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An Investigation of English Teacher
Efficacy Beliefs:
Subject-Specificity, Subject-Congruency,
and Associated Factors.

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2005

An Investigation of English Teacher Efficacy Beliefs:
Subject-Specificity, Subject-Congruency, and Associated
Factors.

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ABSTRACT

Self-efficacy beliefs have a pervasive influence on human endeavours. Teaching is an occupation where efficacy beliefs will, in large part, shape teachers' performances and potentials to initiate new and exciting challenges for learners in their classrooms. Teacher efficacy has been associated with student motivation, teachers' adoptions of innovations, ratings of teachers' competence, and teachers' classroom management strategies. However, such findings are usually based on global measures of teacher efficacy, rather than on subject-specific teaching competencies.

A specialist subject teacher's sense of efficacy is not necessarily uniform across the many subject-specific tasks teachers are asked to perform. Specialist subject teachers are likely to exhibit differences in task-specific efficacy beliefs across a range of subject competencies, depending on differences in levels of enactive teaching experience, and opportunities to have engaged in successful teaching performance experiences.

An English Teacher Efficacy Questionnaire [ETEQ] was developed to assess English teacher efficacy beliefs. The English Teacher Efficacy Questionnaire was informed by Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy and Hoy's (1998) proposed integrated model. The ETEQ also included personal teaching efficacy [PTE] and general teaching efficacy [GTE] items from the Gibson and Dembo (1984) scale and the Riggs and Enochs (1990) scale.

A pilot study was conducted to test the English Teacher Efficacy Questionnaire. The pilot factor analysis generated a robust and meaningful English Teacher Efficacy Scale comprising four subscales that represented distinct domains of English. Self-efficacy data were gathered from a sample ($n = 126$) of secondary English teachers (pre-service $n = 47$ and practising $n = 79$) across the range of subject tasks and competencies identified by the New Zealand national English Curriculum.

Results from a multivariate analysis of variance [MANOVA] with repeated measures revealed differences between secondary English teachers' efficacy beliefs across a

range of competencies, with English teachers displaying greater levels of positive efficacy towards more traditional subject tasks and competencies than towards more non-traditional newer subject tasks and competencies.

Analyses of variance also revealed that English teachers with an academic qualification in Literature, in contrast to some other related discipline, such as Media Studies or Drama, held more positive efficacy beliefs for teaching English. Results also showed that English teacher efficacy becomes more positive with increasing levels of teaching experience and increasing amounts of professional teacher development.

A comparison between practising teacher efficacy and pre-service teacher efficacy for teaching English found that practising teachers held more positive efficacy beliefs across the full range of competencies represented by the ETEQ. Such a finding suggests that Bandura's (1986) four sources of efficacy information -- mastery experiences, peer modelling, vicarious experiences and physiological and emotional states -- become more potent sources of efficacy information for practising teachers.

Multivariate analyses also suggested that teacher efficacy can be associated to a slight extent with student achievement levels, with teachers displaying greater levels of positive efficacy when working with students at higher achievement levels.

The findings of the present study indicate that teacher efficacy is associated with teachers having appropriate core subject content knowledge (academic qualifications), pedagogical knowledge gained through training and practical teaching experience, professional (pre-service and in-service) development opportunities so that teachers can be upskilled and updated. Such findings have important implications for teacher education, and for teaching and learning in general.

DEDICATION

Dedicated to my awesome mum, Jose, whose tenacity to squeeze the last drop of juice out of life, and not go “gently into that good night” was utterly inspiring. To my Dad, whose whole life was an example of the transformative power of education. To my husband and life companion, Paul, and my three children, Polly, Jasmine and Leif, who all are such wonderful teachers, and such very fine human beings. To Myah and Ella, my two beautiful granddaughters; may they always laugh, dance, and dream as they do now. And to all English teachers who continue, often against all odds, to believe in the liberating power of language and the passion of learning and teaching; for they are also the “dreamers of dreams”.

And we are the dreamers of dreams

Yet we are the movers and shakers

Of the world forever, it seems.

Arthur O Shaugnessy

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How do you begin to describe

One

Whose effect is profound,

Life-changing?

When the rhetoric rings over empty space

And the songs have all been sung,

Your lesson remains.

And lastly, thanks to all the school students in my English classes over many years who daily reminded me what a truly noble profession teaching is. And most importantly, reminded me how strangely quirky and colourful life is, and not to take ourselves too seriously, but to endlessly celebrate the sense of humanity that should be the central nexus of every learning classroom.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Much has been written about effective teaching, and how such teaching influences students' learning behaviours. Since the 1950s a considerable amount of empirical research has focused on the way teachers influence the achievement of students. In line with this notion of teacher effectiveness, The *Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development* (OECD, 1994) developed a working definition of teacher quality based on five dimensions. Their definition was accepted by the New Zealand Government's *Green Paper on Teacher Education* (Ministry of Education, 1997). The five dimensions included curriculum knowledge, pedagogic skill, reflection, empathy and respect for others, and managerial competence. The New Zealand study that provided the basis for the *Green Paper* emphasised that a high level of cognitive ability was also a necessary characteristic of effective teachers.

Similar findings have resulted from other studies focused on teacher effectiveness. For example, Brophy and Good (1986) conducted an extensive meta-analysis of studies relating to teacher behaviour and student achievement. The findings from their review suggested that student achievement was maximised when teachers employed a range of well-structured and pedagogically informed strategies for lesson delivery, classroom organization, and communication with students. However, they qualified this finding by suggesting that effective teaching relies on many aspects of teacher practice, and can be much influenced by contextual factors such as the characteristics of the students, and the subject being taught.

When examining the behaviour of teachers in regards to curriculum delivery and curriculum changes, Brophy and Good (1986) pointed out that any educational change efforts must take into account the complexity of teaching. This belief was supported by Carr, McGee, Jones, McKinley, Bell, Barr, and Simpson (1999) who claimed that a teacher's "pedagogical practices are linked to their efficacy as teachers" but that these factors are only "a part of the effectiveness picture" (p.85).

Hattie (2001) in his address to the *New Zealand Association for Teaching English Language*, emphasised the importance of quality teaching and highlighted the extent to which effective English teachers, in particular, have a positive effect on student outcomes:

We do know what makes the difference in the teaching of English – it is teachers who esteem challenge, have deep understanding, are adept at improvisation, are passionate problem-solvers, have respect and sensitivity for all students, have much English knowledge, and most of all provide engaging experiences and optimise feedback about the learning process. And we can fairly, dependably, and credibly identify and esteem these excellent teachers of English. (p.14)

The qualities that Hattie summarised here are those that consistently occur in the self-efficacy research as being characteristic of a positively self-efficacious teacher.

A number of studies have identified the link between teacher effectiveness and teacher efficacy. The characteristics regularly associated with highly efficacious teachers are reflected in findings about effective teachers. Porter and Brophy (1988, cited in Carr et al., 1999, pp.86-87) reported a number of characteristics of effective teachers that have also found to be the characteristics of efficacious teachers who tend to employ positive strategies that maximise learning for students, and increase the likelihood of positive student outcomes.

Bandura (1997) found that principals of highly efficacious schools were leaders who sought ways to improve instruction, and highly efficacious teachers regarded their students “as capable of high scholastic attainments, set challenging academic standards for them, and rewarded behaviour conducive to intellectual development” (p.36). Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy and Hoy (1998), in reviewing teacher efficacy research, found that teacher efficacy was related to teachers’ classroom behaviours, their openness to new ideas, and their attitudes towards teaching. In addition, “teacher efficacy appears to influence student achievement, attitude and affective growth” (p.215).

Bandura (1977, 1986, 1989, 1993) defined self-efficacy beliefs as the beliefs in one's capability to execute the actions necessary to achieve a certain level of performance. Self-efficacy theory helps explain why some people behave one way, while others behave in another way; why some are willing to invest much effort into a task, while others expend little; and, why some demonstrate considerable persistence even when the odds seem against them, while others give up on tasks. Effective intellectual functioning requires more than the understanding of factual knowledge and associated reasoning operations for specific tasks or activities.

Bandura (1997) stressed the importance of the diverse self-regulatory processes that govern all learning and human development/adaptation situations. People require metacognitive skills for organising, monitoring, evaluating and regulating their thinking processes (Brown, 1984; Flavell, 1978a; Meichenbaum & Asarnow, 1979, cited in Bandura, 1997). Furthermore, in order to employ these metacognitive processes effectively, people need a sense of efficacy "to apply what they know consistently, persistently, and skilfully, especially when things are not going well and deficient performances carry negative consequences" (Bandura, 1997, p.13).

Self-efficacy has a pervasive influence on human endeavours and teaching is an occupation where efficacy beliefs will, in large part, shape teachers' performances and potentials to initiate new and exciting challenges to the learners in their classrooms. Teacher efficacy has been associated with such significant variables as student motivation, teachers' adoptions of innovations, ratings of teachers' competence, and teachers' classroom management strategies. Highly efficacious teachers are consistently found to display greater skills of organisation, instruction, questioning, explaining, providing feedback to students having difficulties and maintaining students on task (e.g., Ashton & Webb, 1986). Some studies suggest that a teacher's sense of efficacy is perhaps the most significant predictor and contributor of teacher influence to student achievement (e.g., Bandura, 1977; Woolfolk Hoy, 2000).

In an educational context, a high sense of efficacy is considered to be as important for teachers as it is for students. Highly efficacious teachers must influence and help shape the efficacy beliefs of their students. Therefore, self-efficacy is a construct that has implications, not just for learners, but also for those who are responsible for motivating

learning. Future-oriented beliefs about what people can do are vital for effective cognitive functioning. Such beliefs define and shape who we are, the way we function, the risks we take, the life-choices we make, how and what we contribute, the relationships we form and our perceptions of ourselves and others in the micro and macro worlds in which we live our lives (Bandura, 1997).

According to Bandura's (1986) precepts of social-cognitive theory, people develop their efficacy expectations from four main sources: mastery experiences, physiological and emotional states, vicarious experiences, and social persuasion. Gibbs (1994) considered that all four sources were present during pre-service and in-service teacher development, and thus contributed to teacher self-efficacy beliefs and cognitive functioning. Furthermore, in achievement-related settings, students' academic self-efficacy beliefs function as contributors to the development of cognitive competencies in three main ways: students' beliefs in their efficacy to master different academic subjects; teachers' beliefs in their personal efficacy to motivate and affect learning in their students; and, teachers' collective sense of efficacy that their schools can accomplish significant academic progress and desirable outcomes. Thus teacher efficacy and student efficacy are intertwined and reciprocally determined.

Bandura (1977) claimed that teacher efficacy is cyclical in that teacher proficiency of a specific performance creates a new mastery experience and this, in turn, will provide new information to shape future efficacy beliefs. The more practical teaching experience a teacher undertakes, the greater the chance to gather efficacy information from mastery and other vicarious experiences. Greater efficacy leads to increased effort and persistence, lower efficacy has the reverse effect, and over a period of time teachers develop a relatively stable set of core beliefs about their abilities (Ross, 1998). Increased levels of teacher education and professional development are also likely to offer more opportunities for teachers to be exposed to peer modelling and peer persuasion.

While it is reasonable to assume teachers' knowledge of their subject (content knowledge) will be an influential contributor to student achievement, teacher effectiveness, and teacher efficacy, Darling-Hammond (2000) in a review of the research on teacher quality, reported that this assumption was not "as strong and consistent" as supposed (p.2). Ashton and Crocker (1987) further found only five out of 14 studies exhibited a positive

relationship between measures of subject matter knowledge and teacher performance. Byrne's (1983) summary of 30 studies relating teachers' subject knowledge to student achievement showed a very inconclusive result.

Byrne (1983) suggested that when subject knowledge and pedagogical skill interact, teacher performance is bolstered, and a more positive relationship is reported. It is the teacher who interprets the curriculum, fashions the pedagogy and devises the assessment activities. Moreover, the quality of these actions will be determined by the efficacy beliefs and affect of the individual teacher, both of which will be influenced by content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge. Thus the interplay between teacher effectiveness, teacher efficacy, student learning, student efficacy and academic outcomes is complex. For specialist subject teachers this interplay is further complicated by curriculum designs and intentions.

Some research has indicated that the extent to which new educational innovations or programmes are successfully adopted and implemented by teachers and schools is related to teachers' efficacy beliefs (e.g., Stein & Wang, 1988). Dembo and Gibson (1985) also reported that efficacy was one of the best predictors of "the percentage of goal achieved, amount of teacher change, improved student performance, and continuation of both project methods and material" (p.173). New challenges, such as new teaching initiatives or new assessment methods, can compel teachers to re-evaluate their efficacy beliefs.

Therefore, when assessing subject-specific teacher efficacy beliefs, it is important to consider the contextual challenges and changes that could contribute to subject teachers' efficacy beliefs. Bandura (1977) warned that beliefs about the task of teaching and personal teaching competence were likely to remain unchanged unless compelling evidence was given causing them to be reassessed. For this reason, it is vital that teachers develop strong efficacy beliefs early in their careers.

In line with this idea, the present study focuses on assessing the teacher efficacy beliefs of secondary English teachers in New Zealand, and takes account of the significant curriculum and assessment changes that have challenged these English teachers in recent times.

The Curriculum Review (Department of Education, 1986) initiated a major reform of the New Zealand national curriculum. This review concluded that quality learning was characterised by young people needing to feel confident in themselves, being exposed to new and exciting challenges, and learning how to problem-solve in imaginative ways. This relatively new articulation of learning signalled a shift in the roles of both learners and teachers. This review further claimed that successful teachers working within this new learning culture would need to exhibit all the features commonly associated with the characteristics of highly efficacious teachers: be enthusiastic and confident in their subject knowledge, open to new ideas and challenges, able to reflect and evaluate, and be secure in themselves.

The current *New Zealand Curriculum Framework* (Ministry of Education, 1993) arose out of a combination of the *Achievement Initiative* (Ministry of Education, 1990) and a review of the national curriculum summarised in *The Report of the Curriculum Review* (Ministry of Education, 1997). According to the *Literature Review of the Curriculum Stocktake* (Ministry of Education, 2002), the Ministry of Education's (1997) *Report of the Curriculum Review* envisaged that many traditional practices would have to undergo some changes "as schools were not succeeding in enabling children and young people to be successful learners" (p.3). This document proposed a national curriculum from year one to year 11, with a broad and general focus, and consisting of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values. With the release of the *Draft National Curriculum Statement* (Ministry of Education, 1988) and *The New Zealand Curriculum Framework* (Ministry of Education, 1993) "the way in which the curriculum was defined and enacted underwent a radical change" (Donnelly, 2002, p.15). This change was a move to an outcomes-based curriculum emphasising a student-centred constructivist approach to teaching and learning.

Donnelly's (2002) *Review of New Zealand's School Curriculum: An International Perspective* highlighted this constructivist approach, and the emphasis placed on skills rather than knowledge, as areas for concern. Donnelly criticised the curriculum statements for being overly ambitious in relation to the capabilities of the majority of teachers and that insufficient guidance was provided in the curriculum statements on how schools should develop and teach their programmes (p.18).

In line with this new direction, *The New Zealand Curriculum Framework* (Ministry of Education, 1993) reflected this constructivist student-centred philosophy where language-related learning focused more on a holistic view of language rather than on the knowledge of language, and how it works. Furthermore, *The New Zealand Curriculum Framework* created a knowledge framework that separated learning into essential areas rather than the traditional subject approach. English was embraced within the Language and Languages learning area with a broad-based statement that emphasised language development, communication, creativity, and response to text.

The ideological and philosophical directions of the *New Zealand Curriculum Framework*, while not new, signalled a national educational direction initiating a range of new and related pedagogies. At the same time that English teachers were embracing this development, they were also facing a curriculum expansion. The emphasis shifted from reading and writing in relation to written texts, towards including communicating and responding to all forms of oral, written, and visual texts. This unheralded expansion happened almost imperceptibly as a response to a rapidly developing information age, and the demands of a broader more constructivist curriculum.

The first national English curriculum statement, *English in the New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education, 1994) resulted from the Minister of Education's direction for the redevelopment of the English curriculum in 1991. It was suggested that Language education was going through a period of increased development, "with new curricula and approaches to teaching and learning, and the use of electronic media (including satellite communications) providing wider access to Language learning" (Ibid, p.9).

Thus, the 1990s in New Zealand signalled new developments and directions in approaches to the subject English. Texts were seen as language events that could be responded to and produced. For teachers, this move required not just new ways of planning and teaching, but in many cases a shift in perception and philosophy. Such a shift was highlighted by Bendall (1994b), who suggested that *English in the New Zealand Curriculum* would be "a considerable shift in perception for a surprising number of teachers to begin to look at ways to present this inclusive sense of literacy to their students" (p.44). The major shift referred to was the inclusion of the visual language strand as one of a three-strand structure (oral, written, and visual). While the earlier

Statement of Aims (Department of Education, 1984) had recognised the use of media and visual language as a significant aspect of School Certificate activities, the emphasis on visual language products was not explicitly adopted in the *Statement of Aims* themselves. Moving and shaping were “processes through which language developed, and language was principally oral and written” (Bendall, 1994a, p.48).

The general aims statement for *English in the New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education, 1994) emphasised the idea that this new document built on the shared aims and philosophies of the primary school language and the secondary school English syllabi. These aims were “reflected in, and achieved through, each of the three strands of the English curriculum -- oral language, written language, and visual language” (p.9). Furthermore, it was suggested “when planning programmes over the course of the year, teachers should incorporate all three strands” (p.22). This inclusion of the visual language strand with its related language sub-strands of *viewing* and *presenting*, signalled a major shift for teaching and learning in English. Expectations for teaching, learning, planning, and assessing in the visual language strand were outlined in the introductory statement to visual language in *English in the New Zealand Curriculum*:

Students should explore various forms of verbal and visual communication and analyse the interaction between words and images, thinking critically about the meanings and effects produced. They should develop strategies to identify and analyse the techniques and conventions of visual language in a variety of contexts. They should combine theory with practice, producing their own examples of visual language by writing a script, planning and making a video, designing an advertisement, or producing a class newspaper. Working with appropriate equipment, such as the video camera, can help students to understand techniques and refine ideas. (p. 39)

Some Ministry of Education initiatives were introduced to assist teachers in making this shift to working with visual language and employing educational technologies. For example, in August 1995, a Ministry of Education pamphlet titled *What's New* was released. This publication explained the changes to teaching and learning in the English

Curriculum to parents and school trustees. In September 1995, a series of seven television programmes was launched aimed primarily at English teachers, but also of interest to parents and the wider community. The intention was to share this new direction in education with the New Zealand community.

In 1997, two further supporting documents for English teachers were released. *Planning and Assessment in English* (Ministry of Education, 1997) was designed to help teachers “plan and evaluate their English programmes and plan for assessing, recording, and reporting on students’ progress” (p.5). The overall aim of this book was to help teachers to implement *English in the New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education, 1994).

The second publication *Exploring Language: A Handbook For Teachers* (Ministry of Education, 1998) was designed to assist teachers with the exploring language objectives for *English in the New Zealand Curriculum*. This booklet was distributed to schools with two accompanying videotapes, on oral and visual language. The main focus of the booklet was also to provide teachers with basic information about oral, written and visual language so that they would be more confident about meeting the language objectives described in *English in the New Zealand Curriculum* (1994).

The inclusion of the visual strand within the national English Curriculum reflected the New Zealand Ministry of Education’s response to a rapidly developing world where communication was occurring in many ways, and not just in traditional reading, writing and speaking modes. Kress (1999) pointed out that language-as-writing was everywhere and increasingly being challenged by the image. This challenge posed fundamental questions for how English should be taught and studied. Kress saw this increasing engagement with the image as having deep effects on the forms and functions of writing, and consequently for the English curriculum and teachers of English:

The landscape of communication has changed. Where in the not so distant past the mountain range of literacy -- of lettered representation, of language-as-writing -- dominated the domain of public communication, there is now image as well as writing. The visual exists together with the linguistic. Indeed, the two-dimensionality of writing and image are accompanied in some

domains by the three-dimensionality of models of various kinds, of three-dimensional communicational objects. Language as speech is matched by sound as soundtrack, or by sound as music. The contemporary landscape of communication is decidedly multi-modal. (Kress, 1999, p.17)

While *English in the New Zealand Curriculum* was not explicitly directive or prescriptive in what it required teachers to teach, much of the teaching content and the related learning contexts were made implicit by the suggestion that to be effective functioning citizens, students needed to be able to communicate in oral, written, and visual language modes. Many of the newer specialist visual language dimensions and skills are ones where English teachers have been forced to do the learning vicariously. For example, designing web pages or 'reading', and evaluating the signs and semiotics of web presentations are competencies not taught in most traditional degrees in English studies. To be effective in these new domains of knowledge, English teachers have needed to rapidly transfer existing skills to acquire, and disseminate, new ideas and concepts. Nicholls (2003) summarised these changes in the following manner:

Teaching English in the 21st century is a challenging task. Elements of this challenge include the continual evolution of the subject, the demographic changes in the classroom, new demands for using effective pedagogy to increase achievement and reduce disparities in achievement and society's expectation that the school will have a central role in creating literate citizens able to participate effectively in a globalised economy. (p.23)

Currently in New Zealand, the English curriculum is undergoing another revision process. This process has prompted much debate about the nature of the subject English and how it should be taught. The general consensus is that English teachers need a simpler and more integrated curriculum to meet the needs of diverse learners and a more global future. Fowler (2005) has proposed a restructuring of the English curriculum into two strands: receptive (reading, listening, viewing) and productive (writing, speaking, presenting).

However, while changes to the curriculum may “help to clarify teacher thinking and lead to more effective curriculum implementation” (Fowler, 2005, p.10), it is the specific English and literacy teacher skills and competencies that remain fundamental to effective language teaching and learning.

Traditionally, the main traditional source of subject content knowledge for specialist English teachers is an academic qualification, such as a literature-based university degree. Such traditional academic qualifications generally have a literature or language focus, and do not include the new visual strand elements indicated by the English curriculum. Therefore, English teachers need to learn the subject content and the related skills for these elements while on the job through additional teacher education, professional development and increased practical experience.

New Zealand secondary teachers have also recently been challenged to make a dramatic paradigmatic and administrative shift in relation to national assessment. The traditional norm-referenced model that has for many years dominated the national qualifications and assessment arena has been replaced over the last few years by a standards-based model with the introduction in 2001 of *The National Certificate of Educational Achievement* [NCEA]. Such a philosophical and ideological shift has required all secondary subject teachers to undergo extensive training and professional development organised by the New Zealand Ministry of Education. This change has not been a smooth transition, and many secondary teachers have been compelled to review and reassess their previous teaching practices.

Along with the expansion of the curriculum and new assessment practices, English teachers are also being challenged by the growing tension between the conceptualisations of English and literacy. Luke (2004) considers that such a tension has arisen because of demographic changes, increasing cultural knowledge, and the impact of globalisation. The tension has been heightened by the widespread concern about the increasing numbers of students with low literacy levels, particularly in reading. While New Zealand students have historically demonstrated high literacy levels, there is a widening gap between students with high literacy skills and those with poor literacy skills:

Raising achievement in literacy in secondary schools became an important issue in 2002 because of the results of the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) study. While New Zealanders could be proud of the fact that we ranked third highest of the OECD countries in reading literacy, with the highest number of students (19 per cent) in the level one and two categories, we also had the largest gap between our highest achieving and lowest achieving students of any of the countries. (Alkema & O'Connell, 2003, p.1)

While very little research has been completed on the reading strategies of secondary school students in New Zealand, a study undertaken with secondary teachers (Thornley & McDonald, 2002 cited in Alkema & O'Connell, 2004) found that many students lacked the skills to work on literacy tasks independently.

The achievement objectives and directions promoted by *English in the New Zealand Curriculum* require schools to promote a gradual increase in the students' abilities to use reading processes moving from integration to being confident about adapting reading processes. However, the problem as highlighted by an Education Review Office (1997) report on *Literacy in New Zealand Schools* is that while *English in the New Zealand Curriculum* makes some attempt to offer teaching and assessment examples that indicate what might be expected in a secondary school English programme, reading processes and strategies are not specified and "schools are left to work out for themselves their expectations for achievement in cross-curricular aspects of literacy" (Education Review Office, p.18).

At secondary school level, delivery of *English in the New Zealand Curriculum* has become the sole source of literacy development for secondary school students. The only literacy skill instruction many students receive is specific to the discipline of English and focuses more on literature, particularly fiction, and, therefore does not meet the needs of students in reading for other disciplines. Furthermore, there is an assumption that secondary English teachers have the knowledge and competency in teaching literacy ideas such as reading and writing skills and strategies. This assumption is not supported in practice. Secondary English teachers in New Zealand are not expertly trained in reading and related literacy teaching and learning strategies.

Partington (1997) in his report *Teacher Education and Training in New Zealand* suggested that while the teaching of reading is arguably the single most important aspects of teaching in any country, it was not being done well in New Zealand. Partington further claimed that the structural language elements of grammar and syntax have been neglected in teacher education programmes, and the consequence of this is that English teachers have been poorly equipped to teach these basic skills and students in their classes have missed out as a result. Increasing low student literacy levels, combined with a lack of literacy teaching skills and strategies, could well be a powerful force in lowering efficacy beliefs for some teachers. It is likely, therefore, that some English teachers can have their efficacy beliefs challenged when faced with students who have poorly developed print literacy skills.

Research has demonstrated that a teacher's notion of success is linked to student achievement outcomes (e.g., Armor, Conry-Oseguera, Cox, King, McDonnell, Pascal, Pauly, Zellman, 1976; Berman, McLaughlin, Bass, Pauly, Zellman, 1977; Brookover, Beady, Flood, Schweitzer, & Wisenbaker, 1978). However, in most studies the relationship between teacher efficacy and student achievement has been determined only at one point in time (Gibbs, 1994) with teachers assessing their own performances as they saw them reflected in the performance and achievement outcomes of their students at any one point in time, or on any specific task.

Research has not established a link between teacher efficacy and student achievement levels. English teachers, who work with students with high achievement levels in English, may display increased teacher efficacy. English teachers, who work with students with poor literacy skills and competencies, may display lowered self-efficacy beliefs, which, in turn, may transfer to the students in the classroom. Moreover, given that positive motivation is influenced by a strong sense of efficacy (Schunk, 1991), and that teacher efficacy and student achievement are reciprocally related (Bandura, 1977)), it is important to attempt to understand how efficacy is developed and how it can be strengthened.

Teacher efficacy has been defined as both context-specific and subject-specific (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998). While researchers agree that teacher efficacy is situation-specific, the level of specificity needed in the assessment of efficacy has not

been determined. Bandura (1997) suggested that reasonably precise judgments of capability matched to specific outcome afford the greatest prediction and offer the best explanations of performance outcomes, for these are typically the sorts of judgements that individuals use when confronted with specific tasks. However, despite the findings of some specific studies, generally they have still failed to show what the optimal level of specificity is for accurately assessing teacher efficacy.

According to Pintrich and Schunk (1996), "specificity of domains is one of the biggest issues that needs to be resolved for any cognitive or motivational theory that proposes domain specificity of construct" (p.79). While self-efficacy instruments have produced some positive results in terms of establishing the scope of beliefs, attempts to establish whether these have greater predictive value than more global measures have not yet been clearly determined. Therefore, in order for teacher efficacy to advance, the development of subject-specific teacher efficacy measures that attempt to assess the consistency and congruency across all competencies within a subject domain is desirable.

In attempting to accurately measure efficacy beliefs, Bandura (1997) suggested that to increase accuracy of prediction, "self-efficacy beliefs should be measured in terms of particularized judgments of capability that may vary across realms of activity, different levels of task demands within a given activity domain, and under different situational circumstances" (p. 6). Additionally, efficacy beliefs should be assessed at the optimal level of specificity that corresponds to the criterial task being assessed and the domain of functioning being analysed. Therefore, in designing a valid teacher efficacy measure for the present study, it was important to acknowledge that a specific task focusing on curriculum achievement objectives would have both content (subject knowledge) and process (pedagogical knowledge) dimensions.

In asking teachers about their predicted capabilities to effectively teach certain English related tasks, they would be making evaluative judgements about both their pedagogical knowledge and their subject knowledge. By its very nature, the *New Zealand Curriculum Framework* (Ministry of Education, 1993) creates a pedagogical framework within which teachers organise their content knowledge. One of the questions presented by Gibbs (1992) was "to what extent does self-efficacy vary across and within curriculum

domains?" (p.23). This question is central to this present study, and is addressed by examining the specificity and congruency of English teacher efficacy beliefs.

Rationale for the Present Study

The two dimensions of general teaching efficacy and personal teaching efficacy have dominated teacher efficacy research to date. Very few studies have attempted to assess teacher efficacy beliefs at the subject-specific level. No previous studies have reported on examinations of subject-specific English teacher efficacy beliefs. The present study fills that gap in the teacher efficacy research.

Evidence that teacher efficacy is not an omnibus trait has been demonstrated by secondary teachers. Teacher confidence in their own effectiveness varies with the courses or programmes they are assigned and the students in their classes, and can alter over the time within a course (Radenbush, Rowan, & Cheong, 1992; Ross, Cousins, Gadalla, & Hannay, 1999). Thus, the measurement of self-efficacy and teacher efficacy has been complex and problematic. In response to these problems, Pajares (1996) proposed that future studies in self-efficacy should adopt research strategies that would provide "practical, relevant, and theoretical insights" (p.15).

Based on the results from self-efficacy investigations, Pajares (1996) stressed that particularised judgements of capability were better predictors of related outcomes than are more generalized self-beliefs. Therefore, to gain greater insights into the development and maintenance of self-efficacy beliefs, Pajares encouraged researchers to design measures where the specific judgements individuals are asked to make, reflect the specific performances attached to specific tasks which are clearly and commonly understood by the respondents. The teacher efficacy measure designed for the present study follows these principles.

The present study arose from the belief that the task-specific and subject-specific efficacy beliefs of English teachers have been challenged in new ways with the expansion and changes in direction of the New Zealand English curriculum. For English teachers to be effective in teaching the subject for student success, English teachers need to be efficacious across an ever-widening curriculum. In line with this idea, this study serves to

advance teacher efficacy research by assessing subject-specific teacher efficacy beliefs within the context of contemporary curriculum changes and challenges for students to be multi-literate and able to critically explore a multi-media world. Such challenges have placed increased pressure on secondary English teachers to do much more than teach traditional reading and writing competencies.

Previous teacher efficacy research has established that positively efficacious teachers exhibit the same general teaching and personal teaching behaviours as effective teachers. However, the extent to which the efficacy beliefs of specialist subject teachers are consistently displayed across the full range of subject competencies has not been measured in prior studies. The present study is positioned to fill that gap in teacher efficacy research.

Further, the present study advances teacher efficacy research by examining subject-specific efficacy beliefs, and the relationship between teacher academic qualifications, teacher experience, and teacher education/professional development (both pre-service and practising) with teacher efficacy. This study also extends teacher efficacy research by examining the link between student achievement levels and teacher efficacy.

Teacher efficacy research has previously been hampered by a lack of clarity in defining the construct, and designing a reliable measure that can assess teacher efficacy beliefs at the task-specific and subject-specific levels. Therefore, the present study is important for its contribution in assessing subject-specific teacher efficacy beliefs across the range of competencies within a widening subject domain. This study is also important in terms of understanding what the associated factors are that help shape and inform teacher efficacy beliefs and patterns. Such knowledge can, in turn, inform educational theories and practices, especially in relation to teacher education.

CHAPTER 2

Review of the Literature

In line with changes to the English curriculum and the link with teacher efficacy, the present study focuses on examining English teacher efficacy beliefs, and was designed to answer four central questions:

- Do secondary English teachers display congruent self-efficacy beliefs across a range of subject-specific English teaching tasks and competencies?
- Are teacher academic qualifications (subject knowledge), teacher experience, and teacher education and professional development associated with English teachers' efficacy beliefs?
- Do inexperienced pre-service English teachers display the same levels of teacher efficacy as experienced practising English teachers?
- Is there a relationship between English teacher's efficacy beliefs and English students' achievement levels?

To provide information on the research domain for the present study, the national New Zealand curriculum for English, *English in the New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education, 1994) is described. English teachers' perceptions of *English in the New Zealand Curriculum* from a recent Ministry of Education (2003) curriculum implementation survey are then reported to establish the relevant links with this study.

The Research Domain
English in the New Zealand Curriculum

The New Zealand Curriculum Framework (Ministry of Education, 1993) places English in the learning area of Language and Languages as one of the seven essential learning areas. The underpinning philosophy about language learning and language development in relation to the subject English is outlined in the following statement from *English in the New Zealand Curriculum*.

Language development is essential to intellectual growth. It enables us to make sense of the world around us. The ability to use spoken and written language effectively, to read and to listen, and to discern critically messages from television, film, the computer, and other visual media, is fundamental both to learning and to effective participation in society and the workforce ... all students will need to develop the ability and confidence to communicate competently in English, in both its spoken and written forms. (Ministry of Education, 1994, p.6)

The English Curriculum is divided into three strands: Oral, Written and Visual. Within each strand the curriculum document sets out a structured progression, describing achievement objectives that span all levels of schooling. These objectives encompass language functions and language processes. The language functions specify what students are expected to be able to do as they use and respond to the English language. The language processes underpin the language functions and are considered crucial for students' language development. The achievement objectives for the processes span eight levels in four sets of two-level bands, and provide the basis for planning programmes, and for assessing a student's language development at any one time.

To meet the objectives of the English curriculum effectively, English teachers need to be knowledgeable and competent in the three language strands. According to *English in the New Zealand Curriculum* (1994, p.20) teachers need to identify students' progressive development against the level statements. Such student progress is shown through:

- Their increased vocabulary, their use of increasingly elaborate and cohesive sentence structures, and their control over a variety of types of text;
- The range and variety of the contexts in which they use language;
- Their continuing growth in independence and ability in using language for different purposes;
- Their ability to select precise vocabulary and idiom for the purpose and situation;
- The movement from familiar, personal contexts to exploring new ideas and impersonal or abstract concepts;
- The range and complexity of their ideas and responses;
- Their ability to apply language skills to new learning;
- Their developing ability to interpret layers of meaning in complex texts.

Thus, according to *English in the New Zealand Curriculum* (1994), a fully functional English teacher needs knowledge and understanding of: the three language processes, (*thinking critically, processing information, and exploring language*) and the eleven language functions (*interpersonal listening, listening to text, interpersonal speaking, speaking using texts* (oral strand), *personal reading, close reading, expressive writing, poetic writing, transactional writing* (written strand), *viewing and presenting* (visual strand).

Teachers' perceptions of the *English in the New Zealand Curriculum* were assessed by a New Zealand Ministry of Education research report in July, 2003, titled *Teachers' Experiences in Curriculum Implementation: English, Languages, Science and Social Studies*. Teachers (n = 1077) were asked to indicate their overall confidence in implementing the English curriculum. Of the specialist (teaching years 9-15) secondary English teachers (n = 171) in the sample, 73% self-reported high confidence, 26% self-reported medium confidence and only 1% self-reported low confidence. When English teachers were asked about levels of confidence in teaching the three strands in English, 95% of the specialist (teaching years 9-15) secondary teachers reported that they felt confident in teaching *writing* and 88% were confident in using the *reading (close reading*

and *personal reading*) substrand. In relation to oral language 92% of the secondary English teachers said they felt confident with the *speaking* substrand of the English curriculum, while only 68% expressed confidence in the *listening* substrand. In relation to the visual strand, 84% reported confidence in teaching the *presenting* substrand, and 86% claimed they were confident about teaching *viewing*.

However, when a randomly selected sub-sample (n = 100) of English (primary and secondary) teachers was asked what aspects of English they would most like to receive professional development in to support their teaching of English, 78 teachers stated that *viewing* and *presenting* were the areas where they needed the most professional development. Several teachers added that this professional development should be in ICT. "Written language, including reading and writing was next most-often-mentioned. Others listed oral language, grammar, spelling and listening" (p.33).

When the total sample (n = 1077) was asked what factors teachers believed contributed most to their teaching confidence, teaching experience was reported as the most influential contributor (90%), followed closely by knowledge of English (89%). Academic qualifications or specialist background were considered to be the next contributors (68%), and then professional development in English (58%). School-based factors included: translating the achievement objectives into specific learning outcomes (54%); translating the achievement objectives into a school scheme (57%); and working directly from the achievement objectives (47%).

When asked about the major challenges facing them as teachers of English, some of the secondary English teachers' responses were related to the difficulties surrounding low literacy levels. For example, one teacher stated:

Trying to teach grammar to students with limited ability. I would not teach it all except that they are examined on it so one has to present it. One can turn "verbs" into games also adverbs etc. but the bottom line is these students do not see the relevance. More streaming? But that encourages cretinous behaviour in the lower end (p.57).

And another secondary English teacher commented on the “extreme low literacy skills of students arriving in third form (year 9)” and the challenge of “too much assessment and too little teaching” (p.57).

Multi-level teaching was also considered to be another challenge and one teacher claimed that teaching in such classrooms often meant there was a “lack of time to create new and exciting tasks (I have lots of ideas but not the time to action all of them!) - this hasn't been addressed. I would like to benefit more from more experienced teachers mentoring - but no time in the day!” (p.57).

The teaching of reading was also identified as an issue for teachers working with students with low literacy levels. A number of secondary teachers commented that they did not feel confident to teach reading to students struggling in this area. For example one teacher commented, “I do not have time to go back to the basics of reading with slow readers. I do try to motivate them” (p.21).

The New Zealand Ministry of Education's (2002) *Curriculum Stocktake Report* found that 89% of all English teachers in the study rated their knowledge of the English curriculum area as *good* or *satisfactory* and 9.3% indicated that *they needed more content knowledge*. In general, secondary English teachers felt positive about the national English curriculum especially as a planning framework. However, 74.7% of English teachers in the study felt they still needed more professional development in relation to the curriculum statement and expressed a need for more specific examples of student work to guide their practice, and increased professional development to assist them in teaching and assessing, particularly in visual language, reading and listening.

Therefore, although the New Zealand English curriculum requires English teachers to be equally competent in three language strands, English teachers indicated that they felt more confident teaching in some English dimensions than they did in others. This variation in teaching confidence between the subject strands has implications for teacher effectiveness, student achievement outcomes, and the development and maintenance of subject-specific teacher efficacy beliefs.

Self-Efficacy

The construct of self-efficacy was formalized in Bandura's (1977) publication of *Self-Efficacy: Toward a Unifying Theory of Behavioral Change*. Since that time, the "tenets of self-efficacy have been tested in various disciplines and settings and have received support from a growing body of findings from diverse fields" (Pajares, 1996, p.2). Bandura's (1986) social cognitive theory proposed that individuals possess a self-system that enables them to exercise control over their thoughts, feelings, motivation, and actions. He claimed that outcomes are always a product of human actions, and the outcomes people anticipate depend largely on their judgements of how well they will be able to perform in given situations. This self-system provides reference mechanisms and a set of sub-functions for perceiving, regulating, and evaluating behaviour, which results from the interplay between the system and environmental sources of influence.

According to Bandura's (1986) model of "emergent interactive agency" (p.1175), humans make causal contributions to their own motivation and action within a system of triadic reciprocal causation. In this model of reciprocal causation, action, cognitive, affective and other personal factors, and environmental events, all operate as interacting determinants. Any account of the determinants of human action must, therefore, include self-generated influences as a contributing factor (p.1175). Self-efficacy beliefs, then, function as set of proximal determinants of human motivation, affect, and action.

The beliefs or perceptions that an individual has can be instrumental in determining and influencing outcomes. Furthermore, Bandura (1989) claimed that what people do is often better predicted by their beliefs about their capabilities, than by what they are actually capable of accomplishing. People's self-evaluations of the results of their behaviours inform and alter both their environments and their self-beliefs, which, in turn, inform and alter subsequent behaviours. Bandura's conception of triadic reciprocal determinism is based on the notion that personal factors (cognition, affect, and biological events), personal behaviours and environmental influences create interactions. Because personal agency is socially rooted, and operates within socio-cultural influences, individuals are both products and producers of their own environments, and of their social systems (Pajares, 1996).

Thus, self-efficacy beliefs are defined in terms of an individual's perceived capabilities to attain designated types of performances and achieve specific results. Self-efficacy judgments are task and situation specific, and individuals make use of these judgments in reference to some type of goal (Bandura, 1986, 1989; Pintrich & Schunk, 1996).

In general, researchers have assessed self-efficacy beliefs by asking individuals to report the level, generality, and strength of their confidence to accomplish a task, or succeed in a certain situation. Bandura (1977, 1982, 1986) viewed self-efficacy expectancies as varying along three dimensions that he labelled *magnitude*, *strength*, and *generality*. *Magnitude* of self-efficacy, in a hierarchy of behaviours, refers to the number of steps of increasing difficulty a person believes him/herself capable of performing. *Strength* of self-efficacy expectancy refers to the level of resolve of a person's convictions that she or he can perform the behaviour in question. *Generality* of self-efficacy expectancies refers to the extent to which success or failure experiences influence expectancies in a limited, behavioural-specific way, or whether changes in self-efficacy expectancies extend to similar behaviours and contexts. Success at a task, behaviour, or skill will strengthen self-efficacy expectancies for the same task, behaviour, or skill in the future, whereas perceptions of failure will diminish self-efficacy expectancy.

Social cognitive theory draws a distinction between efficacy expectancy and outcome expectancy. An efficacy expectation is an individual's belief that she/he can perform the necessary actions to achieve a given task. An outcome-expectancy is an individual's estimate of the likely consequences of performing a task at the expected level of competence (Bandura, 1986). These two ideas pose quite separate questions. In relation to efficacy beliefs, the question would be: Do I have the ability to organise and execute the actions necessary to accomplish a specific task at a desired level? The outcome question would be: If I accomplish the task at the desired level, what are the likely consequences? Efficacy expectations generally precede, and thus help form outcome expectations.

Therefore, self-efficacy theory provides a distinction between agent-means relationships (competence) and means-ends (contingency) relationships. However, most self-efficacy research to date has focused on the predictive power of efficacy expectations and given little attention to outcome expectations. Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy and Hoy

(1998) suggest “a consideration of means-ends relationships, in the form of judgments about the requirements of the teaching task, is an important factor in teacher efficacy” (p.7).

However, some researchers have suggested that outcome expectations cannot be easily extricated from efficacy beliefs (Marzillier & Eastman, 1984; Kazdin, 1978; Teasdale, 1978). These researchers “contend that self-efficacy judgments are dependent on and inextricably intertwined with perceptions of the outcomes envisioned by actions” (Pajares, 1996, p.11). Therefore, they see outcome expectations as playing a central part in creating efficacy perceptions, arguing that individuals infer their efficacy beliefs from imagined outcomes. Furthermore, high self-efficacy does not automatically produce competent performances if students are lacking positive outcome expectations, or beliefs concerning the probable outcome of actions (Schunk, 1986).

Learners are motivated to act in ways that they believe will result in outcomes they value. Self-efficacy is dependent primarily on the task at hand, independent of its culturally assigned value. There is no fixed relationship between one’s beliefs about what one can or cannot do, and whether one feels positively or negatively about oneself. Some students may feel highly efficacious in a subject but without the corresponding positive feelings of self-worth, they may take no pride in accomplishing in this area.

Self-Efficacy and other Self-Concepts

Self-efficacy differs from other conceptions of self such as self-concept, self-worth, or self-esteem in that self-efficacy is specific to a particular task. Self-efficacy is a judgement (not necessarily evaluative) about task capability. For example, a person may feel very inefficacious for a particular task, but suffer no diminishing of self-esteem. An issue of self-esteem only arises if the person has invested a high level of self-worth in the achieving such a task. Conversely, high achievers who have high levels of skill in a certain area may still suffer diminished self-esteem because they set personal standards that are difficult to achieve. In relation to teacher efficacy, high achieving teachers will likely set themselves high standards, and thus be tempted to evaluate themselves negatively every time these standards are not met.

Self-efficacy has more to do with the self-perception or belief in one's competence to perform a certain task, rather than the actual level of task competence. Bandura (1997) claimed that, in general, people tend to either overestimate or underestimate their capabilities, and it is these estimations that will help inform the courses of action they pursue, and how much effort they will be likely to expend in pursuing these chosen courses. Bandura (1997) further suggested that the level of self-assurance people have as they approach and manage difficult tasks, also determines how well they will use their capabilities. Therefore, self-efficacy theory encompasses the beliefs in one's ability to perform tasks and to control outcomes.

The complex relationship between the concepts of mastery, control and competence has been explored in many studies (e.g., Deci & Ryan, 1985; Maddux, 1995). While the exact relationship is not clear, Schunk (1996a, 1996b) proposed that the numerous notions and terms can be reduced to a fairly small number of basic social-cognitive building blocks, including causal attributions/explanations, agency/self-efficacy beliefs, means and ends beliefs/outcome expectancies, goals or desired outcomes, and goal/outcome value. Efficacy beliefs are influenced by the acquisition of cognitive skills, but they are not merely a reflection of them. People with the same level of cognitive skill development differ in their intellectual performances, depending on the strength of their perceived efficacy.

Self-concept has been viewed as an integral part of the development of the self-system (Epstein, 1973; Harter, 1993). Shavelson, Hubner, and Stanton (1976) conceptualised self-concept as the organization of individual's perceptions of oneself in terms of many facets such as academic self-concept, social self-concept, and physical self-concept. These facets or dimensions are viewed as hierarchical in nature with general self-concept being at the apex of the hierarchy. Situation-specific self-concept is at the base of the hierarchy. While general self-concept is believed to be relatively stable, situation-specific self-concept is hypothesized to vary across time and situation.

Furthermore, self-concept is characterized as having both descriptive and evaluative elements. There is much empirical support (Byrne, 1984; Boersma & Chapman, 1992; Chapman & Tunmer, 1995; Marsh, 1990a, 1990b; Marsh, Bryne & Shavelson, 1988; Marsh & Hocevar, 1985; Shavelson & Bolus, 1982) for Shavelson et al.'s (1976)

conception of self-concept as a multi-faceted hierarchically organised construct. In line with this notion, Purkey (1996) described self-concept as the “totality of a complex, organized and dynamic system of learned beliefs, attitudes and opinions that each person holds to be true about his or her personal existence” (p.1).

Academic self-efficacy and academic self-concept have been conceptualised as unique factors that contribute independently and interactively to academic achievement or performance (Bong, 1998; Zimmerman, 1995). Academic self-concept incorporates attitude, feelings, and perceptions relative to one’s intellectual or academic skills, and represents a mixture of self-beliefs and self-feelings regarding academic self-functioning (Boersma & Chapman, 1992; Lent, Brown & Gore, 1997). Thus, learners may feel capable because they have high ability, or because they have developed a high level of competence as a result of effort.

Self-efficacy is more task-specific. According to some efficacy researchers (Brophy, 1999; Feather, 1982), learners develop a sense of high self-efficacy if they are motivated to work on a task in which they expect to succeed, and they value the achievement of that task. Woolfolk Hoy (2004) considered self-concept to be a more global construct that contains many perceptions about the self, including self-efficacy. Self-concept develops in part from comparisons of self to other people, using other people’s abilities or accomplishments as frames of reference. Self-efficacy focuses on a person’s ability to successfully accomplish a particular task with no need for comparisons.

Sources of Efficacy Expectations

Bandura (1986, 1997) proposed that efficacy beliefs are multifaceted and contextual, but the level of generality of the efficacy items within a given domain of functioning varies depending on the degree of situational resemblance and foreseeability of task demands. The contextual and mediational role of efficacy in human behaviour comes from four sources from which these beliefs are developed. These four sources are: mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal or social persuasion, and physiological and emotional states.

Mastery experiences (performance experiences) are the results of purposive performances, where individuals gauge the effects of their actions, and these interpretations help create their efficacy beliefs. Success raises self-efficacy and failure lowers it.

Vicarious experiences (observational learning, modelling, imitation) influence self-efficacy beliefs when people observe the behaviour of others, see what they are able to do, note the consequences of their behaviour, and then use this information to form expectancies about their own behaviour and its consequences (Bandura, 1997). The effects of vicarious experiences depend on such factors as the observer's perception of the similarity between the model and the observer, the number and variety of models, the perceived power of the model, and the similarity between the problems faced by the observer and the model (Bandura, 1986; Schunk, 1986).

Verbal or social persuasion influences self-beliefs through messages conveyed by others. In the case of pre-service teachers, associate teachers who mentor them during teaching practicums can often exert influence through the use of positive or negative persuasion. Practising teachers can also be influenced by other teachers and colleagues with whom they work in schools. It is a less potent source of change in self-efficacy expectancy than mastery or vicarious experiences, but some experimental studies have shown that verbal persuasion is a moderately effective means for changing self-efficacy beliefs (Maddux, Norton & Stohlberg, 1986; Maddux & Rogers, 1983; Newman & Goldfried, 1987, cited in Maddux, 1995).

Physiological and emotional states influence self-efficacy when people associate adverse physiological or emotional states with poor performance, perceived incompetence, and perceived failure. Moreover, people are more likely to have self-efficacious beliefs about performance when their affect is positive than when it is negative (Maddux, 1995). According to Scott (1996), these four factors "work in an overlapping and interactive manner" (p.199). This interaction suggests that one factor on its own is unlikely to make an independent contribution. The four factors form an integrated pattern of influence.

Schunk (1996a) also reinforced the notion that self-efficacy judgements involve a careful weighing and combining of various factors. Moreover, information acquired from these four sources does not automatically influence self-efficacy; rather it is cognitively

appraised. In appraising efficacy, people tend to weigh and combine their perceptions of their ability, the difficulty of the task, the amount of effort expended, the amount of external assistance received, the number and pattern of successes and failures, the perceived similarity to models, and persuader credibility.

People's beliefs in their efficacy to achieve a certain behaviour, or performance, can have diverse effects. These beliefs influence the choice of behaviours in which individuals will engage, the courses of action they will pursue, how much effort they will expend on an activity, how long they will persevere when confronting obstacles, how resilient they will prove in the face of adverse situations, whether their thoughts and emotions are helpful or hindering, how much stress they experience in coping with environmental demands, and the level of accomplishments they realise (Pajares, 1996).

Self-Efficacy for Performance and Learning

In line with this conceptualisation, self-efficacy is most useful when defined, operationalised, and measured specifically to a behaviour, or set of behaviours, in a specific context (Pajares, 1996). Most investigations of self-efficacy in academic settings have sought to determine the predictive value of self-efficacy beliefs on varied performances or motivation constructs.

Self-efficacy research has examined a wide range of human performance situations, however, some self-efficacy researchers have drawn a distinction between self-efficacy for performance and self-efficacy for learning (Schunk, Hanson, & Cox, 1987; Schunk, 1989, 1996a, 1996b; Zimmerman, Bandura, & Martinez-Pons, 1992). When students are familiar with skills required to accomplish an academic task, they can interpret their prior attainments and identify the skills on which to formulate their self-efficacy for performance. Moreover, these interpretations and associated self-beliefs can vary in the level and magnitude of their outcome expectancies.

Some social learning theorists (e.g., Bandura, 1977, 1982, 1989; Schunk, 1989a, 1989b; Zimmerman et al., 1992) have proposed that self-efficacy can be thought of as a sense of confidence regarding the performance of specific tasks and, consequently, one's sense of

self-efficacy may influence aspects of behaviour that are important to learning. These aspects can include such things as choice of activities, effort, persistence, learning, and achievement. Schunk (1981) demonstrated that self-efficacy beliefs were among the most important of all the possible factors that lead to achievement in Mathematics. Furthermore, his research reaffirmed that self-efficacy leads to the behaviours that are consistent with success in school, such as effort and perseverance. Such behaviours are considered by educators to be among the prerequisites for successful performance in school.

The amount of effort a student invests in a task is related to their perceived level of self-efficacy. Students with high efficacy are more likely to expend effort and engage in activities such as the use of strategies to comprehend information. Conversely, low self-efficacy students will show less employment of effort because of self-doubt. According to Bandura (1989), highly efficacious students think and feel differently than inefficacious students. Highly efficacious students are often the risk takers and initiators in a classroom learning environment. They question, challenge, and are self-directed. Positive self-efficacy beliefs allow students to contribute to the learning environment because they exhibit more emancipatory behaviours than negative self-efficacy students, and are less troubled by variations in the preferred and actual learning environment. Highly efficacious students are much more independent.

Therefore, a sense of self-efficacy does not refer to actual ability, or skill, but instead to beliefs about competence in using particular skills. Efficacy information is primarily gathered or learned from experience. Self-efficacy beliefs also relate to the attributions people make regarding task or event outcomes. In that regard, there is a strong link between self-efficacy theory and attribution theory.

Attribution Theory

Attribution theory is concerned with how individuals interpret events and how this relates to their thinking and behaviour. Heider (1958) first proposed a psychological theory of attribution. Weiner and colleagues (Jones, Kannouse, Kelley, Nisbett, Valins, & Weiner, 1972; Weiner, 1974, 1986) subsequently developed this initial theory into a theoretical framework.

Attribution theory assumes that people try to attribute certain causes to particular behaviours. A person seeking to understand why another person behaved in a certain way, or performed a certain action, may attribute one or more causes to that behaviour. A three-stage process underlies an attribution: (1) the person must perceive or observe the behaviour; (2) then the person must believe that the behaviour was intentionally performed; and (3) then the person must determine if they believe the other person was forced to perform the behaviour (in which case the cause is attributed to the situation) or not (in which case the cause is attributed to the other person).

Weiner (1974) focused his attribution theory on achievement. He identified ability, effort, task difficulty, and luck as the most important factors affecting attributions for achievement. Attributions are classified along three causal dimensions: locus of control, stability, and controllability. The locus of control dimension has two poles: internal versus external locus of control. The stability dimension captures whether causes change over time or not. For example, ability may be classified as a stable, internal cause, and effort classified as unstable and internal. Controllability contrasts causes one can control, such as skill/efficacy, with causes one cannot control, such as aptitude, others' actions, and luck. If teachers believe that learners are succeeding as a result of their teaching efforts, they are likely to continue making the effort. On the other hand, if they believe learners are doing poorly because of causes beyond their control, such as students' lack of background, poor home lives, or some other cause, their teaching efforts often decrease.

Bandura (1986) observed that there are a number of conditions under which self-efficacy beliefs do not perform their influential predictive, or mediational role in human functioning. For example, some school systems are structured in such a way that students or teachers may find that no amount of skilful effort will bring about desired outcomes. There may also be cases where students may possess the necessary skill and high self-efficacy required to achieve a certain outcome, but they may choose not to because they lack the necessary incentives. Bandura (1986) also stated that self-efficacy will have no bearing on performance if schools lack effective teachers, necessary equipment, or resources required to assist students in the adequate performance of academic tasks.

Understanding how self-efficacy beliefs are developed and maintained has important implications for educationalists. However, the complex nature of self-efficacy beliefs and

the associated difficulty of measuring such beliefs, have presented researchers with the challenge of developing teacher efficacy constructs that can reliably assess teacher efficacy beliefs.

Teacher Efficacy

Teacher efficacy has been defined as “the extent to which the teacher believes he or she has the capacity to affect student performance” (Berman et al., 1997, p.137). Researchers have attempted to conceptualise and contextualise teacher efficacy in many ways. In line with the tenets of social-cognitive theory, Bandura (1986, 1997) contended that personal factors and behaviour interact with the environment and influence each other through a process of ‘reciprocal determinism’. A number of researchers have attempted to increase their understanding of the role of these reciprocal relationships in the development and maintenance of teacher efficacy. For example, Hipp and Bredeson (1995), Rosenholtz, (1989) and Webb and Ashton (1987) studied the role of the school context and teacher efficacy.

Two studies (Raudenbush et al., 1992; Ross et al., 1999) with secondary teachers were conducted to explore whether teacher efficacy was stable across all class periods in a day. Findings from these studies indicated that there was significant variance within teachers across the different classes they taught. Teachers’ levels of personal teaching efficacy [PTE] depended on the subject matter being taught and the particular group of students they worked with during each period.

School-level variables, such as school climate, principal’s behaviour, sense of school community, and the general school culture were also seen as being related to a teacher’s sense of efficacy. For example, Moore and Esselman (1992) using the Gibson and Dembo (1984) efficacy measure found that greater personal teaching efficacy and general teaching efficacy scores were reported by teachers who perceived a positive school atmosphere. Hipp and Bredeson (1995) found that when a principal of a school modeled appropriate behaviour and provided performance rewards, both personal teaching efficacy and general teaching efficacy scores were higher. Specifically, the principal’s ability to inspire a common sense of staff purpose was related to higher teacher scores. Rosenholtz (1989) found that the four school factors were significantly associated with teacher

efficacy. These factors were identified as: receiving positive feedback on teacher performance, collaboration with other teachers, parental involvement in the school, and school-wide coordination of student behaviour.

Other researchers have also examined the extent to which teacher efficacy is a shared sense. Although a consistent measure of a school's collective sense of teaching efficacy has yet to be developed, Bandura (1993) claimed that a school's efficacy as a whole was just as predictive of school performance as teachers' self-efficacy beliefs. Hoy and Sabo (1998) found that school climate influenced student achievement even when socio-economic status was controlled. In general, studies in this area have tended to demonstrate that an important aspect of school climate is the extent to which it strengthens or weakens teachers' efficacy beliefs. A low sense of efficacy among a group of teachers can be very contagious. Bandura (1997) pointed out that low teacher efficacy leads to low student efficacy and related low achievement, which leads, in turn, to further declines in teacher efficacy.

As well as difficulties in establishing a commonly agreed concept of teacher efficacy, research studies attempting to develop teacher efficacy measures have also faced difficulties because of "incongruities in construct definitions and measurement" (Deemer & Mink, 1999, p.3). The lack of clarity about the nature of teacher efficacy has made it difficult to develop reliable measures for the assessment of teacher efficacy. Two main conceptual strands and related measures have emerged from the teacher efficacy research.

The primary conceptual strand of teacher efficacy was first formulated over 20 years ago by RAND researchers using Rotter's (1966) locus of control concept as a theoretical base. The underpinning assumption of Rotter's theory was that student motivation and performance were significant reinforcers of teacher behaviour. This initial concept focused on the extent to which teachers believed they could control or influence student achievement and motivation. Rotter (1966) believed that teachers who concurred that the influence of the environment was more powerful than their ability to have an impact on a student's learning, exhibited a belief that the reinforcement of their teaching efforts was external to them, and thus lay outside their control. On the other hand, teachers who expressed confidence in their ability to teach difficult or unmotivated students, indicating

a belief that the reinforcement of their teaching resided within the teacher's internal control.

The 1976 RAND study (Armor et al., 1976) that examined the success of reading and intervention programmes, found that a teacher's sense of efficacy had a strong positive effect on student performance. Moreover, this positive influence was extended to the number of project goals achieved by teachers, and the extent to which teachers were prepared to change and continue to use project methods and materials after the formal end of the project.

Teacher efficacy was determined by summing the scores of two items on a questionnaire: RAND Item 1 stated: *When it comes right down to it, a teacher can't do much because most of a student's motivation and performance depends on his or her home environment.* It was believed that a teacher who expressed strong agreement with this statement was indicating that environmental factors were more powerful than the individual teacher's capability to make a difference to student performance. Teachers' beliefs about the power of external environmental factors compared to the influence of individual teachers and schools have since been labelled as general teaching efficacy [GTE] (Ashton, Olejnik, Crocker & McAuliffe, 1982).

RAND Item 2 stated: *If I really try hard, I can get through to even the most difficult and unmotivated students.* Teachers who agreed with this statement were seen as indicating confidence in their abilities as teachers to overcome factors that could impede the learning process for students. Such a statement of confidence was seen as an expression of teacher self-efficacy. This aspect of efficacy was labelled personal teaching efficacy [PTE].

In the RAND self-efficacy studies, teachers were asked to indicate their level of agreement with each of these two statements. Studies that included these two items on their efficacy scales (e.g., Ashton & Webb, 1986; Smylie, 1990) found that teacher efficacy was strongly related to student achievement. Some researchers, however, recommended the development of more comprehensive measures of teacher efficacy.

In 1977, Bandura developed a second conceptual strand to the teacher efficacy construct. He identified teacher efficacy as a cognitive process in which people constructed beliefs

about their capacity to perform at a given level. These beliefs influenced how much effort a teacher put forth, and how long they persisted in the face of obstacles, how resilient they were in dealing with failures, and how much stress or depression they experienced in coping with demanding situations. Bandura saw self-efficacy as a future-oriented belief about the level of competence a person expected he or she would display in a given situation.

The fact that these two separate, but closely linked, conceptual strands have developed simultaneously has contributed to a lack of clarity and definition about the true nature of teacher efficacy, both as a construct and a measure. Moreover, it has not been clear exactly what questions such a construct should be answering. Efficacy beliefs are derived from both psychological and cultural frameworks. The two competing conceptual strands of teacher efficacy as developed through both the Rotter model and the Bandura model, have strong connections with the psychological frameworks of teacher knowledge and beliefs. However, the cultural meanings of efficacy in terms of teacher roles, expectations, and social relations that are important in the construction of teacher beliefs, are not the central elements of such constructs (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998).

In examining the historical development of teacher efficacy, and its place in educational research, it is important to stress that most studies of teacher efficacy have been based on one of these two approaches. As a consequence of the success of the RAND studies the notion of teacher efficacy was extended and refined. However, researchers were concerned with the reliability of the two-item scale and attempted to develop longer, more comprehensive measures.

Assessment of Teacher Efficacy

Teacher Locus of Control Scale

Rose and Medway (1981) developed the 28-item measure called the *Teacher Locus of Control Scale* [TLC]. Teachers were presented with teaching scenarios and asked to assign responsibility for student successes, or failures, by choosing between two competing explanations. Half of the TLC items described situations of student success and the other half described student failure. For each success situation, there were two

explanations. One explanation attributed the positive outcome internally to the teacher, while the other explanation assigned responsibility outside the teacher, usually to the students. For each failure situation, one explanation gave an internal teacher attribution, while the other explanation blamed external factors. Rose and Medway (1981) claimed that the TLC was a better predictor of teacher behaviour than Rotter's (1966) Internal-External (I-E) scale. Scores on the TLC have been significantly, but only weakly, related to the individual RAND Items 1 [GTE] and 2 [PTE], as well as to the sum of the two RAND items, with correlations ranging from .11 to .41 (Coladarci, 1992; Parkay, Greenwood, Olejnik & Proller, 1998).

Responsibility for Student Achievement

A 30-item instrument to measure responsibility for student achievement was developed by Guskey (1982). Participants were asked to distribute percentage points between two alternatives for each item. One alternative stated that the teacher caused the event, and the other stated that the event was influenced by factors outside the teacher's immediate control. In comparing scores from the *Responsibility for Student Achievement* [RSA] measure with teacher efficacy as measured by the sum of scores on the two RAND Items, Guskey (1982, 1988) found significant positive correlations between teacher efficacy and responsibility for both student success and student failure. Guskey claimed that the positive and negative performance outcomes represented two separate dimensions, and their influence on efficacy beliefs contributed independently. Greater efficacy was related to more positive attitudes about teaching, as well as a high level of teaching confidence (Guskey, 1984). While the RSA scale was developed as a teacher efficacy measure, it appeared to be a locus of control measure rather than an efficacy measure.

The Webb Scale

The Webb Scale was developed (Ashton et al., 1982) to extend the measure of teacher efficacy by expanding the RAND efficacy questions to increase their reliability. To reduce the problem of social desirability bias, this scale comprised seven forced choice items that were matched for social desirability. According to Tschannen-Moran et al., (1998) the Webb Efficacy Scale "was an attempt to extend the measure of teacher efficacy while maintaining a narrow conceptualisation of the construct" (p.207). Studies using the Webb scale found that teachers who scored higher showed less negative affect in their teaching style (Ashton et al., 1982).

The Gibson and Dembo Teacher Efficacy Scale

In the early 1980s, Gibson and Dembo developed a more extensive measure of teacher efficacy that employed the basic formulations of the RAND studies but also embraced the conceptual underpinnings of Bandura's notion of self-efficacy. Gibson and Dembo saw outcome expectancy as reflecting the extent to which teachers believed that students could be successfully taught given such environmental factors as family background, IQ, and school conditions. They saw self-efficacy beliefs as teachers' evaluations of their abilities to bring about positive student change.

A factor analysis of the 30-item Gibson and Dembo teacher efficacy scale (1984) confirmed two factors: personal teaching efficacy [PTE] that was assumed to reflect self efficacy beliefs, and general teaching efficacy [GTE] that was assumed to reflect outcome expectancies. Other researchers who have used the Gibson and Dembo scale (e.g., Anderson, Greene, & Loewn, 1988; Burley, Hall, Villeme, & Brockmeier, 1991; Hoy & Woolfolk, 1993; Moore & Esselman, 1992; Saklofske, Michaluk, & Randhawa, 1988; Soodak & Podell, 1998) have reported data supporting the two-factor structure of the scale.

The 1984 Gibson and Dembo measure also served to provide additional evidence for the relationship between teacher efficacy and student achievement. Students in the second and fifth grades who had teachers with a greater sense of general teaching efficacy outperformed their peers in Mathematics on the *Iowa Test of Basic Skills* (Moore & Esselman, 1992). The personal teaching efficacy of teachers of third graders at the beginning of the year was significantly related to students' achievement on the *Canadian Achievement Tests*, as well as to the students' sense of efficacy at the end of the same year.

In summary, the Gibson and Dembo scale has been used to measure teacher efficacy as it relates to teachers' classroom behaviours, such as openness to ideas and attitudes to teaching. Woolfolk, Rosoff and Hoy (1990) further found that a student's interest in school, and the extent to which they perceived a subject to be important, was related to the strength of the general teaching efficacy indicated by a teacher. Therefore, as well as the relationship with student achievement, teacher efficacy has also been found to play a

role in shaping students' attitudes to school, the subject matter, and sometimes, even the teacher (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998).

Science Teaching Efficacy Belief Instrument

Some researchers have modified the Gibson and Dembo scale in an attempt measure a teacher's sense of efficacy within particular curriculum areas. For example, Riggs and Enochs (1990) developed the *Science Teaching Efficacy Belief Instrument*. Riggs and Enochs identified two separate, uncorrelated factors: personal science teaching efficacy and science teaching outcome expectancy. Using the *Science Teaching Efficacy Belief Instrument* as a measure, teachers with a higher sense of personal science teaching reported spending more time teaching science and were more likely to invest greater amounts of time exploring the science concept being considered (Riggs & Jesunathadas, 1993).

In a more subject-specific study of teacher efficacy, Rubeck and Enochs (1991) identified a distinction between chemistry teaching efficacy and science teaching efficacy. They found that among middle school science teachers, personal science teaching efficacy was correlated with a preference for teaching science, and that chemistry-teaching efficacy was related to a preference for teaching chemistry. Chemistry teaching self-efficacy was related to science teaching self-efficacy, and science-teaching self-efficacy was significantly higher than chemistry teaching self-efficacy. Furthermore, Rubeck and Enochs found that both science and chemistry teaching self-efficacy were both related to teachers' experiences taking science and chemistry courses with an emphasis on laboratory experiences, and to the level of science and chemistry teaching experience.

The Ashton Vignettes

Ashton, Buhr and Crocker (1984) developed a series of specific situational vignettes that that might typically be encountered by a teacher. Participant teachers were asked to make judgments about the cause of the situation proposed in each vignette. Two frames of reference were tested. Teachers were asked to judge how they would perform in the described situation on a scale from *extremely effective* to *extremely ineffective*. Teachers were also asked to make a comparison with other teachers on a scale from *much less effective than most teachers* to *much more effective than most teachers*. Using the *Ashton Vignettes*, perceptions of efficacy were explored across a variety of teaching situations

(pre-service teachers, classroom teachers, student teacher supervisors). Findings indicated that the vignettes where teachers compared themselves with others were significantly correlated with the RAND items, but the self-referenced vignettes that rated effectiveness or non-effectiveness were not significantly correlated.

Other researchers have used a combination of items from several instruments in an attempt to find more reliable measures. For example, Midgley, Feldlaufer, and Eccles (1989) developed a personal teaching efficacy measure consisting of five items, including the RAND personal efficacy item, one item from the Webb scale, and two items relating to academic futility (Brookover, Schweitzer, Schneider, Beady, Flood & Wisenbaker, 1978). Using this measure Brookover et al., found highly significant differences between elementary and middle school math teachers.

Coladarci and Fink (1995) studied the relationships between the major teacher efficacy measures, and reported a correlation of .64 between the RAND measure, and the Gibson and Dembo (1984) scale. The Gibson-Dembo scale also correlated .47 with the *Teacher Locus of Control Scale* (Rose & Medway, 1981) and .57 with the *Responsibility for Student Achievement Questionnaire* (Guskey, 1981). They concluded that although these correlations indicated that these constructs were related, it was not clear if the elements of teacher efficacy were the same in terms of what they represented and what they measured.

General Teaching Efficacy and Personal Teaching Efficacy

While this early research made a useful educational contribution to teacher efficacy, there still remained a lack of clarity and consensus about the structure of teacher efficacy and its antecedents. Teacher efficacy research consistently found two separate dimensions. Researchers tend to be in agreement that the first dimension, personal teaching efficacy, was related to personal feelings of teaching competence. However, there has been a lack of clarity and agreement about the composition and meaning of the second dimension, general teaching efficacy.

Some researchers (e.g., Riggs & Enochs, 1990) attempted to label the second dimension as outcome expectancy because they reasoned that what teachers, in general, could be expected to accomplish was the outcome an individual teacher could expect from his or her own teaching. Bandura (1989) argued that outcome expectancy was a personal

judgement of the likely consequence of a specific action. Outcome expectancy was based more on the outcome a person expected from his/her own assessment of his/her capabilities and expected level of performance, and not on what would be possible for others to achieve under similar circumstances.

Woolfolk and Hoy (1990) further claimed that items used to measure the second factor of teacher efficacy about the potential impact of teachers in general GTE could not be considered an outcome-expectancy. They believed that in order to capture the means and ends, items would need to specifically refer to the outcomes that teachers would expect given certain actions or means.

Guskey and Passaro (1994) modified the Gibson and Dembo scale in an attempt to clarify the meaning of the two dimensions. They identified all the PTE items as internal orientation 'I can' items, while the GTE items reflected an external 'teachers can't' orientation. Guskey and Passaro (1984) modified both the PTE and GTE items so at there were equal amounts of external and internal orientation. They found that the results conformed to an external-internal dichotomy rather than a general-personal dichotomy. Guskey and Passaro (1994) claimed that the external-internal distinction in their study more "accurately represented teachers' perceptions of the strength of different and independent factors" (p. 639). They saw the internal factors as representing perceptions of personal influence, power, and the impact of teaching and learning situations. External factors related to perceptions of personal influence, power, and the impact of elements that lie outside the classroom and thus, possibly, outside the individual teacher's control.

Bandura's Extended Teacher Efficacy Scale

In order to advance teacher efficacy research, Bandura believed that an efficacy scale needed to provide a "multi-faceted picture of teachers' efficacy beliefs without becoming too narrow or specific" (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998, p.13). Measures of teacher efficacy needed to capture teachers' assessments of their competence across a wide range of activities and tasks to be truly useful and generalisable. In order to do this, Bandura (1997) developed a 30-item instrument based on the notion that teacher efficacy is not always uniform across a range of teacher tasks, or across different subject matters. Bandura's measure comprised seven subscales: efficacy to influence decision-making, efficacy to influence school resources, instructional efficacy, disciplinary efficacy,

efficacy to enlist parental involvement, efficacy to enlist community involvement and efficacy to create a positive school climate.

Bandura recommended that various levels of task demands should be included allowing respondents to indicate the strength of their efficacy beliefs in light of a variety of obstacles or challenges. His aim was to develop a measure that provided a multifaceted profile of teachers' efficacy beliefs without becoming too narrow or specific. However, Bandura (1997) recognised that the greatest challenge had to do with finding the appropriate and optimal level of specificity for the measurement of teacher efficacy. Further, he also claimed that in order to determine the appropriate level of specificity, the effects of context on teacher efficacy should also be examined.

Optimal Levels of Specificity

While researchers and theorists have agreed with Bandura that the teacher efficacy is situation-specific in terms of both the teaching context and subject taught, findings of some specific studies have still failed to show what the optimal level of specificity was for accurately assessing teacher efficacy. According to Pintrich and Schunk (1996), "specificity of domains is one of the biggest issues that needs to be resolved for any cognitive or motivational theory that proposes domain specificity of construct" (p.79). However, attempts to establish whether these specific measures have greater predictive value than more global measures have not yet been clearly determined. Moreover, Tschannen-Moran, et al., (1998, 2001) suggested that finding appropriate measures has been made increasingly difficult because of the confusion around the concept of teacher efficacy. Neither complex nor simple instruments have captured the appropriate balance between specificity and generality. Given that self-efficacy beliefs are situation-specific, and are predicted judgements about successfully performing teacher behaviours employing discrete skills and competencies, teacher efficacy measures need to be task-specific and subject-specific.

Deciding on the optimal level of specificity of efficacy beliefs has been problematic. Bandura (1986) stressed that self-efficacy beliefs should be assessed at a task-specific level. He claimed that omnibus tests often compel respondents to generate judgments about their capabilities without a clear activity or task in mind. On the other hand, Pajares (1996) warned against over-specificity in designing efficacy measures suggesting that

“specificity and precision are often purchased at the expense of external validity and practical relevance” (p.561).

Some researchers (Lent & Hackett, 1987; Multon, Brown, & Lent, 1991) have also identified the need to explore the generality of self-efficacy beliefs in terms of how they relate to, or transfer across, different performance tasks or domains. Bandura (1986) advised researchers attempting to predict and generalise academic outcomes from students' self-efficacy beliefs that, to increase accuracy of prediction, they should follow his proposed theoretical guidelines regarding specificity of self-efficacy assessment. He suggested that reasonably precise judgments of capability matched to specific outcome afford the greatest prediction and offer the best explanations of performance outcomes, for these are typically the sorts of judgements that individuals use when confronted with behavioural tasks.

Therefore, if the purpose of a study is to achieve explanatory and predictive power, self-efficacy judgments should be consistent with and tailored to the domain of functioning and/or task under investigation. Such correspondence between self-efficacy beliefs and task specificity is especially critical in studies that are attempting to establish causal relations between beliefs and outcomes.

According to Pajares (1996, 2000), when these guidelines regarding correspondence between belief and outcome are not followed, there is a loss of predictive power and the influence of self-efficacy as an explanatory variable is minimized. Bandura (1986) also stressed the importance of ensuring that “the skills required to accomplish the performance attainments that form the outcome assessment should be clear to the participant” (cited in Pajares, 1996, p.30). When students do not know accurately what it is they are expected to do, the judgments on which they will base their predicted capability will tend to be questionable. However, it is possible for generality of self-efficacy beliefs to occur if the skills required for accomplishing dissimilar activities are co-developed or acquired simultaneously. Self-efficacy should also generalise in academic domains when commonalities are cognitively structured across activities. In an educational arena the notions of specificity and generality have far-reaching implications for both teachers and students (Pajares, 1996).

Bandura (1986) emphasised the idea that “to be both practically useful and predictive, the level of specificity of an efficacy assessment should depend on the complexity of the performance criteria with which it is compared” (cited in Pajares, 1996, p.3). The results of a study that explored the relationship between specific mathematics self-efficacy beliefs, and their corresponding academic outcomes, indicated that when specific beliefs and criteria task were matched, prediction was enhanced (Pajares, 1996).

Multon et al., (1991) conducted a meta-analysis of self-efficacy studies and found that the effect sizes of self-efficacy on performance outcomes depended on specific characteristics of the types of efficacy and performance measures used. They noted that the strongest effects were obtained from researchers who developed “highly concordant self-efficacy/performance indices and administered them at the same time” (Pajares, 1996, p.3). Lent and Hackett (1987) also observed that specificity and precision are often achieved at the expense of external validity and practical relevance. Based on the investigation of the factor structure of the Gibson and Dembo (1984) *Teacher Efficacy Scale*, Deemer and Minke (1999) concluded that in order to “reveal the true dimensionality of the efficacy construct, future studies should devise measures that are more specific to teaching duties” (p.9). They advocated the development of more specific measures coupled to specific outcomes.

In line with this idea, Bandura (1997) proposed that the construction of self-efficacy measures be guided by a conceptual analysis linking competencies to outcomes within a specific domain. He recommended an intermediate level of self-efficacy generality as a bridge between an atomised list of abilities and global descriptions. Research has indicated that the extent to which teacher efficacy influences student achievement is directly related to the beliefs that individual teachers hold about their ability in a given context. Inefficacious teachers do not necessarily lack the skills or knowledge to perform a certain action, but they may lack the belief in their abilities to implement such skills or knowledge. Furthermore, based on Bandura’s (1986) notion that self-efficacy beliefs are their most potent in specific contexts, and that these beliefs will be greatly influenced by information gained from experience, measuring teacher efficacy beliefs within a specific domain is likely to enhance the contribution of teacher efficacy research.

An Integrated Model of Teacher Efficacy

Tschannen-Moran et al., (1998) proposed a model of teacher efficacy that built on the earlier measures described in this paper. However, they were aware that there was still some refining and testing to be done. They drew particular attention to the way in which teachers analyse the teaching task, and the extent to which this analysis then influences efficacy beliefs. Moreover, they were particularly concerned with identifying the optimal level of specificity required for accurately analysing teacher competence.

In response to the confusion and lack of research agreement surrounding teacher efficacy and in particular, the second dimension of general teaching efficacy, Tschannen-Moran et al., (1998) proposed an integrated model of teacher efficacy where both conceptual strands are incorporated. While the major influences on efficacy beliefs are assumed to be the attributional analysis and interpretation of Bandura's (1986) four sources of efficacy information, Tschannen-Moran et al., emphasised that "teachers do not feel equally efficacious for all teaching situations" (p.227). Teacher efficacy is context specific, and specialist secondary subject teachers are not expected to be consistently efficacious across all subjects and circumstances. Therefore, in making an efficacy judgement, a consideration of the teaching task and its context is required by the teacher. In addition, it is necessary for teachers to assess their strengths and weaknesses in relation to the requirements of the task (p.19).

Further, Tschannen-Moran et al., (1998) advised that the assessment of the teaching task should be weighted to reflect the relative importance of different aspects of the teaching job. For example, assuming that reporting to parents/caregivers comprises about 10% of a teacher's overall classroom responsibilities, then four items on a 40 item-measure would be appropriate for measuring competence in this area. If a teacher was working with students at different year/grade levels, then separate measures may need to be developed for each of these levels, as the tasks may differ significantly at each level. For example, while the New Zealand English curriculum requires English teachers to teach in the written, visual and oral language strands, different competencies are proposed for each curriculum level (levels 1-8) with increasing levels of skill difficulty.

While Bandura's (1986, 1997) four broad sources of efficacy information provided the basis for their model, Tschannen-Moran et al., (1998) argued for a closer examination of

the consequences of self-efficacy in terms of goal level, persistence, risk-taking and other aspects of teacher motivation (p.28). Tschannen-Moran et al., (1998) suggested that a “valid measure of teacher efficacy must encompass both an assessment of personal competence and an analysis of the task in terms of the resources and constraints that exist in particular teaching contexts” (p.28).

Most teacher efficacy measures used in previous research have not included both of these dimensions. For example, in the RAND studies, item one [GTE] tended to assess just the external constraints facing teachers, and item two [PTE] tended to measure teaching strengths but not personal challenges. In the Tschannen-Moran et al. model, two dimensions are related to general teaching efficacy and personal teaching efficacy factors, but they are not identical in their manifestation. When analysing the teaching task and its context, the relative importance of factors that make teaching difficult, should be weighed against an assessment of the resources available to facilitate learning. Therefore, in the integrated model proposed by Tschannen-Moran et al., (1998), perceptions of personal teaching competence are separated from teacher efficacy. In this model, self-perceptions of teaching competence are assessed by questions that focus on perceptions of current functioning as a teacher. These perceptions, then, contribute to a teacher efficacy judgement or a prediction of future capability.

Tschannen-Moran et al., (1998) further recommended that the following questions should be included in future teacher efficacy studies, and might help identify appropriate levels of specificity, correspondence, and success for typical classroom tasks: How specific are teachers' definitions of common classroom tasks? Do experienced and inexperienced teachers hold different conceptions of these tasks? Do these conceptions vary in specificity? What constitutes success?

Tschannen-Moran et al. also suggested that qualitative research could be beneficial in providing some more indepth information to complement quantitative analyses based on the scores from teacher efficacy measures. In addition to the above questions it is important to consider the relationship between teacher efficacy beliefs and teacher knowledge, and that teacher efficacy beliefs about subject content knowledge may not be consistently correlated with pedagogical content knowledge.

Teacher Knowledge

Academic Qualifications, Training, and Professional Development.

Orton (1993) theorised that the nature of teacher knowledge was both tacit and situated. He considered the 'tacit problem' as being the fact that teacher knowledge is primarily a form of knowledge related to *how* to teach, while the 'situated problem' is that teacher knowledge is deeply dependent on particular times, places, and contexts. In the case of specialist secondary teachers, there is a third dimension to the nature of teacher knowledge: subject content knowledge. This knowledge is primarily a form of the knowledge *what*. In examining teacher efficacy beliefs in relation to a subject-specific context one needs to be aware that 'expert' subject knowledge (*what*) may not necessarily equate to a belief that this knowledge can be effectively taught (*tacit*) in a given situation (*situated*).

In a curriculum area such as English, the nature of expert knowledge can be very varied. For example, a secondary English teacher may have an Arts degree majoring in English literature, while another may have majored in Drama, and yet another may have majored in Media Studies. While all three majors can be prerequisites for teaching English, teachers will have more knowledge in certain areas of curriculum than in others. Studies assessing teacher efficacy should consider the relationship between teacher expert/content knowledge usually gained through academic qualifications, and specific teacher efficacy beliefs.

In summarising the relationship between teacher knowledge and teacher efficacy, Fives (2003) suggested there were three categories based on teachers' assessment of knowledge. The first category is the educational level or academic qualification a teacher has. The second category is knowledge that is gained through specialised training or unique experiences. The third category relates to demonstrated knowledge. Studies focusing on education or academic qualifications (e.g., Hoy & Woolfolk, 1993) have demonstrated a relationship between educational level and teacher efficacy. However, Fives (2003) emphasised that the education level a teacher has "does not inform us as to the specific experiences that may have served to build and enhance participating teachers' sense of efficacy" (p.34).

In New Zealand, Baker and McNeight (2000) explored the connection between the previous subject knowledge study and the senior secondary curriculum of a cohort of student teachers of English and Biology. This study found that while all student teachers had tertiary level qualifications, only two entered their teacher education course with formal qualifications closely aligned with the school curriculum.

A few studies that have examined the relationship between professional developments such as specialised training, or unique learning experiences and teacher efficacy, have revealed a relationship between specific types of training and experience that can enhance a teacher's sense of efficacy. For example, Parameswaran (1998) investigated the impact of field experience on educational psychology students' knowledge about problems facing adolescents and efficacy for meeting the adolescents' needs. Findings from this study showed that "positive changes in efficacy can be made in pre-service teachers through specific changes in their educational experiences" (p.37).

Two studies (Schoon & Boone, 1998; Sciutto, Terjesen & Bender Frank, 2000) investigating the link between demonstrated knowledge and teachers' level of content-specific efficacy beliefs, found a strong link between the demonstrated knowledge of teachers and their reported feelings of teacher efficacy. In conclusion, Fives (2003) claimed the "relationship that exists between knowledge and efficacy demonstrated in these studies suggests that higher levels of knowledge are associated with higher levels of efficacy" (p.40). The more practical teaching experience a teacher undertakes, the greater the opportunities are for increasing pedagogical knowledge and performance experiences.

Teacher Experience

Some research has also indicated that a relationship exists between teacher efficacy and teacher experience. Ross (1998) proposed that as teachers gain more experience they develop a relatively stable set of core beliefs about their abilities. Even when teachers are exposed to new methods and ideas through professional development courses or workshops, efficacy beliefs are resistant to long-term changes. When teachers gain new skills, they tend to hold their efficacy beliefs in 'provisional status' attempting to test their newly acquired knowledge and skills before venturing to make predictive competence judgments (Bandura, 1977).

New challenges, however, such as having a new class, teaching a completely new element in the curriculum, or working in a new school environment, can lead to a re-evaluation of efficacy beliefs. Experienced teachers develop a relatively stable sense of their teaching competence that is combined with their analysis of a new task to produce judgements about expected efficacy on that task. When the task is seen as routine and as one that has been handled successfully many times before, there is little analysis of the task. Prospective or inexperienced teachers rely more heavily on their analysis of the task and on vicarious experience (what they believe other teachers could do) to predict their likely success, that is their efficacy in the given task.

Gist and Mitchell (1992) found that teachers are most likely to engage in close self-analysis of their efficacy beliefs when the task is salient to the individual teacher, or when new or different tasks are being attempted. For this reason, some researchers (e.g., Bandura, 1977) believe that efficacy beliefs are most malleable in the early stages of learning when tasks are new, and fixed routines have not become commonplace.

The development of teacher efficacy beliefs among prospective teachers has generated a great deal of research interest because once efficacy beliefs are established they appear to be somewhat resistant to change. Moreover, Bandura (1977) warned that beliefs about the task of teaching and personal teaching competence were likely to remain unchanged unless compelling evidence forced a reassessment. For this reason, Bandura (1977) believed it was vital that teachers developed strong efficacy beliefs early in their careers.

Some research (e.g., Ross, 1994; Stein & Wang, 1988) has found that even though teachers' efficacy beliefs may initially be lowered or remain stable when they attempt to implement new practices, they rebound to a higher level when the new strategies are shown to be effective. Such findings have implications for the ways in which curriculum or assessment changes are implemented in schools. If the efficacy beliefs of teachers are to be increased, then this potential pattern of initial decline, and subsequent boost of efficacy beliefs, needs to be understood and prepared for within the school management system. Changes in fundamental educational structures, such as changes in national assessment practices, need to be introduced in such a way that the process allows for teachers' efficacy beliefs to recover, and increase, after a possible initial period of decline and doubt.

Little evidence exists about how efficacy beliefs change or consolidate across stages of a career. Some studies have found that student teachers consistently display high levels of confidence, although this confidence is higher at some times than at others (Bullough & Stokes, 1994; Kaufman, 1992; Knight & Duke, 1990; Marso & Pigge, 1989; Weinstein, 1988, 1989, 1990). Some studies have found declines in general teaching efficacy after the first year of teaching (e.g., Housego, 1992; Hoy & Woolfolk, 1990) and lower general teaching efficacy for experienced teachers compared to prospective teachers (Pigge & Marso, 1993). Other studies have also found that student teachers are likely to hold unrealistic optimism about teaching, and that teaching practice presents pre-service teachers with a 'reality shock' (Kremer-Hayon & Ben-Peretz, 1986; Veenman, 1984, 1987). When trainee teachers are compared with experienced teachers, trainees are more optimistic, but their efficacy lowers as they gain experience (Broussard, Book, & Byars, 1988).

Campbell (1996) compared the efficacy of pre-service and in-service teachers in Scotland and found a relationship between educational level and teacher efficacy, where higher levels of education were associated with higher levels of efficacy. A study by Hoy and Woolfolk (1993) further found that teachers with more teaching experience and higher levels of education had higher levels of both personal and general teaching efficacy. Dembo and Gibson (1985) established that teachers with a high sense of efficacy believe they can affect student learning (p.173).

Teacher Efficacy and Student Achievement Levels

Virtually all learning experiences, choice-making, and conscious motivation, are affected by the individual's perception of his/her own ability to succeed. In the case of teachers, that notion of success is likely to be linked to student achievement. Teachers tend to assess their performances as they see them reflected in the performance and achievements of their students. Teachers who experience a disruptive teaching environment with low achieving students may suffer decreased commitment to educational goals, feelings of futility, lowered self-efficacy beliefs, and burnout, which, in turn, may transfer to the students in the classroom.

The teacher efficacy construct is considered to be bi-dimensional, consisting of teaching efficacy and personal efficacy. However, both dimensions can operate independently. For example, an English teacher may recognise that clear explanations will aid student understanding of a concept (teaching efficacy) but they may lack the belief in their own ability to perform such an action (personal efficacy). Moreover, teachers who believe students will do well in school have been observed adjusting their behaviour to make it so (Good & Brophy, 1994). Teachers who demonstrate a high sense of efficacy are consistently found to display greater skills of organisation, instruction, questioning, explaining, providing feedback to students having difficulties, and maintaining students on task.

In a New Zealand study, Hattie (2001) found that the teacher interventions that exerted the most influence on students' English outcomes were all related to commonly recognised sources of efficacy information and efficacious behaviour. For example, self-regulation and motivation programmes, mastery learning, prior achievement, and high expectations, were all reported to be influential contributors. Some research has also demonstrated that teachers with high expectations about their ability to teach produce higher student achievement in core subjects (Anderson et al., 1988; Ashton & Webb, 1986; Cancro, 1992; Moore & Esselman, 1992; Ross & Cousins, 1993; Watson, 1991).

In examining the effects of teacher efficacy on computer skills and computer cognitions of Canadian students, Ross, Hogaboam-Gray and Hannay (2001) reported that teacher efficacy had a significant affect on student outcomes. According to Ross, Hogaboam-Gray and Hannay (2001), three strategies for linking teacher efficacy to student outcomes were investigated in the research on the connection between teacher efficacy and student outcomes. The first strategy type, which included most studies, was correlational, measuring criterion and predictor variables at a single time. The second strategy was where researchers increased teacher efficacy scores and examined the effects on student performance. For example, Ross (1994) investigated the impact of in-service training in teacher efficacy for using co-operative learning techniques. The study found that teacher and student outcomes significantly improved in classrooms that implemented the in-service themes. However, changes in teacher efficacy and student behaviour were not significantly correlated.

The third strategy measured student outcomes before and after a change in a teacher. Midgley et al., (1989) used this approach in tracking a large sample of students from grade six with highly efficacious teachers to grade seven with lower efficacious teachers. When these students moved to grade seven their self-efficacy dropped dramatically, and the effects were even more pronounced for low achieving students.

While teacher efficacy research has established that teacher efficacy and student achievement are related (e.g., Armor et al., 1977), little research has been undertaken to examine whether teacher efficacy increases or decreases in relation to student achievement levels. Studies have not examined if teacher efficacy increases when teachers are working with higher achieving students, or decreases when teachers are working with students at lower achievement levels.

Conclusion

In line with the model proposed by Tschannen-Moran et al., (1998), this study aims to employ an integrated approach where both assessment of personal competence and analysis of a specific task are measured for teachers. Thus, in this integrated approach both self-perceptions of teaching competence and beliefs about the task requirements in a subject-specific situation are believed to contribute to efficacy beliefs, and to the consequences that stem from those efficacy beliefs.

This study aims to answer some of the unresolved teacher efficacy issues within the subject-specific area of English. In doing so, this study explores the congruency and specificity of those subject-specific teacher efficacy beliefs for both pre-service and in-service teachers when teaching across a range of language and curriculum related competencies. By considering the competencies and deficits teachers bring to specific tasks, a more comprehensive understanding of teachers' self-perceptions can be developed. Further, the study aims to examine links between teacher knowledge, teacher experience, teacher education, and student achievement levels. Cognisant of the historical development and current status of teacher efficacy research, the present study was undertaken to extend our understandings of teacher efficacy.

CHAPTER 3

Research Questions and Hypotheses

Four key concepts and related underpinning research questions have emerged about teacher efficacy, and provide the focus for this present study. These four questions give rise to the four central hypotheses about secondary English teacher efficacy beliefs that motivate this present study. Each research question is presented and a related hypothesis proposed. Then a rationale that establishes the link with the wider research context for each hypothesis is presented. The four hypotheses shape the research design and methodology, and provide the platform for discussion of the findings and the final conclusion.

The Research Focus

The relationship between effective teaching and increased student achievement has been well established in previous studies. Similarly, a positive connection between teacher efficacy and student confidence/outcomes has also been confirmed in the research literature. However, previous studies have not resolved the lack of clarity about the two dimensions of personal teacher efficacy and general teacher efficacy. Nor have previous studies resolved the optimal level of specificity for accurately assessing teacher efficacy beliefs. For the present study it was considered that personal teacher efficacy related more to subject-specific and task-specific beliefs, and general teacher efficacy related more to beliefs about generic teaching competencies. Further, in line with Bandura's guidelines for specificity for assessing teacher efficacy, this study adapted a subject-specific measure that assessed teacher efficacy beliefs within the domain of English with the aim of investigating the *congruency* of English-specific teacher efficacy beliefs across a range of English strands and related competencies. The present study also focused on investigating other factors associated with teacher efficacy.

Congruency and Specificity

Research Question 1

Do teacher efficacy beliefs differ (*congruency*) across a range of teaching tasks and competencies within a specific (*specificity*) subject domain?

Hypothesis 1

1.1

The efficacy beliefs of secondary English teachers differ across a range of subject-specific language strands and competencies.

1.2

Secondary English teachers display more positive self-efficacy beliefs for traditional English strands and competencies than for non-traditional English strands and competencies.

Rationale

Teacher efficacy has been conceptualised as a teacher's belief in his or her capability to successfully accomplish a specific teaching task in a particular context. Bandura (1977) argued that self-efficacy beliefs should be assessed in terms of specific judgements of capability across realms of activity, task demands within a given activity domain, and under different situational circumstances. Bandura (1997) presented guidelines for measuring efficacy beliefs and, in doing so, emphasised the need for task specificity and transparency in measures of efficacy beliefs.

Previous studies of teacher efficacy have tended to measure beliefs with omnibus scales that focus on general notions of efficacy. However, Bandura (1997) pointed out that a teacher's efficacy is not necessarily uniform across the range of tasks specialist subject teachers are asked to perform. Very few studies have reported the attempt to measure

teachers' efficacy levels across a subject area reflecting the task-specific demands of a national curriculum.

In the subject area of English, the curriculum has expanded over the last decade to include a wider range of language experiences and understandings in oral, written and visual forms. English teachers are required to demonstrate expertise in all these fields in terms of both content and pedagogy. A large number of English teachers may feel less confident in some areas of the curriculum than in others. Such areas are likely to be those that have more recently been included into the curriculum, such as visual language functions and processes.

Some experienced teachers may have completed their training prior to recent curriculum changes and may feel less prepared in these newer areas than less experienced teachers who have been trained with the more contemporary curriculum. Other experienced teachers may have more stable efficacy beliefs and suffer no decrease in teacher efficacy in response to new curriculum changes and innovations. The research evidence is not clear on the relationship between teacher efficacy and curriculum change and innovation.

Even though some researchers (e.g., Pajares, 1996) claim that highly efficacious teachers will be motivated to meet new challenges and implement innovative strategies, some teachers may experience difficulty in maintaining confidence in a subject area if they lack specialist content knowledge. Changes to New Zealand's secondary school national assessments and qualifications (e.g., National Certificate in Educational Achievement) over recent years (2001-2003) may have challenged the efficacy beliefs of many secondary teachers, including English teachers. Secondary English teachers are currently required to employ new national standards-based assessment tasks and assessment schedules.

The research findings of Ross (1994) and Stein and Wang (1988) found that efficacy beliefs may be lowered when teachers are compelled to introduce new practices, but rebound when those practices are proven to be effective. Given that the National Certificate in Educational Achievement [NCEA] is still in its infancy in New Zealand and the potential effectiveness of this assessment model has not yet been fully realised,

secondary English teachers may experience lowered efficacy beliefs in relation to assessment task design and related assessment practices.

Associated Factors

Research Question 2

Is there a relationship between *teacher academic qualifications, teacher experience, teacher professional development*, and teacher efficacy beliefs?

Hypothesis 2

2.1

English teachers display greater positive teacher efficacy for teaching the English language strands that correspond with their major *academic qualifications* gained for teaching English.

Rationale

According to Fives (2003), the educational level or academic qualification a teacher has provides the foundational level for teachers' assessments of their subject teaching knowledge. Studying for a university qualification in literature is likely to engage a person in learning and employing a range of critical literary text analysis skills and strategies that commonly form a major part of core English skills. Thus, a teacher entering the English teaching profession with a literature-based qualification should have good foundational competencies on which to draw initial subject-content efficacy judgements.

Similarly, an English teacher with an academic background in media or film studies may feel more confident about teaching in the visual strand, and less confident in the written strand. Specialist subject teachers are also likely to form efficacy beliefs based on performance experiences while engaged in academic study and gaining qualifications. Teachers who have university degrees in literature, should feel more confident about

teaching both the content and the language skills that formed key components of the literature qualification.

2.2

English teachers with more *teaching experience* display greater positive teacher efficacy than those teachers with lesser teaching experience.

Rationale

According to Bandura (1986), self-efficacy beliefs develop in response to four main sources of information. The most powerful influence on self-efficacy is enactive experience in which self-efficacy for a particular behaviour is increased by successfully performing that behaviour. An underlying assumption would therefore be that more experienced teachers will be exposed to more opportunities to have successful mastery experiences. The amount of enactive experience a teacher has is likely to be associated with the development of positive teacher efficacy.

2.3

English teachers who have undertaken more *professional development* display greater positive teacher efficacy than those teachers who have undertaken less professional development

Rationale

According to Bandura (1986), the second most powerful efficacy influence is vicarious experience in which other similar people are seen to perform a particular behaviour successfully. Professional development courses or workshops for secondary teachers frequently involve a dimension of modelled practice where practising teachers learn new strategies or skills from other more practised teachers or experts. Fives (2003) claimed that in addition to the foundational knowledge gained through academic qualifications, teachers assess their knowledge at a second level through specialised training or unique

experiences. Therefore, teacher professional development is likely to be associated with teacher efficacy.

Pre-service English Teachers and Practising English Teachers

Research Question 3

Do pre-service English teachers at the commencement of their teacher training with little or no teaching experience demonstrate the same level of self-efficacy beliefs as practising English teachers?

Hypothesis 3

Practising English teachers demonstrate more positive teacher efficacy beliefs than pre-service English teachers across a range of subject-specific language strands and competencies.

Rationale

There is very little comparative research evidence about the teacher efficacy beliefs of pre-service teachers and practising teachers. However, some researchers have found that teachers with more teaching experience and higher levels of education have higher levels of both personal and general teaching efficacy (e.g., Hoy and Woolfolk, 1993). Ross (1998) argued that with experience, teachers develop a relatively stable set of efficacy beliefs about their teaching competence. New challenges such as curriculum expansions or changes can elicit a re-evaluation of efficacy. For experienced practising teachers, when the task is seen as routine or similar to one that has been handled successfully in the past, there is little analysis of the task. The efficacy judgement is made on how well the task has been handled in the past. Pre-service teachers are likely to rely more heavily on their analysis of the task and on vicarious experience to gauge their own likely success in the given situation.

Teacher Efficacy and Student Achievement Levels

Research Question 4

Is there a relationship between English teachers' efficacy beliefs and English students' achievement levels?

Hypothesis 4

English teachers display greater positive efficacy for teaching students who are working at higher achievement levels than they display for teaching students who are working at lower achievement levels.

Rationale

A link between teacher efficacy and student achievement has been found in previous teacher efficacy research (Armor et al., 1976; Berman et al., 1989). However, the link between teacher efficacy and student achievement levels in a subject-specific domain has not been examined. The New Zealand English curriculum describes increasing levels of difficulty and the national assessments (National Certificate of Educational Achievement) are derived from the corresponding achievement objectives for curriculum levels six, seven and eight. The achievement objectives of the English curriculum are "cumulative, and express learning as progressively more complex language behaviours and skills" (Ministry of Education, 1994, p.19). This hierarchical model encourages English learning that moves from elementary competencies towards more sophisticated competencies.

Thus, students entered for the National Certificate of Educational Achievement [NCEA] are more likely to be motivated to produce successful academic outcomes than students who are not working towards a national qualification. Teachers working with students at higher achievement levels are more likely to produce successful student outcomes that, in turn, provide positive teacher feedback and positive teacher performance experiences. Thus, the cyclical nature of success reinforcing success proposed by Bandura (1986) is maintained.

CHAPTER 4

Scale Development and Pilot Study

This chapter describes the development of the English Teacher Efficacy Questionnaire [ETEQ]. The theoretical background and rationale for the ETEQ design are presented, along with item selection and development procedures. A pilot study that uses the ETEQ is then described. Results from the pilot factor analysis performed on data gathered from the pilot sample are then reported. The resultant four-factor subscales define the ETEQ for the main study. Finally, qualitative data from the pilot study are summarised.

Design

The English Teacher Efficacy Questionnaire

Rationale

A teacher efficacy scale was developed to assess efficacy beliefs across a range of English curriculum-related teaching activities. The ETEQ was designed to elicit responses about English teachers' confidence in their ability to deliver a range of subject-specific competencies.

Item Selection

Items on the ETEQ were developed to match the achievement objectives and common terminology of the New Zealand national English curriculum. The teacher efficacy scale developed by Gibson and Dembo (1984) has provided the basis for much of the research on teacher efficacy. Woolfolk and Hoy (1990) used a condensed form of only 22 Personal Teaching Efficacy [PTE] and General Teaching Efficacy [GTE] items and, later in 1993, used an even shorter scale containing only 10 items: five items assessed GTE and five items assessed PTE.

For the purpose of assessing English teachers' efficacy beliefs in the present study, a scale was created drawing on the Gibson and Dembo (1984) and the Tschannen-Moran et al., (1998) scale but emphasising subject/task-specificity more than general teaching efficacy.

Equal numbers of items were included in the ETEQ from the three language strands (oral, written and visual) of the national English Curriculum. Items were based on the general aims and achievement objectives for each of the language sub-strands, and employed task-specific curriculum language with which teachers of English would be familiar.

In line with Bandura's (1977) belief that teacher efficacy scales should assess teachers' judgements of their capabilities to teach across a wide range of activities and tasks, a questionnaire was designed that assessed language-related tasks, skills and strategies described in *English in the New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education, 1994). The curriculum document stated that students should be able to "engage with and enjoy language in all its varieties and understand, respond to, and use oral, written, and visual language effectively in a range of contexts" (p.9). To achieve these aims it is stated that students will:

- Develop control over the processes associated with using and responding to English language purposefully and effectively through reading, writing, speaking, listening, viewing, and presenting;
- Develop an understanding of the grammar and conventions of English;
- Develop an understanding of how language varies according to the user, audience, and purposes;
- Respond personally to and think critically about a range of texts, including literary texts;
- Use language skills to identify information needs, and find, use, and communicate information;
- Understand and appreciate the heritages of New Zealand through experiencing a broad range of texts written in English.

(p.9)

The ETEQ was developed comprising a range of task-specific statements based on the achievement objectives for level four (14-15 year olds) for each of the six language sub-strands (reading, writing, speaking, listening, viewing, presenting). The English curriculum is structured in broad bands and levels four to eight are indicated for students at secondary school. All secondary English teachers would be teaching students that were functioning at level four or above. While the achievement objectives do not prescribe tasks, they do indicate what competencies students should be able to perform at given curriculum levels.

The items for the ETEQ were formulated from these indicated competencies. For example, the achievement objective for *interpersonal listening* at level four states that students should listen to and interact with others to clarify understanding of texts and ideas in group or class discussions. The ETEQ item for this element was *I can confidently provide structured opportunities for students to listen and interact effectively with others in discussion groups*. Teachers responding to the ETEQ item would then make a personal judgement about their capability to effectively perform this specific English teaching competency.

Six items derived from the Gibson and Dembo scale (1984) that assessed the two recognised dimensions of teaching efficacy, personal teaching efficacy [PTE] and general teaching efficacy [GTE] were also included. Six items from the Riggs and Enochs (1990) scale *Science Teaching Efficacy Belief Instrument* were included and modified to match English.

In line with Bandura's (1977) notion of the links between efficacy and outcome, items were all worded to ensure that they contained elements of both efficacy expectancy and outcome expectancy. For example, adding the word *effectively* to an item such as: *I am confident that I can effectively teach film as literary text*, implies that both the teaching and the associated student learning are linked to the efficacy belief. The following analysis of an ETEQ item demonstrates how the statements were structured to ensure that the elements of self-efficacy beliefs as outlined by Bandura (1997) were present. The item is presented in parts to show how each element is represented. All items on the ETEQ were worded according to this formula:

Item Example: *I am confident that I can effectively teach students to understand and apply the codes and conventions of stage drama.*

I am confident that I can (future-oriented efficacy expectation)

effectively teach students (outcome expectation)

codes and conventions of stage drama (context-specific)

to understand and apply (task-specific)

I am confident that I can effectively teach (assessment of competence to perform a certain task).

To understand and apply codes and conventions of stage drama
(expert subject knowledge)

The ETEQ was constructed in line with the integration model proposed by Tschannen-Moran et al., (1998) and outlined in Chapter Two. Respondents were asked to make predicted judgements about their capability (self-efficacy) to perform these tasks based on a four-point (forced-choice) Likert scale, that ranged from *totally agree* to *totally disagree*. Garland's (1991) study of the desirability of the mid-point in Likert scales found that social desirability bias where the respondents' desires to please the interviewer by giving what they perceive to be a socially unacceptable answer, can be minimised by eliminating the mid-point from Likert scales.

Accordingly, the ETEQ was constructed with a 4-point scale that forced respondents to make a choice rather than remain neutral on any item. Positively and negatively oriented items were randomly distributed throughout the ETEQ to minimise chances of a response set.

Pilot Study

Sample

The pilot sample consisted of 46 pre-service English teachers. All 46 students in this sample had English in some form as their major area of qualification and all had selected English as their major teaching subject. In terms of the sample profile, of the 46 students, 39 were female and seven were male. Thirty-one students were aged between 20 and 35 years, and 15 students were aged over 35 years.

All student teachers were training as specialist English teachers at a New Zealand university college of education, and had university qualifications in English. The ETEQ required the participants to specify the focus domain of their major qualification for teaching English. A qualification in literature (including New Zealand literature) was specified as the predominant (82.6%) academic qualification for the total sample.

Table 1

Distribution of Qualification Focus for Pilot Sample

Qualification Focus	Frequency	Percent
Literature	37	80.4
Linguistics	2	4.3
Media	5	10.9
N.Z. Literature	1	2.2
Other	1	2.2

N = 46

Establishing the English Teacher Efficacy Questionnaire Scale

Item response data were treated by means of a principal components analysis. An examination of eigenvalues indicated that although there were a number of factors with eigenvalues greater than 1, four factors were more predominant than others with eigenvalues greater than 2 (13.98, 2.95, 2.38, 2.20). A number of varimax rotations were performed. In line with the scree plot of eigenvalues a four-factor solution seemed to be the most meaningful and interpretable solution, and accounted for 54.4% of the total variance. All items with a factor loading of less than .4, or that loaded on more than one

item, were removed from the scale. This procedure resulted in the removal of 13 items from the total scale, leaving a remaining 36 items.

Factor Composition and Psychometric Properties

Estimates of internal consistency for the full scale, and four subscales were obtained by Cronbach's alpha. The total (36 items) ETEQ scale showed an internal reliability alpha coefficient of .90, indicating that the homogeneity of items was retained. An examination of the items in each of the four factors revealed that while each factor contained a range of discrete task-specific items, there were clear patterns and common elements within each of the separate factor compositions.

Factor One contained 13 items related to general English teaching confidence in teaching core English (reading and writing) skills and strategies. Factor One was labelled *Confidence in Knowledge and Teaching* [CKT] and had an internal reliability alpha coefficient of .86. Items and factor loadings for *Confidence in Knowledge and Teaching* [CKT] are shown in Table 2.

Table 2
Items and Factor Loadings for Confidence in Knowledge and Teaching [CKT]

Item	Factor Loading
I am confident that I can motivate reluctant learners to enjoy English	.46
Sometimes I don't know how to turn students on to English	.58
I feel confident that I can recognise explicit and implicit messages in oral texts and can easily teach my students to do likewise	.53
I feel that I can teach students effective strategies for producing quality creative/poetic writing	.57
I am confident about teaching strategies for developing effective comprehension/close reading skills with unseen texts	.57
I am confident that I can appropriately motivate students to capture their personal experiences, ideas and feelings in expressive writing	.65
I am confident in my ability to teach students accurate proofreading skills	.68
I am a confident speller and can teach students effective spelling strategies	.56
I feel confident about providing positive learning opportunities for a range of ability levels in an English class	.59
I have a sound knowledge of reading skills and strategies and can teach students to read aloud effectively	.63
I have a good understanding of poetic and language devices and can teach students to use these confidently in their own writing	.63
I am confident that I can motivate students to read independently	.45
I am not confident in my ability to teach appropriate strategies for improving comprehension skills	.56

Factor two contained eight items that specifically related to confidence in teaching response to text (especially literary texts), and the teaching of writing styles for specific purposes. This factor was labelled *Confidence in Teaching Literary Response* [CTLR]. The English Teacher Efficacy Questionnaire [CTLR] subscale showed an internal reliability alpha coefficient of .84. The items and factor loadings for *Confidence in Teaching Literary Response* [CTLR] are shown in Table 3.

Table 3

Items and Factor Loadings for Confidence in Teaching Literary Response [CTLR]

Item	Factor Loading
I am confident that I can teach students strategies for writing effectively in appropriate styles for specific authentic contexts	.50
I can teach students the appropriate steps for presenting a logical argument in written form with clearly linked main and supporting ideas	.74
I can write confidently and effectively in a range of situations and could teach students to do this also	.70
I am confident that I can teach students to identify, understand and respond to literary elements such as characterisation and setting.	.76
I believe I can provide effective learning opportunities for students to respond to and interpret meanings, ideas, and effects in films	.69
I have a sound understanding of cinematic codes and conventions and can teach these effectively when viewing film in my classes	.45
I believe I have a sound understanding of the concept of 'literary style' and can teach my students to write effective literary essays	.72
I believe I can teach students to respond effectively to a variety of literary genres	.47

Factor three contained seven items that related to confidence in teaching skills and strategies for effective viewing and presenting. This factor included a range of activities such as group discussions, stage drama and the use of educational technologies in the production of language outcomes. This factor was labelled *Confidence in Teaching Viewing and Presenting* [CTVP], and had an internal reliability alpha coefficient of .81.

The items and factor loadings for *Confidence in Teaching Viewing and Presenting* [CTVP] are shown in Table 4.

Table 4

Items and Factor Loadings for Confidence in Teaching Viewing and Presenting [CTVP]

Item	Factor Loading
I can confidently provide structured opportunities for students to listen and interact effectively with others in discussion groups	.57
I am confident that I can effectively teach students to understand and apply the codes and conventions of stage drama	.67
I do not feel confident about using drama games/starters effectively in my English programme	.68
I am conversant with a range of educational technologies and can show students how to use them effectively in their own static and moving image production	.55
I am confident about initiating and facilitating a range of effective drama ideas with students	.81
I am confident in my ability to teach students strategies for effectively 'reading' and responding to visual texts	.43
It is easy for me to design interesting and appropriate performance tasks based on a text such as a dramatic monologue	.60

Factor four contained eight items, four of which related to teacher confidence in selecting appropriate teaching tasks and designing and using appropriate assessment tasks and assessment judgements. The other four items related to confidence in very discrete language competencies requiring expert knowledge. This factor was labelled *Confidence in Selection, Assessment and Expertise* [CSAE] and had an internal reliability alpha coefficient of .77. The items and factor loadings for *Confidence in Selection, Assessment and Expertise* [CSAE] are shown in Table 5.

Table 5

Items and Factor Loadings for Confidence in Selection, Assessment and Expertise [CSAE]

Item	Factor Loading
I am not confident about teaching students effective strategies for writing coherent, logical instructions or explanations	.71
I am not very confident in my ability to accurately assess students oral presentations e.g. speeches	.68
I believe I have a good understanding of the principles of assessment and can design clear and appropriate assessment schedules for all the tasks I initiate in my English programme	.68
I am not confident in my ability to accurately assess transactional writing	.79
I am confident about using information retrieval mechanisms such as the internet or library databases in my English teaching	.45
I am confident in my ability to provide a range of structured opportunities for my students to effectively communicate to others	.47
I am not confident in my ability to select appropriate teaching tasks for visual language	.57
I am confident about teaching students how to use correct grammatical constructions for effective writing	.42

The four factors were defined as subscales of the ETEQ. The four teacher efficacy subscales were retained for the main study, which is described in the following chapter. Means and standard deviations for the four teacher efficacy subscales are presented in Table 6.

Table 6

Means and Standard Deviations for the Four Teacher Efficacy Subscales

Subscale ¹	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>
CKT	3.12	.46
CTLR	3.29	.54
CTVP	2.85	.59
CSAE	3.18	.54

¹ CKT Confidence in Knowledge and Teaching
 CTLR Confidence in Teaching Literary Response
 CTVP Confidence in Teaching Viewing and Presenting
 CSAE Confidence in Selection, Assessment and Expertise

Correlations

Interscale correlations were calculated to assess the independence of the ETEQ subscales, along with their common contribution to the full ETEQ scale. Table 7 shows the subscale intercorrelations and the relationships between the subscales and the Full scale. All Full scale and subscale correlations were statistically significant at the .01 level. The relatively lower interscale correlations indicated that each subscale was relatively independent, whereas the relatively higher correlations with the Full Scale suggested that each subscale appeared to be tapping a common domain of English teacher efficacy. Interscale correlations ranged from .33 (CTVP with CSAE) to .63 (CKT with CTLR). Subscale with full scale correlations were all high, ranging from .66 (CSAE with Full scale) to .86 (CKT with Full scale).

Table 7

Full Scale and Subscale Intercorrelations for the English Teacher Efficacy Questionnaire

Subscale ¹	CKT	CTLR	CTVP	CSAE
CTLR	.63 **	-	-	-
CTVP	.57**	.57**	-	-
CSAE	.40**	.52**	.33**	-
Full Scale	.86**	.85**	.77**	.66 **

¹ CKT Confidence in Knowledge and Teaching
 CTLR Confidence in Teaching Literary Response
 CTVP Confidence in Teaching Viewing and Presenting
 CSAE Confidence in Selection, Assessment and Expertise

Summary of the Factor Structure and Composition

The underlying factor structure of the ETEQ was reasonably consistent with major elements of the English curriculum. The factor structure and composition were also meaningful and interpretable in terms of current contextual challenges facing English teachers that could be associated with English teacher efficacy beliefs. *Confidence in Knowledge and Teaching* [CKT] comprised items relating to the teaching of traditional secondary English literacy skills (reading and writing), and three of the General Teaching Efficacy [GTE] items relating to teachers' capabilities for motivating and engaging students in active learning. The items that loaded on *Confidence in Knowledge and Teaching* related to generic English teaching tasks and competencies that have traditionally been the core business of English teaching.

Confidence in Teaching Literary Response [CTLR] contained items related to teaching literary appreciation and response. Literary text analysis and response are elements that have traditionally been core components of English, particularly at a secondary school level.

Confidence in Teaching Viewing and Presenting [CTVP] comprised items relating to viewing and presenting. These dimensions of English teaching require teachers to have pedagogical and practical knowledge of contemporary educational technologies. English teachers also need to have the personal and professional confidence to explore areas such as drama and visual language. It is likely that many English teachers may experience lowered efficacy beliefs in these more non-traditional areas because they lack the mastery experiences, peer modelling, and other vicarious experiences, that have built efficacy beliefs in the more traditional literary dimensions.

Confidence in Selection, Assessment and Expertise [CSAE] comprised items related to expert competencies such as task selection, task design and assessment. The recent major shift in assessment practice in New Zealand and the compulsion for English teachers to select appropriate assessment tasks for National Certificate of Educational Achievement [NCEA] internal assessment is a likely explanation for the grouping of *Confidence in Selection, Assessment and Expertise* [CSAE] items.

Qualitative Data

In the final section of the ETEQ, respondents were invited to comment on their predicted self-efficacy beliefs and general self-confidence as a future English teacher. Of the 46 participants in the sample, 29 offered written comments. Most of these comments were related to teacher concerns about *Confidence in Knowledge and Teaching* items, or *Confidence in Teaching Viewing and Presenting* items. These comments are summarised as follows in relation to those two factors.

Confidence in Knowledge and Teaching

Three respondents commented on their personal poor spelling and proof reading skills. One student commented: *"I know my spelling is not always up to standard. I did very little grammar at school or in my university degree. My proof reading isn't always the best either"*.

Some general teaching efficacy beliefs were also reported in the students' comments. For example, one student revealed a positive level of general efficacy by stating: *"I have weaknesses in newspaper and video. I will have to teach myself"*. In this comment, the weaknesses or knowledge gaps were self-identified and the solution was also immediately identified and attainable.

Another student commented: *"I am aware that my confidences could change in the future"*. Such a comment acknowledges that with experience in teaching (mastery), predicted judgements about self-capabilities to perform a certain task will alter. This outlook indicates positive self-efficacy in as much that this teacher sees himself/herself capable of growth and not determined by lack of knowledge or other environmental factors.

This positive self-efficacy was further evident in the following comment: *"I am confident that I can access the information I need to be an effective teacher. I am confident in the ability and consideration of experienced English teachers who will help me in the first year with resources and advice"*.

One student also suggested that her/his self-efficacy beliefs could even be a little idealistic: *“As a student teacher, I am a little bit idealistic about my capabilities”*.

One student offered a very reflective response that indicated an understanding that self-efficacy beliefs were not dependent on having the requisite content knowledge or skills: *“I would like to go into teaching with heaps of confidence, knowing that I would teach skills effectively. At the stage I am at now, I am not sure that I have the confidence in my skills and knowledge. But I have the assurance in myself that I will work hard at gaining the knowledge and skills I feel I need but know I lack”*.

Confidence in Teaching Viewing and Presenting

Twelve of the 29 comments expressed concern about competence in teaching visual language and film. Some comments were:

“ My weakness is in visual language as my experience is limited”.

“ I feel visual language and using technology are my weak areas”.

“ I feel I have strengths and weaknesses so I am a bit worried I won't put equal focus on all aspects of the curriculum”.

“I am greatly lacking in confidence in the area of visual language”.

“I lack background in film and visual language”.

“I am not very confident in literature or grammar or poetry. I am ok with journalism and visual texts etc”.

“I am unsure about technology aspects of teaching English. I lack knowledge and experience in drama, theatre and video production”.

“Drama is an area I have limited experience with”.

“I am lacking confidence in speeches, debating and drama”.

“I lack confidence in educational technologies e.g. video making”.

These qualitative data provided insights into participants' efficacy beliefs and complemented the quantitative data. The comments section allowed participants the opportunity to offer additional comments about aspects of their teaching confidence. Patterns of response could be identified and linked to the quantitative findings. On this basis, it was decided to retain this section of the ETEQ for the main study.

CHAPTER 5

English Teacher Efficacy

The efficacy beliefs of New Zealand practising secondary English teachers drawn from a wide range of New Zealand schools, and pre-service secondary English teacher trainees drawn from a New Zealand University College of Education, were examined. Teacher efficacy data were obtained using the 36-item English Teacher Efficacy Questionnaire [ETEQ] developed in the Pilot Study.

Sample Selection

Practising English Teachers

The ETEQ was distributed to a range of practising secondary English teachers in three ways. First, the ETEQ was made available during National Certificate of Educational Attainment [NCEA] Professional Development training days, organised by the Ministry of Education. Teachers were invited to complete the questionnaires on a voluntary basis. Second, questionnaires were sent to schools where Heads of English Departments had indicated an interest in the research, either through personal contact, or as a result of a workshop presentation by the researcher. Third, an outline of the research idea was posted in the Discussion Forum of the *English Online New Zealand* website (<http://englishunitecnology.ac.nz>), with an invitation for teachers to participate in completing the ETEQ by either downloading it from the website, or by requesting hard copies from the researcher. A large number of the practising teachers offered positive support for the research idea, and expressed a need for the research.

Pre-service English Teachers

Pre-service English teacher trainees enrolled in a one-year training programme at a New Zealand university college of education were invited to participate in this study on a voluntary basis. All available students agreed to participate. Anonymity was assured throughout the process for all participants.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval for this present study was granted by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee June 6, 2003 (Reference COE 03/023). The accompanying documentation fully outlined the nature of the study, and made it clear that participation was voluntary and anonymity was assured. Letters outlining the research and inviting teachers to participate were sent to schools. Written consent signalling willingness to participate and acknowledging transparency, and understanding of the intentions of the present study, was gained from every participant.

Sample Characteristics

The total sample consisted of 126 in-service and pre-service English teachers. Seventy-nine participants were practising secondary English teachers drawn from 30 secondary schools from throughout New Zealand, and 47 were pre-service English teachers with limited teaching experience. The spread of the practising teacher participants from across a large number of schools helped to ensure a representative sample in terms of geographical regions, school type (co-educational, single sex, special character), socio-economic background [SES] of students and ethnic diversity. There were 41 males and 85 females in the total sample.

Table 8

Gender Distribution of the Sample

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	41	32.5
Female	85	67.5

N = 126

There was a wide spread of age with participants ranging in age from 20 years to over 45 years. The three main age groups (20-30 years, 30-40 years, 40-over 45 years) were very evenly distributed. Frequencies are shown for both the pre-service teachers and the practising teachers. The age distribution for the total sample is also shown.

Table 9

Age Distribution of Pre-service Teachers, Practising Teachers and Total Sample

Age (yrs)	Pre-service Teachers Frequency	Pre-service Teachers Percent	Practising Teachers Frequency	Practising Teachers Percent	Total Frequency	Sample Percent
20-30	24	60.0	16	20.0	44	35.0
30-40	7	15.0	33	42.0	40	32.0
40-45+	16	25.0	30	38.0	42	33.0

N = 126

Participants were asked to state the focus for their major academic qualification for teaching English. Because Literature was identified by a large proportion of the total sample participants as the their main academic qualification focus, qualifications were divided into two groupings only (*Literature* and *Other*). *Other* included Media Studies, Linguistics, Drama, Film. Table 10 shows the academic qualification distribution for pre-service teachers, practising teachers and for the total sample.

Table 10

Qualification Distribution of Pre-service Teachers, Practising Teachers and Total Sample

Qualification	Pre-service Teachers Frequency	Pre-service Teachers Percent	Practising Teachers Frequency	Practising Teachers Percent	Total Frequency	Sample Percent
Literature	39	83.0	76	95.0	115	91.0
Other	8	17.0	3	5.0	11	9.0

N = 126

Participants were asked about the level of professional development in teaching English and delivering the English Curriculum they had received either during or since their pre-service teacher training. In New Zealand, secondary teachers commonly understand professional development to include in-service training and related courses that focus on both subject and pedagogical theories and practices. Colleges of education or universities provide most of these professional development programmes or in-service teacher courses. Alternatively, some courses might be delivered internally within a school, by other schools, or by individual educational or professional providers.

The ETEQ provided for a range of four responses to the question about number of in-service courses attended, from *extensive* to *nil*. Participants understood that *extensive* referred to attending at least four or more in-service courses or professional training courses or workshops during any one year of teaching. *Considerable* referred to at least three professional development opportunities in any one teaching year. *Some* referred to at least two professional development opportunities. *A little* referred to only one or none professional development opportunities undertaken during any one year of teaching. The following table shows the distribution of *professional development* levels across the total sample.

Table 11
Professional Development Distribution for the Sample

Level of Professional Development	Frequency	Percent
A little	58	46.0
Some	28	22.2
Considerable	26	20.6
Extensive	14	11.1

N = 126

According to these professional development frequencies, 68% of the total sample considered that they had only received *some* or *a little* professional development or on the job training. The remaining 32% percent of the total sample indicated that they had received *extensive* or *considerable* professional development for teaching. The pre-service teachers in the sample accounted for most of the 47 participants of the 58 participants in grouping four (*a little*).

Participants were asked to specify the number of years they had been teaching English. They could respond across three options. The spread of years provided a range of four options from zero to five years teaching English to over 20 years teaching English. The following table shows the *teaching experience* distribution for the total sample

Table 12

Teaching Experience Distribution for the Sample

Years of Teaching Experience	Frequency	Percent
0 - 5 yrs	44	35.0
5 -10 yrs	26	21.0
10 - 20 yrs	26	21.0
20 + yrs	30	23.0

N =126

Note: Three of the 47 teachers in the pre-service sample all had some prior experience as practising teachers.

Results

Hypothesis 1

Hypothesis 1.1 and Hypothesis 1.2.

Hypothesis 1.1 proposed that the efficacy beliefs of secondary English teachers differ across a range of subject-specific language strands and competencies and Hypothesis 1.2 proposed that secondary English teachers display more positive self-efficacy beliefs for traditional English strands and competencies than for non-traditional English strands and competencies.

To investigate differences in teacher efficacy beliefs in terms of ratings on the four subscales of the ETEQ, and at the same time examine whether there were any gender effects in terms of self-efficacy beliefs, a two-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) with repeated measures was conducted. The repeated measures analyses were performed on the four subscales of the English Teacher Efficacy Questionnaire, and the between-subjects factor was Gender. (Means and standard deviations for gender on the four teacher efficacy subscales are shown in Table 15).

A significant multivariate effect was found for the four subscales of the Teacher Efficacy Scale, $F(3,114) = 26.69, p < .001$. Means and standard deviations for the four teacher efficacy subscales are shown in Table 13.

Table 13

Means and Standard Deviations for Teacher Efficacy Subscales

Teacher Efficacy Subscales	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>
<i>Confidence in Knowledge and Teaching</i> [CKT]	3.12	.46
<i>Confidence in Teaching Literary Response</i> [CTLR]	3.29	.54
<i>Confidence in Teaching Viewing & Presenting</i> [CTVP]	2.85	.59
<i>Confidence in Selection, Assessment and Expertise</i> [CSAE]	3.18	.54

Scheffe individual comparisons of means were performed to identify significant differences in mean scores among the four subscales. These analyses revealed that with the exception of the difference between *Confidence in Knowledge and Teaching* and *Confidence in Selection, Assessment and Expertise*, all differences in means for the subscales were statistically significant ($p < .05$).

Effect sizes were calculated using Cohen's (1988) d statistic. According to Cohen's d (1988), medium size effects (greater than .2 but no more than .5 standard deviation units) and large size effects (greater than .5 standard deviation units) were observed between the teacher efficacy subscales, except between *Confidence in Knowledge and Teaching* and *Confidence in Selection, Assessment and Expertise*.

The results of these analyses confirmed that there were statistically significant differences between teacher efficacy subscales thus supporting Hypothesis 1.1. The mean differences between the teacher efficacy subscales and their effect sizes are reported in Table 14.

Table 14

Mean Differences and Effect Sizes (d) for the Four Teacher Efficacy Subscales

Teacher Efficacy Subscales ¹	CKT		CTLR		CTVP	
	<u>M</u> diff	d	<u>M</u> diff	d	<u>M</u> diff	d
CKT	–	–				
CTLR	.20**	.37	–	–		
CTVP	-.26**	.44	-.46**	.77	–	–
CSAE	8.4	15	.11*	.21	.34**	.19

¹ CKT Confidence in Knowledge and Teaching
 CTLR Confidence in Teaching Literary Response
 CTVP Confidence in Teaching Viewing and Presenting
 CSAE Confidence in Selection, Assessment and Expertise

In all cases, *Confidence in Teaching Viewing and Presenting* scores were lower than scores for the other subscales, suggesting that on this subscale, teachers held lower teacher efficacy beliefs for teaching the newer visual language strand competencies. On the other hand, scores for *Confidence in Teaching Literary Response* were higher than

scores on the other subscales, suggesting that teachers held more positive teacher efficacy beliefs for teaching traditional literature-based subject competencies included in the written language strand, thus supporting Hypothesis 1.2.

In terms of the between-subjects analysis, no significant main effect was found for Gender, $F(1,116) = 0.83, p = .361$, and there was no significant interaction effect for Gender by subscales, $F(3,116) = 1.67, p = .17$. These results indicate that although there were statistically significant differences across the four efficacy subscales, there were no statistically significant differences as a function of gender.

Table 15

Means and Standard Deviations for Gender on the Four Teacher Efficacy Subscales

Teacher Efficacy Subscales ¹	Gender	<u>M</u>	SD
CKT	Male	3.10	.39
	Female	3.14	.50
CTLR	Male	3.40	.46
	Female	3.23	.57
CTVP	Male	2.87	.60
	Female	2.84	.58
CSAE	Male	3.27	.54
	Female	3.13	.54

¹ CKT Confidence in Knowledge and Teaching
 CTLR Confidence in Teaching Literary Response
 CTVP Confidence in Teaching Viewing and Presenting
 CSAE Confidence in Selection, Assessment and Expertise

N = 126

Hypothesis 2

Hypothesis 2.1

Hypothesis 2.1 proposed that English teachers display greater positive teacher efficacy for teaching the subject dimensions that correspond with their major academic qualifications gained for teaching English. To examine the relationship between teacher qualifications (*traditional literature* vs. *other*), a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was performed on the four subscales of the ETEQ, with *Teacher Qualifications* as the between-subjects factor. A significant multivariate effect was observed, $F(4,113) = 7.98$, $p < .001$.

Univariate analyses of variance (ANOVA) were then performed on each of the teacher efficacy subscales. Statistically significant differences between the two groups were observed for each subscale, with those teachers having more traditional literature-based qualifications reporting more positive teaching efficacy beliefs than those with non-traditional qualifications.

Effect sizes for academic qualifications on the four teacher efficacy subscales were calculated using Cohen's d . While large effect sizes were reported for all four teacher efficacy scales, the largest effect size was reported for *Confidence in Teaching Literary Response* and the second largest effect size was reported for *Confidence in Knowledge and Teaching* indicating a strong relationship between literature-based qualifications and positive teacher efficacy for teaching literature-based competencies.

The effect size for *Confidence in Teaching Viewing and Presenting* was the smallest, suggesting that the relationship between traditional literature-based teacher qualifications and teaching the newer curriculum visual strand elements is less strong. Therefore, although the results indicated a positive relationship between English teacher subject knowledge gained through academic qualifications and English teacher efficacy across a range of subject and language strand competencies, the strongest relationship was indicated between literature-based teacher qualifications and teaching traditional literature related core English competencies, thus supporting Hypothesis 2.1. A summary of the analyses of variance and effect sizes are reported in Table 16.

Table 16

Summary of Univariate Analyses of Variance (ANOVA) and Effect Sizes (d) for Teacher Qualification Groups (Literature and Other) on the Teacher Efficacy Subscales

Teacher Efficacy Subscales ¹	Teacher Qualification	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<i>f</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>d</i>
CKT	Literature	3.19	.41	21.56	.000	1.17
	Other	2.64	.51			
CTLR	Literature	3.38	.47	26.75	.000	1.27
	Other	2.68	.61			
CTVP	Literature	2.91	.56	7.28	.005	0.71
	Other	2.47	.61			
CSAE	Literature	3.25	.53	13.53	.001	0.96
	Other	2.74	.41			

¹ CKT Confidence in Knowledge and Teaching
 CTLR Confidence in Teaching Literary Response
 CTVP Confidence in Teaching Viewing and Presenting
 CSAE Confidence in Selection, Assessment and Expertise

Hypothesis 2.2

Hypothesis 2.2 stated that English teachers with more teaching experience will display greater positive teacher efficacy than those teacher with lesser teaching experience. To examine the relationship between teaching experience and scores on the four Teacher Efficacy scales, a MANOVA was performed. A significant multivariate main effect for *Teacher Experience* was observed, $F(12, 339) = 3.61, p < .001$.

ANOVA were then performed on each subscale score. Statistically significant effects were found for all four teacher efficacy subscales as a function of teaching experience (CKT $F(3,118) = 8.37 p < .001$; CTLR $F(3,118) = 12.78 p < .001$; CTVP $F(3,118) = 4.78 p < .005$; CSAE $F(3,118) = 5.95 p < .001$)

Scheffe post hoc analyses were then performed to determine which levels of teaching experience were associated with significant differences in efficacy beliefs. In all cases lower scores were reported for 0-5 years teaching experience than for 20+ years teaching experience, suggesting that teachers with more experience held more positive teacher

efficacy beliefs and teachers with less teaching experience held lowered teacher efficacy beliefs, suggesting that teacher efficacy is related to teacher experience with teachers displaying positive confidence in these elements.

Cohen's (1988) *d* statistic was used to calculate the effect sizes of the significant differences. The effect sizes are reported with the mean differences between the teacher experience groupings in Table 17.

Table 17

Means, Standard Deviations, Mean Differences and Effect Sizes (d) for the Teaching Experience Groupings on the Four Teacher Efficacy Subscales.

Teacher Efficacy Subscales ¹	Years of Teaching Experience	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	0-5yrs		5-10yrs		10-20yrs	
				<u>M</u> Diff	<i>d</i>	<u>M</u> Diff	<i>d</i>	<u>M</u> Diff	<i>d</i>
CKT	0-5 yrs	2.93	.45	–	–	–	–	–	–
	5-10 yrs	3.00	.42	.06	.10	–	–	–	–
	10-20 yrs	3.31	.35	.38*	.82	.31	.67	–	–
	20+ yrs	3.38	.44	.45*	.97	.38*	.82	.07	.15
CTLR	0-5 yrs	2.95	.54	–	–	–	–	–	–
	5-10 yrs	3.34	.35	.38*	.82	–	–	–	–
	10-20 yrs	3.43	.53	.47**	1.0	.09	.19	–	–
	20+ yrs	3.65	.40	.69**	1.5	.31	.67	.22	.47
CTVP	0-5 yrs	2.63	.57	–	–	–	–	–	–
	5-10 yrs	2.85	.51	.22	.40	–	–	–	–
	10-20 yrs	2.92	.55	.29	.53	.06	.11	–	–
	20+ yrs	3.15	.59	.52**	.96	.29	.53	.23	.42
CSAE	0-5 yrs	2.94	.45	–	–	–	–	–	–
	5-10 yrs	3.18	.59	.24	.44	–	–	–	–
	10-20 yrs	3.33	.49	.39*	.72	.14	.25	–	–
	20+ yrs	3.43	.53	.49**	.90	.25	.46	.10	.18

¹ CKT Confidence in Knowledge and Teaching
 CTLR Confidence in Teaching Literary Response
 CTVP Confidence in Teaching Viewing and Presenting
 CSAE Confidence in Selection, Assessment and Expertise

Table 18 shows that the greatest significant differences and effect sizes were observed between teachers with little experience (0-5 years) and teachers with extensive experience (over 20 years) on all four teacher efficacy subscales, thus confirming that there is a relationship between teacher experience and teacher efficacy and supporting Hypothesis 2.2.

Hypothesis 2.3

Hypothesis 2.3 proposed that English teachers who have undertaken more professional development display greater positive teacher efficacy than those teachers who have undertaken less professional development. Analyses were performed to examine the relationship between professional development and teacher self-efficacy. A MANOVA was performed on the efficacy subscales with teacher development as the between-subjects (4 levels) factor. A significant multivariate main effect for *professional development* was observed, $F(12,339) = 2.76, p < .001$.

ANOVA were performed on each of the subscale scores, with the result that statistically significant effects were observed for each of the teacher efficacy subscales (*Confidence in Knowledge and Teaching* $F(3,118) = 5.39, p < .001$; *Confidence in Teaching Literary Response* $F(3,118) = 8.43, p < .001$; *Confidence in Teaching Viewing and Presenting* $F(3,118) = 6.11, p < .001$; *Confidence in Selection, Assessment and Expertise* $F(3,118) = 5.50, p < .001$).

Scheffe post hoc analyses were performed to determine which levels of teacher professional development were associated with significant differences in efficacy beliefs. Significant differences were observed between *a little* and *extensive* professional development on all four teacher efficacy subscales. Significant differences were also observed between *considerable* and *a little* for *Confidence in Knowledge and Teaching* and between *some* and *extensive* for *Confidence in Teaching Literary Response*. In all cases the mean scores were higher for extensive levels of professional development than any of the other three categories. Effect sizes were calculated using Cohen's (1988) *d*. According to Cohen's criteria, large effect sizes were observed between *a little* professional development and *extensive* professional development on all four teacher efficacy subscales.

Significant differences were also observed between *some* professional development and *extensive* professional development for *Confidence in Teaching Viewing and Presenting*, *Confidence in Teaching Literary Response* and *Confidence in Knowledge and Teaching*, indicating that teacher efficacy was more positive in a range of competencies among those teachers who undertook greater in-service professional development opportunities, thus Hypothesis 2.3 was supported by these findings. Table 19 shows the means and standard deviations for the four professional development groupings for each of the four efficacy subscales. Mean differences and effect sizes are also shown on Table 18.

Table 18

Means, Standard Deviations, Mean Differences and Effect Sizes (d) for Teacher Professional Development on the Teacher Efficacy Subscales

Teacher ¹ Efficacy Subscales	Professional Development			Extensive		Considerable		Some	
		<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>M</u> Diff	<i>d</i>	<u>M</u> Diff	<i>d</i>	<u>M</u> Diff	<i>d</i>
CKT	Extensive	3.53	.44	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Considerable	3.20	.39	-.32	-.69	–	–	–	–
	Some	3.02	.42	-.49*	-1.06	-.16	-.34	–	–
	Little	3.12	.46	.50**	-1.08	-.17	-.36	-.01	.02
CTLR	Extensive	3.75	.40	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Considerable	3.50	.56	-.25	-.46	–	–	–	–
	Some	3.30	.36	-.44	-.81	-.19	-.35	–	–
	Little	3.08	.55	-.66**	-1.22	-.41*	-.75	-.22	-.40
CTVP	Extensive	3.28	.63	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Considerable	3.08	.51	-.19	-.32	–	–	–	–
	Some	2.78	.58	-.50	-.84	-.30	-.50	–	–
	Little	2.67	.54	-.60**	-1.0	-.41*	-.69	-.10	-.16
CSAE	Extensive	3.61	.62	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Considerable	3.31	.55	-.30	-.05	–	–	–	–
	Some	3.17	.49	-.44	-.8.1	-.14	-.25	–	–
	Little	3.02	.48	-.59**	-1.09	-.29	-.53	-.15	-.27

¹ CKT Confidence in Knowledge and Teaching
 CTLR Confidence in Teaching Literary Response
 CTVP Confidence in Teaching Viewing and Presenting
 CSAE Confidence in Selection, Assessment and Expertise

Hypothesis 3

Hypothesis 3 proposed that practising English teachers demonstrate more positive teacher efficacy beliefs than pre-service English teachers across a range of subject-specific language strands and competencies. To investigate differences in teacher efficacy beliefs between pre-service teachers and practicing teachers, a MANOVA with repeated measures was performed on the four subscales of the ETEQ with teacher group (practising and pre-service) as the between-subject factor.

A significant multivariate effect was found for teacher efficacy $F(3,114) 23.10 p < .001$ and for teacher group $F(3,114) = 2.52 p < .05$. A significant interaction effect was also observed between teacher group and teacher efficacy $F(3,116) 1.85 p < .05$. An examination of the mean scores for the two teacher groups revealed that practising teachers were higher than pre-service teachers on all four teacher efficacy subscales.

ANOVA were then performed for teacher group on each of the teacher efficacy subscales. All analyses produced significant results with the scores of practising teachers being higher than pre-service teachers on all four teacher efficacy subscales.

Effect sizes were calculated using Cohen's (1988) d statistic. According to Cohen's criteria, large effect sizes were found for *Confidence in Knowledge and Teaching*, *Confidence in Teaching Literary Response* and *Confidence in Selection, Assessment and Expertise*. A medium size effect was observed for *Confidence in Teaching Viewing and Presenting*. This result indicated that practicing teachers displayed significantly more positive teacher efficacy than pre-service teachers across a range of English curriculum competencies, but they displayed the least positive scores for the non-traditional viewing and presenting English elements. A summary of the analyses of variance and effect sizes are shown in Table 19.

Table 19

Summary of Analyses of Variance (ANOVA) with Means, Standard Deviations and Effect Sizes (d) for the Two Teacher Groups on the Teacher Efficacy Subscales.

Teacher Efficacy Subscales ¹	Teacher Group	<u>M</u>	SD	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>d</i>
CKT	Practising	3.22	.44	8.23	.001	.56
	Pre-Service	2.97	.46			
CTLR	Practising	3.47	.44	23.45	.000	.83
	Pre-Service	3.01	.55			
CTVP	Practising	2.95	.56	5.74	.005	.44
	Pre-Service	2.68	.59			
CSAE	Practising	3.32	.54	12.13	.001	.62
	Pre-Service	2.98	.45			

¹ CKT Confidence in Knowledge and Teaching
 CTLR Confidence in Teaching Literary Response
 CTVP Confidence in Teaching Viewing and Presenting
 CSAE Confidence in Selection, Assessment and Expertise

These results indicate that practising English teachers display more positive teacher efficacy beliefs than pre-service English teachers across a range of English curriculum strands and related language competencies thus supporting Hypothesis 3.

Hypothesis 4

In New Zealand secondary schools, students move through year levels of study that correspond with particular curriculum levels (Year 9/curriculum level four; Year 10/curriculum level five; Year 11/curriculum level six; Year 12/curriculum level seven; Year 13/curriculum level eight). Students enter secondary school at Year 9 and complete secondary school at Year 13. A Year 13 English programme is generally considered to be a preparation year for further tertiary study, and includes a strong emphasis on critical textual analysis. As students move through the secondary system from Year 9 to Year 13, academic achievement levels incrementally increase, the subject content deepens, and

the expected competencies signalled by the curriculum achievement objectives, become more sophisticated and challenging.

The recent transition from norm-referenced assessment to standards-based assessment with the introduction of National Certificate of Educational Achievement [NCEA] in New Zealand secondary schools has made it difficult to obtain reliable assessment measures of student achievement. Therefore, in order to test Hypothesis 4 using student achievement information, the following method was employed.

Practising teachers were given the opportunity on the English Teacher Efficacy Questionnaire [ETEQ] to provide additional information about students' achievement levels in relation to a curriculum level. Sixty-six of the total 79 practising teacher participants responded with this information. The teachers were asked to identify a student/class achievement level, and related curriculum level, that they predominantly taught. Teachers were given a choice of four options in line with the New Zealand secondary school. Commonly, the corresponding national assessments and qualifications for these four levels are as follows: level one (*classes not working towards a national qualification*); level two (*classes working towards NCEA Level One or equivalent*); level three (*classes working towards NCEA Level Two or equivalent*); level four (*classes working towards NCEA Level Three or equivalent*).

The ETEQ further asked teachers to provide a general academic rating of the same English class taught at the specified achievement level on a three-point scale (below average, average, above average). Teachers were asked to make this rating based on professional judgements of external and internal assessment results of student achievement and relevant curriculum achievement objectives. Frequencies for student levels and teachers' ratings are shown in the following tables.

Table 20

Frequencies for Student Achievement Levels (Curriculum)

Student Achievement Levels	Frequency	Percent
Below NCEA	15	18.8
NCEA Level 1	19	28.8
NCEA Level 2	19	28.8
NCEA Level 3	13	19.7

N = 66

Table 21

Frequencies for Student Achievement Levels (Teacher Rating)

Student Achievement Levels	Frequency	Percent
Below Average	14	17.5
Average	24	30.0
Above Average	28	35.0

N = 66

Hypothesis 4 proposed that English teachers display greater positive efficacy for teaching higher academic achievement level students than they do for lower academic achievement level students. In order to test Hypothesis 4, a four (student achievement levels) by three (teacher rating levels) by four (teacher efficacy) MANOVA was performed on the four teacher efficacy subscale scores with teachers' academic ratings and student achievement levels as the between-subject factors. A marginally significant multivariate effect was revealed for student achievement levels $F(12, 153) = 2.83$ $p < .06$. Because this effect was not significant at the .05 level, univariate ANOVAs were not performed on these data.

An examination of the teacher efficacy mean scores for student achievement levels revealed that while the scores were very similar there was an incremental increase in teacher efficacy corresponding with the increase in student achievement levels, suggesting that teacher efficacy increases as students' achievement levels increase. Means and standard deviations for student achievement levels on the four teacher efficacy subscale scores are shown in Table 22.

Table 22

Mean Scores and Standard Deviations for Student Achievement Levels (Curriculum)

Teacher Efficacy Subscales ¹	Student Achievement Level	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>
CKT	Below NCEA	3.29	.43
	NCEA 1	3.14	.47
	NCEA 2	3.06	.37
	NCEA 3	3.33	.36
CTLR	Below NCEA	3.81	.47
	NCEA 1	3.91	.38
	NCEA 2	3.93	.46
	NCEA 3	4.01	.82
CTVP	Below NCEA	2.99	.72
	NCEA 1	3.33	.48
	NCEA 2	3.33	.46
	NCEA 3	3.51	.45
CSAE	Below NCEA	3.00	.72
	NCEA 1	3.43	.33
	NCEA 2	3.41	.52
	NCEA 3	3.54	.44

¹ CKT Confidence in Knowledge and Teaching
 CTLR Confidence in Teaching Literary Response
 CTVP Confidence in Teaching Viewing and Presenting
 CSAE Confidence in Selection, Assessment and Expertise

No significant multivariate main or interaction effect was observed for teachers' academic ratings of students, suggesting that students' relative academic ability in the present study was not associated with English teacher efficacy, therefore partially rejecting Hypothesis 4.

Qualitative Data

The final section of the ETEQ invited teachers to offer comments about issues their English teaching confidence, or elaborate on reasons for lack of confidence in specific dimensions of English teaching. All 126 participants offered comments in this section. Many comments covered a range of similar issues. Summary data from these responses are reported in relation to the four subscales, and to the variables of *teaching experience*, *academic qualifications* and *professional development*.

According to Bandura (1994) selection processes are influenced by beliefs of personal efficacy. People avoid activities and situations they believe exceed their coping capabilities, but undertake challenging activities and select situations they judge themselves capable of handling. In line with this idea, and with Hypothesis 1, many participants indicated that that they selected to teach English dimensions where they were most comfortable, and neglected other areas.

Confidence in Knowledge and Teaching [CKT]

Confidence in Knowledge and Teaching [CKT] comprised a range of items relating to teaching core literacy skills (reading and writing). *Confidence in Knowledge and Teaching* also contained a number of General Teacher Efficacy [GTE] items that were concerned with teacher confidence, ability to motivate students and willingness to try new ideas and initiatives. Many of the participants' comments focused on these dimensions of English teaching.

Teacher Efficacy and Pedagogical Confidence

A number of participants commented about general teaching principles and attitudes suggesting that certain approaches encourage effective English teaching. One teacher commented " *I think I am at my most effective as a teacher when I provide structured opportunities for my students to respond to text and work together.* "

Some participants recognised the difference between sound subject knowledge and effective teaching. One respondent commented *“I am less confident in my ability to motivate - I am quite confident in my own knowledge but much less so that I will get through effectively to students.”*

One participant whose individual ETEQ scores indicated high positive efficacy commented *“ I often find it difficult, the moaning and groaning of many teachers, and the difficulty in finding and retaining skilled teachers. If you respect the pupils you teach and they respect you, you should be able to achieve what you want”*. This same teacher made the connection between teacher confidence and highly motivated students: *“I don’t want to sound big-headed but as an experienced and enthusiastic teacher who teaches generally well-motivated and skilled students, I feel confident about what I am doing”*. Such a comment highlighted the notion that success feeds success. If students are confident and successful, this will, in turn, help build teacher confidence and efficacy beliefs.

One participant said: *“I am a sound and hard working teacher.”* But then carried on to suggest that the job of teaching was made very difficult because *“Some of my students lack prior learning to succeed at secondary level. I would love more training to help me teach these students”*.

Several participants suggested that having to meet curriculum requirements in the English classroom was somewhat constraining. One respondent who was a beginning teacher complained about having to teach *“programme which leaves little room for teacher creativity and has affected my confidence in my ability to teach.”*

Other participants commented on the wide range of competencies required to be an effective English teacher: *“I am particularly aware of the need for scope in teaching this subject i.e. allowing students to be creative and reach their potential while adhering to grammatical rules and conventions.”* This participant went on to reflect on the enormity of the task of being a teacher in general: *“Being responsible for a student’s desire to learn.”*

Having access to quality resources and being taught how to plan were considered by some participants to be influential in building teacher confidence: *“I believe that planning an English lesson is most important. This is a skill I feel should be learned.” “I do think with more resources at my fingertips, I’ll be much more confident”.*

Teacher Efficacy and New Ideas and Innovations

Several participants commented about the role of innovation in terms of providing motivation and effective English teaching. One respondent commented, *“I think that my strengths lie in my ability to be creative and thus, motivate students through this”.* Another respondent suggested *“ I am confident that I can challenge students to challenge themselves in English”.*

Another participant who reported high levels of positive self-efficacy commented about the relationship between teacher effectiveness and being open to new ideas and initiatives. *“ An English teacher should be open to new ideas and trends that help her become a very effective teacher. She is a life-long learner.”* And yet another participant commented, *“I enjoy the opportunity to be innovative and doing new and unusual things in English.”*

These comments from efficacious participants affirm earlier studies that found high efficacy teachers are more likely to demonstrate innovativeness by taking risks with new ideas. The Rand study (Berman et al., 1977) found a positive correlation between teacher efficacy and innovation with the curriculum. Stein and Wang (1988) also found a positive relationship between the implementation of new teaching approaches and teachers’ self-efficacy.

One participant attributed her lack of innovation to the inaccessibility to adequate resources: *“Access to resources remains an obstacle to some innovation.”*

Literacy Concerns

One experienced teacher criticised the New Zealand Ministry of Education for its perceived lack of attention to reading and literacy issues: *“The issues are complex and given little attention by the Ministry. The current push to improve literacy and numeracy by the Ministry has little funding attached and few relevant techniques are taught. Teachers can be very confident, but when faced with 75% of a year nine intake with*

reading ages ranging from 5-11 years, the reading problem is immense. I would like researchers and the Ministry to begin to look at this problem with the seriousness it deserves.” This comment was reflected by another respondent who said *“Our students (many of them, not all) need basic reading and writing skills – these are my stresses.”*

Literacy teaching skills, such as teaching reading and spelling strategies, were mentioned by several respondents. One respondent, who reported very positive self-efficacy beliefs on all items on the ETEQ made the comments about reading and spelling: *“Aside from ‘sounding out’ and rote learning, I am clueless as to how to teach spelling. Motivation of independent reading seems so outside of my sphere of influence with many students.”* This latter reference to reading was reflected in the comment of another participant who said: *“Teachers, English or otherwise, have little or no understanding of how to teach context-based, strategic reading skills in their subject. This is a glaring gap in their training and subsequent professional development.”*

Lack of Mastery Experiences

Many of the pre-service teachers expressed difficulty in providing accurate self-assessments of task-specific efficacy beliefs. For example, one participant commented: *“Being in a beginning stage of teaching, its hard to say what my ability is, so responses are not founded on actual experience in many cases.”* And yet another commented: *“I am a trainee teacher, so confidence is largely positive thinking, as I have little experience.”* These responses served to confirm Bandura’s (1986) notion that mastery experiences or performance accomplishments is one of the main sources of efficacy information.

The Reality Shock Phenomenon

One beginning teacher wrote a very detailed two-page account outlining the difficulties she faced on entering the profession. She described her experience in the following manner: *“I frequently feel as though I am running backwards over sand. Sheer exhaustion plus a heavy workload, not to mention a programme that leaves little room for teacher creativity have affected my confidence in my ability to teach. I have also ended up with some particularly dim classes. My second and third year fifth formers (Year 11) (some of whom speak little English) are agreed to be the worst lot this year. This class is disheartening.”*

Another pre-service participant suggested that efficacy beliefs could be lowered as the teacher-training programme progressed. *"I will probably be a lot less confident as I learn more."* This response affirms the findings from some studies that suggest that teachers show decreased levels of positive efficacy during their early years of teaching (Housego, 1992; Hoy & Woolfolk Hoy, 1990). Novice teachers frequently encounter a 'reality shock' as they confront the complexity of the teaching task and this tempering of their initial optimism can cause a lowering of efficacy (Weinstein, 1988).

Positive Self-Efficacy

One pre-service participant who displayed high levels of positive self-efficacy to most items on the ETEQ did not consider lack of mastery experiences would lower her capabilities to be an effective teacher. *"I believe I can be effective teacher. I love drama and creative writing, and have an appreciation of all forms of literature."* Another highly efficacious participant offered a similar comment: *"I believe I can learn just about anything to do with English. It is just a case of being exposed to different genres. I am prepared to learn."*

Idealism and Passion

Several participants mentioned the idealism of beginning teachers and acknowledged that confidence levels could change: *"As a student teacher I am a little idealistic about my own abilities."* And one participant suggested that the ETEQ had failed to mention the most important teaching item – *"passion for the job!!!"* *"It does not take into account the amount of passion a teacher brings to the teaching, which I believe is vital and which I believe I have."*

Confidence in Teaching Literary Response [CTLR]

Few comments were offered in relation to *Confidence in Teaching Literary Response*. A likely explanation for this is that generally English teachers feel confident with these competencies and little has changed in the way literature is taught and assessed so that many teachers draw on modelled experiences from their own learning and reproduce that later in their own teaching. This conservative approach was summarised by an experience teacher who offered the following comment: *"I am a pretty conservative teacher. Most*

things in the curriculum I am confident I can do but I simply do not like them. I rate them as less important than reading literature in its basic traditional form. I have a literature Degree, so my literature background is sound.” Such a comment also serves to highlight the idea that teacher do *select* aspects of the English curriculum to teach.

One other teacher who expressed lowered confidence in teaching creative writing, was positive about traditional literature-based dimensions: *“Creative writing, as opposed to transactional writing, is a skill I teach less well, because my tradition is formal, expository and analytical. Sometimes I feel inadequate. Yet I know a good piece of writing when I see it. I have no problems dealing with traditional studies of literature.”*

Confidence in Teaching Viewing and Presenting [CTVP]

Confidence in Teaching Viewing and Presenting [CTVP] comprised items related to the non-traditional English dimensions and many of the participants’ comments reflected concerns about lowered efficacy beliefs in these competencies.

One respondent was clearly unhappy with the teaching elements suggested by the English Curriculum and commented: *“I am a pretty conservative teacher. Most things in the curriculum I am confident I can do but I simply do not like them.”* In terms of the expanding English curriculum, one respondent commented: *“Many of the ‘newer’ elements of English teaching (media studies, static images, film, drama) are things I am most confident with despite minimal formal training.”*

Some participants elected to comment on concerns related to a lack of specific subject knowledge or skills. One participant identified a lack of visual language knowledge as a concern. *“I have no media background or visual language training. I read, spoke and wrote about books”.* Another teacher claimed: *“Film/TV as literature I have found interesting and easy to teach. However, some of the intellectual background/foundation and technical/cinematographic methods needs more professional development for me.”*

Other participants recognised the shift in teaching approaches from a traditional approach towards the constructivist approach encouraged by the *New Zealand Curriculum*

Framework (Ministry of Education, 1993): “I am traditionally taught myself, so my confidence in teaching new aspects such as film and other visual texts reflects this lack in my own background.” Another participant commented: “I was never taught how to do newspapers or video.”

Another participant who reported high efficacy highlighted the idea that if teachers do not value an aspect of English, they may choose to avoid it: “I do not enjoy teaching Drama. I received no training to do this and I see little value in using this in general English except when teaching literature-based drama e.g. Shakespeare. Consequently, I avoid it and have never built the skills needed to ensure success for the students.” In making such a comment, this teacher acknowledges the teachers require expert knowledge and skills as well as professional belief in order to teach an English element effectively. It is possible that the value this teacher attached to teaching Drama is informed to some extent by a lack of efficacy and experience.

Another participant raised the issue of the ever-widening curriculum which was making it often difficult for teachers to know what particular genre or language context was being referred to: “English is often in used in questions but it is too vague – rock song lyrics? Listener article? Website on genetic engineering? TV documentary? Too wide a variety of texts are taught now in English to be sure about some of these questions.”

Confidence in Selection, Assessment and Expertise [CSAE]

Confidence in Selection, Assessment and Expertise [CSAE] comprised items relating to task selection and assessment as well as a small number of items relating to discrete expert knowledge.

Assessment Workload

One participant commented on how the pressure to meet assessment deadlines affected her variability in enthusiasm and energy for teaching. “I fluctuate in my attitude and enthusiasm for the central task of teaching – this human variation is increasingly problematic as increased internal assessments and close deadlines put pressure on students and teachers to confront learning and assessing at speed.”

Task Design and Assessment

The recent introduction of standards-based assessment and the National Certificate of Educational Achievement [NCEA] raised some comments from some respondents. Most assessment related comments were positive with participants expressing positive efficacy beliefs about assessment practices. One participant commented: *“I enjoy developing and creating assessment tasks and I can adapt assessments to suit student levels.”*

Another participant said: *“I find assessment straightforward. I create very clear assessment schedules which I give to the students with the assessment task.”* Another respondent made a link between experience at assessing and the increased competency in making accurate judgements with internally assessed standards-based assessment tasks, such as National Certificate of Educational Achievement [NCEA].

Assessing Against the Curriculum

One teacher suggested that the Achievement Objectives of *English in the New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education, 1994) were not specific enough and open to misinterpretation in terms of planning and assessment. *“Some of the achievement objectives need rewriting to be more specific (and better consistency) and assessable for different levels. This is important to eliminate current uncertainties and gripes among teachers.”*

Expertise

A number of participants expressed anxiety about lacking specific expertise in certain areas. For example, one participant expressed anxiety about her poor personal language skills. *“English is of high interest to me, but my syntax skills are only average. Despite this, I believe I can work hard and teach these weaker skills of mine to others.”* And another commented on her own poor spelling and writing skills. *“I am concerned about my spelling and writing, but really happy with my ability to teach oral and visual texts.”*

Academic Qualifications and Professional Development

Lack of Requisite Skills or Knowledge

Some teachers felt more confident in some areas of the English curriculum than others. This confidence was often linked to lack of, or inappropriateness, of qualifications and training. For several respondents, this apparent lack of requisite knowledge or training was seen as the reason for the perceived low self-efficacy beliefs in that area.

One pre-service participant articulated this concern in the following comment: *"I feel I have strengths and weaknesses so I am a bit worried I won't put equal amount of focus on all aspects of the curriculum. I don't mean I won't use the strands but something you enjoy is easier to teach."* Many of the comments offered by participants highlighted the notion of selection.

One participant commented: *"Creative writing is a skill I teach less well, because my tradition is formal, expository and analytical. I sometimes feel inadequate, yet I know a good piece of writing when I see it."* Another participant commented: *"I do not enjoy teaching drama. I received no training to do this and I see little value in using this in a general English classroom except when teaching literature/drama e.g. Shakespeare-consequently, I avoid it and have never built the skills needed to ensure success for the students."* Another commented: *"I find it difficult to teach grammar and punctuation because I was never taught the skills. I feel the same about essay writing."*

Professional Development and Teacher Confidence

One respondent made the link between recent professional development and increased confidence and commented: *"My own learning in the last ten years has been in the areas of media/film and assessment, hence my special confidence in those areas."* Another respondent whose qualification focus was literature commented that: *"The curriculum range demands much more knowledge than a literary degree offers. Linguistics, media studies, performance drama and oral skills (plus educational psychology and learning theories) are now more important over years 9-11."*

Several participants made reference to the importance of professional development in attaining confidence in an area of English teaching. For example, one teacher suggested

that while teaching film, as literature was interesting, *“some of the intellectual background information and technical/cinematographic methods needs more professional development for me.”*

One beginning teacher highlighted the idea that teachers do often depend on the ‘on the job’ training for specific up-skilling: *“As a new teacher, I have found my confidence has developed. There are still areas of concern, but through professional development, I am sure I will learn new techniques and gain confidence in these areas.”*

Specific professional development courses and organizations were referred to as instrumental in confidence building and one second-year teacher commented *“I am looking forward to attending professional development courses this year. I believe they will enhance my ability to become an effective teacher.”* Another commented: *“Having done a CELTA (Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults) course, I am much more confident in teaching grammar and syntax etc.”*

Another participant talked about the skills gained from additional post-graduate study: *“I have gained huge personal growth in research skills and transactional writing while completing a Masters of Educational Administration – skills I have been able to share with students. Post-Graduate work has been for me the best professional development I could have done.”*

One participant who was an experienced teacher with extensive classroom teaching experience, but lacking a formal teaching qualification and enrolled in the programme to gain formal registration, identified a specific weakness in his own teaching programme. However, he was also able to identify other specific English aspects where he was confident: *“Organising small discussion groups is something I am disappointed with, because it does work for others. I have a weakness with teaching groups. I am keen to do more of this and see the benefits. I judge that I am secure on literary topics and teaching film as text. Speeches, debate and dramatic monologues have been very successful even though they are new to me.”* Such a reflection affirms the notion that a teacher who is aware of deficits in his or her capabilities in a certain circumstance but has a belief about how those deficits can be addressed will have a resilient sense of efficacy (Woolfolk & Hoy, 1990).

One participant expressed concern about importance of being able to make accurate assessment judgements of student work, with particular reference to the National Certificate of Educational Achievement [NCEA]: *“I feel confident about NCEA internal assessment and my personal judgements. I feel this ability to accurately place a student’s work at an achievement level has come from years of teaching and evaluating over all five secondary levels. I do not think (and we have found this in practice) that beginning teachers and non-specialist English teachers have sufficient training in making valid judgements of authentic student work at the varying curriculum levels.”*

In summary, the pre-service participants’ comments tended to be more focused on anxieties about specific subject weaknesses or lack of requisite skills for certain teaching tasks while many of the practising teachers’ comments provided an element of task analysis combined with an element of professional reflection and evaluation gained from actual teacher experience.

These qualitative data served to highlight the strong relationship between teacher academic qualifications, teacher knowledge, teaching experience, teacher professional development, and teacher efficacy. Therefore, these data complemented the quantitative results.

CHAPTER 6

Discussion

Teacher efficacy research has reached the point in its development where the identification of the appropriate levels of specificity, the assessment of the correspondence of efficacy beliefs across a subject domain, and the evaluation of success for typical classroom tasks would provide a positive contribution to our understandings of teacher self-efficacy. This study addressed these issues by attempting to clarify four important questions:

- Do teacher efficacy beliefs differ across a range of teaching tasks and competencies within a specific subject domain? (*Congruency and Specificity*)
- Is there a relationship between *teacher experience, teacher professional development, teacher academic qualifications*, and teacher efficacy beliefs? (*Associated Factors*)
- Do pre-service English teachers at the commencement of their teacher training with little or no teaching experience demonstrate the same level of efficacy beliefs as practising English teachers? (*Pre-service Teacher Efficacy and Practising Teacher Efficacy*)
- Is there a relationship between English teacher's efficacy beliefs and English students' achievement levels? (*Teacher Efficacy and Student Achievement Levels*)

Do teacher efficacy beliefs differ across a range of teaching tasks and competencies within a specific subject domain?

Findings from the present study showed English teachers' efficacy beliefs differed across a range of English teaching tasks and competencies. Furthermore, these differences were most significant between the traditional core elements of English and the more non-traditional recently introduced English elements, such as visual language and educational technologies. The results indicated that the greatest difference was found between *Confidence in Teaching Literary Response* and *Confidence in Teaching Viewing and Presenting*. English teachers' efficacy beliefs are less positive for teaching the viewing and presenting functions of the English curriculum that require expert knowledge about responding to visual texts and producing visual texts. This difference was consistent with many teachers' comments that indicated a concern about lack of knowledge and skills to teach the newer English elements (e.g., "I am traditionally taught myself, so my confidence in teaching new aspects such as film and other visual texts reflects this lack in my own background").

Such a finding concurs with the research of Ross (1994) and Stein and Wang (1988) who claimed teachers' efficacy beliefs may be lowered when faced with new ideas, strategies or trying to implement new practices. Many of the items represented on the *Confidence in Teaching Viewing and Presenting* subscale are new to many English teachers, and therefore present new challenges. It is possible that even the most efficacious teachers in this study were holding their efficacy beliefs about these items in provisional status, and were not willing to make predictive competence judgements in relation to those particular competencies (Bandura, 1977).

On the other hand, English teachers displayed more positive efficacy for teaching the written (reading and writing) and oral (speaking and listening) strands that have traditionally formed the central focus of a secondary English classroom. Moreover, teaching the literary skills needed for response to texts is central to the subject English, and it is in these dimensions where an English teacher will be the most engaged on a daily basis.

English in the New Zealand Curriculum (Ministry of Education, 1994) states that “responding to literature has always been central to students’ encounter with language” and affirms the importance of literature for literacy development (p.16). While the English curriculum proposes a three-strand structure, in reality, the study of literary texts (written strand) tends to predominate. This notion was highlighted by a teacher who stated that his/her own English academic experience was focused on literary text, and that it was this focus that determined the knowledge and skills this teacher brought to the English classroom (“*I have no media background or visual language training. I read, spoke and wrote about books*”). Given this situation and the fact that performance experiences are considered to be the major source of efficacy information (Bandura, 1986), it is likely that many English teachers will feel most confident about the competencies that they are most familiar with, and that are central to their daily work.

The finding that teacher efficacy beliefs differ across a subject domain also concurs with teacher efficacy researchers such as Tschannen-Moran et al., (1998) who claim that teacher efficacy is context-specific and, therefore, teachers cannot be expected to be consistently efficacious across all teaching competencies. Teacher efficacy beliefs need to be assessed at a level of specificity that allows for subject-specific and task-specific differences to be predictively useful. Furthermore, some of the teachers’ comments alluded to the idea that teachers select to teach dimensions of the curriculum about which they feel positively efficacious and neglect dimensions where they feel less confident (e.g., “*I feel I have strengths and weaknesses so I am a bit worried I won’t put equal amount of focus on all aspects of the curriculum*”).

In line with this idea, the differences in teacher efficacy beliefs identified in the findings from this study serve to provide some clarification about the dimensions of the subject English where teachers feel more efficacious or less efficacious. Such a finding gives rise to the next question. What measures need to be put in place to help redress those differences so that specialist subject teachers can present consistently positive efficacy profiles across a full range of subject competencies? This study explored that issue by examining the relationship between teacher efficacy and other sources of efficacy information, such as practical teaching experience, academic knowledge, and related educational training in order to extend contemporary understanding of how teacher efficacy beliefs are developed and maintained, to improve teaching and learning.

The finding that English teacher efficacy beliefs differed across a range of language strands and competencies is important because it confirms that teacher efficacy is not a one or two dimensional construct, particularly when assessing teacher efficacy within a specific subject domain. The finding supports the notion that teacher efficacy is context or domain-specific, and that teacher efficacy beliefs are best assessed by measures that tap that corresponding domain. Furthermore, the finding that teacher efficacy beliefs reflect challenges to teachers in relation to changes, and expansions to the curriculum, has important implications for educationalists at both policy and administration levels. Strategies to bolster teacher efficacy need to be considered when such changes and challenges are occurring in order to maximise effective teaching and learning.

Is there a relationship between teacher experience, teacher professional development, teacher academic qualifications, and teacher efficacy beliefs?

Previous studies have not established a link between subject-specific academic educational background and teachers' efficacy beliefs for teaching the corresponding content knowledge and related competencies. This study revealed that English teachers with academic qualifications in literature (95% of total sample) were more positively efficacious across all four subscales, than those English teachers who held academic qualifications in other English-related areas. The most highly significant relationship and the largest effect size was found between teachers with literature-based academic qualifications and *Confidence in Teaching Literary Response*. This finding concurred with the finding of the study by Woolfolk and Hoy (1990) that found that there was a relationship between a teacher's educational level and teacher efficacy. This link between teacher qualifications and teacher efficacy was further reflected in some of the teachers' comments (e.g., "I have a literature degree, so my literature background is sound." "I have no problems dealing with traditional studies of literature").

Much of the core work of a secondary English programme in New Zealand classrooms is centred on text analysis, with a heavy emphasis on literary texts. An academic background in literature provides the foundational content and skills knowledge for teachers to draw on when teaching secondary students similar content and skills. Moreover, *English in the New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education, 1994) stresses three main language processes for teaching English: exploring language, thinking

critically and processing information. All three processes are pivotal to the academic study of literature where one is required to critically explore, analyse, reflect and respond to a range of literary texts. However, one teacher highlighted the idea that the English curriculum demanded English teachers to be able to teach a much broader range of language related competencies than those gained through a literature-based university degree (*“The curriculum range demands more knowledge than a literary degree offers”*).

The implications from this study’s findings suggest that even given the challenge presented by the expansion of the English curriculum to include film, media, and educational technologies, an academic background in literature continues to provide the strongest foundational subject knowledge base for English teachers to build self-efficacy beliefs across a range of English strands and competencies.

Findings from this study also revealed a significant relationship between English teacher experience and English teacher efficacy across a range of subject strands and competencies, indicating that the more practical ‘on the job’ experience a teacher has, the greater the levels of positive efficacy for teaching. Such a finding confirms Bandura’s (1986) notion that one of the main sources of efficacy comes from mastery or performance experiences. Bandura (1986) proposed that the more success a person has completing a task, the greater the level of efficacy as a consequence. Thus, the more practical teaching experience one has, the more opportunities are afforded for successful mastery experiences and corresponding increased teacher efficacy levels.

The idea of incrementally building knowledge, skills and confidence was reflected in the comment from an experienced teacher who claimed that being able to make expert judgements about the quality and level of students’ English work came from increasing teacher experience (*“I feel this ability to accurately place a student’s work at an achievement level has come from years of teaching”*). Such a finding has implications for teacher education programmes, especially where opportunities for trainee teachers to have practical teaching experience in real classroom situations, may be limited. This finding also affirms the idea that teachers need increasing opportunities to successfully practise teaching theories and teaching skills. Subject content knowledge on its own is unlikely to be enough to build strong teacher efficacy beliefs.

The significant main effect for *professional development* produced on all four teacher efficacy subscales revealed in this study also indicated that along with teacher experience, the amount of ongoing in-service professional development opportunities a secondary English teacher undertakes, contributes to increased levels of teacher efficacy. Previous studies have not explored this relationship and yet such a finding has important implications for pre-service teacher education and in-service professional development.

A significant difference was revealed between *a little* professional development and *extensive* professional development on all four teacher efficacy subscales. There was also a significant difference reported between *a little* professional development and *considerable* professional development for *Confidence in Knowledge and Teaching* suggesting that smaller amounts of professional development or training in core English teaching knowledge could make a significant difference to increases in positive teacher efficacy. A possible explanation for this significant difference could be related to the reading and writing literacy and student motivation items that loaded on *Confidence in Knowledge and Teaching*.

The increasing number of secondary students presenting in New Zealand schools with poor literacy levels is contributing to a cycle of reluctance, low motivation, low achievement, negative feedback to teachers and students, and thus lowered efficacy beliefs for many teachers. A closer examination of individual scores revealed that even some highly experienced teachers with extensive levels of professional development, still reported low efficacy scores for the *Confidence in Knowledge and Teaching* items related to specific literacy strategies (reading). Teacher anxiety about literacy levels and lack of training and professional development to address literacy problems as English teachers was raised in many of the teachers' comments (e.g., "*Teachers, English or otherwise, have little or no understanding of how to teach context-based strategic reading skills in their subject. There is a glaring gap in their training and subsequent professional development*").

Such a finding concurs with the concerns raised by an evaluation of literacy in New Zealand secondary schools reported in *Literacy in New Zealand Schools: Reading* (Education Review Office [ERO], 1997). This report summarised a study of how the implementation of curriculum policies in schools was contributing to meeting the New

Zealand government's National Educational Goal [NEG 5] of *high levels of competence in basic literacy*. The overall conclusion of ERO's study was that literacy skills and strategies are not being taught effectively or consistently across New Zealand secondary schools. The Education Review Office study found that the seven schools that were providing relatively good literacy programmes did have common elements: first, the active promotion of reading skills across learning areas (not just confined to English classes); and second, the comprehensive in-service training of teachers. The wider implication from this conclusion, then, is that increased training and professional development, combined with a school-wide sharing of responsibility, can raise the quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning programmes.

The finding of the present study that indicated a positive relationship between teacher professional development and teacher efficacy was also consistent with The Education Review Office's (1997) findings. A number of teachers in their comments identified subject knowledge and professional development as direct contributors to positive professional confidence and capability. (e.g., "*I am looking forward to attending professional development courses this year. I believe they will enhance my ability to become an effective teacher*"). Some teachers also recognised the link between employing specific effective strategies, and increased student motivation.

Furthermore, some teachers claimed to understand what constituted effective practice, but doubted their ability to enact this in their own English classes. Many of the teachers who expressed concerns about student literacy levels, and their own lack of specific teaching skills to address these learning needs, acknowledged the need for professional development to help build their specific teacher knowledge, skills and confidence (e.g., "*There are still areas of concern, but through professional development, I am sure I will learn new techniques and gain confidence in these areas*").

This suggested connection between specific competencies and professional development signals a way forward with teacher education and teacher professional development. In-service courses for practising teachers need to be tailored to meet specific subject competencies and skills. Furthermore, Such courses need to take account of cognitive motivational theories where facilitators understand how to nurture the formation of teacher efficacy beliefs, and to show teachers how to build efficacy beliefs in their

students. Given that efficacy information comes from four main sources, it is these elements that should be considered when designing and implementing professional development courses for both practising teachers and pre-service teacher education programmes for student teachers.

Do pre-service English teachers at the commencement of their teacher training with little or no teaching experience demonstrate the same level of self-efficacy beliefs as practising English teachers?

Results from this study indicated that significant differences teacher efficacy beliefs exist between pre-service secondary English teachers and practising English teachers, with practising teachers displaying more positive efficacy than pre-service teachers across a range of English strands and related competencies. This finding supports the idea that increases in positive teacher efficacy correspond with increasing levels of teaching experience and professional development.

Bandura (1986) proposed that mastery experiences are the most powerful source of efficacy information and that the perception that a performance has been successful raises efficacy beliefs, contributing to the expectation that performance will be proficient in the future. Practising English teachers are more experienced, and therefore, more likely to have undertaken more professional development than pre-service teachers. It is likely that the pre-service English teacher participants would have drawn very little, if any, efficacy information from prior mastery experiences in teaching.

The idea of pre-service teachers drawing limited efficacy information from prior mastery experiences was reflected in one of the teacher's comments: (*“Being in the beginning stages of teaching, it's hard to say what my ability is, so responses are not based on actual experience in many cases”*). Some of the pre-service teachers' efficacy information for their predicted competency judgements may have come from vicarious experiences where they had seen the specific tasks in ETEQ items modelled by associate teachers while on teaching practicums, or by teacher educators during teacher training programmes. Furthermore, according to Bandura (1986) the more closely the trainee teacher relates to the practising teacher, the stronger the impact will be on teacher efficacy.

Other pre-service English teachers' efficacy judgements may have been made based on confidence in their content knowledge gained through academic qualifications. Furthermore, in line with Bandura's idea that emotional and physiological states can also contribute to efficacy beliefs, it is possible that some of the pre-service participants' predicted efficacy judgements would have been shaped to some extent, by feelings of excitement and optimism as they embarked on training for a new career. (e.g., "*As a student teacher I am idealistic about my abilities*"). For some participants, this 'newness' could also have caused heightened anxiety, and thus could have influenced their efficacy self-predictions.

According to Ross (1998) experienced teachers develop a stable set of core beliefs about their teaching competence and they use these core beliefs to produce judgements about each new teaching situation. The pre-service participants in this study were unlikely to have developed a stable set of core teaching self-beliefs, and would have relied more on analysing the item task to make a predicted judgement of competence.

This idea of experienced teachers having a stable set of core efficacy beliefs could explain why practising English teachers displayed slightly higher teacher efficacy scores for *Confidence in Teaching Viewing and Presenting* than pre-service English teachers, even though their teacher efficacy for *Confidence in Teaching Viewing and Presenting* was clearly lower than the other three areas assessed by the ETEQ. Practising English teachers still reported a higher overall level of teacher efficacy than the pre-service participants, even though the mean scores for *Confidence in Teaching Viewing and Presenting* were relatively low for both groups. It is likely that practising teachers held a more stable set of beliefs about their predicted capabilities, and even though they were less efficacious in relation to viewing and presenting competencies, they could make self-judgements of capability based on a core set of beliefs about themselves as teachers.

Some studies (e.g., Broussard et al., 1988) have found that pre-service teachers are more optimistic than practising teachers, and other studies (e.g., Brown & Gibson, 1982) have found that teachers in the later stages of their careers with extensive teacher experience, displayed lower teacher efficacy. These findings were not supported by the present study. In summary, then, results from the present study demonstrated that practising secondary

English teachers display greater levels of positive teacher efficacy across a range of English strands and related competencies, than pre-service secondary English teachers.

Is there a relationship between English teacher's efficacy beliefs and English students' achievement levels?

While many of the earlier teacher efficacy studies have focused on establishing the reciprocal relationship between teacher efficacy and student achievement, previous studies have not examined the link between student academic achievement levels and teacher efficacy. In line with Bandura's (1986) central efficacy notion that success raises efficacy, and failure lowers it, it is likely that teachers would feel more positively confident about teaching a class of students who were working at higher curriculum achievement levels (NCEA Levels 1, 2, 3; Year/Grade 11, 12, 13) than they would for teaching students working at lower curriculum achievement levels (Non-NCEA; Year/Grade 9, 10). Non-NCEA could include students at years 11, 12, or 13 who were involved in less academic, alternative programmes of study.

A common trend in secondary schools is to allocate the most experienced teachers and most efficacious teachers to the higher achieving and more senior English classes. This tendency is consistent with Bandura's notion of success raising teacher efficacy. If English teachers spend more time teaching higher achieving students with more successful achievement outcomes, these teachers are more likely to experience more professional satisfaction and a sense of mastery, than those teachers who spend a predominant amount of their time teaching lower achieving students (e.g. non-NCEA) or students at lower curriculum levels (e.g. years 9 and 10).

Results from this study revealed only a slightly significant relationship between student achievement levels and teacher efficacy, with teacher efficacy being slightly more positive when teaching students at higher academic achievement levels. However, some research has found (e.g., Ashton & Webb, 1986) that high efficacious teachers consistently display sound pedagogical practices, and that they are also the teachers with high expectations who produce higher student achievement. The practice of allocating highly efficacious teachers to the more senior classes may serve to produce and support a

reciprocal relationship, where positive teacher efficacy builds positive student efficacy and positive student outcomes.

However, the reverse situation may also exist in schools where teachers with lower efficacy are consistently allocated to junior levels or to lower achieving students in alternative academic courses, creating a relationship that is also reciprocal in nature. The comment from a highly efficacious teacher suggested that the combination of teacher experience, teacher enthusiasm, and capable students contributed to overall teacher confidence (*"I don't want to sound big-headed but as an experienced and enthusiastic teacher who teachers generally well-motivated and skilled students, I feel confident about what I am doing"*).

Synthesis of Findings

In summary, the results showed that English teachers displayed differences in their efficacy beliefs across a range of English curriculum strands and related competencies. These differences reflected the recent changes and expansions to the English curriculum where new elements have been introduced that differ from the traditional core English strands, and have introduced a corresponding range of associated new skills and knowledge. Teachers displayed more positive efficacy for teaching the traditional English strands than they did for these newer non-traditional English strands.

If teachers are less efficacious in some newer dimensions of English, they are likely to perform less effectively and their students, in turn, may be likely to experience less successful achievement outcomes in the related competencies. A wider generalisation from this finding is that contextual challenges and changes do influence teacher efficacy, and that curriculum innovation should be accompanied by professional development with related strategies to enhance teacher self-efficacy.

According to the findings of this study, the academic qualifications held by English teachers also appear to be associated with levels of teacher efficacy. Teachers who hold university degrees in literature are more positively efficacious across a range of English

strands and competencies than those who hold academic qualifications in other disciplines such as media or linguistics.

This study further found that more experienced teachers had increased levels of positive teacher efficacy. This finding is consistent with Bandura's (1986) theoretical idea that performance experiences are the most predominant source of efficacy information. The teachers who had been teaching the longest displayed the greatest positive efficacy across a range of English strands and competencies. This study also found that teacher professional development contributed to positive teacher efficacy. Teachers who had undertaken the most amount of professional development displayed the greatest levels of positive teacher efficacy across a range of English strands and competencies.

Therefore, there are relationships between: teacher efficacy and relevant teacher subject content knowledge, gained through undergraduate or post-graduate academic study in traditional literature; teacher efficacy and sound teacher pedagogical knowledge, gained through professional training and development; teacher efficacy and teacher experience, gained through practical teaching experience; and to a lesser extent, teacher efficacy and teaching students at higher achievement levels. The implications from such findings are that efficacious specialist subject teachers can be nurtured if they have the relevant and appropriate academic qualifications when they enter the teaching profession, are provided with multiple and continuing opportunities for ongoing quality professional development, and increasing opportunities for successful practical teaching experiences.

The English Teacher Efficacy Questionnaire [ETEQ] and Teacher Efficacy Research

Researchers (e.g., Pajares, 1996) have argued that self-efficacy is most appropriately measured within a specific context regarding specific behaviours. This study was conducted in order to extend the body of knowledge about teacher efficacy and to gain greater insights into subject-specific teacher efficacy beliefs. Social-cognitive theory assumes that people are capable of human agency, or intentional pursuit of courses of action, and that such agency operates in a process of triadic reciprocal causation. Reciprocal causation is a multi-directional concept that proposes that human agency

results in future behaviour as a function of three interrelated forces: environmental influences, human behaviour, and internal personal factors such as cognitive, affective, and biological processes.

Henson (2001) claimed that this “trinity mutually impacts its members”, determines what we come to believe about ourselves, and affects the choices we make and actions we take. We are products of the dynamic interplay between the external, the internal, and our current and past behaviour (p.3). Bandura (1997) proposed that self-efficacy beliefs were powerful predictors of behaviour because they were explicitly self-referent in nature, and directed toward perceived abilities given specific tasks. This study, then, examined the profiles of secondary English teachers’ self-efficacy beliefs in relation to a range of given specific tasks.

The development of the English Teacher Efficacy Questionnaire [ETEQ] was informed by the findings of previous studies, and by existing teacher efficacy scales. Moreover, the research design took cognisance of some of the theoretical issues surrounding previous teacher efficacy research, such as sources of efficacy information, task analysis, and levels of subject-specificity and subject-congruency.

First, in relation to sources of efficacy information, Bandura’s (1997) proposition that mastery experiences are likely to be the most powerful influence in fostering efficacy was tested in this study by investigating the relationship between years of teacher experience, levels of teacher professional development, and levels of teacher efficacy. In this study, both teacher experience and teacher professional development were related to teacher efficacy, supporting Bandura’s notion that mastery experiences (in this case, increased teacher experience and increased teacher professional development) were associated with positive teacher self-efficacy beliefs.

Second, in relation to task analysis and teaching competence, Tschannen-Moran et al., (1998) argued that teacher efficacy was a joint, simultaneous function of a teacher’s analysis of the teaching task and the self-assessment of the individual’s personal teaching competence, or skill. In assessing self-perceptions of teaching competence, the “teacher judges personal capabilities such as skills, knowledge, strategies, or personality traits balanced against personal weaknesses or liabilities in this particular teaching context”

(p.228). Given that self-efficacy beliefs are futuristic evaluations of expected task performance, Tschannen-Moran et al., (1998) claimed that such evaluations or judgements occurred only after a teacher evaluated his or her current skill level. Furthermore, these judgements occurred only after the teacher's current skill level was weighed against the task analysis. Thus task analysis and assessment of competence occur simultaneously, resulting in an efficacy belief held by the teacher for a given context.

However, the dimension of outcome expectancy must also influence the predicted judgement. Teachers must, therefore, analyse the task and evaluate their personal skills to deliver the task, but the evaluation must be tempered by the feedback from students' achievement outcomes in those specific task elements. In this study, the ETEQ required teachers to make predicted judgements about their personal competence to perform specific English teaching tasks. Teachers completing the questionnaire needed to both analyse the task and evaluate their skills to effectively teach the task. Such judgements or efficacy beliefs would be informed by a teacher's understanding of the discrete requirements of the task and self-knowledge of his/her capability to teach this task in an English classroom. The word *effectively* as used in many of the questionnaire items connotes some type of positive outcome for the students in that class.

The English Teacher Efficacy Questionnaire is a reliable measure for assessing English teachers' task-specific efficacy beliefs. The four-factor structure is robust and meaningful in terms of the national English curriculum and related influences and challenges to secondary English teaching. Questionnaire items reflect the achievement objectives of the national English curriculum ensuring a consistency and commonality of domain conceptualisations and terminology. Moreover, items are worded in such a way as to assess teacher efficacy beliefs where task analysis and evaluation of teaching competence and student achievement occur simultaneously.

It is likely that this complex interplay of reciprocal determination would have shaped the judgements more for the practising teacher participants, than for the pre-service teacher participants. The efficacy judgements of the pre-service teachers would more likely have been made based on self-knowledge of personal skills in similar tasks and task analysis. Tschannen-Moran et al., (1998) suggested that task analysis "will be most explicit for

novice teachers and for those entering a new teaching assignment. Experienced teachers are likely to rely more heavily on memories and interpretations of similar past teaching experiences” (p.231). However, they added that this assumption required further empirical evaluation.

Third, in terms of specificity and congruency, and in line with Pajares’s (1996) belief that self-efficacy judgements are most predictive of behaviour when evaluation of capability is matched to specific outcome, the ETEQ items are referenced to specific tasks. While the tendency in efficacy research has been to measure teacher efficacy globally, Bandura (1997) and others have urged researchers to conduct studies that aimed to measure efficacy beliefs more specifically. The questionnaire was designed to retain the contextual base of English teacher efficacy, without being so specific that all ability to transfer the questionnaire to other situations or to generalise from the results was lost. Given that questionnaire items reflected the common terminology of a subject curriculum, transferring these items to another subject domain could be easily facilitated.

ETEQ items are worded to be domain specific but not level specific. In other words, the questionnaire was designed for any secondary English teacher, irrespective of that teacher’s English class’s year level or curriculum level. Cautions against being too situational specific (e.g., Pajares, 1996) were heeded when designing the questionnaire, and while items referenced task-specific skills, they comprised skill subsets that could be transferred to a range of language learning situations.

The findings from this study indicated that subject-specific efficacy beliefs can be identified and assessed in a reliable and valid manner. Furthermore, teachers can display profiles consisting of a range of positive and less positive task-specific and subject-specific efficacy beliefs, and that these beliefs are related to teacher qualifications, years of teaching, and levels of professional training, and student achievement levels.

Critics of teacher efficacy research (e.g., Henson, 2001) have claimed that teacher efficacy measurement has suffered from poor construct validity. Henson (2001) further argued that exploratory factor analytic strategies have dominated development of efficacy instrumentation, and that one critical decision in exploratory factor analyses is how many factors to retain. However, in this study, four factors explained the item structure of the ETEQ with high levels of internal consistency. The internal validity of the scale, then,

was strongly supported. The strong relationship between responses to item clusters (scales) and theoretically related variables (viz., teacher academic qualifications, years of teaching experience, amount of teacher professional development and student achievement levels) added further support to the construct validity of the English Teacher Efficacy Questionnaire.

CHAPTER 7

Conclusion

The present study builds on previous teacher efficacy research, and serves to augment the understandings of teacher efficacy within a specific subject domain by contributing a subject-specific measure of teacher efficacy as well as providing important insights into factors associated with teacher efficacy.

The English Teacher Efficacy Questionnaire [ETEQ] developed for the present study was informed by Bandura's (1986) belief that teacher efficacy measures need to be guided by a conceptual analysis where competencies are linked to outcomes within a specific subject domain and by the integrated teacher efficacy model proposed by Tschannen-Moran et al., (1998) that simultaneously measures personal competence and analysis of a specific teaching task.

The results of this study indicate that subject-specific efficacy beliefs can be assessed using such a subject/task-specific measure. Subject-specific teacher efficacy beliefs clustered in meaningful patterns that could be interpreted in relation to both subject-specific pedagogical demands, and more general teaching pedagogical practices. Furthermore, differences in teacher efficacy beliefs were displayed across a broad range of subject competencies, with English teachers feeling more positive about teaching the traditional core subject competencies than they did about teaching the newer non-traditional subject competencies.

The findings of this study also revealed that there is a relationship between positive English teacher efficacy beliefs and relevant literature-based academic qualifications, increased teaching experience, and ongoing professional development. Such findings have clear implications for teacher education, both pre-service and in-service. The significant difference revealed between the two teacher groups (pre-service and practising) further supports the finding that there is a relationship between teacher efficacy, teacher experience and teacher professional development. Such a finding indicates that once a teacher is involved in active teaching practice, teacher efficacy is

shaped and maintained by expert training and modelling, and increasing teaching experience.

The findings from this study further indicate the areas where teacher efficacy beliefs would respond to professional development and teaching experience. The relatively low teacher efficacy reported for teaching the *viewing* and *presenting* elements of the visual strand, indicates that these are areas where increased professional development opportunities enabling teachers to be upskilled in related content and competencies could serve to raise corresponding specific teacher efficacy beliefs. Increased student achievement in *viewing* and *presenting* is a likely consequence of enhanced teacher efficacy beliefs.

Further Considerations and Recommendations

Several further considerations that arise from this study are worth noting. First, many of the teachers' comments referred to their anxiety about poor student literacy levels and their lack of requisite teacher skills to address the related literacy problems in English classrooms. The Education Review Office's (1997) report *Literacy in New Zealand Schools: Reading* indicated that there is a literacy problem in New Zealand and highlighted many of the complexities between low literacy achievement levels and poor student motivation and engagement.

In line with this literacy concern, researchers such as Darling-Hammond (1998) have found that teacher qualifications and teacher education are the most critical factors in student literacy achievement. While secondary English teachers in New Zealand are being challenged to raise student literacy levels, most secondary English teachers are not expertly trained in reading and related literacy teaching and learning strategies (Partington, 1997). It is likely that in this current situation where many English teachers lack requisite literacy skills and are constantly challenged with poor student literacy levels, teacher confidence and literacy-specific teacher efficacy beliefs could be lowered. Without the professional training and practical experience in literacy skills and strategies, many English teachers may find that perseverance and effort are not enough. Comments from some teachers in this study affirmed the need for more professional training and

development opportunities to be offered in the teaching of reading and writing skills and strategies.

Second, the ETEQ design did not account for other important underlying dimensions such as: efficacy for *task difficulty*; *magnitude* of efficacy; *strength* of efficacy; or *generality* of efficacy - factors that may further explain the nature and effects of teacher efficacy. In relation to *task difficulty*, the design of the English Teacher Efficacy Questionnaire assumed that all items had equal weighting, and made no allowance for innate, or perceived differences in task difficulty, across the questionnaire items.

Future investigations could expand the findings from this study by measuring the *magnitude* of subject-specific efficacy beliefs. The ETEQ could be modified to include steps of increasing difficulty by wording items in line with the graduated achievement objectives outlined in national curriculum statements. Such a modification would provide data on teacher efficacy beliefs both horizontally across a range of competencies, and vertically through increasing levels of competency difficulty.

In relation to *strength* of efficacy, this dimension was only supported in this study by individual participant's comments about his/her teaching efficacy beliefs. The ETEQ assessed participants' efficacy judgements, but did not capture the level of resolve of participants' convictions. Consideration could be given in future investigations for measuring the strength of domain-specific efficacy beliefs.

The ETEQ was designed following Bandura's (1986) theoretical guidelines for increasing accuracy of prediction and generalisation. Bandura's (1986) notion of *generality* of self-efficacy was implied by the fact that three of the six general teaching efficacy items included in the ETEQ loaded on one factor, *Confidence in Knowledge and Teaching*. This loading indicated that teachers linked these general teacher efficacy dimensions with other discrete competencies, rather than measuring general teacher efficacy per se.

The extent to which the individual participants' successes or failures with specific language tasks influenced their expectancies in a limited specific way, or extended to similar behaviours or contexts was not investigated in the present study. However, the finding that increased levels of teaching practice and professional training influenced

levels of positive efficacy in some dimensions did suggest an element of generality. Further investigations that examine the extent to which subject-specific and task-specific teacher failure or teacher success are transferred to similar teaching contexts are recommended.

Further, the present study design did not take into account a range of external influences such as school resources, school environment, the impact of a particular school culture or ethos; all dimensions that Bandura (1997) recognised as contributors to teacher efficacy formation and maintenance. However, some of these aspects were mentioned as being perceived barriers to teaching and learning in participants' qualitative comments. Future investigations of these dimensions are recommended in order to broaden our understanding of teacher efficacy, especially in the area of subject-specific teacher efficacy beliefs.

In line with the recommended development of teacher efficacy research, this present study employed an integrated model as recommended by Tschannen-Moran et al., (1998) where questionnaire items by their very design required participants to simultaneously assess personal competence and analyse a specific task, so that both competency and contingency are considered in the resultant efficacy judgements. The findings of this study highlight the usefulness of developing domain-specific efficacy instruments as an obvious next step in the maturation process of teacher efficacy research.

The ETEQ serves to enhance teacher efficacy research in a subject-specific way. The findings of this study suggest teacher efficacy beliefs can be both subject and task-specific, and that subject teachers can display efficacy profiles that reflect contextual influences such as curriculum developments. The efficacy profiles revealed by both the practising teachers and the pre-service teachers affirmed this notion. Evidence from this study provides substance to the claim that teacher efficacy is context-specific, and that teachers can feel efficacious for teaching particular subjects, or tasks, to certain students in specific settings, and they can be expected to feel efficaciously different under different circumstances.

Future studies are recommended that build on the idea of subject specificity with the use of more rigorous analytical strategies. Because current conceptualisations of teacher efficacy have been largely driven by rationale and theory, the utilisation of confirmatory factor analyses is recommended. In particular, confirmatory factor analysis methodology would allow future teacher efficacy studies to test the factorial invariance of scores across samples. Such a process is recommended as a next step in teacher efficacy research.

Future studies need to examine teacher efficacy beliefs in specific contexts and their relationships with other influential arbiters. Research has also clearly demonstrated that effective teachers are positively efficacious teachers. At the secondary school level, effective specialist subject teachers are those who are positively efficacious across a range of subject competencies. Moreover, efficacious teachers are typically the risk-takers and the innovators, and given the changing and expanding nature of subject English, it is vital that secondary English teachers are positively efficacious across a range of subject skills and competencies. It is vital also that we understand “how secondary teachers shape their professional knowledge and practice in the socially and culturally diverse contexts of their classrooms” (Patrick, 2003).

A recent study of initial teacher education in New Zealand (Cameron & Baker, 2004) claimed that there was a clear need for more research on initial teacher education:

There is a need for research that contributes to an understanding of the critical components of effective teacher education and that sheds light on how we might conceptualise and define the outcomes of teacher education. (p. 68)

The findings of this study highlight the importance of teachers having: (1) appropriate academic qualifications that provide sound subject content knowledge; (2) pre-service and in-service training and professional development that address curriculum innovations and/or changes and incorporate teacher self-efficacy strategies; and, (3) maximum opportunities to engage in successful teaching practice and mastery experiences. Understanding how efficacy beliefs are formed and once formed, how they are maintained, should be central to teacher education, teacher development and teacher support. As a basis for enhancing teacher effectiveness, this study highlights the

importance of further systematic empirical investigation of domain-specific and context-specific teacher efficacy for both pre-service and practising teachers.

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Appendix A

Appendix A illustrates an information letter to participants, a cover sheet, the questionnaire, and a consent form. The coversheet provides demographic (age, gender) and other information (academic qualifications, teaching experience, and professional development, student class and achievement level predominantly taught by the participant).

ENGLISH TEACHER CONFIDENCE

Participation is completely voluntary and all personal information will remain confidential.

Dear

This questionnaire is designed to help gain an understanding of the levels of confidence and self-beliefs secondary teachers have in delivering the English Curriculum. All items included in the questionnaire relate to specific teaching and learning activities derived from achievement objectives (level 4) of *English in the New Zealand Curriculum* (EINZC). The items ask you to predict confidence judgements of your capability to perform specific tasks related to teaching English. Such judgements will be based on your experience as a teacher and your beliefs in your own teaching competence and capability.

The questionnaire also asks for information on your academic qualifications, years of teaching, and involvement in teacher professional development. This information will be used to explore the relationship between teacher efficacy and other factors such as these.

You are also asked to provide some information about the curriculum levels and a rating of the achievement level (above average, average, below average) of the students you teach most frequently. When providing a rating of the achievement levels of the students you most frequently teach, you should make a professional judgement based on external and internal assessment results and the curriculum level achievement objectives.

Thank you very much for taking your valuable time to fill in this questionnaire. Your assistance is greatly appreciated.

Sally Hansen

English Teacher Confidence

Thank you for participating in this research. Your identity will be anonymous.

Sally E. Hansen

Gender Male Female

Age 20-30 years 30-40 years 40-45+ years

Academic Qualifications

What was the primary focus of your main academic qualification for teaching English?

Literature Media Studies Linguistics Drama Other

Professional Development

How much professional development have you had in relation to the English Curriculum, and the teaching and assessment of English, since completing your pre-service teacher training?

(An *extensive* amount of professional development would be at least four in-service workshops, or professional training opportunities attended in any one teaching year; *considerable* would be at least 3; *some* would be at least 2; *a little* would be 1 or less).

Extensive Considerable Some A little

Teaching Experience

How many years have you been teaching English?

0-5 years 5-10 years 10-20 years 20+ years

Student Curriculum Achievement Level

What level do you teach most frequently?

Non-NCEA NCEA 1 NCEA 2 NCEA 3
(or equivalent) (or equivalent) (or equivalent)

Teacher Rating of Student Achievement Level

How would you rate the achievement of the students you most frequently teach?

Below Average Average Above Average

Directions

Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with each statement by circling the appropriate number to the right of each statement.

Key
1 = Strongly Agree
3 = Moderately Disagree
2 = Moderately Agree
4 = Strongly Disagree

- | | | | | | |
|----|--|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | I can confidently provide structured opportunities for students to listen and interact effectively with others in discussion groups | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 2 | I am not confident about teaching students effective strategies for writing coherent, logical instructions or explanations | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 3 | I am confident that I can teach students strategies for writing effectively in appropriate styles for specific authentic contexts | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 4 | I can teach students the appropriate steps for presenting a logical argument in written form with clearly linked main and supporting ideas | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5 | I am not very confident in my ability to accurately assess students oral presentations e.g. speeches | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 6 | I am confident that I can effectively teach students to understand and apply the codes and conventions of stage drama | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 7 | I can speak confidently and effectively in a range of situations and could teach students to do this also | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 8 | I am confident that I can teach students to identify, understand and respond to literary elements such as characterisation and setting. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 9 | I believe I can provide effective learning opportunities for students to respond to and interpret meanings, ideas, and effects in films | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 10 | I am not confident in my ability to accurately assess transactional writing | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 11 | I do not feel confident about using drama games/starters effectively in my English programme | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 12 | I have a sound understanding of cinematic codes and conventions and can teach these effectively when viewing film in my classes | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 13 | I am conversant with a range of educational technologies and can show students how to use them effectively in their own static and moving image production | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

- | | | | | | |
|----|---|---|---|---|---|
| 14 | I believe I have a sound understanding of the concept of 'literary style' and can teach my students to write effective literary essays. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 15 | Sometimes I don't know how to turn students on to English | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 16 | I feel confident that I can recognise explicit and implicit messages in oral texts and can easily teach my students to do likewise | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 17 | I am confident about initiating and facilitating a range of effective drama ideas with students | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 18 | I feel that I can teach students effective strategies for producing quality creative/poetic writing | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 19 | I am not confident about using information retrieval mechanisms such as the internet or library databases in my English teaching | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 20 | I am confident in my ability to teach students strategies for effectively 'reading' and responding to visual texts | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 21 | I am not confident in my ability to provide a range of structured opportunities for my students to effectively communicate to others | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 22 | I am confident about teaching strategies for developing effective comprehension/close reading skills with unseen texts | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 23 | I believe I can teach students to respond effectively to a variety of literary genres | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 24 | I am confident that I can appropriately motivate students to capture their personal experiences, ideas and feelings in expressive writing | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 25 | I am confident in my ability to teach students accurate proofreading skills | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 26 | I am a confident speller and can teach students effective spelling strategies | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 27 | I am not confident in my ability to select appropriate teaching tasks for visual language | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 28 | It is easy for me to design interesting and appropriate performance tasks based on a text such as a dramatic monologue | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 29 | I feel confident about providing positive learning opportunities for a range of ability levels in an English class | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 30 | I have a sound knowledge of reading skills and strategies and can teach students to read aloud effectively | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 31 | I have a good understanding of poetic and language devices and can teach | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

students to use these confidently in their own writing

- | | | | | | |
|----|--|---|---|---|---|
| 32 | I believe I have a good understanding of the principles of assessment and can design clear and appropriate assessment schedules for all the tasks I initiate in my English programme | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 33 | I am not confident about teaching students how to use correct grammatical constructions for effective writing | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 34 | I am confident that I can motivate students to read independently | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 35 | I am not confident in my ability to teach appropriate strategies for improving comprehension skills | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 36 | I am confident that I can motivate reluctant learners to enjoy English | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

Are there any additional comments you would like to make about your predicted confidence or self-beliefs about yourself as a teacher of English?

You may wish to comment on curriculum or assessment aspects of English teaching/learning in this section.

Thank you once again for your time in filling in this questionnaire

Sally Hansen

Massey University College of Education

English Teacher Confidence Questionnaire

Consent Form

Could you please sign the form below acknowledging that you have read and understood all the conditions associated with this study.

I,, understand that the information from this questionnaire is to be used for research purposes for a doctoral study in the area of teacher efficacy. I also understand that the identities and any personal details of all participants will remain completely confidential to the researcher.

Signed: _____

Date: _____