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Language, Migration and Continuity of Being:  
Notions of Migrant Language Proficiency and Self-Concept  
among Multilingual Migrants in Aotearoa-New Zealand.

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## Abstract

Migration entails adjustment and change, a process crystallized in the way language use patterns, proficiencies and identifications change. Although migrants are often bi/multilingual, their language proficiency tends to be associated with fluency in the host language. Such a monolingual approach is fundamentally at odds with the ethnolinguistic diversity in migration contexts and has prevented a more holistic approach to the dynamic realities of bi/multilinguals. It has also perpetuated a view of linguistic proficiency as technical skill, judged according to idealized monolingual norms. Little is known of speakers' own notions of proficiency in their existing *migrant languages* (ML) and the impact on their social-psychological makeup as their linguistic repertoire undergoes changes in use, function and status. This research investigated proficiency as a matter of conceptualization through its users, including its role for migrants' continued sense of self in the face of sociolinguistic discontinuities. A three-phase research design involving focus groups, a postal survey and follow-up interviews was used with a sample of migrants from a wide range of ethnolinguistic backgrounds. The study found evidence for a multidimensional conceptualization of *migrant language proficiency* (MLP) with a complex range of underlying motivations and a strong emotional attachment to ML, revealing ML as a linguistic resource crucial for self-construction. The present study aimed to provide a deeper understanding of the dynamic nature of these matters to contribute to a socio-culturally grounded view of proficiency and self-concept to help reveal some of the complex processes associated with migrants' social, cultural and psychological wellbeing. The study proposes bi/multilingualism as a settlement target to facilitate this outcome and to foster a sense of self that accommodates multiple identities. Investment in languages promotes an inclusive society of global citizens and complements New Zealand's official Māori/English bilingualism.



## Abbreviations and Terms

<i>ML</i>	Migrant language(s), that is any language or languages other than English or <i>te reo māori</i> . The term reflects the transitory nature of both linguistic and social-psychological dynamics associated with the migration experience.
<i>MLP</i>	Migrant language proficiency, as conceptualized by the respondents in this study.
<i>Bi/multilingual</i>	A collective term that encompasses bilingualism, trilingualism and multilingualism, either at the individual and/or societal level. This composite term avoids possible confusion, particularly in the New Zealand context where a common connotation exists in relation to Māori/English bilingualism.
<i>Host language &amp; host society</i>	The majority language spoken in the receiving country, for example, English in New Zealand in the case of the present study.
<i>L2</i>	Used to refer to any additional language learnt formally, including cases of multilingual speakers, who may have more than two languages already.
<i>SLA</i>	Second Language Acquisition.



## Preface

### *The issues*

Migrants' typically experience changing patterns of language use and proficiencies, fluctuating orientations towards their languages as well as the emergence of new and possibly multiple identities. Their languages are associated with their past histories and have the potential to connect them with their future *being* and *becoming* in the new sociocultural context. All too often, however, there are expectations that migrants will shift completely to the language of the host society to facilitate acculturation.

Studies of minority languages have typically investigated language maintenance or language shift, involving the assessment of speakers' discrete skills through methodologies conceptually and practically informed by the Second Language Acquisition (SLA) paradigm, where proficiency is defined by the idealized native speaker (NS) benchmark. This approach may have little relevance in relation to the languages of migrants (ML), which tend to be either first languages or heritage languages, with different needs and patterns of use emerging from new cultural and sociolinguistic contexts. Treating proficiency as a discrete construct can have far-reaching consequences as it determines access to and participation in society, particularly in terms of social integration and employment, where bi/multilingual proficiencies and patterns of speech may be disregarded or greeted with suspicion (Human Rights Commission, n.d.).

*The approach*

The present study employed an investigative framework that draws on socio-cultural theory (Lantolf, 2000; Norton, 2001), an ecological view of language use and learning (Van Lier, 1996, 2000) and insights from social psychology. This contextually grounded theoretical perspective was adopted to explore migrants' own notions of proficiency and to develop an alternative explanatory model, which takes into account actual practice and functions of language in use (*pragmatic*) as well as normative notions that possibly underlie such practice (*autonomous*).

The emphasis on perceptions of proficiency in ML to the exclusion of the host language may represent an artificial separation at variance with a holistic perspective, and it appears inconsistent with the notion of bi/multilingual proficiency. This emphasis was adopted partly for the purpose of limiting the scope of the study. More importantly, the specific interest in ML aimed to provide insights into ML-related issues and to complement the one-sided focus of applied linguistics on SLA (Johnson & Johnson, 1998). The approach adopted here is not intended to reinforce the notion of bi/multilingual people as multiple monolinguals.

*How do proficiency and self connect?*

Both notions, proficiency and self, are a matter of self-perception, and they are linked in the sense that language contributes to self-construction. In situations of flux such as migrant contexts the question arises what impact changing linguistic repertoires and diminishing opportunities and rights to speak in ML have on people's sense of self. Much is known already about the role of language for identity, but the notion of identity is closely associated with labels such as nationality or ethnicity and may not be broad enough to explore a deeper, more

essential perception of self constructed through language. The notion of self was adopted as an overarching concept that incorporates speakers' identities to create a more interesting research angle, which integrates socio-cultural, linguistic and psychological dimensions. The study therefore sought to answer what proficiency in ML means to its speakers in the first place and to what extent migrants' self-knowledge and their *continuity of being* (Fishman, 2001) relies on the use and functional ability in ML.

Thus, a key assumption underlying the thesis is that ML proficiency ultimately involves subjective evaluation, particularly from the perspective of the speakers themselves. Speaker perceptions may not necessarily match a monolithic four-skills model, particularly if reading and writing abilities have become less relevant in contexts where ML remains primarily a means of oral communication or one of symbolic importance, rather than functional value. After all, language facilitates agency through which individuals construct their subjectivities in social interaction, and the *feeling* that one is proficient may in fact be more important than actual technical skills measured by proficiency tests. It is therefore important to understand the extent to which ML may be an element of what defines a person, beyond labels of identity.

#### *The purpose of the study*

The purpose of the study was to achieve the following objectives:

1. To investigate respondents' normative orientations to MLP in relation to functions and uses deemed to be relevant in the New Zealand context.
2. To identify context-specific dimensions of MLP (notions of proficiency).
3. To explore the affective dimension of ML and its role for self-construction.
4. To develop a user-based research design to promote an emic perspective.

The overall research design and methodology adopted to achieve these objectives are explained in detail in Chapter 4; this includes the research questions (4.2.1). Approval for conducting the research was obtained from the Massey University Ethics Committee in February 1999.

#### *The scope of the study*

The current thesis is limited in the sense that the investigation pertains to the specific New Zealand environment. However, there may be similarities, which allow for comparison with other migration contexts. The scope of the investigation was expanded in terms of multiple ethnolinguistic representation in the sample, which increased the range and depth of views, rather than being limited to a specified community. Also, the integrated perspective contributed to a cross-disciplinary approach that enriched and helped broaden the examination of issues and the interpretation of data.

#### *Outlook*

An overall recommendation of the study relates to a shift in thinking towards an increased recognition of the world as a bi/multilingual context and, associated with that, investment in bi/multilingual outcomes. One of the challenges for investment in languages in the New Zealand context arises from a situation where policy making is committed to Māori/English bilingualism under the provisions of the Māori Language Act 1987 (Māori Language Commission, n.d.). This situation presents an opportunity too in that the social, cultural and linguistic gains of knowing more than one language have already been acknowledged, although cultural sensitivities, first people's rights and the potential for resourcing constraints are likely hurdles. Given the complexities of increasing ethnolinguistic diversity within New

Zealand society, there is an urgent need to address language issues in the long term, which also requires political input and will have to be dealt with as part of a debate on integrating bicultural (i.e. Māori/English) and multicultural realities.

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**CANDIDATE'S DECLARATION**

This is to certify that the research carried out for my Doctoral thesis entitled "Language, Migration and Continuity of Being: Notions of Migrant Language Proficiency and Self-Concept among Multilingual Migrants in Aotearoa-New Zealand" in the School Of Language Studies, at Massey University, Turitea, New Zealand is my own work and that the thesis material has not been used in part or in whole for any other qualification.

**Candidate's Name:**

Ute Gerda Walker

**Signature:**

Ute Walker

**Date:**

23 12 / 2004



**SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION**

This is to certify that the research carried out for the Doctoral thesis entitled "Language, Migration and Continuity of Being: Notions of Migrant Language Proficiency and Self-Concept among Multilingual Migrants in Aotearoa-New Zealand" was done by Ute Gerda Walker in the School Of Language Studies, Massey University, Turitea, New Zealand. The thesis material has not been used in part or in whole for any other qualification, and I confirm that the candidate has pursued the course of study in accordance with the requirements of the Massey University regulations.

**Supervisor's Name** Cynthia White  
**Signature** Cynthia J. White  
**Date** 20/2/04



**CERTIFICATE OF REGULATORY COMPLIANCE**

This is to certify that the research carried out in the Doctoral Thesis entitled "Language, Migration and Continuity of Being: Notions of Migrant Language Proficiency and Self-Concept among Multilingual Migrants in Aotearoa-New Zealand" in the School Of Language Studies, at Massey University, New Zealand:

- (a) is the original work of the candidate, except as indicated by appropriate attribution in the text and/or in the acknowledgements;
- (b) that the text, excluding appendices/annexes, does not exceed 100,000 words;
- (c) all the ethical requirements applicable to this study have been complied with as required by Massey university, other organizations and/or committees, which had a particular association with this study, and relevant legislation.

Please insert Ethical authorisation code (s) here: MUHEC 99/6

Candidate's Name: Ute Walker  
Signature: Ute Walker  
Date: 25 February 2004

Supervisor's Name: Cynthia White  
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Date: 25/02/2004

## CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

What language do you think in? Who/what are you now? Do you still speak *x*? These are the kind of questions addressed at bilinguals, particularly immigrants, when they find themselves in dominant monolingual immigration contexts. In my own case, the answers to the above questions would probably have been quite different 14 years ago, when I emigrated to New Zealand from Germany. Then, my main interest was to polish and apply my English language skills to address the priority need of any new migrant, that is finding work and fitting into a new neighbourhood and the wider community. Not many thoughts were spared for the first language, even to the point where in some situations I pretended not to know any German, for example, when overhearing German speakers in public places - until things began to feel different.

It is generally assumed that sufficient knowledge of the language of the receiving country will facilitate the process of settling into a new society. In a context such as New Zealand, for example, English ability is an essential requirement for social and economic participation. At the official level this is reflected in the recent increase of the IELTS entry scores required by the New Zealand Immigration Service, who rationalized this step by linking it to improved employment and settlement outcomes (Dalziel, 2002; New Zealand Immigration Service, n.d.b). Yet, fulfilling the requisite language requirements alone does not necessarily result in better employment outcomes and settlement experiences, particularly for migrants from non-

English speaking backgrounds (Henderson, 2002). This situation may be indicative of an underlying monolingual view of the world, which is also less accommodating to second language (L2) varieties of English and bi/multilingual patterns of language use such as code switching. In an increasingly global world, the view of monolingualism as a normal state of affairs is at variance with culturally and linguistically diverse contexts.

Monolingual views and practices have a direct impact on migrants in the sense that they facilitate language shift and, inevitably, the loss of the languages newcomers bring with them. Letting go of one's (m)other tongue seems a logical thing to do when there is one commonly shared *lingua franca*. In my own case, however, ongoing immersion in the English-speaking environment over the years has been accompanied by a gradual awareness of an emptying space and feelings of incredulity. Could I really be forgetting my own German language? Why was producing a kind of *denglish* beginning to worry me, when I could perfectly well say anything I want in English anyway? Why was my sense of Germanness intensifying beyond what had more or less been a matter of nationality? Why was I making a more conscious attempt to use German with other speakers and even taking proactive steps to help others retain their German<sup>1</sup>?

A common metaphor for the feelings I was grappling with describes them as the need to *be in touch with one's roots*, yet when people go back to visit their home countries they often feel strangely out of place. This experience is inextricably linked with our languages, changing patterns of language use and proficiencies and the way we identify ourselves and are identified

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<sup>1</sup> Walker (1997)

by others, not least via the languages we speak. The sense of disconnectedness and being out of place because of cultural and linguistic difference was vividly illustrated by Irene Turner-Crombie (National Radio, 2003), who grew up in New Zealand as a child of Jewish parents. The perception of difference she experienced at home was relived when visiting Israel to reconnect with her Jewish roots and feeling “dislocated yet again”, purely because she did not speak Hebrew.

My own interest in the linguistic, social and psychological transformations migrants experience derives from a triple perspective: as a bilingual individual and immigrant, as a member of an increasingly diverse NZ society and as a linguist. The challenges and ambivalences associated with language, fluctuating proficiencies and identifications are mirrored in the experience of many other fellow immigrants. Curiosity about these issues and the possible implications for migrants, their communities and wider society ultimately inspired the writing of this thesis.

### **1.1 A WORLD OF DIVERSITY – A WORLD IN CONTACT**

Diverse societies have emerged increasingly in the context of postmodern, postcolonial patterns of social and international relations and the forces of globalisation, particularly through increased international migration. Migration is one of the major causes of language contact (Sankoff, 2001) and a source of bilingualism (Appel & Muysken, 1987), albeit as a transitional stage, characterized by the ultimate return to monolingualism due to language shift to the dominant language after only two or three generations (Clyne, 1991; Grosjean, 1982; Holmes & Harlow, 1991).

The increase in contact between people from different language backgrounds in the wake of globalisation and ongoing worldwide migration is reflected in the growth of the field of language contact studies (Clyne, 1992, 2003). As a multidimensional phenomenon the study of language contact with its early roots in Haugen (1953) and Weinreich (1953) has focused on structural changes, linguistic processing and sociolinguistics aspects centering on questions about change and stability of languages exposed to crosslinguistic influences (Sharwood Smith & Kellerman, 1986). These influences have been investigated from different vantage points, which integrate the paradigms of language maintenance and shift (Fishman, 1991; Clyne, 1991) as well as language attrition and language loss in both individuals and speech communities (Andersen, 1982; Fase et al., 1992; Seliger & Vago, 1991).

Removed from their original context, immigrants typically experience restricted input and use through reduced sociolinguistic functions and domains, leading to a "reduction in linguistic form and the creation of gaps in the individual's linguistic repertoire" (Anderson, 1982, p. 87) and thus declining proficiency or language erosion (Fase et al., 1992). The underlying psycholinguistic processes manifest themselves, for example, in syntactical simplification, linguistic restructuring, lexical reduction and transference from L2 (Andersen, 1982; Clyne, 1967; Sharwood Smith & Kellerman, 1991). The description of these processes often involves normative judgments where monolingual native speaker (NS) norms serve as a benchmark, for example, in acceptability judgment tests to assess first language (L1) competence shift.

The linguistic manifestations of language contact represent a case of language variation (Fase et al., 1992). Learner language represents a special case of variation which has been

conceptualized in language acquisition theory through the *interlanguage* (IL) hypothesis (Selinker, 1972). IL describes an interim stage in the process of developing a new language towards an idealized NS target form, a paradox which Selinker (1992, p. 261) acknowledges does not correspond very well with a multilingual reality where language contact phenomena abound. In the case of ML speakers, deviation from these norms may not be solely due to declining norm awareness in the absence of L1 models but may also be a reflection of emerging local norms or the deliberate use of code-switching as a bilingual communication strategy (Auer, 1998). The current study attempts to throw light on how speakers themselves might view these processes of change and continuity, particularly in view of the fact that language contact phenomena also have social and affective correlates. For example, code-switching and pragmatic transference of discourse markers such as the adding or dropping of politeness markers can be a reflection of identity as well as communication needs in contact situations (Clyne, 2003).

According to Fishman (1966) linguistic changes in contact situations cannot be separated from “ongoing psychological, social and cultural processes” (p. 424). Thus the affective dimension of language contact is as crucial as sociolinguistic or psycholinguistic ones because, ultimately, “linguistic behaviour in relation to languages in contact is both an expression of multiple identity and a response to multiple identity” (Clyne, 2003, p. 2). While identities can change and reconstruct, the ultimate loss of migrant languages (ML) over generations reveals another affective dimension, that is a sense of continuity that either disappears or becomes limited to non-linguistic practices as migrants shift away from ML. The emotional effect this may have is summarized by Hale (1998) as follows:

The personal costs of language loss, the grief felt by countless numbers of people who have been prevented, for one reason or another, from acquiring the language, or languages, of their parents, or the grief of parents who, for one reason or another, have not been able to give to their children the full portion of linguistic tradition which they themselves possessed. (p. 213)

There has been increasing recognition of the linguistic dimension of diverse societies, albeit with a sense of unease which is only gradually transforming into a positive evaluation of linguistic diversity as Cameron (1995) considers:

Postmodern societies are often linguistically diverse, migration being one consequence of a globally organized economy, and linguistic diversity has long been felt to require management. Currently, however, there is a shift towards evaluating diversity more positively, and seeking to preserve rather than eliminate it. (p. 28)

More positive perspectives towards multilingualism reflect a growing appreciation of linguistic diversity as the rule rather than the exception.

### **1.1.1 Bi/multilingualism – a common state of affairs**

Multilingual abilities are more common than often thought, and bilingualism has been recognized as a worldwide phenomenon (Cook, 1992, 1993; Edwards, 1995; Holmes, 2001). Monolingualism is associated with the concept of nation states, which, according to Harold Carter, may have lost relevance in an increasingly globalized world:

The world is not divided into discrete monolingual cultures contained within well-defined geographical areas. Indeed, it is the interaction of cultures, represented by

language and religion, which has become a defining element of the post-modern world.

(Carter, 1995, p. viii)

Bilingualism or multilingualism is thus a normal state of affairs in many parts of the world and, as Holmes (2001) observes, "in countries like Zaire or India, the idea that you should stop speaking one language when you start learning another is inconceivable" (p. 67). Although bi/multilingualism is inconsistent with the Chomskyan assumption of language as a unitary system and invariable monolingual competence, a monolingual mindset still holds sway (Wardhaugh, 2002), with *monolingual bias* dominating the second language acquisition (SLA) paradigm in particular, as Cook (2002a) believes. Focussing solely on a person's second<sup>2</sup> or additional language fails to recognize bi/multilinguals as complete people. For example, typecasting migrants as inadequate monolinguals, that is in terms of their host language proficiency, may be in stark contrast with their self-perception as bi/multilinguals. This stereotype may also impact directly on the level of participation they are afforded in society where they are judged against a monolingual ideal that stigmatizes L2 uses or accents by default. People with more than one language are rarely balanced in their linguistic skills and uses, thus the inability to express thoughts, topics or notions through all one's languages is not unusual (Bialystok, 2001). Comparing and measuring bilingual speakers against monolingual norms is therefore problematic.

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<sup>2</sup> For reasons of consistency the standard terminology of 'second language/L2/ESL' is followed although it is not reflective of the linguistic repertoire in this sample, with a majority of respondents who are multilingual and for whom English may be the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> language.

The function of language as identity marker also becomes more complex where people have proficiency in more than one language. The belief in monolingualism as the norm has been reinforced by "a widespread failure to recognise new and mixed identities" (Rampton, 1995, p. 338), which is out of touch with the reality of many migrants who experience fluctuations both in terms of their languages and the way they see themselves or are seen by others. The close connection between language and identity or self-perception thus needs to be examined in relation to the complexities associated with being bi/multilingual to help transcend the monolingual paradigm.

## **1.2 LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY – GAIN OR LOSS?**

The emergence of complex pluralistic groupings in multi-ethnic and multilingual societies often results in linguistic, cultural, and psychosocial discontinuities. Migrants typically find themselves in a state of sociolinguistic flux as they undergo multiple transformations, especially in the case of recent arrivals. Fishman (1991) refers to these post-migration changes as *dislocations* across a range of levels; these dislocations are presented here to help illustrate and define the dynamics of change in relation to ML.

### **1.2.1 Physical dislocations**

In immigration contexts such as New Zealand, migrants vary vastly in terms of their backgrounds, which suggests variation in the sense of separation from their countries of origin. Physical distance to the homeland, amongst other things, tends to affect the ability or

frequency of return visits<sup>3</sup> and may shape attitudes towards language maintenance and the level of integration or assimilation in the host country (Roberts, 1999). However, separation can also be experienced in terms of psychological distance, which may intensify the sense of physical or cultural displacement in the new environment. Migrants' languages may provide a crucial instrument for reducing the experience of distance.

### **1.2.2 Demographic dislocations**

The notion of demographic dislocation refers to the nature of settlement patterns, which affects the availability of social networks (Milroy, 1987) and communities of practice (Wenger, 1998) and impacts on the level of access to interlocutors in migrants' own language(s). Demographic dislocation may also be influenced by levels of education, nationality, age, gender, professional background and so forth, determined to a large extent by the immigration policy of the day. For example, early generations of immigrants to New Zealand included various European groups, the majority of which were British, but also included Yugoslavs, Poles, or German-speaking peoples and arrivals, mainly from China, who sought to make a living during the gold-rush days at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Recent immigration policy changes have led to an influx of highly educated or professional people, particularly from Asian source countries (Statistics New Zealand, 2002a).

### **1.2.3 Sociocultural dislocations**

Social and cultural norms and habits depend on access to cultural frameworks, which, most crucially, include language. The absence of non-linguistic dimensions, which help situate

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<sup>3</sup> For most refugees returning may not be an option at all.

language, for example artifacts or cultural practices such as religious and cultural festivals, are all likely to be instrumental in detracting from the relevance of migrants' languages in the host country. New Zealand's immigrant communities represent a vast array of customs in areas such as religion, education, politics, marriage and child rearing and so forth. Recent migrants in particular are often faced with cultural disruption not only due to cultural or psychological distance but simply because their languages as the medium for these practices have few or no domains or speakers available. Refugees are particularly disadvantaged in this respect as they tend to find themselves isolated from their ethnocultural group, "culturally and socially bewildered [and] suffering the loss of some or all members of their family" (Refugee and Migrant Service, 2001). In the New Zealand context, Pernice, (1994) and Pernice and Brook (1996) have documented the emotional stress associated with refugee experience and the impact this has on mental health.

#### **1.2.4 Economic dislocations**

Migrants often face discontinuities in terms of the economic resources available to them. A major reason is unemployment or underemployment of migrants from non-English speaking backgrounds who gained entry as skilled or qualified people, even where they had high English language levels (Department of Internal Affairs, 1996; EEO Trust, 2001, Ho et al., 1997; Watts & Trlin, 2000a). Not only does this situation result in discontinued sources of income and possibly serious financial difficulties, but it also impacts on the ability to integrate and build networks in the new community, not to mention the potential psychological implications. The economic dislocations are thus not separable from their social-psychological repercussions, and "in a world where the populations in most countries are ethnically diverse,

it is essential to understand the psychological impact of such diversity" (Liebkind, 1992, p. 179).

Given these potential post-migration discontinuities, a better understanding of the implications of changing language patterns and proficiencies for migrants' social, psychological and cultural wellbeing is warranted. Leets and Giles (1995) emphasize the central role language plays in this respect. They argue that if we see language merely as a communication tool we risk missing its emotional and affective dimensions. All too often the powerful presence of a dominant lingua franca leaves the languages of migrants with little or no functional value. This is particularly true in predominantly monolingual societies, where the settlement of migrants is seen exclusively in relation to their fluency in the dominant language of the host society.

The view of language as more than a means for communication is central to the language and identity paradigm; language serves to perform *acts of identity* (Le Page & Tabouret-Keller, 1985), both individually and collectively. Speakers may feel their identity is threatened where they fear assimilation or negative associations with their ethnicity, as for example in the situation experienced by New Zealand's Dalmatian community in relation to the conflict in the former Yugoslavia (Trlin & Tolich, 1995). Identities may also be vulnerable when language does function as an identity marker and the language itself is threatened.

Ignoring the affective or symbolic value of ML as a cultural or ethnic identity marker may also have implications for data collection and interpretation. For example, defining ethnic minorities by linguistic criteria alone can be problematic as "the definition is a social one,

delimiting the set of people for whom a language (in this sense a symbolic entity that they themselves define) has either affective or communicative significance” (Stubbs, 1985, p.18). Reviewing the measurement of concepts such as ethnicity for Census purposes addresses such validity issues and takes into consideration the different perspectives of different people (Statistics New Zealand, 2002a), including conceptualizations of the extent and nature of language proficiency as an ethnic identity marker by ethnic minority groups themselves (Walker, 2001).

Change is a part of human nature and, as environments change, so too do human behaviours and identities. Shifting social and cultural allegiances over time are thus part and parcel of settling into a new society and developing new networks and social practices. As a result, social and national identifications will change and, with that, the labels attached to them. However, what happens to migrants’ sense of self in the process? Changes in people’s languages and cultures have probably come to be regarded as a likely or even inevitable outcome. However, this may not happen without profoundly affecting the way people perceive themselves because the relationship between sociolinguistic adaptation and changes to a person’s essential sense of self may be critically linked to the function and use of language and associated proficiency levels.

Jasinskaja-Lahti and Liebkind (1998) have identified the current lack of a “consistent principled distinction between the different concepts related to language, such as linguistic self-identification, language use, language proficiency or language choice” (p. 210). Given the existence and possible interplay of a range of discontinuities, it is important to understand how migrants themselves come to view their proficiencies, particularly under conditions shaped by

language contact and the influence of a dominant *lingua franca*. Ways of conceptualizing and assessing linguistic behaviour have been derived largely from second language learning contexts, but this assumes that migrants as L2 learners and as ML speakers share the same conditions and needs. The current study attempts to address this fundamental contradiction.

### 1.3 THE CASE OF NEW ZEALAND AS A DIVERSE SOCIETY

Data for the current study were collected in the New Zealand context, an English-dominant immigrant nation with a sociolinguistic profile and linguistic landscape not unlike other multi-ethnic immigration contexts such as Britain, Australia, the United States or Canada<sup>4</sup>. As such it represents a valid context in which to study issues commonly arising from language contact situations in migrant settings.

The country's legacy of colonization and nearly two hundred years of mainly European settlement and ongoing immigration have resulted in a population profile that encompasses the majority European *pakeha* group (mainly of Anglo-Saxon background), the *tangata whenua* (the country's indigenous Māori population) and a range of other minority groups of continental European or non-European origin. Founded on a bicultural framework<sup>5</sup> the nation's increasingly multi-ethnic population has become a defining feature of what is in effect a multicultural and multilingual context.

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<sup>4</sup> With French being the dominant language in Quebec.

<sup>5</sup> As circumscribed by the Treaty of Waitangi (Waitangi Tribunal, 2002)

Recent Census data reflect New Zealand's growing ethnic diversity as a result of changing population dynamics over the last decade. The proportion of New Zealand residents born overseas has steadily increased over the last hundred years, with one in three in 1901, one in six in 1991 and nearly one in five born overseas in 2001, when significantly higher numbers originated from Africa, the Middle East and Asia (Statistics New Zealand, 2002b). In 2001, for the first time, more people of Asian ethnicity than people of Pacific origins were counted; these two groups accounted for 6.6% and 6.5% of the population respectively (Statistics New Zealand, 2002a, p. 6). Between the 1991 and 2001 censuses the number of Asian peoples doubled and the number of those identifying as Māori increased from 13% to 14.7%. The *other* ethnic groups category increased to 0.7%, up from 0.2% in 1991, while the number of those identifying as European decreased to 80%, down from 83.2% in 1991 (Statistics New Zealand, n.d.a). Over the same decade some groups showed substantial growth with increases of up to nearly 2000% as summarized in Table 1. Appendix A provides an overview of the most recent ethnicity data and illustrates the trend towards a more ethnically mixed population in New Zealand.

Table 1

Ethnic Groups with Growth Rates above 500% (1991-2001)

<b>Ethnic Group</b>	<b>2001 Census</b>	<b>% increase from 1991</b>
Korean	19 026	1946
Arab	2 859	1514
Croat	2 505	1 366
Iraqi	2 145	772
South African	14 913	643
Russian	3 141	555

Note. Summarised from the Office of Ethnic Affairs (2002, p. 28) and rounded to full figures.

### 1.3.1 The ethnolinguistic make-up of New Zealand

Given favourable conditions, growing ethnic diversity entails linguistic diversity, at least in the short term. Languages spoken in New Zealand were counted for the first time in the 1996 Census. With Māori language revitalization and a century and a half of immigration from many non-English speaking countries the nation's increasing linguistic diversity has been captured in the 1996 and 2001 Census figures.

According to the 2001 Census, 82.1 % spoke English as their only language (Statistics New Zealand, n.d.a), down from 90% a decade earlier. There was a 20% increase in the number of multilingual people since 1996 to one in six people in 2001 (Statistics New Zealand, 2002b), when one in fifty people over the age of five did not speak any English at all (Statistics New Zealand, 2002a, p. 8; see also Appendix B). The proportion of those with no English varied by ethnic group, with the European group most likely to speak only one language (90.4 percent) while those in the *other* ethnic groups category tended to be bilingual or trilingual (14.9 percent) (Statistics New Zealand, 2002a). The most widely spoken languages after English are presented in Table 2:

Table 2  
Languages Most Widely Spoken After English

Language	Count
Māori	160,527
Samoan	81,036
French	49,722
Cantonese (Yue)	37,143
German	33,981

Note. Statistics New Zealand (2002a, p. 8).  
Appendix C provides an overview of the languages spoken in New Zealand.

Although New Zealand's immigration policy aims at increasing human capital (New Zealand Immigration Service, n.d.b), it does not explicitly recognize the potential economic benefits of linguistic capital. Knowledge of minority languages and being bilingual may mean an economic advantage (Grin & Vailancourt, 1997), especially where second or foreign language skills are viewed as an asset or as *linguistic human capital* (Bourdieu, 1991; Grin, 1999) and as a contributing force for productive diversity (Cope & Kalantzis, 1997). In the New Zealand context, Watts and Trlin (1999) highlight the economic importance of ethnic minority languages as a linguistic skills base that has so far been underutilized in enterprises such as tourism and trade. If bilingualism constitutes an important factor for the socioeconomic advancement of society as a whole, it does so too for migrants themselves, depending on the extent to which their linguistic capital is recognized.

#### 1.4 THE LANGUAGES OF IMMIGRANTS - OPERATIONALISATIONS

A range of terminology has been used to refer to the languages of immigrants, including *heritage languages*, *community languages*, *native language* or *mother tongue*. The present study adopts a different term altogether; *migrant language* (ML) is used here to refer to any language other than English or Māori, which originates from a source country outside New Zealand. The term was deliberately chosen to emphasize the dynamic nature of immigrants' languages and their experiences after migration. The term offers the following advantages:

- a) It accommodates different speaker generations and thus avoids the problematic distinction between L1 and L2 and the issue of what order, how, or where the languages were acquired.
- b) It shifts the focus from a language that is in the community now to a language that has migrated and, just like its speakers, has been exposed to contact and undergone change.

While the term bilingualism has been used relatively consistently in bilingualism research, definitions of the concept abound. The current study adopted the practice of collapsing bilingualism, trilingualism and multilingualism into one term (bi/multilingualism). This also helped avoid confusion with the use and interpretation of the term bilingualism in the New Zealand context, where it is strongly associated with official Māori/English bilingualism<sup>6</sup>. At the societal level there are many possible permutations of bilingual individuals in multilingual contexts or vice versa and, in this wider sense, the term bi/multilingual encompasses all scenarios at all levels.

The current study's primary interest is in speakers' conceptual orientation to the notion of ML proficiency, particularly in view of the linguistic and affective outcomes of the migration experience. Therefore the focus of the study is on the individual. After all, "groups and communities and the linguistic attributes of such groups have no existential locus other than in

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<sup>6</sup> Māori Language Act 1987: *te reo māori* is an official language in New Zealand (Māori Language Commission (n.d.)

the minds of individuals, and such groups or communities inhere only in the way individuals behave towards each other" (Tabouret-Keller, cited in Coulmas, 1997, p. 323).

### 1.5 AN ECOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

Due to the multifaceted nature of issues arising from language contact the sociolinguistic aspects of language contact are in essence matters of language ecology. A key experience for migrants is an often dramatic change in their sociolinguistic and cultural environments, which not only affects the way they do things - linguistically speaking - but also how they perceive and evaluate their linguistic behaviours and the norms emerging from those new contexts, as illustrated in the following statement:

Social and linguistic habits respond to changing conditions in the environment. But the habits are not due solely to such changes. They are also caused by what individuals and groups *believe* [italics added] to be important to their behaviour in the changing conditions they must face. ...Human beliefs and the behaviour they engender are inseparable from the linguistic symbols in which they are coined. (Mackey, 1979, p. 455)

To the extent that social behaviour is symbolic and expressed through language in interaction, its meaning, relevance and appropriateness is determined by norms and conventions in a particular context or society. Migrants find themselves at the interface between normative systems valid in their originating contexts and norms and expectations emerging in the new context. Whose norms then apply? An evaluation such as "I can write my language well" may

have very different connotations where it is not interpreted on the basis of ideal native speaker norms applicable in the original context. And for those who cannot or do not write in that language, what is the likely impact on their self-identification? These questions point to complex linkages between the dimensions of proficiency as defined by speakers themselves, their norms and expectations under conditions of changing practices, and, ultimately their self-conceptualization as bi/multilingual speakers in the new context.

The ecological approach provides an integrative perspective that also helps avoid monolingual bias (Van Lier, 1996). This is particularly important in the language acquisition context, where both ML and the newly acquired language form part of a person's linguistic environment. This in turn links in with the post-structural emphasis on conditions which facilitate or constrain the extent of agency migrants are afforded to access and utilize their linguistic resources (Norton Peirce, 1995; Norton & Toohey, 2001; Pavlenko & Lantolf, 2000). Sociocultural theory and the ecological perspective provide an overall theoretical framework for the current study as both help emphasize the situatedness of ML speakers in conditions of the host society. These conditions circumscribe what patterns of use are possible within which communities of practice; they determine domains and functional uses and, associated with that, proficiency in those languages.

## **1.6 METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH**

The current study adopted a method that integrates both quantitative and qualitative dimensions. Its primary focus is the experiential description of ML speakers' views and

interpretations of the issues under study in line with phenomenographic methodology (Marton, 1981, 2002). More recently this approach has been extended to what Baumann (1992) and Hannerz (1996) refer to as *habitats of meaning*, determined by both the local context and the agency of individuals in it. This approach corresponds with an underlying ecological view of language because the notion of *habitat of meaning* emphasizes the interplay of factors and allows for insights into a range of understandings of the world.

Migration contexts represent unique habitats of meaning, and these are “emergent and transitory” in nature (Bauman 1992, p. 191, cited in Bartley, 2003, p. 94). Their meanings are not fixed or bounded, and they emerge through practices and meanings in context. The methodological orientation in the present study therefore takes a user-based, that is a more emic rather than etic approach (Chapter 4), aimed specifically at revealing the understandings migrants themselves bring to the issues. Their views are examined in terms of a model of ML proficiency notions (Chapter 2), which is expected to bring out aspects of change and stability at the point of contact. Chapter 3 investigates migrants' languages from the perspective that they afford a sense of being associated with one's pre-migration past, while promoting emerging identities forged on the basis of new ways of social, cultural and linguistic doing, being and becoming. Chapter 4 provides an in-depth overview of methodological considerations and the research design of the current study, followed by analyses of and findings from empirical data from pre-survey focus groups, the main survey and follow-up interviews (Chapter 5 and Chapter 6). The discussion of the findings in Chapter 7 attempts to integrate sociolinguistic and social-psychological dimensions against the wider view of bilingualism as a settlement outcome because migrants' views and aspirations also reflect their settlement experience and the process of adapting to a new sociolinguistic environment.

Chapter 8 presents the overall conclusions drawn from this study. It outlines the implications of the findings and identifies areas for further study.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY: ISSUES, PRACTICES AND CHALLENGES

Language proficiency is of theoretical and practical importance to a wide range of people, situations and fields. Yet, there is a lack of consistency in the use and definition of the notion of proficiency across disciplines, including bilingualism and SLA studies (Cummins, 2000; Davies, 2003). The current study seeks to address this situation, in line with Bialystok's (2001) key question:

What do we mean by language proficiency? What are its components and what is the range of acceptable variation? Although these questions may seem to be prior to any use of language as a research instrument or conclusion about language ability in individuals, they *rarely if ever are explicitly addressed*. (p. 11, italics added)

From an emic perspective the prime focus of inquiry is on ML speakers themselves. Their definitions of what constitutes proficiency change as an outcome of the migration and settlement process, just as patterns of language use, function and, ultimately, proficiency change. The extent to which migrants are open to embracing different kinds of "bilingual potentiality" (Cummins, 1996, p. 7) depends on their expectations and norm orientations as they emerge in migration contexts. The approach taken in this chapter is based on the assumption that a better understanding of ML users' own conceptualization of ML

proficiency will inform research theory and practice and may contribute to improved reliability and validity of concepts.

## **2.1 MIGRANT LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY (MLP): A USER-BASED RATIONALE**

Besides being a catch-all phrase in general everyday use, language proficiency has been a core concept in a number of fields, particularly of course those concerned with language learning and teaching. For migrants, language proficiency has significance in relation to their often bi/multilingual repertoires, even though they are often perceived as L2 learners or users of the host language.

The purpose of this chapter is to shift the focus to migrants' existing languages and provide a rationale for investigating proficiency as it pertains to the languages of migrants. First, a set of definitions and uses of the term *proficiency* will be outlined, followed by a discussion of issues associated with the concept and its measurement. This will become the point of departure for discussing migrant language proficiency (MLP) and how speakers might conceptualize the term in linguistically diverse situations. The discussion will provide the basis for a tentative explanatory model of MLP (see 2.7) underlying the investigation of ML in the New Zealand context.

Figure 1 shows language proficiency as a concept of central importance across some key linguistic disciplines where proficiency may play a role. The figure helps situate language proficiency in relation to a number of relevant fields of study as well as some of the issues associated with matters of proficiency in multilingual contexts.

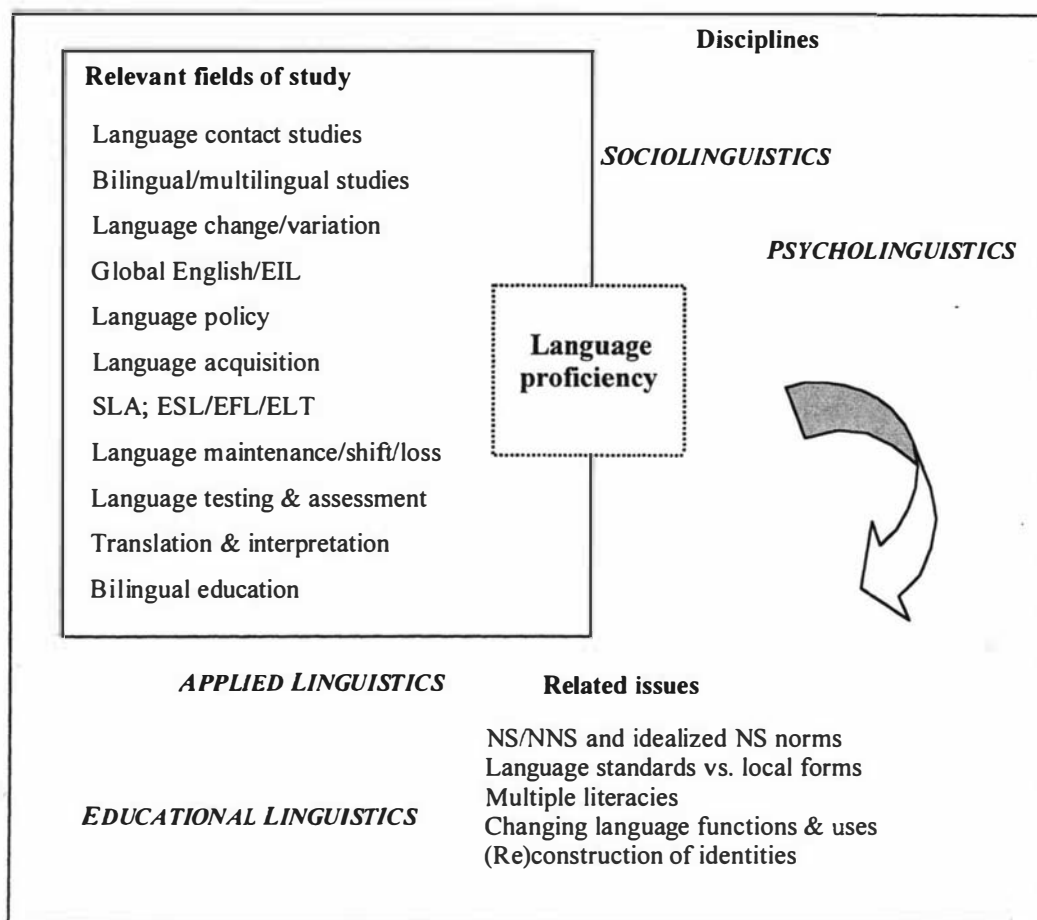


Figure 1. Proficiency across Linguistic Studies: Relevance and Issues

The multidisciplinary applicability of language proficiency may have contributed to its ambiguity and perhaps even contradicts the attempt to define it as a one-fits-all notion. In fact, the existing dominance of applied linguistics and SLA perspectives in the conceptualisation of proficiency is challenged in this chapter as it is inconsistent with the multiplicity of contexts of theory and practice, particularly in the migration context. Migrants are not always or exclusively language learners, and they typically face complex variations in patterns of language use, functions and availability of domains in their existing languages, a situation which gives rise to changes in their linguistic abilities.

A useful approach in the operationalisation of proficiency has been through the description of its component parts, particularly linguistic skills. However, the question then arises as to what extent these represent relevant criteria to evaluate proficiency, as the following statement illustrates:

Is **oral** understanding enough, or should we rather use understanding of **writing** as a criterion? Or the opposite: is understanding writing enough, or should one also understand the oral mode? (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000, p. 12, emphasis original)

The ambiguity of the notion of proficiency is compounded by the complexities of language contact dynamics (Clyne, 2003) in ML contexts. Taking an ecological perspective (see 1.5) provides a crucial underpinning for considering all relevant factors associated with the linguistic environment, including speakers themselves. The present study gives special consideration to the question of ML speakers' own notions of proficiency to provide the rationale for examining the notion of migrant language proficiency (MLP) via a user-based approach, which ties in with the principles of an ecological approach. It is appropriate to understand speakers' own views, expectations and aspirations concerning ML as part of migrants' linguistic ecology, especially in view of the following points:

1. Multilingualism is a "powerful fact of life around the world" (Romaine, 1993, p. 1) and "a normal and unremarkable necessity for the majority in the world today" (Edwards, 1995, p.1),
2. The concept of linguistic and cultural diversity is gaining interest and recognition,
3. Bilingual and/or minority language education in a diverse range of contexts is under ongoing debate and discussion,

4. Bilingual individuals or communities, by the very nature of having more than one language, are in some way affected by one of the aspects outlined above.

An understanding of the views individuals and communities themselves have regarding these points may inform and enrich linguistic theory and practice and complement academic perspectives.

A user-based approach coincides with a perspective adopted by the emerging poststructuralist school of thought (Lantolf, 2000; Lantolf & Pavlenko, 2001; Norton, 2001; Norton Peirce, 1995), which favours methodologies that facilitate the understanding of learner roles and identities in the SLA process. This approach is informed by social constructionist or sociocultural theory (Lantolf, 2000), which also has methodological implications in that it favours ethnographic methodologies which lend a voice to people whose experiences of being and becoming bilingual tend to be marginalized in mainstream SLA studies (Pavlenko & Lantolf, 2000). A user-based rationale thus affords more equality in the research process as the following statement reflects:

The insistence on the 'emic', that is to say, participant-relevant view and opinions, gathered through interviews and the study of diaries and autobiographies, are heard on a par with those of the researchers. (Pavlenko, 2002, p. 297)

In the New Zealand context Christensen (2001) similarly argues that speakers' own aspirations and perspectives need to be taken into account. His survey of Māori language use and proficiency was complemented by a cohort study to provide in-depth information to empower respondents "to express their intentions and make choices in terms of their

conversational interactions with others. They are not merely classified in terms of the established norms of language usage” (p. 104).

Researchers who are members of ethnolinguistic groups under study, may also help enhance an emic perspective, for example, through gaining access to populations more easily. Potential respondents might also be more willing to participate and entrust information to someone with insider status. Examples in the New Zealand context are anthropological or language maintenance studies (e.g. Roberts, 1990; Setiawan, 2001; Shameem, 1995; Verivaki, 1990; Walker, 1995).

Following this approach, the current study draws on and feeds into both sociolinguistics and applied linguistics. It is applied in the sense of social practice, as it is located in "the social community that [applied linguists'] work bears upon" (McCarthy, 2001, p. 135). Therefore, the research findings and otherwise abstract notions may become more meaningful and relevant to real contexts. The research addresses a real world problem, that is the tendency to approach a bi/multilingual issue from a monolingual perspective, in this case the evaluation of minority languages on the basis of NS norms and with SLA methodology (see 2.2).

Adopting a user-based perspective, it is argued here, is of theoretical, practical, methodological and ethical significance because of its potential to:

1. raise awareness of migrants' perceptions and aspirations when undergoing processes of change and continuity, which may assist policy makers, providers of bilingual or mother tongue education, and the wider community in meeting actual needs;

2. provide an additional interpretive dimension for the definition of the multifaceted concept of proficiency;
3. promote the integration of qualitative methods to complement more positivistic research traditions, bringing together micro and macro aspects as recommended by Holmes (1997) and Martin-Jones (1989);
4. reduce monolingual bias in the study of multilingual speakers or communities;
5. inform the development of more valid assessment tools, e.g. survey or census questions on migrants' language abilities.

## 2.2 ORIGIN, MEANINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS OF LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

Philosophically and methodologically the interest in language proficiency and its measurement has its origins in the SLA field. The literal meaning of the term is derived from the Latin verb *proficere*, which refers to making progress or to "advance" (*The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*, 1993, p. 2368). Dictionary definitions also associate proficiency more generally with "expertness" (*Random House Dictionary*, 1987, p. 1545) or with the process of "improvement in skills or knowledge" (*The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*, p. 2368).

Beyond its more general meaning of knowing a language, the construct of proficiency has been defined in a number of different ways. In a more specialized sense, proficiency denotes "the ability to function competently in one's native or second language, involving a sense for appropriate linguistic behaviour in a variety of situations" (Bussmann, 1996, p. 384). These definitions share a common origin in the field of second language learning and

the study of the language acquisition processes where progress is associated with the aim of producing a thoroughly skilled and competent, that is proficient, user of a language. From this perspective language proficiency represents at least partly an outcome of a formal learning process.

Davies et al. (1999, p. 153) provide an operationalisation, which refers to the measurable dimensions of language proficiency:

1. the 'ability' to carry out a specific task in a language, for example, studying or working in a particular job in a language and
2. performance levels based on observable evidence of competence, that is comprehension and production measured by language tests and indicated by test scores or scales (e.g. FSI scales, TOEFL or IELTS scores).

Psycholinguistic definitions refer to proficiency as *ability* or the disposition responsible for successful language learning, while *competence* is used to mean a latent mental ability in the Chomskyan sense, based on an underlying mental representation of language (Baker, 1996, p. 5). It is this cognitive aspect of competence that underlies the use of language for thinking (Skutnabb-Kangas, 1981), which may also be an indicator of underlying conceptual ability.

While in the 1970s and 1980s a more general language ability concept such as the *unitary competence hypothesis* (Oller, 1979) was popular, more recently proficiency has come to be conceptualised in a more multifaceted fashion. Various theoretical models have aimed

at “specifying the nature of its component parts and their relationship to one another. ... there is now a considerable overlap between the notion of language proficiency and communicative competence” (Davies et al., 1999, p. 153).

The current study favours a working definition less confined to second language classroom outcomes. Following Baker and Prys Jones (1998) language proficiency or ability is understood as "the product of a variety of mechanisms: formal learning, informal uncontrived language acquisition (e.g. at home, in the street) and of individual characteristics such as 'intelligence' and an 'aptitude for languages'" (p. 5). Although this product-orientated definition captures different acquisitional types of ML speakers, it still says nothing about other dimensions associated with ML proficiency as the outcome of the migration process, for example, cultural knowledge or speaker identity. The operationalisation of these dimensions will be mainly data driven, based on the respondents' beliefs and developed later in the thesis (Chapter 5 and Chapter 6).

## **2.2.1 Components of language proficiency**

According to Spolsky (1998, p.78) language proficiency requires mastery of specific elements of the autonomous linguistic system. Two specific components of relevance here are language skills and fluency.

### *2.2.1.1 Language skills*

From a monolithic language acquisition perspective, knowing a language involves equal proficiency in the four skills of reading, writing, speaking, and listening comprehension. In reality, however, specific skills may be emphasized according to need, for example writing

for academic purposes or everyday oral communication. The various sub-levels of proficiency rely on the mastery of sub-skills such as grammar, range and use of vocabulary, authenticity, fluency and pronunciation (Richard-Amato, 1996; Wible & Hui, 1985). Language learning contexts face challenges in reconciling these neat proficiency categories orientated towards NS standards, with often wide varietal and acquisitional differences across equally diverse learning contexts.

The issues associated with diversity and change are even more complex in language contact situations where changing patterns of language use and shifting balances in migrants' bi/multilingual repertoires are likely to affect the perception of language skills and proficiency. For example, how authentic is ML in New Zealand where it may have borrowed from English or Māori? How fluent is fluent when speech becomes less automatic, halting and slower as people use ML less? What level of vocabulary is deemed productive or idiomatic where fewer ML functions and domains mean fewer topics to refer to in ML? How important is an accent associated with the source country, when accents change across generations of ML speakers? Even language standards may become less influential in determining expectations for proficiency as their relevance reduces in the new environment. The key question arising from these issues is whether conceptualising MLP is simply a matter of changing thresholds of acceptability or whether it involves redefining of what it means to be proficient in ML altogether.

A shift in thinking about linguistic competence is emerging, for example, regarding literacy and literacy education, with a move away from seeing literacy as an individual skill towards a growing recognition of multiple literacies and literacy as culturally

mediated social practice (Hornberger, 1994; Maybin, 1994, McKay 1996, Cruickshank, 2002). This involves both oral and literate modes of expression, which may vary according to cultural values and beliefs. The reconceptualisation of the notion of literacy has brought about an approach less rooted in Western ideology and normative assumptions of what constitutes literacy (Hornberger, 1996). In the same vein it seems entirely appropriate to take definitions of proficiency beyond the level of discrete or neutral skills to a level that links proficient linguistic practices to specific sociocultural contexts.

#### 2.2.1.2 *Fluency*

Fluency represents a proficiency component, which usually refers to speakers believed to have a very good overall command of a language, particularly in terms of the following:

1. their oral and written skills (Davies et al. 1999),
2. level of hesitation, appropriate prosodic features as well as successful communication of ideas (Davies et al., 1999),
3. speed of response (Bautista et al., 1977) based on automaticity and efficiency of cognitive processing (Nicoladis & Genesee, 1996; Segalowitz, 2001).

Fluency is difficult to quantify due to its complexity and dependence on varying underlying theories used for specification or definitions. For example, does fluency just relate to speech rate (i.e. number of words per minute in consecutive speech), or also to hesitation phenomena (i.e. number of filled and unfilled pauses per  $x$  number of words) or something else altogether (Scholfield, 1995, p. 251)? Where conventions such as hesitation, silence or turn-taking vary cross-culturally or are undergoing changes in

language contact situations quantification of linguistic behaviours will pose particular challenges. To the extent that fluency is realised through behaviour in context and thus is socially constructed, critical features of fluency will be shaped by the needs and practices of an actual community, rather than depend on mastery of idealized prescribed linguistic features.

Quakenbush (1989) provides an example of a sociolinguistic survey that used fluency, defined as *speed of response*, as a measure to establish "the degree to which a language can be used successfully in face to face interaction" (p. 135). Linking fluency to communicative success presumes the functional need for oral interaction and access to social networks and domains. However, these are not necessarily available for minority language speakers, particularly in the ML context.

### 2.2.1.3 *Communicative Competence*

Limiting proficiency to linguistic or psycholinguistic definitions is insufficient and requires the inclusion of sociocultural factors, as "communication is often culturally based and culturally transmitted" (Genesee, 1987, p.140). The communicative approach introduced a wider perspective of what constitutes proficiency beyond mere linguistic proficiency. At the centre of the notion of communicative competence is the ability to negotiate meaning through the use of contextually appropriate language (Hymes, 1972); it is "realized in fluency, style, and creativity, and [is] demonstrated in oral and writing performance or indeed listening and reading differences" (Davies, 1989, p. 168).

The inclusion of cultural competence (Wringe, 1989; Brown, 1987; Cortazzi & Jin, 1993) as well as sociolinguistic, discourse and pragmatic competence (Canale & Swain, 1980), either supporting linguistic competency or as an equal component without which communication can break down, demonstrates the complexity of communicative competence. It is this complexity and sociocultural groundedness of the concept that makes it difficult to construct valid proficiency tests, particularly in relation to less tangible cultural aspects underlying communication. Byram and Morgan's (1994) line of questioning in this regard is indicative of the complexities involved in assessing communicative competence:

Can cultural competence be assessed separately from linguistic competence? Can levels of cultural competence be refined to produce the finer 'steps' which have been defined for linguistic competence? Does cultural competence develop at the same rate as linguistic competence? Can linguistic competence develop whilst cultural competence remains fixed? And is it ethically acceptable to assess cultural competence? (Byram & Morgan, 1994, p. 174)

Ethnographers see communicative competence as part of a wider cultural competence (Rodriguez-Brown & Elias-Olivares, 1983; Philips, 1983), which encompasses non-verbal knowledge of, for instance, underlying cultural values or practices. This holistic approach to communicative competence captures the notion of proficiency in a more integrated way, in contrast to perceptions of proficiency commonly associated with specific educational goals such as literacy or academic proficiency. However, given the propensity for change in post-migration cultural practices, the interpretation of cultural competence as proficiency component may fluctuate too.

The performance dimension of communicative competence refers to a speaker's ability to function in a language. The observable application of knowledge or overall awareness and command of the linguistic system is used to draw inferences about competence relying, as Davies et al. (1999, p.110) point out, on the assumption that competence does in fact translate into performance. As far as ML are concerned, functional use is of course highly variable and sometimes even non-existent, resulting in fewer opportunities for performance. This situation particularly applies to the writing mode.

Another dimension that could be ascribed to communicative competence derives from the sociological view of language and language learning which is concerned with the social nature of linguistic practices. For Bourdieu (1977), for example, the chances of reception in social interaction reside in speaker/hearer power relationships determined by the sociocultural and economic conditions of specific contexts. The notion of competence thus also has to account for a speaker's awareness of the "right to speech" and the ability to "command a listener" or "the power to impose reception" (p. 648, cited in Mellen Day, 2002, p. 18). For minority language speakers who have traditionally found themselves in less powerful positions, Bourdieu's perspective highlights serious implications for ML users, who are confronted with a situation of lesser status on two fronts. As speakers of languages often little valued in the host society, migrants are at the same time labelled as

NNS of the majority language. Descriptors such as ESL, NESB, LEP<sup>1</sup>, reflect a deficit position likely to undermine migrants' attempts to gain the right to speak.

### **2.2.2 A cyclical model of proficiency**

An alternative conceptualization of proficiency has been advanced in van Lier's (1996) cyclical model, a process-orientated approach representing a learner's progression in a second language (see graphic in Appendix D). This model encompasses two aspects not taken account of in more traditional definitions:

1. It is not reliant on NS standard mastery and is more akin to the interlanguage approach but without an idealised endpoint.
2. Social interaction is of central importance as the cog that turns the wheel of growth (e.g. via affordances).

While van Lier's model represents the L2 learning process, its integration of the social context makes it equally applicable to the conceptualization of existing proficiency in ML, as they too are exposed to and reliant on the sociocultural conditions they are embedded in. This dynamic view of proficiency as "a series of phases or cycles, each one with its own conditions and outcomes" (Van Lier, 1996, p. 65) also helps to explain the often fluctuating nature of bilingual repertoires in contact situations. Sociocultural contexts are

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<sup>1</sup> Acronyms used in English-speaking contexts referring to speakers of *English as a Second Language* (ESL), from *Non-English Speaking Backgrounds* (NESB) or with *Limited English Proficiency* (LEP), all of which reflect a monolingual perspective and connote deficiency - as does the NNS label.

the source of linguistic norms and standards, and these play a crucial role in determining definitions and levels of acceptability as well as measurements of proficiency

### **2.3 PROFICIENCY AT THE INTERFACE OF NORMS, MEASUREMENT AND LINGUISTIC VARIATION**

The focus in the present thesis is on discussing the notion of proficiency as a matter of conceptualisation, not measurement. Nonetheless, the process of assessing language is informed and determined by the underlying construct of what is to be measured and by which norms or criteria this measurement is to be evaluated. A brief overview of aspects associated with measuring proficiency may therefore help reveal and put into perspective some relevant normative aspects of proficiency.

#### **2.3.1 Norms versus models**

There are two fundamentally different approaches to evaluating linguistic behaviour, following either a prescriptive or descriptive school of thought. These contrasting perspectives determine whether the criteria for proficiency are based on norms of correctness or models of appropriate language use. An example from the SLA context illustrates how this distinction applies, for instance, to pronunciation:

Regarding a particular native speaker variety as a norm, which has to be imitated independently of any considerations of language use, strongly connects it with ideas of correctness. Taken as a model, on the other hand, such a variety can be used as a point of reference, to which learners can approximate more or less closely, depending on the needs of the specific situation. (Seidlhofer, 2001, p. 60)

In the context of the present study the norm/model distinction is of crucial importance, as similarly contrasting orientations are likely to exist towards MLP (see dual model, 2.4.3). In fact, the post-migration changes in migrants' sociolinguistic environments might result in two opposing outcomes. For example, as the model perspective corresponds more closely with the notion of appropriacy rather than correctness, it could be more amenable to local interpretations of what is acceptable and thus be positively reinforced in the ML context. On the other hand, it could also lead to the continuation or even strengthening of speakers' prescriptive orientations to MLP.

There are a number of factors that are likely to affect the interpretation of MLP and its measures. For example, Figure 2 shows how focusing on norms or models can serve different users and their respective purposes. These, in turn, determine whether a norm-guided or a model-guided approach is adopted.

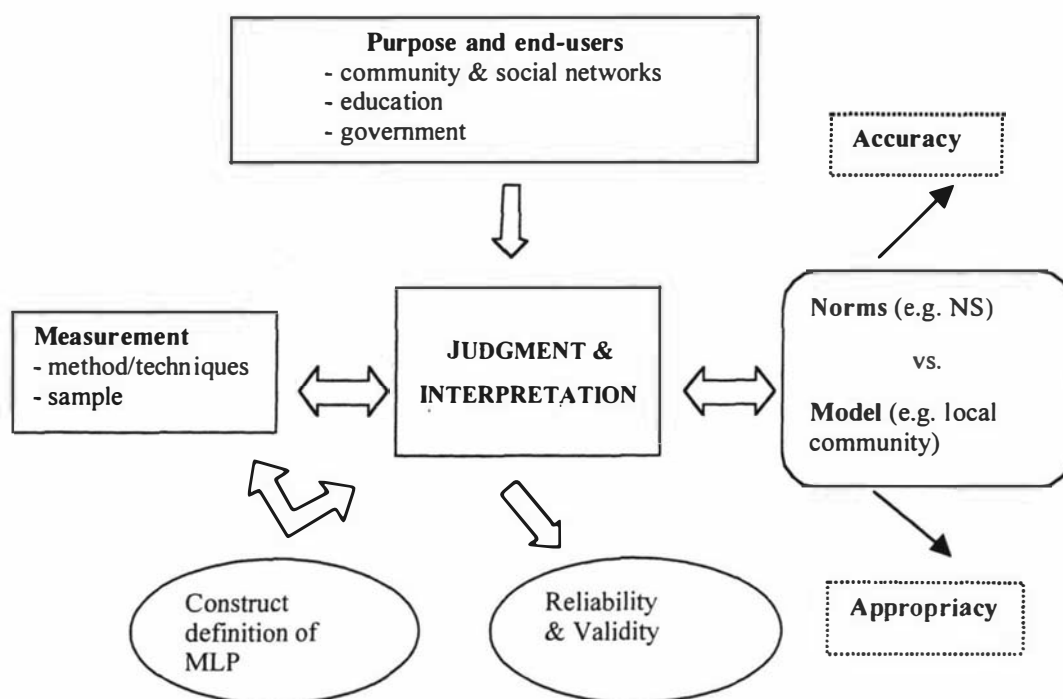


Figure 2. Factors Influencing MLP Measurement and Interpretation

### 2.3.1.1 *Measuring proficiency*

In formal learning contexts language proficiency tests are aimed at second or foreign language proficiency to measure a person's linguistic ability, regardless of how it was acquired (Bachman, 1990; Crystal 1992). The vast range of standardised language tests generally serves two major purposes:

1. Diagnostic and evaluation: what learners can do or have achieved.
2. Planning: to determine learning objectives based on assessed current levels.

Language testing has been approached in fundamentally different ways. *Performance-referenced tests*, for example, emphasize qualitative aspects particularly in the assessment of speech and writing (Shohamy, 1995), while a *system-referenced* approach views languages "as a code to be mastered" (Baker 1989, p. 7). For the former, criterion-referenced (CR) assessment systems have been devised to elicit *criterion performance* with real world application (Baker, 1989, p. 27). CR type tests are mainly employed to assess achievement (Bachman, 1990, p. 338) as a measure of ability matched against a specified criterion such as course content or objectives. In contrast, norm-referenced (NR) testing is based on a system theory of language, and proficiency is measured against an identifiable norm group usually represented by the ideal native speaker (Bachman, 1990, p. 59).

In contrast, measuring minority language proficiency has relied on instruments such as self-report, interviews, observations etc, and less so on actual testing. Nevertheless, the fundamental assumption of the native speaker as benchmark may underlie any of these instruments, including CR type measures. For example, Bachman (1990) argues that using

native speakers as norm group makes even CR designed instruments such as the ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) Proficiency Guidelines (1986) into an NR type instrument. Despite the more authentic nature of CR, one of the key challenges for test designers is to define ability levels while also specifying relevant domains, an obstacle likely to be faced in ML contexts too. If there is no relationship between what is tested and real life use of that language, testing becomes superfluous according to Bachman (1990, p. 356). This presents a particular challenge where language use differs across contexts and languages as in the case of bilinguals (see 2.3.2).

### **2.3.2 Norms and standards versus linguistic variation in multilingual contexts**

Linguistic standards are, to a large extent, the domain of language pedagogy, administration and language planning. In these domains adherence to some form of standard is crucial, as it provides a platform for mutual intelligibility and a model of excellence for learning expressed in formal, codified standards. These are usually manifest in what are considered to be standard languages. The extent to which individuals measure up against standards of correctness has been regarded as a measure of proficiency. According to Tickoo (1991) a standard language

serves as a reliable measure of language proficiency which is made use of by people in administrative or educational authority. Language planners and practitioners in particular are charged with the responsibility of upholding this language in its purest forms. (p. iv)

From this perspective language standards, by and large, represent an acquired, codified and idealised model of perfection associated with dimensions of superiority, purity and prestige. However, treating languages as standard languages across the board is inappropriate in situations of linguistic diversity. The phenomenon of linguistic variation has led linguists to the conclusion that it is not possible in the real world to see languages simply as fixed structures or abstract systems isolated from their respective contextual conditions. This applies in particular to indigenous and migrants' languages, which typically go through structural changes due to language contact and its attendant socio-linguistic and cultural transformations. However, contact-induced variation is not devoid of regularity, as is evident in patterns of use revealed through discourse analysis and language corpora (Brown, 2000; Carter & Nunan, 2001; McCarthy, 2001). For example, stylistic changes may reflect sociocultural imperatives and involve the same processes of change active in the development of NS varieties.

There are divided views of linguistic change as an outcome of language contact. For example, the language loss paradigm is concerned with linguistic deficiencies resulting from language change that can lead to *mutilated forms* (de Bot & Weltens, 1991) and ultimately loss. In contrast, Skutnabb-Kangas (1981, p. 20) states that the code of bilingual speakers is not a collection of static features but rather a group of processes resulting in changes, which should be regarded as a source of enrichment rather than a threat.

Because decreasing ML proficiency can be the outcome of different processes or circumstances, it is difficult to distinguish innovative change from either acquisitional shortcomings or actual loss of existing proficiency. These processes may also be

interconnected as is illustrated in Denison's (1997) study of Sauris German in the Friulian region of Northern Italy. Due to language shift Sauris German is losing its function as an acculturation tool, leading to *acquisition deficit* in individuals, which ultimately results in *competence deficit* and a "drastically decreased awareness in younger speakers of the broad structural and lexical characteristics of the original 'native' strand of their pluriglossic inheritance" (p. 80).

The notion of language standards and their underlying norms is thus at variance with the phenomenon of linguistic variation. This fundamental contradiction becomes particularly pertinent in migration contexts where ML speakers are held up against ideal models, both in terms of their ML and their host language proficiencies.

In its most extreme form, language as normative practice can turn into purism. As such it is aimed at regulating language use based on norms and values to ensure not only intelligibility but also the maintenance of social order (Cameron, 1995). From this perspective, variation in ML forms and uses represents a deviation from shared, idealized norms, which may promote social or cultural alienation from the norm group. This prospect might explain why, as Davies (2003, p. 203) believes, individuals who spend long periods away from native speaker contexts "become increasingly prescriptive and less tolerant of change". Where migrants, especially younger generations, perceive their command of language as restricted, Thomas (1991) argues it may become "a source of shame to its users and irritation to members of the community who do have full command of the native language" (p.128). However, the extent to which MLP represents a potential source of embarrassment to its speakers may vary, as may the level of prescriptivism in

response to changing ML forms, uses and proficiencies. The current study explores these issues by theorizing a dual model of MLP (2.4.3) and by providing empirical evidence of ML speakers' norm orientations.

What is regarded as deviation or deficit in bilingual speech is often a matter of judgment by monolingual norms, as Lainio's (1995) comparison of two generations of Swedish-Finnish bilinguals shows. Due to different situational demands associated with Finnish in Sweden, its stylistic uses have changed in a way "which deviates from the norm [and] is often understood by the monolingual speech community not only as different, but also as indicative of a lack of competence in the appropriate norms" (p. 201). The use of monolingual speakers as point of reference thus becomes less appropriate, which is why there is a need to "reject the view that every departure from monolingual norms should be recognized as a sign of imperfect competence" (Romaine, 1993, p. 161).

Applying norms derived from monolingual ideals in linguistically diverse contexts is also problematic where perceptions of proficiency are based on an idealized *point* rather than a *range* of uses (Davies, 2003, pp. 208-9) across different languages or dialects. The assumption of an ideal point of perfection is crystallized in the Chomskyan notion of "the intrinsic competence of the idealised native speaker" (Chomsky, 1965, p. 24), which contrasts with the flesh and blood person classified as NS on the basis of early acquisition (Davies, 2003). The NS label is typically associated with the language first learnt, with best ability and with dominance (Davies, 2003, p. 24), which renders its role as a point of reference for additional languages in the repertoire of bi/multilinguals questionable.

### 2.3.2.1 *MLP and NS norms*

Although NS norms have provided the benchmark in SLA where "it is language proficiency that is of most applied linguistic interest in the distinction between the native and non-native speaker" (Davies, 1991, p. 15), the definition of the NS has become increasingly contentious. Various authors have highlighted the growing erosion of the once unquestioned native speaker authority (Cook, 1997, 2002a; Davies, 1991, 2003; Denison, 1997; Kramsch, 1998; Paikeday, 1985; Phillipson, 1992), particularly "in a time of large-scale migrations, cross-national and cross-cultural encounters, and increasing linguistic and pragmatic differences among speakers of the same language" (Kramsch 1998, p. 16). Davies (1989, p. 168) criticizes the distinction between NS and NNS as altogether inappropriate arguing that all language ability is acculturated rather than innate and that native speakers too differ in terms of their linguistic skills.

The inadequacy of the NS label can have practical implications. This has become evident in the Australian context, where efforts to assign migrant learners from different language backgrounds more equitably into the language curriculum by classifying them as NS or NNS of their respective languages have resulted in inaccurate categorizations (Elder, 2000). The reasons for this appeared to be incorrect assumptions about literacy skills or different ways of distinguishing dialects across languages. This example illustrates how rigid constructs are at odds with the complex reality of bilinguals. The artificiality and reductionist nature of the ideal NS therefore renders it inadequate for defining and evaluating MLP. It is incompatible with ML speakers' socio-linguistic experience and practices which tend to be physically and socioculturally removed from the source country where ML speakers may have had NS status.

### 2.3.2.2 *Linguistic norms: shared, weakening or in conflict*

The continuity of norms depends on shared views and expectations of what language forms or uses are appropriate. Shared norms are validated and perpetuated via social groupings. However, changing patterns of language use and varying availability of networks and domains compared to those found in migrants' home countries result in a "shortage of contact with 'native speaker peer standard'" (Roberts, 1999, p.198) and, consequently, structural and stylistic change. Shared norms do not easily arise from the fluid social situations typically found among migrant communities as fewer networks are available to act as norm enforcing agencies by virtue of their modelling of linguistic behaviour (Hamers & Blanc, 1989). This impacts on the definition and transmission of linguistic norms as Hamers and Blanc (1989) point out:

The break-up of such a structure, for example the loosening of kinships and peer group ties and the establishment of new links outside the original network, are the social mechanisms whereby norms and values change and the individual develops new group loyalties and adopts new language norms and behaviour. (p. 70)

Shared norms are believed to be central to the definition of *speech communities*. The concept of speech community implies a functionally integrated social system, which does not always apply to the experience of multilingual speakers in situations of flux, least of all in the Chomskyan sense of an idealized homogeneous community of L1 speakers who "acquire a language under conditions of pure and uniform experience" (Chomsky, 1986, p. 17). In real life social groupings intersect, boundaries overlap and speakers shift styles and codes, particularly in linguistically diverse settings where languages are not neatly

distributed by residential groupings. Thus, by adopting the notion of speech community uncritically and "as a static unit, we ultimately preclude change" (Eckert, 2000, p. 34).

The field of pragmatics provides a more user-based, contextualised theory of language, that is one that takes account of "the rules and norms that are valid at any time, in any place in the community in which he or she is living" (Mey, 1994, p. 37). This approach connects norms more closely with local uses and functions and does not explicitly rely on NS authority. However, it does not necessarily address the difficulties arising from community relocation and multiple community ties that can give rise to potential norm conflicts. Contrasting expectations may primarily exist between the ML speech community and the dominant (possibly monolingual) host society; nonetheless, the source community, which may have had a socializing role for some first generation migrants, may also continue to exert its normative powers over migrants and their views and use of language.

A notion much more aligned with the reality of ML speakers is that of *community of practice* (Eckert & McConnell-Ginet, 1998; Wenger, 1998), which is not an isolated or fixed social unit but describes a group by virtue of the practices people engage in. The relevance of this notion for multilingual contexts is that it accounts for the process of co-construction of linguistic change, social meaning and identity via interaction through language, provided of course that shared practices in ML continue to exist. Locally valid norms may then arise out of common practice rather than automatic orientation to an ideal outside the context.

### 2.3.2.3 *Linguistic norms as a function of power*

In an increasingly diverse world the question about whose norms and standards should be chosen is becoming more pertinent, and the perpetuation of NS norms may be even more problematic in linguistically diverse settings outside educational contexts. Ascertaining appropriateness of transplanted languages against native varieties, rather than their specific functions in their non-native contexts, is a practice that does not take into account locally relevant norms (Lowenberg, 2002). It ignores the fact that "there is not just one norm, but a series of norms, even in the same community; and some norms even cut across communities and languages" (Bamgbose, 1998, p. 2). This means that even a notion such as communicative competence can be relative as Nelson (1992) argues:

Communicative competence, the ability to put a language to use in appropriate ways in culturally defined contexts, may become a problematic notion when applied in the situation of such a transplanted language, because the cultural contexts that defined 'appropriateness' in the parent situation are not necessarily the same in the new situation. (Nelson, 1992, p. 237)

In the parallel context of English as an International Language (EIL) the fundamental contrast between dominant standard norms vis-a-vis a diversity of transplanted and nativised varieties of English lends some useful parallels for the purposes of this discussion. ML may not have reached the levels of "confidence and consistency" (Nelson 1992, p. 336) associated with the development of varieties of English, and internal coherence and consistency may be harder to achieve for ML due to their lower status and the fact that they do not fulfill a lingua franca function (language shift prevents that development). Nevertheless, given time and provided ML continue to be used, variants or

languages in their own right may emerge. Shameem (1995), for example, makes the case for Fiji Hindi to be recognized as such.

The legitimization of standard norms of English has been associated with the *centre*, that is the centre of power derived from NS contexts (Kachru, 1985). This is believed to be the source of structural and ideological inequalities (Phillipson, 1992) as the dominance of Standard English varieties arises from the socio-economic power associated with NS users. The view of standard norms as an outcome of an unequal power relationship explains the strong arguments advanced from a political perspective criticizing the hegemony of language standards as "received notions that model *all languages* on the basis of certain 'well-formed rule-governed systems' (such as Standard English, for example)" (Parakrama, 1995, p. 187). Some regard the notion of NS as a myth altogether (Lippi-Green, 1997; Pakir, 2000) and inappropriate in multilingual contexts, as it perpetuates usually monolingual norms affording continued linguistic supremacy to those in power.

Migration as a move to the periphery is set to have similar implications for MLP where the perceived superiority of standard norms that apply in the source context may or may not continue. Just as the notion of NS as the arbiters of correctness has been problematized in the EIL paradigm (Graddol, 1997) this issue exists for speakers of transplanted ML versions and their shift to different cultural and linguistic contexts. If the nature of power relations between more and less dominant languages determines whose language standards are used or preferred, minority languages such as ML are situated at a crossroads between the maintenance of source country standards and emergence of local norms as original power relationships undergo change. While the influence of source country norms may be

waning, it may be replaced by the language of the host society as a source of dominance, which may exert its own influence on migrants' norm orientations, e.g. regarding language mixing or code switching.

#### 2.3.2.4 *Linguistic repertoire*

The notion of *linguistic repertoire* (LR) offers an alternative approach to linguistic proficiency, one which does take a locally available range of forms and uses into account. This approach discards the ideal NS notion and judgments derived from NS norms. LR has been defined as a social phenomenon, that is "the totality of linguistic resources ... available to members of particular communities" (Gumperz & Hymes, 1972, p. 20) or individuals (Duranti, 1997) whose language is compared with the linguistic range within a specific community. But the choice of features or behaviours constituting LR and determining community boundaries where it is valid, may still involve an underlying sense of prescriptivism. Duranti himself concedes that "although repertoire is different from what is usually understood as 'grammar' it makes similar assumptions about norms and expectations" (Duranti, 1997, p. 72). Yet, variation in norms and definitions of proficiency can be accommodated by the notion of LR on the basis of its contextual embeddedness, which therefore makes it more relevant to proficiencies undergoing change and bilingual proficiencies.

#### 2.3.3 **Bilingual Proficiency**

The question of what it means to be bilingual is intricately connected with the notion of proficiency. The positions as to how much or what kind of language is necessary to regard someone as bilingual vary and are reflected in various definitions of bilingualism ranging

from "native-like control of two languages" (Bloomfield, 1933, p. 56) to "emerging second language skills" (Macnamara, 1969).

For all intents and purposes MLP is a component of bilingual proficiency. The notion of MLP has been isolated for the objectives of this study in order to provide a clear focus on ML, without ignoring the fact that the sample in the current study is bi- or multilingual. Issues surrounding bilingual proficiency will by default also be relevant to MLP<sup>2</sup>. Therefore some of the conceptualizations associated with bilingualism are outlined here to help illuminate dimensions which are relevant to ML speakers or their communities. Some of the key concepts and distinctions regarding bi/multilingualism include the following:

#### *Societal versus individual bilingualism*

Bilingualism can be viewed and examined as an individual characteristic or as a social phenomenon. Bilingual language communities (or speech communities) exist in different permutations, ranging from relatively stable diglossic distributions for different sets of circumstances (Wardhaugh, 2002) to settings where bilingualism is a more ephemeral phenomenon.

Different disciplines and research orientations tend to focus on either individual or group aspects of bilingualism though, given the social nature of language, one does not really go without the other. For example, psycholinguists are primarily interested in the mental processes of bilingual individuals as are educators who wish to determine their bilingual

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<sup>2</sup> None of the participants in this study reported to be monolingual although it is possible that some recent arrivals speak only one ML and no English.

students' competence levels. Sociolinguists tend to look at both sides of the bilingual coin, for example, how attitudes of individual speakers may affect code choice and what implications this may have for their group's language maintenance. The linguistic behaviour of groups or speech communities is also the domain of policy makers. The present study has an interest in individuals' perspectives because the sample does not represent specific speech communities as such; nevertheless grouping variables such as ethnic or linguistic background provide a basis for investigating collective orientations to MLP.

#### *Language ability versus use*

This distinction also operates at the individual level where the broader notion of competence refers to dimensions of general language ability, in contrast to a speakers' actual use of their languages, or functional bilingualism. Whereas descriptions of ability are associated with language proficiency and academic success, the fundamentally social nature of language warrants the study of languages used in social contexts and domains (Cummins, 1996) to understand who uses what code to whom and for what purpose (Fishman, 1967). Proficiency and function are closely linked (Romaine, 1993; Sridhar, 1996) so that different patterns of language use typically result in varied linguistic strengths. Sridhar asserts that "multilinguals develop competence in each of the codes to the extent that they need it and for the contexts in which each of the languages is used" (1996, p. 50). Such *selective functionality* contradicts the assumption of balanced bilingualism.

### *Balanced bilingualism*

At the individual level a balanced bilingual is a person with approximately equal functional ability in more than one language. The relative rarity of such a person (Edwards, 1995, Sridhar, 1996) is likely due to the distributional nature of bilingualism. This means that "competence in more than one language is rarely ever equally distributed across all domains of life" (Romaine, 1993, p. 22) because individuals tend to use their languages for different social and communicative functions across a variety of contexts and speaker networks.

Although the notion of balanced bilingualism does not say anything about the level of competence, "the implicit idea of balanced bilingualism has often been of 'reasonable' or 'good' competence in both languages" (Cummins, 1996, p. 8). The notion of balance has relevance for the current study in that it may be problematic in relation to ML. For example, migrants may lack equivalent writing skills across languages due to varying sociocultural needs and practices; from a monolithic view of proficiency this situation is likely to be judged as 'non-balanced' bilingualism.

### *Contrasting views of individual bilingualism*

From a psycholinguistic perspective the expectation of balanced bilingualism only applies where we can assume two separate systems in a bilingual, as opposed to a holistic assumption of a unitary system where L1 and L2 may influence each other (Grosjean, 1985; Cook, 2002a). The latter view regards comparisons with monolingual competence as inappropriate, as they fail to recognise the potential for interconnectedness of two languages in a speaker's mind (Cook, 2002a; Romaine, 1993). People with more than one language

thus have a distinctive state of mind, which is not the equivalent to two monolingual states in one body (Grosjean, 1985, p. 467) but a unique *multi-competence* (Cook, 1992, 2002a) which is different from that of monolinguals:

When speaking their first language, L2 users are still affected by their knowledge of another language - its rules, concepts and cultural patterns. The L2 user stands between two languages, even when apparently using only one, having the resources of both languages on tap whenever needed. (Cook, 2002a, p. 5)

The holistic view of individual bilinguals has given rise to the notion of a deeper *common underlying proficiency* (CUP) (Cummins, 1983a, 1997), which enables linguistic *interdependence* (Cummins, 1981; 1983b) and thereby creates the potential to transfer existing L1 skills such as literacy to an emerging L2, a process thought to have crucial value for enhancing bilingual competencies (Bild & Swain, 1989; Swain et al., 1990). Recent studies suggest that these influences are of a bi-directional nature (Cook, 2003; Kecskes & Papp, 2000).

The unitary versus separate views of bilingualism are likely to correspond with different conceptualizations of proficiency, that is a more dynamic view with the former as opposed to a more static view with the latter. However, the two views of bilingualism may not be mutually exclusive but represent end-points on a continuum according to Cook (2003), in which case a dual approach to the notion of proficiency may be appropriate (see 2.4.3).

### *Cognitive advantages through bilingualism*

Evidence to suggest benefits of bilingualism mainly consists of linguistic and conceptual advantages among bilinguals (Ben Zeev, 1977; Bialystok, 1988, 2001; Clarkson, 1992; Dawe, 1983; Hakuta, 1986; Landry, 1974; Tunmer & Myhill, 1984), which are believed to be subject to a presumed *threshold* (Bialystok, 1988; Cummins, 1976; Toukomaa & Skutnabb-Kangas, 1977). Applied to the foreign language learning context, for instance, bilingual learners can make gains at the structural, phonological, and lexical levels. Multi-competence develops once the threshold is reached and positive transfer begins. Kecskes and Papp (2000) describe benefits to include:

emphasis on knowledge and pragmatic skills that can be observed in the language use of multilingual speakers - in better language manipulating skills, metalinguistic awareness, good interaction style, broader knowledge base, and multicultural attitude. (p. 106)

However, gaining positive outcomes through the interdependence of linguistic systems may involve factors other than psycholinguistic ones. The potential impact of affective or social factors on L2 proficiency means that benefits of bilingualism may not solely derive from a psycholinguistic source such as CUP, which is why Swain and Lapkin (1991) argue that “the nature of the reciprocity, and the psychological and societal conditions which foster it, deserve further attention” (p. 214).

The possible mediation of linguistic and cognitive interdependence in the development of bilingual proficiency by social, cultural or individual factors further underscores the need

for an ecological approach because language proficiency is a function of an individual's overall sociolinguistic environment.

#### *Elective versus circumstantial bilingualism*

Bi/multilingualism can be a voluntary or involuntary outcome (Mills, 2001). Elective bilinguals make a conscious choice to learn another language, usually as a foreign language. This kind of *élite bilingualism* (Skuttnab-Kangas, 1981) is distinguished from situations where bilingualism occurs due to circumstances such as migration or colonization requiring the learning of the dominant language to allow for social, political and economic participation (Valdés & Figuera, 1994). The sampling for the current study did not differentiate between elective and circumstantial bi/multilingualism and, due to the diverse backgrounds and migration histories of the participants, representatives of both types are presumed to be represented. The distinction can be expected to have some bearing on ML speakers' views of the role of their languages and the extent of their investment in them due to varying levels of choice and control over the resources that may have facilitated their bilingual development.

#### *Conversational fluency versus academic language skills*

An approach which considers both contextual and cognitive aspects of bilingual proficiency has provided a distinction between different types of proficiency. These manifest themselves as *basic interpersonal communicative skills* (BICS) in everyday conversational situations or *cognitive academic language proficiency* (CALP) in context-reduced academic situations (Cummins, 1979, 1984a, 1984b). Cummins' dichotomous model may simplify what, by his own admission, is likely to be a much more complex

reality and “the idea of a larger number of dimensions of language competences may be more exact” (Cummins, 1996, p. 152). This apparent contradiction identifies the dilemma inherent in using models intended to simplify because of their potential for obscuring the very complexities which themselves may be of interest.

### *Bilingualism and biculturalism*

The study of bilingualism has focussed on linguistic aspects without necessarily exploring bilingual speakers' non-linguistic abilities. The relevance of this distinction to the current study lies in the role cultural competency and other non-linguistic dimensions may play in the conceptualization of MLP.

#### *2.3.3.1 Bilingualism in second language learning research and practice*

Second language acquisition results in some form of bilingualism, at least as a short term or transitional outcome. However, second language research and pedagogy have traditionally focussed on the development of the target language only, without necessarily recognizing learners' emerging bilingual competencies. Based on the notion of Contrastive Analysis (Lado, 1964), L1 was seen as a source of interference and negative transfer.

Language acquisition research has been dominated by a monolingual view according to Grosjean (1992), Cook (1992, 1997) and Kecskes (1998). More specifically, Sridhar and Sridhar (1986) warn that “SLA researchers seem to have neglected the fact that the goal of SLA is bilingualism” (cited in Lantolf & Pavlenko, 2001, p. 157). The articulation of a multilingual approach has gathered momentum only during the last decade or so (Kecskes & Papp, 2000; Herdina & Jessner, 2002) due to the pervading monolingual orientation in

linguistics influenced by the Chomskyan assumption of the ideal speaker/hearer and his or her knowledge of language.

However, with more research pointing to the potential positive influences between bi/multilinguals' languages, a shift towards recognizing the contributions of L1 to L2 development is taking place in the SLA field (Ellis, 1985; McCarthy, 2001) resulting in a growing recognition of bilingualism as a "social, individual and linguistic phenomenon [that] has several implications for educational practice" (Lam, 2001, p. 97). For example, Beebe (1988) favours a combined, multidisciplinary approach to second language teaching, which includes bilingual education issues and their pedagogical implications. Carter and Nunan (2000) devote a whole chapter to bilingualism. In this, Lam portrays a view of language learning as a process of becoming (or staying) bilingual. She expresses the need for bilingualism to be considered in its own right and for bilingual communities to be recognised and studied on their own terms, rather than according to outdated norms of monolingual homogeneous speech communities. (Lam, 2000, p. 98)

Sridhar provides a chapter on societal multilingualism in McKay and Hornberger's (1996) book, which is aimed at acquainting language teachers with the impact of social and political forces on language use in diverse contexts. Richard-Amato (1996) includes a section on bilingual education as an approach to content learning and acquaints her readers with Cummins' (1984a) discussion on bilingual proficiency and academic achievement. In his recently revised book used widely in TESOL training, Harmer (2001) recognizes that learners "already have a deep knowledge of at least one other language" (p. 99). Yet, the assumption that there may be possible benefits from the purposeful use of code-switching

is located in chapters dealing with interference phenomena and problem behaviour in class.

Increasing recognition of the world's pervasive multilingualism is further reflected in a recent TESOL publication exclusively dedicated to diverse language learning environments in multilingual settings (Christian & Genesee, 2001). Yet, in language education practice the potential for positive cross-fertilization between a learner's languages has not been exploited widely. In the New Zealand context, Barnard and Glynn (2003) explore implications of linguistic diversity for the development of language in the school context. These developments signal an educational linguistics more inclusive of learners' bi/multilingual reality, which may also find its reflection in the notion of MLP.

An area which "epitomizes the relationship between language and education for first and second language (L1 and L2) learners" (Hornberger 1996, p. 452) examines the literacy or 'biliteracy' of bilinguals (Hornberger, 1989). The shift towards a view of literacy as social practice rather than an individual skill (Street, 1994; McKay, 1996; Martin-Jones, 1989; Martin-Jones & Jones, 2000) has provided the impetus to reconceptualize biliteracy and the development or maintenance of literacy practices among bilinguals as a series of continua (Hornberger, 1994; Hornberger & Skilton-Sylvester, 2000). The continuum approach adopted in the biliteracy paradigm helps capture the complexities of multiple proficiencies and contributes to a more authentic conceptualization of the notion of biliteracy. The redefinition of the notion of literacy helps validate the attempt undertaken in the current study to conceptualize MLP as a notion no less complex, potentially inclusive of literacy and similarly context-bound.

### *2.3.3.2 Assessment of bilingual proficiency*

In educational contexts the pedagogical imperative requires not only the definition but also the assessment of bilingual proficiency. This section provides a brief overview of some of the major issues pertaining to assessing bilingual proficiency.

#### *Limited rationale*

The conceptualisation of proficiency has been particularly concerned with the attempt to understand the relationship between language proficiency and academic achievement in bilingual education programmes as well as the overall development of bilingual proficiency. Thus, the assessment of linguistic proficiency in bilingual or multilingual settings has often been limited to specific purposes such as the evaluation of the effectiveness of bilingual education, particularly in immigrant communities in the United States, Canada, Spain, or Australia. As a consequence, the outcomes of testing for native language proficiency have tended to be recognized as "indicators of factors related to second language acquisition" (Bachman, 1990, p. 69) but not necessarily in their own right.

#### *Assessment in one language only*

The measurement of language proficiency in multilingual contexts still had a virtually exclusive interest in the dominant language as recently as the 1970s, and reference to L1 proficiency was still rare in the early eighties (Skutnabb-Kangas, 1981). Even where the L1 background of migrant children was at least mentioned it was done from the perspective of their "willingness to use English" (McEwen et al., 1975, p. 13) at home or in school. The focus on assessment of L2 proficiency continues to dominate in transitional bilingual contexts such as the US, which Kimbrough Oller and Eilers (2002) argue is a

reflection of the politically driven notion that English should be the dominant language in the US. In their view, the failure of research “to address directly the knowledge of children in both languages represents an interpretative limitation of monumental proportions” (Kimbrough Oller & Eilers, 2002, p. 9).

#### *Measuring two monolingual proficiencies*

Testing of separate language proficiencies, not bilingual proficiency, may have practical purposes and reasons, for example due to educational imperatives. However, the practice of isolating L2 proficiency, for example by simply translating instruments (e.g. the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test, see 2.3.3.2) continues to perpetuate the notion that a bilingual person is made up of two monolinguals. It also reflects an assumption of equal proficiency as the ideal, which is problematic when balanced bilingualism is the exception rather than the norm.

#### *Judging bilinguals by monolingual norms*

The monolingual approach to assessing bilinguals misses out information on overall capabilities and the fact that these are typically distributed across contexts and social networks and possibly even exceed those of monolingual speakers. A monolingual perspective also fails to recognize typical language contact phenomena evident in bi/multilingual speech, for example, borrowing, code switching and semantic extension. These tend to be seen as proficiency deficits rather than extended bi/multilingual skills. Ignoring the complex interrelationships between L1 and L2 has obvious implications for language learners, including unfair judgments and the perception of having proficiency in

neither language (Hill & Parry, 1994; Kalantzis et al., 1990; Valdés, 2000; Valdés & Figueroa, 1994).

In multilingual settings such as India the question has arisen "whether proficiency in one language should be tested with reference to other languages in the curriculum" (Satyanath & Satyanath, 1990, p. 195). Nevertheless, attempts to adopt a more holistic perspective may be limited by established institutional or contextual constraints, which perpetuate the emphasis on the target language. An interesting case in point is Papapaviou's (1999) comparative study of monolingual and bilingual primary school children in Greece, which aimed at examining the "mastery and proficiency of their languages" (p. 252) in relation to the pupils' academic achievement and social/cultural integration. Yet, only the spoken and written knowledge of surface features in modern Greek is reported on, with no mention of the bilingual children's other languages.

Bilingual proficiency is perhaps more appropriately conceptualized as a range of varying competencies resulting from shifting patterns of language use and dominance typically experienced by migrants. The following account of Spanish/English bilinguals in the US illustrates the complexities and variable nature of bilingual proficiency, which is difficult to reconcile with a monolithic, monolingual notion of proficiency:

Some individuals are clearly Spanish dominant, whereas others are English dominant. Some individuals are biliterate, whereas others read and write in only one of their languages. Some individuals are active bilinguals who speak both languages with some ease, whereas other bilinguals are passive in one of their languages and can understand but not speak their 'weak' language. (Valdés, 2000, p. 102)

In addition to the variance in functional abilities referred to above, ML forms and uses are often non-standard, undergoing change, and not necessarily products of formal learning. The use of standardised tests to assess ML would therefore be as unsuitable as they are for bilingual proficiency in general.

Some recent studies illustrate how this issue has been dealt with in the educational context. For example, Driessen et al. (2002) employed minority languages and their use at home as intervening variables to explain proficiency in the dominant language of the Netherlands, i.e. Dutch. This approach explicitly aimed at investigating an identified language deficit in L2 but the data show “that the children’s use of language other than Dutch does not need to have any negative consequences for language proficiency” (p. 191). The study found that what may play a role in facilitating SLA is not necessarily the quantity of Dutch being spoken at home but the quality, especially in view of the difference between BICS and CALP.

Assuming that our tests do indeed have the decontextualised nature of CALP and that the measurement of language use at home largely involves BICS ... the transfer from home language to school register is far from self-evident. (Driessen et al., 2002, p.191)

Not only does this finding provide further corroboration that appropriate surface fluency may not necessarily correspond with academic literacy skills (Cummins, 1979; Skutnabb-Kangas & Toukoma, 1976), but it also highlights the crucial problem of validity in relation to the measurement of language proficiency.

Attempts to assess bilingual students' L1 proficiency remain rare and methodologically restricted. Ou & McAdoo's (1993) study of American children of Chinese ancestry employed a Chinese translation of the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT) to determine those "above median and below median in native language proficiency" (p. 253) in order to categorize them as bilingual or monolingual speakers accordingly. It is arguable, however, to what extent the test results can provide a valid measure of the lexical knowledge of these bilingual students, let alone of their L1 proficiency in general. While the children's test scores may well say something about the level of their receptive vocabulary knowledge, scores on single word recognition tasks do not account for more complex semantic awareness. Neither do they take into consideration culturally mediated lexical knowledge. It is not clear whether the translation addressed that issue.

According to Stockman (2000) the ethnic composition of the normative sample in the most recent version of the test (PPVT III) has been adjusted to mirror the distribution of minority groups in the general population of the United States. While this may help reduce bias, there is still an underlying assumption of a separate L1 word store when there may be a possible overlap between the two representational systems. This example highlights a number of issues relating to assessment of bilingual proficiency in the educational domain:

1. The necessity to work with standardised tests means educators are often restricted to norm-referenced instruments, which have been designed primarily to assess academic and cognitive development of monolinguals under test conditions.
2. Decisions about making resources available to minority students depend on whether pupils are deemed to be monolingual or bilingual, based on judgments made on the

strength of mainly quantitative data and methodologies based on monolingual perspectives.

3. Limiting proficiency assessment to one aspect of a person's linguistic system, for example vocabulary, fails to capture complex bilingual abilities.

A different approach to assessing bi/multilinguals is taken by Aarts et al. (1995). They view proficiency as a "multifaceted construct" (p. 76) comprising oral and written skills both in terms of school language proficiency and functional literacy skills. Their study assessed Turkish and Arabic children's minority language proficiencies at the end of their elementary school education. Children in Turkey and Morocco were compared with migrant children from those respective backgrounds in the Netherlands who had received native language instruction in that country. The children were assessed through a range of sub-skills and everyday literacy tasks. What makes Aarts et al.'s investigation particularly relevant to the present study is not only the finding that formal education through L1 in the country of origin had a clear impact on first (minority) language development, but that an explicit distinction was made between first and second language environments of the children's first languages. In other words, Turkish and Moroccan became ML in the Dutch context. Similar to Driessen et al. (2002), Aarts et al. found weaker written language skills, particularly among the Moroccans to be "indicative of the great distance between home language use and standard conventions in the county of origin" (Aarts et al., 1995, p. 95).

In relation to MLP the question arises then whether it is justified to assess ML proficiency through the four skills when there is a lack of relevance or opportunity, for example, for the writing function. The implicit or explicit influence of the educational perspective also

means that measuring children's proficiency in terms of their educational development may obscure developmental sequences, which are culture or context specific (Philips, 1983, p. 93). Children's language development and use is likely to be affected by the process of acculturation to a post-migration society where the patterns of language use and communication needs can be quite different from those required or available within the education context.

## **2.4 PRESENT AND FUTURE APPROACHES TO MLP**

### **2.4.1 MLP - caught in the academic trap?**

ML are often characterized by their functional limitation to the home domain and the fact that they may not have been acquired in formal learning contexts. This situation contrasts with the fact that research on and assessment of minority languages has relied mainly on SLA methodology. In the New Zealand context, for example, Christensen (2001) and Roberts (1999) highlight the need for more appropriate forms of minority language proficiency assessment, which are less classroom orientated. The failure to distinguish elective and circumstantial bilingualism is perhaps another factor which promotes the use of instruments such as ACTFL for purposes they were not intended for, that is comparing bi/multilingual proficiency to that of monolinguals. It also categorizes ML speakers as learners when, in reality, their bi/multilingualism may be the outcome of informal language learning or language contact, rather than formal classroom learning. Roberts (1999) makes the pertinent point that in her study of three community languages in New Zealand the respondents were not in classroom language learning settings and thus they

had no sense of themselves as performing well or badly in academic terms, no sense of any classroom ranking or of being 'good at' or 'bad at' Gujarati or Samoan or Dutch or English as a subject. Presumably they had instead a sense of how comfortable they felt when speaking those languages, how wide a range of situations they felt they could cope with in a given language, and perhaps a sense of how other community members regarded them as potential interlocutors in the MT [mother tongue] or in English. (p.197)

Migrants' languages are not part of the educational system in New Zealand, except for those being taught as foreign languages such as Japanese, Mandarin, or Samoan or indeed those taught through language maintenance curricula. They therefore do not automatically share the same educational norms or roles as foreign or second languages. In fact, a typical feature of many migrant communities is the absence or low relevance of reading and writing, both crucial academic skills in classrooms. This situation may not be perceived as deficiency where there is, for example, no immediate need for these skills and consequently little desire to maintain them. However, the use and transmission of writing skills may serve the purpose of cultural maintenance, especially where the writing system represents a cultural core value. As such, reading and writing take on a symbolic value, which even may outweigh educational considerations; consequently aural/oral proficiency levels may be perceived as secondary.

The continued emphasis on L2 learning and elective bilingualism may be the very reason why the SLA testing profession has given insufficient attention to measuring bilingual abilities. Kimbrough Oller and Zurer Pearson (2002) have argued recently that "it is

impossible to evaluate the knowledge of bilingual children, either from the standpoint of linguistic issues or from the standpoint of intelligence, in the absence of evaluation of both languages” (p.11). To this end the conceptualization of MLP may contribute to a better understanding of the ML users' construct of bilingual proficiency.

Just as BICS and CALP represent different dimensions of proficiency with their respective levels of relevance and appropriacy, MLP may encompass its own specific dimensions, at least in the eyes of ML speakers. Their perceptions of proficiency have at least partly been shaped by post-migration experiences, and their ideas of what is appropriate may be distinctly different from those held in educational environments or in the source country context (see Aarts et al., 1995). If end-user norms and communication needs ultimately determine what is appropriate, ML speakers constitute a unique group of end-users whose needs, practices and perceptions warrant understanding. Although mixing and switching between codes deviates from monolingual norms, the capacity to do so may constitute a dimension of bilingual proficiency in itself. These linguistic behaviours may well represent dimensions of ML proficiency and form the basis of emerging norms in contact situations.

#### **2.4.2 Alternative Conceptualizations and Measures of MLP**

Minority languages such as ML have been investigated in terms of their language use patterns and distribution in multilingual settings, speaker attitudes and language maintenance levels. A range of methodologies has been developed for sociolinguistic and ethnographic research including sociolinguistic surveys, testing or observation as well as the use of census data. Establishing proficiency levels has been particularly pertinent to the study of language maintenance. Studies of language maintenance or language loss attempt

to find what happens to proficiency in language contact situations, characterized by crosslinguistic influences, attitudinal shifts and changing patterns of language use and domain distribution.

In larger samples, MLP has traditionally been measured through self-rating methods usually administered via sociolinguistic questionnaires. These employ a variety of pre-determined categories against which speakers can rank their individual language levels. Bachman (1990) cites as typical examples the kind of scales used in the foreign language learning context such as the ACTFL guidelines or the ILR (Interagency Language Roundtable, formerly known as FSI) proficiency scales. These consist of a set of scales specifying proficiency levels ranging from elementary to native or bilingual. Categories can follow a *Likert*-type system of scales usually between 1 and 5. As an alternative to numerical scales, descriptive scales have been used to self-assess proficiency components such as fluency, which may follow a pattern such as the following:

- *very fluent*
- *fairly fluent but with some mistakes*
- *with hesitation and many mistakes*
- *only a few words*

This technique has been widely used where researchers wish to assess a particular skill or set of skills that can be related to criterion-referenced descriptors. For example, Lainio (1995) used self-evaluations of spoken Finnish for his Finnish/Swedish bilingual subjects to rate their four skills according to these scales: *fluently - well - fairly well - a little - poorly*

The fact that the [L1 Finnish] parent generation in Lainio's sample were found not to have assessed themselves as 100% fluent in Finnish but instead indicated best fluency in [L2] Swedish indicates a typical problem with the interpretation of scales. The different ways of reporting reflect the "subjective and individual evaluation of proficiency depending on which frame of reference one uses in the evaluation of the 'best' language" (Lainio, 1995, p. 279). In the Swedish context Finnish is used mainly in the private domain, that is at home, with friends, or during leisure activities where Finnish can be most spontaneous, while Swedish is ranked best for proficiency when used for official or formal functions. Thus, the construct of fluency as a component of proficiency may be a matter of intuition or personal opinion as Lainio highlights:

If 'fluently' is scaled higher than 'well' it may have the connotation of a perfect standard for a non-standard speaker of any language. At least for Finns, speaking well means speaking 'correct' standard. If single loan words are added to the picture, a minority speaker may easily evaluate his/her speech even lower on the scale. (Lainio, 1995, p. 213)

Edwards (1995) provides an example of an apparently changing perception of proficiency in census data on Irish, which showed an actual increase in the proportion of those claiming to be speakers of the Irish language between 1861 and 1971. Not only does this, as Edwards notes, highlight limitations and possible misinterpretations of census questions in general, but the results also reflect a community's response to the decline of their native language. Edwards concludes that "the interpretation of Irish-speaking ability clearly altered over a century" (p. 37) which may mean that complying with norms has either taken second place to the desire to identify with the language and be counted as an Irish

speaker, or the norms themselves have changed over time and reflect different patterns of use and function. Edwards points out that those claiming to be speakers are likely to be those who have acquired a school knowledge of Irish, which may well represent a “thin wash” (p. 37) of the language compared with 19<sup>th</sup> century abilities.

Christensen (2001) took a different approach in his study of Māori language revitalization, which employed self-assessment across a range of language use scenarios. Instead of discrete proficiency categories his respondents judged themselves according to a language proficiency continuum (p. 109), based on the following descriptors:

<i>Think in English</i>	-	<i>Think in Māori</i>
<i>Hesitant response</i>	-	<i>Fluent response</i>
<i>Message is mixed up and unclear</i>	-	<i>Message is clear</i>
<i>Basic language used</i>	-	<i>Message able to be communicated in a variety of ways including the use of idiom and colloquial expression</i>
<i>Grammatically incorrect</i>	-	<i>Grammatically correct</i>

Christensen’s continuum offers a broader approach based on situational use rather than discrete skills only and, crucially, takes into account a dynamic proficiency range. It also goes beyond purely linguistic dimensions by including communicative and cognitive aspects.

#### 2.4.2.1 *Strengths and weaknesses of self-reporting*

The method of collecting language data through the use of self-report has been particularly useful where testing or participant observation would be impractical, for example in large

surveys including studies in multilingual societies. Despite the practical advantages of self-report, there are questions about its validity and reliability.

The present study employed self-report, although its reliability has been the object of debate (Chrisp, 1997b) and is therefore a tool not without its critics. Problems associated with the use of self-report may, however, not always be due to restrictions of the instrument alone; it could, for example, be influenced by the status of the language reported on. Problems with self-rating as employed in the Language Maintenance Project in England (Stubbs, 1985) were identified by Caldas & Caron-Caldas (1999). They are listed below to help illustrate some of the challenges:

1. Ambiguity of proficiency scales.
2. Different language proficiency levels across different contexts.
3. Over/underreporting for self-esteem or attitudinal reasons.
4. Frame of reference (e.g. compared to own or other community of speakers) with possible variation according to age, type or location of the reference group .
5. A narrow test sample measuring hypothetical language skills which do not represent the totality of language proficiency of a person.
6. Insensitivity to change over time.

McGroarty and Beck (1995) question whether self-reports represent the full range of bilingual speakers' linguistic or conceptual repertoire and therefore "may not be the optimal way of representing the full range of their lexical skills" (p. 332).

Support for self-reported data comes from SLA researchers (Bachman & Palmer, 1989) as well as Fishman (1991), who points out that “our dependence on such categories is not entirely an article of faith [because] the responses on self-report Likert-type instruments are significantly related to independently obtained daily behavioral records of a more precise type” (p. 52). Evidence for a correlation between self-rated and actual language proficiency has been found in several studies. Hakuta and D’Andrea’s (1992) research on maintenance and loss of Spanish/English bilingualism among Mexican background high-school students established that self-assessment not only correlated with measured proficiency levels but also with additive or subtractive orientations. Where self-report data have been used in combination with performance testing or interviewing (Shameem, 1995; Quakenbusch, 1989) it has also been found to validate self-reported data (Shameem, 1994, 2000). Shameem (1998) makes the point that strong correlations between performance-based ratings and self-reported proficiency provide evidence for the validity of the self-report scale used in her study.

Similarly, Christensen (2001) believes that self-assessment in his survey on Māori language speakers' proficiency provided a valid measure of their ability, although he concedes that it may not necessarily provide an accurate picture. Self-assessed ability does not exist in isolation and, as Christensen points out, “one of the main ways that people are able to judge their own language proficiency is through comparison with other known speakers of the language” (2001, p. 107). Such a notion of comparative proficiency does not automatically rely on ideal NS skills as the only benchmark for comparison, although it leaves individuals with the choice to do so.

The conceptualization and definition of the constructs under study may also be influenced by cultural factors. This has implications for the reliability of self-reported data from culturally diverse populations because different cultures may have different notions of a competent user of a particular language. Speakers may know a dialect form of a language, which they may perceive as a real language. Furthermore, cross-culturally different notions and practices of literacy may affect the definition of proficiency. Thus, someone may think they do not know a language very well because they cannot, and perhaps need not, read and write it.

Whether reliability and validity do in fact pose a problem also depends on the purpose of the end-user of the data (McGroarty & Beck, 1995). For example, external agencies involved in funding decisions or policy-making require valid and statistically reliable data, in contrast to the face-validity needs of the speech communities themselves. Thus, the type of assessment should be selected accordingly.

Construct-validity may be threatened by inadequate operationalisation of variables according to Coolican (1999) and De Vaus (1995). Construct validity is determined by the extent to which measures actually assess a concept under study (Coolican, 1999, p.95) and it is thus crucial to avoid what Roberts (1999) deems to be a lack of convergence between a researcher's and the subjects' conceptualisations of standards or notions of fluency and proficiency. The need to improve construct validity supports the key concern of the current study aimed at extending the understanding the stakeholder's perceptions, that is the people who are likely to be studied and judged in respect of their proficiencies.

However, adopting a more individualized approach to language assessment as de Jong & Stevenson (1990) propose would mean that a testing instrument suitable to each community would have to be developed. The impracticalities of such an undertaking justify the sole reliance on self-report from a convenience point of view but with the need to "calibrate self-report" (Quakenbusch, 1989, p. 115) to make it a more reliable instrument.

#### *2.4.2.2 New Zealand studies of migrant language use and proficiency*

Community language studies in NZ have predominantly employed survey techniques such as postal surveys (Roberts, 1999) or sociolinguistic questionnaires and/or interviews ('Aipolo, 1989; Nakanishi, 2000; Park 2000; Roberts, 1999; Verivaki 1990; Walker, 1995). Some studies have employed assessment through testing in combination with self-rating ('Aipolo, 1989; Verivaki, 1990).

Smaller case studies have also varied in their methodological approaches to identify language maintenance levels of their subjects at the micro level. For example, Walker (1995) employed self-report elicited through conventional skills-related scales coupled with observation and elicitation to establish actual language use patterns in social networks (Walker, 1996). Folmer (1992) combined an analysis of a written language corpus with editing and correction tasks for her subjects. Folmer's case study of Dutch-background migrants in New Zealand identified gaps and erosion in her subjects' writing on the basis of patterns of deviation from marked forms of the codified standard language. Folmer's finding of language loss represents a conclusion made from a monolingual Dutch native speaker perspective. Subjects were measured against an ideal that they themselves may or

may not find relevant or applicable where (a) the respondents had only acquired oral/aural ML skills and (b) their writing scores were compared with those of 'matching' relatives in the source country who may be monolinguals and not necessarily exposed to a language contact situation. The question that arises in the context of the present study is to what extent a monolingual approach is consistent with the subjects' sociolinguistic conditions and, more importantly, what approach could be more appropriate.

Johri's (1998) qualitative study of language use, attitudes towards bilingualism and identity is based on data gained from personal interviews complemented by participant observation in domains such as church or language nests. Her findings correspond with earlier ones by Roberts (1990) and Folmer (1992) as well as Park (2000), which identified the encroaching use of English in the home domain. Such shift gives rise to a more symbolic rather than communicative significance of L1, except with groups such as Samoans and Koreans whom Johri found to be concerned about passing on sufficient L1 for communicative purposes.

Shameem (1994) draws attention to the fact that, compared with the long-standing history and development of ESL/EFL tests, only few of those testing proficiency in languages other than English have "involved the assessment of communicative performance" (p. 108). Aiming to fill this gap Shameem's (1995) study of the Wellington Fiji-Indian community allowed for variable standards of correctness, for example in terms of accepting code switching as a bilingual means to maximize communication. The study complemented self-report with conversation simulation, not only to create real life authenticity but also with the explicit aim of reflecting "the creative nature of Fiji Hindi

used by allowing for code-switching, code-mixing and variations in sentence patterns pertinent to real-life Fiji Hindi use in Wellington and in Fiji" (p. 101). The assessment design explicitly aimed at maximizing relevance by taking into account Fiji Hindi's pre-literate nature; scales were selected for oral and aural skills in Shudh, Fiji Hindi and English, while reading /writing scales included Shudh, Urdu and English.

Measuring proficiency in languages with an oral tradition poses particular problems for researchers in the ML context. Roberts (1990) emphasises that migrants' languages or dialects may not have a tradition of writing in their source countries to begin with, citing the example of some of her Chinese participants for whom literacy did not feature as an issue, as most of the New Zealand born respondents were pre-literate.

Those New Zealand Chinese who cannot write the language certainly have no sense that they have been particularly remiss in not learning to write or in not maintaining their childhood ability to write. The task is so great, the rewards (in a New Zealand context) are so few that it seems self-evident to most people it is not worth mastering and/or maintaining. (Roberts, 1990, p. 138)

The finding that this situation did not impact on people's perceived ability to teach ML to their children suggests that abilities and confidence in other areas such as speaking or comprehension make up for what could be perceived as deficit from a monolithic perspective of proficiency. However, Roberts' (1990) study of Chinese language maintenance in New Zealand refers to the possibility that "the standard will be revised downward as time goes on" (p. 53) as a result of decreasing ML use in social interaction.

The sociolinguistic and social psychological patterns in the Korean community were investigated via a sample of primary, secondary and tertiary students, complemented by primary school children's parents (Park, 2000). Park's study integrates the measurement of proficiency aspects with actual language use by employing 'can do' scales for both Korean and English in the four skills plus questions on 'how often performed' scales. This approach takes into account speakers' real usage in the New Zealand setting and thus makes the study more relevant to an ML context. The study also introduces a diachronic dimension by adopting a 'pseudo-longitudinal' method asking retrospectively about language use and ability (two years after migration and present), thereby giving recognition to dynamics of change over time. The list below provides an overview of scale types used in some of the reviewed New Zealand studies.

**Kim (2000)**

*Listening and speaking*

- all conversations
- almost all conversations
- simple conversations only
- only a few but unable in conversation
- no ability at all

*Reading and writing ability\**

- very good
- good (rarely have to use a dictionary)
- passable (but very often I must use a dictionary)
- a little
- no ability at all

\*Descriptive scales for both English and Korean proficiency distinguish between formal and informal language use for oral/aural skills.

**'Aipolo (1990)**

- no ability at all
- only a few words
- able to give a simple formal speech
- able to give a formal speech for almost any occasion
- able to give a formal speech on any occasion

**Nakanishi (2000)\***

- Six levels across four skills
- no competence at all
  - know only few basic words
  - very limited proficiency
  - limited proficiency
  - good proficiency
  - high or native proficiency

**Walker (1995)**

- Four skills in German and English
- nil
  - low
  - average
  - high
  - very high

\*All of Nakanishi's respondents were Japanese-born and unlikely to have 'no skills at all'.

Findings of the New Zealand studies mirror macro patterns of ML elsewhere, particularly the pervasive influence of dominant languages such as English. It affects young migrants' linguistic environments in particular and makes it difficult for them to maintain ML as Watts et al. (2002) have found. At the micro level ML speakers' orientations to their proficiencies vary also, given that linguistic norms and expectations are exposed to contact conditions as much as language functions and use are. Based on the issues outlined so far, the next section attempts to conceptualize a model to help account for MLP from the user perspective.

### **2.4.3 A dual model for MLP**

The purpose of the model to be presented here is to theorize ML speakers' own orientations to proficiency. The model is based on the assumption of a continuum of expectations and perceptions, representing an *autonomous* or *pragmatic* perspective at either end of the continuum (see 2.7.1). While the former typically accommodates more prescriptive notions of MLP, the latter is associated with views of ML proficiency in accordance with shifting levels of use and functions under local conditions (Figure 3). As such the two labels also encompass both formal and functional perspectives in linguistic theory. The autonomous and pragmatic scenarios shown in Figure 3 are not mutually exclusive but help conceptualize orientations to ML from a dual perspective. Changes in linguistic repertoires may coincide with changes in orientation to MLP, that is speakers may either continue to view their proficiency through an autonomous lens, or their locus of concern may shift to a more pragmatic mode as a function of changing needs and values.

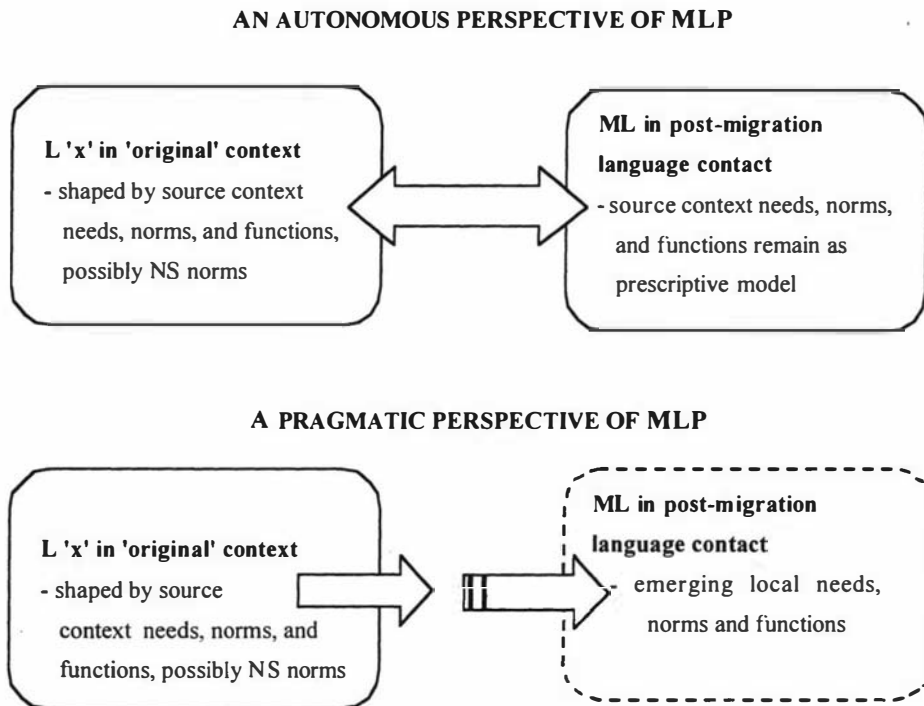
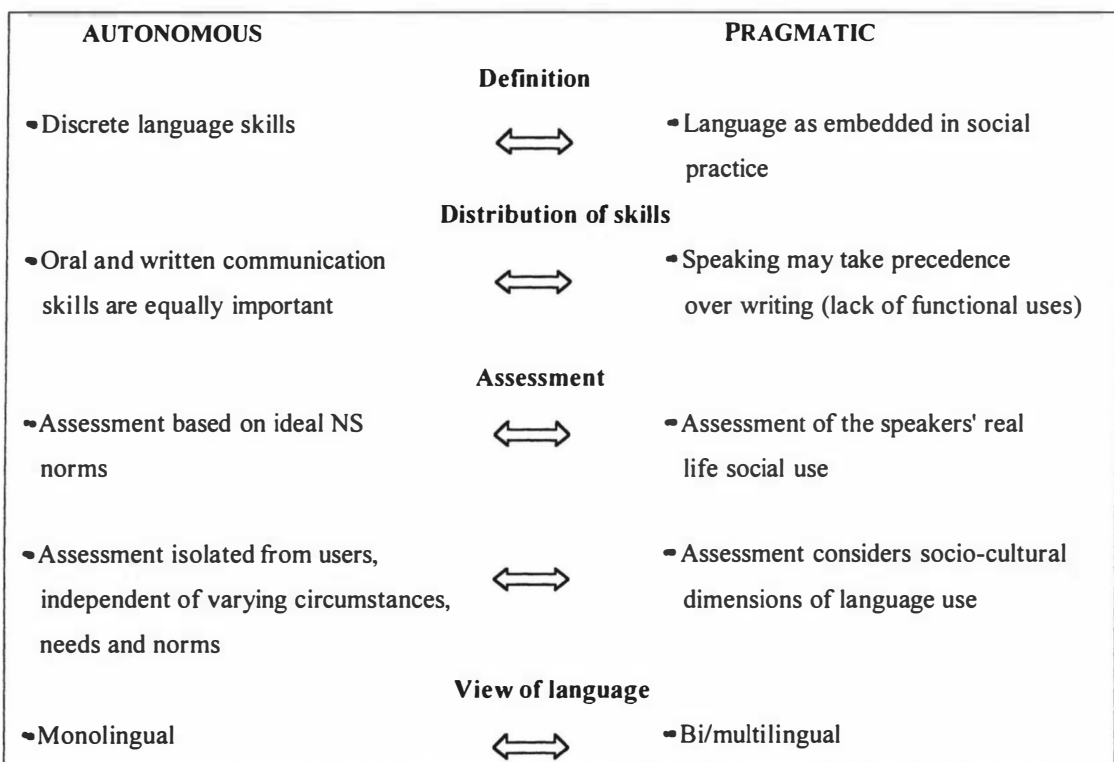


Figure 3. A Dual Perspective of MLP: Between Autonomous and Pragmatic Views

#### 2.4.3.1 *The autonomous/pragmatic continuum*

The two types of MLP notions shown in Figure 3 represent opposing perspectives but are not necessarily either-or scenarios, as they are conceivably outcomes of a process and as such best conceptualized as endpoints of a continuum. In order to locate ML speakers' notions of proficiency on such a continuum, a model was adopted from Hill and Parry (1994) which describes understandings of text and literacy as ranging between *autonomous* and *pragmatic*. To the extent that the model helps explain different notions of literacy, for example those of educators as opposed to students at school and the wider community, it engenders critical questions as to the definitions of literacy in general and the purposes of its assessment in particular, questions which Hill and Parry (1996) applied to the field of testing and assessment in ESL.

Although Hill and Parry's model was devised to reveal fundamentally different understandings of text, their approach also applies to potentially different understandings of language proficiency more generally, as all language use is associated with norms and expressed through social practices. Perceptions of these typically vary, depending on whether norms are regarded as dynamically derived from specific contexts or as static notions based on idealized models. The model adapted from Hill and Parry for the purposes of the present study is presented in Figure 4. It shows how equal knowledge of discrete language skills is associated with the autonomous or monolithic view of language, while the pragmatic view refers to language as being embedded in a social context, engendering its own unique norms and practices of use. The monolingual - bi/multilingual view of language was added to the model as a new dimension.



Note. Adapted from Hill & Parry (1994, pp. 253-277)

Figure 4. Autonomous - Pragmatic Continuum of ML Speaker Notions of Proficiency

The autonomous-pragmatic distinction also contributes to a more integrated approach to social and psychological norms: "Given that overt behaviour ... represents the transformation of a prototype into a socially situated instance or expectancy, there may be more or less 'fit' between the 'ideal' and the 'real'" (McKirnan & Hamayan, 1980, p. 164). The extent to which norms are shared then determines what level of balance can be achieved between the optimum ideal (i.e. autonomous) and the real (i.e. pragmatic) with regard to (a) the optimal level or frequency of behaviours or forms accepted as benchmark, (b) the range of acceptable variation and (c) the distinction between norm and model (see also 2.4.3.1).

Due to isolation from the original (NS) context that shapes linguistic needs, norms and functions there, migrants have been said to lose some of their "generative capacity and tend to become fixed in the locutions of their time of exile, and they become increasingly prescriptive and less tolerant of change" (Davies, 1991, p. 157). One of the objectives of this study is to examine if this assumption can, in fact, be generally applied to migrants or whether and to what extent there is divergence in their own thinking regarding changes in proficiency.

The autonomous-pragmatic continuum model of MLP, at least in terms of its pragmatic dimension, does not promote an 'anything goes' approach with a fatalistic expectation that ML speakers may have to accept that change is inevitable and therefore to be tolerated. It represents a descriptive and explanatory tool aimed at increasing the understanding of possibly complex notions of MLP. This approach may provide a new lens through which to identify, describe, and discuss MLP. In doing so it may assist in developing a new

discourse, informed by users and parallel to what McCarthy (2001) proposes for SLT, that is embracing local needs and increasing awareness beyond the dominant spheres of the old-world native speakers.

The autonomous-pragmatic framework may also help account for the process of crossing from the notion of the native speaker to the notion of an expert user. In fact, the term *expertise* may be better suited to describing linguistic abilities of multilinguals, as it avoids prescriptive norms underlying the notion of the ideal NS and the idealized norm of perfect monolingual competence; instead it “emphasises ‘what you know’ rather than ‘where you come from’” (Rampton, 1995, p. 341).

## **2.5 SUMMARY OF ARGUMENTS AND RATIONALE FOR A USER-BASED APPROACH TO MLP**

This chapter has outlined aspects and issues associated with the concept of language proficiency. The case of proficiency assessment as part of classroom-based second language learning has shown that proficiency judgments tend to be made in relation to educational success rather than the social or cultural adequacy of language skills. Such an approach does not seem appropriate for proficiency assessment outside of the educational domain, especially in migrant communities where migrant languages may not primarily be associated with formal learning outcomes. There is a need to specify what critical features of ML language use remain relevant and appropriate and can be assessed - in terms of their communicative, symbolic or affective functions.

Any form of linguistic assessment of both the L1 and L2 should ideally be devised in a manner which takes into account bilingual repertoires and the set of needs and norms or expectations pertaining to the migrant language speakers' specific contexts. As a consequence, proficiency assessment, whether self-rated or tested, should be carried out with reference to the community of ML speakers, rather than solely in relation to an idealised norm located outside the New Zealand context. For example, language maintenance assessment criteria according to Roberts (1990) need to "take into account not only rate of language maintenance but also to what extent [...] that rate [will] fit in with the desires and needs of the ... communities concerned" (p. 67).

A better understanding of MLP notions is set to uncover complexities too specific or unwieldy for practical measurement. However, the awareness of these complexities may ultimately inform definitions and interpretations of what it means to be proficient in linguistically diverse environments. A deeper insight into these complexities may help create more precise operationalisations of MLP that can capture its complex nature.

The outline of issues, practices and challenges of language proficiency has shown how the axiomatic concept of a native speaker becomes problematic, particularly in multilingual societies. The suggestion that linguistic proficiency should be judged in its own right without automatic reference to NS norms offers an appropriate point of departure for the current study. As an alternative to using NS norms as a default benchmark it is appropriate to conceptualize language competence as "whatever it is" (Cook, 2002a, p. 10) at a given time and within specific linguistic ecologies and the associated ML speakers.

The current study adopted a participant-centered notion of proficiency, which entails establishing and taking into account the communicative, social and psychological needs of ML speakers and their communities. Gathering proficiency data through self-report, amongst a range of other criterion-referenced (CR) type measures, is already an existing means to facilitate assessment from the user perspective. However, *a priori* assumptions of an idealized NS standard are likely to limit the design of instruments that might capture locally appropriate ML functions and forms and their users' orientations towards them. The present study therefore aims to understand how speakers themselves perceive their own proficiencies in often highly changing sociolinguistic circumstances, where codified standards may not necessarily be relevant, important or familiar any more. ML speakers may well find themselves in "situations where competence in a language is more than a technical skill [and] the *feeling of being proficient* may be more important than proficiency as measured by proficiency tests" (de Bot, 1992, p. 140, italics added).

Thus, it might be possible that the psychological and social needs of bilinguals may not solely rely on well-formed language because the "degree of confidence in the ability to speak the language is more influential in its use than is actual ability" (Taft & Cahill, 1989, p. 140). This aspect highlights the role of affective factors in the conceptualization of MLP. Denison (1997) emphasizes that

the homogeneous rule-governed code metaphor seems to be not merely a theoretical fiction but an important psychological and social need, which contributes to the way in which speakers orient and define themselves, their community, their ethnicity, even their individual and group sense of identity. (p. 65)

Language thus helps define the individual's ability to project different personalities through different languages. The question whether fluctuating language proficiency can affect a speaker's self-image and to what extent proficiency levels may impact on individuals' sense of themselves will be the focus of the next chapter.

## CHAPTER THREE

### SELF-CONCEPT AND IDENTIFICATION THROUGH MIGRANT LANGUAGES

One cannot change languages and cultures without changing one's very being.

(Gabaccia, 1994, p. 121)

#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

In an increasingly globalized world cultural and linguistic crossings are a key experience for those who decide or are forced to move to new and unfamiliar cultural contexts. While linguistic and cultural transformations have probably come to be regarded as an inevitable consequence of the migration experience, the potential for changes to one's *very being* may be a less apparent outcome of the process.

The impact of minority language shift or loss on identity has been well documented (see 3.2), but there may also be implications for individuals' deeper, overall subjectivity. Migrants' languages continue to exist in their source contexts; this is not to say, however, that the effect of social and cultural discontinuities is not deeply felt at a personal level with possible consequences for individuals' self-perception. Given the emotional or spiritual dimension of language that Gabaccia's (1994) statement seems to imply, the question arises as to what impact the functional and symbolic changes ML undergoes might have on the affective functioning of its speakers.

Individuals are unlikely to lose their language in a single lifetime<sup>1</sup>, except in the case of *aphasia*. However, a person's proficiency can change with changing functions and uses, particularly when moving to new cultural contexts with different sociolinguistic patterns.

Papademetre (1994) suggests that

the degree of modification of self-identity of a bilingual in a multicultural society can be correlated with the disappearances/appearances of aspects of language use which may wane and wax in relation to a dynamically-shared culture. (p. 507)

What does this mean in terms of how migrants see themselves in relation to their ML proficiency, and what is the possible impact on self-identification in a changing cultural and sociolinguistic context?

The emphasis in the current study on perceptions of the self in a multilingual language contact environment reflects a focus on the individual and an interest in the affective domain that encompasses the kind of emotional or spiritual aspects not necessarily taken into account in conventional language attitude studies or the language and identity paradigm. Focussing on the individual provides a point of departure for a better understanding of the nuances speakers themselves associate with language related concepts. With regard to migrants' languages, both ML proficiency and the role of these languages for self-identification provide a context of inquiry where the process of change and experience of discontinuities may bring to the fore matters which may have less salience in more stable (diglossic) or monolingual contexts.

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<sup>1</sup> The possibility of language shift is, to some extent, a matter of language choice and may coincide with or precede language loss.

The perspective taken in this chapter draws on the ecological approach to language and language learning outlined in Chapter Two. Within the total social, cultural and linguistic environment ML speakers themselves represent the focal point in this study in terms of their mental and affective orientations to their ML. Affective frameworks have been recognized as constituents of learner contributions in SLA, constituents which Breen (2001) argues help shape the extent of *agency* in participation and interaction in the community. This line of reasoning, it is argued here, applies to all the languages in bilingual speakers' repertoires including ML, at least to the extent that their functional use depends on participation in communities of practice.

The influence of affective factors on L2 proficiency has been well documented (Arnold, 1999; Gardner & Lambert, 1972), but their discussion is strongly related to foreign language learning; it is also based on a one-way perspective, that is how students' attitudinal or motivational orientation influences their second language acquisition. Taking a bi-directional view instead suggests that language proficiency could also be a factor in a person's affective framework, in particular his or her self-concept. Proficiency can thus be seen not solely as a psycholinguistic feature or process but also as an integral part of a person's cognitive-affective makeup within a wider linguistic and environment. The rationale for bringing together an exploration of the two notions of proficiency and self-concept in the present study is therefore to reflect on proficiency as a multidimensional phenomenon; it encompasses both objective and subjective correlates manifest in aspects of *knowing* and aspects of *being* which may underlie overall mental representations about MLP (Figure 5):

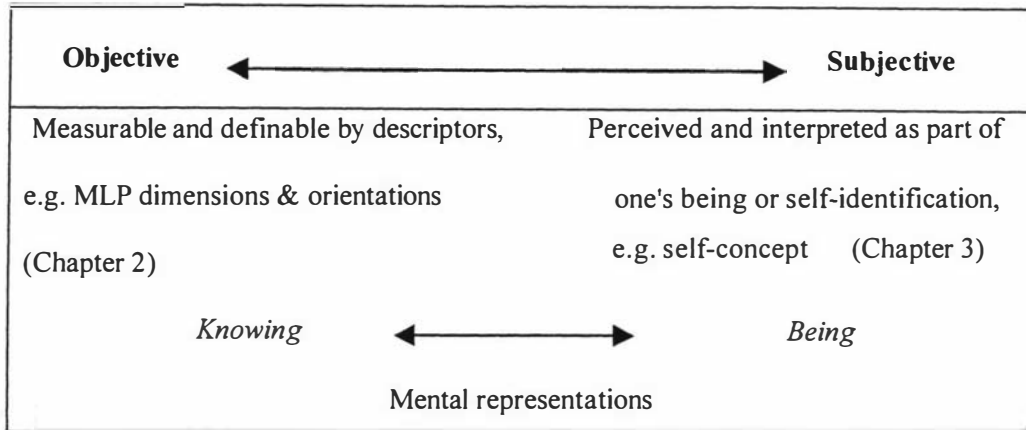


Figure 5. Knowing and Being as Objective and Subjective Correlates of Migrant Language Proficiency (MLP)

### 3.2 WIDENING THE FIELD OF INQUIRY: AN INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACH

Person-related issues of bilingualism have traditionally been informed by social identity theory, particularly through the language and identity paradigm (Edwards, 1985, 1992; Giles & Johnson, 1987; Leets & Giles, 1995; Le Page & Tabouret-Keller, 1985; Smolicz, 1981; Tajfel, 1982; Turner & Giles, 1981) which addresses questions of cultural and ethnolinguistic identity. This approach has gone a long way towards illuminating the role of language for identity formation, both at the personal level (Le Page, 1986) or collective level of social networks (Milroy & Milroy, 1991).

According to social identity theory, identity derives from group membership (Le Page & Tabouret-Keller, 1985, p. 181) via a person's deliberate adoption of group-like features (such as speech) that are seen to facilitate inclusion. However, the assumption that individuals choose the conditions that determine their social membership via linguistic means does not

adequately account for the identification processes in migrant contexts because it fails to consider complexities such as identification with and membership in one's original cultural group. This is contingent on language (ML) and relies on extant social networks or communities of practice as well as on relevant domains where ML is actually used and patterns of linguistic behaviour can develop in the first place, so as to be shared and used as identity badge. A linguistic ecology, which has few niches available for languages other than the dominant host language does not, however, afford the conditions which accommodate multilingual behaviour, let alone individual code choice for identificational purposes.

Milroy and Milroy's (1991) social network paradigm equally emphasizes that membership in social or ethnic networks is vital for self-confirmation and the creation of a strong sense of self, encompassing a sense of how we want to be seen by others and in relation to others. Many authors share the notion that the most common way of identifying a person is by his or her language, though it is, as Edwards (1985) argues, not an essential prerequisite of group identity. Individual as well as social or ethnic identity are both believed to be mediated by language, which "offers both the means of creating this link and that of expressing it" (Giles & Robinson, 1990, p. 317) in social interaction.

While sociolinguists have developed a prolific body of studies investigating the social and ethnolinguistic dimensions of identity at the personal and group level, self-concept has remained primarily a domain for psychologists, particularly in the psycho-analytical tradition (Socor, 1997) and social psychology (Baumeister, 1987, Rosenberg, 1985, Markus & Nurius, 1986).

The poststructural approach to SLA (Lantolf, 2000) is another field which emphasizes the crucial role of identification and positive self-image in accessing learning opportunities through agency in the wider sociocultural environment. The importance of selfhood has also been prominent in the popular domain where, as Baumeister (1987) contends, “the individual quest for personal fulfillment (self-actualisation) has become increasingly accepted by the general society as a legitimate and important aspect of life” (p. 163).<sup>2</sup>

The complex nature of the self has also been investigated in the context of postmodern, postcolonial patterns of social and international relations which have resulted in “hybrid patterns of ethnic identity” (Bradley, 1996, p. 20). The notion of hybridity, developed by Bhabha (1990), arises out of the contemporary global society where no *pure* cultures exist and where communication technology, migration and travel have led to the hybridisation of all cultures. In an increasingly multi-ethnic context hybridity is seen as a positive force, one that creates a *third space* as an alternative to assimilation to one culture only. The development of a hybrid identity is the result of constant exposure to the process of transformation following the migration experience. If hybridity is a “matter of ‘becoming’ as well as ‘being’” (Hall, 1990, p. 225), it is possible to speculate on a new space from where ML speakers perceive their emerging or changing bi/multilingual repertoires and through that, themselves.

It may be difficult to determine whether a merged identity is emerging or whether people simply adopt a complementary *dual* or *multiple* sense of separate identities. In the New Zealand context, Raza (1997) and Jankovic-Kramaric (2001) found evidence of dual affiliation

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<sup>2</sup> This statement may not be generalizable to public domains across cultures, see 3.3.2.2

among their respondents whose Indian or Croatian identities did not appear to be in conflict with a New Zealand identity indicating the development of complementary dual ethnic identification. When ethnic group members have a positive relationship with the majority group, they may not experience competing ethnic identities as Mowe (1997) found in her study of Malay Chinese.

SLA research is beginning to take note of the complex challenges learners face in negotiating a new learner identity, while at the same time experiencing threats to their identities associated with their existing linguistic repertoires. Silberstein (2001), drawing on Norton Peirce (1995), contends that individual learners' social *positionings* afford them different identities through different voices. The impact of identity on the learner has been "largely neglected by language acquisition theories that focus on individual motivation" (p. 106) and ignore the impact of often inequitable social structures on identity construction.

Self-conceptualization involves a mediation process between individuals and their environment, a process for which language is a crucial vehicle. It is an adaptive process to the sociocultural context where "the self constructs for itself a definition that allows it to get along reasonably well in its social environment" (Baumeister & Muraven, 1996, p. 415), resulting in the formation of identity. The notions of identity and self-concept may thus have complementary roles in the process of negotiating and adjusting to unfamiliar post-migration environments.

The current study explores the role of language for self-conceptualisation based on the assumption that the discontinuities migrants often experience are felt not only in terms of

identifications with changing externalities such as national identity, but also at the level of self. If we can perform *acts of identity* through language (Le Page & Tabouret-Keller, 1985) language becomes a tool for self-actualisation and it is necessary to ask how a person will respond where languages undergo qualitative and quantitative changes, such as after migration. A better understanding of what role being bilingual in general, and being an ML user more specifically, plays for individuals and their views of themselves as persons in the face of changing linguistic repertoires thus warrants further inquiry.

### 3.3 SELF-CONCEPT AND IDENTITY – THE INTERFACE

Generally the literature on identity and self-concept provides few clues as to where and how these two notions may interrelate. In fact, they are often dealt with as separate entities, perhaps because the two concepts are associated with different disciplinary paradigms, social identity theory and psychology. Stevens' (1996) approach to *understanding the Self* provides a possible scenario for reconciling identity and self-concept by assuming that personal as well as social identity reflect a dual dimension of the self. Through integrating how we view and express ourselves with the way others see or interpret us, different types of identity become complementary constituents of self-concept (Williams & Burden, 1997).

#### 3.3.1 Labelled identity

Identity labels tend to relate to categorical entities such as nationality or ethnicity. Labels function as an outward expression of membership and/or emotional attachment, yet they may not capture the complex and changing nature of identification processes themselves. This is not to say, however, that labelled identity cannot be adapted or changed, as tends to happen when

migrants are faced with having to accommodate multiple affinities, as examples from some New Zealand studies illustrate.

Raza (1997) found that her second-generation New Zealand Indian respondents' identification with a group or label did not necessarily correspond with the emotional involvement or sense of belonging to that group. Respondents preferred ethnicity labels ranging from New Zealand Indian, Indian, Indian Kiwi, local Kiwi, Fijian Indian, Gujarati Indian, Punjabi, and Goan with varying levels or strength of affinity. Raza thus cautions against a static ethnic group approach. Similarly Jancovic-Kramaric (2001, p. 80) states that "a single ethnic score cannot capture the multidimensionality of ethnic identity". Her study found that among Croatian-background migrants in the New Zealand context the single ethnic label was the most popular (e.g. Croatian, Dalmatian), followed by the choice of a bicultural label (e.g. New Zealand-Croatian, Croatian New Zealander) preferred by the New Zealand-born respondents. The least preferred option was the single host label (e.g. New Zealander, Kiwi, Pakeha, European), a finding which presents a challenge to the notion of an often idealized single host membership.

Identity labels represent discrete categories, which can be indicative of the process of acculturation and participation in a new society according to Bartley (2003). His study of Asian adolescents' acculturation highlights the complexity of meanings and motivations migrants associate with their identities. Irrespective of the respondents' length of residence, the preferred means of identification was through their origin, that is via citizenship or ethno-cultural background. Bartley draws the important conclusion that the negotiation of identity is a function of "the realm of meanings, through which they interpret this variety of experiences"

(p. 139). As such, ethnic identity functions as part of an overall self-concept, which helps to make sense of and handle new or fluctuating situations:

Indeed, a strong sense of self, of one's own ethnic identity, when supported by a measure of flexibility – in the learning of the language, familiarization of dominant customs and so forth – may be an adolescent migrant's strongest asset. (Bartley, 2003, p. 118)

### **3.3.2 Notions of self-concept**

According to Carl Rogers (1951) self-concept denotes a set of ideas about the self and how we perceive ourselves in relation to others and our environment. Contemporary definitions of self-concept and related theories abound in a variety of disciplines. Self-concept is regarded as a cognitive or psychological construct in cognitive science (i.e. as part of our personality), while neuroscience understands self-conceptualization as a physiological process and as possibly related to other aspects of the person such as self-esteem and identity. Self-concept as a global term refers to "the amalgamation of all of our perceptions and conceptions about ourselves which give rise to our sense of personal identity" (Williams & Burden, 1997, p. 97). The self-concept represents a general sense of who we are (Malin & Birch, 1998, p. 587), including perceived self-worth (Malin & Birch, 1998, p. 17). In this sense, the notion of self-concept is particularly relevant to language acquisition and bilingualism studies because sociolinguistic, cultural and other discontinuities may impact on a person's self-consistency. The continuity of the self may in fact represent an important stabilizing force in the face of post-migration fluctuations (see also 3.5.3) as is illustrated in the following statement:

The human self is a self-organizing, interactive system of thoughts, feelings and motives that characterizes an individual. It gives rise to an enduring experience of physical and

psychological existence – a phenomenological sense of constancy and predictability. The self is reflexive and dynamic in nature: responsive yet stable. (Hoyle, 1999, p. 2)

### 3.3.2.1 *The academic self-concept*

In the educational context the study of self-concept has a clear focus on improving learning outcomes through enhanced self-esteem. According to the hierarchical model of self-concept devised by Song and Hattie (1984) language is subsumed under the *ability self-concept*, which is part of an overall *academic self-concept*. Thus, language is clearly seen as a skill related to academic competence (Chapman & Tunmer, 1995; Hansford & Hattie, 1982; Skaalvik & Hagtvet, 1990). Interestingly, little or no reference appears to have been made to language as a discrete self-concept dimension in its own right, except where associated with sub-skills such as reading and academic achievement (e.g. Chapman & Tunmer, 1995).

In the wake of an emerging multicultural education philosophy, educational psychology has shown increasing recognition of learner diversity, including linguistic diversity, as a critical aspect of the learning and teaching context (Eggen & Kauchak, 1999, McInerney & McInerney, 1998). As a consequence, students' diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds have come to be recognized as potentially enriching for classrooms and more attention has been given to the important role of minority children's languages not only for their social but also their personal and emotional development (Eggen & Kauchak, 1999; McInerney & McInerney, 1998).

While this overall trend may well apply to general philosophies it is yet to translate into wider educational theory and classroom practice. For example, the recognition of heritage languages

for their key role in improving performance via facilitating self-esteem (Syed, 2001) appears to have made few inroads outside the foreign language learning context. This role also provides an argument for bilingual education beyond possible cognitive benefits. Yet bilingual approaches to learning continue to conjure up resistance and controversy in many quarters and community language programs in schools are still the exception.

The assumption that self-enhancement through linguistic means contributes to the development of self-esteem may not be universally valid as notions of subjectivity may differ cross-culturally. Any discussion of self-concept must therefore also consider culture-specific meanings attached to it.

### *3.3.2.2 Conceptualization of selfhood across cultures*

Different cultures offer varying legitimate ways of self-construction, which contribute to cultural continuity. The perception of self is influenced by a range of cultural meaning systems, and, as a consequence, a person "may have more than one possible conceptual representation, depending on the cultural meanings brought to bear in their interaction" (Cousins, 1989, p. 125). Malin and Birch (1998, p. 590) emphasize the importance of acknowledging divergence in conceptualizations of the self in different cultural contexts where they may be defined by community or social relationships, for example, with the tribe (e.g. in African contexts) or spiritual forces such as god(s) or one's ancestors (Barth, 1997).

Cross-cultural psychology has described cultural differences in self-perception (including self-esteem) in terms of varying salience of either individual or collective aspects in the process of self-construal. The notion of self as autonomous, internal and stable represents a Western view

based on a Cartesian description of individuality as a unitary entity, whose existence is dependent on perception (I think, therefore I am). Individuals attain self-enhancement through their personal achievements, (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). In contrast, in the non-Western tradition the self is understood as socially constructed, external and flexible and derives from a person's roles and interpersonal relations in social contexts. Self-construal is thus enhanced through maintaining group harmony, as illustrated in the Confucian-derived Chinese concept of the self, which is "not defined by how well it can become the center of all interaction, but how well it can orient itself toward significant others" (Mao, 1995, p. 214).

What makes the process of *selving* universal across different contexts according to Markus et al. (1997) is its simultaneously cognitive and social nature. A person's sense of self is socioculturally constructed in a dynamic process of engaging in cultural practices. This process is captured in Triandis' (1989) three-dimensional model of the self, which incorporates both individual and collective aspects based on cognitions about (a) oneself by oneself (*private self*), (b) how the self is viewed by a specific reference group (*collective self*) or (c) perceptions by a generalized other (*public self*). The social and the personal side of self-concept thus provides a frame of reference for something inner and unique and at the same time something that relates to the real social world:

Just as our self-understanding emerges *from* social interactions, the evolving sense of self *informs* social interaction in a continuous dialectal relationship. Our experiences tell us who we are, and who we are tells us what our experiences mean. (Fivush & Buckner, 1997, p. 181)

Culture provides templates for self-construal as well as the linguistic means for self-presentation. Language reflects and articulates self-knowledge through the formal structure of language (Jopling, 1997; Lakoff, 1997), for example, by self-referential language devices such as personal pronouns or metaphors. Language also facilitates the implicit communication of one's self-understanding during social exchanges. However, language is believed to be more than a medium for self-presentation as it “plays a fundamental role in the actual construction of selfhood [and], speakers come to construct and display ever changing subjectivities” (Budwig, 1999, p. 3) in the way they perceive and talk about their experiences in social interaction.

Cultures appear to differ in terms of their tolerance for contradictions among dimensions of the self. For example, Bruner (1997, p. 507) claims that depending on which norms and values are significant, the level of tolerance towards deviation from norms (e.g. *tight* vs. *loose* cultures as a function of cultural complexity/homogeneity) varies. Thus, ML functions and uses which are different from a perceived standard norm may not only trigger varying attitudinal responses, but they can also vary in the way they affect self-consistency. This line of reasoning suggests that pragmatic or autonomous orientations to MLP (Chapter Two) are culture-specific manifestations of an individual's ability or willingness to reconcile with him/herself any deviations from socially sanctioned norms, including sociolinguistic ones.

Recognition of the diverse possibilities of understandings of oneself in the world is especially pertinent when dealing with culturally and linguistically diverse populations. It is beyond the objectives of this research to explore cross-cultural differences of a language-related self-concept in depth. However, the present study does attempt to inquire into the role and

relevance of migrants' languages in terms of their self-conceptualizations in situations that may be more or less fluid - socially, culturally and linguistically speaking.

A more socially grounded view of the self (see 3.5) recognizes diversity and, crucially, integrates the social and cultural correlates of the self, which may be more salient in some cultures than others but are also universal to the extent that the self does not exist in isolation from others and the social context. This point is emphasized by Neisser (1997) who argues that "the self that emerges from interaction is a dialectical self, defined as much by the other and the interaction as by the individual" (p. 8). Such integration of private and collective aspects of the self, while emphasized differently across cultures (Trafimow et al., 1991) hinges on a crucial factor; it requires language for the process to function through interaction.

### **3.4 AN ECOLOGICAL/SOCIOCULTURAL FRAMEWORK FOR A LINGUISTIC SELF-CONCEPT**

In order to accommodate social, linguistic, cultural and personal (affective) variables this section draws on sociocultural theory and social-psychological perspectives which provide a useful framework for exploring issues surrounding language and self-conceptualization.

#### **3.4.1 The connections between language, human agency and self**

The ecological approach to SLA (van Lier, 2000) recognizes that speakers/learners of languages form part of a system of interconnected relationships with the environment and between the people in it. These relationships are primarily of a social nature but they also encompass an affective dimension. Whereas action - or *agency* - is instrumental for situating

people in their respective sociocultural environments, individuals' perceptions of the situation are also important. In other words, the notion of human agency relates not only to actual linguistic behaviour but also to the perceptions of what ML users regard as important; these perceptions determine what decisions and actions they wish and are afforded to take (Lantolf & Pavlenko, 2001). As agents ML speakers thus actively contribute to the conditions of their sociocultural environment, both in terms of their L2 learning and their ML use or maintenance.

The nature and extent of social engagement is shaped by personal histories and experiences. McKay and Wong (1996), in referring to ESL learners in formal learning contexts, suggest that these experiences constitute "the very fabric of students' lives [...] determining their investment in learning the target language" (p. 603). From a holistic perspective McKay and Wong's arguments apply beyond the SLA context, given that individuals are shaped by their overall sociocultural experiences represented in and expressed through a person's total linguistic repertoire. Davies and Harré (1990) summarize the importance of personal histories as follows:

In speaking and acting from a position people are bringing to the particular situation their history as a subjective being, that is the history of one who has been in multiple positions and engaged in different forms of discourse. (Davies & Harré, 1990, p. 48)

Self-presentation is a key dimension that connects language use with identity (Miller, 2000). Migrants may have fewer opportunities available for self-presentation in social situations, unless they have access to communities of practice, both in the host language and ML, where it is possible to take and validate their positions.

Modifications in linguistic behaviour such as style or code switching may be manifestations of 'self-presentations' derived from the need "to create a positive impression along the dimensions desired by socially influential others" (Giles et al., 1986, cited in Hamers & Blanc, 1990, p. 142). But what possibilities for self-presentation do ML speakers realistically have when interaction with socially significant others is reduced due to a lack of social networks or the lower status of the minority language? Recent migrants in particular are faced with new and unfamiliar ways in which others interact with them and aspects of their identity may not be affirmed in the way they understand and have come to expect. Where changing patterns of ML use and proficiency coincide with an emerging host language and a lack of valorization of one or both languages, neither may have sufficient social, economic and cultural currency to stimulate investment in either language. What are the social-psychological implications of these subtle processes for self-conceptualisation?

#### **3.4.2 A socially constructed self-concept**

To the extent that the self emerges through language in interaction it is fundamentally social in nature. An interest in the social aspects of self is not new. When speakers converge and diverge during interaction on the basis of salient linguistic markers they reflect either in-group or out-group identity (Giles, Bourhis & Taylor, 1977; Giles & Robinson, 1990). However, speech accommodation theory is primarily interested in the investigation of the effects of self on communication, not vice versa. Tajfel's social identity theory (1982) has been the most influential explanation of the dual quality of self-identification, which assumes a self-image based on two constituting elements, personal and social identity. While self-concept relates to an assumed inner self at the individual level, it may form only in reference to others (people,

things or places), giving rise to identity at a collective level. This mirror quality of the self presupposes an 'other' who can be distinguished by way of boundary marking.

The socially dynamic nature of the self is contingent on language use in interaction. However, the extent to which the self is enacted through participation is "afforded and constrained by others" (Markus et al., 1997, p. 50). In view of the fact that migrants' social participation can undergo significant changes in post-migration settings the question arises what possible implications this might have for maintaining their socially constructed selves. ML speakers' linguistic affordances may in fact be doubly constrained, at least for those with limited access to interaction in the host language and few opportunities to engage in social networks and domains associated with ML.

The socially situated nature of self-concept is central to the social-constructionist and poststructuralist approach to language and identity in SLA (Lantolf, 2000; Norton Peirce, 1995, Norton, 2000, 2001; Pavlenko, 2002; van Lier, 2000). This paradigm draws on Bakhtin's (1981) and Vygotsky's (1978, 1986) theories of language and its role in the dynamic relationship between an individual's social and psychological functioning. Learners are viewed as social agents, learning to participate in cultural practices through interaction with others, provided the necessary *affordances* exist (Lanehart, 1996; Markus et al., 1997; Norton, 2000; Norton Peirce, 1995). Thus, when people interact through language "they are not only exchanging information with target language speakers, but they are constantly organizing and reorganizing *a sense of who they are* and how they relate to the social world" (Norton, 2001, p. 166; emphasis added). In the sense that many migrants are at once ML speakers and L2 learners or users, for instance those who come to New Zealand from non-English speaking

backgrounds, the poststructural approach to SLA has relevance for the total range of sociolinguistic resources a person brings to his or her specific environment.

Coming to a different social environment affects the extent and nature of affordances available to migrants, and these may constrain their abilities to position themselves. In societies where monolingual values and practices prevail, *cultural capital* (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977) derives from the dominant language and culture and its associated economic, social and cultural resources. There is hence less reason for *investment* (Norton Peirce, 1995) in any other languages unless bi/multilingual migrants' cultural capital is also determined by the ability to access multiple linguistic and cultural resources.

The imbalance in cultural capital reflects a power imbalance which manifests itself at and is reinforced on two levels: (a) in migrants' L2 status where they are learners of the host language, for example, as migrants from non-English speaking backgrounds in New Zealand and (b) in their capacity as bi/multilingual speakers of languages other than English. This fundamental disparity also finds its expression in the way acculturation is conceptualized as a one-way process, that is, from the origin culture to the target culture. What are the implications for migrants' self-concept, let alone self-esteem, when faced with a situation where they can no longer capitalize on their existing knowledge and experience, including ML? This question is essentially a matter of identity mediated through personal histories. In SLA there has been a growing recognition of the need to enhance language learners' ability to draw on their own "symbolic and material resources" (Norton, 2000, p. 10) to facilitate a positive learner identity. Migrants find themselves facing an identical challenge, constantly reconstructing their linguistic identities in new cultural and linguistic contexts.

Viewed from sociocultural theory as explanatory framework, ML is promoted or constrained by the interplay of a range of ecological factors, a process visualized in Figure 6. The relationship between language and emerging identities can be seen as an outcome of linguistic investment, both in ML and the host language. This bi/multilingual investment may enhance the construction of a self-concept where ML functions as much as an affective resource as it represents a form of social-cultural, linguistic and economic capital.

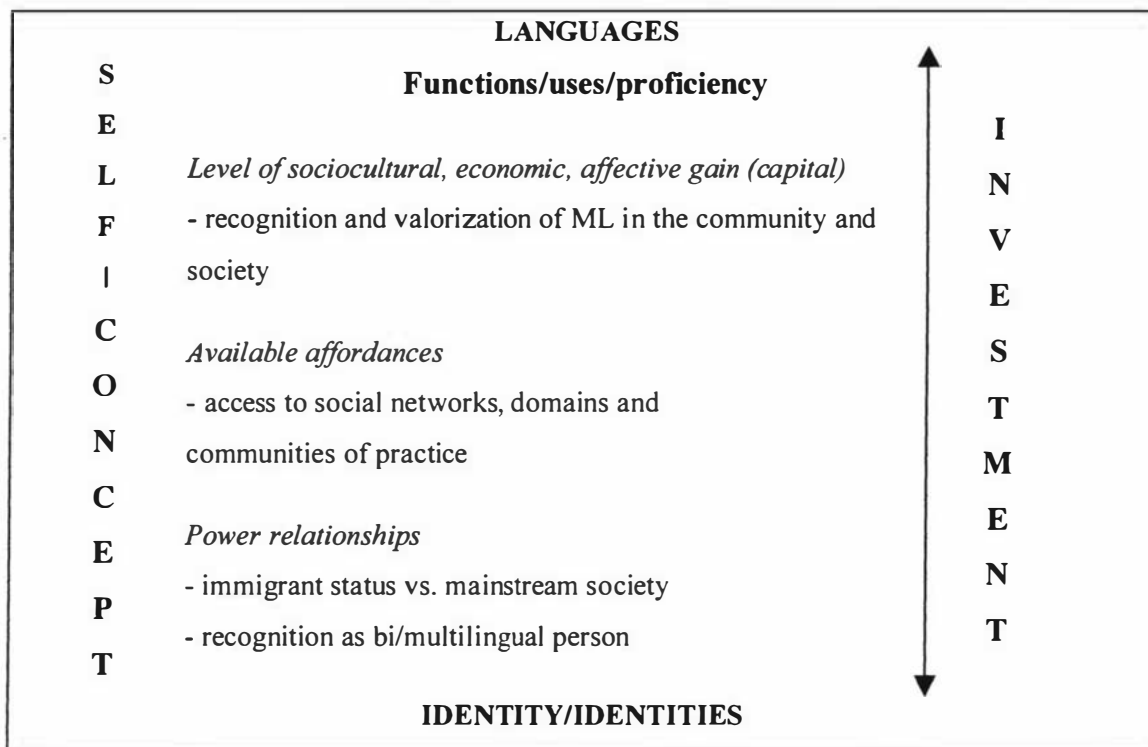


Figure 6. Language, Identity and Self-Concept as Outcome of Linguistic Investment

Re-constructing one’s sense of self as a migrant thus does not appear to be just a matter of picking up where one left off before migrating. Even for generations born into the host society for whom ML may be a second or heritage language, the lack of value attached to ML in a

predominantly monolingual context reduces the chances for ML to contribute to the formation of a bilingual self. In fact, Fishbane (2001) would go as far as to argue that “persons are not free to create themselves by rejecting their roots or their parents. ... there is no ‘self-made man’; the self is co-constructed in a context, especially the family of origin, within the larger context of the culture” (p. 276).

In the context of the current study a number of questions arise from Fishbane’s claim. Does the process of self-construction from the familial and cultural context depend on knowledge of ML and, if so, what impact could varying uses and levels of proficiency have on its success? Are later migrant generations who do not speak or understand ML destined to a rejection of their roots or can they conceptualize themselves as connected to their cultural background through means other than ML?

#### *3.4.2.1 The linguistic self-concept*

The social nature of the process of conceptualizing and constructing a sense of self is rendered possible through language in use because the self “is not so much labeled or described as it is enacted” (Koven, 1998, p. 437). Language provides the means to establish interaction in conversation with the self and others through which the self emerges and is maintained (Gregory, 1987; Sharpes & Wang, 1997). For example, identities as part of self-concept have been described as partially “discursive products” (Stevens, 1996, p. 228). Similarly, the *verbal self* (Stern, 1985, cited in Socor, 1997) is understood to emerge through an interactive ‘world of words’ through language in use.

The notion of *positioning* (Davies and Harré, 1990) helps account for the dynamic aspects of language-generated personhood, rather than the static dimensions of self established through roles or labels. Thus, a person's sense of self is the product of discursive practices embedded in underlying social structures and their attendant norms, beliefs and expectations. Yet, the idea that positioning permits us to choose our own locations as speakers or hearers may be too simplistic in bi/multilingual settings where there is also potential for

discontinuities in the production of self with reference to the fact of multiple and contradictory discursive practices and interpretations of those practices that can be brought into being by speakers and hearers as they engage in conversations. (Davies & Harré, 1990 , p. 62)

The inclusion of social dynamics in the formulation of the self provides an approach that connects subjectivity with language. This approach associates the self with a process of being and becoming and connects it with the social, historical and ideological aspects which impact upon identificational processes. A useful model to illustrate the complexity of these processes via language has been provided by Lanehart (1996b). Her relational model of language identity (Figure 7) describes the interrelatedness of dimensions embedded in the wider social, historical and economic context. The multidimensional nature of a language identity ties in with the ecological perspective of language use and learning and highlights how a number of external influences and agencies shape our overall experience of language identity via overlapping transactional relationships.

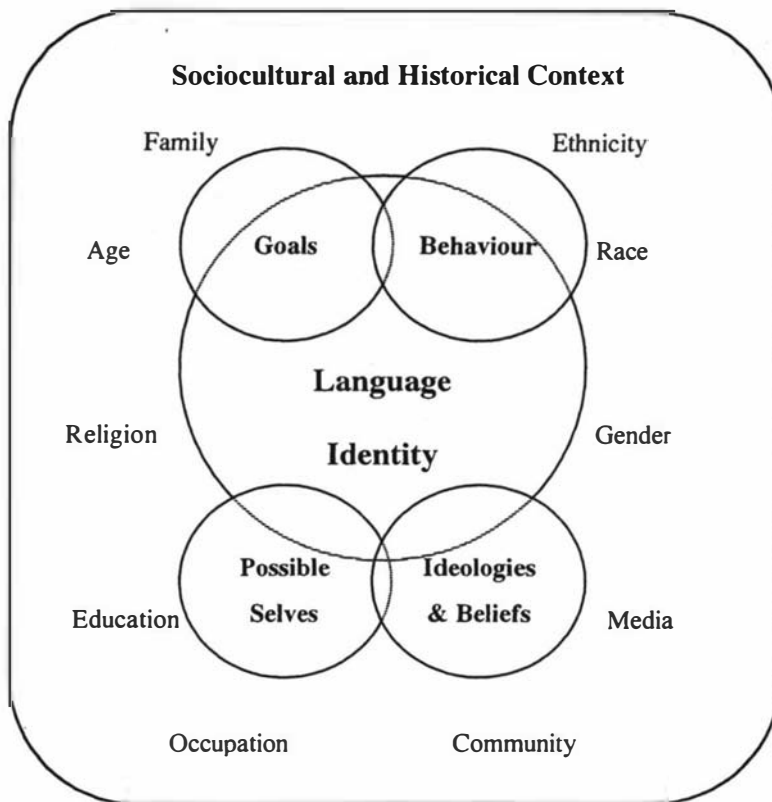


Figure 7. A Relational Model of Language Identity (Lanehart, 1996b, p. 236)

Although Lanehart's model integrates self-concept, or *possible selves*, as a constituent of language identity and not vice versa, it clearly implies an overall sense of being which is mediated by language.

The ability to perceive and express a sense of self through language “is acquired almost with the acquisition of language itself” (Bruner, 1997, p. 156), that is starting with the language one is socialised in. The emergence of the mother tongue as the first language or language of the home through the socialisation process therefore occupies a powerfully symbolic and affective position, which arises out of its close association with growing up and our earliest emotional

experience. Invariably, people attach special value to the first or home-learned language. For example, Padilla (1999) believes that there is

perhaps no greater way to express the importance that language has to a group than to equate it to the affection that we give our mothers. In other words, language, like a mother, provides the nurturance and stability so necessary for healthy development and fulfillment. (p. 116)

The centrality of language is also pertinent to ethnic identity, which constitutes part of the human experience and identifies people's membership in a social groups with a common heritage. Language has been regarded as a fundamental part of ethnic identity "without there being a necessary link between ethnicity and the use of an ancestral language" (Liebkind 1992, p. 151) although Waas (1996) found that proficiency in German among German-background migrants in Australia correlated with German citizenship and engagement with ethnic organizations. A study of Russian and Finnish bilinguals suggests that identification does not depend on actual functional use of the language as neither frequency of use nor self-reported proficiency were found to predict ethno-linguistic self-identification through the respective languages (Jasinskaja-Lahti & Liebkind, 1998).

Some New Zealand based studies illustrate that the extent to which ethnic identity depends on language varies by ethnic group. For example, Roberts (1999) found that over 70 percent of her Dutch respondents did not want to give up their Dutch identity, even though their Dutch language maintenance rate was not high. Similarly Johri's (1998) study of Samoan and Korean participants found that second generation Samoans accepted someone's ethnicity as Samoan even if that person had shifted to English. Non-Samoan speakers were therefore not excluded

from membership of that ethnic group. In contrast, language appeared to be a crucial ethnicity component for the Korean group who saw their language as something they were born with. However, the strong reliance on Korean could also be explained by its communicative function, as 29 percent of Koreans in New Zealand were unable to speak English according to the 2001 Census (see Appendix B).

An important multidimensional linkage between language and identity is suggested by Fishman (2001), who describes language and cultural identities as being borne out “at the level of doing, at the level of knowing and at the level of being” (Fishman, 2001, p. 3). *Knowing*, or ethnolinguistic cognition, arises out of culture-specific interpretations of reality represented by linguistic means (for example, formality levels or kinship systems) and which require enactment or *doing* through the use of language. The *being* dimension involves the passing on of what is believed to represent the essence of an ethnocultural collectivity, creating an intergenerational link between language and ethnolinguistic identity. Fishman (2001) suggests that losing this link means relinquishing the past because

to abandon the language may be viewed as an abandonment not only of the traditional doings and knowings, but as an abandonment of personal ancestral kin and cultural ancestral heroes *per se*. (p. 5)

Fishman (2001) thus highlights how language keeps alive the real or perceived lasting link between language and ethnicity – and via that with kin – which he believes is not translatable into or enactable through a second language. In other words, Fishman’s notion of *continuity of being* suggests a continuity of the self via ethnolinguistic membership which is facilitated by ML.

Self-knowledge is mediated through language and in the process of acquiring the host society's language migrants may find new potential ways for seeing and positioning themselves. However, it may also mean that familiar understandings of oneself associated with one's history, socialisation, and personal experiences either change or disappear as a function of qualitative and quantitative changes in the ML. This may apply in particular to ML literacy.

Literacy represents a specific case of socioculturally situated linguistic practice (Hornberger, 1989, 1996; Martin-Jones & Jones, 2000; Street, 1994). Where literacy is seen as an indication of one's social competence it becomes a constituent of the self, a literate self so to speak. For example, Turner (2002) illustrates the social construction of self through a bilingual child's emerging writing skills as a function of her sense of self as a writer. Turner's study shows how this process is constructed through peer interactions facilitated by relationships among the children. In the case of biliteracy or multiple literacy self-presentation/actualization via one's literate voice becomes even more complex where social practices undergo changes as in migration contexts. The ongoing process of transformation of sociocultural practices in multilingual contexts is manifest in literacy practices, which Martin-Jones (2000) argues warrant a better understanding of how they serve the redefining of identities.

In monolingual host societies ML literacy functions are often invisible in public domains and reduced to uses in the home domain or with relations overseas. Practicing ways of reading and writing in ML is also curtailed due to the lack or even absence of communities of practice, and the weakening of ML literacy may ultimately mean its loss as a mechanism for self-

construction or definition. To the extent that the linguistic repertoires of bilinguals wax and wane, language use patterns change and shift, and the 'sociocultural capital' levels of ML diminish in monocultural societies, the cognitive, social and affective consequences of migration are likely to be complex and profound.

### **3.5 SELF-CONCEPTUALIZATION OF BILINGUALS**

The process of verbal enactment of the self has possible implications for bilingual speakers' identities whose linguistic repertoires allow them to establish different kinds of self because "different ways of speaking in each language point to contrasting experiences and positional identities of bilinguals" (Koven, 1998, p. 410). This suggests that a repertoire of languages allows for the establishment of different kinds of selves, not only through social interaction with others but also by endowing individual speakers with a 'personal voice' for self-expression (Johnstone, 1996). Whereas different ways of speaking can also be the outcome of stylistic variations or speech accommodation, changing patterns of language use and proficiencies in bilinguals tend to be the result of sociolinguistic changes brought about by migration. These typically include the lack of ML domains and social networks as well as a low status or functional value of ML. The dual pressure of developing host language fluency and maintaining ML has both linguistic and affective implications and the question arises to what extent social positioning and personal voice are enabled through ML or L2 or both.

In contrast to one's social voice, inner or private speech mediates between a person and his or her experience of the world. In a situation of temporal and cultural displacement the personal voice may have a role to play in maintaining the pre-migration sense of self and identity.

Pavlenko and Lantolf (2000) draw attention to the need for translating oneself “to ensure continuity by transforming and reintegrating one’s childhood into one’s new past. Without this move, one would be left with an unfinished life in one language, and a life, begun at midstream, in another” (p. 168). Their point highlights the crucial importance of continued bilingualism as a basis for such a transformation process, subject to interaction with others in the sociocultural environment. Shared practices provide continuity and

a consistent context for thinking, feeling, and acting; in short, these are the essential ingredients for a personal identity offering a framework for effective commerce with the social environment. (Taylor, 1991, p. 15)

Yet, the reality in many cases is one of language shift and eventually language loss. As a consequence of crossing between different discursive practices and ways of referring to oneself, which may involve (re)labelling by the self and others even to the extent of name changing, individuals may undergo translations of themselves via the newly emerging host language. However, gaining agency and voice in the new language typically accompanies the loss of one’s ML and with that its role to mediate a person's mental and affective processes. One potential outcome migrants may thus face is “losing the connection to one’s own inner world” (Pavlenko & Lantolf, 2000, p. 165). But according to Pavlenko and Lantolf (2000) loss can also lead into a sense of renewal as observed in the patterns of loss and recovery documented in personal narratives of late bilinguals. They distinguished clearly identifiable stages in a process ranging from initial loss towards a phase of recovery (p. 162-163). The stages are summarized in Table 3:

Table 3

Phases of Linguistic and Affective Loss and Recovery (Pavlenko &amp; Lantolf, 2000)

Initial phase of loss	Phase of recovery
- Loss of one's linguistic identity	- Appropriation of others' voices (L2)
- Loss of all subjectivities	- Emergence of one's own new voice
- Loss of the frame of reference and the link between the signifier and the signified	- Translation therapy: reconstruction of one's past
- Loss of the inner voice	- Continuous growth 'into' new positions and subjectivities
- First language attrition	

The recovery phase culminates in the emergence of a new personal voice and way of seeing oneself, which links in with the concept of a merged or hybrid identity. Applying Pavlenko and Lantolf's (2000) framework to hypothetical cases of ML loss and recovery a number of critical scenarios of possible outcomes are conceivable:

### 1. **Single loss and single gain: monolingual outcome**

- Language shift and/or loss of ML to the extent where proficiency may not sustain social interaction with other ML speakers and, in time, the inner voice disappears.
- English emerges in time to replace ML voice and identification.
- Social and personal impact: cultural and linguistic assimilation.

### 2. **Reconstruction and double gain: bilingual outcome**

- ML proficiency maintained though likely to be different in form and use.
- English emerges as additional language.
- Social and personal impact: assists construction of a third 'new' bilingual voice and SC of multiple complementary identities.

### 3. Double loss: mono/semilingual outcome

- Language shift and/or loss of ML to the extent where proficiency may not sustain social interaction with other ML speakers and, in time, the inner voice disappears.
- Limited emergence of English.
- Social and personal impact: deconstruction rather than recovery of possible or viable selves.

More often than not the double gain scenario may remain an ideal option. The attempt to reconcile one's ML-related past with the host language future may be the cause for conflict because a person's narratives and experiences associated with ML were

constructed in a time and place constrained by conventions that differ from conventions of their present time and place. Thus they have no way of making sense of the present and this, in turn, gives rise to the cognitive and affective dissonances [...]. (Pavlenko & Lantolf, 2000, p. 172)

Pavlenko and Lantolf's (2000) model illustrates the profound impact cultural crossing can have on migrants' linguistic identity. Therefore, as Leets and Giles (1995) emphasize, the expectation "to give up one's native language, one's affective language (along with all the resulting losses) in order to 'make it'" (p. 339) should be questioned. In fact, the very ability to deal with cultural and linguistic change and adjustment in a way that leads to optimal outcomes without becoming monolingual may itself become a stabilizing factor for migrants and contribute to, rather than detract from their acculturation as Lambert and Taylor's (1996) study of Cuban-American families shows. Lambert and Taylor's participants<sup>3</sup> realized that it was

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<sup>3</sup> The sample only included mothers.

possible to succeed in American society by “being themselves linguistically and culturally, while becoming as Americanized as is manageable” (p. 497) was associated with middle rather than lower class social status. Most importantly, the study also established that the mothers’ own language maintenance and their ability to pass Spanish on to their children as a source of self-enhancement was a result of the mothers’ “pride and personal self-respect<sup>4</sup> ... [which itself] was enhanced as a function of their offspring’s competence in Spanish” (p. 497).

ML thus appears to have important functions beyond being a means of communication and of cultural identity. It has the capacity to unite a person with those closest to them, the own inner self and its associated history and ethnic group. A respondent to a survey on the extent of acculturation of Hispanics (Korzenny, 1999) expressed this personal-social-affective dimension of ML as follows:

Spanish is my mother tongue, and it is the tongue of my mother. Spanish is still the tongue which I feel most clearly speaks from my heart. It calls out from my childhood. What I mean is that it encompasses my sense of identity by its sound and rhythm, and the fact that it is the language which I speak to my family with. It speaks not of the identity which I project in public now, but rather of my personality and sense of self since birth. *When I speak in Spanish, I feel I speak from my soul.* (p. 4, italics added)

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<sup>4</sup> A measure of respect and social status perceived for themselves personally and their ethnic group.

### 3.5.1 The dynamic nature of self-concept

Half a century ago Carl Rogers (1951, cited in Gale, 2001, p. 1) claimed that “a strong self-concept is flexible and allows a person to confront new experiences and ideas without feeling threatened”. To the extent that language contributes to this function of self-concept as a coping mechanism, ML may have a crucial role to play in new and unfamiliar situations, which are characteristic of the migration experience.

The ability of the self to cope with change appears to be based on the dynamic nature of the self, generated during a "lifelong process ..., created anew according to various social constraints (historical, institutional, economic, etc), social interactions, encounters, and wishes that may happen to be very subjective and unique" (Giles & Robinson, 1990, p. 316). Thus, the emerging self becomes a tool to negotiate life allowing a person ongoing self-construal in response to changing environments.

Being and becoming implies present and past as well as future. Representations of the self in the past, present and future are inextricably linked to one's sense of self. The self may thus function more like a pool of *possible selves* which continuously evolve,

based upon our past and present transactions with the various entities within our sociocultural and historical contexts. Those transactions help make us who we are and how we see our possibilities. (Lanegart, 1996a, p. 29)

The role of the past for the present perception of self would therefore appear to be particularly significant to people who have moved to socio-historical contexts which have no part in their personal histories. Speakers of minority languages may be constrained in terms of whom they

are able to interact with, in the host language and/or ML, depending on language levels or extant social networks. If past experience, mediated through ML, affects the direction of who we want to be for the future, what will be the impact of the physical, social and emotional separation from the ML for the evolution of a current and future self? The answer to this question may lie in the dynamic nature of the self, which enables it to reconcile contradictions and function "as an adaptive and creative response in the face of basic trans-cultural predicaments and specific environmental and social affordances (Jopling, 1997, p. 265).

The dynamic nature of the self, according to Falk and Miller (1998) stems from its reflective capacity, which arises from the ability to engage in an internal conversation with oneself. This inner dialogue is believed to arise from the responses of significant others to one's appearance, actions, or attitudes. The perception of other people's responses becomes incorporated into a person's many self-images. These various self-images, taken together, make up an overall and strong sense of who one is in relation to others.

A recent study of German migrants to New Zealand (Bürgelt, 2003) illustrates the dynamic force of an evolving self and its importance for a person's social and emotional wellbeing. The notion of a *transcended* inner sense of self was revealed in the migrants' awareness of their reconstructed identities. The experience of migration, irrespective of whether people returned to Germany or stayed in New Zealand, was found to have facilitated a deeper understanding of themselves, resulting in personal growth. The study found a recurrent theme "I am Me & I am a German New Zealander" (p. 70). This sentiment demonstrates merging identities transcending into a person's overall sense of subjectivity.

### 3.5.2 Post-migration challenges to the self-concept

A typical scenario in linguistically diverse contexts is the perceived lack of support of an individual's self-conception by others through, for example, the failure to accept cultural or linguistic difference. Migrants often share the experience of self-concept negation, (Gudykunst & Kim, 1997) when they find themselves facing changes in their linguistic proficiencies, coupled with a low evaluation of their languages by the wider, often monolingual<sup>5</sup> society. Resulting feelings of anxiety are often dealt with by avoidance mechanisms, for example by foregoing contact or communication with members of groups who are perceived to represent a threat to an individual's self-concept. Intercultural communication theory asserts that, irrespective of cultural differences, there exists a universal human need to "sustain our self-conception" (Gudykunst & Kim 1997, p. 257). In reality, negative orientations due to feelings of linguistic inadequacy often accompany the cultural adaptation process typically experienced by language learners. According to the acculturation paradigm (Schumann, 1978) negative affect can become a disruptive force in SLA:

Disruptions of existing mental constructs, particularly those relating to oneself, often entail strong feelings. Simply the necessity of acknowledging ignorance and imperfection, let alone the fear that one will be inadequate to fill gaps, are sufficient reasons to feel distress. (Arnold, 1999, p. 79)

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<sup>5</sup> This refers to members of the majority group, who, as speakers of the dominant language (*lingua franca*), tend to be monolingual.

Arnold's point applies equally to ML in the sense that attrition or incomplete acquisition of ML could engender the same feelings of failure or inadequacy. The process of acculturation is frequently associated with achieving fluency in the host language. However, this monolingual and monocultural focus typically results in the devaluation and ultimate loss of migrants' first languages and cultures leading to subtractive bilingualism (Grosjean, 1982) and an experience of cultural disorientation or *anomie* (Grosjean, 1986) instead. Norton (2000) in fact criticizes the acculturation model for not recognizing the "devastating linguistic and domestic consequences associated with giving up one's history, lifestyle, and language" (p. 457). The theoretical underpinnings of Schuhmann's (1978) acculturation theory has failed to consider the broader social dynamics surrounding both second language acquisition and an ongoing investment in one's mother tongue, which may be fraught with social inequities. The real experiences of language and culture loss of many acculturating migrants suggest the possibility of a process of *deculturation* in relation to their first languages and cultures. In other words the acculturation process has ramifications for a person not only as ESL speaker but also as ML speaker. The weakening of cultural identity due to mother tongue loss can become a source of stress, especially for groups such as refugees, who may be least well placed in terms of acculturation (Liev, 1989).

Where language is a constituent component of personal or ethnic identity, devaluing ML represents a threat to identity and self-esteem. Negative connotations or experiences may have even more serious implications for the mental health of migrants. For example, a correlation of migrant status with mental health was revealed in a study by Pernice (1994) and high anxiety and depression levels found where migrants' socialising patterns were limited to their own ethnic group (Pernice & Brook, 1996).

Migrants' experience of shifting transactional relationships occasioned through changing social and community ties result in a redefinition of language identity and its attendant selves, some of which may not be feasible in contexts where certain relationships do not exist. In the process the vulnerability of ML may become a mirror image of the vulnerability of their speakers, as apparent in the following statement:

The goals and possible selves we choose, as well as the beliefs and behavior we choose, are so integrated into the fabric of our being that attacks against our language cannot be expected not to be detrimental to who we are. (Lanehart, 1996b, p. 329)

Where language identity is not validated or denied, there are consequences for a person's sense of being because "to do that is to destroy the essence of who we are and to limit the possibilities of who we may hope to become. (Lanehart, 1996a, p. 25)

The lack of both functional and symbolic value attached to ML, by the host society and even by ML speakers themselves under pressure to do so, may have a similarly detrimental impact on ML speakers' sense of person. Given that 'possible selves' derive from the complex transactional activities an individual engages in and given that often these are carried out less and less in ML, it is important to consider what the psychosocial effects will be on a person in terms of his or her present and future self. Simply advocating transactions in English rather than ML considers the communication dimension only, without acknowledging the possibility that changing an individual's language means changing the person.

### 3.5.3 Stability in the face of change

The dynamic nature of self-concept is complemented by a contrasting dimension, that is its basic or essential function as “a most fundamental frame of reference” (Rosenberg, 1985, p. 220) which affords individuals a sense of stability. The potential discontinuity of language and culture as an experience of the migration process represents a major destabilizing factor for the self-concept. Thus, a person's self-concept may provide both stability and adaptability in the face of change, which could ultimately help migrants cope with some of the major social and environmental upheavals they may face and help them maintain or reconstruct their identities. Individuals may even aim at a total reconstruction of who they are or used to be, wishing to leave behind their old lives and anything associated with that, as Bürgelt's (2003) data illustrated.

When humans are confronted with new experiences in unfamiliar contexts as migrants are, the need to balance stability and change by sustaining a sense of being will be vital because “the self-concept is a cognitive structure linking new experiences to old ones and thereby provides for stability rather than change” (Hormuth, 1990, p. 167). Maintaining continuity in the face of change is facilitated through a mechanism assumed by Bruner (1997) whereby “the experienced world may produce self, but the self also produces the experienced world” (p. 147). Thus, the self generates the meaning of events and circumstances in the real world acting as a filter “in accordance with a culture’s semiotic cues and genres” (p. 148). ML as a culture-specific semiotic system could thus, according to Bruner’s view, help confront threats to the self’s stability or maintenance, for example, where experienced through rapid cultural change. A critical question then is, to what extent ML can successfully fulfill the purpose of self-

maintenance and stability through functional ability or whether a symbolic role with decreasing proficiency is sufficient to invoke a sense of continuity.

The migration experience is closely associated with the need to find new ways of making sense, not only to facilitate participation in new sociocultural settings but also as a “a profound struggle to reconstruct a self” (Pavlenko & Lantolf, 2000, p. 174). The challenge will be to what extent ML speakers are able to reconcile “their original narratives and L1 selves with an emerging L2 self, while immersed in the second cultural milieu” (Pavlenko & Lantolf, 2000, p. 175), that is to create a new or third space for themselves.

### **3.6 KEY ASSUMPTIONS AND IMPLICATIONS**

The review of the literature and issues associated with self-conceptualization through language leads to the following key assumptions for the purposes of this research:

1. The process of self-conceptualization is complex, dynamic and multidimensional, and it is mediated through language.
2. Self-concept encompasses personal and group identity/identities.
3. The linguistic self-concept expresses a person’s inner and social voice and carries affective, social and cognitive functions.
4. Self-concept provides a dual mechanism for reconciling the self with changing sociocultural environments, while affording stability through continuity of being.
5. The functions of the self depend on affordances from the sociocultural context.

Given the centrality of language in the process of self-conception and the attainment of an overall sense of continuity, the present study examines how this process works where ML uses, functions and proficiencies are fluctuating and views of what constitutes proficiency may be undergoing change.

### **3.6.1 Self-concept – summary and relevance to this study**

Given that the capacity to express (a) one's innermost personal cognition and affect and (b) one's social and ethnocultural connectedness relies on language, it is indeed important to ask:

1. whether at least part of self-conceptualisation is more successfully facilitated through ML (particularly with the language of socialisation) or by any language in a person's bilingual repertoire;
2. whether ML can carry out that function despite quantitative and qualitative changes, which set it apart from ML in the native speaker context;
3. whether interpersonal (relational) functions are affected post-migration, given that fewer speakers and functions are available to share common ML practices and varying levels of proficiency may not sustain communication.

On the basis of the issues outlined here, a picture emerges of self-concept as anything but a monolithic or static entity; rather, it is a multifaceted notion, socially constructed and interpreted and "inextricably woven into the fabric of language" (Jopling, 1997, p. 250). In summary, the notion of self-concept is multidimensional and involves a range of aspects:

1. affective: in terms of one's emotional make-up and personal history
2. social: to navigate intrapersonal and interpersonal interaction

3. cognitive/relational: a tool to conceptualize and represent the self in relation to the sociocultural environment
4. culture-specific: in terms of its definition, content and role
5. linguistic: as a representational and articulatory force

The adoption of an ecological approach through the sociocultural explanatory framework has revealed the dual social and personal nature of self-concept that makes it a navigation tool for interpreting and organizing one's inner and social world, which guides human behaviour. A strong sense of self helps position individuals in their social environment and becomes the catalyst for personal agency. The sociocultural context offers (ideally) the necessary affordances to facilitate or constrain the level and form of agency taken to position oneself as a speaker or learner of languages including ML. Figure 8 illustrates the dynamic nature and situatedness of the linguistic and social-psychological outcomes in a complex environment.

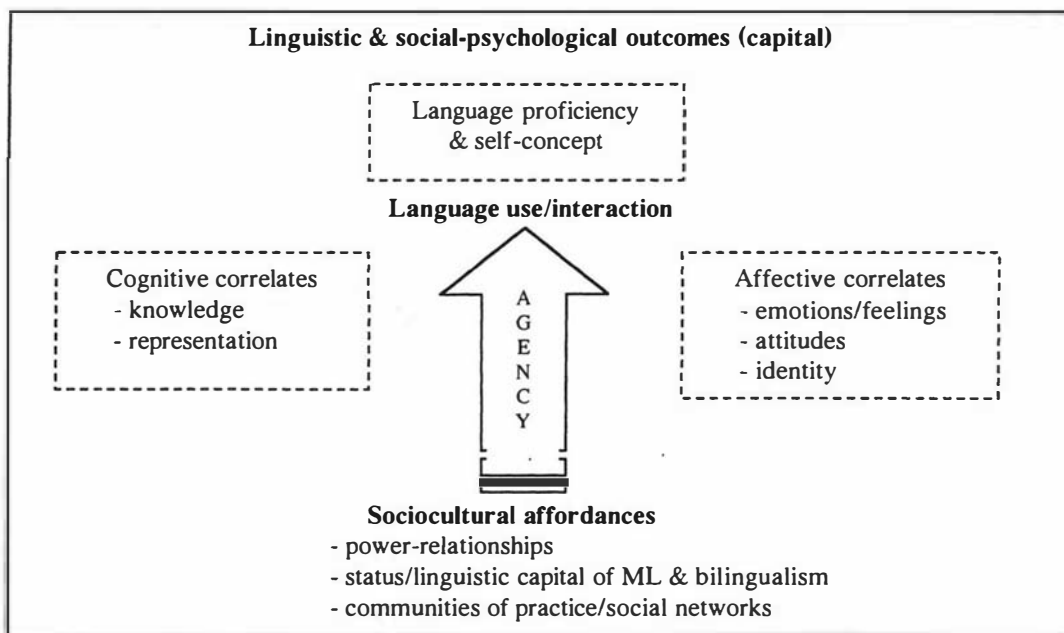


Figure 8. An Dynamic Model of the Process of Self-Construction through ML

Favourable sociocultural conditions encompass the valorization of a language, the extent of which is usually indicated by the language's status in a society. It is important to note that language status has been identified as a prerequisite for additive bilingualism as it facilitates the integration of different cultural and linguistic identities, while the loss of cultural identity promotes subtractive bilingualism (Hamers & Blanc, 1990). According to Hamers and Blanc a well-integrated cultural identity enriched by a bicultural situation is, at the affective level, the counterpart of Lambert's (1977) concept of 'additive bilinguality' at the cognitive level. (Hamers & Blanc, 1990, p. 124)

The discussion in this chapter has highlighted the possibility of a critical link between both the functional and symbolic role of ML and the process of self-conceptualization. To the extent that the context provides a site for acting out the social, cultural and economic needs through interaction it becomes the catalyst for ongoing self-construction, facilitated by language. In view of the sociolinguistic state of flux typically experienced by migrants, the underlying rationale in the present study is thus to investigate the notion of proficiency in ML with regard to its affective correlates, particularly in relation to an assumed ML-related self-concept. Given the complexities and discontinuities associated with the migration experience, it is important to improve our understanding of what it takes to construct and sustain an additive concept of oneself as a bi/multilingual ML user. A possible answer to this question may well be found, for example, in the construction of a *third space* type of self, which can accommodate multiple linguistic identities.

The present study relies on self-reported accounts of language-related selves through affective dimensions, including 'feelings' or 'confidence', following Markus et al. (1997) who argue

that the self – or *selfways* – can provide “a guiding orientation to one’s subjectivity and thus structure feeling, knowing, wanting, and doing” (p. 49). The aim is to investigate the extent and nature of self-conceptualization through ML with particular regard to notions of and orientations to MLP. The methodological approach taken to collect and analyze empirical data in relation to these issues is the subject of the next chapter.

## CHAPTER FOUR RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The methodological approach to investigating notions of ML proficiency and ML speakers' self-concept has been informed by the review of issues in the two preceding chapters. Essentially, what has been highlighted is the need for a methodology to account for people's notions as fundamentally embedded in specific sociolinguistic and cultural contexts. This chapter explains an approach devised to benefit from the close relationship people have with their contexts and the meanings they attach to or derive from these context, in order to optimize the relevance and ecological validity of the current study.

### **4.1 Preliminary considerations: towards culturally sensitive research**

When research does include members of subcultural groups, the same research methodologies used to study mainstream populations tend to be employed. (Maton, 1993, p. 747).

The present study was aimed at investigating multi-ethnic and bi/multilingual individuals to reveal different senses of the concepts under study. The methodological approach chosen for the research reflects the objective of uncovering a range of meanings relating to the languages of migrants in New Zealand. These were expected to vary according to the following aspects:

1. level of relevance of the topic to the group or individual,
2. availability of information,
3. *ways of knowing* which are different from the researcher's experience,
4. diverse thought patterns or belief systems.

The methodology adopted for this investigation aspired to contribute to an empowering research design, tailored for and with an understanding of a culturally diverse population (Cameron et al., 1994). Associated considerations therefore intersect with major phases of the research process including problem formulation, population definition, concept and measurement development, methodology, data collection analysis and interpretation.

A three-phase research design (see 4.2) was devised for the present study. Focus groups in the first phase informed the design of the quantitative instrument. The groups offered collaborative techniques which facilitated input from groups or individuals and thus enhanced the level of relevance and meaning of the survey instrument used in the subsequent phase. The process was appreciated not only by the researcher, but also by many participants who responded with interest and appreciation. Specific comments ranged from offers for more information, complaints about not including a greeting in a particular language on the survey cover sheet, to expressions of support for the study. One person disagreed with the format and content and expressed concern regarding validity (see Appendix E).

The interpretation of questions is a culturally mediated process and has primarily been discussed by cultural and cognitive psychologists (Hines, 1993; Johnson et al., 1997; Hughes & DuMont, 1993; Marin et al., 1992), working in what has been termed *culturally*

*anchored* methodology (Hughes et al. 1993, Sasao & Sue, 1993). Working with a culturally diverse sample in this investigation meant that the universality of concepts under study could not be assumed. In fact, an emic rather than etic approach, specifically to the concept of ML proficiency, underlies this study as a fundamental principle intended to counteract the type of *category fallacy* warned against by Johnson et al. (1997). The assumption the respondents understand and evaluate terms and concepts in similar ways may limit the extent to which measurements of a concept can be generalized because

... the cultural experience of each respondent will cue the cognitive context within which it is assigned meaning. Some elements of this context ... will be shared across cultural groups, while others will be culture specific. The balance of shared-to-unique contextual elements between cultures will define the degree to which the concept in question is generalizable across cultures. (Johnson et al., 1997, p. 106)

#### **4.1.1 A complementary research design**

Studies of migrant languages have traditionally investigated aspects of language use, language attitudes, and language maintenance or shift by adopting predominantly quantitative methodologies and instruments such as sociolinguistic surveys and the use of census data in contexts such as the United States, Australia or New Zealand (Kloss, 1966; Clyne, 1982, 1991; Hu et al., 1997; Verivaki, 1990, Shameem, 1995; Roberts, 1990, 1999; Veltmann, 1983). While quantitative methods provide statistical evidence of the relationship between speakers or speech communities and linguistic variables, they do not necessarily reveal motivations, orientations or aspirations underlying linguistic behaviour. These aspects have been investigated through qualitative research designs to generate more in-depth information and insights, for example through the use of case studies (Folmer, 1992; Walker, 1995) or in-depth personal interviews (Johri, 1998). A qualitative approach

allows a more in-depth inquiry into the “socially constructed nature of reality and is useful in revealing the complexity and variety in processes and meanings which tend to be lost when quantified” (Johri, 1998, p. 95).

Adopting a complementary research methodology is desirable because it combines the benefits of both quantitative and qualitative methods (Christensen, 2001; Dey, 1993; Holmes, 1997; Hughes et al., 1993; Martin-Jones, 1989) by looking at both micro and macro aspects, for example, through linking survey information to qualitative analysis of complex dimensions such as attitudinal orientation or identity. Dual approaches are also better suited to attend to both the individual and the whole dimension of speech communities. Zentella (1997), for example, achieved a more holistic approach in her study of bilingual family and community life in the *barrio* by combining quantitative and qualitative methods, allowing her to analyze patterns in relation to the whole.

The research methodology adopted in the current study is based on a combination of focus group, survey and interview data (see 4.2). Not only did this facilitate a shift in focus from the positivist to the phenomenological where appropriate, but it also took cognizance of the fact that language issues affect both the group and the individual. Speakers' own aspirations and perspectives needed to be taken into account because, as Christensen (2001) argues, it

allows individuals, and household groups to be viewed as being empowered to express their intentions and make choices in terms of their conversational interactions with others. They are not merely classified in terms of the established norms of language usage. (p. 104)

Emphasis on the user perspective represents a crucial dimension in the current study precisely because of the perceived need to avoid pre-determined idealized notions as a measure of migrants' ML proficiency. Qualitative data provided a rich source for 'thick description' to enable "a deeper understanding of phenomena from participants' own perspectives" (Hughes et al., 1993, p. 697).

At the qualitative/quantitative interface questions of directionality may arise. Bratt Paulston (1992) suggests that qualitative analysis can "serve as a prelude to quantitative study in which variables and hypotheses are first identified in the former and then more rigorously tested through the latter approach" (p. 41). While the research design, development of instruments and data collection phases in the present study followed this route, the reverse approach may be just as fruitful. In fact, the presentation of findings here begins with the analysis of quantitative data in order to identify general patterns and associations first; these are then further reflected on, reinforced or put into perspective by insights or patterns found in the qualitative data. Such data triangulation may also increase validity (see 4.7.10).

## **4.2 Research design**

The first phase of this study was of a qualitative nature and employed focus group methodology (see 4.3) designed to explore ML speakers' understanding of ML proficiency, functions and use of ML, as well as the role of ML for migrants' self-concept or identity. Information gained through focus groups facilitated an in-depth understanding of ML users' own perceptions of what dimensions were pertinent to them. This assisted in selecting and refining items for the survey instrument planned for phase 2 of the study

(Fuller et al., 1993). Survey findings were taken back to a small group of survey respondents for follow-up interviews to allow for the inclusion of ML user perspectives of the research findings. Figure 9 represents the three phases of the project and indicates how the final phase of the study helped put the main survey findings into perspective. Not only did the survey results inform the discussions, but the interviewees' views informed the survey results, providing an interpretive framework beyond the one held by the researcher herself.

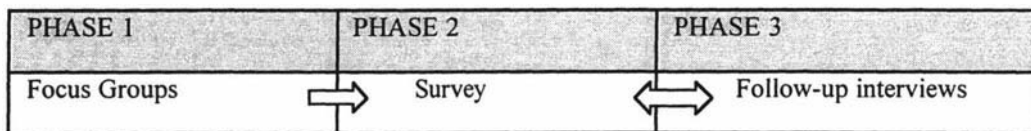


Figure 9. Research Phases: Stages of Data Collection

Utilizing a staged research design adds to its empowering potential (Cameron et al., 1994) by (a) making it interactive and giving participants the opportunity to help set the agenda for the project and help refine the research questions (phase 1) and (b) receiving feedback on key findings from selected stakeholders (phase 3).

Studies whose major interest has been in the level of maintenance or shift of specific languages, either by individuals or speech communities, favour a longitudinal perspective in order to understand what aspects of use, form or levels of proficiency may have undergone changes through language contact. This is usually achieved by relating the status quo of a language to points of reference in the past or the future, either through self-report, longitudinal or quasi longitudinal data. In contrast, this study looks at ML from a synchronic point of view, where the locus of investigation is positioned for a snapshot view of ML. The major focus of inquiry is on ML and their pertinent aspects, rather than levels of shift or maintenance.

#### 4.2.1 Key concepts and research questions

The key concepts under study in this research were discussed in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 respectively, and their examination will be guided by the research questions outlined below. The key concepts are listed first for the purpose of operationalising:

##### *Level of proficiency*

A respondent's self-reported proficiency in ML uses or functions believed to be relevant in New Zealand (on a 5-point scale: 1=very well and 5=not at all)

##### *Notions of Proficiency*

Conceptualizations of MLP in New Zealand in terms of dimensions of proficiency.

##### *Autonomous*

A norm-orientated disposition which regards linguistic skills as discrete and independent from a speaker's varying circumstances and needs.

##### *Pragmatic*

A less prescriptive orientation based on actual needs and practices in a language contact situation rather than native speaker norms.

##### *Self-concept*

An individual's perception of self, or sense of self, encompassing personal, social or ethnic identity.

The rationale underlying the research questions was to (a) guide the process of inquiry, (b) clarify the relationship between variables and concepts and (c) specify aspects pertaining to the broader research context. The research questions also determined the nature of the

questionnaire items in the sense that a combination of open-ended and closed questions was required in the survey.

### **Research question 1**

What beliefs do ML users hold with regard to the role, function and use of ML in New Zealand?

- 1.1 What ML functions or uses are relevant in the New Zealand context?
- 1.2 What are ML users' self-rated levels of ML proficiency for functions and uses deemed relevant in New Zealand?
- 1.2 In what way does self-reported proficiency vary? (according to the independent variables, see 4.2.2)

### **Research question 2**

How do ML speakers perceive the notion of ML proficiency (MLP) within the New Zealand context?

- 2.1 What are the constituting dimensions associated with MLP?

### **Research question 3**

To what extent do ML users adopt *autonomous* or *pragmatic* orientations to ML proficiency?

- 3.1 Do *autonomous* or *pragmatic* orientations to ML proficiency vary according to the independent variables?

### **Research question 4**

What is the affective role of ML for the self-conceptualisation of its users?

- 4.1 How does ML contribute to migrants' self-construction?
- 4.2 Does a correlation exist between ML proficiency and self-concept?

## 4.2.2 Independent variables

The variables listed below were used to perform descriptive and non-parametric statistics with the quantitative data for the purposes of group comparisons and tests for difference.

### 1. *Length of stay*

Number of years resident in New Zealand:

- recent = up to five years,
- established = up to fifteen years
- long-term = longer than 15 years

### 2. *Age group*

- Under 20 years
- 21-35 years
- 36-50 years
- 51-65 years
- 66 years and over

### 3. *Educational background*

- High School
- Vocation/trade
- Tertiary

### 4. *Ethnic category*

- Asian
- European
- Other

### 5. *Ethnic sub-groupings*

- South West Asian
- South East Asian
- North Asian
- Eastern European
- Western European
- Other

### 6. *ML family*

- Indo-Aryan/Iranian
- Indo-European
- Hamito-Semitic
- Sino-Tibetan
- Dravidian

### 7. *Extent of bi/multilingualism*

- Total number of ML reported by individual participants

*Length of stay* was of particular interest in this research in terms of its relevance to the settlement process. The length of time people had resided in New Zealand provided a variable to help distinguish different phases of migrants' experience which, in turn, were expected to affect their views and responses. The breakdown into three specific *length of*

*stay* sequences was based on anecdotal evidence and feedback from focus group participants on what they believed to be major transition points in the settlement process (see 4.4.5.6). Length of stay measures have also been used in previous research. For example, Driessen et al. (2002) studied the influence of home language use on Dutch language proficiency of migrants to the Netherlands and used their length of residence in that context as an independent variable to measure the effect of time on the command of Dutch. They assumed that length of residence had a non-linear effect which “may be very positive when parents have immigrated only for a short period of time, [but] it can also be argued that this effect will gradually fade away when parents have lived for years in Dutch society, having more or less acclimatized to their new home country” (p. 192). Information on migrants' period of residence is also an indicator of different migration histories associated with different socio-political climates and immigration policies migrants may have experienced at different times (Clyne et al., 2003).

The three broad ethnic categories were introduced *ex post facto* (see Figure 11, 4.4.5.2). The response format for the “ethnic background” item (item 2) did not include pre-determined categories to encourage a wider range of data on ways of self-identification. Although the provision of a footnote to explain the notion of ethnicity (“your culture, language, history & tradition”) would have somewhat constrained the open-ended format of item 2, a total of 103 different responses was generated, ranging from ethnic group labels to other types of identification (see also 4.4.5.2). The list of individual responses underwent a number of codings to collapse the diverse labels into larger groups to make them sufficiently large to allow for group comparisons and tests of association. De Vaus (1995, p. 73) recommends a minimum size of 50, however, in view of the relatively small sample size in this study and the use of non-parametric methods of analysis (4.4.9), the minimum groups size was

set at 20. This group size allowed for comparing smaller sub-groups with each other, for example, Eastern and Western Europeans within the larger European category. A similar process was adopted for categorizing languages into language families. Only groups with a minimum number of 20 were included in analyses of variance.

### **4.3 Phase one: focus groups**

Group interviews have been described as a useful tool for obtaining phenomenological data in natural settings (Frey & Fontana, 1993) as they foster near-natural interaction between participants. The use of focus group methodology was recognized to concur with the participant-orientated approach of this study in that it allows for the investigation of a wider spectrum of opinions and the diffusion of the researcher's potential influence. Focus group methodology in particular was chosen to produce near-natural interaction between participants who share a ML background and experience. An approximation to natural interactive settings in focus groups promote the collection of the kind of data that qualitative research requires for "attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them" (Denzin & Lincoln 1994, p. 2).

#### **4.3.1 Focus group procedure**

Focus group interviews were originally developed for assessing audience response to radio programmes as "temporary groups brought together for a specific purpose that are disbanded once the purpose is served" (Stewart & Shamdasami, 1990, p. 34). They are now a widely-used research tool in the social sciences and market research. 'Focus' relates to the fact that the interview is limited in the number of issues to be discussed in a session lasting approximately one-and-a-half to two hours. For the most efficient focus group size

Morgan (1988) suggests six to eight participants who are guided by a focus group moderator who has a central role in directing the discussion towards the relevant aspects of the topic under investigation.

The type and range of information sought depends on the complexity of the issue under study and determines the amount and nature of structuring in the interview, for example in terms of the extent of directiveness or specificity of questions. Questioning can therefore be “more or less directive with respect to the discussion, and often is quite non-directive – letting the discussion flow naturally as long as it remains on the topic of interest” (Stewart & Shamdasani, 1990, p. 11). Focus group methodology offers a number of advantages (Frey & Fontana 1993; Gibbs, 1997; Morgan & Krueger, 1993).

#### *4.3.1.1 Advantages*

One of the major strengths of focus group methodology lies in its approximation to natural settings through interaction between participants. The resulting group dynamics help facilitate a synergistic effect which may reveal information that could remain hidden in individual interviews. For example, discussion with others may help participants form, clarify or evaluate thoughts. This key characteristic distinguishes focus groups from group interviews where data may be produced by eliciting answers from several participants at once with little or no interaction among respondents.

The interactive dimension of focus group methodology, as Gibbs points out, helps unveil participants’ “attitudes, feelings and beliefs [which] may be partially independent of a group or its social setting, but are more likely to be revealed via the social gathering and the interaction which being in a focus group entails” (1997, p. 2). The opportunity to bounce

ideas and opinions off others in a group helps raise awareness of issues participants may not consciously have thought about before and provides a channel “to articulate their motivations, feelings, attitudes, and opinions” (Morgan & Krueger, 1993, p. 17). Thus, focus groups offer the researcher a tool which is more likely to extract information at a deeper level of understanding of the complexities of the issues under study, generating the kind of elaborate feedback favoured by ethnomethodologists (Frey & Fontana, 1993).

What made the use of focus groups particularly appropriate for the present study is their capacity to elicit data from respondents, who may feel threatened in individual interviews, for example due to perceived or real cultural and linguistic barriers. The ability of respondents to express their perceptions, values and beliefs in their own language, aided by the opportunity to ask questions of each other increases the potential for participant empowerment (Race et al., 1994). This sensitive dimension has made focus group methodology particularly suitable for use with children (Hoppe et al., 1995), patients participating in health studies (Kitzinger, 1994, 1995) or subjects from non-English speaking background (NESB) (Hill et al., 1995). They provide a friendly research method which, “when conducted in a non-threatening and permissive environment, [is] especially useful when working with categories of people who have historically had limited power and influence” (Morgan & Krueger, 1993, p. 15). For example, migrants who are L2 speakers of English may feel more comfortable in a group situation with people who share similar experiences. Although individuals may be reluctant to verbalise their views openly in front of others due to personal or cultural factors, discussion in groups tends to be less threatening. This applies particularly to respondents from collectivist cultural contexts, who may be more comfortable operating with the support and safety of a group.

Focus group methodology thus can enrich the overall research process as its collaborative dimension benefits both participants and the researcher by empowering the former and revealing multiple perspectives to the latter (Gibbs, 1997). It helps uncover perspectives potentially removed from the often more academic perspective of researchers who may have “developed ways of thinking about reality that may be substantially different from the people they are trying to reach” (Morgan & Krueger, 1993, p. 16). Focus groups therefore offer a way to access more directly the “views of key stakeholders” (Vaughn et al., 1996, p. 155) and to improve face validity, or the likelihood that the instrument measures what it intends to measure (Sproull, 1995, p. 375).

The current study employed focus groups not only for their ‘user friendliness’ but also their usefulness for exploratory research for which they provide

a starting point for the design of survey questionnaires because they provide a means for exploring the ways potential respondents talk about objects and events, for identifying alternatives for closed-ended survey items, and for determining the suitability of various types of scaling approaches. (Stewart & Shamdasani, 1990, p. 12)

This aspect is particularly relevant where the phenomenon under study is not well understood since focus groups can function as a positioning tool (Greenbaum, 1998) with the purpose of assessing the perception of an issue within a population. Establishing the salience and meaning of concepts such as ML proficiency through focus groups may also assist with reducing the impact of potentially preconceived ideas by the researcher.

#### 4.3.1.2 *Sampling minority groups*

Locating and accessing participants from minority groups has traditionally been difficult<sup>1</sup>. This is reflected in the popularity of the ‘snowball’ system (Henderson, 2002; Roberts, 1990; Shameem, 1995) sometimes combined with the activation of a researcher’s network of friends (Henderson, 2002; Johri, 1998). Lynn (1996) acknowledges the same difficulty by making special mention of sampling methodologies recommended for “special, or minority populations” (p. 141). Shah et al. (1993) in their study of health care needs of ethnic minorities experienced access constraints during recruitment of focus group participants. Overcoming such access problems depends much on a researcher’s successful building up of relationships or the use of intermediaries (Henderson, 2002; Miller & Dingwall, 1997).

#### 4.3.1.3 *Sample frame and group composition*

According to Stewart and Shamdasani (1990) a focus group sampling frame “need be only a good approximation of the population of interest” (p. 20) as findings are not generally intended to be generalized to larger populations. The use of convenience sampling is therefore quite acceptable, provided that the composition of the group and schedule correspond with the overall research objectives. Furthermore, purposive sampling, which allows for selection of participants according to pre-determined characteristics such as age or gender, is deemed acceptable because “with purposive sampling the primary goal is not generalisability *per se* but understanding of an issue or topic in sufficient detail to provide information to design subsequent studies” (Vaughn et al., 1996, pp. 58-60).

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<sup>1</sup> This issue applies to sampling and recruiting in general, not only for focus groups.

For sampling purposes any ML user or speaker, irrespective of perceived speaker generation, was targeted. Due to the temporary nature of focus groups the ability to control for factors such as age, gender or socioeconomic status may be reduced. Although these factors can affect the interaction of groups, for example in terms of leadership behaviour or group conformity, it is argued that the experience of being a migrant provided an overriding common factor promoting interaction through shared experiences. In fact, the “recognition that others have had similar experiences” (Stewart & Shamdasani, 1990, p. 42) appeared to make a strong contribution to building up rapport with other group members and to facilitate their exchange of views on the shared experience of bi/multilingualism. It was felt that the group’s ‘mission’ was perceived to be enjoyable and as a platform for shared experiences, which enhanced group interaction through a sense of group purpose.

Where focus groups are used for exploratory research or to help design survey questions only a small number of sessions are regarded to be sufficient (Knodel, 1993). Having three groups in addition to a pilot group, subject to availability of sufficient suitable participants, was therefore regarded as optimal for this study. Table 4 (4.3.2.2) provides an overview of the composition of focus groups used in this study.

#### **4.3.2 Focus groups in the current study**

Although the use of focus groups in the current study represented only one complementary stage it was crucial in terms of its purpose to facilitate participant input through dialogue, which in turn informed the overall research plan. The groups aimed at enabling participants to use their own experience as a point of reference, a step which

seemed particularly important in a study interested in stakeholders' own notions of and perspectives on ML proficiency.

The focus groups had the following specific objectives aimed at:

1. extracting diverse user views and explore their nuances in relation to the concept of ML proficiency in multi-ethnic and multilingual settings,
2. identifying salient features pertaining to the participants' notions of ML proficiency,
3. generating a range of qualitative data on (a) norms and expectations associated with ML proficiency, (b) ML language uses and functions and (c) ML role in relation to self-concept,
4. providing a basis for the formulation of questionnaire items (pre-survey) to help develop the survey instrument, particularly to increase the relevance and clarity of survey questions.

#### *4.3.2.1 Recruitment*

Vaughn et al. (1996) suggest the following ways of recruitment: (a) membership lists, (b) target groups, (c) contact people or referrals. The recruitment process adopted in this study followed strict guidelines in order to maintain a professional, ethical (see 4.3.3.2.2 below) and personalised recruitment approach to minimize any negative impact (Jarrett, 1993, p. 199). Potential participants were accessed through a convenient sample from three Palmerston North-based sources, which were known for their multi-ethnic composition or contacts: the Ethnic Council of Manawatu and its Migrant Resource Centre, the Open Learning Centre and the Manawatu Association of ESOL Home Tutor Schemes.

An invitation flyer (see Appendix F), used to advertise for participants, generated 21 self-selected individuals who were supplied with information sheets about the study (Appendix G). Invitations were kept flexible in terms of dates and times so that meetings could be offered both during the day and in the evenings. Nevertheless, not all those individuals who came forward were subsequently included due to difficulties in finding mutually convenient meeting times for all.

Five groups, including the pilot group, were convened over a period of six weeks. Each group was intended to include five to six participants. However, both the pilot group and group 3 had one participant less than planned as one individual pulled out at short notice, and one person did not turn up. Some of the participants were known to each other, but each group had at least one individual who had never met the others in the group.

#### *4.3.2.2 Participants*

The desired participant characteristics were determined by the purpose of the study. Following Knodel (1993), two broad types of characteristics were distinguished:

##### *Break characteristics*

Characteristics used to differentiate groups, allowing for potentially contrasting views, e.g. age or ethnic membership

##### *Control characteristics*

Characteristics shared by all groups, e.g. being an ML speaker or similar length of stay in New Zealand (all focus group participants were overseas born).

The number of break characteristics should be kept to a minimum, limited to the most important ones that help establish major difference among sample subsets. For example, gender as a break variable may be useful where open discussion in mixed groups could be hindered due to cultural reasons. The choice of break variables must take into consideration the purpose and issues of the study, the population and facilitation of group discussion as well as practical constraints. Whereas “separate sessions with homogeneous but contrasting groups is believed to produce information in greater depth than would be the case with heterogeneous groups” (Knodel, 1993, p. 40), mixed sessions were preferred for this research as they were intended to reveal a range of possible views and meanings among a heterogeneous group of people.

Groups in this study were differentiated according to *length of stay* as a break variable. This variable was expected to generate varied views of the concept of ML proficiency or other ML related issues because in-group norms and expectations may vary according to the duration of language contact in a new sociolinguistic environment. In addition to the pilot group, two groups each were arranged for *recent* and *established* participants (see Table 4). Due to unforeseen circumstances and reasons of practicality the number of participants was slightly lower than the six to eight recommended by Knodel (1993) (see 4.3.3.2), nonetheless the smaller groups sizes turned out to be an advantage (4.3.5).

Self-identification as ML speaker or user was chosen as the overall control variable, irrespective of speaker generation. While the notion of speaker generation is often used in studies of language maintenance and language shift where it serves as a marker of intergenerational retention or abandonment of ML, it was not regarded as relevant break or control variable for the purposes of the current study.

Table 4  
Composition of Focus Groups

Groups	Number of participants and gender	Length of stay in years	Duration in hours	Participants' language backgrounds
Pilot	3 – 3 females	2-4	2	Thai, Hindi-Telugu, Hindi-Gujarati
Group 1	4 – 2 females/2 males	1-4	1.5	Tamil, Korean, Mandarin, Arabic
Group 2	5 – 3 females/2 males	11-48	2	Urdu, Sinhala, German, Fijian
Group 3	3 – 2 females/1 male	16-20	1.5	Filipino, German, Dutch
Group 4	4 – 1 female/3 males	2-3.5	1.5	Arabic, Sinhala, Hindi-Kannada-Tamil

#### 4.3.2.3 *Ethical aspects*

When dealing with potentially vulnerable groups whose status may place them in a power relationship with the researcher such as is the case with minority groups, the ethical conduct of a study is absolutely paramount. The literature has given little attention to work with non-mainstream groups such as ethnic or racial minorities but the overall approach taken in the current study (see 4.3) is in line with the model of ethical research proposed by Cameron et al. (1994), which should include the following:

1. interactive methods “to enhance our understanding of what we observe” (p. 23),
2. subjects' own agendas – to help identify the focus of the research as “asking questions and introducing topics is not the sole prerogative of the researcher” (p. 24),
3. the question of sharing knowledge to demystify or give feedback on insights.

In order to comply with the principles of providing for informed consent and confidentiality as well as avoiding harm to participants, the following steps were taken:

1. The recruitment of participants from the Ethnic Council of Manawatu (ECM) and its associated members was authorized through the Massey University Ethics Committee in February 1999. The ECM Executive had been approached for consent prior to that, and the first invitations for participation in focus groups were made at the Ethnic Council General Meeting in March 1999.
2. Approval to advertise for participants was gained from the Manawatu ESOL Home Tutor Scheme and the Open Learning Centre who were both agreeable to displaying an invitation in small poster form at their premises.
3. The purpose and procedure of focus groups was outlined in the official information sheet and consent form (see Appendix F) given out to individuals prior to group meetings where possible or, if necessary, at the outset of a meeting. Participants were also given verbal reassurance and explanations regarding informed consent and confidentiality. The reasons for audio taping the sessions were explained, and the participants were asked for their consent for the recording of the group discussions before the discussion commenced.
4. Participants were provided with further verbal elaborations on the focus groups during the introduction phase of each meeting. It was explained to the participants that the discussion was expected to help the researcher understand some important concepts to do with their languages and the way the participants and possibly others think about these languages.

Careful thought was given to how much information should be passed on to participants over and above what is required for informed consent. While “occasionally, it is beneficial to introduce the group to potentially unfamiliar concepts that may require some reflection prior to the interview” (Vaughn et al., 1996, p. 69) it was important to do this without over-sensitizing participants to the concepts under study. Avoiding pre-conceived notions about ML proficiency and what this might consist of had to be balanced against making people think about these, sometimes for the first time (see 4.3.7).

Group meetings were held at facilities where participants could meet in safety and comfort and where audio equipment as well as refreshments could be provided. These factors were given high priority to ensure participants’ safety and convenience of access, given that most participants chose evenings as their preferred meeting times.

In order to maintain a non-threatening atmosphere the use of video cameras was decided against. In addition, the cultural mix of focus group members was expected to make the interpretation of nonverbal responses somewhat more complex than in monolingual or monocultural settings. Audio taping was used instead to provide a record for future transcription.

### **4.3.3 Pilot focus group**

The pilot group helped identify a number of shortcomings in terms of format and delivery. Piloting the first focus group allowed for practice of facilitation and questioning techniques as well as fine-tuning of the written feedback sheet (Appendix H) and ‘discussion schedule’ (Appendix I). Starting off with a five-minute session used for completing the

feedback sheet worked well as a warm-up to focus the participants' thoughts on the issues to be discussed. The feedback sheet also helped trial a number of 'diagnostic' statements to probe the participants' autonomous or pragmatic orientations to proficiency (see Chapter 2). In addition to providing a record of spontaneous choices these statements also became the basis for discussion during the session. As it was intended to include similar statements in the survey instrument, participants' responses to these statements helped highlight any lack of clarity, ambiguous or inappropriate wordings or other possible weaknesses. Post-pilot changes to the written feedback sheet included a number of adjustments, which are listed below .

1. The number of 'diagnostic' statements was reduced from nine to six in order to avoid partial overlap and to achieve an equal number of three statements representing autonomous and pragmatic orientations respectively.
2. The wording of some statements was also amended. "Keep my language *pure* in New Zealand", for example, was found to be too prescriptive and changed to a more objective wording "*the way it is in the home country*" (statement #6).
3. While the written feedback sheet asked participants about background information such as age on arrival, there was no provision for information on the overall length of stay in New Zealand. As this variable was assumed to be potentially important in relation to the participants A/P orientation the item "I have been here \_\_\_ years" was added.
4. A text box at the top of the page provided a brief explanation of the term *migrant language*.

5. A completion statement intended to tease out pre-discussion ideas on proficiency was found to be too general and misleading as all participants produced suggestions for language maintenance measures such as “have regular schooling” or “have constant social gatherings”. The wording was therefore made more specific by making the following change:

**Pilot:**

To be a successful speaker of my language in New Zealand you have to ...

**Post-pilot:**

To be a successful speaker of my language in New Zealand you have to be able to ...

Also added was a “free listing” (Hines, 1993 p. 738) activity during which participants brainstormed specific aspects they believed relevant to the notion of proficiency. The result was a list of dimensions of MLP, which were to be used in the questionnaire.

The pilot also revealed time-keeping to be a challenge. For example, the tendency of both participants and moderator to dwell on aspects for too long at a time became apparent fairly quickly. Some participants were also inclined to talk about their views in relation to English, rather than to their ML. This issue was addressed by additional instructions in subsequent meetings. Time constraints also meant that a planned role play at the end of the pilot meeting was abandoned. In subsequent meetings a scenario was introduced (see 4.3.5) to provide a more structured approach.

#### 4.3.4 Focus Group Questions

The use of a discussion schedule is necessary to provide a certain amount of structure and keep the discussion on track. This is particularly important where participants digress. However, the semi-structured format of the schedule gives discretion to the moderator to let group dynamics develop, to probe where necessary or to follow up on unexpected lines of inquiry. A set of less than 12 questions, ranging from ‘general to specific’ and ‘significant to less significant’ is usually regarded as appropriate. The adoption of a rolling interview schedule for this study allowed questions designed for the pilot group to be revised for subsequent sessions to enable more “information to unfold over time as more is discovered about a topic” (Stewart & Shamdasani, 1990, p. 63). The schedule underwent the following changes :

1. A scenario was included after the pilot group (see above) in order to stimulate participants to see their MLs from a visiting relative’s perspective of observed language contact phenomena such as code switching, borrowing, changes in pronunciation, vocabulary etc (see #5 in the discussion schedule, Appendix I). The responses to the "relative’s" expressed perspectives in turn were expected to illuminate the participants’ own norms and expectations.
2. Brainstorming sessions were devised to generate ‘can do’ lists as well as ‘wish lists’ of what participants desired to be able to do in their ML. These were pasted on the board for subsequent discussion of what it means to be *proficient*.
3. In order to localize the conceptualization of ML proficiency the discussion was wrapped up by asking participants to write down what it means to be a ‘successful’ speaker of ML in New Zealand.

Group meetings were also made more interactive through group or partner work so that dyadic interactions between moderator and individual participants would not come at the expense of group discussion. The reduction in group size from the originally planned six to four was found to be a satisfactory number as the participants faced less competition for speaking time and had more opportunity to verbalize their thoughts in what was the second language for the majority.

Vaughn et al. (1996) suggests that the interview guide should serve as an outline and “be specific enough to guide the moderator but general enough to leave the interviewer with a great deal of latitude to further probe and elicit information” (124). The guide or schedule of questions used for the present study also included probing questions which were devised as a reminder to go deeper into an issue where necessary.

#### **4.3.5 Focus Group Moderation**

The moderator’s role is central for creating conditions conducive to successful focus group discussion. An important prerequisite is sensitivity to group dynamics, which is especially crucial where participants may know each other and “have already established a patterned relationship.” (Frey & Fontana, 1993, p. 33). The interviews were therefore not conducted by an outside moderator but by the researcher herself. Despite the potential for bias or preconceived ideas, it was felt that the researcher’s insider status as a migrant and her familiarity with communicating with ML speakers was an important advantage for using the groups efficiently and appropriately.

Frey and Fontana (1993) suggest two styles that can be adopted during group meetings. A phenomenological/exploratory approach through a less directive, unstructured way of

probing and questioning may be used to help create an informal or natural setting. In contrast, the moderator can take a more controlled, active role in directing groups through a structured set of questions, which may generate a more formal, regulated setting. A combination of both styles was chosen to strike the right balance between putting the participants at ease and reducing the moderator's influence on the one hand while maintaining an appropriate level of control on the other. Thus, moderator involvement was kept low where questioning was mainly aimed at promoting interaction between participants to explore their ideas and perceptions in relation to ML use and other related aspects, including proficiency.

Throughout the focus group discussions it was important to gauge the style of interaction in a way that would be appropriate to the inter-ethnic and inter-cultural nature of the groups. The questioning style adopted for the group sessions was a mixture of friendly and somewhat formal in order to provide a non-threatening atmosphere while maintaining the professional and serious purpose of the groups. The inclusion of moderation techniques other than questions, for example brainstorming and a scenario to generate written responses, was found to be useful for facilitating a range of group activities. These added variety and encouraged participants to utilize different media and channels.

#### **4.3.6 Questionnaire design: items developed from focus groups**

A number of items were developed on the basis of what was discussed in the focus group meetings. Participants' verbal and written feedback indicated that the issues under study were all relevant or of interest to them, which in turn, validated those issues for this study

and justified their inclusion in the survey instrument. Table 5 provides an overview of the notions and issues derived from focus groups and subsequently examined in the survey.

Table 5

## Questionnaire Items Derived From One or Both Focus Group Sources

Focus group stage	Notions under study	Questionnaire items
	Relevance of ML domains & functions in the New Zealand context	Item 8a
	Multiple dimensions of ML, e.g. its symbolic and/or functional role(s)	Item 14 Item 18
	Notions of proficiency, i.e. dimensions or descriptors	Item 13
DISCUSSION	ML role for self as a bilingual or multilingual person	Item 15
	Autonomous versus pragmatic orientation to ML proficiency	Item 16
	Rationalisation(s) for autonomous or pragmatic orientation	Item 12
	Role of languages in relation to self-concept	Item 17
-----		
	Compliance with NS norms	Item 9
	Autonomous versus pragmatic orientation to ML proficiency	Item 11
WRITTEN FEEDBACK	Multiple dimensions of ML, e.g. its symbolic and/or functional role(s)	Item 7
	Notions of proficiency	Item 13
	Notions of proficiency projected to future generation	Item 10

To facilitate FG data processing, coding of transcribed material was conducted by way of identifying sections with common ideas or patterns during repeated listening stages. This, in turn, helped divide the coded data into manageable subtopics and to identify major ideas or recurrent themes. A summary of the findings of FG data and key components for conceptualizing the notion of ML proficiency, are reported in Chapter 6.

#### 4.3.6.1 *Limitations*

Despite the apparent advantages focus group methodology can offer (4.3.1.1), it is important to be aware of its constraints. This section briefly outlines possible limitations and how they relate to and/or were addressed in the present study.

##### *Limited generalizability due to small sample size, group variation and non-randomness*

The focus group phase did not constitute a main data collection tool and was mainly employed for identifying the stakeholders' views of issues to assist with survey preparation so that the need to generalize any findings did therefore not arise. Variability in group composition in fact enriched the focus group phase, as each group consisted of people from different language backgrounds and was able to contribute unique dimensions (see 4.3.2.2, Table 4).

##### *Logistical difficulty in getting groups together at times/locations suitable for all participants*

This was found to be a challenge to a certain extent. However, every attempt was made to be flexible when making the group arrangements by offering alternative meeting times during the day and evenings. All groups went ahead successfully, despite a few minor problems (see 4.3.3 below).

##### *Reduced control and potential for group conformity*

Group members can influence the direction of the discussion, which can result in loss of focus on relevant issues. This situation may be compounded by the influence of dominant participants, which can increase the risk of group conformity and bias. The effectiveness of groups therefore relies strongly on the skills and techniques of the moderator, even to

the extent of intentionally relinquishing a certain amount of control. Issues relevant to individuals may only emerge, if participants are able to take control, for instance in order to explore unscheduled but relevant aspects, which might otherwise remain hidden.

The current study began with a pilot focus group to allow the researcher to practise, evaluate and refine the necessary moderation skills and the schedule of questions. In the only case where a 'dominant participant' did in fact materialize, both the moderation procedures and reference to the schedule by the researcher were sufficient to help keep discussions on track.

#### *Reduced confidentiality or anonymity*

This limitation arises from the social nature of focus groups and the sharing of information through discussion, which makes any information volunteered in the meetings group knowledge. A minimum safeguard in this respect was the request to group members via the information sheet and repeated verbally to keep confidential other participants' contributions.

#### **4.4 Phase 2: postal survey**

The survey phase represented the second research phase of the project and was carried out in two major stages:

Stage 1: November 1999

Stage 2: March 2000

Due to the timing of the first wave of questionnaires sent out returns were low and follow-up calls to regional Ethnic Councils indicated that many members had started their holidays or gone on leave overseas. A second wave of questionnaires was therefore sent at the end of summer.

#### **4.4.1 The questionnaire instrument**

One of the major challenges the questionnaire instrument had to meet in this study was the cultural diversity of the target population. The principal overall goal was thus to improve the appropriateness and clarity of content, interest and equivalence of constructs for respondents from a wide range of ethnic and linguistic backgrounds. Steps taken to address all of the above included:

1. *Content*: inclusion of issues identified and validated in the pre-design phase (literature and focus groups) to maximize relevance and interest.
2. *Length*: aimed at 20-30 minutes completion time with a maximum of 20 questions.
3. *Appearance*: friendly layout with a multilingual cover and back; no pre-coding to avoid a too technical or too official look.
4. *Language*: English for surface equivalence, rather than multilingual translations (see 4.4.3.2).

##### *4.4.1.1 Design and purpose of the instrument*

The overall aim of the instrument was to generate data relating to the two key notions of MLP and ML-related self-concept. In this regard, the use of probing questions and multi-tiered items represented a key tool to uncover underlying motivations, for example those indicative of autonomous or pragmatic orientations. The item illustrated below

demonstrates a question design aimed at uncovering parents' views of their children's ML, in particular parents' underlying norm orientations towards the next generation's ML. These were identified through their responses to what represented an idealized norm in the second tier of the question ("should have same knowledge as..."). The third tier of the item generated in depth data where respondents elaborated further and provided explanations for their chosen answer in the second tier. This particular item also helped construct a pseudo-longitudinal perspective as it encouraged future projection.

**10. Think about your children's knowledge of your language.**


**If you have no children, tick what you think is best for other families.**

*It is important to me that my children know our language.*

I disagree   
I agree

↳ If you agree, do you think they should have the same knowledge as children in the home country?

Yes   
No

↳ Can you tell me why you think so? 

Questionnaire items relating to aspects of self-concept were designed with a view to exploring the affective dimension ML may afford in the self-construction of its speakers, not to measure self-concept as such. None of the existing self-concept measures reviewed (Byrne, 1996; Hattie, 1992; Song & Hattie, 1984; Williams & Burden, 1997) included language as a self-concept dimension, except where it represents part of the academic self-concept and is linked to academic success. Therefore items were devised in the form of diagnostic statements which encompassed self-concept dimensions derived from the literature and the focus groups; they include the following self-concept markers: *confidence, spontaneity, feelings, being oneself*. These statements served as indicator

variables for emotional states or processes which respondents were asked to associate with their language(s).

The questionnaire instrument consisted of two parts with distinctly different purposes and objectives as outlined below:

*Part 1*

1. To establish the participants' background via demographic variables (item 1 to item 4), their preferred identity label (item 5), level of multilingualism (item 6) and perceived importance of their ML (item 7).
2. To introduce an emic dimension aimed at respondent-generated answers and sensitizing participants to the underlying reasons for their responses, e.g. via open-ended options in item 4 and the sub-tier to item 7.

*Part 2*

1. To establish relevance patterns of ML functions and uses in order to maximize applicability of the responses to the respondents' specific linguistic ecology.
2. To investigate respondents' normative (autonomous/pragmatic) orientations in relation to MLP by encouraging reflection on a range of aspects including:
  - perceived comparative proficiency in ML (item 9),
  - expectations of MLP for future generations (item 10),
  - level of agreement with diagnostic statements on specific linguistic behaviours (item 11) or in relation to a scenario (item 16),
  - perceptions of change in ML use or repertoire expressed through the absence or presence of concern and respective reasons (item 12).
3. To identify dimensions of MLP (item 13).

4. To assess the affective role of ML via:
  - respondents' sentiments on the experience of language shift or loss (item 14),
  - associations between language and four pre-determined self-concept markers (item 15),
  - perceptions of the distinction between the communicative and affective function of ML (item 17).
5. To generate in-depth qualitative data by inviting respondents to provide reasons or justifications for answers (sub-tier questions such as "Can you tell me why you think so?").
6. To provide an additional avenue for feedback to capture information respondents might convey more comfortably or effectively in ML (open-ended item 18).

Seven items from the questionnaire are explained below to illustrate their respective nature and purpose. The complete instrument is shown in Appendix K.

*Item 8: To determine the level of self-reported proficiency on a range of functional uses respondents considered relevant in the New Zealand context.*

By establishing relevance first, this item extended the more typical format used in language maintenance studies which match skills against *a priori* external norms. It limited proficiency self-assessment to functions or uses the respondents regarded as sociolinguistically meaningful in the local context.

*Item 13: To establish the level of importance of proficiency dimensions as identified by focus groups respondents (see Appendix L).*

This item aimed at identifying user-derived dimensions of MLP indicative of notions of MLP.

*Item 11 and Item 16: To encourage responses indicative of autonomous or pragmatic orientations towards MLP.*

These items were based on propositions selected from the focus groups and presented respondents with authentic choices reflective of their norm orientations.

*Items 14, 15 and 17*

These items were aimed at illuminating issues in relation to the psychological role of ML in particular for self-conceptualization, for example regarding the real or imagined loss of ML or its affective impact.

#### *4.1.1.2 Questionnaire pilot*

Piloting the questionnaire designed for the survey part of this study was an important phase, particularly as most questions were new or significantly different from existing questionnaire items such as those typically used in language maintenance studies. The instrument required a structured pretest that would replicate survey conditions as realistically as possible in order to assess the effectiveness of the instrument and improve its quality.

Following de Vaus' (1995) suggestion, a *participating* pre-test was carried out with "people who will resemble the types of people to whom the questionnaire will finally be given" (p. 103). Local volunteers and users of the Migrant Resource Centre, including people from Thai, Chinese, Dutch, Korean, and Burmese backgrounds, were approached

for help with the expressly declared purpose of improving the clarity and wordings of individual questions. A pretest of the whole questionnaire was also carried out with five members of the ECM committee. Participants in the pilot were asked not to take part in the main study. While some changes were made to the questionnaire after the pilot (listed in Appendix J), none were major, and they were primarily aimed at increasing clarity and comprehensibility through improved wording.

Larger scale piloting and field pre-testing were decided against for two reasons. Firstly, the chosen cognitive approach to survey pre-testing was expected to be more efficient and thus require fewer numbers of respondents. Working with a multilingual sample from culturally diverse backgrounds exacerbates potential comprehension problems, not only in terms of surface features but underlying concepts. A major objective of the questionnaire pilot was thus to determine difficulties with understanding questionnaire items, difficulties which may go unnoticed in field piloting unless, as Schwarz (1997, p. 35) points out, “respondents ask for clarification or give obviously meaningless answers”. Clarification as well as paraphrasing of ambiguous questions by pretest-respondents in fact provided a clearly targetted and well-focussed way for identifying comprehension problems and finding alternative wordings in a collaborative fashion. A second reason for avoiding piloting of larger numbers was simply one of anticipated sample access problems and the concern that a larger pilot sample might lead to a lower response rate in the main survey.

#### **4.4.2 Sampling**

Probability sampling techniques have the advantage of increasing the representativeness of survey findings and decreasing sampling bias. However, due to a number of constraints

pertaining to the context of the present study, these techniques were regarded as impractical and not necessarily suited to the sampling procedure used here.

Firstly, clearly defined sampling frames were unavailable for the whole target population of speakers of migrant languages. The plan to survey a diverse population rather than one or several clearly identified ethnolinguistic groups as, for example, in language maintenance studies carried out in New Zealand (Roberts, 1990, 1999; Shameem, 1995; Verivaki, 1990) meant that demographic information as available through the Census data could not be used for any purpose other than background information.

It was similarly difficult to establish demographic profiles for the Ethnic Councils. Where the approached organizations did have membership lists, the lists were not always reliable due to inconsistencies in maintaining up-to-date records across groups due to high mobility and fluctuation of membership. A related issue was incomplete representation as not all migrant language speakers are members of Ethnic Councils. Those who are represented may also be different from those who are not, for example in terms of their attitudes towards issues relating to ethnic minorities, including language matters. In fact, their membership may be a reflection of their strong feelings about issues which non-members may hold different views about. To overcome or at least reduce the inherent danger of bias to some extent supplementary sample frames were used (see 4.3.3.1).

Secondly, the main goal of the present study was to investigate the range of perceptions of the notions of MLP and self-concept among a wide spectrum of ML speakers. As the ability to generalize to individual language communities was not a primary objective, non-probability sampling was therefore seen to meet the sampling objectives satisfactorily.

Where, as de Vaus (1996) suggests, researchers are more concerned with exploring patterns and generating hypotheses, obtaining a variety of responses outweighs the concern for proportional representation. This clearly applies to the present research as it is not primarily interested in “what proportion of the population gives a particular response but rather in obtaining an idea of the range of responses or ideas that people have” (de Vaus, 1996, p. 77). However, it is still possible to look at individual groups as sub-samples where return and completion rates are high enough.

The nature of the population to be sampled placed particular obligations on the researcher. Issues outlined above (see 4.4) with regard to difficulty of access to ethnic minority populations applied to the survey sampling process. Compared with the focus group phase, however, the impersonal postal survey approach offered less opportunity for explanation and reassurance. The level of sensitivity to being approached in a manner that may arouse potential participants’ suspicions or encroach on their privacy was highlighted by an e-mail response from a community radio station worker. Despite her colleagues’ strong interest in the issues covered in the questionnaire, some of them were unsure about taking part in the survey and ultimately decided against participating. They were reportedly hesitant to commit to paper “what can be very personal matters” (June 15, 2000, personal communication).

Ethical considerations were thus paramount and had to be balanced against ‘statistical purity’ concerns. The sampling sources employed in this study, while not allowing generalization to a total population, did however generate a diverse sample in line with the objectives of the study. The research design therefore had to reach the optimal compromise

between accuracy, accessibility and what was possible in terms of achieving the research objectives.

As a consequence of the limitations outlined above, purposive sampling was chosen as a non-probability sampling technique, which uses *typical cases* whose characteristics are deemed relevant (Sproull, 1995) but are not chosen randomly. The cases relevant for this study were those who possessed one key characteristic: being an ML speaker, irrespective of speaker generation. Furthermore, the sampling process was aimed at generating a sample that incorporated both regional and urban coverage across New Zealand.

#### **4.1.3 Sample size, response and completion rates**

Given the nature of the target population and the ‘hands-off’ type of questionnaire administration associated with a postal survey, the final size of the sample in this study was not expected to be large. As Schofield (1996) points out “the quality of the inferences being made from a sample will be related to both sample size and sampling method” (p. 52). A larger sample size is generally desirable for a more meaningful and accurate analysis. However, larger samples may also lead to more non-sampling errors such as non-response.

In order to contact a wide range of possible ML speakers, the New Zealand Federation of Ethnic Councils (NZFEC) was identified as a key organization likely to include members of the target group. The Federation, of which the researcher is a member, was approached in February 1998 with the request for access to the membership of the regional Ethnic Councils, who represent groups and individuals from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds. Approval was given by the NZFEC at a subsequent General Meeting.

All thirteen regional member councils of the NZFEC were subsequently contacted in writing (see Appendix M) and sent batches of questionnaires. As only Auckland, Wellington and Manawatu had a membership list available for access, the following two methods of questionnaire distribution were adopted.

1. Direct mailout to contacts on membership lists
2. Bulk mailout to regional Ethnic Councils' secretaries who forwarded the questionnaire forms to members on the researcher's behalf, either via their own mailout or through distribution at meetings.

The sampling process was complicated by the fact that the use of *middle people* such as the regional Ethnic Councils did not allow for complete control over the selection procedure. As a consequence, it was not possible to ascertain exactly how many questionnaire forms actually reached individuals. Recipients of multiple questionnaire packs were also given basic information and instructions in the cover letter coupled with a request for a range of respondents.

While the resulting sampling frame did allow for a wide coverage of ethnic groups, its inherent sampling bias is reflected in the following points:

1. disproportionate representation of particular ethnic groups compared with the total population, due to the non-randomness of the sample and because some ethnic groups were more strongly represented in some Ethnic Councils,

2. exclusion of people without necessary English language/literacy ability to respond to what was at times a somewhat complex questionnaire format presented only in English,
3. possible inclusion of respondents from outside the target population, for example people associated with ethnic councils via marriage to a member.
4. self-selection of participants such as those with a personal or professional interest in the issues studied in this research.

The sample drawn from the regional Ethnic Councils was further augmented through secondary contacts including people accessed via a number of data bases. These were suggested to the researcher by participating individuals or others, who had become aware of the research project via the NZFEC or associated individuals or groups, including the following:

1. secondary 'snowball' contacts linked to main sample sources,
2. the Race Relations Office (exclusive of contacts already included in other data bases),
3. the Hungarian Consulate,
4. the Austro Hungarian Club (Christchurch),
5. the European Forum,
6. Auckland Community Radio.

The Community Languages and ESOL (CLESOL)<sup>1</sup> database was also made available but was excluded due to many overlaps with the other databases.

Considering that "actual response rates are often lower than expected with around 20 to 40 percent for surveys without follow-up" (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 1996, p. 226),

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<sup>1</sup> CLESOL: a biannual national conference in New Zealand.

the 47% response rate for this survey was regarded as reasonable. This rate (see breakdown below) may have been achieved through administrative steps intended to enhance response rates, including follow-up calls to Ethnic Council secretaries and second wave postings where forms were reported missing or lost (see Appendix N).

The extent of completion and final response rate were calculated as follows:

Sent	1000
<i>Minus:</i>	
Lost (estimated)	150
Returned: address unknown	
- individual forms	5
- 8 groups	50
Returned: not relevant	11
- Sent twice/different databases	1
- Incomplete returns	3
	780
Completed & returned	370
<b>Response rate<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>370 ÷ 780 = 47.5%</b>

#### 4.4.4 Non-sampling errors and limitations

This section outlines some significant challenges encountered in the context of this study, which comprised potential sources of error other than those associated with inadequacies of the sampling frame (see 4.5.1) and which resulted in a number of limitations. Some of the major errors likely to arise out of a survey process itself according to Sapsford and Jupp (1996) are outlined in the following.

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<sup>1</sup> "The percentage of a sample from which information is successfully obtained" (de Vaus, 2002, p. 364).

#### 4.1.4.1 *Non-response, incomplete or inaccurate responses*

Mail surveys are notorious for low response rates as they can be difficult to control. Response numbers will depend on the “combined effect of the topic, the nature of the sample, the length of the questionnaire, the care taken in implementing the particular survey and other related factors” (de Vaus, 1995, p. 107). These externalities are complicated further where set in a multilingual and culturally diverse context, which may introduce a range of additional sources of bias, including:

1. non-responders are primarily those who face language barriers due to insufficient English skills (especially reading and writing),
2. item non-response is caused by items being too similar, too demanding, confusing or intrusive,
3. varying levels of willingness to respond are due to taboo or sensitivity issues,
4. diverse interpretations of tasks or underlying constructs.

#### 4.1.4.2 *Response editing*

Considering that “most survey respondents may have a predisposition to acquiesce, or play it safe, when answering questions that are interpreted as vague or confusing within their culturally defined cognitive framework” (Johnson et al. 1997, p. 93), clarity of questionnaire items was of the utmost importance. However, different levels of *respondent acquiescence* (yea-saying) have not only been associated with level of education (de Vaus, 1995) but also with ethnic or cultural differences (Hines, 1993). Given the diversity of the sample in this study, people’s tendency to agree rather than disagree irrespective of how they really thought about a question may therefore not have been entirely avoided.

Nevertheless, great care was taken to avoid questions that respondents might be unfamiliar or uncomfortable with to reduce response bias. For example, the use of forced response items may be problematic with respondents from cultural backgrounds which may tend to be more non-committal (Hines, 1993). An example for this is item 15 (see 4.4.6.1).

Response editing can also be a consequence of survey language. Bond and Yang (1982), for example, found response patterns varied with the language of questionnaires (e.g. 'ethnic affirmation'). Translating the questionnaire into the respondents' language, while desirable for a culturally homogeneous target population, was not feasible for this study due to the large diversity of respondents. The range of languages was not known beforehand, and it would have been impossible to translate into the diverse range of languages and dialects of all the respondents. As a compromise, respondents were invited to write in their preferred language in the final open-ended question in order to acknowledge their multilingual background and encourage responses from people with limited English. As a result, twenty nine open-ended responses were received in languages other than English. These were translated back into English with the help of community translators (see Appendix O for the list of languages involved). A statement explaining the reason for the use of English only in the questionnaire was included in the information sheet.

While the lack of translations of the questionnaire is regrettable in view of the multilingual setting of the research, the use of English may have increased surface consistency. According to Schwarz (1997), surface consistency is not necessarily guaranteed by translations because respondents attach different meanings to translated terms. This applies particularly "when a question is translated into different languages, where attempts

to maintain surface characteristics of question wording may strongly interfere with conveyed meaning” (Schwarz, 1997, p. 33).

The use of English as a general medium of communication may in fact have facilitated a higher level of equivalence of terminology and concepts across multiple ethnolinguistic and cultural boundaries (Hantrais & Mangen, 1996). Improved surface standardization notwithstanding, a multitude of experiences, perceptions and levels of awareness was likely to be present among the sample. Furthermore, the respondents of this survey were either L2 speakers of English and/or users of different varieties of English, and their diverse understandings and responses were expected as a further source of non-response error.

Attempts to improve the wording of questions thus needed to focus on the consistency of *conveyed* meaning, the purpose of which was the objective of the pilot phase.

#### **4.1.5 Description of the survey sample**

The sampling process resulted in a diverse mix of respondents. This section provides a brief overview of the participants' backgrounds in terms of their main demographic characteristics.

##### *4.1.5.1 Origins outside New Zealand*

The data generated by the survey were drawn from a highly diverse sample in terms of ethnolinguistic background and migration experience. Both New Zealand-born participants (N=20, 5.4%) and those born overseas were included in the study. Those born outside New Zealand reported a total of 81 birthplaces which were categorized into regional origins as shown in Figure 10:

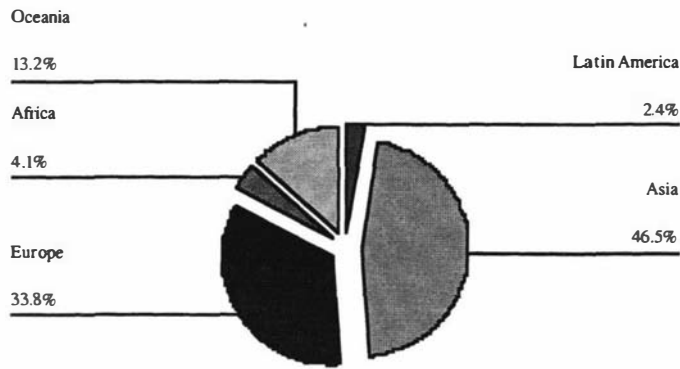


Figure 10. Birthplace by Regions of overseas-born respondents (N=350)

4.1.5.2 Ethnicity

Self-identifications generated from item 2 were mainly expressed through ethnic group labels. However, respondents also provided other types of identification. These included labels relating to their status such as *permanent resident*, *New Zealand citizen*, *immigrant* and *refugee* or neutral, inclusive types of label such as *cosmopolitan*, *international* or *world citizen*. The generalized overall ethnic categories are represented in Figure 11, while Table 6 shows specific sub-groupings they comprise.

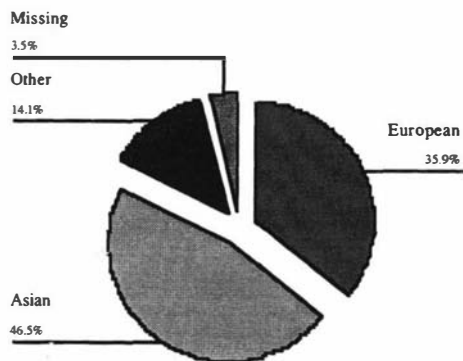


Figure 11. Ethnic Categories Represented in the Sample (N=370)

Table 6  
Ethnic Groupings Derived from Self-Identifications

<b>Ethnic Category</b>	<b>Ethnic Group</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
ASIAN	North Asian	60	16.2
	South-East Asian	48	13.0
	South-West Asian	64	17.3
EUROPEAN	Western European	61	16.5
	Eastern European	53	14.3
	Southern European	19	5.1
OTHER	East African	9	2.4
	South African	1	.3
	Middle/South American	7	1.9
	Middle Eastern	16	4.3
	Polynesian	19	5.1
	Missing	13	3.5
TOTAL		370	100.0

Appendix P provides a list of the self-identified ethnic background labels, followed by Appendix Q, showing the composition of the ethnic categories and groups in more detail.

#### 4.1.5.3 *Languages represented in the survey and extent of individual bi/multilingualism*

Altogether 68 languages were reported as the ML which respondents chose to report on in the survey (survey ML, see Appendix R). These languages represent the 13 language families listed in Table 7. While the survey data is based on only one ML of the participants' choice, respondents were encouraged to list all of their languages in addition to English. This measure helped establish the extent of multilingualism for the whole sample and the linguistic repertoire of individuals. Figure 12 illustrates the proportions of people who reported multiple ML. One third of the sample was at least bilingual with one ML (plus English) and another third was trilingual (two ML plus English). One fifth of the respondents had three ML, whereas people with four, five and six ML accounted for a

total of 15 percent of the sample. In some cases these languages included those learnt as a foreign language.

Table 7  
Language Families Represented in the Sample

Group	Frequency	Percent
African	2	0.5
Indo-Iranian	3	0.8
Japanese	4	1.1
Tai	5	1.4
Austro-Asiatic	11	3
Korean	15	4.1
Uralic	19	5.1
Dravidian	22	5.9
Hamito-Semitic	22	5.9
Sino-Tibetan	39	10.5
Indo-Aryan	40	10.8
Austronesian	55	14.9
Indo-European	130	35.1
Missing	3	0.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>370</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Note: Language family groupings according to Crystal, (1987).

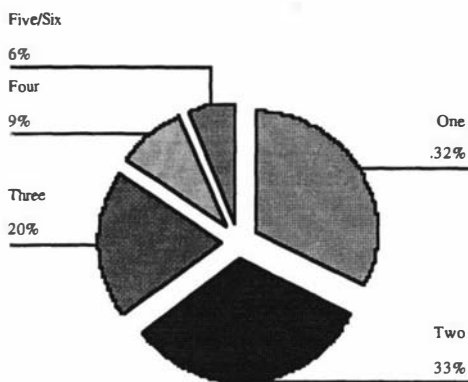


Figure 12. Number of ML Reported by Individual Participants (N=355)

Figure 12 includes New Zealand-born subjects as they represent only a small number of respondents (N=20). Not surprisingly however, this category showed a lower level of multilingualism with 50% being monolingual, 32.3% bilingual and 16.7% trilingual<sup>1</sup>.

A comparison with data from the 2001 Census shows a lower level of reported multilingualism nationally. In 2001, among the overseas-born normally resident population (N= 645,273, excluding those not defined elsewhere), over half were monolingual (58.5%) and a third bilingual (32%). The number of those reporting to have three or four languages was substantially smaller compared with the current sample (7.3% and 2.1% respectively), and a negligible number (0.1%) reported five or six languages. These differences may be explained through the much smaller sample size in the current study and possible sampling bias.

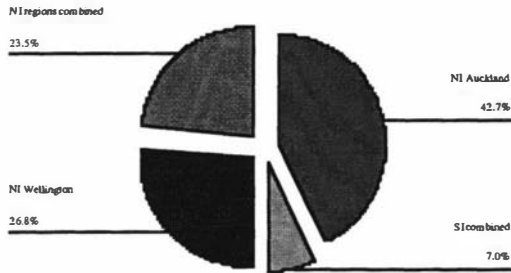
#### 4.1.5.4 *Respondents' location in New Zealand*

Although the survey attempted national coverage, the response rates varied substantially across regions and between the South and the North Island (Figure 13). Wellington and Auckland accounted for nearly two thirds of the sample and almost a quarter originated from North Island regional locations. Response rates from the South Island were particularly low, originating from Christchurch, Dunedin, Invercargill and Nelson. Responses from these areas were collapsed into one South Island group, which accounted for under 10% of the sample. Similarly, responses from North Island regional locations were amalgamated into a combined category covering Hawkes Bay, Bay of Plenty,

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<sup>1</sup> Census 2001 data reflect a similar contrast; for example 59% of Asian and Middle-Eastern were bi/multilingual, compared with 13% in the total population (Office of Ethnic Affairs, forthcoming).

Manawatu Taranaki, and Waikato. The Wellington category also includes responses from Hutt City.



Note. NI = North Island SI = South Island

Figure 13. Location of Respondents in New Zealand (N=370)

4.1.5.5 *Educational background*

As Figure 14 illustrates, the majority of respondents were highly educated with nearly two thirds reporting a tertiary education. Those with either High School or additional vocational or trade qualifications take almost equal share of the remaining sample.

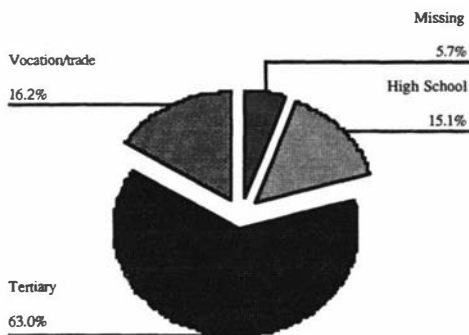
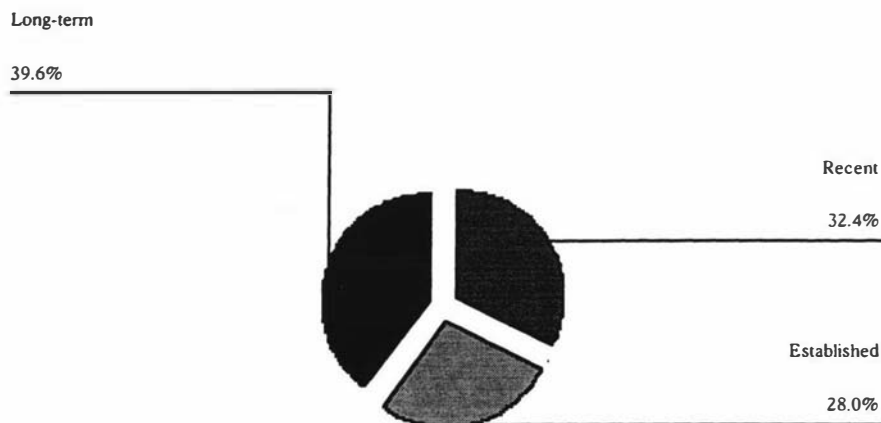


Figure 14. Educational Background of Survey Participants (N=370)

#### 4.1.5.6 Length of stay

Tentative focus group separations into ‘recent’ and ‘established’ length of stay categories had indicated, albeit anecdotally, differing view points from the more long-term immigrants, compared to people who had been in the country less than five years. In fact, some reference was made to changing perceptions after the first four or five years in the new society. Dividing the survey sample by length of stay criteria happened at the analysis stage, where several trial codings indicated that between-group differences existed not only between the initial two groups but also between three groups, where a second threshold appeared to be around fifteen years length of stay. The resulting three categories were then labeled *recent* (up to 5 years), *established* (up to 15 years) and *long-term* (over 15 years). This division resulted in three relatively evenly sized categories (Figure 15), suitable for group comparisons and tests of difference. Non-responses (N=4) and the New Zealand-born respondents (N=20) were excluded.



Recent=up to 5 years Established=up to 15 years Long term=over 15 years

Figure 15. Length of Stay in New Zealand of Overseas-Born Subjects (N=346)

#### 4.1.5.7 Age

Two measurements of age were taken in order to establish respondents' age distribution at the time of the survey (Figure 16) as well as the age on arrival of those not born in New Zealand (Figure 17). The age distribution of the sample is slightly skewed towards the older generation, with very low numbers in the youngest age range (N=8), while respondents in the middle group of 36 to 50 years of age make up the largest age category (N=139). Overseas-born people who arrived between 20 to 40 years of age are the most strongly represented in this sample (Figure 16).

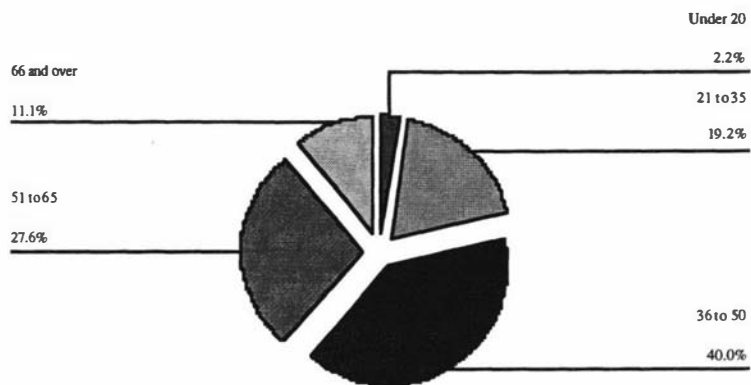


Figure 16. Age of Respondents (N=370)

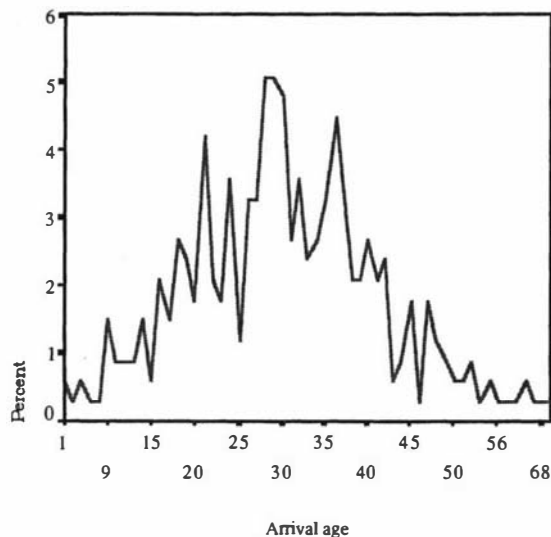


Figure 17. Arrival age of Overseas-Born Respondents (N=334)

#### 4.1.6 Data Handling and Processing

Data editing and cleaning is an important stage and involves “proofreading of the data to catch and correct errors and inconsistent codes” (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 1996). To improve consistency and reduce potential response errors all questionnaires were checked for completeness prior to entering survey data. Consistency checks, particularly for Item 8, which was anticipated to be difficult to answer due to its complexity, revealed some irregularities expressed in respondents’ side comments. These indicated two types of error:

1. uncertainty about the question; column (b) left open as a consequence
2. misinterpretation, e.g. answers given for ‘frequency’ rather than ‘ability’ in column (b).

Where selected scales were glaringly inconsistent with data elsewhere, they were discounted and coded as non-responses. For example, in one respondent’s case the repeated choice of scale (5) for “not at all” in column (b) of item 8 was found to be in stark contrast to the choice of “better” ML knowledge than others in item 9. Further checking revealed that the responses given by this person in item 8 made little sense when compared with “good communication skills” in ML reported in item 18. As a result of this triangulation process ten column (b) responses from Item 8 were disallowed in order to reduce potential response error.

#### 4.4.6.1 *Difficult questions*

##### *Item 8*

Despite a number of changes made on the basis of comments during the piloting phase this question appeared to be too complex for some respondents. Self-rating in column (b) in particular was confused with frequency of use by some respondents.

##### *Item 11: (h)*

Reference to “less respectful” use of ML did not appear to make sense to some respondents. This may be because of different language backgrounds where, for example, politeness markers differ in form and salience. This matter did not emerge as a problem during focus group discussions.

##### *Item 9*

Some responses reflected confusion, possibly because of the lack of specific criteria in this question. For instance, asking respondents to compare themselves to others on the basis of speaker level, topic or overseas-born status might have generated more accurate answers. Nonetheless, the intended openness of this question successfully stimulated reflection on the respondents’ own criteria of comparison which this question attempted to tease out.

##### *Item 15*

What appeared to some respondents as a forced choice item generated side comments expressing their inability as a bilingual to choose one option over the other. A clear preference for the dual option was borne out in the high number of “both” choices.

#### 4.1.6.2 Coding

Although codes allocated to closed or forced choice questions were specified and recorded in a code book, they were not printed on the actual questionnaire form. The purpose for this was to avoid an overly official appearance and, as a result, the possibility of increased non-returns.

Item 9 and item 12 incorporated sub-tier questions, which generated multiple responses requiring separate coding through the *multiple response method* (de Vaus, 1995, p. 238).

Designing a coding frame for each item was achieved through two separate strategies:

1. Response listing (Moser & Kalton, 1993, p. 422).

80 questionnaires from different batches were read through and assigned 13 codes across a maximum of three variables. Code classifications were determined by the research questions as well as the patterns emerging from the initial examination of the data. Although this resulted in a relatively large number of codes, it was expected to capture more detail and retain the original richness of the raw data (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias 1996, p. 339), while still allowing for later amalgamation into more general categories.

2. Code transfer

This strategy involved the use of codes already generated through analysis of the qualitative survey data. For this part of the analysis the HyperResearch software package was used and assisted in identifying patterns and assigning codes to the data. Code categories derived from this process were adopted where they related to issues covered in item 9 and item 12. For example, comments in item 12 were expected to refer

to motivations similar to those found for the 'autonomous/pragmatic' continuum or aspects of self and identity. Item 9 was likely to produce comments on ML use patterns, domain availability or length of stay.

The initial draft list of codes for items 9 and item 12 was further refined and finalized during a second checking process of the first 60 questionnaires. Raw data were then input using Excel, following the code book instructions for the whole of the questionnaire.

#### **4.1.7 Validity and Reliability**

Any measurement of a variable needs to provide evidence for the degree of the instrument's accuracy and consistency. This section provides an overview of what safeguards were taken in relation to validity and reliability concerns and what possible threats were identified. The combination of qualitative and quantitative strands in this project is likely to have yielded valid data on diverse and complex phenomena. "The two methods together provide triangulation of research methods, in which the findings of each enriches and informs the other" (Slavin, 1992, p. 72).

##### *4.1.7.1 Content validity*

To ensure content validity survey items and tasks included in the instrument needed to be representative measures of the content of the survey instrument or, in other words, the variables under study. To this end a list of the variables of interest was produced to establish the existence of at least one item for each variable to be measured. This procedure also examined whether higher frequency of occurrence of items existed for the crucial variables. Any items measuring variables not included on the list were discarded.

#### 4.1.7.2 *Construct validity*

As any attitude measurement in social research “is inferred from the verbal responses” given (Moser & Kalton, 1993, p. 356) it is difficult to test directly and objectively for a measurement’s validity. The concern for construct validity centres not only on the instrument itself but may also extend to the validation of the theory behind it (Moser & Kalton, 1993). In the context of this study it was particularly desirable to establish how the measurements derived from the survey instrument relate to the theoretical framework underpinning the major constructs examined through the research: (a) notions of ML proficiency, (b) normative (autonomous/pragmatic) orientations to MLP and (c) self-concept and proficiency.

Assessing the degree to which items or tasks used in the survey instrument provide sufficient support for construct validity is, however, difficult to establish where new items have been developed, as in item 8 and item 13 in this survey. However, the use of multiple indicators in both items (item 18 and item 15 respectively) is likely to have increased the validity of the measures (de Vaus, 2002, p. 180). Construct validity is also expected to have been enhanced through the 3-stage research design and the resulting triangulation of results.

Following Coolican (1999) an important objective of the investigation of variables in the context of the present study was to “serve as operational definition of the concept under research” (p. 150). Construct validity can be enhanced through concurrent validity or by the “degree to which a measure correlates with another measure of the same variable which has already been validated” (Sproull, 1995, p. 80). The findings of the current study, for instance, support the theoretical description of MLP via ML speakers’ autonomous or

pragmatic orientations to it as this was supported through both quantitative and qualitative data.

Ecological validity is enhanced where the research design and process represent real-life experience (Hetherington et al., 2002), increasing the "extent to which findings can be generalised to the real world" (Psybox.com, 2002). As a form of external validity, ecological validity determines the extent to which findings can be generalised to the wider population of migrants. The input received from respondents in terms of instrument design and content was derived from their immediate experience of real life situations and, as such, may have strengthened the ecological validity of the present study.

#### 4.1.7.3 *Internal reliability*

Internal consistency of the questionnaire instrument was checked by calculating the Cronbach Alpha coefficient for scaled items. A scale can be considered reliable if the Cronbach Alpha coefficient is above 0.7 (de Vaus, 2002; Pallant, 2001). Coefficient values for scales in the current study meet an acceptable reliability level:

Item 8a:  $\alpha=.95$

Item 8b:  $\alpha=.96$

Item 13:  $\alpha=.92$

#### 4.1.7.4 *External reliability*

External reliability estimates the consistency of responses over a period of time, ideally through test-retest scenario; thus this reliability test was not feasible for the present study.

#### 4.1.8 Measurement errors

There remains a series of possible threats to the validity and reliability of the present study, which derive from variations in the measurement procedure. Possible sources of measurement error, according to Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias (1996) include the following:

1. *Associated attributes of the variable to be measured have been measured unintentionally.*

A minimum level of English reading and writing skills were necessary to interpret and answer questions in the survey. Respondents' misunderstanding instructions or tasks due to differences in language level may have had a distorting effect on answer scores.

2. *Setting and administration differences may have varying influences on how respondents completed the questionnaire.*

The hands-off distribution of questionnaire forms via diverse channels and through intermediaries is likely to have produced a variety of response settings, which the researcher had no control over.

3. *Differences in processing and interpretation*

The potential for error is thought to have been reduced as far as coding, processing and interpretation of qualitative data are concerned. As administrative support was received with inputting the quantitative data using Excel, the data were handled by a person other than the researcher. This might have introduced an additional element of error.

#### **4.4.9 Methods of Data Analysis**

The inclusion of both qualitative and quantitative data in this study required different approaches to the data analysis. Two types of software were used to assist with this aspect of the research; qualitative data were examined and coded with the help of HyperResearch (see Appendix S for a list of codes generated), while SPSS 10 (8.0) was employed for the statistical analysis of quantitative data. This involved descriptive statistics as well as exploration of relationships between dependent and independent variables as well as pair and group comparisons.

Descriptive statistics were used to illustrate frequency distributions mainly for ordered categorical as well as nominal data. Due to the non-random sampling method no assumption of normality could be made for the population under study, and it was therefore appropriate to select non-parametric tests to examine the data. These tests included:

1. Kruskal-Wallis (test for difference)
2. Mann-Whitney U (pairwise comparison) for follow-up examination of significant differences between larger groups
3. Spearman's rho (rank order correlation coefficient)
4. Chi square (test of significance with an alpha level of .05)

To ensure an overall 5% significance level and avoid Type 1 error, the threshold for significance was set at lower levels according to the Bonferroni correction (Pallant, 2001, p. 174) where multiple comparisons were made by independent variables, with the exception

of *length of stay*, which only has three categories. Analyses of variance were limited to groups with a minimum size of 20 to avoid proliferation of comparisons between numerous small groups.

Where appropriate, a measure of strength of association eta ( $\eta$ ) was used as the correlation coefficient most suitable for investigating the relationship between proficiency as a quantitative variable and the categorical independent variables (de Vaus, 2002, p. 276). Eta ( $\eta$ ) can also measure non-linear relationships, whereas eta squared ( $\eta^2$ ) was calculated as an indication of effect size or “the proportion of variance of the dependent variable that is explained by the independent variable” (Pallant, 2001, p. 175). Interpreting the strength of the effect measure followed Cohen (1988), using the following effect size indicators:

$\eta^2$	effect size
.01	small
.06	moderate
.14	large

Cohen’s interpretation served as a guideline only as it is based on a personal value judgment and may vary by sample size (Barnette & Maclean, 2001). However, indicating the strength of a relationship was felt to be useful and “almost always necessary” according the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (2001, p. 25).

#### 4.1.9.1 Scales

Summary statistics (mean, standard deviation and standard error of mean) were employed with data generated through scaled measures of two key concepts, perceived levels of proficiency and notions of proficiency. The direction of the scaling indicated that ‘1’ and ‘5’ represented the high and low end of the scale continuum respectively. The scaling

should ideally have been reversed to indicate that high scores represented high levels of proficiency or agreement and low scores indicated low levels. However, reversing the coding was decided against in order to avoid potential recoding errors. Reminders of the scale meanings were provided in the analysis to avoid confusion.

To gain information on overall response patterns, scale values were converted into single measures by computing the total sum of values on a multiple scale. This applied to both the 5-item scales (item 8 and item 13) and the shorter 3-item scales (item 11 and item 13). Where measures of central tendency were calculated this was done with the purpose to explore patterns, not to prove any hypotheses. Levels of confidence in these mean values were indicated through standard error of mean values. Cronbach Alpha analysis was used to check the reliability of the scales (see 4.1.7.3).

#### **4.5 Phase 3: Follow-up interviews**

The third and final phase of the research design was not intended as a discrete data collection tool but aimed at providing independent perspectives on the study's key issues and findings. As such, the final interviews were kept to a minimum number and were carried out with convenience-sampled respondents to represent at least two different ethnolinguistic backgrounds. Three individuals were interviewed:

1. A Chinese-background (Cantonese speaking) couple, involving a New Zealand- born wife and a husband resident in New Zealand since the age of 11.
2. A Spanish speaker of Latin-American background, resident in New Zealand for 27 years.

Although this small sample did not include anyone with a more recent immigration history, all three participants were able to reflect back on their own experiences when they were recent migrants as well as those they had been in contact with.

The interviews were semi-structured to the extent that an overview of the purpose of the study and its findings were given to set the scene. Participants were shown selected graphs, figures or quotes as a means to generate questions or comments which presented points of departure for more in-depth discussion by relating findings to the interviewees' own views or experiences. This concluding phase afforded a sense of closure appropriate to the user-orientated methodology adopted in the study as a whole

#### **4.6 Limitations**

Like any research method, the design and procedures adopted in the present study combine strengths and weaknesses. The limitations of this study, in particular those pertaining to the second phase, are listed below:

1. relatively low response rate in survey,
2. variation in response rates by region,
3. sampling difficulties and resulting bias,
4. diverse interpretations of constructs in a diverse sample,
5. limited generalization due to non-random sampling,
6. reliance on self-reporting,
7. potential inaccuracy and low reliability of self-reporting.



This chapter provides the findings of an in-depth data analysis. The findings are presented in five parts, beginning with a background examination of the relevance of ML in the New Zealand context (5.1), followed by an analysis of self-reported proficiency for a range of ML functions deemed to be relevant (5.2). The following sections then explore the notion of ML proficiency from the perspective of the stakeholders (5.3) as well as their orientations to ML proficiency via the autonomous/pragmatic explanatory framework (5.4). Finally, the chapter focuses on the role of ML and ML proficiency in relation to speakers' self-conceptualization and identity (5.5).

### **5.1 RELEVANCE OF ML**

Ninety-eight percent of the respondents claimed that their ML was important to them. Despite this global vote of support the relevance of ML for specific uses and functions may vary in the New Zealand context. These functions and uses consisted of 18 pre-determined variables quantified through item 8a in the questionnaire and are listed in Table 8. The table shows generally high levels of relevance which are also borne out in the results of a Chi Square Goodness of Fit Test showing significance values at the  $p=.001$  level across all 18 functions. However, the rankings shown indicate that some ML uses or functions are more relevant than

others. Those relevant to three quarters of the sample or more (i.e. the top eight) involve functions related to everyday communication, both oral and written.

Table 8

ML Uses or Functions in New Zealand Ranked by Level of Relevance (N=370)

Use or function	Percent
Make phone calls	86%
Converse about everyday things	84%
Write personal letters	81%
Comprehend every day conversations	80%
Greet and introduce	78%
Read books	76%
Speak about interests, movies etc	74%
Read newspapers	74%
Teach ML to children	71%
Give directions	70%
Sing songs	70%
Discuss current politics	69%
Comprehend movies	68%
Count/do Maths	68%
Read alphabet/script	67%
Write alphabet/script	66%
Write formal (letters, newsletters, stories etc)	66%
Comprehend prayers	59%

### 5.1.1 Between-group comparisons: relevance by independent variables

Whether a use or function of ML is deemed relevant may vary according to independent variables such as length of stay, ethnic category, language family, age group, and educational background. The possible impact of these on the perceptions of ML relevance is examined below, using Kruskal-Wallis tests to identify if groups differed overall. Bonferroni correction was applied to maintain an overall 5% significance level in pairwise comparisons of smaller

groups. To avoid proliferation of comparisons between numerous small groups such as those composing the *ML class*, tests were restricted to pairing the large groups (e.g. Indo-European) with the remaining ones with a minimum size of 20.

#### 5.1.1.1 Age

The oldest participants (aged 66 and above) rated ML relevance consistently higher across all uses, for example, *discussing current issues* (85%), *understanding prayers* (88%), *singing* (88%), *formal writing* (85%), *reading and writing of the alphabet/script* (90% and 88% respectively), *reading books* and *reading newspapers* (93% each). Interestingly the youngest category (aged 20 and below) had some high ratings too. However, these should be treated with caution due to the very small number of participants in this age category (N=8). Not surprisingly, only two individuals from this latter, youngest group found *teaching children* relevant.

Across all age groups two types of ML use stand out as the most relevant, that is *everyday conversation* and *making phone calls*. This highlights the primary importance of oral communication, irrespective of age (Table 9). The varying relevance levels expressed for different ML uses or functions may reflect differences in terms of age-related needs or interests. Significant age-related between-group differences were found for a number of variables the majority of which involve reading and writing. The relevance of *comprehending prayers at church* was the only ML function revealing highly significant differences (Table 10). In all cases the oldest group consistently reported the highest level of ML relevance. It is not unexpected that a person's religious commitment and thus his or her need for ML in a religious role may be a function of age.

Table 9

Most Relevant ML Uses and Functions Across Age Groups (N = 370)

Age group in years	<21	21-35	36-51	52-65	>65
Make everyday conversation	100%	85%	80%	84%	90%
Make phone calls	100%	85%	83%	84%	95%

Table 10

Variation in Relevance of ML by Age Group (significant differences only N = 370)

<i>ML uses/functions</i>	<i>Chi-Square</i> (3df)	<i>Asymp. Sig.</i>
	Significant at p=.05	
Comprehend movies	9.124	.028
Write alphabet/script	10.753	.013
Write personal letters	9.242	.026
Write formal letters, newsletters etc	9.481	.024
Read alphabet/script	13.537	.004
Read newspapers	10.128	.018
Read books	9.210	.027
	Significant at p=.001	
Comprehend prayers at church	17.666	.001

Note. Excludes small group of participants aged below 20 years of age (N=8)

However, relevance of ML for use in written communication, both productively or receptively, is also associated with older age (Figure 18). Interestingly, younger respondents aged 21-30 years ranked the relevance of ML for understanding movies highly, ahead of the two middle groups. Similarly, this group also finds ML very relevant for writing personal letters. Those aged 36-50 years consistently rated all of the ML functions as less relevant than other age groups (Figure 18 and Figure 19).

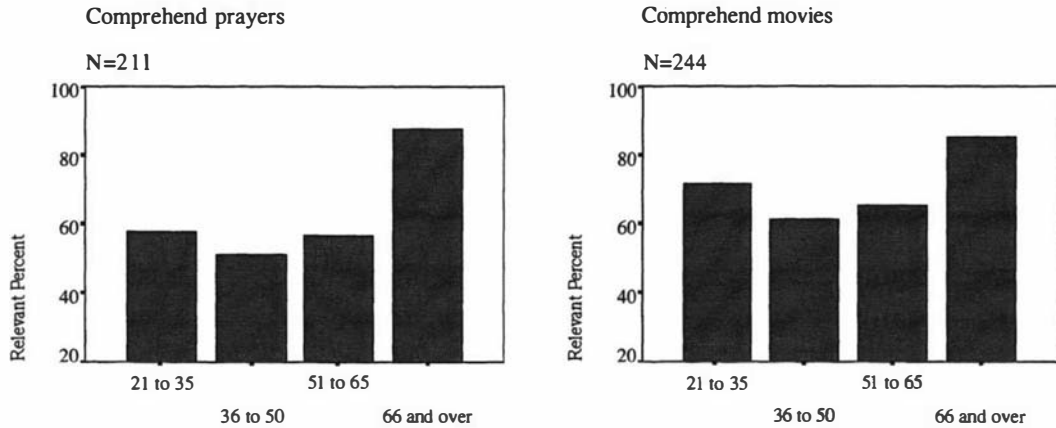


Figure 18. Relevance of Religious and Cultural Functions by Age Group

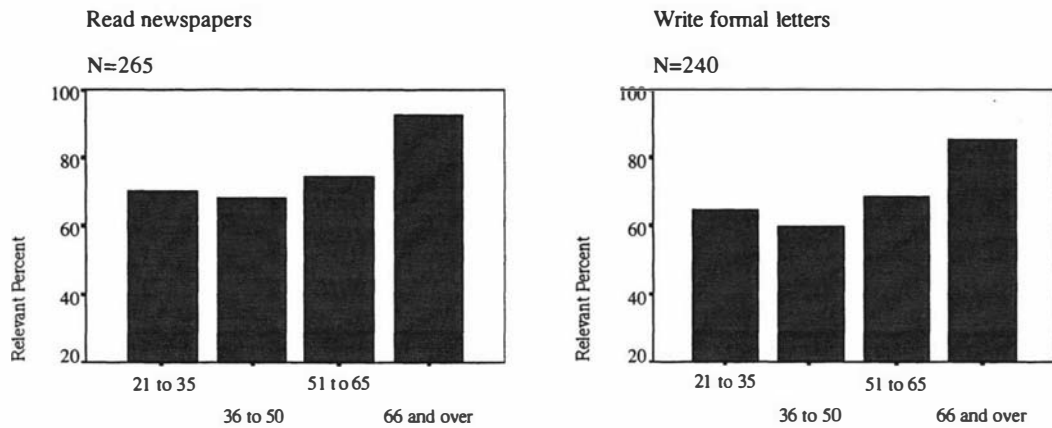


Figure 19. Relevance of Reading and Writing Functions by Age Group

According to the patterns described in this section, relevance of ML functions in the New Zealand context is a matter of age. Age, in particular, appears to be a factor for the relevance of ML uses involving reading and writing.

### 5.1.1.2 Length of stay

Relevance of ML uses or functions appears to be strongly associated with overseas-born respondents' time spent in New Zealand, with half of the 18 variables showing significant differences (Table 11) in terms of their assessment by respondents.

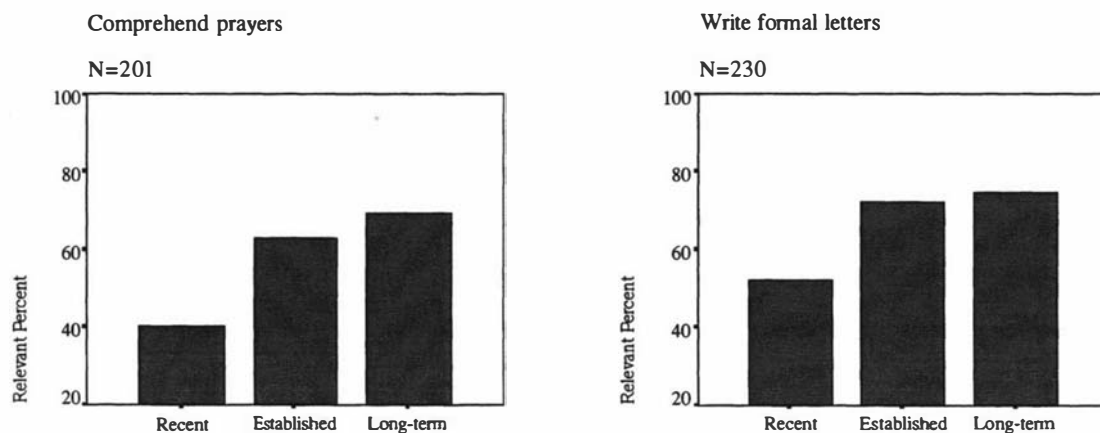
Table 11

Variation in Relevance of ML by *Length of Stay* (significant differences only N=346)

ML uses/functions	Chi-Square (2 df)	Asymp. Sig.
	Significant at p=.05	
Make conversation about everyday things	6.185	.045
Give directions	9.525	.009
Speak about interests, movies etc.	9.676	.008
Comprehend everyday conversations	9.235	.010
Sing songs	12.502	.002
Read alphabet/script	11.497	.003
	Significant at p=.001	
Write formal letters	16.119	.000
Comprehend prayers at church	22.736	.000
Comprehend movies	13.237	.001

Note. Recent = up to 5 years, Established = up to 15 years, Long-term = over 15 years

The bar graphs in Figure 20 illustrate a pattern consistent in all the variables shown in Table 11 according to which the relevance of ML functions and uses increases with length of stay. The increase in ML relevance involves primarily communicative functions, except for ML use for religious purposes (prayers), and may be a reflection of strengthening commitment to ML over time, irrespective of the actual availability of domains of use or speaker networks. The lower ML relevance levels among recent arrivals, in contrast, could be indicative of a higher



Note. Recent = up to 5 years, Established = up to 15 years, Long-term = over 15 years

Figure 20. Relevance of Religious and Writing Functions by Length of Stay

priority being given to developing communication skills in English in the first few years in the new host country with ML relevance decreasing as a consequence.

### 5.1.1.3 *ML family*

When relevance of ML functions and uses was analyzed according to language groups<sup>1</sup> (Table 12), significant differences occurred with a small group of varied uses. Yet there were highly significant differences in relation to functions involving writing, both in terms of the technical skill (alphabet/script writing) and the functional use of ML for formal writing.

<sup>1</sup> Included only groups with a minimum size of 20 (see 4.2.2).

Table 12

Variation in Relevance of ML by *ML Family* (significant differences only N = 311)

<i>ML uses/functions</i>	<i>Chi-Square (df 4)</i>	<i>Asymp. Sig.</i>
Significant at p=.05		
Comprehend movies	10.673	.030
Sing songs	15.601	.004
Read alphabet/script	9.748	.045
Read newspapers	10.075	.039
Significant at p=.001		
Write alphabet/script	23.174	.000
Write formal letters, newsletters, stories etc	28.634	.000

Reading and writing is clearly very relevant for speakers of Indo-European languages (Figure 21), although the proportion of Dravidian speakers judging formal writing as relevant is almost equal to the former group. This contrasts with lesser cultural and religious significance of ML such as for songs and prayers (Figure 22) for the same group and might indicate differences in cultural practices. The low relevance attached to ML use for *comprehending prayers* by the Sino-Tibetan group is not surprising, given that many in this group may come from China where religion is less important. Low relevance scores from the Hamito-Semitic group were unexpected as it includes Arabic, the language of the Koran. The reference to "church" in the original item may have caused confusion among respondents who did not associate this place of worship with a non-Christian religion. However, ML use in prayers is very relevant to speakers of Indo-Aryan/Iranian languages, which makes sense, considering that this language family subsumes ethnolinguistic groups which are likely to be Muslim or Christian.

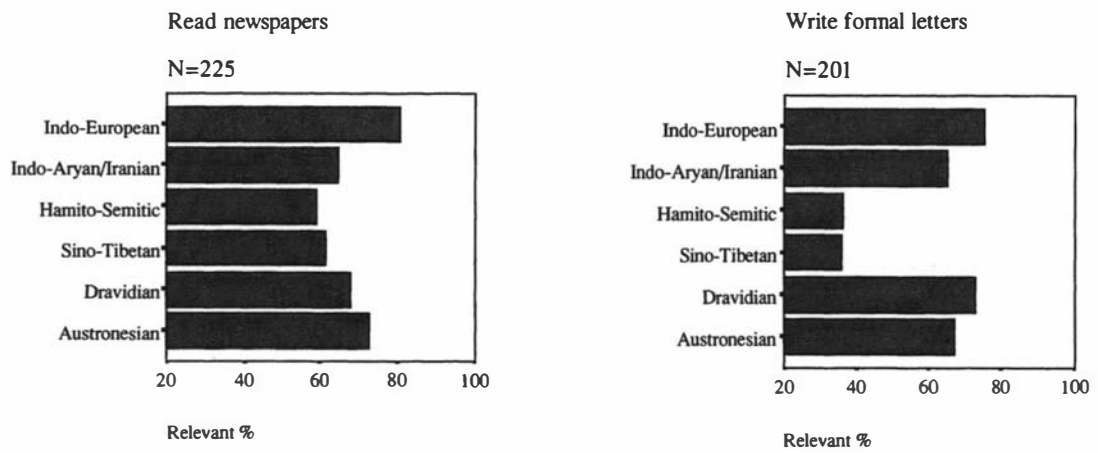


Figure 21. Relevance of Reading and Writing Functions by *ML family*

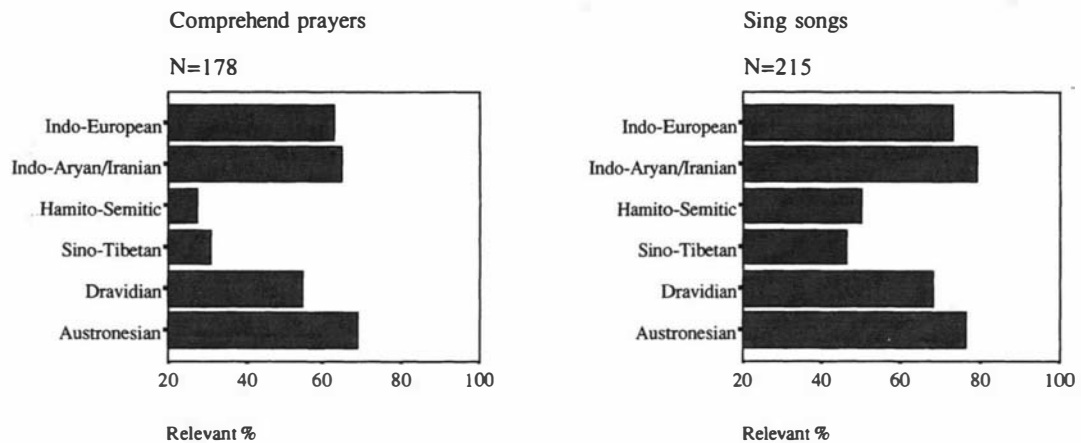


Figure 22. Relevance of Religious and Cultural Uses by *ML Family*

Pairwise comparisons between language groups revealed some significant and highly significant differences between speakers of different language families:

### **Alphabet/script writing**

Indo-European - Sino-Tibetan ( $U=1521.000$ ,  $Z=-4.490$ ,  $p=.000$ )

Indo-Aryan/Iranian - Sino-Tibetan group ( $U=492.000$ ,  $Z=-3.719$ ,  $p=.000$ )

### Formal writing

Indo-European - Sino-Tibetan (U=1534.000, Z=-4.561, p=.000)

Indo-Aryan/Iranian-Sino-Tibetan (U=593.500, Z=-2.627, p=.009)

### ML for prayers

Indo-Aryan/Iranian – Hamito-Semitic (U=294.000, Z=-2.868, p=.004)

Indo-Aryan/Iranian – Sino-Tibetan (U=550.500, Z=-3.088, p=.002)

Indo-European – Sino-Tibetan (U=1716.000, Z=-3.551, p=.000)

Indo-European – Hamito-Semitic (U=918.000, Z=-3.135, p=.002)

This list reveals a pattern according to which particularly the Indo-European and Indo-Aryan/Iranian groups differ from the Sino-Tibetan in how they perceive the relevance of three functions. The relevance of functions involving writing may not be viewed homogeneously among members of the Sino-Tibetan group because their assessment may depend on whether traditional (e.g. Taiwan) or simplified characters (e.g. China) are used.

#### 5.1.1.4 Ethnic category

Ethnic membership does not appear to be a crucial predictor for variation in ML relevance as participants differ significantly only on formal writing (Table 13).

Table 13

Variation in Relevance of ML by *Ethnic Category* (significant differences only)

ML uses/functions	Chi-Square (df 2)	Asymp. Sig.
	Significant at p=.05	
Write formal letters, newsletters, stories etc	6.138	.046

Group comparisons show a higher level of ML relevance for formal writing among the Europeans (Figure 23a). However, these three general ethnic categories are not homogenous in their views as further breakdowns into ethnic sub-groups show (Figure 23 b). The North Asian group expressed the lowest level of relevance for formal writing overall and, according to pairwise comparisons (Mann-Whitney tests), the difference between the North Asian and the Western European groups is highly significant

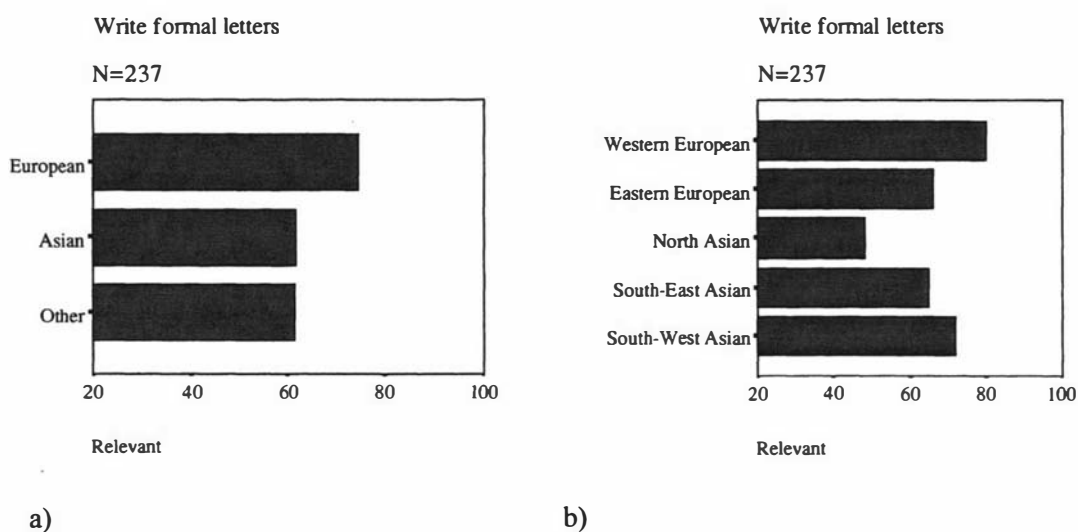


Figure 23. Relevance of ML for Formal Writing by (a) Ethnic Category and (b) Ethnic Sub-Grouping

( $U=1640.00$ ,  $Z=-3.912$ ,  $p=.000$ ). Such variation is not surprising for groups with very different ethnic heritage and vastly different writing systems. The significant difference between the North and South-West Asian groups ( $U=1468.000$ ,  $Z=2.669$ ,  $p=.008$ ) is unexpected as both subsume languages with complex writing systems. However, the fact that the North Asian group comprises Chinese speakers may account for this group's response to formal writing in the New Zealand context. Chinese script, especially where it has not been simplified (see

5.1.1.3) may be very difficult to maintain, let alone develop, without continued practice and formal study.

#### 5.1.1.5 *Educational background*

Educational background was found to be associated with a significant difference in how ML relevance was perceived when the sample was divided into tertiary and non-tertiary educated participants (Table 14). Reading books and newspapers, as well as comprehending prayers, has a higher level of relevance among the non-tertiary group. A possible explanation might be that tertiary-educated respondents work in academic or professional areas that require them to engage in a high level of reading in English. However, several other ML uses summarized in Table 8 actually do include reading of books and academic study as relevant ML functions, but educational differences do not appear to have an impact in those cases.

Table 14

Variation in Relevance of ML by Tertiary/Non-Tertiary *Educational Background* (significant differences only)

ML uses/functions	Chi-Square (1 df)	Asymp. Sig.
	Significant at p=.05	
Read newspapers	4.123	.042
Read books	4.419	.036
Comprehend prayers at church	4.803	.028

#### 5.1.2 *Other relevant ML functions and uses*

In addition to the pre-determined functions and uses which were presented in Table 8 (see 5.1), further examples of functions and uses in ML regarded as relevant in New Zealand were

derived through open-ended questions. The responses encompass a range of ML uses with quite diverse functions as categorized in Table 15, revealing a complex role for ML beyond that of everyday oral communication. Half of the 'other' functions alone involved the use of ML for academic or professional purposes.

Table 15

Relevance of ML Functions and Uses Identified by Respondents Categorized by Type

CATEGORIZED USES	N	%	% of sample
<b>COMMUNICATION/INFORMATION</b> email/internet, television, radio	9	16.7	2.4
<b>PERSONAL</b> praying, diary writing, 'everything'	5	9.3	1.4
<b>PROFESSIONAL/ACADEMIC</b> Literary, publishing/editing newsletters, academic study, reports, chairing meetings, speeches, translation/interpretation	27	50	7.3
<b>SOCIAL/CULTURAL</b> socialising, teaching, cultural activities	13	24	3.5
<b>Total</b>	54	100	14.6

### 5.1.3 Summary: ML relevance

1. *Age, length of stay* in New Zealand and *ML family* appear to be important factors for participants' evaluation of ML relevance.
2. Ethnic group membership and education play a lesser role and are associated with variation in formal writing and reading relevance respectively.
3. A range of ML uses were identified qualitatively indicating that ML is relevant across a wide spectrum of major and minor uses and functions.

## 5.2 SELF-REPORTED ML PROFICIENCY

The analysis of proficiency data in this section is based only on responses given for ML uses and functions the respondents identified to be relevant in the New Zealand context (item 8b). The initial focus is on the analysis of the total overall proficiency measure derived from the average proficiency values computed for individual uses or functions. This is followed by an examination of self-reported levels of ML proficiency relating to the individual uses and functions as well as perceptions of changes in ML proficiency.

### 5.2.1 Total overall proficiency

Measures of central tendency and dispersion for the total proficiency variable highlight generally high levels of self-reported ML proficiency. Figure 24 clearly shows a large majority of scores clustered around the mean value representing the highest level of proficiency ( $\bar{x}=1.55$ ), which indicates an overall robust confidence in the participants' perceived ML proficiency. However, the strongly left-skewed data are also a reflection of a non-normal distribution and results have to be read with caution.

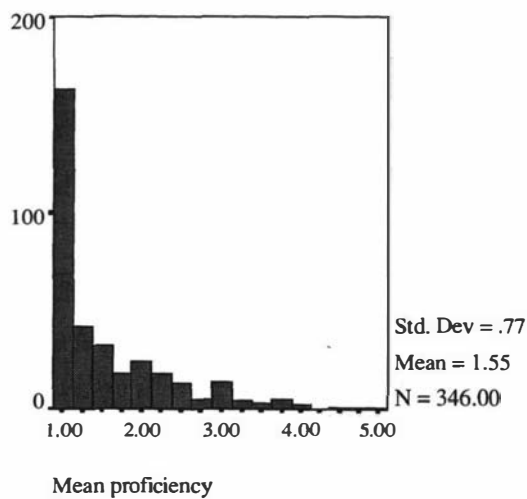


Figure 24. Dispersion of Total Proficiency Scores Across 5-Point Scale

In order to establish whether overall average proficiency correlates with the number of relevant ML uses/functions Spearman's rho was calculated and only a weak and non-significant relationship was found ( $r=-.023$ ). The relationship between total proficiency and independent variables was then examined by examining between-group differences, which are presented in Table 16. The standard error of mean (SE) was included in order to give some indication of the reliability of the means for this sample because "the more dispersed a sample is around the mean (that is, the larger the standard deviation), the larger the sample error of mean will be. This, in turn means that the confidence interval range will be larger" (Bryman & Cramer, 2001, p. 111). As a measure of sampling error SE thus indicates how well a mean approximates the population mean with a 95 percent chance of the sample mean to be within +/- two SE units.

*Educational background* was found to be the only independent variable associated with significant variation in average proficiency, but it had only a small effect size. With the low SE for the mean of  $\bar{x}=1.48$  measured for the tertiary-educated group we can assume that this groups' significantly higher self-assessment holds in this population.

Table 16

Associations Between Total Proficiency Measure and Independent Variables Kruskal-Wallis (K-W) Test and Eta<sup>2</sup>

Proficiency by Grouping Variables		N	Mean	SE	Chi-Square (K-W)	Asymp. Sig.
Ethnic category	European	121	1.43	.058	5.037 (2 df)	.08
	Asian	166	1.69	.065		
	Other	47	1.42	.10		
Length of stay	Recent	100	1.50	.068	1.189 (2 df)	.552
	Established	93	1.53	.087		
	Long-term	129	1.53	.065		
Age group	21 to 35 years	66	1.53	.078	2.268 (3 df)	.519
	36 to 50 years	138	1.60	.072		
	51 to 65 years	97	1.47	.074		
	66 years and over	37	1.53	.10		
Educational background	High School	49	1.79	.12	11.143* (2 df)	.004
	Tertiary	221	1.46	.048		
	Vocation/Trade	57	1.60	.10		
ML family	Indo-European	116	1.44	.063	10.129 (5 df)	.119
	Indo-Aryan/Iranian	39	1.83	.14		
	Hamito-Semitic	20	1.51	.20		
	Sino-Tibetan	39	1.77	.13		
	Dravidian	20	1.63	.10		
	Austronesian	53	1.51	.10		

Note. Eta effect sizes: .01=small .06= moderate .14= large (Cohen in Pallant: 175)

\*p < .05

Between-group comparisons showed whether the independent variables had a more noticeable effect on the individual proficiency sub-variables.

### 5.2.2 Proficiency sub-variables: ML uses and functions

Descriptive statistics presented in Table 17 show the mean values for proficiency reported for 18 ML functions and uses, ranging between the lowest mean of 1.28 for *greet and introduce* and the highest mean of 1.95 for *write formal letters*. These values indicate a very high overall level of reported proficiency, considering that lower values represent higher proficiency and vice versa (1=very well / 5=not at all). There is a less than one scale-point difference between the highest and lowest means and even the lowest level of proficiency represented by the 1.95 mean still indicates an above-average level. These data reflect the extent to which the

Table 17  
Ranked Mean Values of Self-Reported Proficiency Levels

Function/Use	N	Mean	SE
Greet and introduce	279	1.28	.042
Read alphabet/script	237	1.31	.053
Write alphabet/script	236	1.37	.055
Make phone calls	309	1.37	.043
Comprehend everyday conversation	287	1.40	.049
Make everyday conversation	297	1.43	.047
Count/do mathematics	247	1.45	.057
Give directions	250	1.54	.061
Write personal letters	288	1.55	.061
Read newspapers	267	1.56	.066
Read books	270	1.57	.064
Speak about interests, movies etc	265	1.57	.059
Comprehend movies	244	1.57	.067
Comprehend prayers at church	211	1.64	.084
Sing songs	250	1.67	.071
Teach ML to children	249	1.72	.074
Discuss current issues in politics	250	1.78	.074
Write formal letters, newsletters, stories	239	1.95	.083

Note. Scales range from 1 = very well to 5 = not at all

distribution of values is positively skewed. The fact that respondents only self-assessed their proficiencies on ML functions and uses they thought were relevant for them in the New Zealand context is likely to have contributed to these high means. The data may also be an indication of over-reporting for reasons not immediately apparent from these data. One possible influence could be the respondents' positive affective orientation that might have overridden other considerations in self-assessing their proficiency. Rationalization of changes in proficiency levels due to changing norms and expectations in the migration context may also have played a role.

### **5.2.3 Comparative Proficiency**

Proficiency is based on a conceptual framework determined by the dynamics of the normative environment within a community of speakers. Examining how participants rationalize their proficiency compared to other ML speakers in New Zealand served as a vehicle to identify underlying dimensions of norms and expectations in relation to ML proficiency in a migration context, where patterns of ML use, function and relevance may be undergoing change. A large majority of people in this sample assessed their global proficiencies as equal or better compared to others (Figure 25).

In addition to this global comparative self-evaluation, respondents provided a maximum of three respective reasons for their self-assessments. The resulting open-ended raw data encompassed a wide range of explanations which underwent several steps of coding (see 4.1.6.2 in chapter 4) from which a narrowed down, quantifiable set of categories emerged.

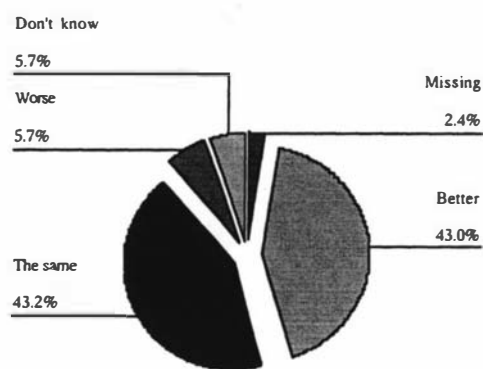


Figure 25. Self-Assessed Proficiency in comparison with Other ML Speakers  
(N = 361)

These included *functional*, *normative* and *environmental* dimensions as listed in Table 18. Functional dimensions represent a major category, with 46% of those who compare themselves positively with others (group a) mentioning regular or active use as the reason. Conversely, 78% name the lack of use or exposure to ML as the main reason for not comparing favourably with other ML speakers (*Group b*). In *Group a* the normative dimension also features strongly, though made up of different reasons. Formal study and having been brought up in the ML can be taken to denote knowledge of NS norms and standards and, as such, these two reasons combine with ‘command of all four skills’ into a composite normative dimension which accounts for 40% of the reasons given for comparing well with others. In other words, positive comparative proficiency appears to be associated with both functional use and norm-orientation, where the latter appears to have been mainly perpetuated through formal study. Loss of functional use explains most of the negative comparative proficiency, while the reported status of ML as L2, indicating distance from NS norms and standards, was mentioned by few.

Table 18  
Reasons Given for Self-Assessment Compared to Other ML Speakers

Type of reason	Dimension	N	Proportion
a) Same or better: positive reasons			
Formal ML study		60	
Brought up in ML	normative	45	40%
Command of ALL four skills		26	
Regular/active use	functional	122	46%
Relative to topic or level of other speaker		26	
Short length of stay in NZ	normative/ functional	22	7%
Other		23	7%
Total group a)		324	100%
b) Same or Worse: negative reasons			
Lack of use/exposure to ML	functional	24	73%
ML is L2	normative/	5	21%
Long length of stay in NZ	functional	2	
Little/no need for ML in NZ	contextual	2	6%
Total group b)		33	100%
TOTAL both groups		357	

*Length of stay* is an interesting category in that it can denote the length of time migrants may have been removed from NS standards as role models, periodic visits or other forms of NS exposure notwithstanding. In that sense, when *length of stay* is given explanatory power for proficiency judgments, it may reflect ML speakers' awareness of changing normative influences over time. The data referred to in the three dimensions (normative, functional and contextual) in Table 18 is based on non-forced choice responses and thus represents an important insight into the participants' normative orientations. A high proportion of normative reasons occurs among group a (40%), that is those with higher comparative proficiency. This

suggests that people are more norm-orientated where they are actually in a position to comply with them. In contrast, the major reason for not comparing well with others in term of ML proficiency is the lack of functional use of ML (73%).

#### **5.2.4 Group comparisons and tests of association**

Proficiency data were compared across the independent variables to test for difference (Kruskal-Wallis test), based on the null hypothesis that there would be no difference in self-reported proficiency levels across different groups. The effect size categories relate to the strength of the association indicated by eta squared ( $\eta^2$ ), hence  $\eta^2$  values were only provided where significance exists. However, effect size categories have guideline value only as they do not necessarily reflect an absolute strength, particularly with skewed data.

##### *5.2.4.1 Proficiency and educational background*

The data in Table 19 reveal that proficiency reported for certain uses or functions varies according to educational background. Significant variation occurs in uses or functions, which are of an interactive nature (conversations), of a social or cultural nature (prayers and movies) or involving reading and writing. Figure 26 shows four examples to illustrate where highly significant differences occur. Overall, the tertiary and high school groups show opposing patterns. In the reading, writing and speaking functions fewer high school educated people thought they speak ML very well, that is around 60% compared to 80% among the tertiary educated group. Conversely, the proportion of those reporting no skills at all in these functions was generally higher among the high school group, although the actual values were below 10% for all. The two groups differed even more in the way they assessed their ability to teach ML to children, with almost twice as many tertiary educated respondents saying they could do

Table 19

Self-Reported Proficiency Levels for ML Functions or Uses by *Educational Background*  
(Kruskal-Wallis test)

Uses and Functions	Chi-Square (1 df)	Asymp. Sig.	$\eta^2$
Greet and introduce	.573	.449	
Make everyday conversation	5.758*	.016	.02
Give directions	3.824	.051	
Speak about interests, movies etc	1.096	.295	
Discuss current issues in politics	1.589	.207	
Make phone calls	2.267	.132	
Comprehend everyday conversation	6.112	.013	.03
Comprehend movies	11.212**	.001	.04
Comprehend prayers at church	8.324*	.004	.03
Sing songs	4.843*	.028	.02
Count/do mathematics	5.201*	.023	.02
Read alphabet/script	.479	.489	
Read newspapers	7.676*	.006	.03
Read books	8.511*	.004	.03
Teach ML to children	10.311**	.001	.05
Write alphabet/script	2.590	.108	
Write personal letters	6.517*	.011	.03
Write formal letters, newsletters, stories	2.454	.117	

Note. Eta squared effect sizes: .01=small .06= moderate .14= large (Cohen, 1988, cited in Pallant, 2001, p. 175)

\* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .001$ .

so very well, while a fifth of the high school group reported no ability at all. The vocation/trade group generally featured between the other two groups, but respondents ranked themselves ahead of everyone in the 'well' category. Figure 26a and 26b represent a response pattern, which also applies to *reading newspapers* and *writing formal letters*. The picture emerging from this analysis is that higher reported proficiency is mainly found among people with tertiary education, particularly for functions and uses requiring more formal and complex

skills such as *reading* and *writing* (26a/b) as well as *teaching* ML (26d), even though the former were reportedly less relevant among the tertiary group (5.1.1.5). This may have important implications for the maintenance of ML. If perceived proficiency is a predictor of action, that is active support for ML transmission, ML maintenance may have a more realistic chance in families with higher educational levels.

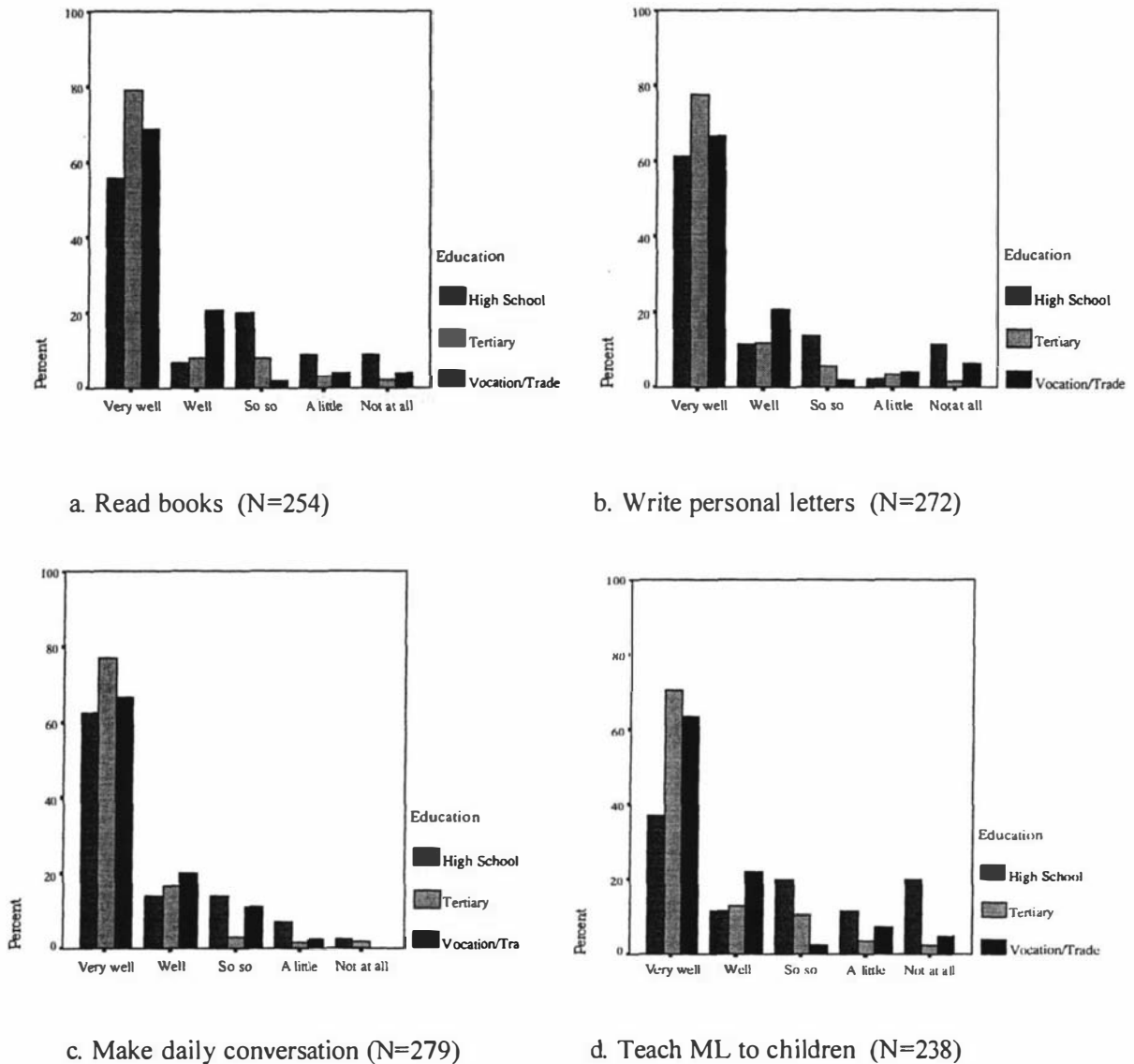


Figure 26. Examples of Proficiency in Four ML Uses/Functions by Educational Background

### 5.2.4.2 Proficiency and ethnic category

Although ethnicity did not show any effect on the overall proficiency measure (5.2.1), variation in proficiency in individual ML functions and uses is strongly associated with ethnic membership, particularly for variables involving reading and writing where highly significant differences occurred (Table 20). Ethnic category has a moderate effect on this group of ML uses or functions, the highest

Table 20

Proficiency Levels for ML Uses and Functions by Ethnic Category (Kruskal-Wallis test)

Self-reported proficiency	Chi-Square (2 df)	N	Asymp. Sig.	$\eta^2$
Greet and introduce	7.467	271	.113	
Make everyday conversation	8.494	287	.075	
Give directions	6.788	240	.148	
Speak about interests, movies etc	10.974*	256	.027	.03
Discuss current issues in politics	4.119	240	.390	
Make phone calls	5.731	300	.220	
Comprehend everyday conversation	3.780	276	.437	
Comprehend movies	9.206	234	.056	
Comprehend prayers at church	8.961	204	.062	
Sing songs	11.187*	240	.025	.05
Count/do mathematics	7.958	237	.093	
Read alphabet/script	14.072*	228	.007	.08
Read newspapers	19.145**	258	.001	.09
Read books	11.544*	260	.021	.06
Teach ML to children	6.739	239	.150	
Write alphabet/script	24.360**	226	.000	.11
Write personal letters	21.921**	278	.000	.07
Write formal letters, newsletters, stories	9.538*	231	.049	.06

Note. Eta squared effect sizes: .01=small .06= moderate .14= large (Cohen, 1988, cited in Pallant, 2001, p. 175).

\*p < .05. \*\* p < .001.

of which ( $\eta^2=.11$  for *writing alphabet/script*) may be explained by varying writing systems having different levels of complexity. Participants' ethnicity is also associated with proficiency variation in the social interaction type variable *speaking about interests* and the cultural activity of *singing songs*, both of which may well derive from different cultural customs and needs.

Figure 27 illustrates how ethnic groups differ in relation to the reading and writing variables. Fewer members of the Asian group ranked their proficiency highly on reading newspapers (27a) and personal writing (27b), compared with those belonging to the European group or other groups. This result may indicate a more modest self-evaluation among the Asian group. However, members of this group were the only ones to report noteworthy levels of no proficiency at all for the reading and writing variables (7.6% and

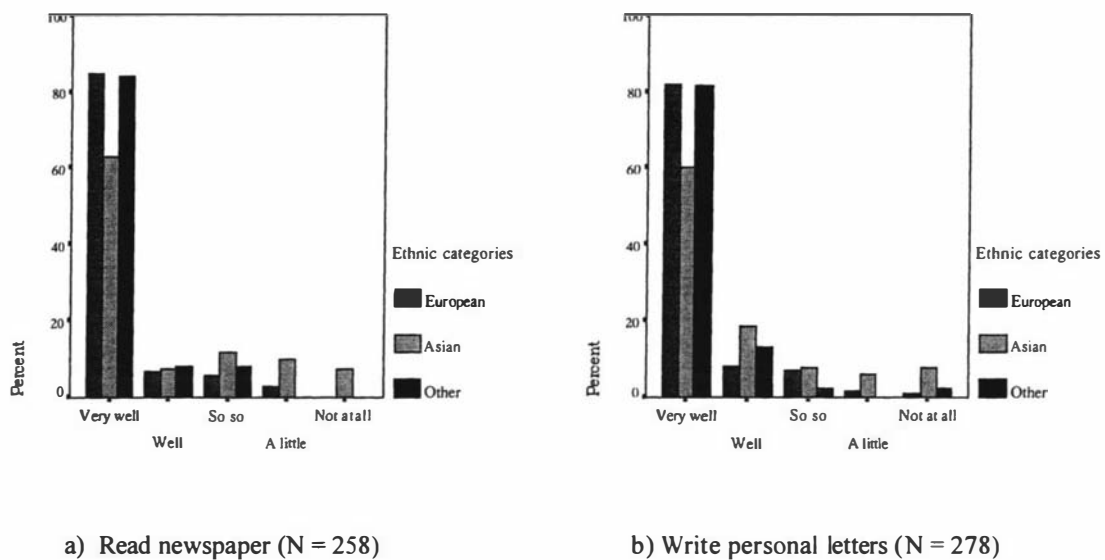


Figure 27. Examples of Reading and Writing Proficiency by Ethnic Category

8.5%, respectively), in fact the only ones to do so for *read newspapers*. This situation may also have been influenced by factors such as differences in educational background (see 5.2.5, Figure 26) or the language group (see 5.2.8, Figure 28)

#### 5.2.4.3 Proficiency and age group

Participants' age does not appear to be a factor for variation in reported proficiency as no significant differences were found for different age groups.

#### 5.2.4.4 Proficiency and language family

Proficiency levels reported for certain ML functions or uses differ by *ML family*, in particular those involving reading and writing (Table 21). Proficiency in *reading newspapers* and *writing personal letters* as well as in the associated alphabet/script skills seems to be affected by the type of ML involved as significant to highly significant differences and moderate to large effect sizes ( $\eta^2=.14/\eta^2=.09$ ) were revealed for these functions. A major difference in proficiency reported for these two variables occurs between speakers of Indo-European and Sino-Tibetan languages (Figure 28). The former group reported substantially higher levels of proficiency at the top end of the scale ("very well") compared with the former. The number of those reporting no proficiency at all in this group is non-existent for *read newspapers* (28a) and negligible for *write personal letters* (28b). However, nearly 20% of the Indo-Aryan/Iranian group reported to have no proficiency in either of the two functions.

Table 21

Proficiency Levels for ML Uses and Functions by ML family (Kruskal-Wallis test)

Self-reported Proficiency by <i>ML family (N&gt;20)</i>	Chi-Square (5 df)	N	Asymp. Sig.	$\eta^2$
Greet and introduce	2.353	260	.798	.02
Make everyday conversation	7.288	278	.200	.12
Give directions	3.220	235	.666	.03
Speak about interests, movies etc	7.965	247	.158	.04
Discuss current issues in politics	1.565	231	.905	.08
Make phone calls	2.940	288	.709	.01
Comprehend everyday conversation	7.252	268	.203	.04
Comprehend movies	11.371*	230	.045	.08
Comprehend prayers at church	1.401	197	.924	.06
Sing songs	11.436*	234	.043	.14
Count/do mathematics	10.175	230	.070	.07
Read alphabet/script	17.146*	220	.004	.09
Read newspapers	25.578**	247	.000	.14
Read books	15.936*	249	.007	.11
Teach ML to children	8.328	234	.139	.08
Write alphabet/script	24.287**	219	.000	.14
Write personal letters	22.589**	266	.000	.09
Write formal letters, newsletters, stories	6.652	222	.248	.06

Note. Eta squared effect sizes: .01=small .06=moderate .14= large (Cohen, 1988, cited in Pallant, 2001, p. 175).

\* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .001$ .

The group differences relating to the respective writing systems may be a reflection of more indirect factors at play. For example, real or perceived proficiency differences could be the result of reduced access and exposure to non-European scripts in the New Zealand context. However, the response patterns may also suggest different perceptions of what constitutes the (arbitrary) proficiency scales or a more modest proficiency self-appraisal among speakers of non-European languages.

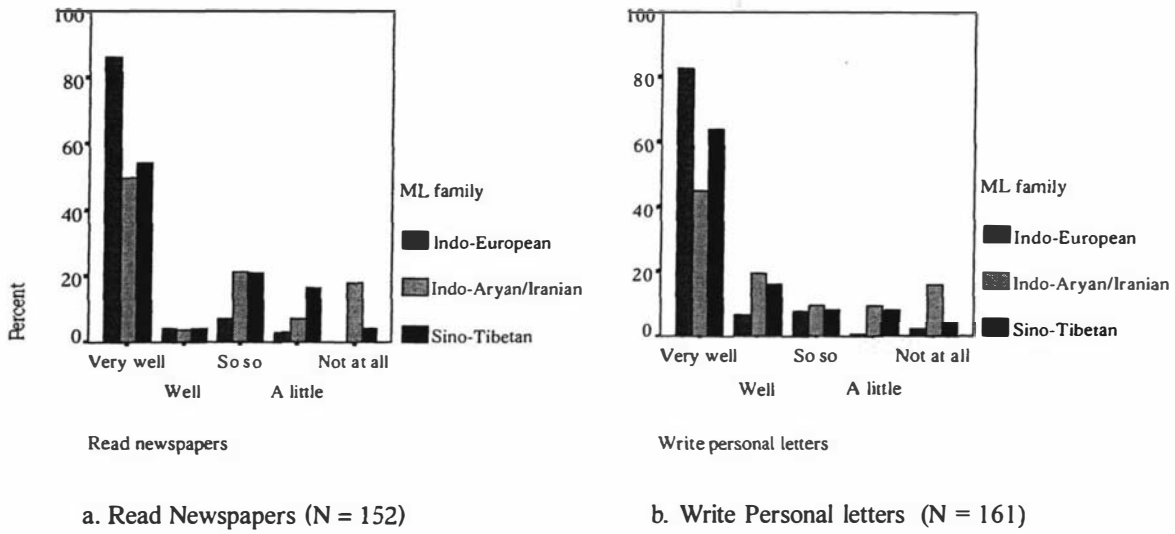


Figure 28. Examples of Reading and Writing Proficiency by ML Family (major groups only)

5.2.4.5 Proficiency and extent of multilingualism

Although the survey data related to only one ML specified by the respondents, they also provided information on the total number of ML they reported to have, demonstrating their *extent of multilingualism*. This measure also represented an independent variable that was used for group comparisons to establish whether an association might exist between the overall number of ML in someone’s repertoire and perceived proficiency reported for the survey ML. Table 22 shows average proficiency across functions and uses reported for the survey ML by the total number of ML spoken.

Table 22

Reported Average Proficiency in Survey ML by Extent of Multilingualism (N=331)

Extent of multilingualism: total number of ML reported	N	%	$\bar{x}$	SE
1	106	32.0	1.65	.085
2	107	32.4	1.55	.070
3	68	20.5	1.37	.073
4	29	8.8	1.36	.100
5	13	3.9	1.52	.151
6	8	2.4	1.15	.070

Note. Proficiency scales range from 1 = very well to 5 = not at all

A small but significant, correlation was found between the overall proficiency measure and the number of ML reported ( $r=-.156$ ,  $p=.004$ ,  $N=346$ ). Although the correlation is weak, its negative nature suggests a relationship between the number of ML in a person's repertoire (extent of multilingualism) and a lower mean (i.e. higher proficiency). According to the SE values the observed mean for those reporting two ML may range between  $\bar{x}=1.69$  and  $\bar{x}=1.41$  at a 95% confidence level. While this makes the lower mean (=higher proficiency) for this group less reliable, the average proficiency for speakers of three ML ranged between  $\bar{x}=1.51$  and  $\bar{x}=1.22$ , confirming higher proficiency levels reported by this group. A medium strength effect size of eta square ( $\eta^2=.06$ ) further supports the notion that multilingualism may be a factor for the way respondents perceived their proficiency.

When the extent of multilingualism was used to compare proficiency values for individual functions and uses, four of the proficiency variables differed significantly by the number of ML reportedly spoken (Table 23). All four variables involve oral interaction and listening.

Table 23

Proficiency Reported for Individual Functions/Uses by Extent of Multilingualism.

	Chi-Square	df	Asymp. Sig.
Greet and introduce	7.856	5	.164
Daily conversation	12.837*	5	.025
Give directions	13.243*	5	.021
Speak about interests	11.244*	5	.047
Discuss politics	6.210	5	.286
Make phone calls	7.640	5	.177
Daily comprehension	6.204	5	.287
Comprehend movies	4.604	5	.466
Comprehend prayers	4.423	5	.490
Sing songs	11.411*	5	.044
Counting/math	2.281	5	.809
Read alphabet/script	4.814	5	.439
Read newspapers	5.542	5	.353
Read books	5.153	5	.398
Teach ML to children	3.329	5	.649
Write alphabet/script	5.209	5	.391
Write personal letters	4.254	5	.513
Write formal	7.223	5	.205

a Kruskal Wallis Test

b Grouping Variable: Number of ML spoken

Mann-Whitney follow-up tests for examples with significant variance revealed proficiency differences between people who have one and three ML, that is for *daily conversation* ( $U=2327.000$ ,  $Z=-2.584$ ,  $p=.010$ ,  $n=155$ ), *give directions* ( $U=1470.500$ ,  $Z=-3.099$ ,  $p=.002$ ,  $n=129$ ) and *speak about interests* ( $U=1782.500$ ,  $Z=-2.770$ ,  $p=.006$ ,  $N=137$ ). Similar differences were found for the reading and writing variables, including *reading books* ( $U=2042.500$ ,  $Z=-2.014$ ,  $p=.044$ ,  $n=142$ ) and *write formal letters* ( $U=1504.500$ ,  $Z=-2.358$ ,  $p=.018$ ,  $n=126$ ). All significance levels are, however, above the adjusted level of  $p=.01$

(Bonferroni adjustment). Nonetheless, the patterns are apparent and, as Figure 29 and Figure 30 illustrate, they highlight an interesting trend. The absolute differences between means may be small and barely involve a move between the “well” and “very well” scales, yet the data demonstrate respondents’ increasingly positive perception of themselves as multilinguals with their mean reported proficiencies continuing to increase up to an 'optimum' of three ML.

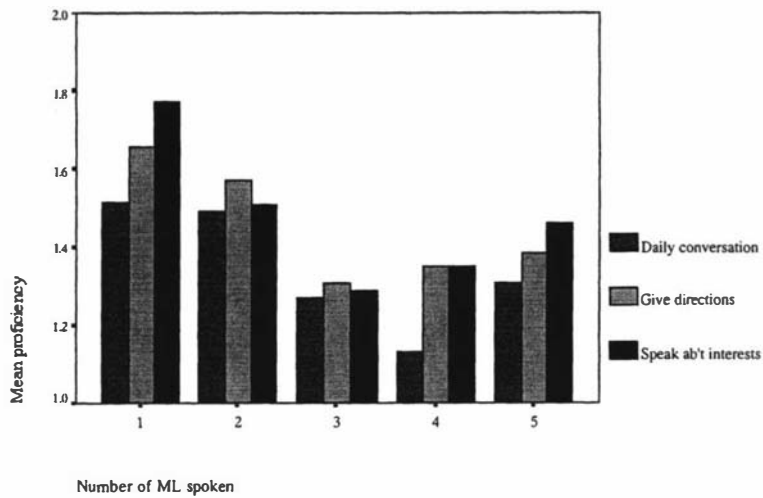


Figure 29. Proficiency in Three Oral Functions/Uses reported for Survey ML by Total Number of ML Spoken (N=249)

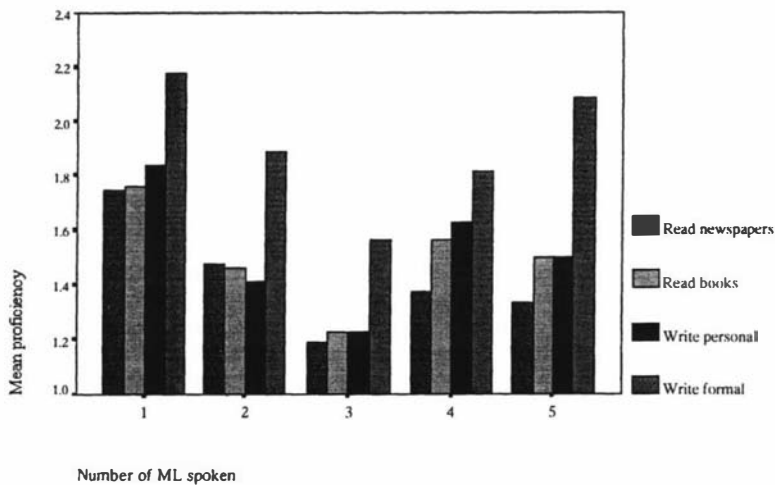


Figure 30. Proficiency in Four Literacy Functions/Uses reported for Survey ML by Total Number of ML Spoken (N=249)

These patterns suggest that perceived ML proficiency is enhanced among tri- or quadrilinguals (3 ML plus English). Knowing more than one ML appears to have a positive impact on how ML speakers evaluate their proficiency in some of the functions and uses in the survey ML. Whether the ability to converse or write in more than one ML does in fact enhance migrants' actual abilities or whether it is simply their views of proficiency which have changed is a moot point at this stage. What constitutes proficiency in the minds of people in this sample will be the subject of investigation in Chapter Six.

#### 5.2.4.6 *Proficiency and length of stay*

No significant differences were found for any of the proficiency sub-variables by *length of stay* groups. Although *length of stay* did have an effect on relevance levels (see 5.1.1.2), it did not seem to have affected self-assessed proficiency. This finding is surprising as it appears to indicate ongoing language maintenance, which contradicts typical patterns of language shift and proficiency fluctuations among migrants.

On the basis of the analysis so far variation among the proficiency variables seems to follow a pattern where ML functions and uses fall into two distinctly different categories:

##### **1. Involving interactive/everyday oral communication**

Greeting/introducing, making phone calls, giving directions, speaking about interests, making and understanding everyday conversation

##### **2. Involving written communication**

Reading and writing the alphabet/script, writing personal letters, reading newspapers and books.

Similar clustering patterns were found through discriminant analysis as illustrated in the dendrogram below (Figure 31). Here too, the formal writing function did not form part of any cluster, in fact it appeared as one of two completely unattached variables (see dendrogram). This may be linked with the low level of relevance attached to this ML function.

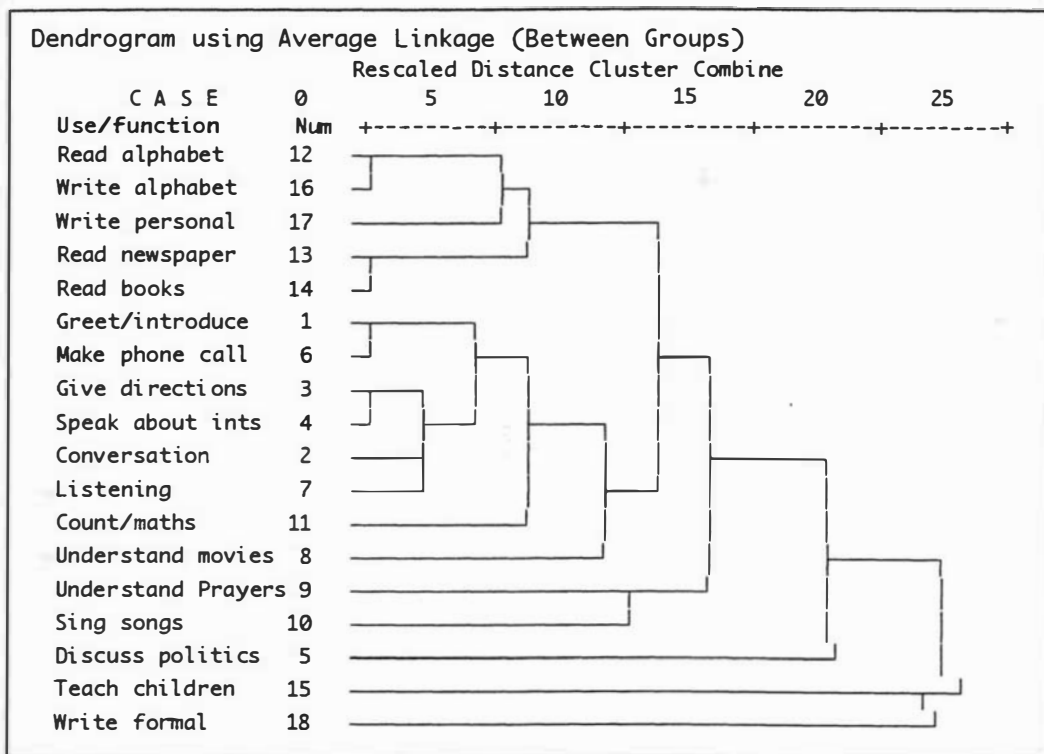


Figure 31. Hierarchical Cluster Analysis of Proficiency Uses and Functions

### 5.2.5 Summary

A number of key points emerge from the analysis above.

1. Proficiency levels are clearly distinguished by ML family, with ethnic membership acting as a similar discriminator for proficiency level, although differences in formal writing proficiency were only found across ethnic groups, not language groups.
2. Being multilingual is associated positively with perceived ML proficiency.

3. Reported proficiency is unaffected by length of stay status.

Having examined the relevance of ML functions and uses in the New Zealand context as well as participants' respective proficiency levels, the next section aims at analyzing the notion of ML proficiency at a more conceptual level, presenting respondents' ideas, beliefs and expectations respondents held in relation to ML proficiency (MLP).

### 5.3 NOTIONS OF PROFICIENCY

To investigate notions of MLP, responses were measured across 15 separate items (component variables) in order to explore respondents' perceptions of what constitutes a *good* ML speaker in New Zealand. The data were derived from questionnaire item 15, where each item represented a possible dimension of MLP. Respondents assessed these dimensions in terms of their importance on a weighted 5-item scale. The overall response pattern revealed what dimensions are meaningful and important to ML speakers in the New Zealand context.

#### 5.3.1 Proficiency dimensions: descriptive data

The mean values of the overall measure of proficiency dimensions ranged from  $\bar{x}$  2.3 to  $\bar{x}$  1.4, indicating a consistently high evaluation of all individual variables, with no more than one scale point difference (Figure 32). Even the two variables accorded the lowest level of importance (*creativity* and *stylistic variation*) still straddle the border between high and average importance ( $\bar{x}$ =2, SD=1.8 and  $\bar{x}$ =2.3, SD=1.27, respectively). The associated standard deviation values also exceed those of the other variables and, while not large, suggest

a slightly wider distribution of views, or less certainty, about the importance of creative and stylistically diverse ML use as a measure of proficiency.

Figure 32 illustrates the relatively narrow distribution of means. Although *creativity*, *grammar knowledge* and *stylistic variation* stand out from the rest, all 15 dimensions are located in the top half of the scale, that is above  $\bar{x}=2.5$ . To deal with a skewed response pattern such as this, extreme values were examined but found to make only small differences between the variable means and 5% trimmed means (between 0.08 and .014). It was therefore assumed that extreme values did not have a large impact on the means and were thus included in the calculations.

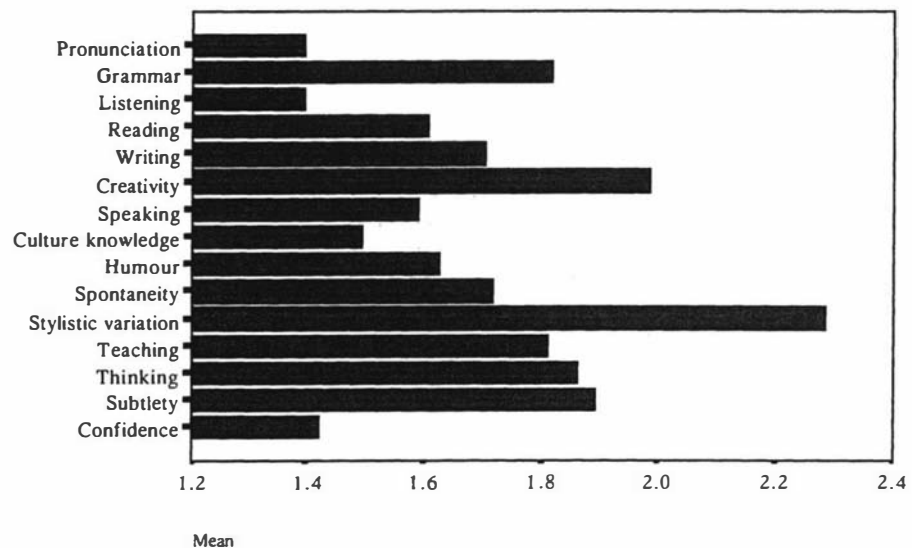


Figure 32. Mean Values Representing Level of Importance Attached to Dimensions of MLP

Figure 33 shows the distribution of central tendencies for the proficiency dimensions ranked most important (*correct pronunciation*) and least important (*stylistic variation*) and clearly illustrate the left skewed nature of the data. The mean of means given in Table 24 ( $\bar{x}=1.7$ )

illustrates the overall high importance attached to all of the variables. From this measure it can be assumed that all the marker variables employed in this item are regarded as important components of proficiency in the eyes of the respondents and that what makes a good ML user is therefore a complex affair involving all of the dimensions.

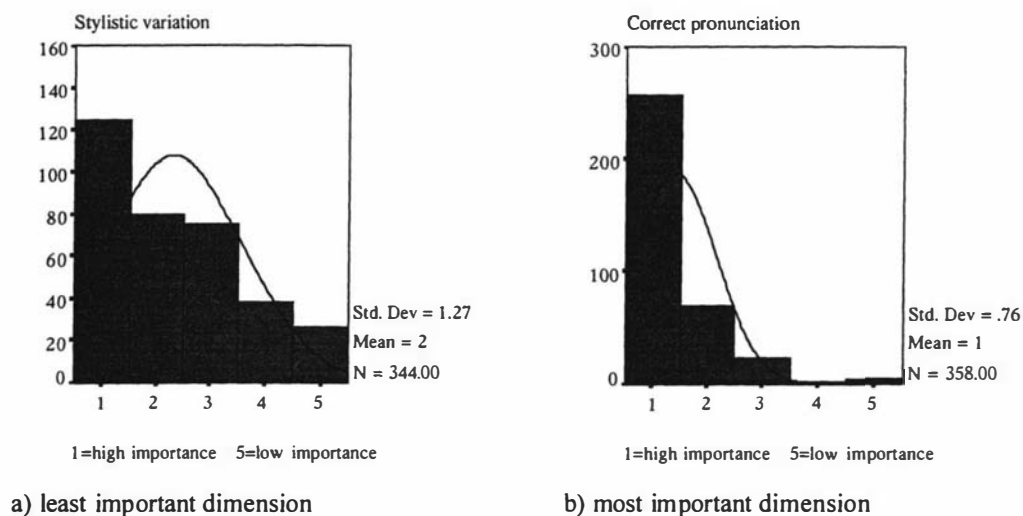


Figure 33. Distribution of Values for Low and High Ranked Proficiency Variables

When means are ranked, the top ranking is shared by three dimensions which are different in nature, that is involving technical, receptive and personal aspects (Table 24). The first four ranks ( $\bar{x}=1.4$  to  $\bar{x}=1.7$ ) range across a spectrum of eight diverse types of variables, which encompass not only the more technical, receptive and productive skills required for communication but also those engendering appropriate (sociocultural) and confident ML use. The remaining four ranks range between  $\bar{x}=1.8$  to  $\bar{x}=2.3$  and include mostly 'specialist' type dimensions such as *spontaneity*, *creativity and subtlety* but also *grammar knowledge*. This again suggests a perception of ML proficiency as a complex phenomenon, encompassing both linguistic and non-linguistic dimensions, knowledge of which should allow ML speakers to

perform not only basic communicative functions but also to use ML with confidence. The confidence to be subtle, creative and spontaneous with a language depends on structural, sociocultural and technical expertise, which is perhaps why the different ML proficiency dimensions were seen to be of almost equal importance.

Table 24

## ML Proficiency Dimensions Ranked by Mean Level of Importance

Dimension	Type	$\bar{x}$
Correct pronunciation	Technical	1.4
Listening comprehension	Receptive	1.4
Confidence	Personal	1.4
Culture knowledge	Sociocultural	1.5
Reading	Receptive	1.6
Speaking	Productive	1.6
Humour	Sociocultural	1.7
Writing	Productive	1.7
Spontaneity	Spccialist	1.8
Grammar knowledge	Technical	1.8
Teaching children	All	1.8
Thinking	Personal	1.9
Subtlety	Specialist	1.9
Creativity	Specialist	2.0
Stylistic variation	Sociocultural	2.3
Mean of Means		1.7

Note. 1 = Very important 5 = Not important

### 5.3.2 Between-group comparisons

Data were analyzed for possible variation in the way respondents attached importance to the 15 MLP component variables (Table 25). Most of the significant and highly significant differences occurred when comparing ethnic categories, although there was also some

variation by age and ML family. The importance of reading and writing as MLP components showed most variation, with significant or highly significant differences by age, ethnic category and ML family. The view that a non-linguistic component, that is *humour*, constitutes a part of proficiency differs significantly by ethnolinguistic variables.

To ensure an overall 5% significance level, the threshold for significance of individual tests was set at lower levels according to the Bonferroni correction (Pallant, 2001, p. 174) for all independent variables except *length of stay*, which only has three categories. To avoid proliferation of comparisons for the *ML class* variable with its six groups (larger than 20) tests were restricted to pairing the largest group (Indo-European) with the remaining ones.

#### 5.3.2.1 Age

Age is associated with highly significant differences in the evaluation of importance for writing skills (at the  $p=.001$  level) as well as significant differences (at the  $p=.05$  level) for listening and reading skills (Table 25).

Table 25  
Association Between Proficiency Dimensions and Independent Variables  
(Kruskal-Wallis Test)

Proficiency dimensions	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	Education	Age	Ethnic category	ML family	Length of stay
Correct pronunciation	358	1.4	.76	1.993	7.429	9.166*	7.209	.934
Grammar knowledge	357	1.8	1.1	.547	6.274	11.636*	9.124	5.480
Listening skills	356	1.4	.7	.630	10.067*	14.878**	10.841	5.077
Reading skills	358	1.6	1.0	1.494	12.345*	17.772**	24.122**	.059
Writing skills	356	1.7	1.1	2.155	15.714**	20.754**	27.227**	.607
Creativity	350	2.0	1.2	.070	4.299	17.347**	14.488*	.421
Speaking skills	357	1.6	.9	.015	1.528	15.929**	10.649	.751
Culture knowledge	355	1.5	.8	.177	1.525	5.504	4.240	.064
Humour	353	1.7	.9	.102	4.660	26.582**	19.799**	.758
Spontaneity	349	1.7	1.0	.413	2.392	12.951*	10.963	.074
Stylistic variation	344	2.3	1.3	2.169	4.838	8.919*	5.821	.305
Teaching skills	352	1.8	1.2	.110	.761	6.722*	3.650	2.919
Thinking skills	348	1.9	1.2	2.419	5.256	12.802*	11.907*	1.055
Subtlety	347	1.9	1.0	2.370	4.995	6.847*	6.387	.899
Confidence	355	1.4	.8	2.824	5.694	6.493*	4.606	1.841

Note. ML class N>20 only. Age group N>20 only

p = .05. \*\* p = .001

Pairwise comparisons show that in all three cases the older age groups evaluated the three dimensions significantly higher (lower means) than the younger groups (higher means), with the oldest participants attaching highest importance to both reading and writing (Table 26). Table 26 illustrates that most variation by age occurs for dimensions of proficiency involving writing as both the oldest and second oldest groups assess the importance of writing significantly higher than the youngest or second youngest groups respectively.

Table 26

Group Variation in Evaluation of ML Proficiency Dimensions by Age (Significant Differences Only, Mann-Whitney Test)

	Reading		Writing		Listening	
	Age group		Age group		Age group	
	21 - 35	66+	21 - 35	66+	36 - 50	51 - 65
Mann-Whitney U	978.000		910.000			
Z	-3.116		-3.460			
Asymp. Sig (2-tailed)	.002		.001			
N	69	40	69	40		
Mean	1.8	1.2	1.9	1.3		
SE	.14	9.61E-02	.14	.11		
	36 - 50	66+	36 - 50	66+	36 - 50	51 - 65
Mann-Whitney U	2133.500		2036.000		6554.500	
Z	-2.970		-3.181		-2.835	
Asymp. Sig (2-tailed)	.003		.001		.005	
N	143	40	142	40	142	96
Mean	1.6	1.2	1.7	1.3	1.5	1.2
SE	8.22E-02	9.61E-02	9.09E-02	.11	7.33E-02	4.89E-02
			21 - 35	51 - 65	21 - 35	51 - 65
Mann-Whitney U			2727.500		2695.000	
Z			-2.356		-2.844	
Asymp. Sig (2-tailed)			.018		.004	
N			69	97	70	96
$\bar{x}$			1.9	1.6	1.5	1.2
SE			.14	.11	7.80E-02	4.89E-02

Note. Bonferroni adjustment at  $p = .013$

A similar pattern can be observed in relation to reading skills, although the significantly different mean value applies only to the oldest participants aged 65 years and over. Those aged 51-65 years assessed the importance of listening comprehension significantly higher not only compared with the youngest group but also with their close age group of 36-50 year-olds.

Overall then, a higher importance attached to reading and writing, as well as to listening is closely associated with being aged 50 years or older (Figure 34).

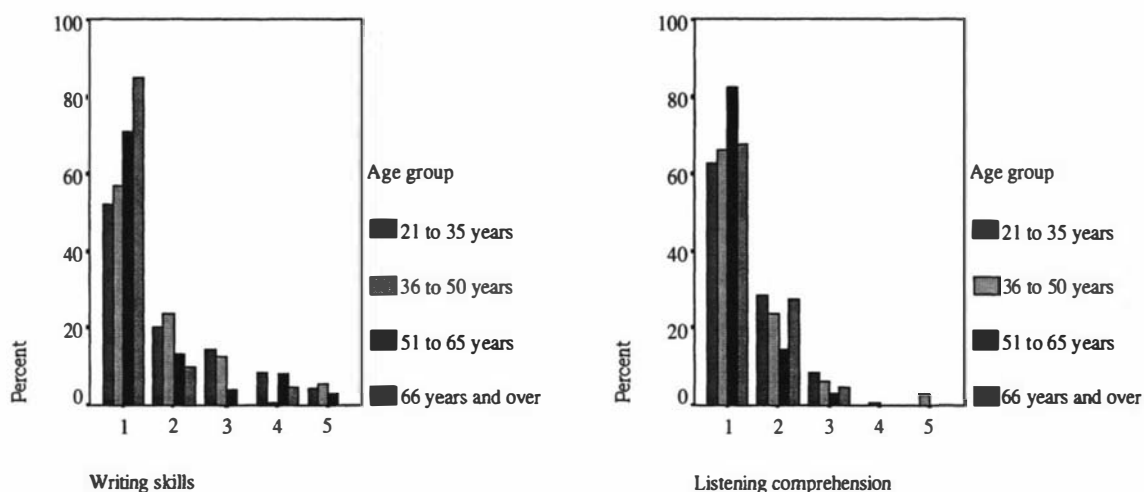


Figure 34. Examples of Writing and Listening Skills by Age Group

### 5.3.2.2 Ethnic category

Ethnic membership appears to be an important predictor of variance in conceptualizing proficiency. In all but one case ethnic groups varied significantly in their views of what dimensions are important for proficiency (see Table 25). The values presented indicate high variability in the way ethnic membership may impact on the assessment of the variables in question. However, the highly significant differences across virtually all but two variables indicate that ethnicity is a good predictor of variation, particularly in terms of viewing reading and writing as an important component of ML proficiency.

Figure 35 outlines an overall tendency for receptive skills to be regarded as more important (listening/reading) than the productive ones (speaking/writing), except for pronunciation. The

Asian sub-groups generally rank proficiency across all skills lower (greater means) compared with the other ethnic categories. Mann-Whitney results show up a significant inter-European (East/West) difference on the writing variable ( $U=1625.500$ ,  $Z=-2.145$ ,  $p=.032$ ), though in absolute terms both groups still attach above average importance to writing.

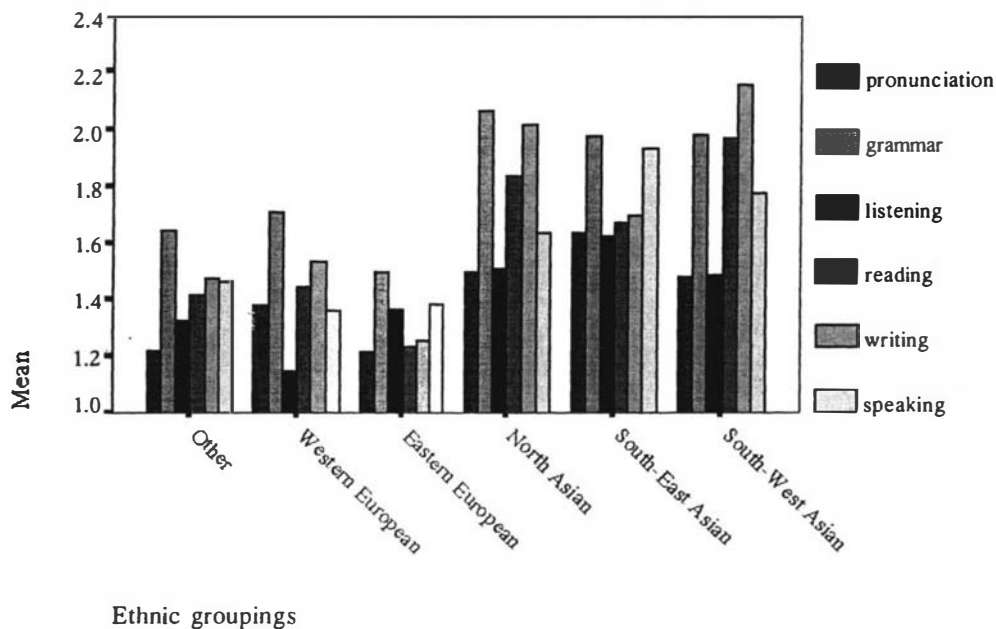


Figure 35. Importance of Technical, Receptive and Productive Proficiency Dimensions by Ethnic Grouping

Among the 'personal' dimensions in Figure 36, subtlety and creativity appear to be the least important across all ethnic sub-groups with the latter being least important for the North Asians. Confidence clearly emerges as the most important variable for all groups, with mean values consistently below  $\bar{x}=1.8$ . Style variation ranks lowest among the pragmatic proficiency dimensions across all groups (Figure 37), while cultural knowledge is the most important in all groups, except the Western European where understanding humour scores highest. Humour can be seen as culturally determined, and its importance only underscores the

crucial role knowledge of culture appears to play as a proficiency dimension. In the Asian sub-groups teaching children is classed almost equally important as understanding humour.

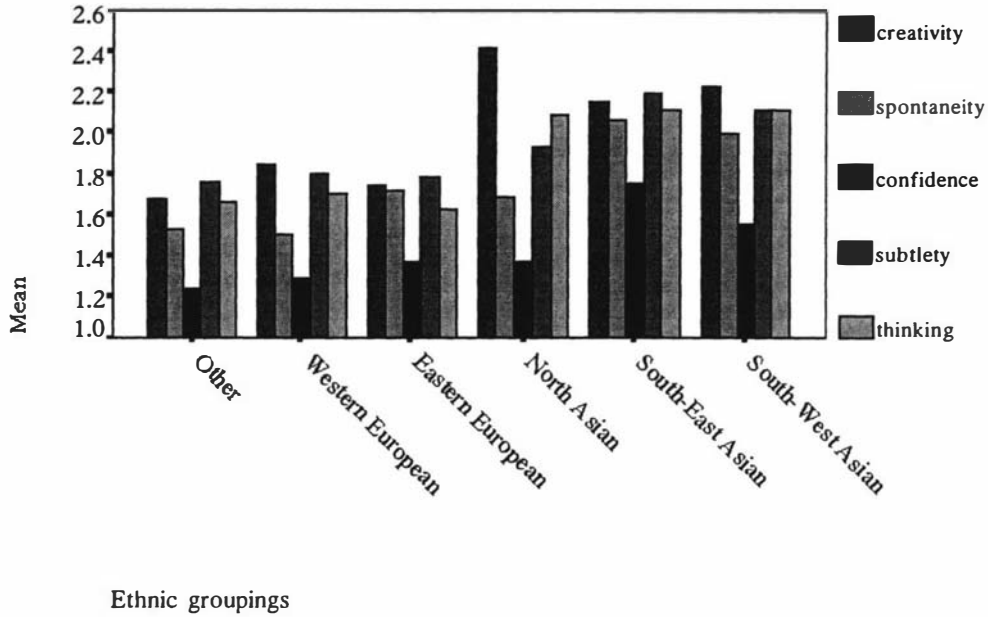


Figure 36. Importance of Specialist and Personal Proficiency Dimensions by Ethnic Grouping

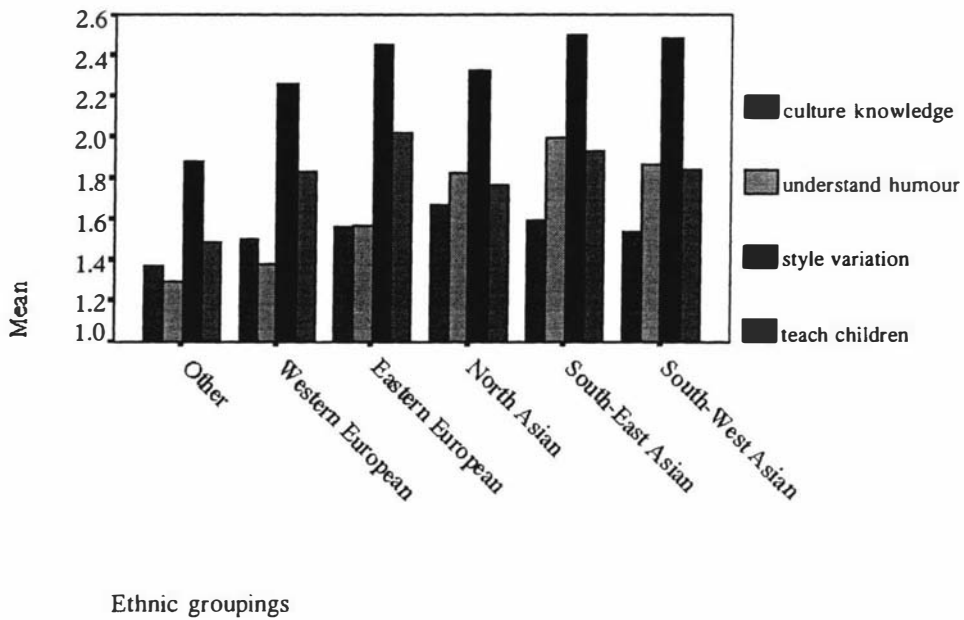


Figure 37. Importance of Sociocultural Proficiency Dimensions by Ethnic Grouping

### 5.3.2.3 *ML family*

Being an ML speaker from specific language families appears to make a difference for five variables for which test results revealed significant to highly significant variation among language groups. Pairwise comparisons showed which groups these differences occurred in, although only those groups are shown which remain significant after Bonferroni adjustment to  $p=.008$  (Table 27). Variation at the  $p=.05$  level was also found between the Indo-European and Dravidian groups, the Hamito-Semitic and Sino-Tibetan groups, the Hamito-Semitic and Dravidian groups as well as the Hamito-Semitic and Indo-Aryan/Iranian groups, particularly in relation to writing skills and understanding of humour. However, compared with the larger Indo-European group, speakers of both the two Asian language families showed significantly less support for the five variables (Table 27).

Creativity was least important to the Sino-Tibetan language group with a lower mean of  $\bar{x}=2.5$  while the Indo-Aryan/Iranian group attached least importance to reading and writing as proficiency component. Although the standard error values for the non-Indo-European groups are higher, possibly due to a smaller group size, the pattern of contrasting means nevertheless indicates consistency in how the five proficiency dimensions were evaluated differently by the compared linguistic sub-groups.

Table 27 Group Variation in Evaluation of Proficiency Dimensions by ML Family (Mann-Whitney Test)

<b>Indo-European * Indo-Aryan/Iranian</b>						
	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Writing</b>	<b>Creativity</b>	<b>Understand humour</b>	<b>Thinking</b>	
	Mann-Whitney	1813.000**	1757.000**	2137.000	1884.000*	2059.500
	U					
	Z	-3.919	-3.943	-1.802	-2.649	-1.989
	Sig	.000	.000	.072	.008	.047
	N	126	125	123	124	120
<b>Indo-European</b>	Mean	1.40	1.46	1.83	1.45	1.63
	Std. Error of Mean	.069	.075	.098	.068	.088
	N	43	43	42	40	42
<b>Indo- Aryan/Iranian</b>	Mean	2.21	2.30	2.17	1.85	2.14
	Std. Error of Mean	.21	.21	.18	.16	.22
<b>Indo-European * Sino-Tibetan</b>						
	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Writing</b>	<b>Creativity</b>	<b>Understand humour</b>	<b>Thinking</b>	
	Mann-Whitney	1672.000*	1598.500*	1530.000*	1704.000*	1482.000*
	U					
	Z	-2.965	-2.898	-3.017	-3.202	-3.165
	Sig	.003	.004	.003	.001	.002
	N	126	125	123	124	120
<b>Indo-European</b>	Mean	1.40	1.46	1.83	1.45	1.63
	Std. Error of Mean	.069	.075	.098	.068	.088
	N	36	35	36	39	36
<b>Sino-Tibetan</b>	Mean	1.92	2.14	2.50	1.97	2.28
	Std. Error of Mean	.20	.24	.22	.17	.22

Note. \* p=.008. \*\*p.0001.

Figures 38 to 40 help visualize the level of importance attached to the individual proficiency dimensions, that is the lower on the (mean) scale a dimension is the higher its importance. Table 27 shows speakers of Indo-European and Indo-Aryan/ Iranian languages to differ significantly in their assessment of the importance speaking ( $U=2110.500, Z=-2.520, p=.012$ ).

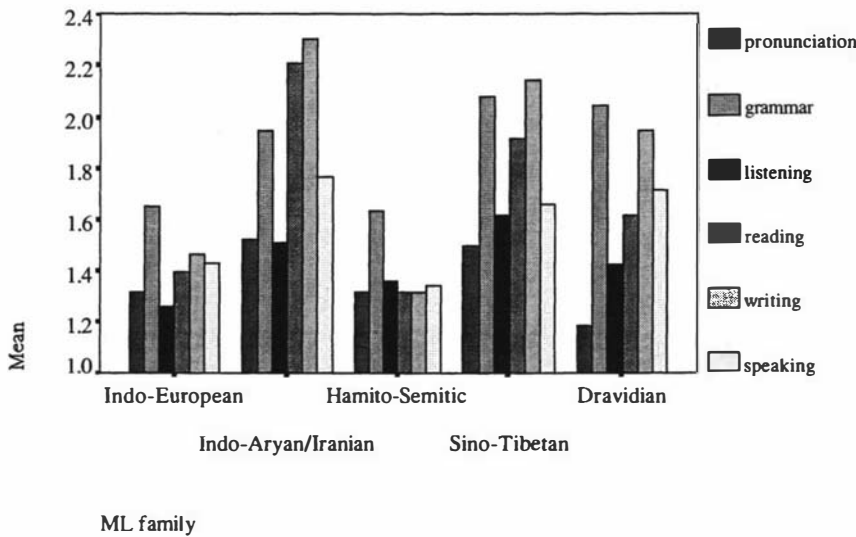


Figure 38. Importance of Technical, Receptive and Productive Proficiency Dimensions by ML Family

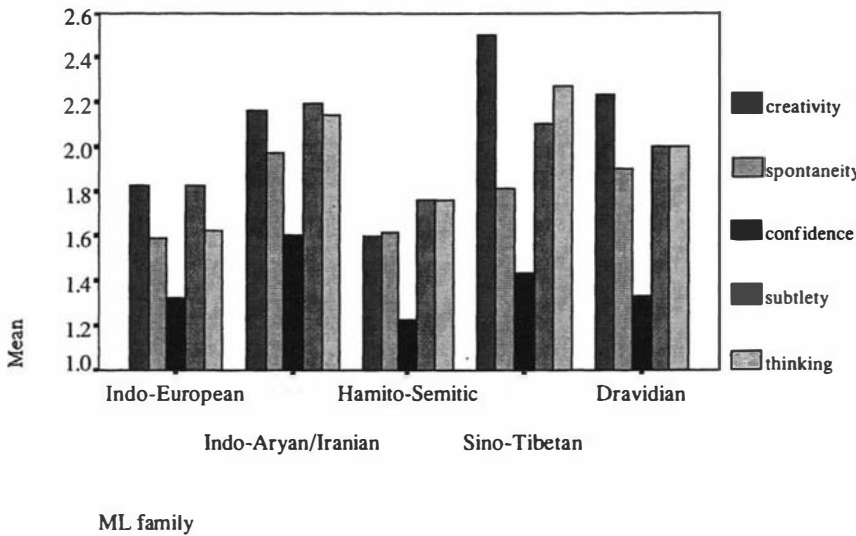


Figure 39. Importance of Personal Dimensions of ML Proficiency by ML Family

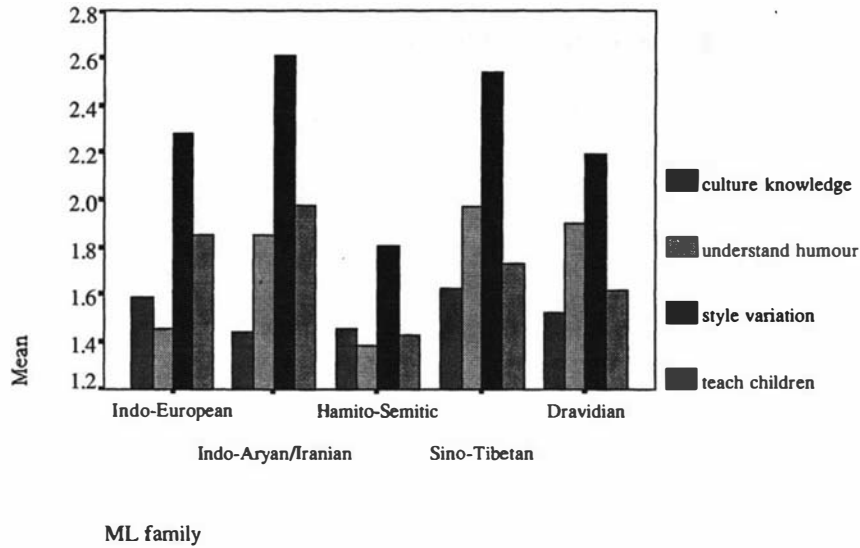


Figure 40. Importance of Pragmatic Dimensions of ML Proficiency by ML Family

There is also a difference in the perception of listening as a proficiency component ( $U=2177.500$ ,  $Z=-2.025$ ,  $p=.043$ ), though after Bonferroni adjustment the significance value was reduced to  $p=.025$ . The assumption that a higher ranking of writing is associated with language groups with less complex writing systems may apply in the case of the Indo-European group. However, this does not explain the very high importance of writing for the Hamito-Semitic group, which includes languages with complex writing systems such as Arabic and Hebrew. Reading and writing (on a par in the Hamito-Semitic family) in Arabic is likely to have enhanced importance due to its religious function, i.e. as the language of the Koran. This might explain the significant difference between the Hamito-Semitic group and the Indo-Aryan/Iranian on the ranking of both writing ( $U=284.000$ ,  $Z=-2.849$ ,  $p=.004$ ) and reading ( $U=308.500$ ,  $Z=-2.517$ ,  $p=.012$ ) as proficiency dimension, although the latter group also incorporates many who may be Muslim (mirrors variation patterns in relevance, see also 5.1.1.3)

The lesser degree of importance for both reading and writing may, however, also derive from respondents' respective level of self-reported proficiency. A medium but highly significant correlation was found between the level of self-reported proficiency on both personal ( $r=.37$ ,  $p=.000$ ,  $N=279$ ) and formal ( $r=.41$ ,  $p=.000$ ,  $N=232$ ) writing functions and the overall importance attached to writing as a proficiency variable. However, either variable can explain only 14% and 17% of the variation in the other. These patterns suggest that those who attach high to average importance to writing as a proficiency dimension purport to be "very good" (personal letter) writers (Figure 41). But over a third of those who thought writing has low importance also reported high ability for this function. However, the large majority in the "not important" group were people with no ML proficiency at all. Average importance of personal writing goes with average to high personal writing ability.

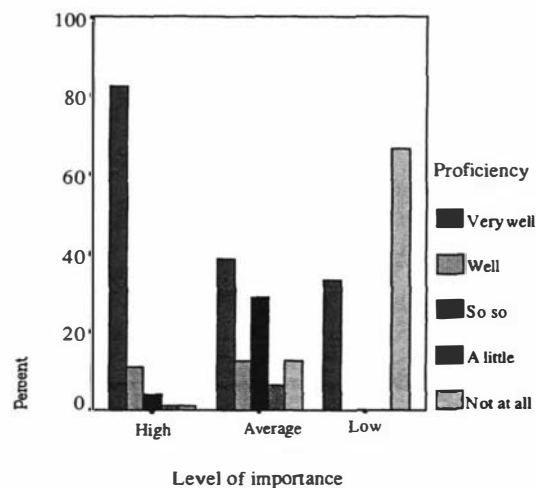


Figure 41. Importance of Writing as a Proficiency Dimension by Self-Reported Personal Writing Proficiency (N = 279)

The patterns for formal writing are not markedly different. Nearly 90% of those who evaluate formal writing as a highly important ML dimension claim to be “very good” or “good” writers (Figure 42). In contrast, the group who assigned little importance to formal writing, is exclusively made up of people with either “no” or only average (“so so”) ML proficiency.

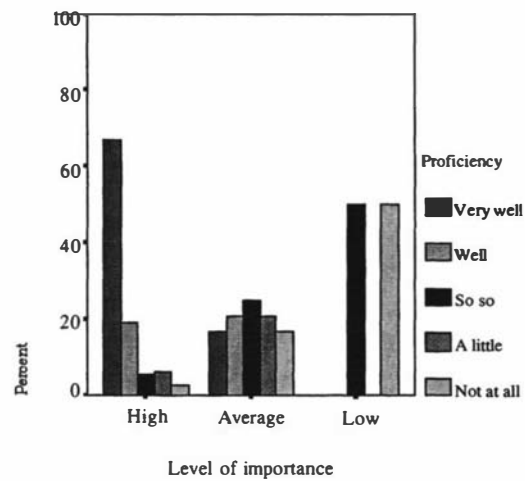


Figure 42. Importance of Writing as Proficiency Dimension by Self-Reported Formal Writing Proficiency (N = 226)

Self-assessed writing proficiency thus appears to be associated with how important writing is to the participants. People attach little importance to the dimension they profess to have little or no proficiency in, whereas the opposite is true for a group of respondents who are proficient at personal writing, yet see it as unimportant for ML proficiency. Other factors such as personal needs and patterns of use may have a bearing on the evaluation of importance.

#### 5.3.2.4 Length of Stay

No statistically significant difference was found on any of the individual variables. Length of stay was earlier found to be associated with significant differences in the assessment of

relevant uses of ML in New Zealand (see 5.1.1.2), though not overall reported proficiency (5.2.10). The absence of such variation in what is expected of a good ML speaker suggests that the conceptualization of MLP may be immune to time where the overseas-born participants are concerned.

#### 5.3.2.5 *Educational Background*

Results from the Kruskal-Wallis test showed no significant differences between subjects from different educational backgrounds in how they assessed the importance of the individual variables associated with proficient ML use.

The overall picture that emerges from the analysis of variance by independent variables is that different variables cluster together according to subjects' responses and how these relate to the level of perceived importance. The clusters correspond approximately with two groups of mean rankings (Table 18), that is those at or above the mean rank of  $\bar{x}=1.7$  (#1-3) and those below it (#4-5). The dendrogram in Figure 43 illustrates these cluster patterns which can be summarized as follows:

1. *Pronunciation, listening, confidence and culture knowledge* form a relatively tight cluster of the four dimensions which occupy the top three ranks according to attached level of importance (Table 18).
2. Reading and writing skills form a cluster by themselves. These two dimensions have been singled out by a high level of between-group variation despite their overall high importance ( $\bar{x}=1.6$  and  $\bar{x}=1.7$  respectively).

3. *Speaking* and *humour* combine into a cluster with *spontaneity*, which is the only exception among this group as it does not fall into the top group of variables at or above the mean of mean.
4. *Grammar*, *thinking* and *subtlety* form a cluster which share very similar means ( $\bar{x}=1.8$  and  $\bar{x}=1.9$ ).
5. *Teaching ML*, *creativity* and *style variation* appear as quite separate dimensions; this may have something to do with the finding that the former two are variables were accorded the lowest ranking in terms of importance for MLP (Table 24).

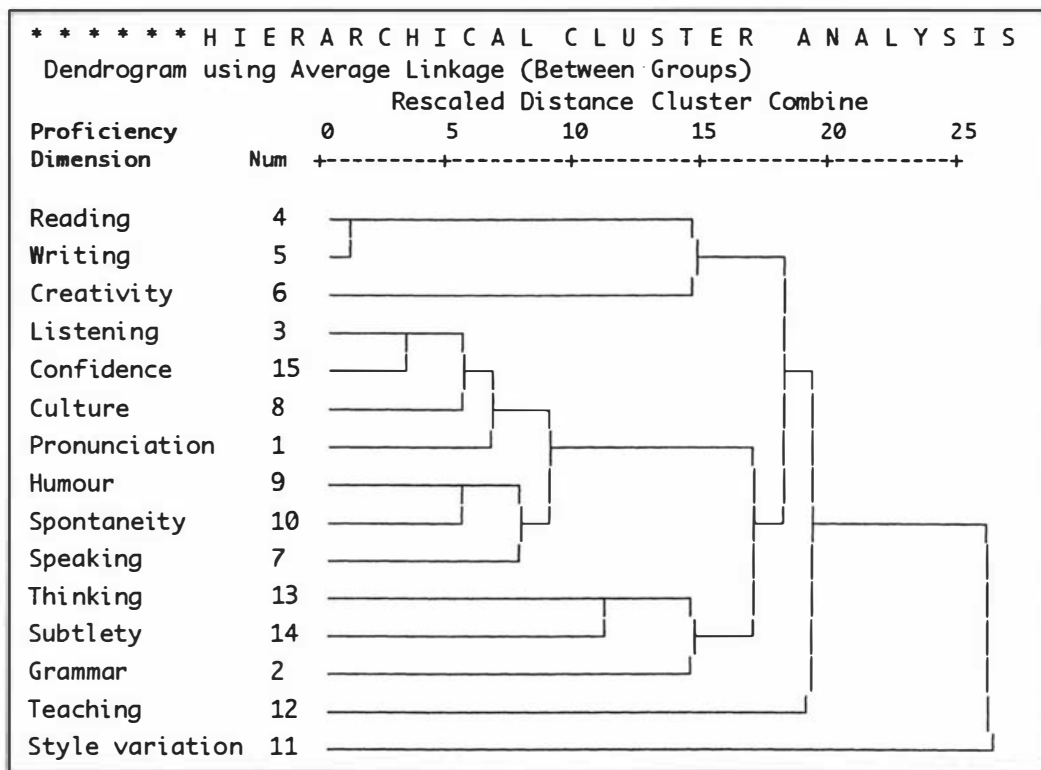


Figure 43. Clusters of ML Proficiency Dimensions

## **5.4 ORIENTATIONS TO ML PROFICIENCY: AUTONOMOUS AND PRAGMATIC VIEWS**

This section explores a key construct underlying the current study, i.e. the conceptual distinction between *autonomous* and *pragmatic* orientations towards ML, henceforth abbreviated as AutPrag. Analysis of this part of the data integrates:

1. descriptive analysis of the AutPrag measures, derived from individual items 11 and 16 as well as a total combined measure based on the computed sum of values for both items (part 1.1);
2. tests for association with independent variables and between-group comparisons (part 1.2) and bivariate correlations;
3. descriptive analysis and tests of association for individual AutPrag indicator variables, i.e. component items of Question 11 and Question 16. (part 1.3);
4. an examination of possible factors associated with the adoption of an autonomous or pragmatic orientation to proficiency.

### **5.4.1 Autonomous versus pragmatic orientations: descriptive analysis**

Two separate items in the questionnaire were used to generate data on respondents' orientation to ML proficiency. Item 11 and item 16 each included several diagnostic statements indicative of either autonomous or pragmatic views. In order to get an overall measure of these two variables the total sum of values of Item 11 and Item 16 was computed, resulting in two combined single measures representing autonomous (Autall) and pragmatic (Pragall) orientation (Table 28).

Table 28

Individual and Total Measures of Autonomous and Pragmatic Orientations to MLP

	N	Total range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
<b>Item 11</b>						
Autall11	368	1-12	1	12	5.6	1.8
Pragall11	366	1-12	2	11	6.8	1.6
<b>Item 16</b>						
Autall16	353	1-6	1	6	4.9	1.2
Pragall16	358	1-6	1	6	2.8	1.2
<b>Total measure: items 11 &amp; 16 combined</b>						
Autall	369	1-18	1.00	18.00	10.2	2.5
Pragall	369	1-18	3.00	15.00	9.4	2.2

For this set of variables the location on the total possible range (1-18) indicates someone's position in terms of AutPrag, that is how much a person approaches either the agreement or disagreement end of the range. Higher values reflect an approximation towards disagreement while the lower values represent more agreement with the respective variable. Table 28 reveals an almost one-point mean difference between both variables (Autall:  $\bar{x}=10.2$ / Pragall:  $\bar{x}=9.4$ ) where the lower mean suggests a slight leaning towards a pragmatic view. Considering, however, that the average mean value of 9 indicates a middle position on a 1-18 range, neither the autonomous nor the pragmatic total measure show a clear or strong commitment towards either orientation. Likewise, mean values for Item 11 show a slight tendency towards agreement with autonomous and towards disagreement with pragmatic notions, though both are very close to the average value of 6 (Autall  $\bar{x}=5.6$ , Pragall  $\bar{x}=6.8$ ). In contrast, item 16 indicates a clearer tendency to disagree with autonomous thinking ( $\bar{x}=4.9$ ), compared to a mean for the pragmatic measure reaching slightly below the average value of 3

( $\bar{x}=2.8$ ). Responses appear to be fairly evenly spread around the means as standard deviation scores are identical in each of the three pairs of variables except the slightly lower value for Pragall 11.

Figure 44 reveals a reasonably normal distribution of the values for both the total autonomous and pragmatic measures, with the majority of responses peaking around the neutral “not sure” mean. Thus, there is no clear evidence for an overall orientation towards either the autonomous or the pragmatic end of the spectrum.

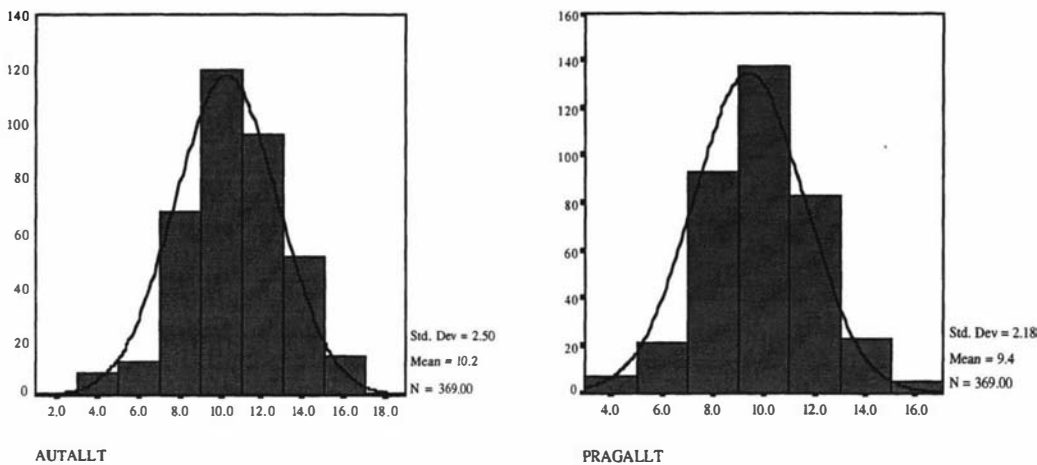


Figure 44. Distribution of Scores for Autonomous and Pragmatic Orientations

#### 5.4.2 Between-group comparisons by independent variables

The relationship between the AutPrag measures and independent variables (*ethnic category, length of stay, age group, education and ML family*) was investigated through group comparisons using Kruskal-Wallis tests. They also present an overview of central tendency measures, including the SE values to help determine the confidence level for mean values. Follow-up Mann-Whitney tests then helped establish which pairwise combinations differed for

these variables and to what extent. Groups smaller than 20 were excluded from these comparisons, which affected two variables:

*Age group* (Under 20 year-olds excluded)

*ML class* (Uralic, Austro-Asiatic, Tai, African, Japanese, Korean excluded)

Pairwise comparisons carried out through Mann-Whitney tests showed that some of the independent variables account for a number of significant differences between paired subgroups. Making multiple comparisons between sample subpopulations means that “the probability of finding a significant difference by chance alone increases rapidly with the number of tests” (SPSS, 1999, p. 105).

Eta ( $\eta$ ) has been used in this study to measure the success of the independent variables for predicting AutPrag scores and to understand which of the independent variables help explain the variability in the dependent variable (SPSS 1999, p. 87). For example, the  $\eta^2$  values for ethnic category as independent variable indicate a small effect size for the former and no effect for the latter (Table 29). Eta squared ( $\eta^2$ ) represents “the proportion of variance of the dependent variable that is explained by the independent variable” (Pallant, 2001, p. 175). Following Cohen’s 1988 guidelines (cited in Pallant, 2001, p. 175) values correspond with effect sizes as follows:

*.01=small*

*.06=moderate*

*.14=large*

#### 5.4.2.1 Ethnic category

The means for both the European and Asian groups are slightly lower for the pragmatic measure (Table 29) with an approximately 1-point mean difference between these two groups. The Other group shows almost identical means for both measures. The only slight difference in means occurs in the Asian group where the range only reaches a maximum of 15 on the pragmatic measure, suggesting a slight tendency towards agreement. Conversely, the Asian and Other groups reach the maximum range value of 18 on the autonomous measure. Higher SD and SE values for the Other group, particularly on the autonomous measure, suggest that

Table 29

Total Autonomous (Autall) and Pragmatic (Pragall) Measures by Ethnic Categories

		AUTALL	PRAGALL
<b>Ethnic categories</b>	K-W sig	.017	.501
	Eta sq	.024	.003
	Min-max	1-18	1-18
<hr/>			
<b>European</b> (N=133)	Mean	10.45	9.50
	Std. Deviation	2.4	2.29
	Std. Error of Mean	.21	.19
	Range	1-16	3-15
	Mean	10.36	9.31
<b>Asian</b> (N=171)	Std. Deviation	2.4	2.1
	Std. Error of Mean	.18	.16
	Range	4-18	4-15
	Mean	9.33	9.48
<b>Other</b> N=52	Std. Deviation	3.0	2.0
	Std. Error of Mean	.42	.28
	Range	3-18	4-14

the means for this group, probably due to its smaller size and diverse composition, are less reliable. Follow-up Mann-Whitney tests showed no significant difference in the pairwise comparisons between the more specific ethnic sub-groups on the AutPrag measures.

#### 5.4.2.2 *Length of stay*

A higher level of agreement (low mean) with pragmatic notions is associated with the *long-term* group of people, who have resided in New Zealand more than 15 years ( $U=5239.0$ ,  $Z=-4.348$ ,  $p=0.000$ ). This group differed highly significantly from the *recent* group, in the country for 5 years or less. This appears to mark a threshold as the *long-term* group also differs significantly from the *established* group (6-15 years) on Pragall ( $U=4993.5$ ,  $Z=-3.160$ ,  $p=.002$ ). The higher mean value of the *recent* group indicates more disagreement with pragmatic views. Significance levels were not affected by Bonferroni adjustment which reduced the alpha values to  $p=.025/p=.0005$ .

According to Table 30 the mean differences between Autall and Pragall are very small for the recent and established groups (.2 and .7 respectively) but increase to a mean value of  $\bar{x}=1.3$  in the long-term group. An AutPrag distinction may be evolving or becoming more pronounced after at least 15 years as indicated by a growing agreement with pragmatic notions (lower range maximum, lower mean) compared with more disagreement with autonomous notions (highest range maximum, high mean).

Table 30

Total Autonomous and Pragmatic Measures by Length of Stay

Length of stay		AUTALLT	PRAGALLT
	K-W sig	.606	.000
	Eta sq	.00	.06
	Min-max	1-18	1-18
Recent N=112	Mean	10.1607	9.9554
	Std. Deviation	2.4735	2.0062
	Std. Error of Mean	.2337	.1896
	Range	4-16	4-14
Established N=96	Mean	10.3958	9.7083
	Std. Deviation	2.2171	2.1419
	Std. Error of Mean	.2263	.2186
	Range	4-16	3-15
Long-term N=137	Mean	10.1095	8.7883
	Std. Deviation	2.7189	2.1876
	Std. Error of Mean	.2323	.1869
	Range	1-18	3-15

#### 5.4.2.3 Age group

All individual means are low on the pragmatic measure (Table 31). Complemented by slightly less dispersion as indicated by lower standard deviation figures these values are an indication of an apparently stronger tendency towards pragmatic notions across age groups. More specifically, the oldest group emerges as the one most agreeable with the pragmatic perspective with the lowest mean value overall ( $\bar{x}=8.1$ ) and a range that only reaches a maximum of 13. However, the same age group also displays the lowest values on the autonomous variable, both in terms of mean (but higher SE) and maximum value on the range. This would suggest that the oldest participants, while most likely to be in favour of pragmatic

Table 31  
Total Autonomous and Pragmatic Measures by Age Group

		AUTALLT	PRAGALLT
	K-W sig	.209	.000
	Eta sq	.02	.07
	Min-max	1-18	1-18
21 to 35 years N=71	Mean	10.4085	9.3944
	Std. Deviation	2.4818	2.0458
	Std. Error of Mean	.2945	.2428
	Range	4-16	3-14
36 to 50 years N=147	Mean	10.4694	9.5782
	Std. Deviation	2.5002	2.0236
	Std. Error of Mean	.2062	.1669
	Range	4-18	4-15
51 to 65 years N=102	Mean	9.9902	9.4412
	Std. Deviation	2.4916	2.3018
	Std. Error of Mean	.2467	.2279
	Range	1-16	4-15
66 years and over N=41	Mean	9.4878	8.1463
	Std. Deviation	2.5896	2.0683
	Std. Error of Mean	.4044	.3230
	Range	4-14	3-13

views, are at the same time fairly split in terms of their orientations. Responses from the 36-50 year-old group reflect both a comparatively higher level of disagreement with and more diverse views about the autonomous variables (SD=2.5).

Group differences related to *age group* and *length of stay* in New Zealand were only found in relation to pragmatic notions. A highly significant difference exists between both the younger group of 21-35 year-olds and the middle-aged 36-50 year-olds, compared with the 66 plus group (U=981.5, Z=-2.899, p=.004 and U=1890.5, Z=-3.690, p=.000 respectively). The oldest

group shows significantly more agreement with Pragall, even after Bonferroni adjustment of the significance levels ( $p=.008$ ,  $p=.0002$ ). Thus, a more pragmatic stance towards proficiency seems to be associated with a longer term stay and older age as well as with ethnic category.

#### 5.4.2.4 *Educational background and ML family*

Neither *educational background* nor *ML family* were linked with any significant differences.

#### 5.4.2.5 *Length of stay*

As *length of stay* constitutes an independent variable of specific interest further examination was carried out to see how much variation in AutPrag could be explained by length of stay within specific sub-populations (Table 32). While no effect was registered on the autonomous measure by *length of stay* in general, the same variable becomes a better predictor for AutPrag scores within specific ethnic groups. Length of stay in New Zealand has a moderate effect on the autonomous views and a strong effect on the pragmatic views within all but the Western European and Other ethnic groups where only a weak effect of *length of stay* was measured. In fact, in the Northern Asian group *length of stay* explains up to a third of the variation in the perceptions of Pragall ( $\eta^2.28$ ), but only 6% of the Autall variation. Thus, the impact of time on autonomous or pragmatic orientations to ML proficiency varies by ethnic category. Other effect variations worth noting are:

- a moderate effect on Pragall within the youngest group but on Autall within the oldest group,
- tertiary educated participants' Pragall notions are affected in a moderate way,

- across ML families *length of stay* explains up to a quarter of the AutPrag variation with, for example, a strong to moderate effect on both Autall and Prag all in the Indo-Aryan/Iranian and Sino-Tibetan groups.

Table 32

Effect Size ( $\eta$ ) of Length of Stay on AutPrag by Ethnic, Age, Education and Language Family Subpopulations

Grouping factors		Autall	Pragall
		$\eta^2$	$\eta^2$
Western European		.03+	.04+
Eastern European		.09++	.17+++
North Asian	Ethnic group (N=332)	.06++	.28+++
South-East Asian		.13++	.20+++
South-West Asian		.06++	.10++
Other		.03+	.02+
21-35		.01+	.10*++
36-50	Age group (N=369)	.00	.05+
51-65		.07++	.03+
66 plus		.06++	.05+
Non-tertiary	Education (N=348)	.03+	.04+
Tertiary		.00	.06++
Indo-European		.01+	.12++
Austronesian	ML family (N=366)	.02+	.04+
Indo-Aryan		.14+++	.25+++
Sino-Tibetan		.08++	.21+++

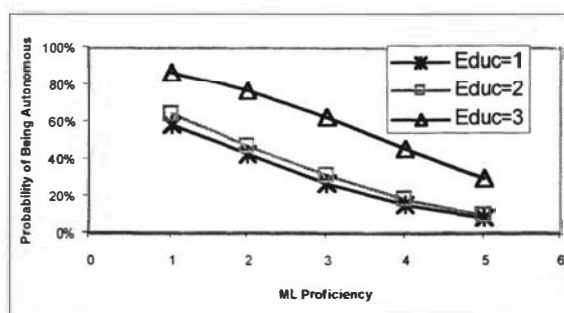
Note. Groups included if  $N \geq 50$   $\eta^2$  effect sizes: + weak ++ moderate +++ large

### 5.4.3 Summary of between-group comparisons patterns

1. The oldest generation is strongly associated with a pragmatic orientation to ML
2. Educational background, which was expected to have an impact on the participants' orientation to ML, does not seem to play an important role. It may not be surprising that not more difference was observed in participant orientations considering that the majority of participants were educated at the tertiary level (63%).
3. Two distinct variable sets were associated with either of the AutPrag orientations. *Length of stay* and *age group* accounted for differences mainly with pragmatic notions, while *ethnic category* and *ML class* related to variation on autonomous views. The 'quantitative' nature of the former set of variables suggests that pragmatic orientations are more liable to variation with time. In contrast, the more 'qualitative' latter set is characterized by cultural and ethnolinguistic dimensions which appear to affect the level of 'prescriptive' thinking and thus possibly help determine whether someone adopts an autonomous orientation or not.
4. People who have resided in New Zealand for more than 15 years (long-term) are more closely associated with pragmatic views as the higher mean values on the pragmatic measure were significantly different for both the *recent* and *established* groups. The two latter groups are thus more similar to each other, which would indicate that a transition towards more pragmatic thinking takes time and that a 'threshold' tends to be reached after about 15 years in New Zealand.

#### 5.4.4 Factors determining AutPrag

It was of interest in this study to further investigate what factors may help determine what variables affect a person's autonomous or pragmatic orientation. The relationship between a dichotomous variable (AutPrag) and possible explanatory variables can be described by logistic regression. Here it was used to model how the probability that a person tends to be autonomous rather than pragmatic is affected by factors such as *age*, *length of stay*, *ethnic category* and *education* as well as reported ML proficiency. The model was fitted using backward elimination. Initially all explanatory factors were fitted, and the least significant factors were progressively dropped from the model until only significant factors remained. The final model involved ML Proficiency ( $p=0.0236$ ) and Education ( $p=0.0743$ ), and overall fitted the data reasonably well (Residual deviance = 166.7 on 128 degrees of freedom). Higher ML Proficiency was associated with a higher probability of being autonomous and, as Figure 45 shows, those with vocational/trade qualifications (Educ3) were marginally more likely to be autonomous than those with high school (Educ2) or tertiary (Educ1) qualifications ( $p=0.054$  for high school versus vocational;  $p=0.052$  for tertiary versus vocational).



1=high proficiency - 5=no proficiency

Figure 45. Probability of AutPrag Orientation by Educational Background

### 5.4.5 Correlations between autonomous and pragmatic orientations

Spearman's rho was employed to test if and to what extent scores correlated between the two complementary items (Question 11 and Question 16) as well as between the two total combined measures. Correlation coefficients between the individual item measures indicate only very small and non-significant correlations between the two autonomous measures ( $r=.05$ ,  $p=.4$ ) while the coefficients for the pragmatic variables ( $r=.21$ ,  $p=.000$ ) suggest a small but highly significant correlation between these two measures. However, the proportion of variance explained by the latter correlation would still only be 4% ( $r^2=.04$ ). The relationship between the overall combined measures of AutPrag, is neither very strong nor significant ( $r=.09$ ,  $p=.08$ ).

While rho is very small for the overall combined measures of AutPrag, the scatterplot in Figure 46 illustrates a positive linear relationship (albeit with relatively dispersed values)

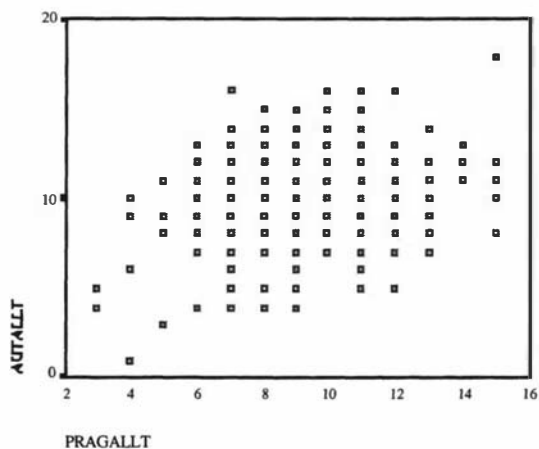


Figure 46. Pattern of Relationship Between Total Combined AutPrag Measures

between the two, indicating that higher values in one tend to be associated with higher values in the other. Furthermore the positive nature of this relationship suggests that participants who have adopted one type of orientation do not automatically disagree with the other one. In other words, autonomous and pragmatic perspectives to ML do not appear to be mutually exclusive although there are large numbers of people whose responses are not particularly related.

The overall low correlation levels may be a reflection of limited construct validity in one or both of the items and could thus be indicative of discriminant validity (Stangor, 1998, p. 87). However, given the potential complexity of the underlying construct involving human beliefs, which can be affected by any number of variables, low correlation is not unexpected. In fact, the complementary function of the two items was intended to capture different dimensions of what could possibly constitute an autonomous or a pragmatic notion. The individual dimensions represented by eight sub-questions in item 11 and four sub-questions in item 16 may not always come together neatly to form either a pragmatic or autonomous perspective as such. Given the weak evidence obtained from the analyses of the composite AutPrag measures, it is important to look at response patterns to the individual sub-items in order to identify which dimensions constitute salient components of autonomous or pragmatic orientations.

#### **5.4.6 Responses to individual AutPrag variables**

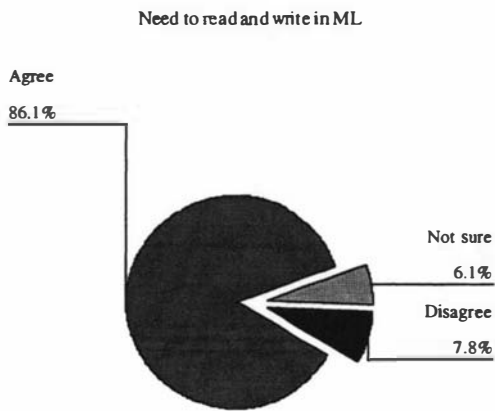
The diagnostic function of the eight sub-items in item 11 and four sub-items in item 16 was to assess the views people have of individual dimensions assumed to underlie autonomous or pragmatic orientations. Simple frequency counts reveal varying response patterns to the individual variables.

#### *5.4.6.1 Responses to autonomous indicator variables*

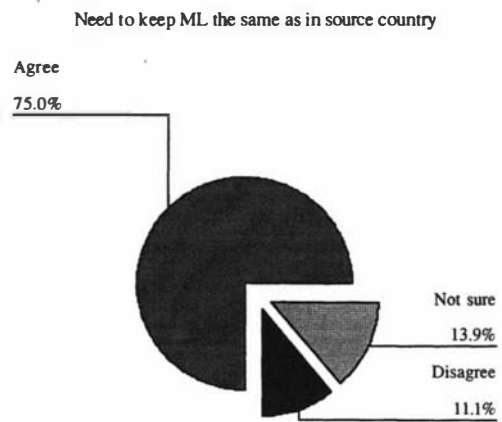
Figure 47 illustrates that in four cases (47a-d) the majority of respondents was in agreement with the respective proposition. Nine out of ten respondents supported the use of ML for reading and writing (Figure 47a), while three quarters expressed the need to maintain the type of language as it exists in the country of origin (Figure 47b). This also applies to keeping ML vocabulary up-to-date in relation to the NS context (Figure 47d). Taken together these three cases provide evidence of the respondents' commitment to NS norms as represented by the respective variables. A comparison of Figures 47b and 47c suggests that the expectation to keep things the same diminishes in relation to the next generation, although a majority of 60% were still committed to maintaining NS-like ML abilities among their children. These responses represent a position clearly aimed at upholding standards and uses in the New Zealand context which apply in the source country. Figures 47e and 47f reflect people's thoughts about meeting the expectations of other ML speakers in terms of ML use in New Zealand. According to Figure 47e there is very little concern among the respondents that they might be making mistakes in front of other ML speakers as nearly 86% did not see this as an issue. Almost half of the respondents felt unconcerned about not meeting the expectations of others which might cause disappointment (47f), whereas a third (31.2%) indicated that their ML use might not satisfy others.

It is possible that the notion of "disappointing other ML speakers" was more widely defined by the respondents than that of "making mistakes". The extent to which these responses reflect migrants' desire to comply with the expectations of others is limited. In fact, the low level of

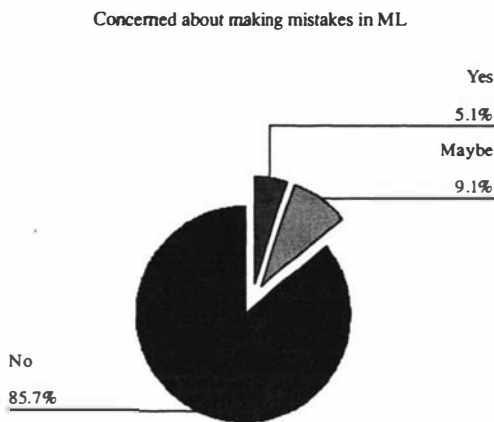
a. N=360



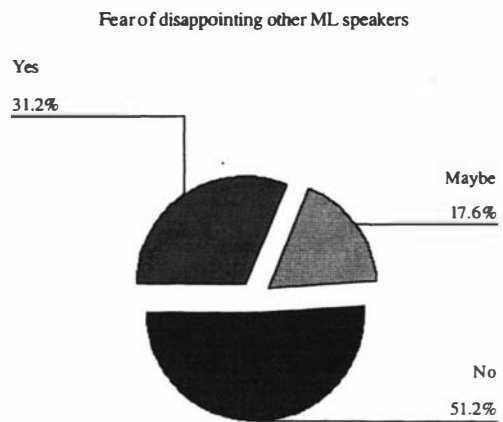
b. N=360



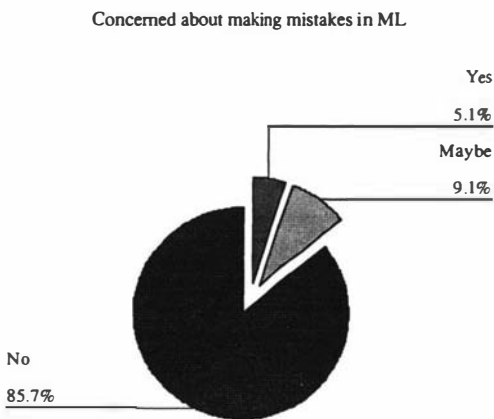
c. N=356



d. N=357



e. N=350f



f. N=340

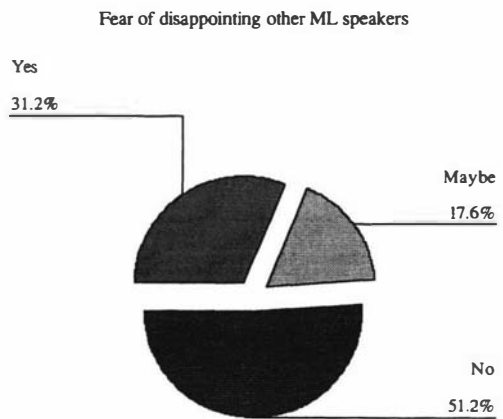


Figure 47. Responses to Autonomous Indicator Variables

concern to be failing in ML could also be an indication that respondents perceived the norms and expectations of others to have changed in the New Zealand context.

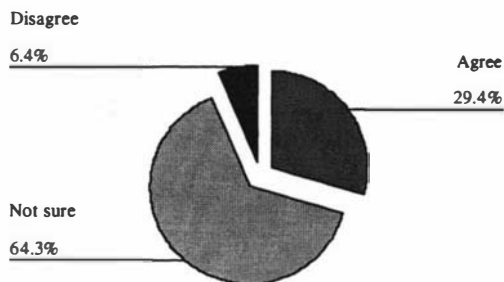
#### *5.4.6.2 Responses to pragmatic indicator variables*

A large number of respondents were not sure if they could accept a “less than perfect” ML (48a) in New Zealand, although almost a third did agree with this notion. They might be those respondents for whom ML is a symbolic rather than communicative tool. As such ML may be assumed to carry less prescriptive weight. A very high level of uncertainty was also apparent in the responses to 48b, with nearly 9 out of 10 not sure whether ML is still “good enough” in the NS context. This could mean two different things. Either ML speakers have lost confidence in ML remaining acceptable in the NS context, or they are still coming to terms with what is acceptable here in New Zealand as norms and expectations are changing or evolving. Figures 48c, 48d and 48e reflect responses to typical bilingual phenomena, that is code mixing, style simplification and switching, which have often been associated with language loss. Nearly three quarters (72.8%) regarded code mixing as part of bilingual speech, and just under 70% felt happy about code switching. However, nearly half of the respondents (48.2%) were unsure about changes in style and only a third (32%) were fine with it (48d).

The different response patterns may reflect different interpretations. Strong support for code mixing and switching suggests that respondents see it as a positive or creative way of using their bi/multilingual repertoires, whereas style changes or simplification may be associated with loss of formal and functional properties of ML. This view might be particularly strong among speakers of languages with complex stylistic repertoires, used, for instance, to express

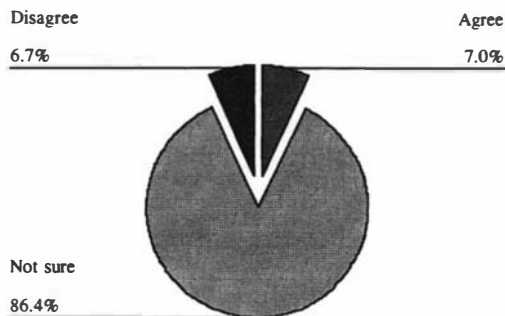
a. N=361

No need for perfect ML  
(good enough for communication in NZ)



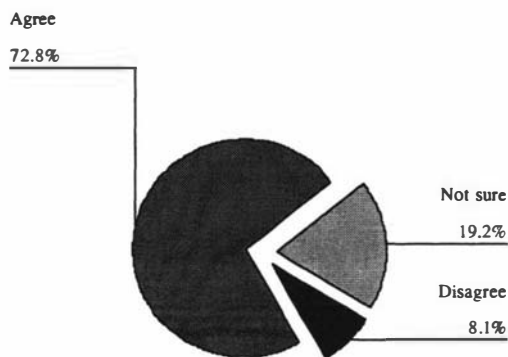
b. N=359

ML is not good enough for 'home country'



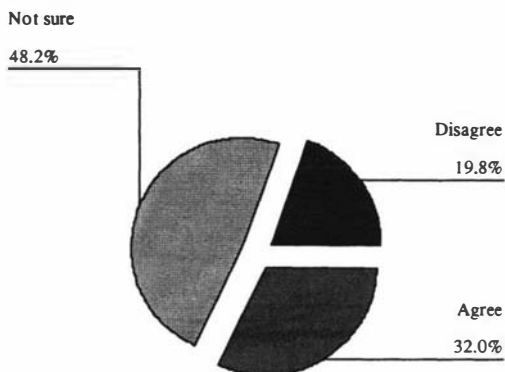
c. N=360

Mixing ML with English is natural



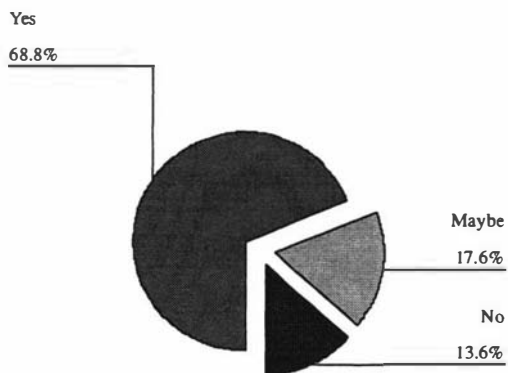
d. N=338

Using ML in a different style in NZ is ok



e. N=353

Switching codes is ok



f. N=346

Using ML in NZ is natural but different

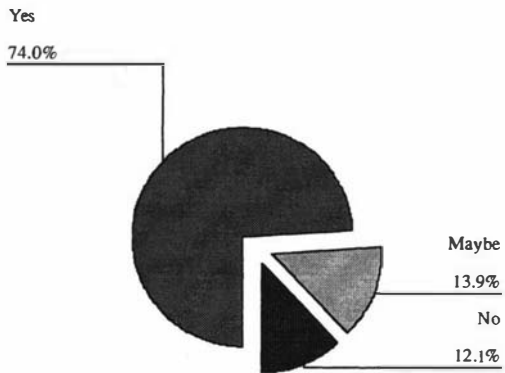


Figure 48. Responses to Pragmatic Indicator Variables

politeness or formality distinctions.

In contrast to the emerging trend towards an autonomous orientation which became apparent in Figure 47a-d, views of pragmatic notions appeared less clear-cut. However, the expression of uncertainty may itself be indicative of a process of changing orientations towards, for example, an evolving notion of proficiency which may be more accommodating to the changing ML needs and uses in the host environment. Interestingly, where the item propositions refer to specific language behaviours, responses show a clearer discrimination of answers. Cases in point are code mixing (47c), code switching (47e), stylistic variation (47d) and different ML use patterns (47f) where responses suggest the beginning of a pragmatic view of ML.

#### **5.4.7 Between-group comparisons of AutPrag indicator variables and independent variables**

The individual sub-variables for AutPrag underwent tests for association with the independent variables to identify possible patterns of difference (Table 33). Examples where significant differences were found (Kruskal-Wallis test) were then examined further by follow-up comparisons between subgroups (Mann-Whitney test) reported on in the next section.

Table 33

Individual AutPrag Indicator Variables by Independent Variables (Kruskal-Wallis Test)

AutPrag Indicator Variables	Chi Square				
	Ethnic category 2df	ML family 5df	Age group 3df	Length of stay 2df	Education 2df
<b>Autonomous orientation</b>					
ML speaker should be able to read and write in ML	5.787	8.255	11.026*	1.208	.480
Try to keep ML the way it is in the NS context	3.101	7.561	3.252	1.519	.461
Children should use ML 'properly', as in NS context	8.235*	12.018*	2.423	9.604*	.504
ML vocabulary should not become out of touch in NZ	10.607*	4.174	2.076	2.767	1.129
Fear of making mistakes in front of other ML speakers	1.005	7.722	2.432	.132	.421
Fear of disappointing other ML speakers	29.496**	42.437**	3.398	6.150*	.555
<b>Pragmatic orientation</b>					
No need for perfect ML in New Zealand	1.528	1.668	2.366	7.432*	.251
ML is not good enough in NS context but ok in New Zealand	.605	7.208	3.064	6.469*	.209
Mixing ML with English is natural in New Zealand	23.069**	21.189**	4.765	.099	.000
It is ok to use ML in a different style in NZ	.252	1.144	4.750	17.984**	.298
Relaxed about switching into English	1.871	4.146	6.838	12.064*	.425
Using ML differently in NZ is natural	.045	8.600	2.459	.811	2.563

#### 5.4.7.1 Autonomous and pragmatic orientations by ethnic sub-groupings

Variation between ethnoculturally different groups is perhaps to be expected. For example, a highly significant difference was found in responses to one of the autonomous variables: “fear of disappointing others”. The different mean values indicate more agreement with this sentiment among the South-West Asian ( $\bar{x}=1.94$ ,  $n=62$ ) compared with the Western European group ( $\bar{x}=2.68$ ,  $n=56$ ), ( $U=952.000$ ,  $Z=-4.723$ ,  $p=.000$ , ). Some variation was also found among ethnic sub-groups within the same larger category. For example, the South-West Asian group differed from other Asian subgroups on two of the variables (Table 34), but only before Bonferroni adjusted level. This group appears slightly more autonomous towards keeping

Table 34

Variation in Responses to Autonomous Indicator Variables by Ethnic Sub-Groups

<b>“ML vocabulary should not become out of touch in NZ”</b>		
	South-West Asian	* South-East Asian
Mann-Whitney U	1097.500	
Z	-2.279	
Asymp. Sig (2-tailed)	.023	
N	63	45
Mean	1.48	1.82
SE	.098	.13
<b>“Children should use ML ‘properly’ as in NS context”</b>		
	Northern Asian	* South-West Asian
Mann-Whitney U	1497.000	
Z	-2.151	
Asymp. Sig (2-tailed)	.031	
N	58	64
Mean	1.40	1.62
SE	.081	.095

Note. Bonferroni adjustment  $p=.017$

vocabulary up-to-date but slightly less so in relation to children's ML proficiency. The mean values are located on a range of 1 (agreement) to 3 (disagreement) with values around 2 representing non-committal (not sure), although the range is only small and the mean values may not be reliable in all cases (see SE values).

A highly significant contrast between culturally distant groups was also found with one of the pragmatic indicator variables (Table 35), with means indicating that Eastern Europeans tend to disagree more with code mixing compared to people from a South-West Asian background. The Eastern European's orientation is also significantly different from their Western European counterpart, who appear to be more reconciled with the mixing of codes.

Table 35

Variation in Responses to Pragmatic Indicator Variable by Ethnic Sub-Groups

<b>"Mixing ML with English is natural"</b>				
	South-West Asian	* Eastern European	Western European	* Eastern European
Mann-Whitney U		960.500		1119.500
Z		-4.635		-2.771
Asymp. Sig (2-tailed)		.000		.006
N	63	53	58	53
Mean	1.22	1.72	1.40	1.72
SE	.069	.091	.081	.091

Note. Bonferroni adjustment  $p=.013$

#### 5.4.7.2 *Autonomous and pragmatic orientations by age group*

Age was shown to be a factor for only one of the autonomous indicators, the notion that a proficient ML speaker "needs to read and write in ML". A significant difference in the

perception of this variable was found between the oldest and the youngest group, with mean values of  $\bar{x}=1.03$  and  $\bar{x}=1.40$  respectively. With both means below average it appears that even the younger group agrees with the proposition; although the significantly lower value among ML speakers above the age of 66 shows a much stronger commitment to the desire for reading and writing in ML.

#### 5.4.7.3 *Autonomous and pragmatic orientations by length of stay*

Length of stay was shown to play a role for six of the AutPrag indicator variables, particularly in terms of a pragmatic orientation where most of the variation occurred. Pairwise comparisons between length of stay groups showed that the long-term group differed significantly from both the established and recent groups (with values for the latter two almost identical<sup>2</sup>). For example, a higher mean in the long-term group indicates less support for the autonomous notion towards children's ML ( $\bar{x}=1.7$ ) compared with a lower mean ( $\bar{x}=1.45$ ) among the recent group. This finding indicates a need among people with a shorter length of residence to uphold NS-like standards in children's ML, which may be a reflection of ongoing commitment to NS norms or expectations. Those who have been in New Zealand for more than 15 years find this notion less important, even though this group, with a longer migration history and experience of changing ML patterns of use, might feel a growing need for cultural and linguistic continuity in the next generation. The apparent lessening expectations of children's ML over time may be a reflection of the challenges, barriers and practical difficulties experienced in maintaining children's ML at all, let alone at a level similar to that

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<sup>2</sup> Therefore only the values for the recent group are referred to in this section.

in the source country. In this sense, their pragmatic orientation to children's ML appears to be a response to lacking affordances.

Three between-group differences were found on pragmatic indicator variables, "no need for perfect ML in New Zealand", "relaxed about switching" and "it is ok to use ML in a different style". Table 36 shows that the recent group was consistently less in agreement with these three propositions. Differences relating to linguistic behaviours such as code switching and non-NS style were highly significant. In the longer term code switching became much more acceptable as did style variations. The recent group also showed least agreement with the more general view that ML does not have to be perfect in the New Zealand context, though the above average mean for the long-term group reflects at least uncertainty or non-committal in this respect. These patterns suggest that both lessening autonomous notions and increasing pragmatism towards the way ML is used in the host context are associated with longer-term residence, whereas at least in the first 5 years the reverse seems to apply.

Table 36  
Variation in Responses to Pragmatic Indicator Variable by Length of Stay

	"No need for perfect ML in New Zealand"		"Relaxed about switching into English"		"It is ok to use ML in a different style in NZ"	
	Long-term	* Recent	Long-term	* Recent	Long-term	* Recent
Mann-Whitney U	6280.500		5530.000		4658.000	
Z	-2.366		-3.500		-3.869	
Asymp. Sig (2-tailed)	.018		.000		.000	
N	133	111	132	107	121	106
Mean	1.68	1.83	1.30	1.61	1.68	2.03
SE	.065	.072	.052	0.73	.065	.064

None of the groups appeared to be concerned about “disappointing other ML speakers”, the only variable on which residential groups were not at variance and where all clearly disagreed with the notion (recent  $\bar{x}$  = 2.03, n=106; established  $\bar{x}$  = 2.34, n=89; long-term  $\bar{x}$  = 2.24, n=122).

#### 5.4.8 Perception of changes to ML proficiency

In migration and language contact situations functional and structural changes of language may be accelerated and more tangible to people. Where people in this sample had experienced or observed changes in ML use, their sentiments towards these changes were expected to provide an insight into their normative orientations. Figure 49 shows that while there was concern among nearly a third of the sample (32.4%), almost half of the respondents reported no concern (48.5%). Only a very small number had no clear stance (2.7% collapsed into the missing group).

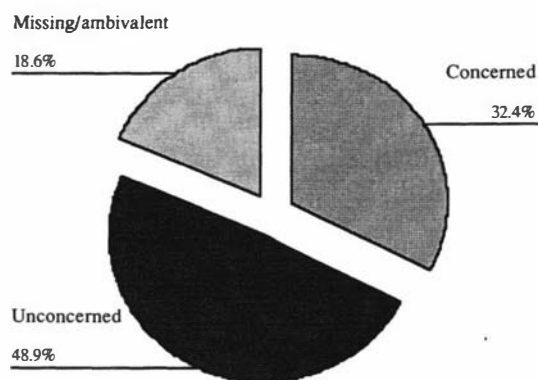


Figure 49. View of Perceived Change(s) in ML N=370

150 respondents provided reasons or explanations for the concerns they had (Table 37), only some of which appeared to be motivated by normative (autonomous) considerations. Approximately half of the reasons were associated with an ideal NS-norm orientations (47%), where people felt that changes to the structure and use of ML and reduced ability across the four skills were a deviation from the acceptable standard. This group of people also feared that the ability to model ML for the purposes of intergenerational transmission of ML had deteriorated. This response suggests an autonomous orientation based on the belief that changing linguistic repertoire reflects a lack of command which, in turn, does not represent a good model for children. The second category of reasons reflected concerns about having a reduced command of ML in an English dominant context which affected the personal and symbolic function of ML. Thus, the fear of losing touch with ML because of a reduced “feel for the language” was not so much a concern because it might contravene any rules or norms.

Table 37

Reasons for Concerns about Perceived Changes to ML (N=150)

Specific reasons given to explain concerns	Frequency	Percentage	Outcomes
Threat to ML standard	32		
Fear of loosing mastery of all four skills	19		A. Non-compliance with
Bad model for children	10	47%	NS-norms
Fear of embarrassment	9		
Fear of loosing 'feel' for and sense of self through ML	35		
Fear of increasing English dominance	23		B. Weakening personal
Cultural identity loss through reduced ML mastery	8	47%	and symbolic
Fear of being different (from ML speakers)	5		function of ML
Other	9	6%	C. Other
Total	150		

Instead, a lack of linguistic intuition and diminished mastery was associated with losing the ability to identify with the culture and express a sense of self. Reasons given in the *other* category included the general concern about a cultural and educational environment perceived to have little to offer to address the primary concern of keeping ML alive. While category (A) and category (B) in Table 36 represent outcomes based on an autonomous view, they reveal contrasting underlying reasons for being autonomous, with only category (A) pertaining to norms.

The range of reasons why respondents are not concerned about changes to their ML (Table 38) are indicative of a pragmatic orientation towards ML use and proficiency. Not only do these reasons show people's awareness and tolerance of the processes of linguistic change and typical bilingual behaviours such as mixing codes (A), but they also illustrate flexibility in a

Table 38

Reasons for Not Being Concerned About Perceived ML Changes (N=169)

Types of reasons given to explain non-concerns	Frequency	Percentage	Outcomes
Language change/shift is natural and inevitable (even in NS context).	55		A. Recognition of dynamic bilingual processes.
Mixing is normal for bilinguals.	4		
Language is 'recoverable' through personal language maintenance effort, including visits to the country of origin.	48	63%	
Needs and norms differ for ML in NZ.	42	25%	B. Acceptance of context-specific norms.
English is lingua franca (can replace ML)	9		C. Acceptance of non-ML media for communicative and symbolic function.
Culture/identity can be expressed through non-linguistic means.	1	6%	
Other	10	6%	D. Other
Total	169	100%	

linguistically and culturally dynamic situation with its own emerging needs and norms (B). Nearly half of the respondents in this group trusted in their own ability to maintain or retrieve ML, reducing a sense of threat through weakening ML proficiency. A small number of people did not rely on ML for communicative or symbolic function of ML (C). The fact that only one single person took comfort in the belief that cultural identity does not depend on language suggests that linguistic self-projection through ML does indeed play an important role – as reflected in the (B) group of reasons in Table 37.

The analysis of the presence or absence as well as type of concerns about changes in ML structure and use in the New Zealand context suggests a rationalisation continuum ranging between autonomous and pragmatic orientations towards ML proficiency. Whether someone is concerned or not also appears to be strongly associated with the number of observed changes (chi square =28.161,  $p=.000$ , 6df,  $N=301$ ). This finding suggests that concern about ML proficiency is a function of the perceived intensity of ML change.

Interestingly, whether people are concerned about ML changes or not is not necessarily reflected in their AutPrag orientation. Those who express concern measure similarly in terms of their AutPrag orientation as reflected in very similar means on the total measures (Table 39). However, the higher mean on the autonomous measure indicates that those who are not concerned show a slight tendency to disagree with being prescriptive. At least some of the variation in the AutPrag orientations can be explained by the fact that people are concerned, as shown by the small effect size of eta ( $\eta^2=.05$ ).

Table 39 Comparison of ML Orientations by Level of Concern about Perceived ML Changes

View of perceived change(s)	AUTALLT	PRAGALLT
Concerned	9.8417	9.5417
Not concerned	10.7624	9.2762

## 5.5 IDENTIFICATION AND SELF-CONCEPT

The findings in this section refer to the self-identification via the use of labels, indicating how people describe themselves in relation to others (group belonging) or how they want to be seen by others. The label acts as a marker of membership of a cultural, ethnic or national group which may or may not include the language dimension. Data are also analysed to reveal the role of language at a deeper level of self-conceptualization.

### 5.5.1 Group or personal identification

In order to determine participants' preferences for identification through descriptive means of labelling, they were presented with four categories made up of two single-label options and 2 hyphenated options with one open category and one pre-determined New Zealander label each (Table 40). Table 40 shows that options including open categories were given preference to the single labels. The most preferred choice was a combination with the open category in first position indicating that many respondents do want to signal their affinity with the host society or nationality without however letting it override

Table 40  
Frequency Of Self-Identification Labels

Identity category	Frequency	Percent
Open category & New Zealander	147	39.7
Open category	139	37.6
New Zealander & open category	52	14.1
New Zealander	26	7.0
Missing	6	1.6
TOTAL	370	100.0

their original cultural, ethnic or national identification. This result and the fact the least preferred option was the single *New Zealander* label (less than 10%) reflects the respondents' inclination for integration rather than assimilation by way of signaling dual rather than single identity states. What these simple frequencies indicate is a clear preference for (a) dual identification, (b) inclusion of self-named identity and (c) priority position for the self-named identity.

The majority of choices made in the open categories included national, cultural or ethnic identity markers although a small number of people also chose to identify themselves by immigration status such as refugee, permanent resident or naturalized. A small number also referred to themselves in more general terms, e.g. as a *person* or *world citizen* (see Appendix P), which could be the reflection of a certain unwillingness to be identified with specific groups at all.

The respondents' length of stay in New Zealand was the only variable where significant differences were found in relation to the preferred identity labels ( $p=.001$ , chi square =21.498,

df=6, N=340). The crosstabulations in Table 41 show some interesting patterns which suggest that: (a) recent arrivals tend to prefer the open categorization, (b) the preference for the open category decreases with length of stay, (c) the preference to identify as New Zealander first increases with length of stay and (d) the preference for a dual label with the open category in first position remains fairly stable over time while (e) the preference for the single New Zealander label declines in the long-term.

Table 41  
Preferred Self-Identification Labels by Length of Stay

	Length of stay							
	Recent		Established		Long-term		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Open category	55	50.0	38	40.4	41	30.1	134	39.4
New Zealander	4	3.6	10	10.6	9	6.6	23	6.8
Open & New Zealander	44	40.0	37	39.4	57	41.9	138	40.6
New Zealand & open	7	6.4	9	9.6	29	21.3	45	13.2
Total	110	100.0	94	100.0	136	100.0	340	100.0

### 5.5.2 The role of ML in relation to self-concept

In contrast to group or personal identification that can be described via labels, self-conceptualization as a process requires a more detailed investigation of its complexities, in particular in terms of its assumed relationship with ML. A series of four items was devised each of which allowed for a choice of ML or English or both in order to examine the role of

language for the respondents' self-conceptualization. Each item represented possible dimensions of self-concept. Table 42 presents a frequency count of the number of times either ML or English were chosen in total, that is across the four variables. It illustrates how often people chose either language up to a maximum of four counts as their preferred code for the four self-concept indicator variables.

Table 42  
Preferred Language Choice Counts For Self-Concept Variables

Counts of language choices	English %	ML %
0	31.1	11.1
1	17.6	10.8
2	13.5	12.7
3	10.3	25.7
4	27.6	39.7
Total	100.0	100.0

The proportion of those indicating a preference for a specific code more than once increased for ML, while it decreased for English, although significant differences in the number of tokens were only found when choices were compared by ethnic group and only in the number of tokens for ML (chi square=15.722, df=8, p=.046, N=357), as visualized in Figure 50 (see Figure 51 for comparison).

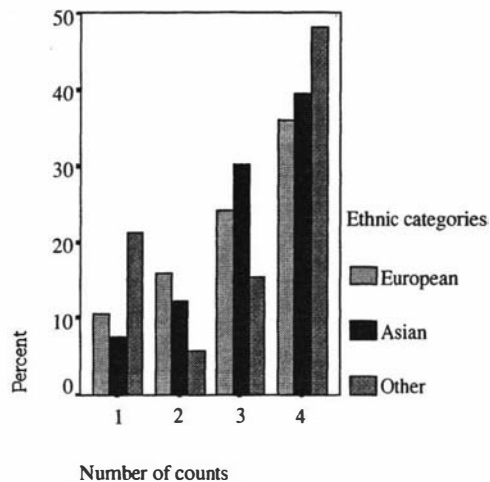


Figure 50. Tokens of ML-Related Self-Concept Choices by Ethnic Category

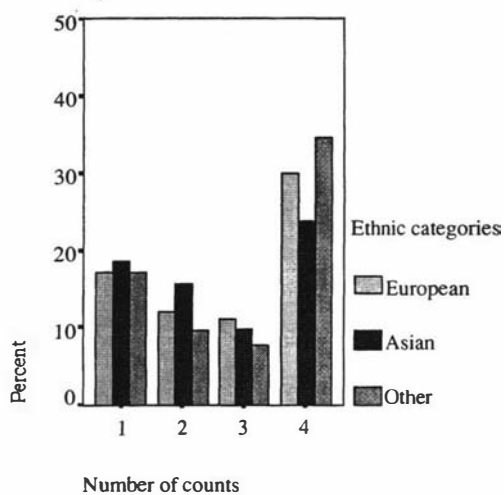


Figure 51. Tokens of English-Related Self-Concept by Ethnic Category

#### 5.5.2.1 Self-concept dimensions

The four self-concept items were grouped into two categories:

- Confidence and spontaneity (~ self-esteem) – one item each for both ML and English
- Being ‘oneself’ and expression of one’s feelings – one item each for both ML and English

Frequency counts expressing preference for ML, English or both are summarised in Figure 52. The design of this item avoided forced choices to cater for a bilingual reality where both ML and English may contribute to or complement each other in the process of self-conceptualisation. Overall, ML accounts for 40%- 47% of the preferred choices across all four dimensions, indicating a major role of ML for maintaining a linguistic self-concept. However,

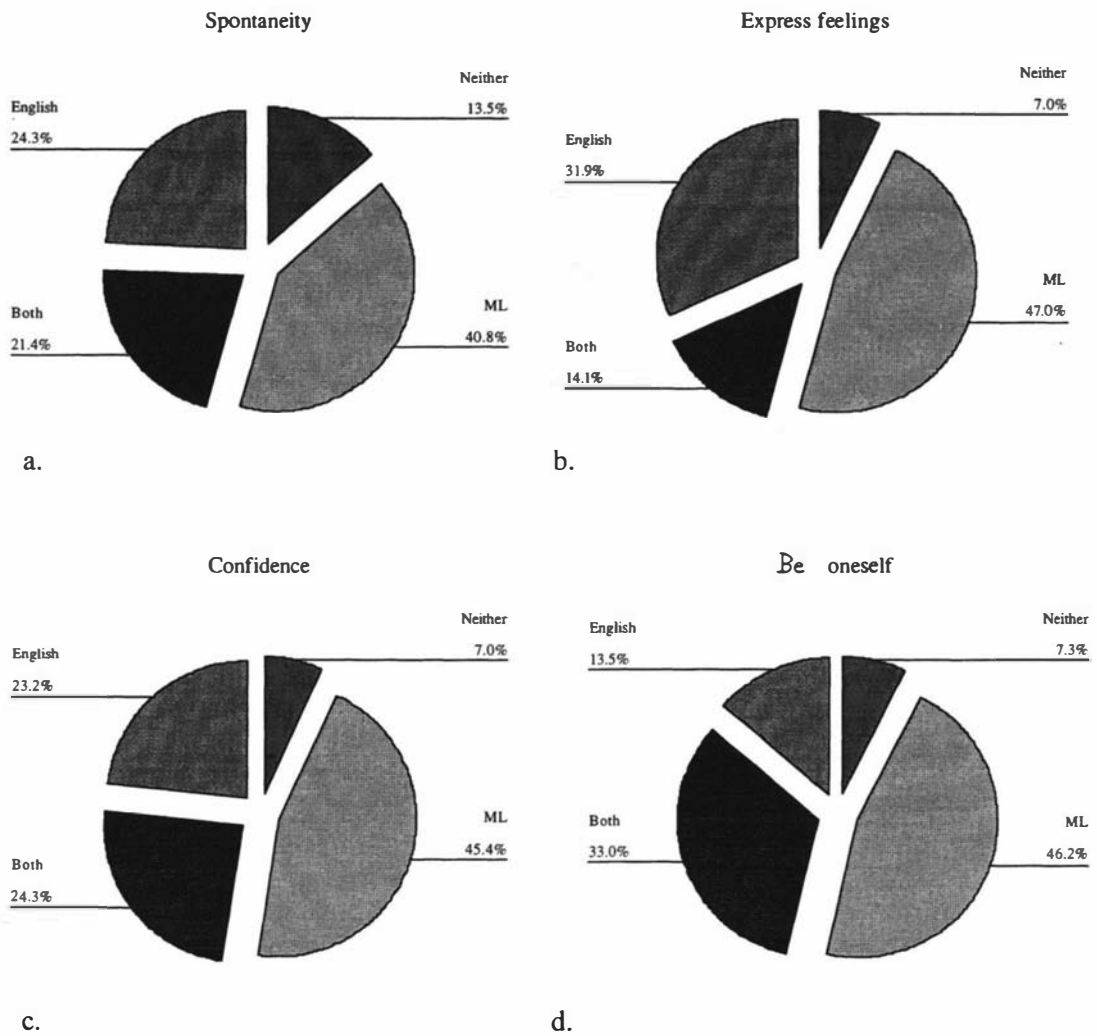


Figure 52. Manifestation of Self-Concept through Code Choices across Individual Self-Concept Dimensions (N=370)

a sizeable proportion of respondents also indicated that both languages are important for their self-conceptualisation, less so in the case of *expressing feelings* (14%) and more so for *being oneself* (33%). English was also selected by a substantial third on the former dimension, while it was least important (14%) on the latter dimension.

*Expressing feelings* and *being oneself* make an interesting comparison. ML was given the higher preference on both items (47% and 46% respectively). However, while English was the preferred choice for nearly a third of the respondents when it came to expressing their feelings, the role of English seemed much less important as the language that affords linguistic manifestation of a sense of self (13.5%). It is not surprising that the communication of one's inner feelings may be effective in the language one is more fluent in and if that happens to be English it may share functional equality with ML. In contrast, the sensation of *being oneself* may be more associated with an emotional bond with ML and its ethnocultural associations. Hence, among the four dimensions linguistic self-manifestation represented by *be oneself* constitutes perhaps the most explicit SC measure and the strong support for ML as well as 'both' languages suggests the possibility of an emerging 'bilingual self'.

#### 5.5.2.2 *Self-concept in relation to length of stay*

The sum of values for each self-concept dimension was computed to obtain a single measure for each item, which was then examined in terms of the potential impact of *length of stay*. A clear pattern is apparent across the four self-concept variables by length of stay (Figure 53 a-d). Respondents who have been in New Zealand less than five years show the strongest preference for ML as self-concept conduit. For example, 70% of the *recent* group selected ML as the language through which they express their feelings better and 63% thought that one's

self is realized better through ML. In contrast, English is favoured by people who have been in New Zealand the longest. As length of stay increases, so does the role of English for self-conceptualisation as the number of long-term stayers who choose English across the four SC dimensions almost doubles or even triples (*express feelings*). This pattern is complemented by a similar rising trend for “both” choices, which outnumber the English and ML only options

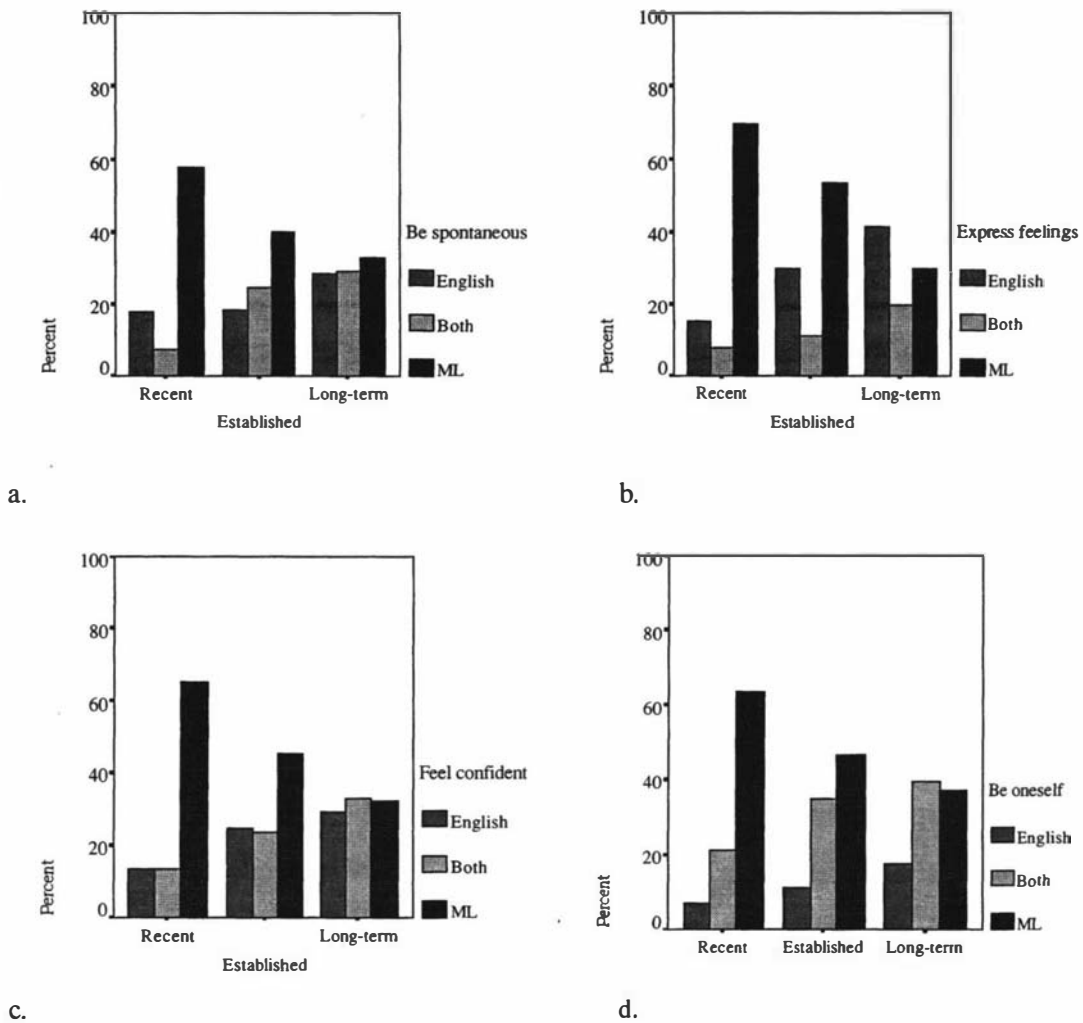


Figure 53. Manifestation of Self-Concept Variables through Code Choice by Length of Stay (N=346)

on *confidence* and *be oneself* in the long term. This result seems to suggest an emerging bilingual self-concept.

The shift in self- conceptualization through linguistic means over time is most obvious in two SC dimensions in particular. *Expressing feelings* appears to become less associated with ML in the long-term group as the preference for English (42%) actually overtakes the choice of ML (30%). However, the reverse is true for *be oneself* where ML remains the preferred choice even in the long-term group (37% ML, 18% English), although this proportion has almost halved from 65% in the recent group. How much these preferences are associated with the respondents' ML proficiency is explored in the next section. The differences according to length of stay significant across all four variables (*be spontaneous*  $p=.011$ , *express feelings*  $p=.000$ , *feel confident*  $p=.000$  and *be oneself*  $p=.001$ , 2df).

### 5.5.2.3 Self-concept dimensions and ML proficiency

It stands to reason that self-conceptualisation through linguistic means is influenced at least to some extent by ML proficiency, particularly where the SC dimensions used in this study include communicative aspects (e.g. *express feelings* as opposed to *be oneself*). The strength of association between proficiency and the four self-concept dimensions was investigated through the calculation of eta square values which indicate the degree of difference between mean proficiency levels by SC dimension as the grouping factor (Table 43). The strongest association was found for *be oneself* which accounts for 17% ( $\eta^2=.17$ ) of the mean proficiency variability. *Feeling confident* and *express feelings* share the same moderate effect size of  $\eta^2=.09$ , while *be spontaneous* accounted for only 3% ( $\eta^2=.03$ ) of varying ML proficiency.

Although the majority of the SC dimensions used here help explain only relatively small proportions of mean proficiency, the one dimension which refers to linguistic manifestation of the self most directly (*be oneself*) suggests an association between ML proficiency and preference of linguistic self projection through ML. It is entirely possible too then that this preference plays a role in maintaining proficiency.

Table 43  
Mean ML Proficiency by Four SC Dimensions

	Be oneself		Feel confident		Express feelings		Be spontaneous	
Mann-Whitney	.000		.000		.000		.004	
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)								
Eta (eta squared)	.41 (.17)		.31 (.09)		.30 (.09)		.18 (.03)	
Preferred language	English	ML	English	ML	English	ML	English	ML
N	47	160	81	157	112	161	85	141
Mean	2.31	1.50	1.94	1.50	1.88	1.41	1.78	1.47
Std. Error of Mean	.16	.05	.11	.05	.09	.05	.98	.06

In summary, the role of ML for linguistic self-conceptualisation is mediated by *length of stay*. While ML preference in general reduces over length of time, it is the language that affords a sense of self for the majority of people, even in the long-term.

#### 5.5.2.4 *Self-concept and identity: two corresponding processes?*

Crosstabulations between the chosen labels for described identity (see 5.5.1) and the four self-concept dimensions revealed no significant differences between groups. Neither were any significant correlations found between identity label choices and the number of times either

English or ML were chosen as the preferred self-concept code. However, frequency distributions reveal an interesting pattern in that ML continuously represents the preferred code for self-conceptualization across the four identification labels, as exemplified in the case of *be oneself* shown in Table 44.

Table 44

Code Preferences for Self-Concept Dimension (Be Oneself) by Preferred Self-Identification Labels (N=338)

Preferred label	Code preferences			Total
	% ML	% English	% Both	
Open category & New Zealander	46.8	18.0	35.3	100
Open category	49.2	13.5	37.3	100
New Zealander & open category	64.6	10.4	25.0	100
New Zealander	44.0	12.0	44.0	100

Even among those identifying as *New Zealanders*, an identification label taken to show a strong commitment to the host country, the proportion of people who feel they can 'be' themselves through ML remains strong (44%). In contrast, the proportion of those who prefer English for this dimension actually decreases. If identification as a *New Zealander*, including the dual label with *New Zealander* in a primary position, signifies commitment, e.g. by becoming a citizen and presumably the desire for integration and belonging it is expected to manifest itself in linguistic identification with English. This is certainly not happening at the self-concept level and the relevant code preferences. In fact, among the group which prefers the dual identification label (*New Zealander/open*) the proportion of those preferring ML as self-concept code jumps to 64.6%, while among those favouring the single *New Zealander*

label the proportion of people who prefer both English and ML for self-conceptualization equals that of those preferring ML only (44%). This paints a picture of an increasing role of ML for self-conceptualization at the same time as identification with an English-dominant host society appears to take over from the original identity, at least in terms of one's ethno-cultural or national identification. Language as self-concept component, however, seems to go in the opposite direction.

## **5.6 SUMMARY OF RESULTS**

### **5.6.1 Relevance**

This analysis identified high relevance of ML for all uses and functions, but especially for those involving everyday communication functions. A range of 'other' relevant functions were identified by participants themselves, which indicates a complex functional role of ML beyond everyday communication needs. Factors affecting ML relevance include:

1. age (especially reading and writing functions),
2. length of stay (increasing relevance of religious and writing function with longer stay),
3. ML family (associated with differences in the relevance of reading and writing, religious and cultural use,
4. ethnic category (formal writing among ethnic subgroups),
5. educational background (reading books and newspapers is more relevant among the non-tertiary group).

### 5.6.2 Reported ML proficiency

Overall the participants in this study perceived their ML proficiency to be very high. Their reported proficiency was found to be affected by ethnolinguistic background and age but length of stay was not associated with differences in mean proficiency. The level of multilingualism (i.e. number of ML reported by an individual) appears to have a positive impact on how respondents rate their oral proficiency in the ML reported on in the study. This may be indicative of an enhanced bi/multilingual self-concept.

Positive or negative assessment of ML proficiency in comparison to other ML speakers provided an insight into the participants' expectations of functional use and norm-orientation. Negative comparative proficiency was mainly rationalized through loss of functional use and lack of formal ML study resulting in growing distance from NS norms and standards. No significant correlation between relevant functions and overall proficiency level was found.

### 5.6.3 Notions of ML proficiency

All 15 dimensions (covering technical, personal, productive and pragmatic aspects of ML proficiency) were regarded as important, though *creativity*, *grammar knowledge* and *style variation* were ranked lower than others. Factors affecting the evaluation of what constitutes ML proficiency were age, ethnicity, and ML family. The importance of the writing dimensions varied according to reported ML proficiency. Length of stay did not affect the way people thought about the proficiency dimensions. This indicates that the conceptualization of the notion of ML proficiency is of a general and enduring nature, irrespective of relevance, perceived proficiency or education.

#### **5.6.4 Orientations to ML proficiency: autonomous vs pragmatic**

There is no clear evidence for an overall orientation towards either the autonomous or the pragmatic end of the spectrum. On the individual indicator variables, however, responses were found to show clear patterns. Typical bilingual phenomena such as code mixing and code switching as well as different usage in the New Zealand context are associated with pragmatic views. In contrast, participants are clearly prescriptive when it comes to the need for reading and writing skills in ML, up-to-date vocabulary and upholding of an NS-like standard. Pragmatic notions of ML proficiency are more likely to be differentiated according to age and length of stay, which implies they are more affected by time. Increasing length of stay was associated with a less autonomous approach, and by implication, the development of pragmatic views. Autonomous notions, in contrast, varied by ethnic and linguistic background, suggesting that prescriptive thinking is more prone to the influence of cultural and ethnolinguistic patterns. In other words, it appears that AutPrag orientations are affected by contextual factors borne out of the respondents' sociolinguistic ecology.

Where ML changes were perceived or observed, a third of the sample conceptualized their concerns based on the belief that (a) change is a precursor for lack of command which will also negatively affect transmission of ML to the next generation and (b) changes will lessen the personal and symbolic functions of ML.

Higher ML proficiency and vocational/trade qualifications were the two factors found to be associated with a higher probability of being autonomous. People who perceive themselves to have a better grasp of their ML may simply be more prescriptive because they are more likely to comply with NS-like norms; but it is also possible that their stricter norm orientation has led

them to maintain higher ML proficiency. In other words, the direction of the association is not entirely clear. Why having a vocational/trade based education should increase the probability of being autonomous, albeit in a negligible way, is also not clear, unless people in this group are generally more conservative than their tertiary qualified counterparts.

#### **5.6.5 Role of ML for Self-Conceptualisation**

ML is an important medium for linguistic self-conceptualisation. Despite English making inroads on all four SC dimensions over time, ML remains of almost equal importance for engendering a feeling of spontaneity and confidence. However, as preference for ML or English as a mechanism for self-representation is mediated by ML proficiency, it determines the very ability to be spontaneous and confident. Most importantly, a sense of self is gained more through ML than English, even in the longer term, affording some level of 'stability in the face of change'. This phenomenon is also reflected in the continuation of ML as the preferred code across the four self-concept dimensions, even among respondents who self-identify more strongly with their English-speaking host society via the relevant labels. Thus, while self-identification and self-conceptualization were not statistically established as corresponding processes, they do appear to serve different but complementary purposes.

To the extent that a descriptive label tends to signal national, cultural or ethnic membership it encompasses the relevant criteria associated with that group, including language. A *New Zealander* label, by implication, is likely to reflect identification with and through the English language. This does not, however, take away from ML's continued function as a mechanism for self-projection, either by itself or in bilingual mode complemented by English. It cannot be said with certainty, however, whether preference for ML plays a role in maintaining ML

proficiency or whether higher proficiency affects the preference of ML for linguistic self - projection.



If I have to speak only English the rest of my life I can 't live, I can't.

(Focus group respondent)

The way we see ourselves encompasses the language(s) we speak. In this sense, the process of self-conceptualisation may not operate separately from speakers' notions of proficiency, unless one's bilingual or multilingual self-image is purely based on 'number of languages spoken' which in itself is a vague proposition. This chapter presents data that may help shed light on respondents' notions of what constitutes MLP, their normative orientations and the role their languages play in a context characterized by language contact and changing ML uses and needs. The analysis of these data expands on the quantitative data presented in Chapter 5. It is based on qualitative data derived from both focus group discussions prior to the survey as well as the main survey instrument.

## **6.1 PRE-SURVEY FOCUS GROUP DATA**

The purpose of this section is to highlight responses that indicate salient ideas or issues relevant to the concepts under study; these were identified prior to surveying a larger sample. The data are presented together with the name of the participant's language, plus the number of the relevant focus group. Where applicable, group participants with identical languages are distinguished by number, for example: Kannada 2 / G4.

### **6.1.1 Notions of proficiency**

The focus groups generated a wide range of thoughts about what it means to be proficient in ML or not. Some key ideas are listed in Table 45; these relate to four aspects:

- continuity of skills (1);
- the association between proficiency and use in the local context (2);
- intuition (3) and creativity (4) vs. mechanical use (5) ;
- linguistic purity (6).

In addition to these general reflections participants offered more detailed thoughts pertaining to the following four areas: linguistic, normative, socio-cultural and psychological.

Table 45

## What It Means To Be Proficient - Or Not

- 
1. You have to still understand it, for example when you hear or read something 16 years later.  
Dutch / G3
  2. You are proficient at the level that you actually use that language in ordinary life.  
German / G2
  3. Intuition [eg ability to understand, negotiate meaning even if meaning of a word forgotten] use thingie. I find you don't lose that.  
Filipino/G3
  4. Using language in a witty way [e.g. like in 'Yes Minister'] where they use the English language to the optimum, and then I feel hey if I knew Telugu that way I would have been able to speak that way too, that's the only time I really regret because it's then that I feel, hey I should know it, but I don't! And that is something lost.  
Telugu / G1
- Not proficient**
5. If you have to translate rather than speak.  
Filipino / G3
  6. When the pure language, the purity of it has been lost. [It is] still spoken by a sect of people back home but is not generally used, but ah in public meetings or speaking you would get it.  
Telugu / G1
- 

### 6.1.2 Linguistic skills

There was no clear pattern of favouring a monolithic view of proficiency involving the mastery of all four language skills. In fact, one person suggested that even without abilities across all skills one should still be regarded as proficient:

It's probably nice to have it [reading and writing] because it's an advantage [but where people are not able to read and write] it would be awful to tell them you're not proficient – then they'd have no language left. (German / G3)

The above statement does not appear to be motivated by any normative considerations as to what a proficient person *should* know. If anything, it is more reminiscent of a pragmatic assessment that having some language is better than having none. Another respondent emphasized the mutual dependence of discrete skills, an insight based on the person's own experience rather than a prescriptive view:

If I wasn't proficient in my speaking I would never ever be able to do writing and reading. (Dutch / G3)

ML as a spoken medium was generally regarded as a minimum skill to have, especially and not surprisingly for the purposes of communicating with relatives at home.

If I go there and I cannot speak it that means I cannot communicate. [When grandchildren go back to visit] they just sit around doing nothing and don't know, you know, what to do and the oldies can't actually talk to them. They should at least talk to them. (Gujarati / Pilot)

If they cannot do that, this respondent feared, there would be a “gap” because without communication the opportunities for social and cultural contact and renewal will be reduced.

Proficiency in ML is also clearly tied to ML use in the local context, which applies particularly to writing because oral communication typically takes precedence in ML contexts. As a result proficient writing skills become less relevant in these host societies where written communication tends to be in the dominant language.

It depends where it is, isn't it if you say that a person is proficient in the language. I should imagine in your own country, certainly, you have to be able to read and write. [...] my son, his writing might not be proficient enough but he's certainly proficient enough to communicate here. (German / G 2)

Respondents had varying perceptions on whether proficiency required the ability to write in ML. For example, writing was either seen as “definitely needed for 'experts'” or “not necessary” at all. The former answer seems to indicate a gradation into experts and non-experts, both of whom could presumably be proficient in their own way. The latter view was illustrated with the example of the respondent's illiterate grandfather who wrote books with the help of others. Non-experts are likely to encounter certain limitations however, as the following response illustrates:

If he can't read and write, only can speak fluently and perfectly, he still has a limit of knowledge because he can just get information from people, not a book. [e.g. about history, special or current issues, etc]. (Korean / G1)

Views of proficiency in ML skills often encompass reflections on functional use. One respondent who claimed to be able to read typed Gujarati had problems with the handwritten script. Only since coming to New Zealand did this person realize her special personal desire for the written language, because she decided to learn to sing and dance and therefore needed to be able to understand the songs which are all written in Gujarati. This particular example also highlights the linkage between cultural maintenance and ML use.

It's so important, I must learn. It's really made me realize how important it is for me now to go and learn how to read and write and I've started on my own. (Gujarati / Pilot)

The same person also commented on the difficulty of using the written language due to the lack of people in New Zealand who can read and write it. This situation particularly affects languages with complex scripts as one respondent observed for Tamil. He concluded that writing skills in such a language might be regarded as “ok for New Zealand” but not for the home country (G 1), where formal study was available and expectations were high.

The functional dimension of ML proficiency was again highlighted in the expressed need to use it for communication. This was illustrated in the following exchange between a speaker of Sinhalese (SL) and Kannada (K).

SL: When you read and write and communicate you are proficient - the language itself.

K [disagrees]: There's more to language than grammar, it's the essence of language.

SL: [ Argues that reading, writing, and grammar is all you need to be proficient]

K: I think there is something that's intangible that's there as well, like - it's like it's an abstract that's there in the language that you can only capture once you go on using and living that language.

(G 4)

Whether it is structural knowledge (grammar) as favoured by SL or the less tangible ‘abstract’ dimension of proficiency K mentions, both aspects depend on actual functional use according to the two respondents. This brief exchange reflects a multi-layered notion of MLP, which encompasses functional, structural and almost spiritual qualities. Which elements make a person proficient seems to be a matter of different emphases in different socio-cultural contexts and the varying needs and uses as this respondent points out:

I would be called proficient in Sri Lanka ..., simply the emphasis is different. But here I think a lot of the things are more eh around cultural events, which probably puts a different emphasis on someone who is proficient to have in that kind of situation. [Proficiency in ML situation can be defined in different ways, it is] much less technical and what people will perceive - migrant communities - to see if someone is being proficient, is in a slightly different way. (Sinhala / G2)

### 6.1.3 Norms and expectations

Expressions of the respondents' expectations in relation to their MLP as well as those believed to be held by others are illustrated in Table 46. The Table shows samples of more or less prescriptive notions of MLP represented by the respondents in (1) and (5) respectively. The former shows a preference for linguistic purity and a variety closer to the home/NS original. Her value judgments of Telugu becoming "mutated" or, in her daughter's case, "terrible" through the influences of the ML context reveal an autonomous view of language, despite her apparent awareness of its social stratification in India. In contrast, the respondent in (5) is very accommodating of the apparent lack of respect reflected in other Thai speakers' informal speech, a linguistic behaviour totally inappropriate in the original Thai context. This much more pragmatic response may derive from the respondent's awareness and acceptance of different socio-cultural conditions in the host society. Varying local needs and uses determine the functions or domains where speakers can actually remain proficient (2).

When it comes to making normative judgments some respondents prefer to rely on an 'outside authority', presumably from the original source context as illustrated in (3) and (4) (Table 46). It appears as though being removed from the NS context and its associated norms reduces one's necessary discernment or intuition for proficiency judgment (3).

Table 46

## Reflections on norms and expectations

- 
1. [When we use ML] it should be always the pure language, because it's been mutated and the more you take on the mutated form the further you mutate it, so you need to try to keep the original, get back to the original.

[Illustrates with an example of social varieties in India, eg the language spoken by] a Riksha man or a better person - the more Sanskrit is in it it's a purer language, [it] helps classify people in India.

My younger daughter's Telugu has become terrible, it's anglicized.  
Telugu / G1

2. [On whether ML speakers in New Zealand have the same expectations of proficiency as 'back home']. Yes definitely, at least they should aim to - but you have to admit that the areas you can be proficient in are different from the home country, for example politics are not necessary here.  
Dutch / G3
  3. It's difficult to judge unless we have an outsider doing it.  
German / G2
  4. Because we are here we don't notice that.  
Urdu / G2
  5. When they [other Thai speakers] talk with me, they talk with me like they talk with their friends. [Normally she would say] Don't talk with me like that [...] but I accept because I know that this is not in Thailand so I accept the language - that style that they talk with me. [Gives example: failure to use suffix -ka for polite speech, accepts lack of it because people don't recognise here "who I am" - except for Massey students who show her respect as a former lecturer].  
Thai / G1
  6. [Her mother said her pronunciation of German sounded] 'terrible, she goes up instead of down [puts] verbs in the middle'. But some other friends were quite astonished how well I still speak, [...] it must have to do with what their expectations are.  
German / G3
- 

In summary, these responses reveal a certain belief in continuing NS authority on the one hand, but they also imply that the use of those norms in the ML context is redundant, at least where ML speakers who belong to this context are concerned.

The use of mixed language was expected to be a revealing topic as it may be an indicator for a speaker's normative outlook. Surprisingly, few respondents indicated any clear opposition to mixing, as the comments in Table 47 indicate.

Table 47

Views on code mixing

- 
1. At home you can just mix and match your languages and you can really get the meaning across.  
Dutch / G3
  2. [Discussion on whether mixed speech is a bad thing] Yes, The best part of the language is the purer you can speak it. I do that [mixing] and somehow I feel that I'm cheating on my mother tongue by not using the - there are words for that particular context that I want to use but I got so used to - my brain finding the English words quicker than can our words, but I substitute with English words.  
Kannada 1 / G4
  3. [Arabic speaker's friends in Iraq sometimes complain when he mixes and say: 'Excuse me?']. They don't worry because they understand. It's normal. It's normal, just habit, it comes.  
Arabic / G4
  4. [Several Gujarati-speaking families use a lot of] coined words and you know, slangs, which are actually originated in Fiji. [They are acceptable to the Fiji Gujarati speakers and Indians have] come to realise what they mean.  
Gujarati /Pilot
- 

Thus, respondents typically perceive code mixing to be:

- a) an acceptable practice that maximizes communication (1) and (3), at least among those who share or understand both codes or varieties (4)
- b) an automatic part of their language processing, despite the reservations of 'cheating' on ML (2).

### 6.1.3.1 *Dynamics of language contact and time*

Individuals' perceptions of their proficiencies are also conceptualized in relation to the time they have spent in the host society, away from the normative conditions or functional patterns of the source country. Experienced or anticipated changes to their ML proficiency are linked to length of stay, as this Arabic-speaking participant, in New Zealand for 2 years, points out:

I lived for more that 35 years in my country and I speak this [ML] and just came for 3 or 5 years, maybe 15 years or 20 years. Now I am the best in my language, better than any languages. I can go and live in my country as before, 'cause I have forgotten nothing, I can communicate with people, can start my job, everything I can do. But this will be worse if I live here for 15 years or 10 years. After that maybe I have to exam myself. (Arabic / G4)

After socialisation through Arabic and a large part of his adult life spent in that cultural context, this respondent appears to feel in control of his proficiency; nevertheless he is quite aware of possible changes to his proficiency in the future.

Another respondent is beginning to experience loss of contact with "the day-to-day things" after four-and-a-half years and he describes the impact of the reduced ML use on his writing. Not only does he think the mechanics of writing in the ML script are 'slipping', but the observed slowing down in his writing indicates a lack of automaticity:

I don't write so frequently in that language anymore. I just lost touch you know, like it's not as good as it used to be. I used to write essays in my school days. It's like my [?] has come down by around 80%, my writing ability has too and to fill up a page like that probably I take 45 minutes. [It takes] much longer, and more mistakes and eh it looks very bad, I can't say it. Like it's so crooked and all the letters have lost their shape. (Kannada 2 / G4)

## 6.1.4 Socio-cultural aspects

### 6.1.4.1 *Language and culture – a mutual dependency*

Linguistic and cultural aspects are conceived as inextricably linked according to the reflections on MLP listed in Table 48. Not only is cultural content needed to ‘fill’ the linguistic structure, (1) but it is also the vehicle to express cultural content (2), without which inappropriate linguistic choices (3) or cultural discontinuity may result (4).

Table 48

#### Connections Between Language Proficiency And Culture

- 
1. [Points out that a large part of the language used in conversations is of a cultural nature] very much related to our eating habits, our living habits the way we eh [...] our life philosophy, you know the way you respect your father, the way you talk to your brother, the way you talk to your sister. It's so much related with culture. In my case I would say that you can't achieve this level at all, you can't achieve this level unless you understand this culture. This is very important; unless you understand the culture this proficiency can't be achieved.  
Kannada 2 / G4
  2. [Without knowledge of culture] you cannot be fluent, because culture and language they go hand in hand [...] you cannot function fully in your language because it has all the terms of the culture.  
Fijian / G2
  3. If you don't have the cultural knowledge the language suffers. [e.g. not knowing the need to distinguish formal /informal in German].  
German / G2
  4. [Is especially concerned about the next generation]. They have lost the link, don't understand the behaviours and habits when they go back to visit with parents, even if they know the alphabet. That's why many friends send their kids back for 3 or 6 months.  
Kannada 2 / G4
- 

Although proficiency has been linked with the functional use of ML, it is the cultural dimension which facilitates the use of ML in the first place, not its communicative value alone. One respondent argued that where there is no ML-related cultural content to convey, the dominant host language tends to become the substitute medium of communication.

I think of lot of the language, it comes with you, if you tie it to culture you know, other things, the way they tend to use it there [in Fiji]. But the moment you take it as a medium of communication [in New Zealand] they tend to use English, friends are doing it ... the moment you put in a cultural situation they are, they see the other components of it and eh use it. (Fijian / G2)

The notion of language as the link with one's cultural heritage is clearly evident in the responses in Table 49. In addition to providing a bond with a person's cultural and ancestral origins (1), ML is also associated with an existential or organic quality comparable to the actions of parents or root systems (2), which also drives future endeavour (3). Even where someone has an expressed functional or "utilitarian" relationship with ML, the emotional ties or "affinity" with his original cultural background are contingent on ML (4).

Table 49

A link with cultural heritage and ancestry

- 
1. I respect my language, more than any other language, that's my forefather's language.  
Sinhala G / 4
  2. My language is my roots. It's my mother, my history, my everything.  
Arabic / G1
  3. It is my root, to identify where I come from, my - forward strive.  
Taiwanese / G 1
  4. I think I'm a bit more utilitarian when it comes to languages. To me it's just a means of communication but I know there is more to it than just that. I know if you keep your language alive then you keep your culture alive. And there's a link between us speaking the language and, and our affinity for, for the Philippines. I think without that we'd lose all our affinity and love for the Philippines – if we lost the language.  
Filipino / G3
-

#### 6.1.4.2 *A sense of membership and belonging*

Possessing ML communication skills means having more than discrete skills as they have attached to them specific social outcomes. Communication gives rise to social and cultural belonging through social interaction. Speaking ML with monolingual relatives, particularly the older generation overseas, helps maintain familial links, as this participant emphasized:

It's just one of the things I've got, one of my skills [therefore she can speak with her grandmother]. If I couldn't speak Dutch and the rest of the family did I'd feel really left out. (Dutch / G3)

ML proficiency creates linkages not only with significant others and related networks of people who share the same language but also with the wider cultural world, where ML has social and cultural currency. Where this currency has little or no value in the host society, it cannot be exchanged for cultural group membership according to this person:

I think it's more than catching up the latest nostalgia. The feeling of belongingness when you see your language and you understand, it's - it's sharing something that you're not [in New Zealand]. I guess for me it happened. Till I saw that Indian movie I didn't know what I was missing, and then it clicked 'yes - I miss that' because in India everybody would be speaking Hindi - and when you see that movie that's when you realize you missed it. (Telugu-Hindi / G4)

Although both cases quoted above highlight the important social dimension of ML, the latter example draws attention to the fact that in ML contexts, depending on demographics and patterns of ML use, exposure to speech communities or communities of practice may be limited or absent altogether.

### 6.1.5 Psychological aspects

ML plays an important role at the personal level, particularly in terms of the social-psychological function of self-identification as well as other gains ML speakers derive from the language.

#### 6.1.5.1 Multilingual identity

The migration process brings with it changes in identification, be they of a national or cultural nature, but the process involves more than changing or adding labels as the person herself changes typically resulting in dual or hybrid identities. The emergence of duality or hybridity is a dynamic process associated with changing communicative needs and thus associated directly with language.

As bilingual or multilingual people the respondents in the present study described their experiences of shifting or emerging identities with ML being constitutive of the person. Although dual identification via both languages is felt to be enriching there is also the potential for negative effects. In a discussion of the use of dual labels for identification purposes (e.g. ML *and* English related) one respondent said:

I quite like that, I' m not English [speaker] and I'm not ML [speaker], I'm now both - and isn't it neat, something to be proud of. And I was just thinking of my last visit back to Germany which was 2 years ago, I was, ehm, - yeah - I was very proud to belong to both, even though that can sometimes create a problem ehm, a cultural identity crisis - you're not a New Zealander and you're not German any more, cause you've changed.  
(German / G3)

Others may not necessarily understand this change, nor the possibility to identify as more than one person who may even get lost between the two identities. One respondent describing

herself as a Dutch Kiwi commented how in the Netherlands she is regarded as Kiwi and in NZ she is seen as a Dutch person:

They never realize that you're both. (Dutch / G3)

Being both does not necessarily mean the sum of two separate parts but rather a *hybrid* mix of the two, similar to the merging of cultures:

When you emigrate you bring a culture with you, but it's never really that because somehow there's a blending of cultures, so what you have now is a hybrid of those two cultures. [Explains that the same goes for language] so you have a hybrid in your thinking processes. (Filipino / G3)

These comments, in sum, highlight ML speakers' dual or hybrid way of relating to and conceptualizing the world around us, including how oneself features in it, via one's languages and multiple identities.

#### 6.1.5.2 *ML as part of oneself*

Beyond the identificational function of ML there is a deeper, more existential quality which respondents may not always recognize until it is under threat, as a direct consequence of changing patterns of language use or language shift.

When I came to NZ first [ML] wasn't as important as it is now. The first sort of few years, eh because I was married to a New Zealander I was very keen to get taught lessons into English, submerged into the culture, I didn't even seek, if I could have, I didn't even seek any contacts with other German people because I wanted to learn English. I wanted to be part, I wanted to belong here. But once I got over that hurdle, I'd say 5 years down the track, and we started having children it became suddenly - I realized [...] part of me wasn't there and I wanted to make it alive again. And also it was

something I wanted to pass on to my children, so it became very important then and I went into rescue mission, suddenly speaking German to my children, and all their German books and German videos and so on. Something happened, initially I denied I was here by myself and then I realized – me. I think it was a coping mechanism to learn a new language and culture. But really I couldn't, I could not exist without my language, my German language – I'd die. (German / G3)

The imperative of English fluency in New Zealand society tips the balance of functional language use away from ML, at least in the early years of settlement, as is evident through the above respondent's comments. There seems to come a point of realization, however, when ML becomes valued as a means of self-conceptualization, quite apart from its communicative value. The respondent also alludes to her time spent in the host society; five years length of stay appear to represent a kind of watershed which divides her early settling in phase from a later phase, characterized by the recognition of her ML-associated needs. For this person, these needs are also related to her children's identity, and they are to do with the preservation of her ML-related self ("part of me wasn't there"). ML is associated with a sense of connection and continuity, which also extends to the next generation, as another German-background respondent said:

It's not just communication it's part of you being you, isn't it, keeping your own language for yourself and your children eventually. Even if I never spoke German again I'd still feel it is mine, I can read it and whenever I talk it I'm pleased to talk it - because it's part of me. (German / G2)

This fundamental self-confirming role of ML was expressed very poetically by a Fijian participant:

I call it my window, my road, it's my door, it's my life. Without it I have no identity. It's how I see the world, you know, I cannot be in this world unless I have that. (Fijian / G2)

Thus, to the extent that ML affords a person a sense of self it helps shape one's perception (window), gives future direction (road) and grants access (door) to one's socio-cultural environment.

In view of the crucial importance of ML for a person's sense of self the impact of any threat to it can be profound. This can, for example, involve a change to the person's self:

If you take that language away I don't think I'll be like the way I am now.  
(Kannada 1 / G4)

The belief that ML is associated with the continuity of one's being was repeated by other participants, who linked their languages to the continuation of their existence. One participant expressed this sentiment as follows:

It's my life - all my life, because [it is] my mother tongue. If I have to speak only English in the rest of my life I can't live, I can't. (Korean / G1)

#### *6.1.5.3 Emotional wellbeing*

The perception of ML having a life-sustaining capacity is complemented by a life-enhancing quality it appears to afford to its users. For example, Arabic-speaking A's thoughts in the exchange with the group facilitator (U) suggest that the "feeling of happiness" is derived from a sense of confidence, which may go beyond linguistic confidence in ML relative to his weaker language, English. ML is more than a means to communicate more effectively; it is clearly associated with a different feeling. This illustrates the important role ML has for this speaker's emotional wellbeing.

- A: You can find some person in their language and he is very well and he's very happy and he's very active but when he is sitting with a foreigner with the English language he is very quiet. I find some things like that in our groups. They are very good talking [in ML] or they are even a funny guy.
- U: It sounds like that person is almost like a different person.
- A: Yes, because his - his feeling is different.
- U: Do they feel different when they speak their language at home?
- A: Absolutely, absolutely. (Arabic / G4)

One feeling that is clearly associated with ML is happiness described in detail by another respondent. Her determined effort to use Telugu whenever an opportunity presents itself is rewarded with a sense of security and pleasure, despite certain linguistic difficulties:

Basically I never thought I'd miss it, you know, until I came here. [When watching a video in Telugu she noticed that] I really missed listening to the language [...] it gave me a lot of happiness, I felt very much at home. [She even enjoyed things she doesn't usually care for, e.g. the dusty environment. She's always spoken English to her mother, sisters, and husband.] But I'm here now and the first time I get a call I talk in Telugu. I'm so so wanting to establish, or reestablish the language. I might be rusty, I don't care. I am mumbling or whatever or using whatever words I can and filling in English words if I forget but I'm talking in Telugu. [...] That's what I've been doing [...] cause it's the only time I get an opportunity possibly to try to talk to someone who knows the language. The moment they say they are Tamil or Telugu, zingo, I zip into the language. It takes me about 5 minutes because I'm rusty, my words get stuck in my mouth, I can't speak as fluently, but after 5 to 6 minutes I go on happily. I'm very pleased with that. It means I haven't forgotten. Probably, I haven't really since you now ask I never realized why I'm happy or why I'm doing it, there's probably an unconscious reason or an unconscious something that wants me to reestablish links. [She describes herself as rusty in all her Indian languages]. But I always plod on. (Telugu / G1)

The thoughts revealed in this respondent's comments integrate a number interesting of aspects. The sense of joy Telugu gives her lends further credence to the role ML has for its speakers' emotional wellbeing. This is perhaps why there is such a strong desire for 're-

establishing' what she now realizes she is missing out on. Interestingly, these thoughts are in direct contrast to her earlier explicit statement on the need to use "pure" language (Table 45) as her insistence on purity of ML in New Zealand bears no resemblance to her comments above, which describe her as taking every opportunity to use Telugu, albeit in an admittedly blundering manner. The willingness to forgo linguistic purity for the chance to use Telugu speaks for the depth of her "unconscious reason" for doing so. This very revealing contradiction is also reflected in the judgment of her daughter's anglicized Telugu (Table 45), which contrasts with the mother's own linguistic practice of mixing. This particular example underscores the fact that the ideal autonomous expectations held by a person may not necessarily reconcile with actual linguistic practices, as defined by pragmatic considerations of the real needs and uses in the local context.

#### **6.1.6 Focus group data: summary of key aspects**

The focus group reflections on MLP presented in this section provide a tentative picture of a multi-layered MLP concept, associated with tangible and non-tangible, static and dynamic and personal and social dimensions. The focus group data clearly show not only a wide range of salient issues but also emerging patterns which warranted further study. The apparent distinction between *autonomous* and *pragmatic* views and a respective discrepancy between theory and linguistic practice gave rise to questions which were investigated further on the basis of the survey data.

To summarize, focus group participants associated MLP with a range of dimensions across several broad categories (Figure 54):

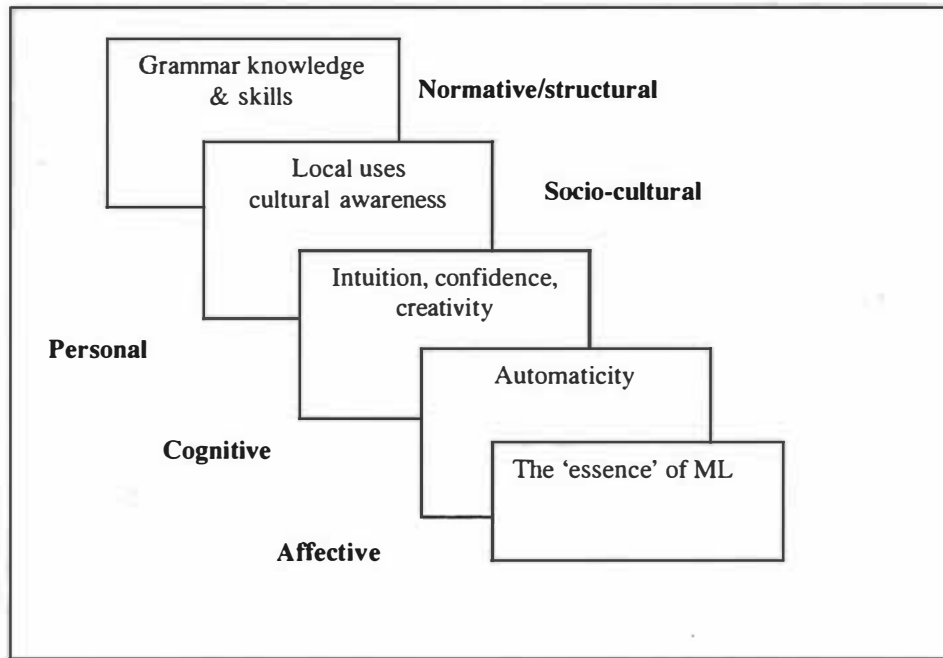


Figure 54. Dimensions of ML Proficiency (MLP)

## 6.2 QUALITATIVE DATA FROM POSTAL SURVEY

This chapter will deal selectively with two major sets of data, one relating to the respondents' orientations towards children's ML proficiency, the other focusing on aspects of self-concept and identification through ML. The open-ended questionnaire items also generated data on other relevant aspects but not directly related to the research questions. These data were categorized according to a list of codes and processed with the HyperResearch software programme. They are not dealt with in detail here; the list of all codes used in this research can be found in Appendix S.

### 6.2.1 Orientations to ML proficiency: the next generation

This section presents the respondents' orientations towards their children's ML. Their views of the next generation's MLP are of particular interest here as a manifestation of their own projected norms and expectations for the future. Respondents who felt that ML was important for their children (93%, N=353) were asked whether they should have 'the same knowledge as children in the home country'. Half of the respondents (51%) agreed with this expectation of NS-like ML, while 49% disagreed, indicating an autonomous or pragmatic orientation to their children's MLP respectively.

The answers did not vary by any of the independent variables but a wide range of explanations was given for their perspectives, indicating an underlying motivations or reasons. After in-depth analysis and categorization five key types of reasons emerged which were associated with either autonomous or pragmatic perspectives.

- a. practical = functional purpose (e.g. communication, career)
- b. symbolic = personal or cultural identification
- c. normative = compliance with standards
- d. social/environmental = socio-cultural and linguistic conditions
- e. other

The number and scope of these reasons gives an indication of the complexity of the respondents' notions of MLP. The next section will outline these in more detail.

### 6.2.1.1 *Autonomous orientation: practical reasons*

Practical or functional values were described in terms of communication, education and future career.

#### 6.2.1.1.1 Communication and education

Respondents who adopted an autonomous stance basically reflected an ambition for their children to be balanced bilinguals. A major motivation for this is associated with the functional aspects of ML, that is to maintain communication with relatives and to gain educational and career advantages. Functional ability in ML may be a matter of family survival in situations of where “mum and dad, [have] little English” (47) and the statements in Table 50 highlight a clear need expressed by parents for their children to be able to understand the parents’ and relatives’ languages.

Table 50

Children's Communicative Needs in the Country of Origin (e.g. Family, Travel, Job)

- 
1. Because I think that they should aim to achieve as much perfection as they could. Because they will have family members in Yugoslavia. 13
  2. So when we visit they can understand everyone - and that they can talk to their peers. 301
  3. They may go back home (if they wanted) and being unable to properly speak one's mother tongue would not be desirable back home. 72
  4. I teach them and expect them to speak the language at home. It's important because when they meet or go to Samoa they will have no problems in communicating with others. 364
  5. When we visit our relatives, my children must be able to communicate with them. 21
-

A strong MLP was also seen to have educational advantages. It provides, for example, a basis for acquiring additional languages because of an expected positive transfer from ML as this respondent believes:

Because when they know their language, they will have success in other languages too. They have to know both languages equally. 281

In a more general sense, equal proficiency in the children's languages was also associated with cross-cultural awareness and a wider view of the world.

My children gain a broader outlook on life with the usage of more languages. 131

Being bilingual through the retention of ML is clearly seen as advantageous and a large number of expressions of support illustrate how bilingualism can benefit or enrich both the individual and society, particularly in a monolingual society or one with one dominant language such as New Zealand:

I think that knowledge of several languages enriches one's life. 304

Language adds to the diversity and richness of New Zealand. I dread the day when only English will be spoken. 290

We have many dialects in Holland, here it is almost the same [language] everywhere. Knowing Dutch and having been born on the continent, I like to think that I am less insular than many "Kiwis" and have broader interests than many of my contemporaries. 284

#### 6.2.1.1.2 Bilingualism as a career advantage: ML as a resource

A number of explanations also reflected parents' expectations for a specific positive outcome, which one person described as "the asset of being bilingual" (193). In a linguistically diverse world children were perceived to be better equipped as balanced bilinguals, ready "to meet the challenges in this highly competitive world" (371) as their linguistic abilities were seen as a "valuable resource" (33). This resource was seen to provide future career advantages as the following quotes illustrate:

Because we might go back to Japan someday, and bilingualism is a big advantage at business scene and even academic scene. 75

Because they could decide to go and work in Italy, so they should know the language perfectly. 180

It is a great benefit to know more than one language. It widens the horizons, gives a chance to read great literature in the original language and may even become their area of professional expertise in future. 11

#### 6.2.1.2 *Autonomous orientation: symbolic reasons*

The explanations given for autonomous views often emphasize the symbolic dimension of ML, centering on aspects of cultural connection and self-identification.

##### 6.2.1.2.1 Cultural maintenance: a link with cultural heritage

A re-occurring theme in the data is that of the association between language and culture, as reflected in this parent's thoughts:

Because language is culture. So less understanding of language means lesser understanding and appreciation of culture. 78

Cultural understanding is also directly connected with the fostering of family networks and relationships as another respondent described it:

The greater the knowledge, the greater is their appreciation of their cultural background. It also leads to greater 'closeness' with parents and relatives, especially when they visit their ancestral homeland or relatives visit them. 344

ML therefore has "central importance in the handing over of culture and family values" to quote another parent. Successful cultural maintenance and identification with and through one's heritage in this case is expected to operate optimally only with "proper" ML proficiency at the best level of perfection, to ensure cultural transmission and maintenance for future generations. While ML provides the medium to facilitate this process, the home represents a pivotal location providing just about the only domain where the necessary actors and their social networks can function in their languages. Because so much depends on ML, high expectations are warranted according to this respondent:

Because it's the children's home language, their culture, religion and history depends on the language and they should have the same knowledge as the kids of their home country. 23

For some parents successful cultural transmission is clearly contingent on the ability to read and write. Their autonomous view of MLP thus appears to cater for the socio-cultural needs of people crossing cultures. In other words, reading and writing skills are seen as essential MLP components because they contribute to the desired outcome of cultural and religious maintenance as the following quotes illustrate:

[If] they cannot read it or write it they cannot get to know the culture of their parents.  
172

It's important to me that my children know to read and write so they can pray and read the Quran. 306

I want them to be able to communicate in all aspects with people there. Some people say that it is sufficient for them if their children only understand the language and maybe speak some. But I want to see and I hope that both my children will be able to read and write in their other language. 104

#### 6.2.1.2.2 Self-identification

One set of explanations parents gave for their autonomous orientation towards children's MLP reflects a keen awareness of the potential for identity conflict or loss in the next generation. Continued identification with the ML-related culture is clearly associated with the language itself, as these respondents emphasize:

Because it's who they are and they have to know it. 69

If you forget or stop using the language that means you are not a Niuean. Language is our identity and culture. 307

ML is believed to give the next generation a sense of "identity and belonging" (190) which is not necessarily tied to a sense of place as these statements indicate:

One day if they go back - or even if they are here, to have the identity as a Singhalese so they should know the language. 255

ML is also associated with another dimension, one that extends beyond a simple language/identity equation. Some respondents referred to ML's role in reinforcing children's dual or hybrid identity. For example, where children are perceived to be different by virtue of

their racial or cultural characteristics, ML is attributed a balancing capacity, which renders the ML side of the dual identity coin more consistent or complete, giving the children

... pride in their links with our ancestry. They are Kiwis but due to skin colour [and] mannerisms they are different. Their knowing the background gives them a sense of stability. 188

This statement highlights an essential function ML may play in the process of psychological adaptation to situations characterized by diversity, discontinuities and change. Reconciling dual or hybrid identities in the face of competing pressures and demands is expected to be more successful through the stabilizing influence of ML, provided it is afforded space, function and value.

#### 6.2.1.3 *Autonomous orientation: normative reasons*

Generally speaking, where elaborations on autonomous viewpoints were indicative of underlying prescriptive norms they took the form of general statements rather than specific expectations of children's MLP. One such general theme is the belief in language as an autonomous system that needs to remain unadulterated and kept free from the potential impacts of language contact:

I wish those who speak Hungarian as a mother tongue abroad would make a bigger effort to keep the purity of the language; both languages. 279

##### 6.2.1.3.1 *Avoiding humiliation and maintaining standards*

Respondents expressed a sense of obligation to observe perceived NS norms due to real or anticipated repercussions for non-compliance. Linguistic inadequacies in the original NS

context are described as a potential source of shame and humiliation. These sentiments are associated with the original home context, as the following examples illustrate. The second statement indicates the same expectations do not apply in the host society context.

I'm very embarrassed to speak my own language if I went back home the people think I'm a disgrace to my country. 64

I'm ok if I'm in New Zealand but in Malaysia, it can be very embarrassing. 160

However, even if the social pressures to conform are lessened in the migration context and sociolinguistic variation may become the new norm, there is also a broader consideration behind autonomous thinking. The upholding of standards is seen to help maintain both function and form of ML to counteract linguistic change beyond recognition, which may lead to miscommunication and even the possible loss of the language itself.

Whichever language you use, it is to communicate and the 'standards' should be the same. 12

If the standard is lowered the language will be unrecognisable after several generations. 165

#### 6.2.1.4 *Autonomous orientation: Sociocultural reasons*

The single theme which emerged under this category relates to what appears to be a key aspiration, that is a continued sense of belonging and connection with the parents' culture via the language.

#### 6.2.1.4.1 Continued group membership

A major reason for parents' desire for their children to master ML was to ensure the children's ability to "fit in" in the culture of origin, a wish that appears to be inspired by socio-cultural concerns rather than by a belief in norm compliance. The parents fear that their children might become estranged from their parents' culture of origin, a sentiment represented in this series of statements:

So that they can make conversation and have the same idea about children things; if you know the language, then you don't feel like a stranger. 325

If they visit [the relatives] then our kids don't feel out of place. 232

So that they will feel that they are not strangers in the home country, although they grew up here in New Zealand. 168

To be equal in case they go home (back to their birth country). 6

Breaks down barriers, isolation. 226

There is no expression of concern about the children embarrassing themselves through the use of inadequate language as it applies to the adults themselves (6.2.1.3). Nevertheless, the notion of 'stranger' does imply outsider status or loss of membership presumably precisely because of the loss of shared norms. The last statement in the series above (226) also reveals an interesting reference to the potential of reverse culture shock children could suffer if they did not have sufficient ML in their country of origin.

#### 6.2.1.5 *Pragmatic orientation: ecological reasons*

Where respondents disagreed with the proposition that children's MLP should be NS-like, they were motivated primarily by reasons to do with the social, cultural and linguistic conditions in the host society. The data in this section reveal pragmatism as a function of the all-encompassing dominance of English and the presence of little or no formal support to promote linguistic diversity.

##### 6.2.1.5.1 The dominance of English

A crucial reason for adopting a pragmatic orientation to MLP is the dominance of English in the host society. This aspect represents a major theme which was discussed in relation to reduced functional opportunities for ML and its lessening relevance in an English dominant environment. These facts make upholding MLP comparable to levels in the NS context unrealistic if not impossible. With English dominating the linguistic landscape of the host society, particularly the public domain, the relevance of ML is reduced and opportunities for its use restricted to traditional domains such as the home or church. The resulting need for English competence therefore often ranks highly for functional or survival reasons. As a result, many respondents felt that keeping proficiency in ML is not possible as "the system is English" (106). Comments such as the following were typical<sup>1</sup>:

For daily life you need English in New Zealand. 29

Business life is in English. 269

---

<sup>1</sup> This also applied to adult respondents, e.g.: I'd rather speak better English than better Polish from practical reasons. 270

My children and grandchildren should learn the language of the society they are mixing with. 55 (emphasis original)

In China all studies are in Chinese. This is an English speaking country. 288

The overpowering influence of the dominant language is also the object of considerations, which center on a characteristic bilingual experience of shifting linguistic dominance (cf. ‘balanced bilingualism’). This is a particularly pertinent issue for generations born or growing up in the host society and typically results in English becoming their first or dominant language. For people like those represented by the comments below, this is a natural form of accommodation to the new sociolinguistic environment, where MLP is secondary:

Because their mother language is English. 350

[My children] live in New Zealand, therefore English is their dominant language, it is only natural. 177

Knowing their own language is good, but they have to know the language of where they live better. 254

#### 6.2.1.5.2 Reduced relevance of ML

Not only does ML have little or no role to play in the public domain but it is also virtually non-existent in the school system perceived to be monolingual English by many respondents. It is therefore not surprising to find another common theme relating to the lack of resources and curricular support through the school system. Respondents identified this hurdle as a reason for their pragmatic perspective of MLP:

It is very difficult to attain good knowledge of a language without formal school and proper instructions. Hungarian is not taught as a second language in New Zealand schools. 280

Many comments combined the absence of formal learning opportunities in ML with the restriction of ML use to virtually only the home domain. The combined effect of both lack of exposure and support is limited functional relevance of ML in the New Zealand context, which translates into reduced interest or motivation to use or learn it. This renders MLP not only impossible at a level equal to NS standards but also difficult to maintain at all:

I am very worried about my children, because they cannot speak or understand the Arabic language, even though I try to teach them our language in my home. They know very simple things of their language, but I hope [for] an Arabic school here so as to learn the HOMELAND LANGUAGE. 96 (emphasis original)

Because they have education in English and English is their first language. They can use our language just at home, so this is not enough to have the same knowledge as children in Bosnia. 326

Because they learn in English. They always meet English speaking people outside their home. They only get a chance of speaking our language at home. This condition limits their understanding of our language. 44

With little or no formal educational support for developing or maintaining MLP the task of teaching ML to the next generation often falls to parents who do not always feel well equipped for the task. One parent pointed out that this task is often neglected because it “requires great discipline for parents and children” (44). Other comments reflect similar challenges:

Because I can't teach my children Kurdish grammar and our language is mixed with English especially when children are far away [from home]. I face difficulty to explain everything in Kurdish language. 240

We have tried very hard to teach Polish to our children. For practice the odds were against us, friends, the schools, TV, Radio and all the entertainment sport are just too much to cope with. 43

Thus, the very conditions affecting parents' and children's language use and ability in the first place make it difficult to pass ML on to the next generation, particularly in the case of mixed marriages, where the dominance of English is even more strongly felt:

It makes a big difference whether your children's other parent shares your migrant language; while my husband is supportive, he doesn't speak Dutch, so I am about to give up. Let alone sharing the language of my early childhood - I don't often sing any of the thousand Swedish songs to them because it doesn't mean a thing to them. 200

#### 6.2.1.5.3 Geographical/cultural separation

Repeated reference was made to the fact that 'we are in New Zealand now', an environment removed from the influences, needs and overall socio-cultural conditions of the culture of origin. As a consequence, children are not expected to have the same knowledge as in that now distant context, either because it is not deemed necessary and/or not possible as this respondent thinks:

Firstly, it's impossible for children born in NZ to have the same knowledge as those in China. Secondly, it is not necessary, because they live in a different environment and society. 66

We choose to live here. [We] should try not to think or compare too much with the home country. 325

Some knowledge is acceptable, they live in New Zealand, not the home country. 207

Life in a society which is sociolinguistically and culturally different from the culture of origin does not only affect MLP potential or necessity as outlined above. Even if parents had prescriptive ideas about what their children should or should not know some respondents acknowledged that children's language socialization in the host society was not comparable to their parents' and that it was up to the next generation to settle on what is right for them. The following comment sums up this point of view, which clearly reflects this parent's rational assessment of the situation:

Ultimately, they have a different background (reversal of first and second languages) and need to make their own decision. 39

In the end too, the context where ML lacks relevance and functional value may take care of this issue as it affords little incentive to have any ML in the first place. This statement reflects a view at the 'resignation' end of the pragmatic spectrum in that it identifies an overall language ecology which has no place for ML, irrespective of its users expectations:

They live in a different environment and there is no motivation to learn the mother tongue. 291

The reality is that most children are not interested and cannot see any reason to learn. Also they do not want to be identified as 'foreigners' with another language. 185

The latter comment highlights the negative side of identification through ML, which becomes undesirable if not valued by others and may result in the exclusion from mainstream society.

Distance from the original ML context also appears to underlie the acceptance of linguistic change as a natural or inevitable outcome migration. Respondents talked, for instance, about

the fact that language takes on new words over time and across different contexts. This indicates an awareness of the need to accommodate local needs and a further motivation for pragmatic thinking.

Language is dynamic and should change to accommodate the particular area you live in. 9

#### 6.2.1.5.4 Basic knowledge in ML is sufficient

A typical outcome of ecological circumstances such as those outlined above is that functional emphasis begins to shift towards oral communication where reading and writing skills become less important and knowing the 'basics' is regarded as sufficient for the New Zealand context. There is also a realization that expectations beyond basic proficiency may detract from the appeal ML has for the children, which could counteract the retention and possible later development of MLP altogether. The three comments below represent these kind of views:

As long as the children can speak my language, it would be fine (e.g. do not need to know how to write or read). 267

New Zealand is a long way from my home country and the important thing is that they have a working knowledge of the language. There is no need for them to be able to write it 100% correctly. 243

Basic knowledge is enough - if you extend - they would loose interest. When children are older (much older - 20+) they can extend their knowledge themselves.

As an interesting contrast to the autonomous view of equal MLP as a prerequisite for 'fitting in back home' for the purpose of social acceptance, the pragmatic equivalent is satisfied with survival back home, which merely depends on basic MLP. This notion appears to be linked to

the view that linguistic change is natural as well as the realization that opportunities for social and professional success are associated with English, not ML. The following comments are typical:

If my child decides to go back for whatever reason, she should not be stranded. Language is always changing. If my child knows the basics she must be able to survive. 206

If they can speak and understand it that's great but I don't think reading and writing is important. It is not going to get them jobs or qualifications in New Zealand. 101

Primarily English is the language in New Zealand, where our language is at times unheard of. So it is better for them to concentrate on what will give them better opportunity here. 14

#### 6.2.1.6 *Pragmatic orientation: reasons of fairness*

The parents' appraisal of a sociolinguistic and cultural environment as not conducive to maintaining full mastery of ML is complemented by their unwillingness to put too much pressure on children, especially with the demands on their English language competency. A number of parents are not prepared to push their children, despite the functional and symbolic benefits of being bilingual expressed by their autonomous counterparts. The series of statements below illustrates the depth of concern parents hold in this respect:

Being in a country where English is the main language it would be unfair to expect the children to [have the same MLP as in the source country]. It's difficult enough to learn a new language and at the same time to keep your own language knowledge up (in cases of those who came at an early age). 311

Because such high expectation will be unfair to children born in an English-speaking environment. 208

Once you migrate you cannot expect a lot from your children about the language as they learn everything and their environment is full of another language background. 252

New Zealand is an English speaking country and the time and resources to make someone fluent in Cantonese (written & oral) would be unreasonable, particularly since my children must fully function in an English environment. 187

As the two latter comments illustrate, what makes autonomous expectations unfair or inappropriate in their view is the monolingual nature of the host society in general and the dominance of English in particular that they see their children up against (see 6.2.1.5.1). In other words, the ecological conditions of the sociolinguistic context do not afford the necessary incentives within which more autonomous expectations could exist. If they do, they are often contradicted by actual practice, as the next section illustrates.

#### *6.2.1.7 Theory versus practice: ideal expectations versus real behaviour*

While the themes presented in the previous sections indicate a clear-cut distinction into either autonomous or pragmatic orientations to MLP, the data also reveal ambiguities in the respondents' thinking. These manifest themselves in the contrast between an expressed desire for NS-like MLP and people's actual linguistic practices in the host society. Respondents' difficulties reconciling their own norms and expectations with actual linguistic behaviour typically refer to mixing codes which seems to increase as confidence in ML decreases over time, as these two statements illustrate:

It's natural that sometimes I use English words when I speak Persian although I should try not to do it. 361

As time passes [...] I no longer can claim to have quite the same confident command of Swedish. I try not to mix in English words, however, but sometimes I have to search for a word for quite some time. 243

Ambivalent notions of MLP are particularly strong in relation to future generations and are characterized by the conflict between autonomous ideals and real life experience. The statements that follow not only illustrate the contrast between normative theory and linguistic practice but also denote feelings of regret or resignation in the face of 'the inevitable':

[Children should have same knowledge]. In that way they really can understand the culture, feel it, be Dutch, but that is wishful thinking. Reality is to be able to communicate and read the language. 261

They should have [the same knowledge] but unfortunately it is not possible, because they don't go to "our" school, and they speak Croatian only at home with me and their grandparents. 223

It is a shame to forget your own language, to narrow your vocabulary but I suppose it is unavoidable when living in another country. 337.

### 6.2.2 Summary

The responses presented above reflect a number of key themes in terms of orientations to MLP and their underlying motivations or reasons for these. The patterning of these themes clearly shows that not only do autonomous or pragmatic notions exist, but they are rationalized in rather different ways:

1. Proponents of autonomous thinking emphasized native-like MLP for normative, socio-cultural and symbolic reasons.
2. Pragmatic perspectives were motivated by the recognition that MLP is determined by the sociolinguistic ecology of the host society context.

The analysis above also revealed a wide range of individual reasons underlying the different orientations to MLP, which further highlights the complexities of people's conceptualizations. The reasons are summarized in Figure 55, which also illustrates the potential ambivalence between autonomous and pragmatic thinking by way of a shift from the ideal theory to notions based on real life experience and compounded by dynamics of time spent under conditions of language contact:

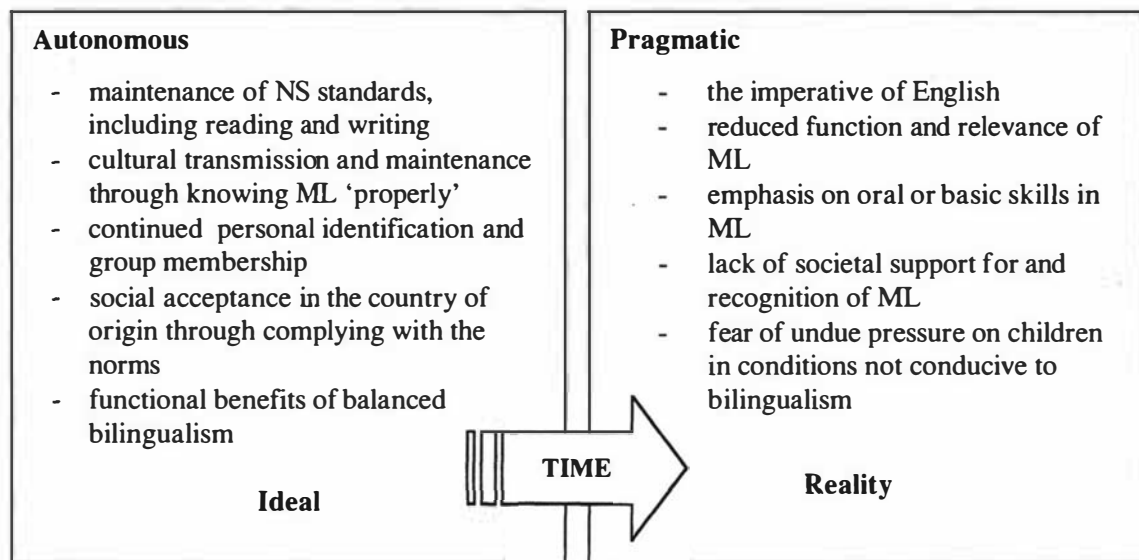


Figure 55. Changing Orientations to MLP and Their Underlying Reasons under the Influence of Time

### 6.2.3 SELF-CONCEPT

The data selected for presentation here illustrate the multidimensional nature of language related self-conceptualization, ranging from the more global aspects such being the language of socialization and personal/cultural experiences to the sense of what feelings and beliefs people have about themselves and their ML:

My feeling of gratitude in having a language - the language with which I have grown up, within me and my humble knowledge. This is one of the very important parts in my life, the language, that is because it holds me, all through these times that I am Tongan by birth/roots and the feelings attached to religion or dance. 89

The construction of self through talk is evident in the two quotes below. It is dependent on social interaction with other ML speakers. Whereas different ways of speaking may be the outcome of intended stylistic variations, different patterns of ML use and changing proficiencies are associated with typical outcomes such as the loss of domains or functions:

Makes me feel I can only be truly myself amongst Swedes. As time passes this, however, becomes less true as I no longer can claim to have quite the same confident command of Swedish. 243

I am this person only in my language. All my internal being is being expressed through my mother language. At the same time this is the language of my people I share my identity with. It means: I am really me only in my language. 283

#### *6.2.3.1 A sense of self*

Responses frequently referred to a language-related sense of being oneself. These responses highlight not only how much ML is perceived as part of the person but also the range of dimensions associated with ML as a mechanism for self-conceptualization. The resulting sense of self (Table 51) further manifests itself in a private dimension associated with personal functions (Table 52).

Table 51

## ML Affords A Sense Of Self

- 
1. It is part of me and my psychological makeup. 80
  2. They are part of my cultural identity and representative of who I am. 169
  3. [I was] born with my language and my feeling develop[ed] with this language. 26
  4. I can be myself when I use my language 68
  5. [ML gives a] sense of wholeness. 229
  6. How you see yourself. 305
  7. Being Dutch is part of being me. Dutchness, language and me go together. 239
  8. It is part of my root, culture, religion; it is part of myself. 230
  9. It identifies me with myself. 16
  10. It's part of my culture, feelings emotions and me! 2
- 

Table 52

## ML Use For Personal Or Emotional Functions (Thinking And Feelings)

- 
1. We naturally think in our language most of the time.131
  2. Differences in thinking patterns; the flow of thought. 134
  3. It depends what I'm saying e.g. Praying in English feels completely foreign to me, as does writing my diary in English. 136
  4. I still cannot express myself well in English specially when it concerns personal issues like feelings etc. It feels like having a knot in your tongue while your thinking in Dutch goes ahead. 261
  5. What I say in English, I have to think in my language. So it does not come naturally. 263
  6. I think in Kinyarwanda and I like that language. 359
  7. [ML] belongs to my feeling and emotional side. 2
  8. It is helping me to think naturally. 206
  9. It embodies my intellect, faculty of reasoning, [and] sum total of my education. 21
  10. My Dutch language very much belongs to my feeling and emotional side. 239
-

### 6.2.3.2 *A sense of identity*

A large number of responses referred to the role ML has as either personal identity marker (Table 53) or group identity marker (Table 54), although these may often overlap. The responses in Table 53 outline the diverse facets associated with personal identity, including the way respondents related to themselves and others through their national and ethnocultural background (1, 6, 7), linkage with their cultural heritage (2, 3, 5) and connection with their emotional and mental makeup (6).

Table 53

#### ML As Personal Identity Marker

- 
1. I am Albanian. 294
  2. It is the symbol of my identity. It shows to others what I am. 44
  3. Retains my identity and my culture. 220
  4. It's always been so important for my personal identity. 283
  5. A language is a heritage that will enable individual people to identify themselves, and also [make them] feel comfortable when mixing amongst your own people. 27
  6. It makes up part of my culture and it is a way of communication - of my feelings and thoughts. 154
  7. It tells me who I am from ethnic perspective. 61
- 

The comments presented in Table 54 emphasize group connections facilitated through ML's dual function of personal and group identity marker (1), which affords a sense of natural attraction to groups who share linguistic similarities (2) and practices (3). Without ML to establish this common bond some respondents experienced a sense of exclusion (5, 6).

Table 54

## Identity Through Group Membership With Other ML Speakers

- 
1. It identifies me as a person and part of a group. 243
  2. I feel attracted to people who also speak my native language. 100
  3. When I went to Wales, if I didn't speak the language - I would also feel strange communicating with extended family in other than Welsh. 124
  4. They [my languages] give one an identity and a sense of belonging. 244
  5. Shut out! Lonely! [without ML] 212
  6. Feel cut off from the community [without ML]. 98
- 

The interconnectedness between a personal sense of being and shared group identity is both derived from and facilitated through ML, which in turn relies on the existence of ML speaking communities or networks. It is through these that opportunities for ML's self-representational capacity are developed or maintained. Comments such as those in (5) and (6) in Table 54 reinforce the crucial function ML has beyond being a marker of identity or communication tool; it promotes linguistic practices that help oil the wheels of social interaction as the locus for both group and self expressions to emerge. Without ML both the functional and symbolic ways of establishing groupness are limited or absent.

Group membership is also associated with a sense of group responsibility that extends to maintaining one's group identity via ML:

I would feel that I have lost part of my identity, that I betrayed my people. 40

Identification is dynamic and multidimensional. The need to maintain one's ML-related identity in the face of change was expressed by one respondent as the need to "foster original identity". ML also has another, deeper dimension, self, personal or group identification notwithstanding. Many respondents associated ML with something that sustains them in a fundamental way, often expressed metaphorically through references to notions such as *lifeblood* or *birth mother*, functioning as a life support system or source of life (Table 55).

Table 55

## ML As A Life Sustaining Force

- 
1. Forgetting [our] mother tongue is [the] same as forgetting our mother. 21
  2. [ML is the] fundament of my life. 230
  3. [It helps] survive and cope with daily problems, trials and tribulations. 154
  4. I would rather die [than to be without ML]. 67
  5. It is important for my soul. 337
  6. Your language runs in your blood. 33
  7. My native language is my past, the other languages are one part of my future.  
But without past there isn't a future. 289
  8. I regard my language [the] same as my mother and for me to discard my language  
is equal to discarding my mother. 17
- 

These statements indicate that the role of ML is beyond being a mere label of personal, socio-cultural or national identity. ML is clearly viewed as an integral part of the cognitive, experiential and emotional sides of a person, all of which contribute to one's personal happiness and wellbeing, as these comments further emphasize:

When you speak your own language you feel comfortable. English or any other language is a second language to anybody but your own is what you can feel happy with.  
54

[ML] makes me feel more complete at certain times. 239

Beyond the joy factor ML can have a guarding function (particularly perhaps where geopolitical factors increase the need to enhance national/ethnic identities through linguistic and cultural means).

I am Kurdish, I feel protection. My language and cultural is important because we have more than one enemy. 240

The above example shows the social-psychological power attached to ML, which may function as a 'demarcation line' from one's perceived enemies. Another shows how an ML can also bring together potential or actual foes:

I think language plays very important role to bring the different people close. For example, when we speak Punjabi with Indian people, we forget the enmity between us and feel ourselves with the same community. 22

Given the level of importance and scope of functions people associate with ML, it is not surprising that its imagined, anticipated, or already experienced loss instills a real sense of sadness and apprehension in people, expressed through a range of emotional responses (Table 56). Interestingly, the majority of the comments appear to refer to the impact on one's existential self, rather than the reduced identificational function of ML.

Table 56

## A Sense of Loss Without ML

---

Shattered. 136
I feel horrible and sad. 13
Impoverished. 167
Bereft. 339
Devastated, lost. 25
In despair! 6
Isolated – displaced. 100
It will be a worst part in my life. 277
I wouldn't like it, I would lose some of myself. 251
Feel terrible, how can I feel if I lost my feeling? 26
I feel I lost part of my emotions. 61
Like I have lost part of me, part of my identity and pride. 200
I feel out of my culture and I have lost my identity. 18
Distressing. It is a bit like losing a part of you and a language that you know is good and useful. 9
[It feels like] the severance of my past. 134
Something is missing in your life. 118
Without them I am nothing. 172
It's just like forgetting myself. I would feel like floating in the middle of an ocean. 303
My life will be like [a] tree without roots. 88
Without it I should be denying the essence of my being. 226

---

Faced with the scenario of ML loss, expressions of personal responsibility lend further support to the assumption of a close connection between ML and self. Where the loss of ML was anticipated or a real experience the tendency was for respondents to blame themselves. The list of comments in Table 57 includes some very personal responses expressing feelings of shame. They provide a powerful illustration of a double blow migrants can face, that is feelings of disorientation and grief at the loss of ML, compounded by guilt about letting the loss happen.

Table 57

## A Sense of Guilt without ML

---

I will be ashamed of myself.	27
I feel I am insult[ing] my culture and myself.	151
Feel lost, ashamed, would feel culturally discounted.	90
Sorry and ashamed.	337
I would feel stupid and dumb.	27
I feel very bad and guilty.	269
I would feel embarrassed.	92
I would feel bad and feel that I am not smart.	107
I'll feel stink and humiliated.	5
Like a failure.	28

---

In contrast, Table 58 represents a small number of responses with a neutral or unconcerned position towards the prospect of losing ML, including a sense of acceptance or inevitability.

Table 58

## No Concerns over the Loss of ML

---

No complaint.	215
It doesn't bother me.	350
If it comes, it comes.	305
I would feel it is a natural outcome of choosing to live in another culture.	31
Is this important? Depends on the person's value of their culture.	333
I'd like my children to learn but if they lose it never mind.	99
It has happened to me and although I was surprised at how much I had lost, I soon picked it up again.	
So it was not of great concern.	258
If due to conscious decision to cut all emotional and cultural ties - maybe unconcerned.	229
Absolutely relaxed until I need it if it ever came about.	130

---

The perceived capacity of bilingual speakers to express dual or multiple identities emerges from the statements presented in Table 59. Varying linguistic repertoires allow them to engage in different linguistic behaviours that convey different personae. It is of interest to note that no response expressing the potential for identity conflict was recorded. This would seem to suggest that the experience of dual or multiple identification has been a natural, positive or even desirable experience for the respondents in this sample.

Table 59

## A Multiple Identity of Self through Bilingualism

---

To speak another language (it doesn't matter which) is like to become another person.	213
I sound different speaking my mother tongue. Different languages can express different feelings.	70
You are as many people as you know languages.	308
[ML provides] access to different ways of communicating/being.	12
I sound different speaking my mother tongue.	49
Because when I talk in English, I feel like I am an English person. But when I talk in my own language I feel like that I am in my home country, and I feel more comfortable and I can express myself.	19
Sometimes the way we speak is different (more frankly) [...]. Dutch people speak more openly (some say aggressively).	284

---

Self-identification has wider implications, particularly in terms of the migration experience and the imperative of adapting to a new society. The need to find oneself in a society, especially if it is a new one for migrants, is summed up by this respondent:

I am proud of my culture and my language, it gives me an identity. I think that when people regret or do not accept their identity or can't find themselves or find an identity, then is when you seem to have a problem in the new country. You need to adapt to a new culture, but you don't need to lose your identity. 153

The data presented so far suggest a close connection between identification and self-conceptualisation, with many responses referring to psychological and social dimensions of ML at the same time. This lends support to the assumption that both are related or depend on each other in a dynamic process of identity formation. But ML also has significance beyond providing labels of identity which can undergo change. It is clearly associated with imparting permanence of personhood as this respondent explains:

My language is part of who I was before and of who I am today. It forms part of my personality. 55

#### 6.2.4 Summary

The data presented in this chapter illustrate ML speakers' thoughts both in relation to the communicative and the symbolic function of their languages. Responses reveal a strong belief that to see language only as means for communication is to neglect its emotional and affective dimensions. From a pragmatic point of view, purism is seen as self-defeating according to many ML speakers who, instead, seem to have adopted a constructive *work with it* attitude. For this group the symbolic function of ML can still operate unhampered by possible divergence from native speaker norms.

An autonomous view clearly exists among many ML speakers although their actual language use may contradict their prescriptive ideals in a language contact reality. However, their rationalizations reveal that autonomous thinking is not necessarily founded on prescriptive thinking alone; reasons given for autonomous views are in fact often of a social, symbolic and practical nature. Where the latter are concerned, the functionality of being autonomous

contrasts with a pragmatic acquiescence with circumstances. In other words, being autonomous is less defined by a belief in norm-compliance than by functional views of what NS-like MLP is expected to achieve, particularly more effective cultural transmission or professional benefits.

The large number of responses identifiable as either autonomous or pragmatic or both (N=251) not only lends support to the notion that this conceptual framework has relevance for examining MLP, but, in terms of the underlying motivations, it also contributes to the understanding of complex ways of thinking about MLP, including its affective dimensions.

The possibility of an ML-related self-concept has emerged as an essential frame of reference, the loss of which respondents expect to have a negative impact. ML is clearly associated with the capacity to 'be oneself' because it functions both as a symbol of and a medium for self-representation and constitutes an inherent part of one's inner universe, beyond the mere labelling function of identity. The ability to sustain a sense of self in changing sociolinguistic environments therefore appears to constitute a major challenge for ML speakers, the small number of unconcerned responses notwithstanding. Proficiency may or may not be a central factor in this process.

The current investigation focussed on three major themes of inquiry, which connect sociolinguistic as well as social-psychological perspectives. The issues identified and discussed in Chapter Two and Chapter Three provided the point of departure for the research questions, representing three major strands from which arose the objectives for the study. These objectives aimed at examining:

1. the relevance of ML functions and uses and associated self-reported proficiency (Research Question 1);
2. notions of ML proficiency and normative orientation towards ML proficiency (Research Question 2 and Research Question 3);
3. the role of ML and ML proficiency for self-concept construction (Research Question 4).

A further objective underlying the research in a more general but fundamental way was to adopt a methodological approach which would promote stakeholders' voices and deal with people in the sample as expert participants in order to facilitate access to their experience of the issues under study. The discussion of the findings offers additional perspectives by referring to the follow-up interviewees and their responses to the findings.

## 7.1 AN INTEGRATED PERSPECTIVE

The integration of sociolinguistic and social-psychological aspects in the current investigation is in line with an ecological approach to the issues under study; it highlights ML as part of a person's linguistic environment that is affected by a range of factors. An ecological perspective also ties in with the post-structural emphasis on the sociocultural context (Norton Peirce, 1995; Norton & Toohy, 2001; Pavlenko & Lantolf, 2000). Contextual conditions facilitate or constrain the extent of agency ML speakers are afforded to access and utilize their linguistic resources through which they construct/re-construct their identity and sense of self (Markus et al., 1997). The ecological perspective is also more amenable to a bilingual approach as it encompasses individuals' overall linguistic repertoires within a linguistic environment.

This approach to the issues under study provided an integrative perspective from which to examine ML speakers' changing proficiencies and notions of MLP as part of their self-projection in a post-migration context where MLP emerges as a psychological construct as much as a linguistic one. The data from the current study suggest a conceptualisation of proficiency which integrates a number of key factors (Figure 56). Figure 56 illustrates how, within a sociocultural context, social interaction enables migrants to perceive and position themselves as ML speakers, given favourable social, cultural, linguistic and affective factors. These factors help shape affordances that facilitate linguistic and affective outcomes and, through those, the construction or re-construction of a linguistic self-concept. The continuity of the linguistic self-concept, in turn, may enhance the quality of contextual factors, for example, by strengthening ML speakers' commitment to ML and its use in a range of domains.

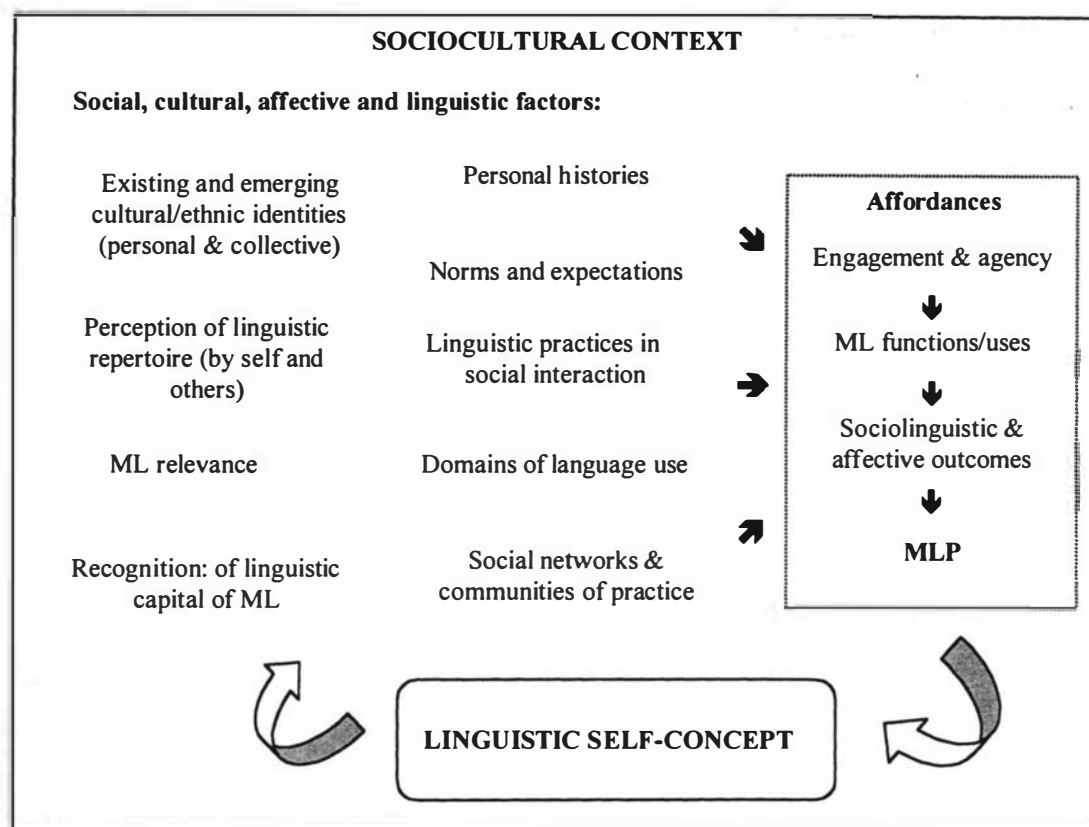


Figure 56. Factors Involved in Shaping MLP as Part of a Linguistic Self-Concept

From this perspective, social and linguistic behaviours are viewed as a response to environmental conditions; they shape a socially constructed self via language in interaction, giving ML communicative relevance and providing a mechanism to reconcile the self with changing sociocultural environments and fluctuating linguistic proficiencies. However, where ML has little or no functional value, enacting one's self through ML in Koven's (1998) sense is reduced. In view of the potential for discontinuities (Chapter One) the current investigation has thrown some light on the extent to which ML continues to act as a tool for speakers' affective continuity.

The overall aim of this discussion chapter is to revisit the findings in relation to the wider issues identified in the first three chapters. The division into three strands of objectives (see above) implies that they represent independent aspects of the issues under study. From an integrated perspective, however, all of these aspects make up ML speakers' overall language ecology. The discussion will therefore attempt to uncover and examine possible linkages and integrate emerging themes while adhering loosely to the original tripartite format.

## **7.2 ML PROFICIENCY**

The point of departure for investigating MLP in the current study was to establish the relevance of functions and uses in the New Zealand context prior to self-assessment by the participants. This approach aimed at establishing a meaningful basis for their self-reported proficiency. Without this step, it was argued, the assessment of ML speakers' proficiency would implicitly adopt an ideal-native speaker perspective that could be out of step with the actual sociolinguistic conditions of their specific post-migration context. Furthermore, identifying functional relevance adds to the understanding of actual needs in the New Zealand context and may have relevance for more targetted language planning and language maintenance efforts. A follow-up interview participant commented positively on establishing ML relevance since "it's more specific and people can understand why it is important for people because it's the activities they're actually engaged in, every thing they actually do."

Although ML was found to be important for virtually the whole sample, reflecting its undeniable significance to people in a general or perhaps symbolic sense, relevance is a different matter and clearly varies according to factors such as local needs, extant domains and

the availability of social networks or communities of practice. In fact, this state of affairs provides the very reason for adopting a user-based methodology as it links reported proficiency with locally relevant functions and uses, rather than following prescriptions of monolithic skills, not all of which will be used by ML speakers.

The finding that oral/aural uses of ML were among the most relevant for people in this study is not surprising in view of the fact that the writing function is typically the least maintained in migration settings. However, the rankings for relevance levels (see 5.1) show that it would be too simplistic to say that writing in ML becomes irrelevant *per se*. While the formal types of reading and writing were indeed ranked lower in terms of their relevance, writing for personal communication and reading of books and newspapers were among the top third of relevant functions. In fact, *writing personal letters* ranked third highest following *making phone calls* and *everyday conversation*. This underlines the importance of written communication for the purposes of maintaining social connectedness, particularly where distance prevents face-to-face contact with overseas relatives. This finding reveals a connective dimension of written ML, which helps explain why certain forms of reading remain relevant, for example, to keep up-to-date with current events and maintain links with one's origins through reading newspapers.

Reading for the purpose of staying in touch with the original culture may become even more relevant in the future, given the reduction of distance and growing multilingual capacities offered by the internet (Crystal, 2001). People can exploit the world wide web to their advantage and according to their needs, which could lead to new or different ways of expression. For example, online written communication in ML could become as important as

face to face interaction and thus enhance the relevance and use of ML in the virtual speech community, as indicated by Fishman (2001).

### **7.2.1 Relevance: it is all relative**

ML relevance patterns found in the current study suggest a complex linguistic ecology where participants' multilingual needs and repertoires fill specific niches relative to their respective needs and practices. This is particularly apparent where relevance of functional uses varies, as in the case of religious and formal writing functions, which increase in relevance with age and length of stay. Ethno-cultural origin also plays a role for the formal writing function, which has more relevance for Europeans, in particular those of western-European origin. Interestingly, ML for religious use in prayers had the lowest overall relevance which, at an initial glance, might call into question the importance of the religious domain for maintaining ML. This generalization fails to take into account, however, that people above the age of 65 as well as speakers of Indo-Aryan/Iranian and Indo-European languages attach significantly higher relevance to this function, compared to other age and language groups. Talking about relevance in absolute terms is therefore too simplistic as it tends to obscure the underlying patterns arising from local functional uses in specific sociolinguistic or cultural environments.

There is no one unitary course for ML functions and uses in terms of their relevance. ML relevance patterns evident in this sample have shown that, despite the monolingual English conditions surrounding ML speakers in New Zealand, a wide array of functions and uses continues to be relevant to them. This is also apparent in the range of participant-generated functions of ML use, which underlines the importance of ML for professional and

sociocultural purposes. For example, half of the "other" functions involved the use of ML for academic or professional purposes – an indication that ML speakers themselves recognize this role, even though it may remain unvalued in the wider society.

The finding of variation in relevance according to length of stay is not unexpected and reflects migrants' settlement needs at different post-migration stages. Some of the ML functions and use became relevant to migrants only at the later stages of residence in the host country, presumably when primary settlement needs had been met. Conversely, decreased ML relevance reported by more recent arrivals reflects the pressing need of this group to develop and engage in the host society's language, a situation similar to Bartley's (2003) findings among Asian teenagers and their families. ML relevance is therefore consecutive, rather than parallel to the relevance of English. In contrast, the need to use ML does not appear to reduce automatically over time for functions involving social interaction and cultural activity, pointing to the participants' ongoing commitment to their cultural origin and the need for a community of practice. Thus, ML relevance cannot be seen in isolation of the *overall* sociolinguistic needs during settlement. These needs are characterised by two key outcomes: (a) addressing immediate settlement needs through focus on host language acquisition, aimed at social, economic and cultural participation and integration and (b) attending to cultural maintenance and continuity of being through ML. The priority given to learning English in the New Zealand context makes absolute sense in the light of (a). Yet, the very dominance of English makes ML use and maintenance difficult, a situation which, in view of the findings of this study, may indeed be counterproductive as it fails to serve the multiple needs of bilinguals in multilingual contexts.

'Belated' relevance also has implications for the long-term survival of ML as it inhibits the maintenance of bi/multilingualism as a normal state of affairs. The availability of ML functions is of particular importance for children and young migrants, but valuable time may be lost if this is left too late and linguistic practices and domains have gone out of use, as the following statement highlights:

It is infinitely easier to socialise children into an environmentally utilised language (no matter how small that environment may be in relative terms) than into one that remains unutilised outside of the easily compartmentalised school-experience. (Fishman, 2001, p.15)

Where cultural and linguistic maintenance is relegated to second place, ML relevance becomes harder to justify to migrants themselves and society as a whole. It leaves little motivation for the intergenerational transition of ML and paves the way for a shift to monolingualism in the next generation. This is a very real and likely scenario where migrants are not supported in their language maintenance efforts, as evidenced in typical patterns of language shift within two to three generations. However, given the potential for multiple discontinuities associated with the loss of ML, the ongoing relevance of ML from the moment of arrival is paramount.

### **7.2.2 The affective dimension of relevance**

Ascribing relevance may represent an attempt to attribute meaning to one's linguistic repertoire, even if discursive practices are actually changing or disappearing. This suggests a symbolic notion of relevance, one that does not necessarily coincide with actual use of ML. In this sense, relevance patterns may also be read as a response to the experience of linguistic and affective loss and recovery described by Pavlenko and Lantolf (2000). Thus, even where ML

has no communicative function for social interaction, it may retain its relevance as a medium to represent a person's ethnocultural identity and to sustain a sense of self. In fact, basic dictionary definitions describe this dimension of relevance as "*bearing upon or connected with the matter in hand*" (Random House 1983, p1628, italics added) or "*closely connected or appropriate to the matter on hand*" (The New Oxford dictionary of English, 1998, p. 1567, italics added). The notion of relevance thus appears to have a profound meaning to the respondents, one that transcends relevance for functional use and refers to the extent ML is perceived to be *connected* to its speakers, reflecting their close relationship with their ML.

Viewed from this perspective, declaring ML irrelevant may be as good as giving up one's sense of self and identity. In this sense, the extent of relevance ascribed to ML across a wide range of uses, functions and genres, variations notwithstanding, can be explained as a symbolic act of self-preservation through linguistic means. Continued relevance of ML facilitates cultural and linguistic continuity by providing a bridge to and foundation for one's newly emerging identity, and ML is needed for translating oneself during the process of cultural crossing. The reduction or even suspension of ML relevance therefore would not only represent a step towards language shift and loss, but it would also result in personal and cultural discontinuity and the narrowing down of possible linguistic selves (Lanehart, 1996b; Fishbane, 2001). Designating ML as irrelevant to the process of adaptation to new sociocultural circumstances, be it intentionally or not, means ignoring a crucial facilitation tool for successful transformation into a well-adjusted individual, whose new bilingual voice accommodates the pre-migration past with the new present and future. Our sense of being and making sense of the world around us is mediated through language (Lanehart, 1996b;

Fishbane, 2001) or languages in the case of bi/multilinguals. Sole emphasis on learning the host language for best settlement outcomes is therefore restrictive and short-sighted.

### 7.3 WHOSE NORMS, WHAT PROFICIENCY?

One of the major contentions that arose from the review of the literature regarding the notion of linguistic proficiency (Chapter Two) was that the definition and measurement of ML proficiency has, to a large extent, relied on SLA methods and theory. There has been, however, growing recognition of the context dependency of proficiency and its underlying norms (Nelson, 1992). This recognition has been reflected mainly in the debate surrounding issues such as:

1. the *myth* of the native speaker and the need to reconceptualize the native speaker/non-native speaker (NS/NNS) distinction (Davies, 1998, 2003);
2. criticism of SLA's monolingual view of proficiency and assumption of monolingualism as the norm (Phillipson, 1992; Wardhaugh, 2002);
3. the related definition, measurement and evaluation of L2 proficiency in terms of monolingual NS norms (Cook, 1997, 2002a; Lam, 2001; Romaine, 1993; Valdés & Figueroa, 1994);
4. lack of recognition of bilingual repertoires (Sridhar, 1996; Valdés, 2000), particularly in the education system (McGroarty & Beck, 1995).

It was argued earlier that the critical discussion of these issues is directly applicable to ML because, from an ecological perspective, the identification of norms by which the definition

and measurement of linguistic proficiency occurs has relevance for all of a person's linguistic repertoire, including ML. This is particularly important in post-migration situations where proficiencies are in a state of flux and adaptation to the new context may ultimately result in monolingualism.

### **7.3.1 Self-reported proficiency in ML**

The high level of self-reported overall proficiency represents a key finding in this study. One apparent reason for this is the fact that participants self-assessed only on functions and uses they regarded as relevant, confirming enhanced proficiency as a function of relevance and use. The respondents also explicitly referred to the connection between functional use and their perceived proficiency when comparing themselves positively with other ML speakers' proficiencies. Where comparisons were negative the lack of functional use was given as a reason.

Reported proficiency varied in interesting ways, for example, by educational background. Reading books and newspapers was reportedly more relevant to respondents from non-tertiary backgrounds, whereas higher reading proficiency was associated with people who did have a tertiary qualification. One possible implication from this finding is that ML maintenance may have a more realistic chance in families with higher educational levels, that is among those where perceived proficiency promotes ML use. Age made no difference in terms of reported proficiency, while it did for relevance. Some overlap between functional relevance and reported MLP was found on the reading and writing variables, where speakers of Indo-European languages consistently assessed themselves highest in both categories.

The data revealed a distinct difference between reported proficiency levels and ML relevance. Whereas relevance varied by length of stay, no such pattern was evident for proficiency across functions and uses. This is surprising because decreasing relevance over time is expected to be associated with fewer functions and use and, in turn, declining proficiency. The data may simply indicate general insensitivity to proficiency changes over time, but there may be different explanations.

Another possible explanation for the high levels of self-reported proficiency arises from the affective quality of proficiency or, what de Bot (1992) refers to as *feeling proficient*. From this perspective, the notion of ML proficiency extends beyond the realms of linguistic, psycholinguistic or sociocultural competence to a social-psychological conceptualisation. In this sense, perceived proficiency may be reflective of a speaker's psychological need of self-definition (Denison, 1997, p. 65) or confirmation. Proficiency then becomes a matter of self-identity, a notion which might explain the high levels of reported proficiency as an act of loyalty to oneself or one's culture. This interpretation also has implications for self-report, for instance, if respondent have difficulties with separating their subjective orientations to their proficiencies from a more objective appraisal of their actual abilities. This scenario may be reinforced in situations where migrants feel culturally and linguistically disconnected because their *feeling proficient* may afford them a sense of continuity.

#### 7.4 NOTIONS OF ML PROFICIENCY

The findings from the present study shed light on ML speakers' perceptions of what constitutes MLP and identified proficiency dimensions reflective of ML speaker expectations in the New Zealand context. The model of MLP that emerged from the data lends support to a view of proficiency that is defined by "critical areas" (Bialystok, 2001, p. 18) or dimensions. The critical proficiency dimensions identified in this study include non-linguistic dimensions such as humour and cultural knowledge, or those associated with complex linguistic ability such as spontaneity or subtlety, pointing to a complex notion of MLP which integrates a wide range of proficiency dimensions across technical, receptive, productive, personal and sociocultural categories (Figure 57). The integrated model of MLP dimensions shown in Figure 57 illustrates this multidimensional nature of MLP, positioning it close to communicative competence models which include sociolinguistic, discourse and pragmatic

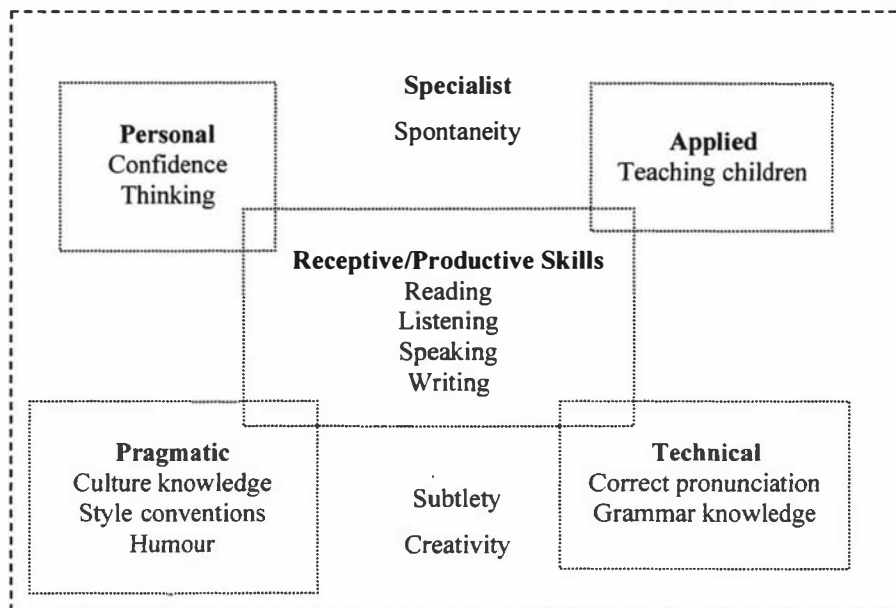


Figure 57. An Integrated Model of ML Proficiency Dimensions

competence (Canale & Swain, 1980) as well as cultural competence (Brown, 1987; Cortazzi & Jin, 1993; Wringe, 1989). The model is descriptive and can only hint at the complexities involved, including the possible interrelationships between linguistic, social and affective factors.

A follow-up interviewee appeared surprised about the complexity of MLP notions derived from the data when she realized “how much actually comes out, things like humour”. The same person felt that although all dimensions were important, only a “cluster of baseline things” would probably be enough for communication purposes. These comments capture what is essentially the continuous nature of MLP, ranging between basic communication skills and complex abilities involving multiple dimensions of proficiency (see also Figure 55 in Chapter Six). Depending on where someone is located on the continuum, the individual proficiency dimensions may rank differently in terms of their importance.

#### **7.4.1 Nature and critical dimensions of MLP**

The individual dimensions of MLP were all clearly seen as part of an integrated structure. The way MLP is visualised in Figure 57 indicates that the *specialist* dimension encompasses all other dimensions, allowing the speaker to be subtle, creative or spontaneous by drawing on some or all of the other dimensions. This model of MLP emphasizes the complexities involved in conceptualising language proficiency and incorporates conventional proficiency notions such as a core of receptive and productive linguistic skills or communicative competence.

#### 7.4.1.1 *The affective quality of MLP*

The affective quality of MLP, already revealed in high levels of self-reported proficiency (see 7.3.1), was evidenced further in the high ranking of *confidence* as an MLP dimension, reflecting a subjective notion of MLP arising from *feeling proficient*. The importance of confidence as a dimension of MLP may derive from a possibly bi-directional function: for a confident ML user, other dimensions such as pragmatic knowledge and technical skills have to be present to engender confidence; in turn, confidence facilitates the ongoing presence or development of the other MLP dimensions. Because confidence promotes use, it is pivotal for the retention of ML. At the same time, confidence gives rise to feelings of continued or renewed identification with ML and its cultural associations, which helps to explain the important role confidence was found to play in the conceptualisation MLP. As a catalyst for language proficiency and identity, confidence in ML, real, perceived or aspired to, can be seen as an act of empowerment.

The dynamic relationship between affective factors and language proficiency has been theorized in SLA where the role of confidence for motivation and achievement has long been acknowledged (Gardner, 2002; Gardner & Lambert, 1972). Although ML speakers could be assumed to have an advantage over L2 learners, in the sense that they may already be proficient and thus have a reason to be confident, they lack the systems and educational effort available to classroom learners aimed at fostering motivation and learning<sup>1</sup>. In actual fact, the lack of social capital and limited affordances associated with ML are likely to inhibit the formation of a positive orientation that could help motivate migrants to maintain their ML

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<sup>1</sup> Irrespective of their level of success.

proficiency. Where the motivation exists, the opportunities for use are limited. The high ranking of confidence as a proficiency marker could therefore also be an indicator for respondents' aspirations, that is the continuity of ML proficiency facilitated via the confidence of its speakers.

The affective nature of MLP was manifest at yet another level. Being multilingual correlated with higher reported oral/aural proficiency levels among respondents with up to three or four languages. Whether this situation indicates cognitive benefits of being bi/multilingual would have to be tested further, for example through assessing respondents' bilingual proficiency. However, the finding could also be an indication of the respondents' positive affective orientation towards being multilingual. In other words, their *feeling multilingual* as a special case of *feeling proficient* provides another way of describing additive bi/multilingualism and underscores the importance of actively fostering language development and the retention of bi/multilingualism.

#### 7.4.1.2 Literacy

Literacy emerged as another important MLP dimension with some interesting variation in its ranking by respondents. The importance of reading and writing functions was ranked lower among speakers of languages with more complex writing systems, particularly from the Indo-Aryan/Iranian and Sino-Tibetan groups. Responses in the qualitative data suggest that this variation is not only a function of language distance *per se* or cultural variation in literacy practices (Street, 1994; Cruickshank, 2002) but a reflection of what ML speakers perceive to be realistic or acceptable in the New Zealand context. This might explain why the European

group, using romanized script in the main, reported higher relevance and proficiency scores on reading and writing functions (except formal writing). In contrast, written Hindi or Korean might appear more alien in the local New Zealand linguistic landscape, where users of these languages appear to find fewer opportunities to engage in their ML. The maintenance and intergenerational transmission of complex writing systems thus presents an additional challenge to some groups already facing generally unfavourable conditions for ML. Sociocultural theory provides a feasible explanation as to whether or not ML literacy is considered relevant and a feasible part of MLP, that is as a function of the necessary affordances in the New Zealand context.

Given that personhood derives from linguistic practices in social interaction, the ability to read and write represents an element of what defines a person (Street, 1994) and an individual's social competence. It is not surprising therefore that the conceptualisation of written proficiency is made on affective grounds as much as on sociolinguistic ones, revealing it as "object of emotional attachment" (Calvet, 1998, p.164). Notions of MLP will ultimately adjust to changing expectations, based on changes in functional needs and linguistic practices, but they also represent two other linked dimensions, that is the perception of oneself as a reader or writer of ML and as a person who is afforded the right to read and write (see 7.5). Part of these perceptions are ML speakers' normative orientations to MLP.

#### **7.4.2 Orientations to MLP: not a matter of either/or**

The present study has problematized a contradiction between the notion of stable linguistic proficiency and the dynamics of linguistic change inherent in language contact situations. Following changes in usage patterns, speaker numbers, domains and networks, ML typically

undergo changes in form and function which may become a precursor of future attrition. ML speakers' responses to these changing linguistic practices and discontinuities were captured in Hill and Parry's (1994) autonomous/pragmatic model which provided a descriptive framework for ML speakers' norm orientations, in particular in terms of contrasting orientations towards proficiency. While the autonomous/pragmatic distinction may be seen as roughly synonymous with the prescriptive and descriptive schools of thought, the model represents a continuum, which, critically, takes into account the dynamic nature of orientations towards MLP and allows for positions anywhere on the continuum.

#### *7.4.2.1 Autonomous or pragmatic or both*

The dual model of ML proficiency adopted for the purposes of the present study (see 2.4.3) has helped to illustrate the complex combinations and permutations of views on the autonomous-pragmatic continuum. The model provides an integrative perspective of both dimensions of ML proficiency and balances the need to be flexible in the face of fluid language contact situations with the desire for the continuity in standards. People's views pertaining to MLP were not fixed, and it was in the response patterns to the individual diagnostic variables, representing autonomous or pragmatic perspectives, where the complexity of the construct was revealed. For example, a majority of the sample showed autonomous tendencies, evidenced in their clear support for the need to read and write in ML (86%) and the desire to keep ML the same as it was in the source country (75%), including up-to-date vocabulary. These high expectations also carried over to what was expected of the next generation; nearly 60% supported source country standards for their children's ML. Although superficially this finding is indicative of an autonomous perspective reflecting strong

expectations of future generations' MLP, the qualitative data revealed an intricate combination of reasons and desires underlying parents' views. Concerns about changes in ML structure and use, for example, often related to the implications for personal and symbolic functions of ML, rather than a concern about not complying with a standard. Parental expectations varied by language family, for instance, speakers of Sino-Tibetan languages are significantly more demanding in terms of children's ML compared to speakers of Indo-European languages, who are also less concerned about what other people think of their MLP.

Davies' (1991, 2003) claim that the level of prescriptiveness increases with prolonged absence from native speaker contexts was not supported through this study. In fact, the slight tendency towards a pragmatic orientation was associated with people who had resided in New Zealand 15 years or longer. Becoming increasingly pragmatic over time may be indicative of the increasing influence of unfavourable conditions for ML over time. Interestingly, the autonomous perspective varied more according to ethnolinguistic background than the dynamics of time, which may help explain group differences in terms of language maintenance and language shift.

The finding that being autonomous was more probable among people with higher reported proficiency is not unexpected as it stands to reason that migrants' expectations of norm compliance are more meaningful if they have the linguistic means to realise those expectations. People who expressed autonomous views usually supported bilingualism, but at the same time they tended to be resigned to the fact that conditions in New Zealand were not amenable to maintaining any ML, let alone at the same level as in the source context; remaining bi/multilingual therefore became problematic.

Autonomous and pragmatic orientations also emerged as two contrasting responses to the same phenomenon, that is concerns about changes in ML proficiency and use in the migration context. Interestingly, where respondents had experienced or observed any such change, their concern was not necessarily a function of normative considerations. What seemed most concerning to many was that reduced proficiency was expected to hamper intergenerational transmission of ML. Where these concerns existed, an autonomous orientation appeared to function as a tool to facilitate desirable linguistic outcomes, specifically the continuation of ML literacy in the next generation. In other words, being autonomous did not primarily serve to comply with ideal norms but to maintain a critical level or standard to keep the language alive.

Autonomous views expressed in relation to children's MLP were motivated by a complex set of reasons, including practical, symbolic, normative and sociocultural considerations. These bring to the fore a dilemma typically faced by migrants, particularly between generations, that is the potential of losing membership in the original culture while not belonging to the new society either. The parents' attempt to uphold ML standards among their children may thus be borne out of their concern that being unable to "speak the mother tongue properly" will make their children strangers in the source country and even in their ML speaking home environment.

In comparison, respondents adopted a pragmatic orientation to MLP not only in response to changing or weakening norms but as a reaction to sociocultural factors, which constrain ML, that is the dominance of English and the monolingual nature of New Zealand society, particularly in the school domain. In this instance, pragmatic thinking was accompanied by

considerations reflecting unease about the uncertain future of ML and parents resigning themselves to a predominantly monolingual linguistic environment. This mode does not represent a *constructive* type of pragmatism, which might engender sufficient flexibility towards emerging local needs and norms, but a *non-constructive* type of pragmatism as a consequence of yielding to unfavourable sociocultural conditions.

The range of specific reasons, which underlie pragmatic and autonomous orientations demonstrates the complexity of both notions. For example, a majority of people were ambivalent about whether ML should be *perfect* in New Zealand or whether their own ML was *good enough* in New Zealand but not necessarily in the source country. In contrast, views of linguistic behaviours associated with bilingualism, including code switching, code mixing and stylistic or functional uses specific to the host context, were a lot more clear-cut and generally reflected more agreement. This suggests that ML users make distinctions between general norm expectations and their orientations towards actual linguistic behaviour. This phenomenon is also evidenced in the distinction between the *real* and the *ideal* revealed in the qualitative data.

A follow-up interviewee validated not only the distinction between real and the ideal but also the resulting feelings of guilt or frustrations if the ideal cannot be attained. This came through clearly in her expressed disappointment that her own children's MLP is not NS-like, generating responses from others like "how come the children don't speak x" as people believe that they should because they are her children. This person's comments substantiate the expressions of ambivalence found in the sample in terms of the push and pull between idealized expectations and actual outcomes regarding their children's ML abilities and the

potential psychological impact of not meeting one's own and others' expectations. The interviewee expressed these sentiments as follows:

Immediately there's a sense of failure attached to it, it's dealing with those feelings that yeah ok I've done the best I can. That's the sense of frustration and disappointment in my case.

The pragmatic approach to MLP highlights the sociocultural relativity of the concept, which was effectively encapsulated in an analogy that emerged from the same follow-up interview. In response to the issue of formal, rule-based learning and assessment of ML in contrast to its real-life use according to the rules and conventions of local contexts the person commented:

It's like when you're learning to dance, you go and learn the steps like ballroom dancing or you go and learn the Tango. But then when you go to the actual ordinary social situation people don't dance like that. You may be very proficient but then you may go to Argentina, and you feel out of it. People might say, what are you doing? Proficiency to me is so culturally bound.

This analogy confirms the distinction between the more technical autonomous interpretation of language proficiency and its culture/context-bound pragmatic equivalent, lending credence to the problematization of the concept in the present study. Technical proficiency is nothing by itself, it has to be validated through communities of practice within their specific contexts and linguistic ecologies, or, in the words of a follow-up interviewee: "You cannot have it as an absolute. Anyway, perfect by whose standards?"

It is concluded that underlying autonomous orientations tend to exist in the form of general principles, perhaps acting as some sort of anchor providing connectedness and stability, while a pragmatic stance emerges in relation to real, contextualized language use in specific conditions. The latter equips ML users with a certain flexibility that helps facilitate their sociolinguistic adjustment to the host society. The fact that accepting contact-induced linguistic behaviours such as code mixing and code switching increased with length of stay shows that people do become more accommodating to changing ML uses and needs in the host environment. In other words, local notions of proficiency are evolving; this takes time and accounts for feelings of ambivalence because it affects ML speakers' value systems and self-perceptions which themselves may be undergoing change as part of cultural adjustment. Most importantly, for local notions of proficiency to emerge, ML has to be used.

#### *7.4.3.1 Autonomous and pragmatic orientations – help or hindrance for language maintenance?*

Variation implies use, and it could be speculated that autonomous orientations might be counterproductive to retaining ML in that they support idealized states, while a pragmatic orientation could encourage ML use which is not shackled by unrealistic expectations or held up against idealized norms. Where there is a mismatch between idealized language and locally emerging contact forms and uses, an autonomous approach motivated by the desire to maintain the purity of the language may be ineffective. A similar issue is facing *te reo māori*. Benton and Benton (2001) believe that purist efforts such as those advocated by the Māori Language Commission do not help the revitalization or regeneration of the language. For example, corpus planning steps to discourage borrowing and to encourage the re-introduction

of traditional words do not, in their view, reflect usage and conceptualisations evolving especially among younger speakers.

Being pragmatic about changing formal and functional properties of ML may in effect be a rationalization of what is essentially the beginning of language attrition. Thus, a pragmatic orientation might be at odds with the goals of language maintenance and revitalization because it fails to uphold educational standards. However, from the perspective of one of the follow-up interviewees being pragmatic is “not a cop-out”. This person did not think ML will change beyond recognition and added the interesting prediction that “if anything, the language here will probably change less than in that country” where she observed rapid vocabulary change. She believed ML could be kept intact due to its isolation, like some traditions are. An autonomous approach to judging children’s ML was felt to be inappropriate: “It is unrealistic to have a person grow up in NZ and then compare with somebody of the same age [from the original culture], obviously it’s going to be different.”

And where this being different involves, for example, code switching behaviour, judgment of this linguistic behaviour becomes academic in this person's view because “for [the children] it’s the only way”. While this stance may be interpreted as rationalisation, it is also clear that without such a favourable affective frame of mind the use and retention of ML might not come about at all.

### 7.5 EMERGING SELVES: “IT’S LIKE CREATING A NEW PERSON”

The affective dimension of language derives from its function as a means to construct and represent the self. To the extent that self-construction is a social process, it is contingent on social interaction facilitated through language. The current study considered the possible implications for the process of self-conceptualisation in the face of changing patterns of ML use, function and form and, with that, changing proficiencies. The findings in Chapter 5 and Chapter 6 revealed the important role of ML for self-conceptualisation, mediated, however, by length of stay. It is not surprising that, in the longer term, affective functions increasingly shift to English, given the growing pervasiveness of the dominant language across all domains of language use.

Yet, the findings also suggest that the opposite may happen: the preference of ML for self-conceptualization was found to increase among those whose ethno-cultural or national identification shifted towards labels associated with the host culture. This finding lends support to the notion of a broader, *transcendent* sense of self (Bürgelt, 2003). This sense of self encompasses the process of identity reconstruction, enabling individuals to hold on to aspects connected with their original identity, while at the same time accommodating their newly emerging identity associated with the host society. Figure 58 illustrates the dynamic process of self-construction in the face of opposing forces.

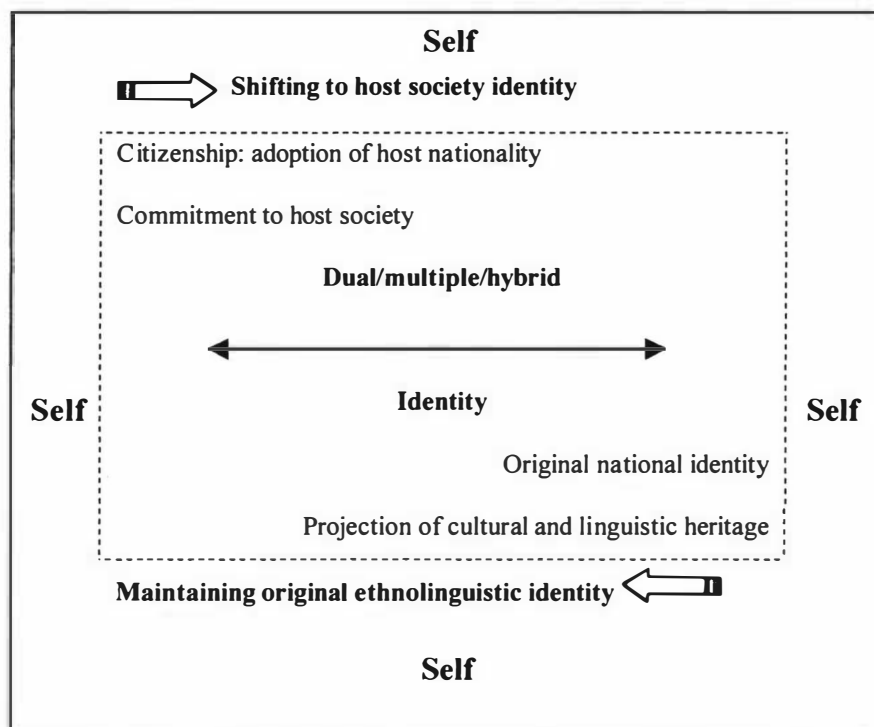


Figure 58. Process of Merging Dimensions of Identity within Overall Self-concept

Self-reported ML proficiency was shown to mediate the preference of ML for self-conceptualisation, particularly where confidence and maintaining a sense of self are concerned. Lower ML proficiency is likely to make the communication of dimensions of the self more difficult, and where that happens, the shift to English as a preferred mechanism for self-representation seems natural. However, the finding that the preferred mode for these two dimensions of self is a bilingual one (i.e. having a choice of either code) suggests that ML retains a foothold for longer when it is associated with the symbolic/affective function of ML for self-representation. A bilingual self thus caters to the need to retain one's original ML-related self, complemented by an emerging L2-related identity in an attempt to sustain social-psychological stability.

ML acts as the connective tissue between people's pasts and futures. The many metaphorical references to the existential quality of ML and expressions of anguish, even grief, in the face of actual or potential ML loss lend empirical support to the notion of *continuity of being* (Fishman, 2001). Given the real or perceived social, cultural, economic and linguistic discontinuities migration entails, ML affords an element of stability in the face of change by maintaining dimensions of a person's past. This theme transpired through frequent comments such as the following from one respondent: "My language is part of who I was before and of who I am today. It forms part of my personality."

The data revealed the vital importance attached to ML as a medium to self-construction - to the point where the loss of the language is equated with an experience equivalent to dying. This finding complements the view of self-concept as an outcome of social interaction and emphasizes its emotional aspects, which appear to be very real to many of the respondents. It supports Deaux's (1992) suggestion that there is "a need for a more personalized view of identity and a more social view of self" (p. 29).

The emotional dimension of language is not, however, necessarily tied to only one language. The fact that a third of respondents opted for both languages on the *be myself* dimension (Figure 52d) indicates the emergence of a bilingual self and illustrates the importance of both ML and English for ML speakers' sense of self. To the extent that a dual or hybrid identity might accommodate a range of personal and group relationships, a bi/multilingual self-concept allows ML speakers to reconcile their shifting linguistic practices and proficiencies and to accommodate their emerging voices within their total linguistic repertoires. This process involves a combination of both stability and flexibility in order to cope with the waxing and

waning of language use; it benefits from the ability to emphasize or draw complementary identities which facilitates linguistic and cultural crossings.

A sense of being bi/multilingual is an enriching option both for the individual speaker and society as a whole because the bilingual self may represent the social-psychological prerequisite for wishing to remain bilingual. It may counter the almost inevitable tendency towards reverting to monolingualism after two or three generations. In other words, a self which is constructed through more than one language provides a basis for additive bilingualism. Not perceiving oneself as a bilingual person, compounded by a lack of value afforded to bilingualism by others, may therefore be a crucial factor for subtractive bilingualism, language shift and language loss.

The dynamism of multilingual self-portrayal was further evidenced by the reaction of a follow-up interview participant to a quote by a survey participant. "I can be me only in my language" was too limiting in this person's view as it applied only to a part of her. She felt that her past "me" had changed and that there was probably more than one "me", for example, when interacting with her English-speaking husband, suggesting dual or hybrid identity. This additional testimony lends support to an enacted multilingual self (Koven, 1998) and also corresponds with the process of loss and recovery suggested by Pavlenko and Lantolf (2000). According to the latter, both ML and the emerging new voice facilitate the emergence of a new multi-dimensional self, based on its capacity to afford both stability and flexibility in situations of change.

One interviewee likened herself to a multi-rooted tree, some of whose roots tap into her ML-speaking world, while others grounded her in the English-speaking host society, and it is the combined root system that contributes to a meaningful whole. While reference to one's cultural roots is nothing unusual, the respondent's tree image conveys the multi-layered nature of self-construction. This person commented that people in her culture of origin may not understand her life here, but the roots put down in the new society have nonetheless also become necessary to sustain her. The multi-rooted tree metaphor effectively projects the notion of a complex dual identity facilitated by bilingual repertoires as a growth medium. The notion that each language is "like a slice of me, but this whole me is a lot bigger pie" suggests the existence of a dual bilingual self in complementary or hybrid form (Bhabha, 1990, Bradley, 1996, Hall 1990). The person's need to sustain both types of roots is further evidence of the existence of a complex self that is in this respondent's words "almost like superimposed over everything else" and accommodating multiple identities.

Undergoing post-migration changes and adjustments is by no means straightforward affair because people do not simply move from one identity to another as the linear view of acculturation would have it (Norton, 2000; Pires & Stanton, 2000). It is rather a matter of growth, a follow-up interviewee emphasized: "It's almost like creating a new person when you take in a new language, when you come here taking on English." The result is a multidimensional, bi/multilingual self as this person's comment reflects:

It's an engrained part of me, sort of part of my soul ... but it's not the whole of who I am. I see myself bilingual now, but it depends on the situation and how people look at me.

This quote also highlights the crucial importance of support or validation from others. More often than not, others may fail to recognize or accept cultural and linguistic difference. For example, where others perceive migrants solely as second language speakers, for instance via their accent, they fail to recognise their identity as bilingual speakers. The participants' deep concern over the devaluation of ML is reflected in repeated references to the monolingual system and a lack of appreciation for other languages in the New Zealand context. However, without favourable macro conditions to promote and sustain bilingual selves, the role of self-concept as a regulating force for shifting self-images (Abrams, 1992, p. 91) remains an ideal. The qualitative data in particular revealed a strong awareness among participants of how much the odds are stacked against their desire to retain a niche for ML, as one of the follow-up interview participants lamented: "We're surviving in a place that's in a way quite hostile to other languages. We're doing the best we can. It's a matter of how much do you try to bash your head against a wall."

In the light of the findings from this study, the question arises how the social-psychological need to sustain or reconstruct one's self-image and identity can be reconciled with lacking affordances created by monolingual bias.

### **7.5.1 Labelled Identity**

Identity, at least in terms of the way it is expressed through generalized labels, is typically associated with, for example, ethno-cultural and national identifications. Moving to a different context naturally promotes changes in and redefinition of identity as group memberships change. In turn, new alliances and networks - or the lack of them - bring about new ways of self-identification and how one is seen by others. Yet, the data also suggest a deeper, affective

dimension of ML, associated with personal wellbeing, thinking, and feeling. At this level, the inner self which one respondent referred to as the “essence” of his being, was revealed as a mechanism for maintaining stability during a process of identificational changes.

Respondents’ identification through labels showed a clear preference for a qualified dual identity via hyphenation with the inclusion of self-named, ethnic or national origin descriptors, preferably in first position. This finding corresponds with Bartley’s (2003), though more dual choices were found in the current study. Further to Bartley’s contention that changing identity label configurations “represent different manifestations of attempts to engage with the host society” (p. 103), the argument put forth here is that ML speakers’ choices of dual identity labels represent a deliberate expression of their ongoing connection with their cultural and linguistic origins – in addition to their commitment to the host society.

The fact that open categories were preferred by recent arrivals is of particular interest as it contrasts with the perhaps common expectation that migrants wish to blend in immediately<sup>2</sup>. The continued reference to their original identity may be due to the perceived or experienced lack of affordances for attempts to engage and belong, particularly when not many opportunities to participate may have been available in the short term. Multiple identity labels thus provide a vehicle to counteract discontinuities by way of retaining earlier identifications, while at the same time adding a label to demonstrate identification with the host society. These deliberate choices represent an outward expression of what might be a less conscious need for continuity of being, providing tangible evidence for an underlying self-concept.

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<sup>2</sup> As exemplified by the popular 'equalising' formula in the New Zealand context: 'We're all Kiwis'.

Multilingual contexts allow for many permutations and merged combinations of dual or hybrid identities. The overt identification with the host society via its language can be accommodated within an overall self-concept constituted at least to some degree by ML. The fact that identity labels can vary and recombine makes them well suited to signal a migrant's level of engagement and commitment, for example, via citizenship. Changing identities may help cope with cultural, linguistic, social and psychological discontinuities by way of accommodation and as part of self-conceptualization.

One of the follow-up interview participants predicted that most people preferred the 'origin & New Zealander' label as he thought it natural for people to put their "origin first". His partner qualified this by stating that ideally people "merge" identities, bringing both sides together. As a Chinese-New Zealander she strongly felt her New Zealand side but was very aware that there is Chinese in her too.

If holding on to one's linguistic and cultural identity is as essential for migrants as indicated in the data, the host community as a whole stands to benefit from a migrant population with a 'healthy' sense of self – both individually and socially. This aspect becomes even more pertinent when considering the most recent Census data, which shows a higher proportion of people reporting multiple identifications. In 2001, 7.9% of people identified with more than one of the major ethnic groups, almost double that reported in 1991 (Statistics New Zealand, n.d.a).

### **7.5.2 Identity and self-concept: two corresponding processes**

The data lend support to the idea that identification through language encompasses both distinctly personal and social aspects and thus highlight the need to integrate both dimensions in identity theory as “without personal meaning categories of identity are hollow” (Deaux, 1992, p. 25). The notion of self-concept offers a way to accommodate both social and personal dimensions and helps bring together the collective and personal aspects inherent in and constitutive of both. An important dimension in this respect, albeit a non-linguistic one, was revealed in a follow-up interview in which the participant described a friend’s reaction to her children’s questioning her desire for them to learn ML. The Asian mother’s response was, “Look in the mirror, who do you see?” This suggests that, at least in the mother’s mind, the retention of ML may help reconcile racial difference with cultural origins via the language associated with that culture. The potential for tensions between self and other identifications based on appearance is further illustrated in the following comment: “My son looks African, is treated like an African at school, was born in New Zealand and thinks he is a Kiwi “ (Tanguay, Personal Communication, 2001).

Where affordances are unavailable or limited within the new context, identification may be hampered. The notion of agency emphasises the social dimension in the process of self-construal through social interaction; this, in turn, defines reality and “what reality is more fundamental than the individual’s in understanding of his or her self?” (Taylor, 1991, p. 15). There is therefore a need for an environment that is more conducive to the integration of two or several cultures into a harmonized bi/multilingual identity where “the individual finds personal solutions without having to deny one of his cultures” (Hamers & Blanc, 1989, p.

123). This notion highlights an important social-psychological dimension of bilingualism, one that influences interethnic relations, is shaped by social factors and will in turn condition the development of social psychological mechanisms relevant to the integration of the individual in society (Hamers & Blanc, 1989, p. 134).

The extent to which ML plays a part in ML speakers' self-construal varied by ethnic background. This finding points to cross-cultural differences in the way individuals from collectivist or individualistic cultural backgrounds may construct their selves. The psychological effects, for example, of language shift or language loss, may vary by type of self-construal as a cultured process. Therefore, dependent and interdependent selves are likely to attach different meanings to role of ML in relation to their self-concept (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Norasakkunkit, 2000). One of the follow-up interviewees expressed surprise about the depth of feeling expressed in some statements on ML loss and appeared to be less affected himself by that possibility, although he did express awareness and regret regarding his own weakening ML skills.

What is more, individuals may be desensitised to the potential emotional implications in societies that discount any role ML might play for its speakers, communicative or otherwise as Lanehart (2001, personal communication) observed in the case of her own experience with Black American English:

In situations of language loss or the threat thereof, how do you get people to understand the seriousness of that? I'm not sure how individuals or groups come to realize the importance of their language when they're bombarded with images and messages in general telling them they shouldn't even care.

Lanehart's comments highlight the important role of the wider sociocultural context in providing conditions that encourage investment in multilingual identities. Such conditions would be conducive to both the learning of English and the fostering of ML and the promotion of language as an investment in "an identity that is constantly changing across place and time" (Norton, 2001, p. 166).

### **7.5.3 From migrant language to community language: future generations**

The current study relied almost exclusively on the adult migrants' views<sup>3</sup> which, nonetheless, revealed a great deal about their aspirations for the young migrants' future integration, identity and linguistic repertoire in the host society. These issues become particularly pertinent for future generations, that is those who were born in or grew up in the host society as they tend to be L2 users of ML, if at all, and have weakening linkages with the original culture. Although some of the sociolinguistic studies in New Zealand have investigated matters of language and identity specifically among younger migrants (Bartley, 2003; Shameem, 1994; Watts et al., 2002), little research is available on migrant children's post-migration adjustment, despite the fact that they represent "a special category of migrants" (Bartley, 2003, p. 77). Bartley found that parents of his sample of 1.5 generation adolescents maintained transnational linkages with networks, jobs or businesses overseas as "strategies of transnationalism in order to preserve and enhance these forms of capital" (p. i). The capabilities of children to act as such transnational or global citizens may not be the same for those who have no ML and, given the pervasiveness of English across domains, it is difficult for young migrants to maintain ML (Watts et al., 2002). As Bartley (2003) contends, bilingual skills, amongst other factors,

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<sup>3</sup> Only eight survey respondents were below the age of 20.

position the young 1.5 generation in a way where “they have options, and can set into play any number of trajectories” (p. 90), including returning to their original countries or going overseas as transnational citizens.

The findings from the current study support Bartley’s claim. Many parents talked about the importance of their children’s ML, not only for reasons of cultural maintenance and identity, but also to promote professional opportunities. These were almost exclusively associated with overseas prospects as ML was not perceived to possess much capital in the New Zealand context. Thus, while many comments revealed the strong conviction of parents that having ML would mean professional and cross-cultural advantages for their children, more often than not they conceded that this was difficult or almost impossible to achieve. These responses mirror what Bartley describes as being “limited by a type of cross-cultural exchange rate that rendered their normally impressive social and cultural capital of limited immediate worth” (Bartley, 2003, p.241).

## **7.6 INVESTMENT IN LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY: ENHANCING SETTLEMENT**

The current study supports the key proposition of bi/multilingualism as a crucial settlement outcome, which stands to benefit the individual, communities and wider society. In an environment where multilingualism is "a normal and unremarkable necessity for the majority in the world today" (Edwards, 1995, p. 1) predominantly monolingual societies may fail to benefit from this essential characteristic of global citizenship. Where individual ML speakers are concerned, a multilingual repertoire equips them with a wider scope of options to respond

to ethnolinguistically diverse environments with different voices because “by using language creatively, we can exercise our individual voice and challenge the world we encounter” (Mellen Day, 2002, p. 11). If removing monolingual tendencies can help achieve additive bilingualism, foster positive affective outcomes and create favourable sociolinguistic conditions through the relevant affordances, multilingualism may become an actual tool for removing settlement barriers and thus facilitate acculturation.

Public discourse favouring monolingualism and mainstreaming (for these read “assimilation”) continues, and it ignores the complex relationship between language(s), the self and diverse societies. It prevents the acculturation process from following a multidirectional path where dual or hybrid identities could help facilitate crossing between ethnolinguistic and cultural groups (Rampton, 1995). The depth of feeling expressed by many respondents about the real or potential loss of ML is indicative of the role ML plays at the affective level and speaks to the sense of loss over one’s continuity of being. “Those who experience this grief are the immediate human victims of language loss” (Hale, 1998, p. 213) although there is also a wider social cost in terms of decreasing cultural and linguistic diversity.

### **7.6.1 Language matters are settlement matters**

As ML speakers’ linguistic choices are responses to post-migration circumstances, “language issues are not separated from issues within the broader context of the settlement process” (White et al., 2001, p. 40). Such a perspective considers the wider sociocultural conditions (Lantolf, 2000) and conveniently integrates language issues relating to both acquisition of the host language and ML maintenance. Neither should be seen in isolation from the settlement process as both languages make up an individual’s linguistic repertoire and form part of the

dynamics of the overall sociolinguistic ecology in migration contexts. As far as new or recent migrants are concerned, these conditions determine their settlement but the socio-political conditions of host societies have not necessarily been helpful in creating the necessary affordances to facilitate bi/multilingual outcomes with their attendant sociocultural, economic and affective effects.

The connections between language and settlement outcomes have been recognised at the government level, but with a focus on acquisition of the host language. For example, the recently launched Adult ESOL Strategy (Ministry of Education, 2003d) explicitly links improved English language skills with more successful settlement. It remains to be seen to what extent this strategic approach gives rise to actual outcomes. More significantly, with the launch of a multilingual telephone interpretation service in New Zealand (Language Line a success, 2003) the language/settlement link is beginning to extend beyond the traditional sole focus on host language acquisition. While only a 1-year pilot project with provision limited to five government agencies, the inception of a free interpretation service signals a growing recognition that people who as yet have no English can perfectly well communicate through their existing languages. The service promotes empowerment through providing more effective access to essential services such as the Police but, just as crucially, recognises and values migrants' and refugees' own languages. The need for equal access and opportunity through professional community interpretation services has already been officially acknowledged in the publication of guidelines for using interpreters in government services (Kasanji, 1995). In the booklet's preface, a former Secretary of Internal Affairs highlights the role of ML for equitable service delivery:

Immigrants' and/or visitors' inability to speak English to the same standard as they speak their mother tongue creates barriers when these people are seeking government information and other services. (p. 5)

The recognition that placing the onus of adjustment on migrants only - linguistic, cultural and otherwise - is inadequate, appears to be making further inroads at the political/official level in New Zealand. In her address to the inaugural meeting of the Intercultural Assembly in Christchurch, the Immigration Minister, Hon Lianne Dalziel, emphasized the concept of partnership in the settlement process. The minister's metaphorical reference to the *lock and key* relationship between migrants and the host community illustrates the importance of mutual responsibilities and willingness to engage on both sides in the creation of "a strong and secure environment for and with each other" (Dalziel, 2003). The positive connotation of the notion of partnership notwithstanding, the lock and key metaphor equally illustrates an asymmetrical relationship where an unequal distribution of "willingness to engage" means migrants have to find the key on their own.

A similar philosophy is also reflected in recent policy development as both the *Ethnic Perspectives in Policy* (Office of Ethnic Affairs, 2002) and *Adult ESOL Strategy* (Ministry of Education, 2003d) espouse participation in New Zealand society as a key value. Such a relational view of settlement is very much in line with the notion of affordances applied to the SLA context (Lantolf & Pavlenko, 2001; Norton Peirce, 1995; Norton & Toohey, 2001). The settlement process is equally socially situated, and outcomes similarly depend on participation through opportunities for interaction. Thus ML and L2 matters interface directly during

settlement where the host society affords social capital to migrants' voices, both as ML speakers and learners/speakers of the host society's language.

Without wider social and political recognition of this need, however, the social capital of ML is set to lose its currency. The recent publication of the *Social Report* (Ministry of Social Development, 2003) reflects how little social capital is afforded to ML in one of the major government departments. The report identifies *knowledge and skills* such as adult literacy in English as well as *cultural identity* among the nine major outcomes used for measuring social health and wellbeing. There is explicit acknowledgment of New Zealand's culturally diverse population and recognition that cultural identity promotes social wellbeing by building social capital through improved social networking and participation (p. 82). Yet, the anticipated outcomes reflect an underlying bilingual/bicultural model restricted to fulfilling the country's obligation and commitment to its indigenous population and its Pacific Island population. Māori language proficiency and Māori/Pacific Island-language education serve as indicators for the extent to which people from those groups maintain cultural participation and identity by intergenerational transmission of the language. While the report states that "possession of knowledge and skills can be integral to a person's sense of belonging and self-worth" (p. 38), being bi/multilingual *per se* or having knowledge in languages other than *te reo māori* or its Polynesian cousins rate no mention whatsoever; no reference is made to ML as a resource, either for self-enhancement or socio-economic gains.

### **7.6.2 Adaptation in more ways than one**

Successful settlement of migrants is contingent on some form of adaptation, with the goal of sociolinguistic and affective adjustment and socio-economic benefits. The acculturation model

(Schumann, 1978) theorizes this process in terms of adjustment to the local dominant culture and acquisition of its language. However, it does not take into account aspects of conflict or power struggle experienced by minority language speakers and is based on the assumption that acculturation is a linear, one-way process - from the culture of origin to the adoption of the host culture (Norton, 2000; Pires & Stanton, 2000; Tollefson, 1991). From this perspective, acculturation ultimately serves the transition to monolingualism.

The findings from the current study indicate the respondents' concerns about such a monolingual approach to acculturation as it effectively removes any need for ML use and proficiency and associated processes of identification and self-conceptualisation. In contrast, their perspective represents a multidimensional, multi-linear view of acculturation more in touch with bi/multilingual and culturally diverse contexts as it allows for multiple outcomes, rather than ultimate assimilation and language shift.

A uni-directional outcome of adjustment, culturally and linguistically, is also facilitated by the experience of economic pressures. Because socio-economic and political conditions usually work in favour of the dominant language (Holmes, 2001), migrants are exposed to discourse in the economically dominant culture and a society that encourages speakers of local languages to believe that their futures depend on switching from their native languages to the dominant code. This typically comes at a price, that is complete language shift in the second or third generation.

If the currently fashionable discourse of *celebration of diversity* is to be more than a catchphrase and positive outcomes of diversity are to be achieved, acculturation must be

defined and supported as a two-way process to promote pluralistic rather than assimilationist outcomes. One key outcome is the preservation of migrants' existing cultural and linguistic resources. Settlement is about adjustment, and the "integration of societies, not assimilation of dominated groups, is a prerequisite for cultural (and linguistic) diversity to be maintained" (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000, p. 131). It is thus the outcome of a mutually negotiated process whereby both the majority and the minority group or individual may undergo change. This requires support services and programs to be made available across the spectrum, but specifically in education (Syed, 2001, p. 144), according to the following key dimensions and goals: (a) *Linguistic*: the level and balance of bilingualism, biliteracy, (b) *Affective*: additive vs. subtractive bilingualism, identity and self-concept: dual or hybrid identification and a multilingual self and (c) *Cultural*: diversity across educational, social, and employment sectors.

Researchers are increasingly recognizing migrants' multilingual backgrounds. In the New Zealand context, for example, Bartley (2003) and Watts et al. (2002) collected data on migrant youth acculturation with reference to both languages. In his study of the acculturation of Asian teenagers Bartley explicitly identified the acquisition of English as a key contributor to migrant acculturation in New Zealand. One of the reasons given for the preferred use of the "origin language" included easier communication in L1 and the perception of the ML as *their* language (p. 186). Bartley concluded that ML preference is associated with fear of embarrassment about limited English ability. However, this interpretation ignores the possibility of ML itself playing a role in acculturation for functions other than communication. In fact, the same study indicated that participants preferred identity labels linked with the

origin culture, and that ML was the language used most often at home (p. 230), where embarrassment about one's lack of English was unlikely to be such an issue.

Some degree of fluency in the dominant language is undoubtedly needed for socio-economic integration. The underlying assumption that this outcome is inevitably a monolingual one is, however, based on several fallacies, including the following:

1. Due to the sole focus on English fluency ML is *not* needed and therefore retention of ML rendered useless.

The data in the current study indicated that preserving relevance means maintaining connectedness and facilitating the use of ML. This, in turn, helps preserve the self-concept which functions as an adaptive force (Jopling, 1997, p. 265) to change. Devaluing ML on an assumed lack of communication functions clearly overlooks its affective role.

2. ML retention is an indication of a lack of commitment to or integration in the host society.

This view assumes a single, static identity represented through one language. The monolingual perspective does not adequately conceptualise this situation as a sign of commitment to one's past and the histories associated with ML in addition to one's future in the new language.

3. Mother tongue retention hinders L2 acquisition.

Being and remaining bi/multilingual does not have to be at the expense of developing an additional language. In fact, additive bilingualism (Lambert, 1977) and transfer of skills in the presence of a sufficiently developed L1 (Cummins, 1984a) have been identified as key factors for successful SLA. A well-developed L1 also provides conceptual knowledge that facilitates comprehensible input in L2 (Krashen, 1996). In fact, the government strategy for a more coordinated approach to adult ESOL provision (Ministry of Education, 2003d) recognises migrants' "diversity of skills, cultural practices and understandings" (p. 3) as an enrichment to New Zealand's multicultural society, though the document falls short of explicitly mentioning multilingual skills in its vision. However, it does state that

while ESOL is an effective tool for encouraging participation in New Zealand society, it is recognised in the Strategy that this should not happen at the expense of learners' inheritance, culture and language. Rather, these aspects of cultural heritage should be used as a valuable basis for building new skills. (p. 6)

Thus, to the extent that promoting bilingualism can assist host language development, the approach contributes to a vision of migrants with good English language who, as a consequence, have better chances to integrate and make economic contributions. This approach fits in with the recent New Zealand government emphasis on higher levels of English language proficiency for skilled migrants, based on the expectation of better employment outcomes<sup>4</sup> and is evident in a comment by the current Minister of Immigration:

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<sup>4</sup> Overall IELTS score of 6.5 and 5 for principal and non-principal applicants respectively in the Skilled Migrant category (New Zealand Immigration Service, n.d.a)

The decision on the English language tests is based on the knowledge that language competence holds the key to successful engagement and settlement in a new country.

(Dalziell, 2002, p. A15)

This simplistic reliance on language scores alone does not necessarily guarantee the desired outcomes as it ignores the critical need for sociocultural conditions to facilitate that very engagement in society. For bi/multilinguals, successful engagement also entails interaction in ML, and in that sense, the validation and support of migrants' linguistic resources also facilitates settlement outcomes.

The conclusion drawn from the current study is that bi/multilingualism - that is not as a transitional stage only - is more conducive to the affective wellbeing of migrants. The continued use and relevance of ML provides a sense of stability and allows recent arrivals to reconcile their past with the current self, while it undergoes changes and adaptations towards future possible selves (Byrne, 1996; Lanehart, 1996b). For subsequent generations, the continuation of ML may contribute to a sense of continuity (Bruner, 1997; Hormuth, 1990; Leets & Giles, 1995).

#### *7.6.2.1 Towards an inclusive definition of bilingualism*

Bilingualism in New Zealand tends to be associated with English and *te reo māori*, reflecting the nation's bicultural heritage. What is officially a bilingual framework at the societal level has also come to denote individuals' skills in these two languages, particularly in the public

sector<sup>5</sup>. The growth in Māori language education represents an important achievement in the process of the revitalization of the indigenous language of New Zealand. Increasing recognition of the importance of proficiency in languages other than Māori or English has come with the country's growing internationalisation. The need to reconcile local with global needs represents a challenge which a major report attempted to address over a decade ago (Waite, 1992). It highlighted the need to communicate in more than one language, anticipating major personal, social, economic and cultural benefits through language resources likely to suit the country's trading needs. Although the report emphasized the need for policy to ensure an overall approach towards developing languages in New Zealand, both in terms of Māori revitalization and the maintenance of migrants' languages, no policy measures ever eventuated.

The question for migrants thus continues to be how they and their languages might fit into the existing binary system. A final interview comment was quite revealing with respect to this issue. The interviewee apologized (a statement in itself) for what she felt were "strong views" about Māori/Pakeha biculturalism and government "paying lip service" to multiculturalism by ignoring other ethnic groups and their aspirations. This comment goes right to the heart of the relationship migrants have with an officially bicultural and bilingual society where the country's policy of biculturalism meets face to face with an increasingly multicultural population. This situation presents a real barrier to the incorporation of migrants and their languages into the host society and, as Bartley (2003) suggests, highlights the need for a more

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<sup>5</sup> A case in point are job vacancies for 'bilingual teachers', which often refer to these two languages involved only in the body of the advert.

inclusive system of incorporation, which does not see biculturalism and multiculturalism “as binary opposites” (p. 48). In fact, language survival and/or revitalization are aspirations shared by both indigenous and ethnic communities, based on a commonality of bilingualism that can be advocated by both groups to address the very issues investigated in the present study – without clashing over a possible “rivalry of resources” as suggested by Spoonley (1993, p. 93). Joining forces on questions of linguistic recognition, bilingual education and the social, cultural, economic and personal benefits of being bilingual could help bring about multilingual outcomes. Having said this, resourcing implications do exist, especially when it comes to the educational sector, which further stresses the need for resourced measures supporting multilingualism. Whereas *te reo māori* has a powerful force behind it in the Treaty of Waitangi and existing revitalisation measures, the promotion of the *other* languages of New Zealand is bound to remain ineffective in the absence of policy and funding.

However, fostering linguistic diversity is not just a matter of policy, it also depends on the orientation towards bi/multilingualism of individuals and wider society. With changes in New Zealand’s ethnolinguistic make-up perceptions of a multilingual society appear to be shifting. More importantly, growing official recognition of the importance of language education is reflected in a recent recommendation by the Ministry of Education which promotes the learning of at least one other language in New Zealand (Ministry of Education, 2003a; Morning Report, 2003; One language not enough, 2003). Expected gains such as personal enrichment and better cross-cultural awareness are also increasingly recognized in the public domain with comments such as “too many of us are monolingual and it shows” (One language not enough, 2003, p. A14) revealing positive attitudes towards linguistic diversity. While ML were found to be under-utilized in New Zealand business by Watts and Trlin

(1999), recent developments indicate a possible change in this respect. For example, the Tourism New Zealand information line is now operated through a Wellington-based call centre, which deals with inquiries in both English and German (Johnson, 2003). Interestingly, a prediction of an inclusive multilingual future comes from a quarter associated with Māori interests; Ben Dalton, Crown Forestry Rentals Trust manager believes “New Zealanders will be able to switch between a range of languages with *te reo* and English being the main ones” (Tyler, 2003).

#### 7.6.2.1 *Investment in multilingualism as investment in settlement*

Immigration has primarily been regarded as a tool to stimulate economic growth. However, there are dimensions of wealth creation other than economic ones, as even the government department responsible for tracking and interpreting population changes acknowledges. New migrant cultures are expected to contribute to the country’s growing cross-cultural sense as part of the “richness” of a society (Statistics New Zealand, n.d.b). A range of other wealth indicators have been associated with human capital:

Wealth can embrace social, cultural, and economic capital, environmental resources, human capital, and the public and private institutions that guide our lives. [...] The social capital that contributes to society functioning effectively involves social behaviours, expectations and networks which have individual and aggregate benefits outside their ability to assist the market. (Statistics New Zealand, n.d. b ¶1)

The proposition that successful acquisition of the host society language is an investment in the individual, education and policy (McKay & Wong, 2000) can be extended to maintaining ML

as part of migrants' overall linguistic repertoire. If reducing monolingual tendencies indeed promotes rather than hinders the development of second language proficiency (Krashen, 1996), then an investment in bi/multilingualism, with its additional personal, social, cultural and economic benefits becomes an investment in settlement. Being bi/multilingual helps reverse the situation of conflicting investment (L1 vs. L2) to move towards investment in bilingualism and foster "bilingualism as a first language" (Swain, 1972). Bi/multilingualism as normal social practice may be inevitable as Tucker (2003) believes: "at some point multilingualism and language contact will come to be regarded both by specialists and by ordinary citizens as normative rather than exceptional" (p. 248).

The critical issue will be whether the relevance of ML translates into actual use and whether ML can be maintained for long enough for an affective *loss and recovery* process (Pavlenko & Lantolf, 2000, p. 167) to take effect during a migrant's acculturation process. The data in the current study suggest that preserving relevance helps maintain a sense of connectedness, and in that sense ML relevance helps preserve the ML-related self-concept and allows it to function as an adaptive force (Jopling, 1997, p. 265) in the face of and changing cultural and sociolinguistic affordances.

Pavlenko and Lantolf's (2000) Loss/Recovery model has been adapted here (see Table 60, cf. Table 3 in chapter 3) to show how a bilingual perspective de-emphasizes loss and instead stresses the potential for enrichment through bilingual outcomes (linguistic and affective). The notion of enrichment suggests a solid and sustainable outcome that culminates in the emergence of a new personal voice and way of seeing oneself, which links in with the concept of a merged or hybrid identity.

Table 60

## Phases of Linguistic and Affective Enrichment

Initial phase of contact	Phase of enrichment
Appropriation of others' voices (L2) ⇨	extension of one's linguistic repertoire & identity
Emergence of one's own new voice ⇨	emerging subjectivities (possible selves) through construction of the present based on the past
(Re)construction of the inner voice ⇨	continuous growth 'into' new positions and subjectivities via bi/multilingualism
Shifting L2/ML balances ⇨	continuity of ML/being-becoming bi/multilingual

Note. Adapted from Pavlenko and Lantolf (2000)

#### 7.6.2.2 Education and language teaching

Increasing ethnolinguistic diversity in New Zealand will place growing demands on the education system to cope with the needs of a bi/multilingual population. Linguistic and cultural diversity in New Zealand classrooms presents educationalists with a challenge they cannot ignore; that is to find ways to take L1 into account, even if the primary aim is to facilitate SLA. Van Lier (1996) pointed out that

in foreign language lessons the native language is usually either banned ... or only grudgingly tolerated as a last resort (in most communicative courses). Conversely, in the native language lesson a discussion of foreign language concepts and experiences is not considered relevant. (p. 19)

Yet, there has been growing recognition of the value of language learners' L1 in Applied Linguistics. (Storch & Wigglesworth, 2003) list a variety of functions for L1 in language

classrooms, including the construction of knowledge via collaborative dialogue (Swain & Lapkin, 2000), using private verbal thinking as cognitive/metacognitive tool in task learning (Centeno-Cortés & Jiménez Jiménez, 2004), promoting language awareness (Cole, 1998) and assisting the construction of learner identity (Norton Peirce, 1995).

Potential barriers between teachers and students (and their families) from different language backgrounds could be turned from a constraint into resource through increased language awareness by drawing on learners' total linguistic experience. This would certainly coincide with the aspirations expressed by the respondents in this research. There is evidence that wherever second or foreign language education is securely based on mother-tongue education the children do well in both. Simple substitution of or transition from the mother tongue for a second/foreign language is debilitating and can create cultural alienation and loss of identity (Pattanyak, 1991, p. viii). Given the potential for mutual enhancement of bilinguals' competencies that various research has suggested, continued monolingual bias towards the provision of ESOL only is therefore both restrictive and self-defeating.

Earlier discussion revealed how the evolution of a self-concept in a changing bilingual or multilingual context involves changing and developing different identities. However, migrants face a double jeopardy as neither their emerging host language skills nor their existing/changing/disappearing ML are accorded sufficient value. Identification through both languages via bilingualism and dual identity requires affordances for both languages, as has been argued in relation to literacy; "language and literacies are crucial symbolic resources for negotiating new relationships and for constructing new identities" (Martin-Jones, 2000, p. 150). It is important to create conditions with opportunities where these resources are

developed. This will allow ML speakers to be active agents, who can reflect on past events, analyse present perceptions, and shape future experience.

How we view and handle issues related to language change, language preservation, and language in education planning is ultimately influenced by whether society perceives language diversity as a threat or as a resource. Instead of seeing the linguistic resources of ML-background students as a problem to overcome educators can look to them as a valuable opportunity to facilitate students' growth of language in a more holistic way. A bilingual approach that benefits the development of English language skills, while giving a place to ML, would appear to offer a win-win situation. The message echoing through the data in the current study does indeed emphasize that ML needs a place and wider support because the parents were clearly struggling under the pressures of trying to achieve bilingual outcomes for their children without the necessary affordances.

#### *7.6.2.3 Configuring local multilingualism in the context of internationalisation*

*Transnationalism* has been identified as a reaction to local conditions which afford little or no role and value to multilingual repertoires (Bartley, 2003). Nevertheless, transnational capacities are after all facilitated through multilingual abilities and could thus transform into a proactive strategy with positive flow-on effects for the individual and society. The current study has shown the affective benefits of complementary identities accommodated by a bilingual self-concept. However, to reposition oneself as a legitimate speaker of ML in the host society context a more pluralistic approach to language in society is required at the macro-level and this will depend on abandoning what has largely been a monolingual notion

of language. With that, the transnational potential of migrants can evolve into international capacities and create benefits at the macro-level. If globalisation is played out most effectively through the complementary roles and utilization of English as an international language complemented by local, regional and other international languages, there is a case to be made for fostering multilingualism.

#### *7.6.2.4 Language maintenance and language policy*

Baker (2003) has called for a new ‘grounded’ approach to language planning. What linguistic ecology is New Zealand to have and what role is there for language policy? The existing multilingual skills base (Watts & Trlin, 1999), though of potential significance as an economic resource, has not captured the imagination of those who stand to benefit from a diverse workforce (Smith, 2000; EEO Trust, 2001). There is only token discourse about the advantages of speaking the languages of one’s trading partners. With the continued absence of language policy in New Zealand and only nominal support for languages other than English or Māori in the educational sector, retaining ML remains a community-based or even individual responsibility, relegated to minor importance by policy makers. While a language policy could foster conditions conducive to bi/multilingualism it would not function in isolation from the socio-economic context and the needs and aspirations of speakers themselves, as the following statement highlights:

The most elegant educational policies for minority groups are doomed to failure if they go counter to prevailing social forces, especially the economic situation. Language planning efforts are most likely to be successful when they are supported by economic

advantage or similar social incentives for the minority groups. (Bratt Paulston, 1988, p. 12)

In the foreword to Waite's (1992) report, the former Minister of Education Lockwood Smith endorsed the need to "adopt a coherent and comprehensive approach to all ... language issues" (p. 4). One of the fundamental points listed referred to "the possibilities for ethnic communities to maintain their own languages" (p. 4), separate from the need for all to learn English. Based on the findings of this study it is entirely appropriate to support the overall promotion and development of bi/multilingual abilities in the population, encompassing English, Māori and the languages of migrants. Commitment to multilingualism is what ethnic communities themselves would like to see promoted through policy measures (Prasad & van der Walt, 2002, p. 133).

The research has made clear the need for a holistic approach to ML, not only to understand and foster all dimensions involved in an individual's bilingualism but to deal with the wider implications of settlement and integration in a multilingual society. Recognising migrants' diverse linguistic repertoires will help reduce possible stress and increase the potential for wellbeing in a culture, which allows the integration process of new migrants to define their past, present and future self.

The final words to conclude this chapter will help weave together the linguistic and affective strands of being a migrant. The words highlight migrants' linguistic and cultural contribution

to the host society as well as their own sense of self as the essence of their being– through remaining bilingual:

Don't ever apologise for your heritage, celebrate it and find ways where it can enrich your new homeland. Don't be afraid to teach your children your native tongue whilst at the same time teach them the main medium for communicating with others. Never allow anybody to strip you of your sense of selfworth and somebodyness because you are a migrant or a refugee. Dignity is what you carry in your inner being, not a label others bestow upon you or strip from you. (Fortuin, 2002).

## CHAPTER EIGHT            CONCLUSION

If, through the findings of the study, one major theme has emerged, it is this: migrants' experiences, perceptions and aspirations are complex and intricately interwoven with their languages. This complexity finds its expression in the multidimensional nature of ML proficiency and varying patterns of autonomous and/or pragmatic orientations to MLP. These patterns are a reflection of migrants' expectations of and concessions to the broader sociocultural context. However, being proficient was also revealed as a deeply subjective experience that manifests itself in *feeling proficient*, an affective quality of MLP of critical importance to ML speakers' language-related self-concept.

The issues this research has helped bring to the fore are epitomized in three key areas:

1. The interconnectedness and dynamic nature of ML matters.
2. The affective quality of ML and its significance for migrants' continuity of being.
3. The depth and diversity of feelings and motivations relating to ML and MLP.

The overall insight gained through these themes is that ML is interconnected with people's past, present and future and is manifest in their overall sense of self. It would be a fallacy to assume that migrants' prospects as well-integrated and productive members of society are solely dependent on gaining citizenship and mastering the host society language. These two factors are crucial but they may not necessarily be sufficient, at least in terms of migrants'

social-psychological adjustment and functioning. The findings made here indicate that a different, more holistic perspective is needed.

### **8.1 THE NEED FOR A SHIFT IN THINKING**

Fitting into different, at times contradictory worlds is a comprehensive and consuming process. It involves fluctuating language use patterns and proficiencies, mirrored by an ongoing negotiation of identity and the (re)construction of self and its relationship to a new sociocultural environment. In view of the complexities involved in this process, a more holistic approach to dealing with language matters in migration contexts is critically important, in order to create linkages across micro and macro dimensions, towards positive outcomes for individuals, communities and society. The findings of the present study indicate the critical need for an accommodating sociolinguistic ecology. This would help migrants conceive of themselves as multicultural citizens and legitimate speakers of all the languages in their linguistic repertoires, instead of being perceived - by themselves and others - as inadequate second language speakers with unrecognized ML skills. Clearly, this has to be an integrated effort by researchers, policy makers and relevant stakeholders alike, guided by a shift in thinking about migrants and diversity.

### **8.2 CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE STUDY**

What the research has highlighted is the connectedness of language issues with the overall socio-cultural conditions migrants find themselves in. Their linguistic needs and behaviours are ultimately dependent on and produce responses to those conditions. This insight was

gained through a grounded approach and an in-depth exploration of migrants' own perceptions of the concepts under study. The user-based approach served the purposes of the research in that it helped achieve a more emic perspective and promoted stakeholder agency, particularly in the research design phase. This approach generated a large range of views across a diverse spectrum of groups, thus maximizing the identification of relevant patterns and themes and rendered the findings more meaningful to stakeholders. It also informs theory in new ways by promoting "participant-relevant sensitivity towards fundamental concepts" (Firth & Wagner, 1997, p. 286, cited in Pavlenko, 2000).

### 8.2.1 Another view of proficiency

A key contribution this research has to offer is an operationalisation of proficiency as a multifaceted concept (Figure 57), integrating an affective dimension which supports the notion of MLP as part of a person's linguistic self-concept (Figure 56). Thus MLP can be conceptualized as a matter of *being* as much as *knowing* (Figure 8). While this broader notion may be more cumbersome in terms of measuring MLP, it increases construct validity and highlights the complex meanings attached to proficiency in fluid multilingual situations, shaped through the interplay between autonomous and pragmatic orientations. The continuum of autonomous and pragmatic orientations to MLP (Figure 4) is not only indicative of processes of continuity and change but the real-life dilemma of migrants having to reconcile ideal expectations with actual conditions not conducive to sustaining ML.

The research investigated the concept of language proficiency as a matter of conceptualization, that is from the perspective of ML speakers with multilingual proficiencies in fluid sociolinguistic environments. In doing so the study problematized the conventional

adoption of an essentially monolingual view of proficiency, which was argued to be inconsistent with a linguistically diverse context.

### **8.2.2 A key connection: proficiency and self-concept**

In assuming a conceptual link between proficiency and self-concept the study helped reveal affective dimensions pertaining to both notions as each involves aspects of self-perception. After all, communication involves self-disclosure. The way someone's proficiency is perceived - by self or others - may have a more critical impact on people with fluctuating linguistic repertoires, especially recent migrants whose host language is still emerging. An important implication of this is that for individuals the *feeling of being proficient* can act as an important self-sustaining mechanism, which nevertheless requires validation by others.

### **8.2.3 A key distinction: self and identity**

The differentiation between the two notions of self and identity was crucial in revealing the role of ML at a deeper level of self-perception and self-construction. The findings from this study point to the fundamental importance of the need for migrants' *continuity of being* (Fishman, 2001), a powerful notion which helped explain the crucial role language plays in affording some sense of stability and self-consistency in situations of change. The focus on *becoming* a new member of the society via the host language is critical but must be informed by the knowledge that the process of *becoming* encompasses the accommodation of existing and emerging identities and the continuation of *being* via ML.

The complexities involved in the process of being and becoming were also apparent at the level of labelled identity, which has implications for the use, measurement and interpretation

of identity. For example, migrants' *de jure* identification through citizenship does not necessarily correspond with their more multidimensional *de facto* identity or identities. Identity labels are convenient but fail to capture the complex processes involved in reconciling contrasting identities, as evidenced in respondents' preference for qualitative labels of their choice. The present study offers a lens through which people's adherence to their pre-migration sense of self can be viewed and explained by the profound need of the individual for a sense of self-consistency which does not contradict but facilitates commitment to the host society. Dealing with these complexities requires a better understanding of the critical contribution ML has to make in constructing identity and self.

#### **8.2.4 Interdisciplinarity**

The integration of linguistic, socio-cultural and social-psychological perspectives in this study contributed to an interdisciplinary approach and promoted an overall ecological view of the complex and dynamic processes associated with matters being a bi/multilingual migrant. The construct of self provided a crucial tool to unify the different disciplinary angles and provided an integrative perspective from which to examine ML speakers' notions of proficiency and self as part of an overall post-migration experience.

### **8.3 IMPLICATIONS**

The complexity of issues revealed in the present study indicates multiple implications for the individual, communities and society and areas associated with these three levels.

### 8.3.1 Implications for the individual

The investigation of notions of proficiency and self-concept in the present study had a clear focus on the individual, aimed at bringing the person into view because it is the individual who experiences both the immediate and long-term effects of migration. Being a migrant often means being different by virtue of one's culture and language and being bi/multilingual with changing and emerging identities in an environment dominated by a monolingual worldview<sup>1</sup>. The findings of this research indicate that for an individual the experience of being different can be an empowering one, if the necessary validation is available.

The research illustrated the potential for personal growth through a flexible self, able to accommodate change and emerging identities by transcending into something new. Migrants should have an advantage in this respect. The very fact that people migrate (with the exception of refugees) is an indication of their willingness to widen their horizons, have new experiences and take personal and professional risks, based on their personality, aspirations and value systems. These characteristics exist pre-migration, and ignoring those very strengths and values, even if symbolically by devaluing migrants' cultural and linguistic capital, may have serious repercussions. At the individual level the implications for the social-psychological wellbeing of a person may be serious and can lead to alienation, isolation and low self-esteem. Treating immigrants as latent monolinguals when they are people with multilingual repertoires denies them the opportunity to participate and thereby maximize their personal, social and economic potential – for their own and society's benefit.

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<sup>1</sup> At least in societies with dominant languages, e.g. English-speaking contexts such as New Zealand.

### 8.3.2 Implications for stakeholder communities

The findings of the present study have implications for the way communities deal with matters of language. Ethnic communities play a pivotal role in mediating between the needs of the personal and the collective. Not only do they represent potential communities of practice necessary to carry functions and uses of ML, but they also function as advocates for the needs and aspirations of their members. They are in a key position to raise awareness among their own members and the wider community of the nature of sociolinguistic change, dislocations and social-psychological impacts. This will be important to further the understanding that language issues are contextually grounded and thus not exclusively owned by migrants. To this end it will be crucial for umbrella organisations such as NZFEC<sup>2</sup> and CLANZ<sup>3</sup> to work closely with government and non-government agencies towards joint objectives, as for example in seeking funding for language maintenance projects. Ethnic organizations themselves emphasise the need to invest in languages (NZFEC conference declarations, e.g. Panny, 1997; Prasad & van der Walt, 2002) and an overall “commitment to multilingualism” in general policy and the education sector (Prasad & van der Walt, 2002, p. 133).

Local communities are equally important stakeholders in the sense that migrants who live in those communities contribute to and depend on their communities' socio-cultural and economic health. In fact, requirements under the Local Government Act 2002 have put more pressure on local authorities to promote sustainability through fostering social, economic, environmental, and cultural wellbeing in a strategic way via a *Long Term Council Community*

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<sup>2</sup> New Zealand Federation of Ethnic Councils Inc.

<sup>3</sup> Community Languages Association New Zealand

*Plan* "to provide for democratic and effective local government that recognises the diversity of New Zealand communities" (govt.nz, 2004, ¶1). Local councils have already adopted varying approaches to facilitating awareness of ethnic communities' issues and ways of addressing their needs, for instance, under the wider umbrella of managing growth and diversity towards *Livable Communities* (Auckland City, n.d.) or by identifying the ethnic sector as a *community of interest* as a target for development (Hamilton City, n.d.; Palmerston North City, 2002). The latter cases in fact refer to specific initiatives and outcomes such as cross-cultural awareness among the wider community as well as cultural and linguistic maintenance.

The provisions of the Local Government Act 2002 offer ethnic communities an avenue for input and tangible initiatives. Local models of partnership and support may ultimately be more effective in facilitating inclusive outcomes because they offer locally relevant solutions, for example by supporting ML in libraries, schools or neighbourhoods. In this sense, fostering ML becomes part of local capacity building, through supporting community-based groups and the voluntary sector where additional support structures such as the recently formed Community Sector Taskforce may assist (Taskforce News, 2004). This approach would inject practical meaning into the abstract slogan "think globally, act locally".

### **8.3.3 Language maintenance**

Language maintenance generally serves the purpose of retaining or revitalizing function, form and patterns of language use and, connected with that, preservation of cultural identity. The findings of this research suggest another key dimension at the individual level, that is the continuity of being on the basis of an evolving sense of self and linguistic self-concept. Considering the strength of emotional attachment to ML expressed by many respondents, the

potential emotional costs of devaluation or loss of ML is considerable, particularly for marginalized or isolated migrant groups such as women, the elderly, and refugees.

However, there are also important implications at the macro level as ML maintenance is as much to do with building social and cultural capital and the evolution of transnational/world citizens as it is to do with ensuring personal and cultural continuity. Language maintenance efforts thus serve capacity building in a wider sense too, by promoting the cultural capital of individuals and communities in a society where people can move between worlds. From this perspective, the purpose of language maintenance is not necessarily limited to the aspirations of individuals and specific ethnolinguistic groups, but it also promotes multilingual skills as a societal asset. Such a shift in thinking about language maintenance strengthens the argument for resourcing language nests and teaching of ML in schools, instead of leaving this heavy responsibility to parents and ethnic communities themselves.

#### *8.3.3.1 Language maintenance: some small steps in the New Zealand context*

Many stakeholders assign fundamental importance to upholding ML proficiency through community-based initiatives, which often operate against huge odds and are dependent on the initiative of individuals and parent funding. These initiatives afford ML a visibility, status and empowerment they would not otherwise have. Nevertheless, there are signs of wider recognition as in the case of the Wellington Hindi School, recently acknowledged by a local government award for “voluntary educational and child and youth development” (Narayan, 2003, p.13). The school’s development of a 5-year curriculum includes development of

literacy and may provide a useful model for others, although some ethnic groups may not have sufficient critical mass even to get started without help.

Fostering ML maintenance as a wider goal will require initiatives, which take matters beyond the needs of individual ethnolinguistic groups. This requires a more strategic approach, as illustrated in the following examples:

- a) The Multicultural Centre for Learning and Support Services, Wellington (MCLASS) has provided practical support for community language teachers for several years, for example, by initiating community language teacher workshops (Ethnic link, 2002) to provide some basic training needs and networking opportunities and by appointing a Mother Tongue Education Facilitator in 2003. The agency is also proposing a one-day strand for community language teachers at the Community Languages and ESOL (CLESOL) 2004<sup>4</sup> conference to promote professional development for those involved in mother-tongue teaching in a multicultural society (S. Narayan, personal communication, January 13, 2003).
  
- b) The Community Languages Association New Zealand (CLANZ) was founded in 2001 with the goal to provide language maintenance groups with a voice through national representation. CLANZ aims to develop a national database of community language

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<sup>4</sup> Biannual national conference, organised by the New Zealand Tesol organisation (TESOLANZ); the 2004 conference theme is "Language, Community, Diversity: Hearing Every Voice".

schools and to provide networking opportunities (Sollitt-Morris, 2002), for example through featuring guest writers, community language groups, and teaching tips.

In the absence of a languages policy in New Zealand, official support for language maintenance efforts remains slim. One key component for the development of a more effective and less *ad hoc* way of supporting language maintenance is the availability of qualified teachers. In a survey of the training needs for community language teachers in Auckland Shameem (2003) identified the need for a more language-based curriculum, which promotes the use of language beyond classroom functions and cultural maintenance and has a stronger focus on literacy skills. A curriculum of this kind would support the diversity of functions and uses which this research revealed as dimensions of ML proficiency. An education programme for community language teachers of the kind Shameem advocates is critically needed, if language maintenance is not to continue as an activity almost completely dependent on efforts in the community and the home. It would also be a fitting response to the expectations and aspirations many respondents expressed in this research, including the continuity of literacy and the upholding of standards to ensure the retention of ML for future generations. A more formal approach to maintaining ML supported by trained teachers would foster MLP to complement autonomous motivations which strive for educational standards. It would, at the same time, facilitate constructive pragmatism, open to the creative development of ML in the local New Zealand context.

### 8.3.3.2 *Being pragmatic – survival strategy or vicious cycle?*

The finding of a continuum of autonomous and pragmatic orientations to MLP with complex underlying motivations, sometimes held simultaneously, reflects the dynamic nature of language proficiency and a reality where different people follow different pathways. It also presents an interesting conundrum. On the one hand, a pragmatic orientation can be a proactive force to validate emerging local needs and norms and liberate ML speakers from prescriptive norms that may have lost relevance in the migrant context, but this requires continued functional relevance and use. On the other hand, people's pragmatism more often than not represents a reaction to lacking affordances for ML. Even if people wanted to be more autonomous, for instance by sustaining ML literacy, conditions are not favourable. It is therefore important to differentiate between constructive and non-constructive pragmatism, a distinction which may empower migrants to work creatively with the former but resist the latter as a key obstacle to language maintenance efforts.

The present study has provided insights into migrants' aspirations for ML, which underscore the vital importance of language maintenance, irrespective of variation between groups. It is obviously impossible to accommodate, support and resource all languages equally in a linguistically diverse context. What does need to be addressed, however, are the unfavourable socio-cultural conditions driven by monolingual attitudes and practices and lacking validation for multilingualism. A shift in thinking about language maintenance therefore has to involve a better understanding of its multiple benefits and linkages between maintaining ML, sociolinguistic and psychological processes connected to adjustment and integration.

The sustainability of language maintenance relies on the cultural and linguistic continuity of future generations. However, young migrants' needs and aspirations may be quite different from those of their parents. This is especially true for those young migrants not born in New Zealand or who came as young children. Interestingly, the first NZFEC Youth Forum in 2002<sup>5</sup> indicated a commitment to ML remarkably similar to that revealed through the present study. The forum declaration included the following key points (P. Narayan, personal communication, September 9, 2002):

1. The need for conditions to allow migrants to assert their right to speak/uphold their language and culture.
2. Languages in the community should be accepted, valued and supported.
3. More languages should be available at schools, with opportunities to learn minor languages.
4. Language schools need to help prevent loss of languages.

The challenge for New Zealand society as a whole is to nurture the commitment these young people are showing to their cultural heritage and to grow their potential for a multicultural and multilingual generation.

#### **8.3.4 Implications for society**

The findings of the current study support the general conclusion that ML plays a role beyond its communicative function for individuals and communities alike. ML can make crucial contributions to the emotional wellbeing of its speakers, and there is thus a critical need to create an environment where cultural and linguistic difference is not only celebrated as a “nice

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<sup>5</sup> Wellington, September 2002, with delegates from different New Zealand regions.

idea”<sup>6</sup> but where multilingual skills are valued, actively encouraged and aspired to at all levels. This approach will help promote tangible steps towards an inclusive, cohesive and multilingual society, while at once promoting the successful integration of migrants.

### **8.3.5 Settlement, integration and productive diversity**

The current official approach to migrant settlement in New Zealand contributes to a compartmentalized view of migrants. This is particularly reflected in the sole reliance on higher English skills levels to promote improved settlement outcomes, following the formula "all will be fine with sufficient English". While English language has paramount importance for social and economic participation, it does not in itself guarantee that participation without the relevant affordances. Moreover, the English-only approach masks migrants' other language needs and the recognition of their multilingual abilities. Integration at the expense of ML is clearly not perceived as a positive outcome by many migrants themselves. After all, immigration aims at increasing human capital, an outcome which depends on the successful harnessing of migrants' social, cultural and economic contributions. Monolingual solutions are unlikely to foster this outcome effectively.

From the perspective of this study, settlement is essentially a process of being and becoming. There are thus clear implications for the conceptualization and handling of integration and settlement, specifically regarding the way language matters are dealt with. Aimed at helping

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<sup>6</sup> Generally, New Zealanders appear to have embraced the non-threatening aspects of cultural diversity; e.g. a large majority was found to appreciate increased vibrancy and access to ethnic food in their communities (Quality of life report, 2003).

migrants' transition into the new context, it must at the same time build on what migrants bring - their skills, their languages their histories, that is the complete package - to achieve positive spin-offs for society as a whole. The integration of migrants can only ever be effective where it is inclusive of what people bring with them<sup>7</sup> - unless they themselves make a choice to forget their pasts, for instance, due to traumatic experiences in the case of refugees.

Official discourse recognizes the benefits of diversity in the form of growth of human capital (e.g. Ministry of Education, 2003a; New Zealand Immigration Service, n.d.b; Statistics New Zealand 2002b, n.d.b). Both the Associate Minister of Education and the Prime Minister have publicly acknowledged the disadvantages of monolingualism with reference to a revised, more language-focussed curriculum (Morning Report, 2003, June 16). Yet, linguistic diversity continues to rate low or even arouses suspicion among the general public.

ML represents linguistic capital. Its potential for socio-economic, cultural, cognitive and psychological benefits need conditions where bilingualism is cultivated rather than being treated as a transitional phenomenon on the road to monolingualism. This requires linguistic investment (Figure 10) aimed at bi/multilingualism as settlement outcome, which ties in with Baetens Beardsmore's (2003, p. 24) argument that integration is more likely to succeed by encouraging rather than discouraging bilingualism among migrant populations. Society as a whole stands to gain positive outcomes from the spin-offs additive bilingualism can have for individuals, and as such it represents a measure of excellence as the following statement suggests:

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<sup>7</sup> With the exception of cultural practices contravening local law or human rights.

Bilingual societies need not be more unstable or disadvantaged than unilingual ones. On the contrary, the number of bi- and multilingual speakers a country produces may be seen as an indicator of its educational standards, economic competitiveness and cultural vibrancy. Clearly, bilingualism may be a condition to be aspired to and cherished, rather than one to be prevented and remedied. (Dewaele et al., 2003, p.2)

The linkages between monolingual/monocultural bias and unsuccessful settlement outcomes have serious implications for migrant employment. If linguistic diversity in the guise of L2 English accents and switching between languages continues to be perceived as a risk or threat (Henderson, 2002), employers may find themselves out of step with an increasingly diverse customer base. The failure to secure employment has severe implications for migrants' socio-economic integration and flies in the face of the declared aims of skilled immigration. The ultimate irony, it seems, is that the very factors expected to enrich the nation through immigration represent a major barrier to achieving the expected gains.

Migrants with little or no English (see Appendix B) face the highest barriers in terms of access and participation in society. This has serious implications for services provision and results in increased interpretation needs to overcome communication barriers, particularly in the health sector (Holt et al., 2001). The provision of competent and ethical interpretation facilitates a form of investment; not only does it fulfil a critical need but it promotes the professional use of ML resources. This, furthermore, presents opportunities for the training and recognition of ML speakers as professional interpreters, rather than relying on them as volunteers.

### 8.3.6 Implications for theory and practice

The current study has attempted to illuminate the conceptualization of MLP against the backdrop of a fundamental contradiction between a stable or monolithic concept of linguistic proficiency and the dynamics of sociolinguistic change. A monolingual view of the world perpetuating the idealized native speaker as arbiter of correctness contrasts with the multilingual realities of a globalised world, where people move, and local needs and norms emerge together with different patterns of language use and function. While the need to acquire the language of the host society is an absolute imperative, especially for recent arrivals, the often exclusive focus on migrants as L2 learners by policy makers, SLA research and teaching professionals perpetuates a monolingual bias that denies ML users the recognition and utilization of their multilingual repertoires.

The adoption of a more integrated theoretical perspective and holistic approach to migrant language issues will help promote research and theory that takes into account the broader conditions arising from complex sociolinguistic, cultural, psychological and economic factors interrelated within specific local contexts. The data from this study illustrate the often deep frustration of many participants about an environment not conducive to their efforts to use and maintain ML. Their own testimonies tie in with what the ecological approach and socio-cultural theory have emphasized as a crucial need for L2 learners, that is opportunities to engage with the target language environment through social interaction (Pavlenko & Lantolf, 2000; Van Lier, 1996). In multilingual contexts both L2 and ML are legitimate *target languages*, and access to both is needed to afford a sociolinguistic environment to sustain an overall linguistic repertoire and to optimize cognitive as well as affective gains. The requisite theoretical frameworks exist across a range of areas, including transfer of skills, bilingual

processing, cross-linguistic influences, bilingual literacy and additive bilingualism (e.g. Cummins, 1984a; Grosjean, 1992; Herdina & Jessner, 2002; Hornberger, 1994; Kecskes & Papp, Lambert, 1977 2000; Swain & Lapkin, 1991). What is needed is the commitment to bring theory and practice closer together.

Although not all L2 learners are migrants, the case of migrants as L2 learners highlights the need to abandon a monolingual-by-default approach to language learners as “deficient native speakers” of L2 and to see them instead as whole people with linguistic repertoires transcending those of monolinguals. This shift would also help refocus on the learner away from a narrow focus on the learning process in SLA (Ellis, 2001). There are clear implications for applied linguistics, particularly in terms of the way SLA is conceptualized. Although SLA aspects are outside the brief of the current study, the findings lend strong support for a holistic approach to bilinguals. The proposed shift in thinking would promote a view of SLA as a process where learners reposition themselves as emerging or existing bilinguals with developing L2 abilities. This view may ultimately be more motivational and self-sustaining than a deficit-orientated perception of learners as partial monolinguals.

The Esol Hometutor Service in New Zealand recognizes learners’ first languages in a small but very meaningful way, through the provision of a multilingual greetings poster and community language cards recommended for teachers to “create a welcoming and inclusive learning space” (Esol Hometutor Service, n.d., ¶3)). Grass root steps such as these need to be encouraged and guided by a theory which recognizes acculturation as a two-way process, one where both L2 acquisition and ML play a role because both entail a struggle for identity. “Language professionals need to understand and address broader social inequities that have

concomitant effects on the investments that immigrant families have in both the mother tongue and the target language” (Norton, 2000, p. 458).

#### 8.3.6.1 Schools

The educational sector is in a unique position to help promote multilingual outcomes and foster the kind of pluralist approach necessary to increase inclusiveness beyond the vague celebratory stage. Schools are a microcosm of New Zealand's diverse ethnolinguistic makeup, and this has implications for pedagogy in terms of dealing with the increasing diversity of learners. Foreign languages, *te reo Māori* immersion or bilingual streams, and ESOL have formed the backbone of language education in schools, with ML conspicuously absent, despite the complementary role it was officially accorded by Waite over a decade ago (1992):

Teaching English as a second language and supporting first language maintenance must be recognised in the education sector as two sides of the same coin. English does not need to be learnt at the expense of the first language; the goal is to have students who achieve high levels of proficiency in both languages. (Part A, p. 27)

The 2003 *Ministry of Education Curriculum Report* signals a shift in thinking, with a recommendation for learning at least one language in addition to English to develop local and global citizenship skills (Ministry of Education, 2003a). The revised principles underlying the curriculum promote an increased focus on language, which aims to "contribute to developing the human capability necessary for a prosperous and inclusive New Zealand society" (Ministry of Education, 2003a, ¶1). The rationale underlying the recommendation for enhancing

language learning is based on a number of educational benefits cited by the Ministry of Education, (2003b):

1. Learning languages is a key to students developing greater understanding of the cultures of others.
2. Relative to other countries, New Zealand has very low levels of language learning.
3. Language education helps to foster bicultural and multicultural awareness.
4. The teaching of languages supports literacy in English and forms part of a broad general education for all students.
5. There is general agreement amongst the New Zealand languages community that years 7-10 are the most appropriate years for any significant *investment in languages teaching* (emphasis added).

These benefits are described in relation to learning languages in general, yet the essential learning areas in the language curriculum, while they provide for inclusion of ML, are divided into two separate areas (Ministry of Education, 2003b):

The essential learning area Language and Languages/Te Kōrero me ngā Reo should be two separate learning areas - English/*te reo Māori* and Languages. Additional Languages include foreign, community and heritage languages and second language learning in English and in *te reo Māori*.

This distinction is reflective of the obligation to foster *te reo Māori* as an official language of New Zealand under the Māori Language Act 1987 (Māori Language Commission, n.d.) and may assist in allocating marked resources. However, it also creates the impression of a hierarchical approach, where an amalgamated *languages* category exists to carry the rest, with

no recognition of the vastly different needs of, for example, foreign language, community or heritage language learners.

Initiatives by individual schools are beginning to emerge<sup>8</sup>, but the new curriculum is not envisaged until 2005, and it will only make a difference in the long term, particularly with regard to teacher training implications. Better support of bilingualism and language diversity in schools must be addressed through pre-service teacher education Smith (forthcoming), the need for which has also been acknowledged by the Ministry of Education. Recommendation 11 of the curriculum report (2003a) identifies the need for pedagogies that enable teachers to "better recognise and cater for diversity in all of the essential learning areas and nga tino wahanga ako" (Ministry of Education, 2003c, ¶3). However, the details essentially refer to Māori bilingual needs such as resource development and teacher fluency. ML speakers as the country's existing multilingual skills base (Watts & Trlin, 1999) have been ignored as an already available resource that could be targeted for teacher training.

### 8.3.7 Implications for policy

New Zealand, unlike countries such as Australia or Canada, has no language or population policy to address the needs of an increasingly multiethnic society. The ultimate goal of any

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<sup>8</sup> For example, Porirua College introduced a Māori and Pasifika languages programme for Year 9-10 students and beyond and received a commendation from the Race Relations Commissioner for its positive contribution to race relations in New Zealand. (Human Rights Commission/Te Kāhui Tika Tangata, personal communication, 27 January 2004). *First Voice* (n.d.) represents an ongoing project to foster first languages through children's writing in ML. Initiated by Anne Somerville, Massey University College of Education (Palmerston North Campus) and a group of local educators, the project also promotes teacher sensitivity to the needs of ML speakers.

planning process is implementation; thus, most crucially, goals and outcomes need to be matched with strategic approaches and resourcing to facilitate active and productive diversity. Whereas, for example, the *Ethnic Perspectives* policy framework (Office of Ethnic Affairs, 2002) represents an important stepping stone towards promoting ethnic perspectives in policy development, including language matters, there is a lack of recognition across other policy areas of issues relating to ethnolinguistic diversity. The document identifies outcomes “to affirm the government’s commitment to the ethnic sector and to indicate government priorities and expectations of what it hopes to achieve for ethnic communities” (p. 16). Yet, the realization of these outcomes requires more policy (p. 17). If policy recommendations are not to remain a mere wish list, more tangible steps need to be taken to achieve the expected benefits of diversity. Any policy on language matters must also be guided by a grounded approach and be in tune with local needs and initiatives developed by groups and organizations (see 8.3.2).

Given New Zealand’s bicultural heritage, an important implication of the study’s findings is the question of reconciling the needs and aspirations of ethnic minority communities in New Zealand vis-à-vis the bicultural framework based on the Treaty of Waitangi (Waitangi Tribunal, 2002). Language may provide a helpful point of departure for approaching this very complex issue as it offers commonalities through shared experiences such as language shift and loss, threatened identity, the emotional and spiritual importance of language and the sense of continuity with one’s past, present and future. The Māori Language Act 1987 states that the provisions of the act shall not “affect the right of any other linguistic community in New Zealand to use the language of that community” (Māori Language Commission, n.d.). Of course this statement refers only to the equal right to use ML, not to its recognition or

resourcing, for example in the education sector (see 8.6). Yet, the present study has highlighted that sustaining the use of languages cannot be separated from the need to have the relevant affordances. It has also shown that too much is at stake to leave matters to sort themselves out.

A critical step towards addressing this issue is a national strategy, aimed at investment in languages overall in order to promote and sustain the country's linguistic resources and develop multilingual repertoires as a measure of excellence in a global world. The challenges are too big to be met by school and community-based initiatives alone, and a more comprehensive approach is essential to ensure more effective language programmes (Glynn, 2003; Peddie, 2003). This would also help foster positive attitudes to bi/multilingualism in general and thus complement New Zealand's official Māori/English bilingualism, rather than conflict with it. Ultimately, this issue is a political one, involving crucial decisions to be made regarding the definition of New Zealand's socio-political character and its ethnolinguistic environment. The need for debate on this matter is pressing, and it has to be informed by all stakeholders, including ethnic communities. Most importantly, it has to translate into inclusive and tangible policies and practices.

#### **8.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY AND FUTURE RESEARCH**

The research presented in this thesis is constrained by a number limitations including the following:

- The sample drawn for the research was not random and cannot be regarded as representative. Therefore the findings cannot be generalized to the wider population of migrants.
- The sole focus on ML may contradict the underlying theme of bi/multilingualism and the problematization of monolingual bias. However, the approach was a pragmatic choice and allowed for more emphasis on gaining insights relating specifically to ML.
- The respondents' English language proficiency may represent an important intervening variable, which was neither measured nor taken into consideration. It is conceivable that respondents with weak English ability may find it difficult to express self-dimensions through English and are therefore more likely to prefer the continued use of ML for this purpose.
- The lack of gender data meant that an opportunity to explore possible gender differences was missed. Gender factors may play out differently across ethnocultural groups with a possible impact on the validity of the findings.
- Children's views were only represented indirectly through their parents' responses. While parents' thoughts at least provided some level of insight and understanding of parent concerns and pressures, migrant children's unique needs and challenges associated with straddling cultures and generations warrant separate attention.
- Refugees were subsumed under the migrant label. It is acknowledged that refugees and voluntary migrants are different categories and cannot necessarily be generalized about.
- The assumption that self-concept subsumes identity or a pool of possible identities, while conceivable on the strength of the evidence, precludes a relationship in the

opposite direction. Nonetheless, this approach assisted in highlighting the notion of a deeper sense of subjectivity and its relationship with ML.

The insights gained through the present study have helped identify multiple implications, from which new questions arise. Future research in relation to migrants, their languages and their integration needs to address a number of major needs, including the following:

1. provide a better understanding of the long-term implications of migration and its attendant issues through longitudinal research designs such as the Longitudinal Immigration Survey in New Zealand (LisNZ) (New Zealand Immigration Service, 2003) or the Massey University New Settlers Programme (n.d);
2. take account of the impact of migration and settlement experiences on specific sub-groups such as children, refugees, women and the elderly, for example through comparative studies and case studies;
3. examine the relationship between host language acquisition and language maintenance in specific local contexts, including New Zealand;
4. examine the social-psychological aspects of the process of *becoming* in the second language learning process through the notion of *self* to complement work on learner identity;
5. devise interdisciplinary research to further the understanding of the interplay between socio-cultural, psychological and economic environments and migration outcomes;
6. develop educational practice through research into teaching linguistically diverse students, including action research to explore practical ways for drawing on ML to enrich language and cultural awareness and facilitate L2 learning;

7. develop more valid assessment tools, e.g. survey or census questions on migrants' language abilities;
8. find avenues for improving the interface between research findings and stakeholder communities (e.g. more publications in newsletters such as Watts & White, 2002).

### 8.5 TOWARDS AN INCLUSIVE SOCIETY VIA A MULTILINGUAL OUTCOMES

A more holistic way of thinking about migrants and their languages is consistent with the principles of inclusivity. An inclusive society is about the equality of social relations, access and participation. Aspiring to this goal in an ethnolinguistically diverse environment is a tall order and must extend to linguistic equality, given the findings of this research. Fostering a sense of *being different* as a bi/multilingual person or community aims at empowering ethnic minorities and is a crucial tool to counteract the potentially detrimental effects of multiple discontinuities in the experience of an individual.

Ultimately, an inclusive society will be a more sustainable society. To this end, members of society need to embrace the concept of diversity at different levels, including different ways of communicating. Investing in bi/multilingualism at the individual, community and national level, it is concluded, is most likely to advance ML into valued and utilized community languages in a multilingual community of practice.

*Language adds to the diversity and richness of New Zealand.*

*I dread the day when only English will be spoken.*

(Survey participant)

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## APPENDICES

**APPENDIX A**      **Population characteristics in New Zealand:**  
**Census 2001 Top 50 Ethnicity Categories at Level 4 of the Classification**

2001 Categories	1991	1996	2001	Percentage of Change		
				1991-1996	1996-2001	1991-2001
New Zealand European	2,618,445	2,496,552	2,696,724	-4.7	8.0	3.0
Māori	434,847	523,374	526,281	20.4	0.6	21.0
Samoan	85,743	101,757	115,017	18.7	13.0	34.1
Chinese nfd	44,136	78,663	100,680	78.2	28.0	128.1
Indian nfd	29,820	40,404	60,210	35.5	49.0	101.9
Cook Island Māori nfd	37,233	46,092	51,486	23.8	11.7	38.3
Tongan	23,175	31,392	40,719	35.5	29.7	75.7
English	53,325	281,895	35,082	428.6	-87.6	-34.2
Dutch/Netherlands	24,732	47,571	27,504	92.3	-42.2	11.2
European nfd (incl Other European nfd and European nec)	11,934	3,009	23,598	-74.8	-40.4	97.7
Australian	23,967	53,625	20,784	123.7	-61.2	-13.3
Niuean	14,427	18,474	20,148	28.1	9.1	39.7
Korean	930	12,753	19,026	1271.3	-49.2	1945.8
British nfd	16,659	729	16,572	-95.6	2173.3	-0.5
South African	2,007	6,762	14,913	236.9	120.5	643.0
Scottish (Scots)	14,094	107,007	13,785	659.2	-87.1	-2.2
Irish	7,392	73,047	11,706	888.2	-84.0	58.4
Filipino	4,917	8,190	11,091	66.6	35.4	125.6
Japanese	2,970	7,458	10,023	151.1	34.4	237.5
German	4,611	13,410	9,057	190.8	-32.5	96.4
American (US)	6,663	7,977	8,472	19.7	6.3	27.2
Fijian (except Fiji Indian/Indo-Fijian)	5,100	7,695	7,041	50.9	-8.5	38.1
Tokelauan	4,146	4,917	6,204	18.6	26.2	49.6
Sri Lankan nfd	2,406	4,077	6,042	69.5	48.2	151.1
Khmer/Kampuchean/Cambodian	4,320	4,407	5,268	2.0	19.5	21.9
Thai/Tai/Siamese	1,047	2,838	4,554	171.1	60.4	335.0
Canadian	4,239	4,932	4,392	16.3	-11.0	3.6
Asian nfd	495	1,998	3,930	303.6	96.8	693.7
Taiwanese Chinese		2,721	3,768		38.6	
French	1,400	5,886	3,516	308.8	-40.3	144.1
Vietnamese	2,673	2,886	3,462	8.0	20.0	29.5
Welsh	2,781	9,963	3,414	258.3	-65.8	22.7
Russian	480	2,190	3,141	356.3	43.6	554.6
Italian	1,542	4,914	2,955	218.7	-39.9	91.6
Arab	177	1,725	2,859	874.6	65.6	1514.1
Croat/Croatian	171	3,897	2,505	2178.9	-35.7	1366.1
Swiss	1,671	3,747	2,346	124.2	-37.3	40.5
Greek (incl Greek Cypriot)	2,100	3,564	2,283	69.7	-36.0	8.6
Iranian/Persian	984	1,650	2,160	67.7	30.9	119.5
Iraqi	246	966	2,145	292.7	122.4	772.4

Note. Reproduced from *Ethnic Perspectives* (p. 28), Office of Ethnic Affairs, 2002, Wellington, Author. Copyright by the name of the Copyright Holder. Reprinted with permission. The table shows the most common languages with a high proportion of non-English speakers.

**Appendix B**                      **Summary of most common languages spoken in New Zealand and non-English speakers**

Language	Total number of speakers	Number of speakers who can't speak English	Proportion of total speakers who are non-English speaking %
Maori	160,500	6,800	4
Cantonese	52,600*	12,600*	24
Mandarin	33,900*	6,800*	20
Korean	15,900	4,600	29
Samoa	81,000	11,400	14
Tongan	23,000	3,200	14
Arabic	8,000	900+	11
Hindi	22,700	1,600	7
Cambodian/Khmer	5,000	1,500	30
Vietnamese	3,400	1,100	32
Somali	1,600	500	31
Assyrian	1,500	400	27
Kurdish	600	200	33
Amharic	500	150	30
Thai	4,600	600	13
Lao	1,400	300	21
Russian	5,600	500	9
Serbo-Croat	6,000	400	7
Punjabi	5,500	1,500	27
Gujarati	11,100	1,200	11
Bengali	1,500	150	10
Urdu	2,900	300	10
Niuean	5,500	400	7
Tokelauan	2,800	200	8
Tuvaluan	1,400	200	15
Cook Island Māori	9,400	500	5

All figures have been rounded to the nearest 100

\* People who did not specify which Chinese language they spoke have been assigned to these categories in proportion to the size of each Chinese language category specified.

+ Use by interpreting services indicates much higher demand than this Census figure which may underestimate the number of refugees and migrants from many different countries who speak Arabic for religious purposes e.g. Muslim, or as an official language as well as their community languages.

Note. The data in this table is based on Census 2001 data, reproduced from Ethnic Perspectives (p. 34), Office of Ethnic Affairs, 2002, Wellington, Author. Copyright by the name of the Copyright Holder. Reprinted with permission.

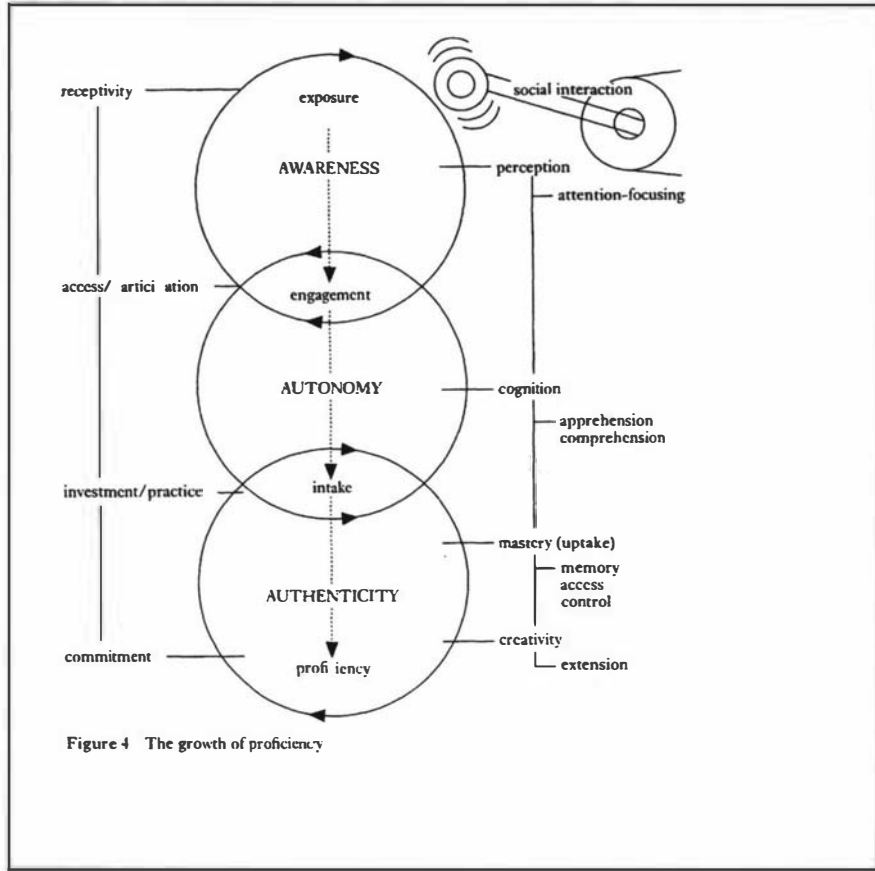
**APPENDIX C      Language Spoken in New Zealand: Total Responses<sup>1</sup> for the Census Usually  
Resident Population Count, 2001**

West Germanic not further defined	-	Sindhi	54
Afrikaans	12,783	Kashmiri	54
Dutch	26,280	Sinhala	3,213
English	3,425,301	Gujarati	11,145
German	33,981	Konkani	210
Friesian	327	Marathi	861
Yiddish	168	Romani	69
Scots	273	Indo-Aryan not elsewhere classified	405
West Germanic not elsewhere classified	1,038	Celtic not further defined	69
North Germanic not further defined	-	Welsh	1,158
Danish	2,094	Scottish Gaelic	618
Norwegian	1,005	Irish	735
Swedish	1,998	Breton	3
Icelandic	111	Celtic not elsewhere classified	51
N'th Germanic not elsewhere classified	21	Iranian not further defined	-
Romance not further defined	-	Persian	2,478
French	49,722	Kurdish	603
Catalan	69	Pashto	462
Portuguese	1,830	Iranian not elsewhere classified	69
Spanish	14,676	Turko-Altaic not further defined	-
Italian	7,215	Turkish	726
Romanian	750	Azeri	33
Romance not elsewhere classified	1,044	Turko-Altaic not elsewhere classified	105
Greek	3,501	Uralic not further defined	12
Baltic not further defined	9	Estonian	114
Latvian	252	Finnish	522
Lithuanian	93	Hungarian	1,191
Baltic not elsewhere classified	-	Uralic not elsewhere classified	9
Slavic not further defined	789	Dravidian not further defined	-
Belorussian	30	Kannada	414
Russian	5,550	Malayalam	588
Ukrainian	516	Tamil	3,810
Bulgarian	507	Telugu	1,419
Macedonian	621	Dravidian not elsewhere classified	3
Serbo-Croatian	5,946	Sinitic not further defined	22,851
Slovene	210	Yue	37,140
Czech	861	Hakka	492
Polish	2,466	Min	5,526
Slovak	186	Northern Chinese	26,514
Slavic not elsewhere classified	105	Wu	258
Albanian	534	Tieu-Chow	399
Armenian	132	Sinitic not elsewhere classified	294
Indo-Aryan not further defined	2,538	Tibeto-Lolo-Burman not further defined	-
Hindi	22,749	Burmese	432
Urdu	2,946	Tibetan	81
Fiji Hindi	189	Tibeto-Lolo-Burman not elsew. classified	213
Bengali	1,464	Mon-Khmer not further defined	-
Oriya	48	Khmer	4,992
Nepalese	393	Mon-Khmer not elsewhere classified	411
Panjabi	5,541	Viet-Muong not further defined	-

Vietnamese	3,423	Other Niger-Congo not further defined	15
Viet-Muong not elsewhere classified	18	Fulani	27
Tai-Kadai not further defined	-	Other Niger-Congo not elsewhere classified	426
Lao	1,356	Pidgins and Creoles not further defined	648
Thai	4,620	Creole	93
Shan	18	French Creole	15
Tai-Kadai not elsewhere classified	93	Pidgin English	618
Central Pacific not further defined	12	Neo Melanesian	60
Māori	160,527	Mauritian Creole	6
Samoan	81,033	Tok Pisin	123
Tongan	23,046	Hindi Bat	135
Cook Islands Maori	9,375	Solomon Islands Pidgin	69
Niuean	5,478	Bislama	390
Tokelauan	2,808	Pidgins and Creoles not elsewhere classified	222
Tuvaluan	1,398	Japanese	19,938
Tahitian	285	Korean	15,873
Pukapukan	105	Basque	21
Fijian	3,585	Language Isolates not elsewhere classified	-
Rotuman	168	Papuan	279
Central Pacific not elsewhere classified	309	Nilo-Saharan	24
Solomon Islands Languages	849	Miaow-Yao	111
Micronesian not further defined	3	Caucasian not further defined	-
Kiribati	609	Georgian	66
Nauruan	72	Caucasian not elsewhere classified	3
Micronesian not elsewhere classified	69	Australian	471
Vanuatu Languages	282	Amerind	144
W. Malayo-Polynesian not further defined	9	Other Miscellaneous Languages	81
Bisayan	393	Artificial Languages not further defined	-
Cebuano	270	Esperanto	162
Ilokano	195	Artificial Lang's not elsewhere classified	3
Bahasa Indonesia	3,792	Sign Language not further defined	813
Malaysian	4,941	New Zealand Sign Language	27,285
Tagalog	7,827	Signed English	60
Javanese	69	American Sign Language	24
W. Malayo-Polyn. not elsewhere classified	651	Australian Sign Language	27
Cushitic not further defined	3	British Sign Language	30
Somali	1,635	Don't Know	12
Cushitic not elsewhere classified	141	Refused to Answer	18
Semitic not further defined	9	None (eg too young to talk)	76,053
Assyrian	1,476	Response Unidentifiable	5,295
Arabic	7,959	Response Outside Scope	4,155
Maltese	120	Not Stated	171,852
Amharic	468	Total Responses	4,429,347
Tigrinya	186	<b>Total People</b>	<b>3,737,277</b>
Hebrew	972	(1) Includes people who stated each language spoken, as their only language spoken or as one of several languages spoken. Persons reporting more than one language spoken, have been counted in each applicable group. All cells in this table have been randomly rounded to base 3.	
Semitic not elsewhere classified	297		
Chadic not further defined	9		
Hausa	30		
Chadic not elsewhere classified	21		
Bantu not further defined	21		
Swahili	951		
Yoruba	60		
Zulu	804		
Bantu, not elsewhere classified	1,152		

Note. Reproduced from *Census data Classification Counts: Languages spoken, 2002*, Statistics New Zealand, Wellington, Author. Copyright by the name of the Copyright Holder. Reprinted with permission. Statistics New Zealand (2002c)

APPENDIX D Van Lier's (1996) Cyclical Model of Proficiency



Note. Reproduced from *Interaction in the language curriculum. Awareness, autonomy and authenticity* (p. 65), by L. van Lier, 1996, Harlow: Longman. Copyright by the name of the Copyright Holder. Reprinted with permission.

**APPENDIX E      Participant comments on the survey**

I wish you good luck and success

Dankie! (Thank-you)

P.S. Have you read thesis on "Aging and Identity in Dutch Community in Auckland" is part of this thesis.

I am happy to help you if you need more information.

Thank you for this research, I've learnt something. Wish you good luck!

It is a pity that Tamil has not found a place on your cover sheet. Whereas some languages have found places more than once.

I must say "Heartiest congratulations!" on this extraordinary effort! The amount of thought and hard work is most praiseworthy and deserves every success it must surely bring attention to detail in formulating the material indicates deep knowledge of the migrant life and the accompanying linguistic problems! I and my family are full of admiration!

There is a sizeable Tamil population in this country - please include the Tamil greeting in the front.

Good luck with your research and wishing you all the best.

Thank you for the invite to express myself in Cook Island. I do not need to prove to you, the researcher, my identity.

Some very difficult and somewhat irrelevant questions with double negatives etc. I doubt the "validity" of some of the outcomes.

I wish you the best. Hey.

**APPENDIX F      Focus Group Invitations**



School of Language Studies  
Private Bag 11 222,  
Palmerston North,  
New Zealand  
Telephone: 64 6 356 9099  
Facsimile: 64 6 350 2271

Would you like to help with my research?  
I am looking for people from overseas to join:

**A discussion group  
on  
Migrant Languages.**

You will find more details in my Information Sheet.

Please pick your preferred date:

	<b>NAME</b>	<b>PHONE NUMBER</b>
Monday, 26 April, 7-8.30 pm		
Tuesday 27 April, 7-8.30 pm		
Wednesday 28 April, 3.30-5pm		
Thursday 29 April, 10-11.30 am		

**WHERE?**      Migrant Resource Centre (Rangitane Pavilion, opposite the City Council entrance).  
Hot drink provided.

**APPENDIX G      Focus Group Information Sheet and Consent Form**

School of Language Studies  
Private Bag 11 222,  
Palmerston North,  
New Zealand  
Telephone: 64 6 356 9099  
Facsimile: 64 6 350 2271

You are invited to join a group of 5 or 6 people to talk about the topic of

**"MIGRANTS' LANGUAGES IN NEW ZEALAND"**

1. My name is Ute Walker and I am a doctoral student at Massey University. My study into languages in New Zealand is supervised by Dr Cynthia White and Dr John Newman at the School of Language Studies (phone 356 9099).
2. Next to English and Maori, many languages are spoken in New Zealand. This study is a PhD project with the purpose of investigating the situation of migrant languages in New Zealand.
3. I have an interest in migrant languages not only as a linguist but also through my work as the chairperson of the Ethnic Council of Manawatu and my own experience as a migrant to New Zealand.
4. In order to find possible participants for this study, I have advertised among members of the Ethnic Council of Manawatu as well as two organisations connected with it (Open Learning Centre and Esol Home Tutors).
5. I wish to find out about
  - the ability to speak migrant languages in New Zealand,
  - what changes have happened/are happening to migrant languages in New Zealand,
  - how speakers feel about migrant languages,
  - what migrant languages mean for their speakers' identity.
6. If you speak one or more migrant languages, your experience will be very important for this study.
 

I would like to ask you questions about your use of the migrant language(s) and what you can do with it (them). I am also interested to ask you about the role or importance of your language(s) for you.
7. The group meeting will last about 1 1/2 hours. I will be there to ask a number of questions and you can also share your experience with other people who speak a migrant language.

**IMPORTANT:**

8. Everything you say will be confidential information and you will remain anonymous (your name will not be used).
 

I undertake to be the only person with access to your information from the group discussion.

It is requested that you keep confidential any information shared in the group.

The group discussions will be taped and tapes will be kept in a safe place. Please indicate on the consent form if the taped group discussions can be stored or should be destroyed.
9. It is alright for you NOT to take part in this study. If you DO take part, you have the right to refuse answers to a question or to stop at any time.
10. The findings of this study will be written up in a final report (thesis). I will provide a summary for participants in the study if requested.

⇒ If you have any questions you can contact me at work (354 0922) or at home (326 8317).

**THANK YOU!**

## Appendix G continued


<b>CONSENT FORM</b>
---------------------

- ◇ I have read the Information Sheet and the details of the study were explained to me. I understand that I can ask further questions at any time.
- ◇ I understand that I have the right to withdraw from the study at any time. If I don't want to answer a question I have the right to decline.
- ◇ I agree to give information to the researcher but my name will not be used without my permission.
- ◇ I agree that I myself will keep information from the group discussion confidential.
- ◇ I agree that the interview is tape-recorded.  
Yes  No
- ◇ I agree that the taped discussions can be kept by the researcher.  
Yes  No
- ◇ I agree that any transcripts of the taped discussions can be kept by the researcher.  
Yes  No
- ◇ I can ask for the tape-recorder to be turned off at any time.
- ◇ I agree to take part in the study under the conditions described in the Information Sheet.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

 You can also call me on 354 0922 (work) or 326 8317 (home)

**APPENDIX H Focus group – written feedback sheet**

**MIGRANT LANGUAGES IN NEW ZEALAND**

*Migrant languages* are all the languages people have brought with them to New Zealand. For some of you a migrant language may be your 'mother tongue'.

Please take a few minutes to think about your language(s) and complete the questions below.

**A. Your Background**

I was born in (country): \_\_\_\_\_



if not New Zealand:

I came to New Zealand at age \_\_\_\_\_.  
and have been here \_\_\_\_\_ years.

My language(s) other than English:

	I can read & write	I can speak/understand
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

My language(s) is/are

Important   
not important



because...

To be a successful speaker of my language(s) in New Zealand you have to be able to ...

**B. Do you agree with any of these sentences? If yes, please tick them.**

- 1  As a speaker of \* \_\_\_\_\_ in New Zealand I should be able to read and write it. *\*Put the name of your language(s)*
- 2  My language skills are good enough to use in New Zealand but they would not be perfect enough to use in my home country.
- 3  My language is not so important for communication, but it expresses who I am.
- 4  My children should be able to use my language properly.
- 5  I notice that my language has changed over the years in New Zealand.
- 6  After leaving my home country I should try to keep my language the way it is in the home country.



## Appendix I      Focus group discussion schedule

The schedule outlines the main categories to be covered during the discussion and questions used to lead into the subject. Further sub-aspects are listed for deeper probing.

### *Part One*

#### A. Short written profile

This is intended to warm up, sharpen the participants' focus and provide a written record relating to the major issues, which can also be compared with points raised in the discussion.

#### B. Possible topics covered

1. Autonomous view, need for all skills.
2. Pragmatic view, local needs are met .
3. Symbolic role of language
4. Reduction in modes, focus on oral communication
5. Functional variation
6. Autonomous view, across generation
7. Pragmatic view, CS/mixing as communication tool
8. Language change

### **Part Two**

Group discussion - Schedule of questions

### **Schedule of questions**

#### *1. Language Use*

'In what kind of situations would you use your (first) language rather than English?'

- > where
- > with whom
- > how much
- > what for

#### *2. Language State, proficiency, change, etc*

'What is your language like at the moment?'

'Has it always been the same?'

'Has it changed at all over the last few years?'

'What kind of changes have you noticed?'

- > mixing
- > code switching
- > vocabulary range
- > function

'What kind of things can you do/talk about in your language?'

- > 4 skills & subskills
- > communicating with others in the community
- > communicating with others in the 'home' country
- > functions
- > EXAMPLES

'What kind of things can you NOT do/talk about in your language?'  
 > EXAMPLES

'What would you like to be able to do/talk about in your language?'

'How would you describe your level as a user of your language?'

- > compared to other speakers in NZ
- > compared to other speakers in the 'home' country

'How would you describe the general level of other people using your language here?'

'If you wanted to test their language skills what would you test?'

'What does it mean to be a successful speaker in your language in NZ?'

'Should your language skills be the same as those of speakers in your home country?'

'Is it ok to use your language less perfectly in Nz?'

➤ BRAINSTORM (WRITE)

List everything you think a successful ML user in NZ needs to know.

### 3. Role

'What does your language mean to you?'

'What do other people think about your language?'

- > self-concept/ID
- > communication
- > bilingual skills

### 4. Expectations

'What will your language be like in 10 years?'

'What will your children's language be like in 10 years?'

➤ language maintenance/shift

### 5. Scenario (on individual slips of paper handed out to participants)

A relative who hasn't seen you for many years comes visiting from your home country. After a few days s/he comments on the use of your language in your family.

Write down what you think the relative says:

## APPENDIX J Post pilot changes to questionnaire format/wording

### Item 2

To clarify the notion of 'ethnic', which had confused some of the pilot participants, a small footnote was included for explanation of this term.

### Item 5

A rather loose self-identification task was changed as shown below in order to provide more clarity and also introduce the possibility of different weightings in the case of dual identities which participants discussed as necessary options.

#### *Pilot*

"How would you describe yourself? Tick one."

- \_\_\_\_\_  
 New Zealander  
 Both \_\_\_\_\_ & \_\_\_\_\_

#### *Survey*

"Which answer describes our identity best?"

- \_\_\_\_\_  
 New Zealander  
 \_\_\_\_\_ & New Zealander  
 New Zealander & \_\_\_\_\_

### Item 8

The major source of confusion turned out to be the column (a) instruction which was perceived to be too general to be understood. The changed instruction connected the criterium of 'relevance' to that of 'language use in the New Zealand context', thus enhancing further the column heading.

#### *Pilot*

"Tick only what is relevant for you in New Zealand"

#### *Survey*

"Tick only what is relevant when using your language for daily life in New Zealand"

### Item 13

The original open scale used in the pilot was thought to be easier to complete as it does not require commitment specific values. After suggestions from the pilot participants as well as statistical consultation a five-item scale across three levels of importance was used instead.

### Item 15

Initially this was intended to be a forced choice item but pilot respondents indicated that they found it difficult to choose just one option, mainly because they felt that both options could apply to them. While the body of the item was left intact the instruction was changed as follows

#### *Pilot*

"Please tick only one statement in each box"

*Survey*

“Please tick where you agree”

**Item 17**

Responses indicated that participants perceived this to be a question comparing their ML ability with English ability. A slight change in the choice of verb was therefore made to the trigger statement in order to stimulate a response in terms of emotional attachment rather than linguistic ability.

*Pilot*

“I can say anything in English, but it wouldn’t be the same as saying it in my language.”

*Survey*

“I can say anything in English, but it wouldn’t feel the same as saying it in my language.”

**Item 18**

A quote from one of the focus groups was used as an introduction to this item. However, as this was intended to be an open-ended item the quote was taken out so as not to lead or possibly confuse respondents in any way.

APPENDIX K Survey instrument - Questionnaire

Aloha

안녕하세요

Hallo

Hej

Cám ơn

你好

ᄒᄒᄒᄒ

ZDRAVO

Talofalava

ЗДРАВСТВУЙТЕ

こんにちは

Γειά σας

مرحباً

السلام عليكم

Migrant Languages

in

New Zealand

Ciao

Muraho

Hallo

Jó napot

అలె

କେବଳ ଏମିତି

Kumsta

سلام

Dzien' dobry

Vambo

కొన్నింటి

ᄒᄒᄒᄒ

नमस्कार

नमस्ते

Hei



### Information

1. My name is Ute Walker. I am a doctoral student at Massey University. My study into migrant languages in New Zealand is supervised by Dr Cynthia White and Dr John Newman at the School of Language Studies (phone 06-356 9099).
2. Next to English and Maori, many languages are spoken in New Zealand. This study is a PhD project to investigate the situation of migrant languages in New Zealand.
3. I have an interest in migrant languages through my own experience as a migrant to New Zealand, my work as the chairperson of the Ethnic Council of Manawatu as well as my profession as a linguist.
4. To find possible participants for this study, I have advertised among members of the New Zealand Federation of Ethnic Councils.
5. I wish to find out about
  - levels of expertise among migrant language speakers,
  - how speakers feel about migrant languages,
  - what migrant languages mean for their speakers' identity.
6. If you speak one or more migrant languages, your experience will be very helpful for this study.
7. Everything you say will be confidential information and you will remain anonymous (your name will not be used).
8. It is alright for you NOT to take part in this study. If you DO take part, you have the right to refuse answers to a question.
9. The findings of this study will be written up in a final report (thesis). I will provide a summary for participants if requested.
10. There are 18 questions and it will take you about 30 minutes to do.
11. The questionnaire has not been translated because it went to many people from different backgrounds. If you have difficulty with the English, feel free to ask a family member or friend to help you.

☛ If you have any questions or comments you can contact me here:

**Work**  
 International Pacific College  
 Private Bag 11021  
 Aokautere/Palmerston North  
 Fax 06 -354 0935  
 Phone 06-354 0922 ext 834  
 uwalker@ipc.ac.nz

**Home**  
 4 Oruaiti Crescent  
 Ashhurst  
 Phone 06 - 326 8317

1 New Zealand has many people  
with many different languages.

This is a study of the languages of migrants - not English.  
Can you help?



If you speak a migrant language,  
please look at the information inside.

If you can't help,  
please give this form to someone else who can.

THE QUESTIONS BELOW ARE ABOUT YOUR  
NATIVE LANGUAGE IN NEW ZEALAND - NOT ENGLISH.

PART 1: YOUR BACKGROUND

1. I was born in (country)

\_\_\_\_\_



a. I came to New Zealand at age \_\_\_\_\_

b. I have been here for \_\_\_\_\_ years.

New Zealand

2. My ethnic\* background \_\_\_\_\_

\*ethnic = your culture, language, history & tradition

3. My age group

Under 20

21 to 35

36 to 50

51 to 65

66 and over

4. Your educational background - please tick your highest level.

High school

University

Vocation/Trade

Other  \_\_\_\_\_

5. Which answer describes your identity best?

I am a

- \_\_\_\_\_
- New Zealander
- \_\_\_\_\_ & New Zealander
- New Zealander & \_\_\_\_\_

6. What languages and/or dialects do you know ?

Please list all of them, except English:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

7. My language(s) is/are

- important
- not important

↪ because \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE CONTINUE WITH PART 2:  
YOU AND YOUR LANGUAGE**

☞ From this point, please choose only your most used language apart from English, even if you know several migrant languages.

☞ Please write down the name of this language: \_\_\_\_\_.

**8. Please think about what you do with your language in New Zealand.**

**Column (a):** tick only what is relevant when using your language for daily life in New Zealand.

**Column (b):** circle a number for your level next to your ticks in (a).

2 Which of the activities below are relevant for you in NEW ZEALAND?	(a) Tick	(b) I can do this ...				
		very well	well	so so	a little	not at all
greet and introduce myself	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4	5
have conversations about everyday things	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4	5
give directions	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4	5
speak about hobbies, interests, movies etc	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4	5
have discussions about current issues in politics	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4	5
make phone calls	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4	5
understand conversations about everyday things	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4	5
understand movies	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4	5
understand prayers at church	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4	5
sing songs	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4	5
count and do mathematics	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4	5
read the alphabet	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4	5
read newspapers	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4	5
read books	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4	5
teach the language to my children	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4	5
write the alphabet	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4	5
write personal letters	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4	5
write formal (letters, a newsletter, stories etc)	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4	5
other _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4	5

9. Now think of other people in New Zealand who speak your language too. In general, how well do you know this language compared with others?

My knowledge is ...

- better
- the same
- worse
- don't know

Can you tell me why you think so?




---



---



---

10. Think about your children's knowledge of your language.

If you have no children, tick what you think is best for other families.

*It is important to me that my children know our language.*

I disagree

I agree



If you agree, do you think they should have the same knowledge as children in the home country?

Yes

No



Can you tell me why you think so?




---



---



---



---

11. Read the statements below. Please tick one box for each line.

	Agree	Not sure	Disagree
a. As a speaker of my language in New Zealand I should be able to read and write in my language.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. My language is not so important for communication in New Zealand, so I don't have to know it perfectly.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. My language is not good enough to use in my home country but it is OK to use in New Zealand.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. After coming to New Zealand I should try to keep my language the way it is in the home country.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. My children should be able to use our language properly, the same as in the home country.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Using English words when I speak my language is OK because it happens naturally and people here understand.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Our vocabulary should not become out of touch and old fashioned compared with people's vocabulary back home.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. I don't care when people speak to me in a less respectful way, it's OK to use my language in a different style in New Zealand.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

12. Have you ever noticed any of these changes in your own language?

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> use more casual style   | <input type="checkbox"/> slower use      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> remember fewer words    | <input type="checkbox"/> less confidence |
| <input type="checkbox"/> use old fashioned words | <input type="checkbox"/> other _____     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> use more mixing         |  |



If yes, does this worry you at all?

Yes, because \_\_\_\_\_

No, because \_\_\_\_\_

**13. How important is it to be able to do the things below, if you want to be a good speaker of your language in New Zealand?**

	<b>High importance</b>	<b>Average importance</b>			<b>No importance</b>
		<b>Please circle one number</b>			
	1	2	3	4	5
pronounce words correctly	1	2	3	4	5
know the grammar	1	2	3	4	5
understand others	1	2	3	4	5
read	1	2	3	4	5
write	1	2	3	4	5
use the language creatively	1	2	3	4	5
express ideas	1	2	3	4	5
know the culture	1	2	3	4	5
understand humour	1	2	3	4	5
be spontaneous*	1	2	3	4	5
know different language styles	1	2	3	4	5
teach children	1	2	3	4	5
think in the language	1	2	3	4	5
express fine differences	1	2	3	4	5
be confident in using the language	1	2	3	4	5
other _____	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5

\*happens naturally, without planning or thinking

**14. Sometimes people forget their native language or stop using it. If this happened to you, how would you feel?**

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**15. Please tick where you agree:**

- I can be more spontaneous in my language  
 I can be more spontaneous in English

- I can express my feelings better in English  
 I can express my feelings better in my native language.

- My language gives me confidence.  
 English gives me confidence

- I can be myself when I use my language.  
 I can be myself when I use English.

**16. Imagine you meet someone in the supermarket who also speaks your language. When you talk to this person in your language, what would go through your mind?**

Please tick one.

	Yes	Maybe	No
a. I am worried in case I make mistakes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. I am relaxed, I can switch into English if there is a problem.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. I feel it is natural to use my language, even though I use it differently from how I would use it in my home country.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. I hope the other person isn't disappointed with my language.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

17. Please read this statement:

*I can say anything I like in English, but it wouldn't feel the same as saying it in my own language.*

- I agree
- I disagree

 Can you tell me why ?



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---

18. Now, please write any other thoughts or comments about yourself and your language. If you prefer you can write in your own language:

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---

---

---

---

---

---

Gracias

고맙습니다

Danke schön

Tack

Xin chào

धन्यवाद

HVALA

fɔafɛtɛtɛle

谢谢

спасибо

Εὐχαριστῶ

ありがとうございます

شكر

This is the end of  
the  
questionnaire.

شكر



Grazie

THANK YOU  
VERY MUCH!

Миласкозе

Dankuwel

Köszönöm

ස්තූතියි

धन्यवाद

Salamat

ස්තූතියි

رسر

Serdecznie dzie

Asante

धन्यवाद

kiitos

धन्यवाद

धन्यवाद

**APPENDIX L Proficiency dimensions derived from FG written feedback**

<b>TYPE</b>	<b>DIMENSION</b>
<b>Linguistic aspects</b>	recognition of words
	guess meanings
	good understanding
	reading & writing
	correct grammar
	get meaning across
	understand subtleties
	knowing the culture
	creativity
	spontaneous expression
<b>Non-linguistic aspects<sup>1</sup></b>	thinking in ML
	know the history
	use in social situations
	know humour
	be experienced
	have confidence
	use for the required purpose
	be an expert
keeping ML alive	

<sup>1</sup> These are not devoid of linguistic aspects, for example, creative, subtle or culturally relevant use of ML requires mastery of a wider lexical and structural range.



## APPENDIX M Survey Cover letter



School of Language Studies  
Private Bag 11 222,  
Palmerston North,  
New Zealand  
Telephone: 64 6 356 9099  
Facsimile: 64 6 350 2271

Ute Walker  
4 Oruaiti Crescent  
Ashhurst

22 October 1999

To  
xxx Ethnic Council Inc  
Address

Dear xxx

### **Migrant Language Research**

It was nice to catch up with you at the General Meeting last week and I hope you had a safe trip back.

As announced at the meeting my research project has reached the stage where I can commence the national survey. The success of my project relies very much on a good response rate and I would be extremely grateful if you could assist with the distribution of my questionnaires to your membership.

I realise that Ethnic Council membership varies across the regions, however, it would be helpful if I could get feed back from

- a diverse mix of people from all cultural backgrounds,
- both recent and more established migrants, ie who have been in New Zealand less than five and more than five years respectively.

I do appreciate your help with this and look forward to the feed back from Auckland. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Kind regards

**Enclosed:** x Information Sheet, Questionnaires

APPENDIX N Survey follow-up letter



School of Language Studies  
Private Bag 11 222,  
Palmerston North,  
New Zealand  
Telephone: 64 6 356 9099  
Facsimile: 64 6 350 2271

Ute Walker  
4 Oruaiti Crescent  
Ashhurst

26 January 2000

To  
xxx Ethnic Council  
Address

Dear xxx

A very happy New Year to you and all in the xxx Ethnic Council!

This is just to say thank you for passing on my questionnaires. Of the forms I sent out in December I have received a small number so far. With the holiday period coming to an end now I am confident that more will come in. Anyway, I have begun processing and there is already interesting information.

I will still be collecting questionnaires until the end of next month, or possibly later and if there is any chance of distributing more forms, e.g. through including them in your next mailout, I'd be very grateful. I do have self-addressed return envelopes or more forms for that purpose, so please don't hesitate to let me know if these are needed, I can send them out any time.

I hope to be able to catch up with you again in xxx.

With very best wishes for a successful 2000!

Ute

**APPENDIX O      Open-ended survey data translated from languages other than English  
(Question18)**

Amharic  
Arabic  
Czech  
Dutch  
French  
Gujerati  
Hindi  
Korean  
Lao  
Latvian  
Malay  
Mandarin  
Niuean  
Pilipino/Tagalog  
Russian  
Samoan  
Serbo-Croatian  
Sinhala  
Spanish  
Tamil  
Telugu  
Tongan  
Vietnamese  
Welsh

## Appendix P Self-identified ethnic background (item 2)

Label	Count		Count
AFRICAN	2	KOREAN	15
AFRO-KIWI***	1	KURDISH	1
ALBANIAN	1	LAO	1
ARABIC	2	LATVIAN	1
ARGENTINIAN	1	LOCAL* ITALIAN	3
AUSTRALIAN	1	MALAYSIAN/MALAY	11
AUSTRIAN	5	MAURITIAN	1
BANGLADESHI	3	NATURALISED**	2
BOSNIAN	2	NETHERLANDS	1
BRITISH	5	NEW ZEALANDER	2
CAMBODIAN	4	NIUEAN/NIUE ISLANDER	3
CANTONESE	2	NZ CITIZEN**	2
CATALAN	1	PAKISTANI	2
CHILEAN	3	PALESTINIAN	3
CHINESE	27	PERMANENT RESIDENT**	2
CITIZEN**	1	PERSIAN	1
COLOMBIAN	1	PERSON***	1
COOK ISLANDER	2	POLISH/POLE	5
COSMOPOLITAN***	2	PUERTO RICAN	1
CROATIAN	3	REFUGEE**	1
CYMRO-WELSH	1	ROMANIAN	1
CYPRIOT	1	RUSSIAN	3
CZECH	3	RWANDAN	1
CZECH RESIDENT	1	SAMOAN	9
DANE/DANISH	3	SERB/SERBIAN	3
DUTCH	22	SERB&YUGOSLAV	1
ETHIOPIAN	5	SINHALA	1
EUROPEAN*	9	SOMALI	3
FIJI INDIAN	3	SOUTH AFRICAN	1
FILIPINO	17	SOUTH AMERICAN	1
FINN	1	SPANISH	2
FRENCH	1	SRI LANKAN	14
GERMAN	5	SUDANESE	1
GREEK	13	SWEDISH/SWEDE	5
GUJARATI	1	SWISS	5
HINDI	3	SWISS-AUSTRIAN	1
HOKKIEN	1	SYRIAN	2
HUNGARIAN	17	TAGALOG	1
IMMIGRANT**	1	TAIWANESE	4
INDIAN	26	TAMIL	6
INDONESIAN	1	THAI	3
INTERNATIONAL***	1	TIBETAN	1
IRANIAN	1	TONGAN	6
IRAQI	4	UKRANIAN	2
ISRAELI	1	VIETNAMESE	5
ITALIAN	3	WELSH	3
JAPANESE	3	WORLD CITIZEN***	1
JORDANIAN	1	YUGOSLAV	2
KHMER	1		

Note. Labels other than ethnic, language or nationality:  
 \*by region \*\*by status \*\*\*other

**APPENDIX Q      Composition of three major ethnic categories: self-identified ethnic groups**

**ASIAN**

*North Asian:* Cantonese, Chinese, Chinese-Mandarin, Japanese, Korean, Mandarin, Taiwanese, Tibetan.

*South-East Asian:* Cambodian-Chinese, Chinese-Khmer, Filipino, Javanese, Khmer, Laotian, Malay, Malaysian, Malaysian-Chinese, South-East Asian, Thai, Vietnamese-Chinese.

*South-West Asian:* Bangladeshi, Bengali, Fiji Indian, Gujarati, Indian, Indian-Hindu, Indian-Mauritian, Pakistani, Punjabi, Singhalese, Sri Lankan, Sri Lankan-Tamil, Tamil.

**EUROPEAN**

*Western European:* Swedish, Danish, Swiss, Swiss-German, Dutch, Welsh, Austrian, Finnish, French, French-Breton, German, Irish-Italian, Indo-Dutch, Netherlands.

*Eastern European:* Albanian, Bosnian-Croatian, Croatian, Croatian-European, Bosnian-Croatian, Croatian-Bosnian, Bulgarian, Czech, Czech-Austrian, Estonian-Russian, Hungarian, Latvian, Polish, Romanian, Russian, Serbian, Serbo-Croatian, Slovenian, Ukrainian.

*Southern European:* Italian, Spanish, Greek, Catalan, Cypriot-Greek.

**OTHER**

**AFRICAN**

*East African:* Sudanese, Somali, Ethiopian, Amharic, Oromo,

*South African:* Afrikaaner.

**MIDDLE/SOUTH AMERICAN**

Argentinian, Indo-American, Latin American, Puerto Rican, Spanish-Chilean, Spanish-Latin-American, Surinamese-Dutch.

**MIDDLE EASTERN**

Arabic, Iranian, Iraqi-Arabic, Israeli, Kurdish, Persian.

**POLYNESIAN**

Cook Island Maori, Cook Islander, Niuean, Samoan, Tongan, Tokelauan.

Note. Two religious self-identifications (Hindu, Muslim) were assigned to the South West Asian and Eastern European group respectively (based on relevant birthplace)  
Multiple identifiers were integrated similarly, e.g. Cambodian-Chinese > South East Asian.

**APPENDIX R Migrant languages represented in survey**

- |                       |                  |
|-----------------------|------------------|
| 1. ALBANIAN           | 55. SPANISH      |
| 2. AMHARIK            | 56. SWEDISH      |
| 3. ARABIC             | 57. SWISS GERMAN |
| 4. ARIFKAANS          | 58. TAGALOG      |
| 5. BAHASA MALAYSIA    | 59. TAIWANESE    |
| 6. BENGALI            | 60. TAMIL        |
| 7. BOSNIAN            | 61. TELUGU       |
| 8. BULGARIAN          | 62. THAI         |
| 9. CAMBODIAN          | 63. TIBETAN      |
| 10. CANTONESE         | 64. TOI SAN      |
| 11. CATALAN           | 65. TONGAN       |
| 12. CHINESE           | 66. URDU         |
| 13. COOK ISLAND MAORI | 67. VIETNAMESE   |
| 14. CROATIAN          | 68. VISAYAN      |
| 15. CYMRAEG-WELSH     |                  |
| 16. CZECH             |                  |
| 17. DANISH            |                  |
| 18. DUTCH             |                  |
| 19. SPANISH           |                  |
| 20. FIJI HINDI        |                  |
| 21. FILIPINO/TAGALOG  |                  |
| 22. FINNISH           |                  |
| 23. FRENCH            |                  |
| 24. GERMAN            |                  |
| 25. GREEK             |                  |
| 26. GUJARATI          |                  |
| 27. HEBREW            |                  |
| 28. HINDI             |                  |
| 29. HOKKIEN           |                  |
| 30. HUNGARIAN         |                  |
| 31. INDONESIAN        |                  |
| 32. ITALIAN           |                  |
| 33. JAPANESE          |                  |
| 34. KHMER             |                  |
| 35. KINYARWANDA       |                  |
| 36. KOREAN            |                  |
| 37. KURDISH           |                  |
| 38. LAO               |                  |
| 39. LATVIAN           |                  |
| 40. LINGALA           |                  |
| 41. MALAY             |                  |
| 42. MANDARIN          |                  |
| 43. NIUEAN            |                  |
| 44. OROMO             |                  |
| 45. PERSIAN           |                  |
| 46. POLISH            |                  |
| 47. PUNJABI           |                  |
| 48. ROMANIAN          |                  |
| 49. RUSSIAN           |                  |
| 50. SAMOAN            |                  |
| 51. SERBO-CROATIAN    |                  |
| 52. SINGHALESE        |                  |
| 53. SLONCONOI         |                  |
| 54. SOMALI            |                  |

**APPENDIX S      Master Code List for qualitative data set generated in HyperResearch**

Active support for LM  
 Autonomous view of ML  
 Balanced bilingual  
 Benefits of bilingualism  
 Better command/more confidence in ML  
 Better expressive capacity through English  
 Comments on survey/questions  
 Complementary use/distribution ML & English  
 Dual identities through bilingualism  
 Feeling of comfort/joy through ML  
 Few or no ML functions/speakers  
 Functional importance of English  
 Functional role of bilingualism  
 Functional role of ML-s  
 Inadequacy if ML insufficient  
 Language awareness  
 LM difficult/impossible task for parents  
 LM leads to competition - school vs. home  
 LM same level impossible - ideal  
 LM to same level unnecessary  
 ML as enrichment  
 ML as group ID marker  
 ML as personal ID marker  
 ML as sustainer/life force  
 ML bonds people across national/ cultural boundaries  
 ML connects with heritage  
 ML for religious purpose  
 ML has 'mother tongue' status  
 ML is asset or treasure  
 ML is exclusive  
 ML loss not expected for self  
 ML needed in school  
 ML needed to pass on to children  
 ML promotes cross-cultural understanding  
 ML use for personal functions  
 ML view changes with age  
 ML's unique capacity for expression  
 Multiple behaviours through bilingualism  
 Multiple selves through multilingualism  
 Need for LM  
 Need for more recognition of ML  
 No or little concern over ML loss  
 No or little ML use/exposure to ML  
 Personal experience of ML change/loss/shift  
 Pragmatic view of ML  
 Pride in ML  
 Sense of loss without ML  
 Sense of self through ML  
 Sense of shame/frustration without ML  
 Sense of unhappiness without M

