with her already this year (2 workshops) where I’d gone over big ideas but that had presumably not sunk in ... Why has she picked up on some of my ideas especially those related to assessment, and not on the ideas about curriculum?” (Reflective Journal p. 30).

As described in Chapter 4, Sue engaged closely with the ELLP document. The combination of using the evidence-base of ELLP from which she could deduce next steps and align them with the outcomes focus of the ESOL Unit Standards seemed to be a good combination for Sue. She used various bits of evidence to draw conclusions about her students’ progress and transferred the data about ELLP stages to her mark-book. This attention to tracking individuals’ progress and the recording of ELLP data was evidenced in Sue’s mark-book (Appendix 1 Conference PowerPoint, slide 13, 14). She seemed to value the frameworks and models in the ELLP document. They were something she and other teachers could grasp and work with. Sue and Anita both showed that, with PLD facilitation, they could also reach beyond the low expectations as their own inquiries developed.

At Anita’s school, too, my persistence in using an evidence-base in challenging prevailing attitudes towards Pasifika students was evident. Early on, when Anita was listing things she would like help with, she said, “About Pasifika - I don’t really think that has been too much attached to the ESOL Department. It’s kind of been in with Learning Support,” and then went on to list other priorities. Armed with the literacy data which showed a plateau of low achievement in the...
secondary school for Pasifika students, I was able to respond with, “And also thinking some more about ESOL and Learning Support and the relationship between them, in relation to supporting Pasifika students” (Learning Conversation 2). So, Anita began to ask questions about whether the needs of the Pasifika students should be addressed differently in her school and whether her EAL specialist role should be conceived differently. She set up an analysis of the Pasifika students’ Level 1 Literacy status in Term 3 so that students who might miss out on opportunities to achieve were identified. This data helped her to question the school’s systematic response to Pasifika students and to her eventual repositioning of the school culture, seeing the Pasifika students as competent bilingual learners.

6.4.3 My reflections about the use of an evidence base

In thinking about using an evidence base to challenge teachers’ ideas about teaching Pasifika students, I was mindful that I wanted to support the idea that assessment was primarily to inform teaching and learning. I had written in my Reflective Journal that

Assessment plays an “advocacy” role (Cummins 1996); it informs the planning of future teaching and learning tasks and is aimed at supporting students’ academic and linguistic development (cited in Gibbons 2002, p. 33).

In reflecting on the PLD, I can now see that this view of assessment held by Cummins and Gibbons and articulated in the NZC influenced the way I developed the workshop on Assessment, rather than Entrance Tests, for Sue’s school. I developed this as a broad response to a narrow request for guidance. I wanted to expand the idea of assessment from a placement test to something which could also be used to inform teaching and learning. I noted that Sue had most likely entered the PLD process with a more realist view of assessment, evidenced by her initial, absolute acceptance of the findings of the Special Needs testing results. I now consider that the use of an assessment evidence-base brought Sue and me to common ground, to a place where we could converse without talking past each other. Our relativist and realist assertions could come together and be drawn to the surface in discussions about student achievement data, and from that common position we could begin to have powerful learning conversations.

Reflecting on MOE policy relating to Pasifika students I can now see that it too, is informed by the evidence base that identifies seemingly “intractable problems” in education in addressing Pasifika students’ achievement (Timperley et al., 2007, p. xxvii). As explained in Section 6.1, the MOE was inquiring into its own education initiatives at the time of this PLD. The MOE was using data to analyse
what was working in schools. From finding that Pasifika students’ achievement was well behind attainment for some other ethnicities, a decision was made by the MOE to establish goals and targets outlined in the *Pasifika Education Plan 2009-2012*. Relevant targets were:

Increase the proportion of Pasifika school leavers achieving NCEA Level 1 Literacy and numeracy requirements from 84 percent in 2008, to 93 percent by 2012

and

Increase the proportion of Pasifika students leaving school with at least NCEA level 2 or equivalent, from 63 percent in 2008, to 75 percent by the end of 2012 (p. 4).

The beginnings of iterative cycles of inquiry were at play, so the MOE’s data and the consequent PEP thinking and expectations impacted on the decisions that I made about PLD. Reinforced by the national data and the national imperatives, my PLD led the teachers to identify their own needs once they had looked at their school’s or class’s Pasifika students’ needs. This process of accessing evidence from the school settings ensured the teachers’ learning was centred in practice and immediately relevant to them (Hunzicker, 2011). Looking at evidence during and towards the end of the participants’ inquiry cycles provided an opportunity to analyse shifts, to possibly show evidence of change that would lead to further inquiries.

I now consider that ELLP was an important tool in supporting Sue to see Pasifika students as ELLs. The ELLs-specific tool enabled her to see one student through a language lens instead of through a SEN lens. Within the Learning Conversation and with the support of the ELLP data, Sue was able to question the data that suggested that this student would be slow to learn. Importantly, the use of the ELLP evidence-base provided stimulation for discussion about possible underlying causes and possible ways to think differently about teaching and learning, especially for Pasifika students. The ELLP stages need to be seen as first steps in PLD, that can be used as stimulus for deeper investigation of what is happening for Pasifika learners in schools and teaching inquiry, not as an end point. With PLD input to understand the frameworks and ideas in ELLP in context, there are opportunities to consider the assumptions that underpin them and to work with an understanding of their strengths and limitations.

In Anita’s school, the *talanoa* about culture and language in a cross-sector group, discussing the same students in their transitions from primary to secondary
supported a systems-level shift. I consider that the viewing of the Pasifika students’ achievement data, across the schools and over time contributed to this shift. This conclusion concurs with recent research literature that supports the use of an evidence base (Timperley, 2011; Earl, 2010; Robinson and Lai, 2006) to make changes that matter.

6.5 Tying the threads together about the PLD facilitation

In the first theme, Section 6.1, I examined the influence of my contractual requirements and my research agenda and their influence on my PLD leadership. Because the writers of the PLD contract had similar theoretical influences to my own, the influence of the contract had more than an accountability influence. The directions set out in the contract had emerging notions of teaching-as-inquiry and facilitation-as-inquiry. I found through my analysis congruence between the ideas I was researching in the theory and ideas held by the writers of MOE documents and the audience of my milestone reporting. Therefore, my responses to the contract and the research informed each other. These influences were more a stimulus than a constraint. Nevertheless, I reflect that if I had informed the participants more about my thinking, and not just my obligations, we could have avoided some tensions. Then my positionality would be clearer and what could be interpreted as manipulation might well be understood as guidance.

The second theme, learning together, also dealt with two influences. One idea was the impact of the social contexts (or learning communities) on outcomes. The other idea was the impact of social characteristics of effective PLD (collegiality, collaboration, having on-going support and accessing outside expertise) which had been literature which had identified. I found that I was able to influence sustained and systematic change in how Pasifika students were understood in one participant’s school, where the PLD was networked across a number of social contexts, including other initiatives within the school. In the second school, where there was little in-school networking, the impact of the PLD perhaps contributed to some dissonance in relationships within the school. Alternatively, it could be that the dissonance within the school affected the impact of the PLD. The characteristics that were identified in the literature were confirmed as being effective in this PLD about curriculum for ELLs for both participants in this small study.

In the third theme, the shape of PLD, I have used two models as lenses through which I could view and analyse the impact of my PLD about curriculum for ELLs. I rejected the Joyce and Showers Five Step Model of modelling, demonstration, feedback, practice and coaching as having the potential to perpetuate a realist view of both PLD and teaching and learning. With this model the expert-novice
positioning is perpetuated. The additional first step of ‘sharing a vision’ might have mitigated against the impasse that I came to, by sufficiently surfacing beliefs when facilitator and participant embark on the process of PLD. The teaching-as-inquiry model (MOE, 2007; Timperley et al. 2007), on the other hand, served my agenda of supporting teachers to have a considered awareness in their EAL curriculum decision-making. The inquiry approach gave them both a model and agency to act as fellow researchers, in examining the effect of their decisions on their students’ learning.

The last theme, the use of an evidence-base, addressed the use of an evidence base to stimulate change in thinking about EAL curriculum. I found that the evidence base itself was not sufficient as it could easily be misinterpreted for ELLs. In both schools, low expectations for Pasifika students appeared to be affected by evidence (or lack of appropriate evidence) that directed them to needing general Learning Support rather than needing language learning support. In one school, challenging conversations around the evidence-base created a change to having higher expectations for Pasifika students. In the other school, the use of longitudinal data, combined with deep talanoa in analysing cultural understandings provided stimulus for change in one school. The use of the English Language Learning Progressions (ELLP) provided a language learning perspective for understanding Pasifika students’ English language learning and also some valuable direction for next steps. Thus, through this research, I came to further appreciate ELLP as a potentially transformative curriculum document because it threw a focus on language learning difference and potential rather than on under-achievement.
Chapter 7 Conclusions:

This chapter highlights findings from an action research project, analysing how Professional Learning and Development (PLD) can support shifts in teachers’ understandings and practice for English as an Additional Language (EAL) teaching and learning, in relation to the revised New Zealand Curriculum (NZC). The first section of this conclusion provides a brief summary of findings in relation to the first three research sub-questions. The second section is the response to the fourth research sub-question, drawing together my thoughts about how the findings and reflections on this practitioner research project might inform my practice as a PLD facilitator. The last section identifies opportunities for further research.

7.1 Summary of action research findings – Addressing the research questions

The purpose of the research is articulated in the overarching question of “How can PLD support shifts in teachers’ understandings and practice for EAL teaching and learning in relation to the revised NZC?” With the action research methodology in mind, I grouped the inquiry into my practice into two cycles, each of which is associated with particular sub-questions.

In Cycle A, Chapter 4, the teachers’ thinking, actions and reactions were in the foreground as I answered the first two research sub-questions:

1. How do participating teachers understand EAL curriculum, teaching and learning?

The two teacher-participants brought a rich range of experiences to their understanding of curriculum in their new EAL teaching roles. While there were some similarities in their experiences, the participants’ conceptualisations of curriculum were initially very different from one another. One teacher-participant understood EAL as a subject in which English was taught generally in a ‘knowledge as a noun’ manner, with the teacher as an expert and the class expected to carry out one-size-fits-all language learning activities. Students were expected to respond diligently and quietly to the teacher’s direction. The other teacher-participant understood EAL as a support for students’ learning in other subjects. English was used generally in a ‘knowledge as a verb’ fashion, where students used their own languages and developed English for a range of learning purposes. Students were expected to help each other to learn English. They were regarded as needing temporary English language support as they became increasingly independent, and a clear exit pathway exited.
Both teacher-participants were relatively new to their roles and were becoming familiar with key curriculum directions for EAL. One of the teachers had no experience of the NZC. They both identified that they wanted to know more about the *English Language Learning Progressions* (MOE, 2007) and the ESOL standards in the national assessment of NCEA.

2. How do they respond to a PLD interruption?

I found that both the teacher-participants had made shifts in their understandings about with whom, where and how EAL teaching and learning might happen. They both shifted in thinking which learners needed their EAL specialist attention. Both came to realise that Pasifika students' bilingual language learning strengths and needs were under-identified, and sometimes mis-identified as other learning needs. In considering the diversity of their learners' strengths and needs, they came to reconsider their roles and their focus in EAL support. One teacher shifted from understanding her role as a language expert imparting knowledge to her whole class. Her role changed to that of an enabler, supporting her students' individual or group needs in varied ways, and granting more responsibility to the students. The other teacher came to see her role as an in-school EAL advisor, supporting other teachers in teaching ELLs in mainstream classes.

In responding to the PLD, one teacher maintained an outward stance that the NZC was not a document pertaining to EAL teaching. However, in spite of this claim, her teaching developed to reflect a student-centred approach that was akin to the essence of the curriculum. The other teacher explored the Key Competencies NZC in some depth in her classroom, particularly looking at the impact of emotion on learning. She additionally began to work across the eight Learning Areas as she developed her role as a supporter of teachers of English language learners throughout her school. Both participants valued the ELLP document and used it extensively. The ESOL standards for NCEA remained a dominant curriculum driver for both participants. Although small-scale and exploratory, the teachers' responses to curriculum show how EAL teachers may understand and respond differently to a 'common' curriculum, bringing different understandings to their EAL teaching. However, these understandings are not immutable.

In Cycle B, Chapter 6, my actions, reactions and reflections were in the foreground and the teachers were in the background, as I explored the third research sub-question:
3. How can PLD engage EAL teachers with ideas about curriculum, teaching and learning?

Findings from my study indicate that effective PLD could be achieved when it was designed within layers of iterative inquiry, including the contractors (MOE), the PLD facilitation provider (me) and the teacher-participants. The joint force of the MOE-generated PLD contract objectives and my own research into emerging literature about effective PLD gave a strong justification for the use of teaching-as-inquiry methodology in this study. The inquiry frameworks, illustrated in Chapter 5, support teachers and PLD facilitators to engage in finding out about their students’ strengths and needs; exploring their own knowledge and challenges; trialling new practice; and monitoring its impact on student outcomes. In this study, shifts in thinking about curriculum seemed to be deeper and more sustained when the teachers developed their own inquiries. Through the use of inquiry, I found that in handing over control to the teachers, they gained agency to generate significant change in thinking about curriculum.

The MOE direction to focus on Pasifika students gave impetus to my own interest in exploring the needs of Pasifika ELLs. The PLD stimulated the analysis of the schools’ own Pasifika students’ language and literacy data, and consequently, the teacher-participants shifted to focus on creating better outcomes for their Pasifika students. In one school the PLD involved challenging one-to-one learning conversations. In the other school, the PLD involved group *talanoa* (discussions), with a range of people making up a predominant forum, in the other school community. Through both types of discussions, the teacher-participants engaged with ideas about curriculum, teaching and learning for Pasifika students. This study shows how PLD with an EAL perspective provides a valuable body of knowledge, which can help shift teachers’ expectations about Pasifika students’ English language learning potential and their bilingual capabilities. When such involvement is part of networked PLD, where teacher-participants are networking with nodes of PLD in their schools and facilitators are networking with school nodes and with MOE nodes, PLD facilitation can help to bring about systemic and sustained change for Pasifika and other students.

7.2 How findings inform my practice as PLD facilitator

I now respond to the fourth sub-question,

4. ‘How might the findings and reflections on these PLD interruptions inform my practice as a PLD facilitator?’
My learnings from the research are encapsulated as recommendations grouped into three themes: a focus on a culture of inquiry; ways of reconceptualising curriculum and how I might talk about this; and the potential to more effectively support Pasifika learners (see Figure 11). These recommendations can now underpin my on-going facilitation with teachers of ELLs. They may also be of interest to the Ministry of Education in making decisions about PLD for EAL teachers in secondary schools. Further, the recommendations may be of interest to those who are considering the contested nature of curriculum, especially to those looking at curriculum decisions for Pasifika students in secondary schools.

*Figure 11. Aspects shaping this study and conclusion*
7.2.1 Focus on a culture of inquiry

From literature, practice in PLD facilitation and this action research, I understand that PLD facilitators work at a nexus of theory and practice. PLD for teachers is more than just ‘tips and tools’, and a source of information about national assessments. It is scholarly and informed by research. At the same time, it can also contribute to research and theory. Through action research, literature can inform the PLD before, during and after the PLD process. Similarly, tentative understandings can emerge and inform the PLD as it evolves. Research and action are therefore intertwined in the PLD.

Decisions need to be made about PLD processes and activities which develop ownership and interest in exploring useful change in teaching practice. Particular activities in PLD create varying responses. On analysis of this research, it appears that teachers can develop resistance during the first three steps in the facilitator-dominant Five Step Model (theory, demonstration, feedback, practice, coaching). The review of the PLD revealed that co-construction was a particularly effective singular activity that could bring about change. However, such practices, which are time-intensive on the part of facilitators and individual teachers, need to be directed to sustainable outcomes which exemplify principles of effective teaching and learning for ELLs. In this research, it was found that learning conversations involving video-stimulated recall were very effective in supporting change in teaching practices.
Having a coherence and purpose for a collection of PLD activities is necessary to develop a process which is on-going, sustainable and powerful in bringing about change. In this study, teaching-as-inquiry worked as a very successful process providing a strong, common framework for PLD. Additionally, for teachers, the sense of control that teaching-as-inquiry generated for teachers was successful in engaging the participants’ commitment and enthusiasm in changing their practice.

I found that teaching-as-inquiry strongly supports flexible PLD facilitation. My engagement in this research has reinforced for me the understanding that PLD should not have a one-size-fits-all approach, because each participant is influenced by a range of contextual factors. In this study, even though the participants were both EAL teachers who were new to their roles, their contexts were characterised by difference rather than similarity. In this PLD facilitation, the flexible teaching-as-inquiry approach enabled one participant to analyse the locus of control in her teaching. If the PLD had not been so context-embedded, literature would suggest that little change would ensue. The flexibility inherent in teaching-as-inquiry allowed the second teacher to consider school-wide student learning needs, and to forge a leadership opening. There was evidence that an inquiry approach to PLD can be highly adaptable to different circumstances.

PLD decisions about who gets PLD are also important. PLD needs to be directed for schools and teachers in a strategic manner, in order to create sustained outcomes. Involvement of senior management in inquiry processes and having more than one teacher from a school in PLD appears to be necessary if any systemic change is to be achieved. In this study the greatest systemic change was set in motion when the EAL teacher, other teachers and management were involved in PLD within and across school. There is a tension in responding to requests for PLD for part-time teachers who are new to EAL teaching. This study revealed how external expertise without clear connection with in-school systems might potentially be limited or problematic. I have learnt that middle leaders need to be informed and engaged in support of teachers who undertake PLD. Strategic decisions therefore need to be made about PLD for sustained, systemic outcomes. There are challenges for myself as a PLD facilitator, to negotiate with school leadership and the broader teacher community in a school in ways that support systemic change. At the same time, I have found that it is important to support individual EAL teachers and not inadvertently isolate or undermine them.
7.2.2 Focus on reconceptualising curriculum and how I might talk about this

Figure 13 Key findings about PLD and EAL curriculum

This action research has shown me more clearly how EAL teachers can understand curriculum differently and how teachers’ curriculum ideas can change. I therefore suggest that in introducing PLD about EAL curriculum, it is important to talk about different understandings of curriculum, how they have influenced official documents, how ideas can be contested and can develop. If, in my role as a PLD facilitator, I spend time finding out about the participants’ understandings of curriculum, I should also reveal some of my own ideas. This reflects the theoretical underpinnings of my methodology about openness and equity in research. The need for a ‘shared vision’ for PLD also suggests the need for the facilitator sharing a theoretical vision that the participants may not have. I found that this lack of shared vision at the outset of the PLD slowed the pace of change for one participant.

It would be useful to guide participants in PLD to expect interruption, change or ‘supported unease’. In my reading about PLD and in analysing the learning conversations, I realise that being clear at the outset that PLD could be an interruption is critical in ensuring that participants expect to make changes. Similarly, in leading teachers to explore and critique the theoretical curriculum ideas that underpin current MOE documents, PLD can help to deepen understanding in the relationships between official, national, classroom and hidden curriculum decisions.
As a result of my research about contested curriculum theories, I can now understand and use the English Language Learning Progressions (ELLP) as a ‘curriculum platform’ alongside and intertwined with the NZC. Before, I understood it as an outside, extra document with no particular status. I did not recognise its value because I expected a curriculum document to have a set of objectives or outcomes. Now I understand the underlying, constructionist notions of a student-centred curriculum that ELLP shares with the NZC. I also see and accept the ‘post’ influences on ELLP. Now I can promote ELLP as an empowering curriculum document, which describes students’ English language acquisition in jagged profiles, promoting ideas that diverse groups of ELLs will bring different knowledge and ways of knowing. ELLP provides a platform for teachers to make informed decisions in their curriculum planning about ‘where to next’ for students’ English language learning.

Notions of transformative pedagogy can fit within an ‘integrated’ approach to EAL where high challenge is expected along with scaffolded and strategically-withdrawn support. Epistemological pluralism in relation to EAL supports the valuing and use of students’ multiple and shifting linguistic and cultural competencies. From my reading for this research, and from my involvement with the participants, I am now repositioning my understanding about EAL. In PLD facilitation, I am giving more prominence to ‘trans-languaging’ practices and the valuing of home languages.

I have found there is a need to raise the profile of EAL. PLD for a wide audience is necessary to ensure that EAL is understood and recognised as a far-reaching aspect of curriculum. Most importantly, for students, by not sitting inside one Learning Area, EAL loses the opportunity to have ‘curriculum-aligned’ NCEA Achievement Standards (valued by the universities as standards on the “Approved List” for University Entrance). EAL being theoretically positioned as cross-curricular, can be seen as aligning with the intent of the NZC Principles. That EAL learning can then be undervalued in the national assessment system because it does not fit inside a particular Learning Area is an example of how curriculum can be, and needs to be, contested. The audience for PLD about EAL should therefore include those who make policy at national and school management levels.
7.2.3 Focus on Pasifika ELLs

With a shared vision of Pasifika students’ potential, teachers can respond to entrenched underachievement. In this action research, my view about the untapped potential of some Pasifika students was supported by the MOE contract, which required a focus on raising achievement for Pasifika learners. The contract empowered me to challenge assumptions held by teachers and within schools about Pasifika learners. This led to me being focussed afresh to bring about improvement in NCEA achievement for those learners.

By re-viewing Pasifika students as being culturally and linguistically diverse ELLs, high expectations can be upheld. This study showed that teachers can have low expectations of Pasifika students who have ‘basic interpersonal communication skills’ (BICS), but are yet to develop ‘cognitive academic language proficiency’ (CALP). In this study, the interpretation of some student achievement data by teachers led to underestimating the potential of some ELLs. In both schools in this study, bilingual Pasifika students were initially wrongly assessed as needing some kind of ‘Learning Support’, based on test results. When there was no acknowledgement of the students’ emerging bilingualism, teachers’ expectations tended to be lower, and students’ self-esteem lowered at the same time. This research has shown me that, by finding out more about the students’ abilities, teachers’ expectations can increase significantly.

Pasifika students may not come under the radar of EAL specialists. Deliberate communication within a school between EAL teachers, Literacy Leaders and Learning Support teachers should be encouraged for a number of reasons.
Through such collaboration, misdiagnosis of Pasifika students may be averted. EAL teachers can contribute expertise in identifying Pasifika students’ multilingual language strengths and needs. Through collaboration, power can be generated to change the systematic placement of Pasifika ELLs in low band, limited pathway classes. An additional reason to increase collaboration between EAL and literacy provision is that they share an articulated positioning in the NZC (p. 16) and, by being cross-curricular in nature, have many facets in common. Further, the practice of collecting ethnicity data rather than language data may contribute to the “benign neglect” of Pasifika students’ linguistic strengths and “identities of competence” (Cummins & Early, 2011, p. 4). This research has led me to consider that if data collected for MOE purposes through school management systems is to identify students’ bilingual and multilingual strengths, rather than simply ethnicity, higher expectations of Pasifika students would be achieved.

The research impacts on my future practice, by challenging me to think about reconceptualising EAL (or a branch of EAL), that would better support Pasifika and other learners who already display strong BICS. Such a new course would support epistemologically and linguistically plural learning. Culturally and linguistically diverse learners would be supported to maintain and develop their languages (including academic English), their diverse cultures and their forming identities as they grapple with critical thinking. Competence in language learning (knowledge as a verb) would be the focus rather than learning a language (knowledge as a noun).

This action research has given me the opportunity to reflect on literature about ‘knowledge and knowing’ and curriculum, particularly in relation to EAL. Accessing the theory, and particularly seeing how theory influences EAL, has enriched my thinking as the study progressed. From a view of ELLs as a diverse group of students bringing rich linguistic repertoires to their education, I was spurred to focus on Pasifika students, whose potential appeared to be untapped. I have then learnt from my reflections about how PLD actions can support transformative change, as I have worked alongside teachers with their own teaching-as-inquiry considerations.

### 7.3 Further research

#### 7.3.1 Limitations and strengths

There are limitations and affordances with this kind of small-scale, practitioner action research. This study might be considered invalid in quantitative scientific research. However, with qualitative research methodology, my study can be read
as revealing and valuable for the attention it gives to the particulars of context. By being deeply involved in facilitating the PLD that I was researching, my positionality could be seen as presenting a bias. However, by acknowledging my positionality in the action research, and the teachers’ involvement in their own inquiries into their practice, I have been able to research complexities that could not be identified in the removed, impartial traditional approach. There was strength and power in the action research which enabled me to draw on literature to clarify ideas as they emerged.

Limitations of this action research include the small size of the project. The need to select settings and participants from schools where I would be working also limited the selection of participants. Given the small sample of teachers that I worked with generalisation about my findings is not possible. Another limitation was that the teachers and I did not have the freedom in the study to do exactly what we might want to do, because the research was context-embedded, bounded by my contractual requirements with the MOE for me, and by school organisational constraints for the teachers. Also, the research was limited to reflections on PLD that constituted a series of disjointed events: I was not in the schools continuously and my reflections were dependent on snap-shots of interaction that could be taken when I was present. It could be seen that the reflections were subjective in that the teachers and I talked about what we saw through our own experiences. However, learning from people’s experience (including my own) is a valid and valuable way of understanding complex, changing phenomena.

There were several strengths in the research. I was able to embed the research inside my practice as a PLD facilitator, weaving my own research into my practice, with the teachers’ own inquiries into their thinking and practice. Further, this type of research has enabled me to delve with some depth and nuance rather than with breadth and cursory attention to subtleties of individual contexts and experiences. Additionally, this type of action research has afforded the opportunity to explore change in thinking and practice. Exploring change was important at a time when the revised national curriculum was being implemented in schools. Examining change through a series of interruptions for reflection in both my PLD facilitation and in teachers’ teaching was equally important. I would suggest that this approach is valuable as teachers and researchers continue to explore what teaching and learning might look like for multilingual learners in emerging 21st Century secondary school contexts.
7.3.2 Research opportunities

In undertaking this research project, possibilities for complementary research have emerged. This research would be complemented by a longitudinal study. While I have been writing up this research I have been able to observe ongoing developments in one of the schools. I can see it would be very valuable to have been able to follow this sustained development and to observe the characteristics that enabled this burgeoning, pedagogically and epistemologically plural EAL practice.

Another area of potential, related research would be to look at ELL students’ perceptions of curriculum. It would be interesting to explore how these students manage themselves as they cross from one learning context to another, for example, from intermediate to secondary school, or one country to another. It would also be potentially valuable to capture students’ perceptions about their learning through a school day, as they cross from one subject or one teacher, to the next.

A study examining perceptions about EAL curriculum with a range of teachers in both primary and secondary sectors, MOE strategists, academics and PLD facilitators could be useful in contributing to the debate about curriculum. My limited study shows considerable variance in teachers’ understandings about curriculum. A wider study would reveal important foci, for PLD and the NZC, if it emerges that significant differences exist in understanding across the various groups.

Over the next few decades, the nature of the New Zealand population will change and learners will interact in an English-dominated, globally-connected context. More research may be needed into how language learning is articulated in national curriculum documents and assessment practices. This may be so especially for Pasifika students. The relatively traditional, single-language learning subjects in New Zealand schools might well need to be reconsidered. New provision might need to be made for multilingual, ‘languaging’ learning, including community languages and English. There is considerable scope for further research in these areas.

7.4 Final word

Action research has been a valuable methodology in illuminating ideas and practice in New Zealand secondary EAL teaching. It has challenged me to explore my own understandings and practice, a process which has not always been straight-forward or comfortable. The linking of my action research with the
participants’ teaching-as-inquiry has provided rich and reciprocal benefits for the teachers and for me, as we have learnt from each other. There have been distinct rewards for me, in being a practitioner-researcher, that I hope may be of benefit to others.


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Appendices

Appendix I Excerpts from Sue’s PowerPoint

Outcomes from the different cycles - for students

- Talk
- Quality of writing
- Attitude: mediocrity to excellence
- Independence: in writing process

Sue’s CLESOL PowerPoint, Slide 12

Reflection from Sue

I have found experimenting with ways of helping students learn how to learn, an uncertain science, but this uncertainty means the students are choosing their own paths to understanding –

and that was the goal.

Sue’s CLESOL PowerPoint, Slide 18
Example of one of Sue’s annotated Teaching-as-inquirymodels
CLE SOL PowerPoint, Slide 6

Example of two of Sue’s annotated ELLP matrices
CLE SOL PowerPoint, Slide 4
Focus on fluency

“I’ve gone away from the idea of deficit learning (focus on errors) - rather - sculpting the writing step by step.”

Focus

Exploring ways to help learners
- develop their writing
- become more independent in their production of writing

Level 2 ESOL report writing standard
Feb
- NZ doesn’t have a place so much to play and it is so different with Japan. But I like NZ because people who are living NZ, they are kind. It’s different as Japan as well.

Sept
- An earthquake is an overwhelming disaster. If an earthquake has happened in the ocean or sea, it will make a tsunami and if an earthquake has happened under the ground, it will destroy buildings.

Feb
- I missing playing soccer back in Solomon Island. But I played soccer for the Canterbury. I enjoyed.... Be the way everythinks good look forward to come back.

June
- If you want to be a good skateboarder you need to practice hard on your moves and learn tricks like ollies flips and three sixty .... Then you need guts and determination to win competitions.
Appendix II Section of one of my facilitator inquiries

What is it I want to focus on?
Formulating some guidelines for all schools about using ELLP in relation to other tracking documents in wider school – links to principles of coherence, identity and...

Focusing Inquiry
What is important (and therefore worth spending time on), given where my students are at?

Why? Email request from participant. In our discussion at School A the point was made that reading and PATs are not suitable for ESOL students in their first two years of ESOL instruction. There are several questions and comments I have. Many students that arrive in New Zealand at secondary level have had EFL. Would it be better to say that students who are at Foundation and Stage 1 of the ELLP should not complete these assessments? I would like this clarified as all ESOL students at School B are subjected to both these reading tests, and they are included in the cohort for the school. Those
Appendix III Initial Interview: semi-structured questions

Interview questions

Part A – Participants' stories

• What, for you, is ESOL about?
• Tell me how you came to be an ESOL teacher.
• What have been some of the experiences you have had as an ESOL teacher?
• Tell me how the way you “do” ESOL teaching has changed and why it has changed?

Part B – Thinking about a class

Think about one ESOL class that you are teaching

• Describe what a visitor would generally see, hear, smell and feel when he/she visits this class.
• What do you draw on when making decisions about what to teach and how to teach this class?
• In what ways do students’ needs influence your teaching? How do you know what their needs are?
• How do you feel the class is going?
• How do the students feel the class is going? Which students?

Part C – Professional learning

• Describe some earlier professional learning that has been useful to you.
• What are some changes in your thinking and practice in ESOL
  o that have happened the past?
  o that have happened this year?
  o What has worked to change your thinking?
• What has been in the PD that you expected and what has been in there that you didn’t expect? How do you feel about this?
• Which component of ESOL professional development do you want to focus on in relation to my Masters research?
  o NZC – ELLP – model units of work workshops
  o Teaching as inquiry workshops
  o Other
• What do you want from your involvement in this research?
Appendix IV Extract from Anita’s conference presentation

English Language Learning Progressions (ELLP)

ESOL Teachers and ESOL Head of Department

Implications

ESOL Teachers  Mainstream Teachers  Students  Parents  Caregivers
HODs and Senior Management  Guardians  Agents