Understanding the self-efficacy of students using te ao Māori concepts in AS91925 – a mixed methods study

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Abstract

Aotearoa New Zealand's NCEA qualification has undergone recent changes, with Change 2 of the Review of Achievement Standards stating that mātauranga Māori is to have equal status with other forms of knowledge. This change has led to the incorporation of mātauranga Māori, such as the use of te ao Māori concepts as a lens with which to analyse film in English classes, in NCEA assessments for the first time in 2024. Drawing on Vygotsky's (1978) socio-constructivist theory, this paper focusses on how students experience using te ao Māori in AS91925 to add to the current literature on self-efficacy and its relationship with culture. This mixed methods study, conducted in an inner-city girls' school, explored the student experience and their perception of their self-efficacy through an online survey and follow-up interviews. Findings indicate that for students who identify culturally as Māori, self-efficacy is perceived as high in this assessment. For non-Māori cultural groups, self-efficacy in AS91925 is perceived diversely due to a range of social and educational factors.

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I dedicate this thesis to Nellie and Hadley – the voices of the future.

Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Study aims

The aim for this study was to understand how students perceive their self-efficacy in NCEA AS91925 when asked to analysis a text through the lens of a te ao Māori concept. AS91925 is a Level One NCEA English internal assessment worth 5 credits which assesses the ability to demonstrate understanding of aspects of a studied text.

Using te ao Māori concepts to analyse a text is a relatively new area of learning, brought about by the 2018 NCEA Review of Achievement Standards and the refreshed English Curriculum. Consequently, students are experiencing this learning for the first time and there is little evidence available to teachers to understand the self-efficacy of students with new learning in English, particularly when they are asked to use aspects of te ao Māori. Self-efficacious students are more likely to persevere when faced with challenges in learning (Bandura, 1997) and generally, have greater subjective wellbeing (Cohen & Cairns, 2012). Therefore, understanding how new learning impacts self-efficacy, particularly when the new learning goes beyond the scope of traditional English subject requirements, is key to ensuring that the implementation of mātauranga Māori in English classrooms is successful.

Traditional English subject requirements have operated through a Pākeha-centric lens. This lens is widely accepted by teachers and students of the subject as it mirrors that of Western knowledge forms found around the world, particularly in colonised lands. However, this narrow interpretation of English as a subject fails to recognise the complexity and scope of what it has to offer. While English may have emerged with colonial intentions, its current form allows for a rich exploration of culture through the analysis of different text forms. Traditionally, this exploration has been viewed from Western-centric lenses, such as feminism, eco-criticism and queer theory. Many believe that this approach to English is how the subject should operate and the current discourse on the subject of English, under the National Coalition government's review of the New Zealand Curriculum, highlights this. While the implementation of te ao Māori concepts as a lens through which to examine a text may be viewed as inappropriate in a traditional English classroom, embedding mātauranga Māori in the curriculum allows English as a subject to achieve greater significance and impact when the cultural restriction of Western perspectives is removed.

This study recognises the significance of mātauranga Māori as a taonga of Aotearoa New Zealand. While Western-centric perspectives and ideologies are found all over the world – a consequence of colonisation – mātauranga Māori is unique to this land. Therefore, this study is underpinned by the belief that the current dominance of Western perspectives in education needs to be critically examined and challenged, and that equal status should be given to mātauranga Māori in the New Zealand Curriculum and NZQA assessments. This study operates within the context of Aotearoa New Zealand's shift towards an equal bicultural partnership between Māori and Pākeha, although historically, the progression of this shift has not been, nor does it continue to be, linear. Changes in government priorities often halt the progress made towards achieving equal status for mātauranga Māori, influencing teaching and learning within the English classroom. Consequently, the attitudes and experiences explored in this study must be viewed as a snapshot of the time the study was conducted, within its social, political and educational context.

This study looked to provide evidence of the student experience, particularly their sense of self-efficacy, to support teachers to better understand the diversity within their classes. By examining student self-efficacy and its relationship to student identity and culture, the conclusions drawn in this study aim to encourage teachers to recognise the range of student experiences so they can implement strategies to support the development of student self-efficacy further. This is of particular importance with the incorporation of mātauranga Māori, as Aotearoa New Zealand's educational history highlights how previous educational changes have done little to prevent the marginalisation of Māori and Māoritanga. Ensuring mātauranga Māori gains equal status with other knowledge forms is necessary to stop the 'othering' of Māori within their native land. English, as a subject, is often viewed similarly as English as a language in Aotearoa New Zealand, in that its place in education is unquestioned and its dominance is widely accepted. However, the data and insights gained from this study can support teachers to question the purpose of English as a subject, and to identify what more can be done to effectively honour Te Tiriti ō Waitangi (Tawhai, 2023) by giving mātauranga Māori equal status with Pākeha-centric viewpoints.

The study was developed with a socio-constructivist epistemological foundation (Bandura et al., 2003; Vygotsky, 1978), recognising how learning and knowledge is developed through the interaction between individuals and their socio-cultural environment. The Social Cognitive Theory formulated by Bandura et al. (2003) highlights how learning happens within social contexts, which supports the Complexity Theory (Morrison, 2008) used to analyse data from the quantitative and qualitative methods used in the study.

1.2 Outline of chapters

In this thesis, chapter one outlines the study's aims, a summary of the chapters and a glossary of terms and list of illustrations used in the document.

Chapter two reviews the literature on the decolonisation of educational curriculums as viewed in Aotearoa New Zealand and abroad, and the decolonisation of the English curriculum specifically. It then addresses the Aotearoa New Zealand social and political contexts before reviewing the literature on self-efficacy and its relationship to culture.

Chapter three outlines the methodologies used in this study, with particular focus on the development of research questions through the use of Plowright's (2011) F*ramework for an integrated methodology*, the case and data analysis. It goes on to examine ethical considerations pertinent in the study, as well as legitimation and reflexivity.

Chapter four reports the results of the quantitative and qualitive data collected in the two phases of the study and then the integration of this data. This data is presented in the form of tables, graphs and direct quotations from participants.

Chapter five discusses the study's findings in light of the current literature to address the research questions. Chapter six concludes the study with the significance and limitations of the study and suggestions for further research.

Finally, the reference list and appendix are presented.

1.3 Glossary

AS91925 – A Level 1 NCEA English internal assessment – "Demonstrate understanding of specific aspects of a studied text."

fono – Pasifika term for 'meeting'

hauora – a Māori view of health and wellbeing

hui – Māori term for 'social gathering or meeting'

iwi – a large familial group, tracing descent from a common ancestor and associated with a distinct land area

kura – school

Māoritanga – Māori culture, traditions and way of life

mātauranga Māori – Māori knowledge, wisdom, skill and understanding

NCEA – National Certificate of Educational Achievement – the main secondary qualification in Aotearoa New Zealand

NZQA – New Zealand Qualifications Authority

Pākeha – A New Zealander of European descent

Pasifika – A collective term for the people descended from Polynesian countries

taonga – a treasure, considered valuable

te ao Māori – the Māori worldview

Te Tiriti ō Waitangi – The Māori treaty signed between Māori and British colonisers in 1840

tikanga – Māori customs and traditional values

whakamā – shame, shyness or embarrassment

whakapapa – genealogy

whānau – family, extended family or a familial grouping

whānaungatanga – the practise of creating close connection or kinship with others

1.4 Illustrations

Chapter 2: Literature review

Understanding student self-efficacy using Māori concepts in an NCEA English internal assessment requires understanding the surrounding issues – namely, the trend of decolonising curriculums globally and nationally, the specific Aotearoa New Zealand educational context and what self-efficacy is and how it is affected. This review will examine the literature on these issues separately.

2.1 Decolonising the curriculum

2.1.1 National and international context

Historically, education systems in colonised countries such as United States of America, South Africa, India, Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand have served a colonial agenda, supporting imperialism by promoting Western knowledge and marginalising indigenous knowledge (Bishop & Glynn, 2003; Macdonald, 2018). These educational systems have been characterised by continual change as educational priorities are re-evaluated and curricular revised to reflect the expectations and needs of each generation, all the while upholding the colonial agenda. However, recent education discourse around the world has included critical reflection of the colonial history of education, resulting in a call to decolonise curricula to address the inequities facing indigenous peoples (Brennan et al., 2021).

Aotearoa New Zealand's educational history recounts multiple curriculum changes and many of these have manipulated the position of Māori in schools. The Native Schools Act of 1867 provided a structure in which schools could be established for Māori, with local communities in partnership with the government. However, these schools operated under a tension between community aspirations and the government's desire to colonise and civilise Māori (Hutchings et al., 2012; Simon, 1998). Moreover, according to Turner-Adams and Rubie-Davies (2023), 20th century English-medium education in Aotearoa New Zealand actively discouraged mātauranga Māori and held no ambition for Māori students to be educated beyond what was necessary for manual labour.

In the 1980s, curriculum changes under the Labour government indicated a social shift towards the promotion of Māori culture. These changes included the implementation of Taha Māori, the practice of including te reo Māori and tikanga Māori in English-medium schools, in what can be viewed as an attempt to improve educational experiences for Māori (Lourie, 2015). The Taha Māori

initiative of the 1980s highlights how nationally there were moves to foster the development of tikanga and te reo Māori in English-medium schools, but the focus for this initiative was to enhance the self-esteem and cultural connection for Māori students (Lourie, 2015), rather than give mātauranga Māori equal status with Pākeha knowledge. The Taha Māori initiative never fully gained momentum and some Māori teachers accused the initiative of being a lacklustre attempt to incorporate aspects of Māori culture into schools (Smith, 1990; Tocker, 2015 as cited in Lourie, 2015). Over time, the Taha Māori initiative wilted and eventually disappeared.

Alongside Taha Māori, the Education Act 1989, Section 155 gave legislative support to the already established Kura a-Iwi and Kura Mana Motuhake and these Māori schools became recognised as special character schools, using Te Marautanga o Aotearoa as their curriculum. Section 155A of the Education Act 1989 also outlined the designation of Kura Kaupapa Māori as special character schools. Kura Kaupapa Māori used the Māori philosophy of Te Aho Matua to underpin their learning programmes. These three types of Māori schools predominantly operated in te reo Māori and the students and whānau who enrolled in these schools were expected to uphold the philosophy of the school's special character. This special character included the use of mātauranga Māori as a foundation for teaching and learning and therefore, it could be argued that mātauranga Māori was considered an appropriate knowledge basis for students and whānau who opted into Kura Kaupapa Māori, Kura a-Iwi and Kura Mana Motuhake, yet these students accounted for only a small proportion of the wider student population in Aotearoa New Zealand. The Education Act 1989 did not result in mātauranga Māori being accessible and used in all schools with Aotearoa New Zealand and therefore, these legislative changes did little to deconstruct the epistemological dominance of Western ways of knowing (Bishop & Glynn, 2003).

Although Aotearoa New Zealand's history of curriculum changes have given some attention to the promotion Māori education, they have perpetuated the notion that mātauranga Māori and tikanga Māori are important for and applicable to Māori students only. English-medium schools have been slow to adopt mātauranga Māori outside of te reo Māori classrooms, resulting in the 'othering' of Māori ways of knowing and being. Historical curriculum changes, such as the Taha Māori initiative and the Education Act 1989 may be viewed as a tolerance of mātauranga Māori in Aotearoa New Zealand's education system, rather than an equal bicultural partnership between Māori and Pākeha. The lack of equal partnership in Aotearoa New Zealand's education system has resulted in continued advocation for the curriculum to be decolonised for all students – a call that is echoed internationally also.

Contemporary international discourse of curriculum change involves a focus on the decolonisation of education however, these discussions cannot be viewed as neoteric. Twenty-five years ago, Polly (2000) wrote about Aboriginal scholars who were using indigenous pedagogy and epistemologies in their teaching at universities across Australia to aid the decolonisation of higher education. Five years later, Gillborn (2005) argued that educational policy in the United Kingdom had been an act of white supremacy, actively perpetuating racial inequality, and called for further work to be done to address this non-accidental social injustice. In Aotearoa New Zealand, Māori concepts emerged in the New Zealand Curriculum in 1999 through the implementation of hauora in the Physical Education and Health curriculum – something that was viewed as a radical shift towards biculturalism (Meier & Culpan, 2020). Moreover, in 2003, Bishop and Glynn called for an end to educational policies and practices in Aotearoa New Zealand that actively marginalised Māori. For a quarter of a decade, academics have discussed the importance of decolonising curriculums all over the world, but educational change has been slow to take effect.

Academic calls to decolonise curriculum are mirror by social debates as individuals weigh in on the state of education (Beyer, 2022). In South Africa, the Rhodes Must Fall protests, beginning in 2015 at the University of Cape Town, had protestors calling for an end to colonial dominance in academia through better representation of non-white professors and the de-centring of white perspectives from the curriculum (Mangcu, 2017). This movement swept through South Africa and the world and, accompanied by other international protests movements such as Black Lives Matter, promoted the critical examination of systemic racism in educational institutions (Brennan et al., 2021). These international social movements are reflected in Aotearoa New Zealand educational politics as policymakers and the public consider how institutional racism has affected Māori and non-Pākeha peoples.

Education experts in Aotearoa New Zealand have discussed the place of te reo and te ao Māori in the curriculum for decades, propelled by a need to lift the educational achievement of Māori learners. Bishop et al. (2009) note that years of educational reform in New Zealand have unsuccessfully attempted to address the disparities facing Māori learners in schools and they, along with Turner-Adams and Rubie-Davies (2023), argue that this is due to previous reforms continuing to operate within a neo-colonial framework. The call to decolonise the New Zealand Curriculum, for use in English-medium schools has gained favour and, under the Labour Government in 2018, Chris Hipkins announced a review of NCEA and the New Zealand Curriculum to address its failings. The changes to NCEA with the Review of Achievement Standards explicitly addressed the place of mātauranga Māori, with Change 2 recognising that

mātauranga Māori needed to have equal value in NCEA as other forms of knowledge (Ministry of Education, n.d.). This change has meant that, where possible, all NCEA achievement standards are expected to incorporate an aspect of mātauranga Māori. This can be viewed as a step to de-centralise Pākeha knowledge in an attempt to decolonise Aotearoa New Zealand's dominant secondary education qualification.

Since the Labour Government's announcement of the NCEA Change Package and the work on the Refreshed Curriculum, there have been varying arguments regarding the place of mātauranga Māori in the Aotearoa New Zealand education system. Debates over academic knowledge, cultural knowledge, the teaching of soft skills versus literacy and numeracy dominated headlines and media interviews, both in New Zealand and overseas. On the side of the importance of academic knowledge, Lourie (2021) suggested that there are elitist connotations to the term 'academic knowledge' which evokes a feeling of unease. She questioned whether the curriculum's shift away from academic knowledge towards cultural knowledge was an attempt to honour the Te Tiriti ō Waitangi by rejecting Western knowledge, creating a curriculum that was weak and misguided. Similarly, Siteine (2021) argued that a curriculum focussed on cultural knowledge does not provide enough richness to allow for a strong sense of academic identity to form and will do a disservice to learners.

In a more extreme attack on mātauranga Māori in the Science curriculum, British scientist Richard Dawkins labelled the move for mātauranga Māori to have equal footing as Western science knowledge "ludicrous virtue signalling," (Dawkins, 2023, p. 1). This attitude was supported by Elon Musk on the social media platform X, formerly known as Twitter. Criticism on the value of mātauranga Māori has played out nationally and internationally and highlights the tension that exists regarding traditional ideas of academic knowledge and indigenous knowledge, particularly with mātauranga Māori in the New Zealand Curriculum.

Offering an alternative perspective, Brennan et al. (2021) highlight the potential for mātauranga Māori to add richness to academic knowledge. They suggest that educators can find opportunities in their teaching programmes to enhance learning through the inclusion of Māori world views, such as Māori metaphors and narratives, underpinned by Māori values in the English classroom. This perspective serves to enhance academic knowledge in a way that is unique to our Aotearoa New Zealand context and in a way that honours the Te Tiriti ō Waitangi purposefully, without detriment to current educational practices. Brennan et al. argue that we need to not see mātauranga Māori as an alternative, but as an addition that will make our curriculum stronger.

Often the discourse on curriculum change includes comment from politicians as they voice their stance on what values education should uphold. This was evident in Act Party leader David Seymour's Facebook post which declared, "The Government's NZ history curriculum threatens to indoctrinate students in left-wing ideas about colonialism, the welfare state, gender identity, and 'cultural appropriation'," (Seymour, 2021, p.1) in response to the Labour Government's change to the New Zealand History curriculum in 2019 which focussed on ensuring all students learned about topics such as the Māori land wars and pre-colonial Aotearoa. Degenhardt (2018) suggested that curriculum carries the weight of social direction, noting that judgements about what is included in the curriculum can be considered a judgement about how individuals should live their lives. Brennan et al., (2021) add to this discussion by exposing the role that power relationships play in curriculum development and the influence politicians have on education. The curriculum and NCEA qualification changes, instigated by the Labour government in 2018, are no exception to these debates and the discourse around the political ideologies underpinning curriculum can create inflammatory responses from those who oppose the change or align with alternate ideologies. These political influences and responses can make curriculum change a more divisive issue socially.

2.1.2 Decolonising the English curriculum

When examining the English curriculum in secondary schools specifically, there is an interesting narrative of the subject's origins. 'Literary studies', as it is often known in other parts of the world, had a relatively late inclusion into British universities compared to other humanities subjects such as Classical Studies and History, and its position among other 'knowledge' based subjects was questioned (Davies & Sawyer, 2023b). Initially, there were arguments that the subject lacked the rigidity worthy of an academic subject and that literature study was better suited as a hobby. With colonisation, however, the subject took on a new purpose, as Literary Studies became a means for colonisers to embed imperial ideologies throughout the colonies (Davies & Sawyer, 2023a). The tertiary domain of Literature Studies later trickled down into secondary education as what we now call 'English' and is a key component of national curriculums across Western countries, including Aotearoa New Zealand.

A deep-seated attitude among English teachers is the importance of the 'literary canon'; that is, the texts that are deemed authoritative, legitimate or worthy of academic study (Macaluso & Macaluso, 2018). These texts have been taught in secondary English programmes for decades and include works from Shakespeare, *Of Mice and Men, To Kill a Mockingbird* and *The Great*

Gatsby. The issue with the 'literary canon' has been the limited narrative diversity, with texts generally perpetuating gender, racial and socio-economic stereotypes. Canonical texts that are known worldwide offer a Western perspective, and rarely include indigenous stories or perspectives (Zhang, 2023). While attitudes to the canon are changing in Aotearoa New Zealand, as evidenced by the draft Refreshed Curriculum (Ministry of Education, 2022) which focuses more on stories from Aotearoa, there is still an existing tension with which texts teachers deem to be 'worthy' of study and the decolonisation of the subject.

In addition to the literary canon, English as a subject can also be a place where Pākeha or Western perspectives can be the dominant lens through which all texts are analysed. McKinney (2017) observed this in a secondary English classroom in Johannesburg, where a student challenged their teacher's Western interpretation of a text through the use of her own isi-Zulu perspective. McKinney reports that the teacher failed to take up the perspective of their student, thereby reinforcing the dominance of Western-knowledge in the classroom. This narrative speaks to the problem faced in Aotearoa New Zealand English classrooms where the culture of the teacher may inform the manner in which texts are analysed. In 2020, 73% of Aotearoa New Zealand's teachers in English-medium schools were Pākeha, with only 10% Māori (Turner-Adams & Rubie-Davies, 2023). While these statistics refer to the wider teacher population, as the current ethnicity status of Aotearoa New Zealand's English teachers has not been collected, they indicate the culture dominance of Pākeha in the teaching profession.

The lack of Māori teachers highlights an issue discussed by Meier and Culpan (2020) around the appropriation of Māori concepts by Pākeha teachers in a predominantly Pākeha environment. They argue that Māori concepts, such as hauora, can be minimised by teachers through a lack of cultural understanding, and used for political and ideological gains which may serve to damage the relationship between Māori and Pākeha further. This raises the issue of how to incorporate mātauranga Māori in the English classroom without it being detrimental, especially in the face of neoliberalism. Meier and Culpan conclude by stating that this tension is typical in post-colonial societies and shifts to include mātauranga Māori in the curriculum must be accompanied by more general changes to de-colonise society.

It is likely that these differing perspectives on the place of mātauranga Māori in the New Zealand Curriculum, and more specifically in NCEA assessments, as seen in national and international discourse exist among the teaching profession and the wider school communities. The current National Government are vocal about their stance that school should be more focussed on reading, writing and Maths in their Teaching the Basics Brilliantly policy (Ministry of Education,

2023). Students involved in this study are likely to have been exposed to these attitudes which may affect their self-efficacy when participating in an NCEA assessment that uses a Māori concept to examine a text. Moreover, the teachers implementing and delivering these assessments may be influenced by the national and international discourse, particularly around the dangers of cultural appropriation, which may impact their willingness and efficacy to teach Māori concepts in a culturally responsive manner.

2.2 The Aotearoa New Zealand context

In New Zealand, there are six major ethnic groups, comprising of Pākeha / New Zealand European (67.8%), Māori (17.3%), Pasifika (8.9%), Asian (17.3%), Middle Eastern, Latin American and African (MELAA) (1.9%) and Other Ethnicities (1.2%) (Statistics NZ, 2024). Each ethnic group is heterogeneous and is comprised of many sub-cultural groups with distinct characteristics and values.

While ethic groups are easier to identify, and are used by the Ministry of Education to categorise educational data, culture and cultural identity is far more complex. Brock and Tulasiewicz (2018) define cultural identity as a designation of how one chooses to live their life based on the social structures they bond with. Hoosain and Salili (2007) recognise that culture is becoming less stable as countries shift to be more diverse, and that interactions between individuals naturally alters one's own cultural identity. Nevertheless, they argue that within an individual, there is generally one dominant culture and this allows them to connect with wider cultural groups. This literature review uses student achievement data provided by NZQA and the Ministry of Education which is based on the ethnicity data, as cultural data is unavailable, and it is acknowledge that the reported ethnicity may or may not correlate to the cultural identity of students.

Aotearoa New Zealand's classrooms are comprised of a diverse, multi-cultural and multi-ethnic student population, whose experiences of life and learning is unique and nuanced. The Aotearoa New Zealand education system, that serves a Pākeha-centric ideology, generally fails to meet the needs of learners from a non-Pākeha cultural background (Bishop & Glynn, 2003; Marie et al., 2008). As previously mentioned, Māori students in Aotearoa New Zealand have a history of educational failings while Pasifika students have lower achievement in international educational tests such as TIMMS and PISA than the general student population (Acosta & Hsu, 2014). Moreover, migrant learners are more likely to suffer poorer educational outcomes, particularly if they are from refugee backgrounds and have had their learning interrupted by war or

displacement (Bilgili et al., 2018). These statistics are bleak and highlight the challenge facing educators in the classroom to address the disparities and improve outcomes for Māori, Pasifika and migrant learners.

However, there are exceptions to these poor statistics among non-Pākeha students. It is noted that students of Asian descent, on average, achieve in NCEA above the national average and both Asian and MELAA students are more likely to go on to tertiary study than the wider student population (Education Review Office, 2023). This data, however, does not indicate whether these students are first-generation immigrants or not, which has been noted to affect academic performance, with first-generation immigrants significantly adversely affected compared with second- or subsequent generation immigrants (Acosta & Hsu, 2014). Educational attitudes and expectations of those from Asian and MELAA cultures may also align more with Pākeha attitudes and expectations of education which could contribute to their success within the Pākeha-centric educational system. While the data provided by the Ministry of Education and other educational scholars provides a general understanding of how students experience school and NCEA based on ethnicity, it does not provide sufficient evidence of how a student's cultural identity impacts their motivation and achievement in Aotearoa New Zealand schools.

When examining Māori students, there are a number of aspects to consider about the cultural complexities that exist. Firstly, Māori cannot be considered a homogenous group (Durie, 1995). Each iwi has a unique whakapapa, with diverse tikanga and values. Moreover, a Māori student may be ethnically Māori but have no cultural connection with te reo and te ao Māori due to the generational disconnect from their culture as a result of colonisation (Faircloth et al., 2016). Durie warns against making assumptions based on ethnicity and suggests that culture is the appropriate lens to look at student achievement through, particularly for Māori students. Marie et al. (2008) argues that educational disparities between Māori and non-Māori are the consequence of the Aotearoa New Zealand education system failing to respond to the cultural differences of Māori students. When one considers the underachievement of Māori, Pasifika and migrant learners, Marie et al.'s point may be applied to all students whose culture does not align with the Pākeha-dominant culture found in many of Aotearoa New Zealand English-medium schools.

For Pasifika students, there is equal diversity in cultural identity as for Māori (Bruce Ferguson et al., 2008; Samu, 2006). Pasifika students are comprised of those who are descendent from 14 Pacific Island countries, all with unique customs, values, and languages. The cultural variation amongst Pasifika students is vast and this must be recognised when considering the experience

of students in the classroom. The same can be said for Asian and MELAA students who belong to a vast array of cultures. By categorising these students into ethnic groups, we can minimise our understanding of their unique experience (Samu, 2006). Therefore, teachers must recognise and respect the unique cultural identity of each of their students in order to be effective practitioners (Darling-Hammond et al., 2024).

Internationally, with the rise of globalisation and diverse communities, the discourse around culturally responsive pedagogy has gained prominence as teachers grapple with how to respond to the needs of their student body (Hoosain & Salili, 2007). Culturally responsive pedagogy is defined as an approach to teaching that considers student culture when designing, implementing and reflecting upon learning programmes (Collier & Tripp, 2020). It recognises that students from different cultures view education and learning differently and that educators need to respond to this through the use of appropriate teaching strategies and learning contexts (Cresswell-Yeager & Whitaker, 2021; Hoosain & Salili, 2007).

Creating an inclusive learning environment for young people is crucial to success in education. Darling-Hammond et al. (2024) argue that supportive, culturally responsive schools have the potential to reduce the impact of adversity such as poverty, family harm and trauma, which are known to affect motivation and achievement. While the value of culturally responsive practice is clear, it must be accompanied by a culturally responsive curriculum also. A Pākeha-centric curriculum fails to achieve this for all students, so the Refreshed Curriculum and changes to NCEA allow for teachers to reflect upon their learning programmes and look for opportunities to engage with culturally diverse perspectives and acknowledge the dominance that Pākeha perspectives have held in Aotearoa New Zealand. By giving mātauranga Māori equal status in the curriculum alongside traditional Pākeha knowledge, there may be an acceptance that knowledge is culturally and socially curated and valued (Alexander, 2006) and all forms of knowledge have equal status, allowing greater space for students from all cultures to view their knowledge as valuable.

Culturally responsive practices in the classroom must also be accompanied by a willingness from teachers to examine their own unconscious bias. Doyle et al. (2023) suggests that many teachers view unconscious bias as an issue belonging to others rather than to themselves, resulting in a lack of reflection or change of their own behaviours. Education Review Office (2023) stated that one in four ethnic students in Aotearoa New Zealand report that they have been discriminated against by their teachers, particularly in terms of their academic pathways and course selection. This illuminates the issue facing non-Pākeha students in Aotearoa New Zealand and shows that

there is more work to be done to ensure students are not affected by racial prejudice. Darling-Hammond et al. (2024) reinforce the importance for teachers to acknowledge their unconscious bias so they can support all students to meet their potential. When teachers in Aotearoa New Zealand can recognise and rectify the dominance of Pākeha ideologies and knowledge in the curriculum, and acknowledge the unconscious biases they hold, it is possible that the disparities facing Māori, Pasifika and migrant learners will decline.

The Aotearoa New Zealand educational context is complex and the challenges facing policymakers, educational leaders and teachers are immense. Recognising the cultural differences among students in the classroom and working to honour Te Tiriti ō Waitangi, de-centre Pākeha ideologies and become more culturally responsive is critical to the success of all students within the educational system.

2.3 Self-efficacy

2.3.1 Defining self-efficacy

Exploring the nature of motivation has been a key part of educational and psychological research for decades. The 1970s witnessed a shift away from the behaviourist theories of learning, which had dominated for half a century, towards more complex theories, such as constructivism and social learning (Greene, 2018). During this shift, Bandura's (1977) framework for self-efficacy was developed and it challenged the behaviourist view that behaviour was only influenced by external factors (Greene, 2018). Instead, the social cognitive theory considered a triadic reciprocal model (Bandura et al., 2003) where three factors - person, behaviour and environment - interacted, recognising the influence of both internal and external factors on the self.

Bandura (1997) defined self-efficacy as a self-belief in one's ability to perform a particular task. In this respect, self-efficacy differs from other 'self' theories, such as self-concept and self-esteem, in that it focuses on how individuals perceive their competency in an activity based on the qualities or abilities they have. Anderman and Anderman (2020) stress that self-efficacy isn't subject-specific, arguing that a student could be both efficacious and inefficacious in a subject, depending on the task they are asked to complete and it lacks predictability or stability (Bong & Skaalvik, 2003; Zimmerman, 2000). Self-concept and self-esteem are considered to be more stable than self-efficacy (Bong & Skaalvik, 2003), however, Greenier et al. (1995) emphasise that, self-esteem stability is not guaranteed, and individuals may experience fluctuations in their self-esteem as a result of external factors such as self-enhancement or self-protection. This

highlights an interesting perspective for this research in that one cannot make assumptions about the self-efficacy of students in AS91925 based on their perceived self-concept and self-esteem in other areas of school life.

When characterising self-esteem, Eisenberger et al. (2013) suggests that it is an individual's judgment of their self-worth, self-liking and promotes contentment and predicts satisfaction. Meanwhile, Bong and Skaalvik (2003) define self-concept as being less value orientated than self-esteem, and instead encompasses the general ability that one perceives themselves to have. In terms of academic and personal success in education, self-efficacy is considered a more important attribute than self-esteem as it leads to further growth. Sternberg (1988) posits that self-efficacy is developed in students when they successfully complete a task that they didn't believe that could achieve. He suggests that self-efficacy requires teachers to allow their students to be uncomfortable, whereas a focus of self-esteem in the classroom involves teachers making students feel comfortable. Eisenberger et al. (2013) note that the conflict between development of self-esteem and self-efficacy in students can impact the expectations teachers have and consequently, the pedagogies they implement within the classroom.

Bandura (1997) noted that an individual's self-esteem may be affected by low self-efficacy, dependent on the value that they put on the task completed, but if they hold no value in the task, their self-esteem might not be affected. When considering the impact that self-esteem has on self-efficacy, the literature is less clear (Pignault et al., 2023) and tends to examine the impact it has, alongside self-concept and self-efficacy, on learning (Chen et al., 2023; Gebregergis et al., 2020; Jiang, 2024).

There are many benefits to developing self-efficacy in students. Bandura (1997) noted that students who possess high self-efficacy are more likely to persist in the face of learning difficulty, while it has also been suggested that higher self-efficacy is related to greater subjective wellbeing (Cohen & Cairns, 2012) and fewer experiences of depressive moods and anxiety (Leary & Tangney, 2003). Those with low self-efficacy are likely to question their ability, contributing to low self-concept, and are unlikely to use the skills they do possess well (Eisenberger et al., 2013). Conversely, self-efficacy is characterised by self-discipline, effort and motivation. Understanding and enhancing the self-efficacy of students is therefore a key component of effective pedagogy.

Prior knowledge has been argued to positively affect self-efficacy in the literature, particularly in Mathematics and Physics, (Ferla et al., 2009; Thompson & Zamboanga, 2004; Usher & Pajares, 2009) and is noted to improve motivation and reduce procrastination in learning. Prior knowledge is generally defined as the knowledge held by an individual through previous experiences (Fulano

et al., 2021). While much of the literature supports the causal effect of prior knowledge and self-efficacy, Choo et al. (2024) noted that among first-year university students studying Accounting, prior knowledge from secondary school was not an advantage to highly efficacious beliefs among the study's participants. It could be argued, therefore, that the importance of prior knowledge and its causal effect on self-efficacy is dependent on the social learning environment and whether there is a perception that prior knowledge is needed in order to successfully complete new learning. Therefore, self-efficacy beliefs may be impacted if it is perceived that prior knowledge is advantageous.

Bandura (1997) outlined four key areas that affect self-efficacy: mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasions and physiological responses. Inside the classroom, mastery and vicarious experiences play a significant role in self-efficacy development. Bong and Skaalvik (2003) and Eisenberger et al. (2013) note that experiencing success helps to strengthen efficacy, including when that success is experienced vicariously through someone perceived to have a similar level of ability. Therefore, the self-efficacy of students doesn't have to be founded on true competence but on their perceived competence (Anderman & Anderman, 2020). While verbal persuasion and physiological responses affect self-efficacy, Bong and Skaalvik (2003) argue that these are not stronger than mastery and vicarious experiences. However, there is significant literature on teacher and parental involvement in student learning and it often targets verbal persuasion through feedback or expectations as a key influencer of self-efficacy (Bong & Skaalvik, 2003; Eisenberger et al., 2013; Klassen et al., 2011; Pinquart & Ebeling, 2020; Schunk, 1985; Zhang et al., 2024; Zimmerman, 2000). Therefore, while experiences may be considered the most influential, verbal persuasion is something that parents and teachers may influence with efficacy development, whether knowingly or not. Looking at student self-efficacy in this study, requires consideration of the interactions between students and their teachers and parents to fully understand their experience.

For efficacy development in the classroom, Schunk (1985) provided guidance on what teachers could do with their students, including setting proximal goals, encouraging students to set their own learning goals and giving enactive feedback. Zimmerman (2000) suggested teachers model self-regulation techniques in the classroom and provide students with feedback on their use of these techniques, while Bong and Skaalvik (2003) added to the discourse by encouraging teachers to use cooperative learning strategies in the classroom where students are grouped with peers of a similar level. These strategies all recognise the importance of experiences and verbal persuasion on the development of self-efficacy and highlight how teachers can play a role. Just as teachers may have a positive effect on self-efficacy development, they can also negatively

affect it through negative behaviours such as belittlement and dissatisfaction (Shukla et al., 2020).

Another consideration of self-efficacy development in students is how it is affected by the self-efficacy of teachers. Klassen et al. (2011) define teacher-efficacy as a teacher's belief in their own ability to teach the students in front of them, while Bandura (1995) noted that teacher efficacy has a direct impact on the sense of efficacy held by their students. Eisenberger et al. (2013) reinforce this by arguing that it is difficult for teachers to develop the self-efficacy of their students if they are not efficacious themselves. As teachers are required to work in a more culturally diverse environment, as a consequence of migration patterns, their efficacy is challenged. Bandura (1995) argues that there is a correlation between increasingly culturally diverse student bodies and a lack of teacher efficacy, which arises from the challenge of implementing differentiated strategies to meet the needs of their learners. In the context of this study, the pressures on teacher efficacy are significant: implementing new learning, incorporating mātauranga Māori, facilitating new NCEA assessment standards and responding to a culturally diverse student population. This holds the potential for teachers to lack self-efficacy and therefore may have a causal effect on student self-efficacy.

Beyond the classroom, self-efficacy is affected by whānau, particularly with regard to verbal persuasion. It is noted that students who have parental involvement in their learning are more likely to be positively affected (Eisenberger et al., 2013), especially for younger students (Macakova & Wood, 2022). However, Eisenberger et al. do note that developing self-efficacy in adolescences requires them to overcome challenges they are faced with. Therefore, parents must realise that their role is not to remove obstacles for their children but to support them to overcome challenges they face. In this way, the manner in which parents engage with schools is an important factor. According to Pinquart and Ebeling (2020), a review of 169 studies indicated that prior achievement affected academic achievement less than parental expectations, and while this is not a direct reflection of the impact of parental involvement in developing student self-efficacy, it does highlight the importance of the role parents and caregivers play in student learning, of which self-efficacy is a component. Parental attitudes towards student learning, particularly around the inclusion of mātauranga Māori in the English classroom may impact student self-efficacy and is an area to explore in this study.

2.3.2 Self-efficacy and culture

To understand how students perceive their self-efficacy, it is also important to consider the identities they bring with them into the classroom. Klassen (2004) noted that there was

discrepancy between the assumptions made by the Social Cognitive Theory and the characteristics presented in non-Western cultural groups, specifically around positive efficacy beliefs and actual performance. Pajares (2007) suggests that culture, gender, and social beliefs such as individualism and collectivism all impact efficacy beliefs and actual competence. It is important, therefore, to consider culture when examining the self-efficacy beliefs of participants in this study.

Ferrari and Mahalingam (1998) examine the relationship between culture and engagement in learning. They note that cultural expectations impact how students engage in their learning. Moreover, what might be considered valuable for one culture may not be for another (Brophy, 2008), creating a possible tension between school, home and wider societal expectations creating another layer of complexity to the study of self-efficacy in students. McInerney (2008) argues that discussions of engagement in learning must be done through a socio-cultural lens, as anything else diminishes the effect that culture has on learning and takes a simplistic view of the issue. Therefore, examining self-efficacy beliefs of student must acknowledge their individual cultural beliefs and recognise that attitudes to learning are specific to the student's lived experience. While trends may be apparent in data across students of a similar cultural background, generalisability is problematic because of the complexity of cultural identity and teachers should recognise that each student in their class will experience and develop self-efficacy differently.

Self-efficacy is a complex theory of 'self' and while Bandura (1997) outlined the four key factors that contribute to efficacy development, culture also impacts efficacious beliefs and behaviours. Aotearoa New Zealand's unique cultural context necessitates further literature on how learners experience self-efficacy, especially as we move to include mātauranga Māori as having equal status to Pākehā knowledge in the New Zealand curriculum. Understanding how learners experience self-efficacy when using te ao Māori concepts in an NCEA English assessment will help to fill this gap in the literature.

2.4 Conclusion

The literature on the decolonisation of the curriculum, the Aotearoa New Zealand educational context and the role of self-efficacy in learning highlights the need for further investigation into how students perceive their self-efficacy when asked to incorporate aspects of mātauranga Māori in the English classroom. Further exploration of how an individual's culture affects their self-efficacy is particularly relevant to the current Aotearoa New Zealand context as NCEA requires teachers to de-centralise Pākeha knowledge and enhance mātauranga Māori in

assessments. Understanding the self-efficacy of students using te ao Māori concepts in AS91925 will help to fill the gaps in the literature as presented in this review.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

A mixed methods approach has been taken for this study, underpinned by a pragmatic philosophy. This philosophy recognises that both quantitative and qualitative approaches to research have limitations, such as depth and generalisability respectively, and aims to minimise these by selecting whichever complementary methods are necessary to support the research aims and questions (Johnson & Christensen, 2014; Punch & Oancea, 2009). Pragmatism can be considered more central on the continuum between quantitative and qualitative methods, disregarding the dichotomous research traditions which were prominent in the late 20th century (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). Foundational to the pragmatic research philosophy is that the researcher considered what works best in practice to answer the research questions comprehensively (Johnson & Christensen, 2014).

Plano Clark and Ivankova (2016) state that when using mixed methods design, researchers must be clear in their purpose for using the approach and consider carefully how quantitative and qualitative methods are integrated to enhance the quality of the evidence collected. It is not enough to simply use both quantitative and qualitative methods to capture evidence, but the research must use these methods to enhance their strengths and minimise their weaknesses. To this end, this research will employ an explanatory sequential design (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018; Fetters et al., 2013) using the *Frameworks for an integrated methodology (FraIM)* developed by David Plowright (2011) to guide the research process.

3.2 Framework for an integrated methodology

Plowright's (2011) *Framework for an integrated methodology* provides a basic structure to guide the research process (see Figure 1.). Each component of the framework can be further deconstructed to explore the intricacies of mixed methods research. While other frameworks or models exist (for examples, see Hammersley, 1992; Punch, 2009) and have been considered, FraIM has been chosen for its suitability to small scale research in a single educational setting (Plowright, 2011).

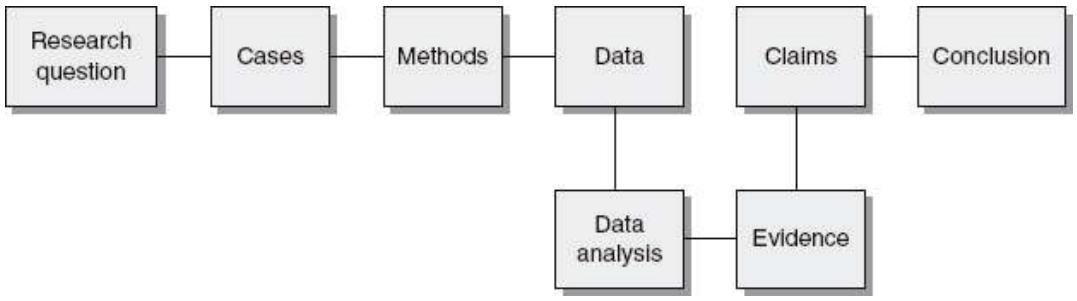


Figure 1. Framework for an integrated methodology – The basic structure (Plowright, 2011)

3.2.1 Development of research questions

FraIM places research questions as the first step in the framework, giving focus to the remainder of the process. This initial step supports Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2006) assertion that research questions drive mixed methods research by determining the sample, methods and analysis with which the research operates. Plowright (2011) notes the importance of identifying the wider contexts that affect the research, including the professional, organisational, policy, national and theoretical contexts that the research is situated within (see Figure 2.). Examining these contexts gives purpose and clarity to the research questions and illuminates how the researcher positions themselves within the wider context of the study.

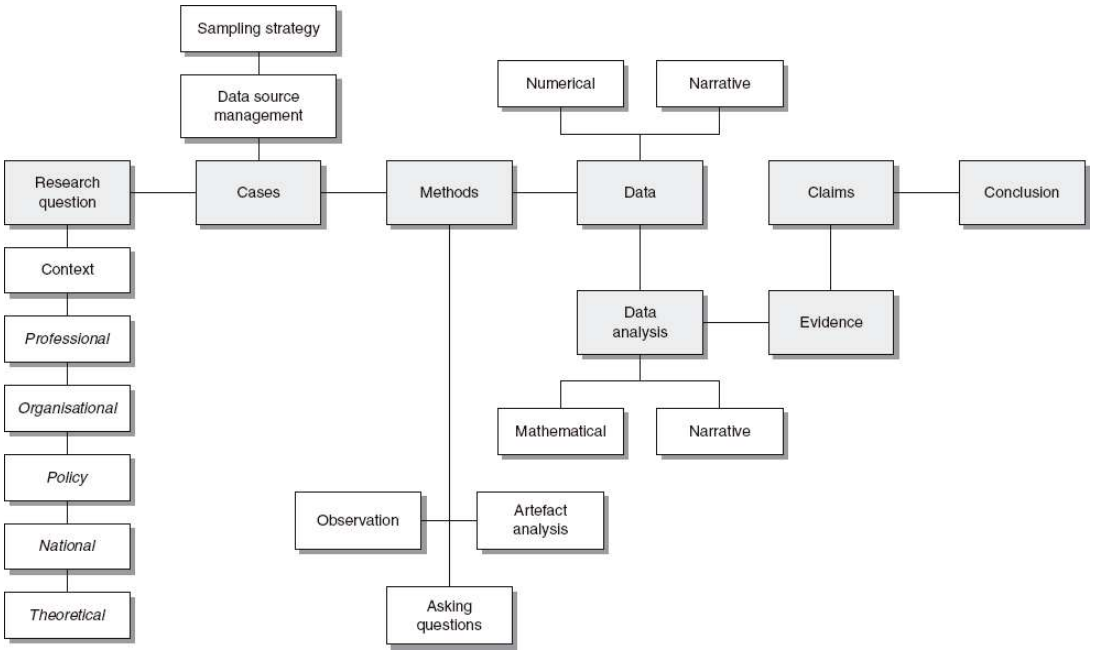


Figure 2. The main, extended FraIM (Plowright, 2011)

3.2.2 Professional context

As the researcher, reflecting upon my professional context is crucial to understand how I impact the direction of the study, highlighting personal biases and limitations that are present

(Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2006; Plowright, 2011; Punch & Oancea, 2009). I have taught English for 11 years at the secondary school in which the study is taking place. While this has given me a deep understanding of the context of the school, my experience with other educational settings is limited and narrows the perspective I have of education in Aotearoa New Zealand. Moreover, this school is a single-sex girls' school, further limiting my perspective.

Additionally, my undergraduate degree was not English, but in Classical Studies, so English was a minor subject in my initial teacher training. Nevertheless, I was presented with opportunities in English throughout my career and have been Head of Department of English and Classical Studies since 2020. For me, English is an exploration of culture and identity through literature and the strength of the subject is in its ability to connect people through shared and differing experiences and perspectives. This professional context underpins the desire to examine how student identity and culture interacts with mātauranga Māori in the English classroom, manipulating the research questions to explore this phenomenon further.

3.2.3 Organisational context

The organisational context for this study is significant, not only in the way it has moulded my own identity as a teacher and a researcher, but for the impact it had on the way this research was conducted. The school involved is a high achieving, inner city girls' school with a culture that merges its long-standing traditional history with innovative curriculum and pedagogy. The school has a comprehensive strategy for Māori achievement and embeds Positive Behaviour for Learning and culturally responsive practice into its strategic goals. The demographic of the school is Pākeha (59%), Māori (11%), Asian (11%), Pasifika (5%), Middle Eastern (5%) and other ethnicities (9%).

The School Board was supportive of the study, indicating that the research would be beneficial to their strategic goal of providing quality educational experiences for all students. Furthermore, they believed the study aligned with their vision for upholding Te Tiriti ō Waitangi meaningfully and it provided an opportunity for reflection on the current attitudes of staff and students on the incorporation of mātauranga Māori in the classroom. When consulted about the study, the School Board wanted assurances that students would not be adversely affected by participation, particularly with regard to any impact on attendance in curriculum classes. Working within this organisational context impacted the methods used to collect data which is evident in the research questions.

3.2.4 Policy context

There were two significant policies that were relevant to the context of this study. Firstly, The Education and Training Act 2020: Section 9 (Te Tiriti ō Waitangi) and secondly, Article 12 of the United Nationals Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Firstly, the Education and Training Act 2020: Section 9 (Te Tiriti ō Waitangi) outlines the responsibility schools have in upholding Te Tiriti ō Waitangi, including ensuring that systems, policies and curriculum reflect mātauranga Māori and te ao Māori. This is unique to the Aotearoa New Zealand educational context and has a significant influence on the setting of this research. It requires the research to uphold the principles of the Treaty by upholding the status of Māori as a bicultural partner in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Secondly, Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN General Assembly, 1989) states that any child who is capable of forming their own opinions has the right to share these freely and that they should be listened to. This article was ratified by Aotearoa New Zealand in 1993 and therefore, has bearing on the context of this study. Consequently, the research questions were formulated to allow participants to share their lived experience and have opinions about an issue that directly impacts them.

3.2.5 National context

This study took place in 2024, six years after the Labour Government announced the Review of Achievement Standards and the Refreshed Curriculum. 2024 was the first year that the new Level One NCEA standards were fully implemented, although, standards had been piloted by a small number of schools in Aotearoa New Zealand in the three years prior to this.

In 2023, the national election saw National, Act and New Zealand First replace Labour as Aotearoa New Zealand's government. The coalition were vocal about their dislike of the new NCEA standards and the Refreshed Curriculum, and announced in April 2024 that they would be reviewing and rephasing the roll-out of the NCEA Change Package (Standford, 2024). This national context had a significant impact on the study as the discourse around the ideological function of NCEA and the curriculum became more prominent in national media. Consequently, the research evolved to include the attitudes that students held about the value of analysing a text through a Māori lens in the English classroom.

3.2.6 Theoretical context

The literature review (Chapter 2) provides the theoretical context from which the research questions are born. Key literature on the history of the English curriculum, the Aotearoa New Zealand education system and self-efficacy were reviewed to formulate the direction for this study.

3.2.7 Research questions

The examination of the professional, organisation, policy, national and theoretical contexts led to the development of three research questions. The first two focussed on the quantitative and qualitative phases of data collection and finally, the mixed methods question gave purpose to the integration of quantitative and qualitative methods.

Quantitative

What is the relationship between student's perceived self-efficacy with using te ao Māori concepts in a high-stakes NCEA Level One English assessment and their cultural identity?

Qualitative

How do students perceive their self-efficacy with using te ao Māori concepts in an NCEA Level One English assessment?

Mixed Methods

How does the perception students have of their self-efficacy explain the relationship between cultural identity and self-efficacy with using te ao Māori concepts in an NCEA Level One English assessment?

3.3 Case

3.3.1 Data source management

For this research, a single case study was chosen, with boundaries established by the educational context of the setting (Merriam, 1998) of which the researcher has little control over (Plowright, 2011). While Plowright considers a single case to be one or few participants, Bartlett and Vavrus (2016) suggest that a case could be used to describe a single institution, as well as each person in that institution. These contradictory definitions create some ambiguity in the use of the term 'case', so for the purpose of this study, the single case is defined at the institutional level.

The case study was chosen as it offered the opportunity to consider the complexities of the phenomenon and allowed the researcher to study it within its real-world context (Yin, 2009). The research questions were formulated to support an explanatory approach where data was collected to examine patterns (Yin, 2009) and according to Creswell (2009), were appropriate as the variables were not clear to the researcher at the outset of the study.

The case was bounded by the year-level, NCEA enrolment status and subject class of the participants. It included 127 Year 11 students at a single-sex secondary school who were enrolled in NCEA Level One English. These students were from five English classes, with each class taught by a different teacher. While the researcher also teaches a Level One NCEA English class at the school, their students were excluded from the study for ethical reasons (see: 3.5.4 Ethical Considerations).

The boundaries for this case were defined to offer a manageable sample size that was easily accessible to the researcher. While Yin (2009) and Merriam (1998) present the boundedness of cases as being a naturally occurring characteristic of a case, this researcher acknowledges the argument put forward by Bartlett and Vavrus (2016) that boundaries are created by social actors to frame the case as they deem necessary. Therefore, recognising the purpose of the boundaries as they pertain to the study aims is important to maintain objectivity regarding the limitations of the study.

The sample size chosen for this study offered ethnic and cultural diversity, with a demographic of Pākeha (59%), Māori (11%), Asian (11%), Pasifika (5%), Middle Eastern (5%) and other ethnicities (9%). Additionally, the researcher acts as the Head of Department for English at the research setting so there was some degree of control (Plowright, 2011) over the teaching and learning, and assessment conditions for the Year 11 learning programme.

3.3.2 Sample strategy

The initial quantitative phase of the study employed a convenience sample strategy (Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007), also known as availability or haphazard sampling (Check & Schutt, 2012). This strategy was chosen as it offered the least amount of pressure for participants which was an important consideration when working with young people (Mat Roni et al., 2020). Prospective participants were invited to join the study collectively, rather than singling individuals out by using a random or systematic sample strategy. The intention for this was to encourage participation without having students feel as though they were required to participate to be successful in the assessment

The limitations of the convenience sample strategy meant that those who were willing to participant did not represent the wider population (Kornuta & Germaine, 2019) as the students who returned consent forms were generally more academic and active members of the wider school community. This could be as a result of other students feeling as though their perspective of learning was not valuable or that they felt generally disengaged with school. When analysing the data from the first phase of the study, it was necessary to consider those voices that were missing and recognise the limitations of the sample and its generalisability (Check & Schutt, 2012).

For the second phase of the study, a nested, purposive sample was used (Check & Schutt, 2012; Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007). Five participants were selected based on their identified culture and their self-nomination to participate in the interview. These participants included one Pākeha, one Māori/Pākeha, one Asian, one recent migrant of French/Pākeha decent and one Pasifika participant. It was important in this sample that there was cultural diversity so that the interviews could further explore the relationship between self-efficacy in the assessment and cultural identity. Of the five participants selected for the interviews, four were completed. One participant did not respond to communication with the researcher about the interview.

3.3.3 Initial correspondence

127 Year 11 students who were enrolled in AS91925 were spoken to at a year level assembly by the researcher. At this assembly, the study aims and methods were communicated, and information sheets and consent forms were handed out. The researcher discussed the voluntary nature of participation, which was reinforced by the year level Dean once the researcher had left the assembly. The year level Dean distributed the information sheets and consent forms to students who were eager to participate. A second opportunity to collect information sheets and consent forms was then given to students by their English teacher later in the week so students who were not present at the assembly had an opportunity to find out about the study.

A challenge which was presented in this phase of the study was the students misplacing their original information sheet and consent form. Extra copies were left at the school office and with English teachers for the next two weeks so students could get a replacement. Parents of the students were also emailed twice with information sheets and consent forms, which resulted in a number of replies. Furthermore, parents of Māori and Pasifika students were spoken to at the school's whānau hui and fono which resulted in a few consent forms being returned once parents had spoken directly with the researcher. This highlighted the importance of whānaungatanga when conducting research in an Aotearoa New Zealand context, with trust and strong

connections necessarily fostered with members of the wider school community, rather than only with the participants.

Once consent forms were returned, either on paper or digitally via email, participants were sent an anonymous link to the online Qualtrics survey. It was hoped that of the 127 students, 70 would participate in the online survey to ensure there was sufficient data to analysis. However, of the 127 students approached for the study, 41 returned consent forms and 34 completed the online survey. While this number was less than hoped, it reflected the nature of research in schools with young people who are already overwhelmed with pressures of learning, assessment and their other extra-curricular commitments. Check and Schutt (2012) note that when the response rate is below 65% of the sample population, the researcher must be aware that findings may not apply to the wider sample as the experience of non-respondents can differ significantly from those who choose to participate.

3.3.4 Data collection methods

The first phase of the study used an online survey, sent to the participant's school email address using an anonymous link to Qualtrics. The survey was separated into five sections: Background information, attitudes to school, attitudes to English, attitudes to using te reo and te ao Māori in English and further comments. The intention for separating the survey in this way was to establish the participant's ethnic and cultural background and to separate self-efficacy in AS91925 from their general attitudes towards school and English as a subject (Check & Schutt, 2012). The final section of the survey allowed participants to self-nominate for phase two of the study and to provide an opportunity to add any comments they had which hadn't already been covered in the survey.

When designing the survey, careful consideration was given to the wording of the questions. Participant literacy levels can impede upon their ability to understand and respond appropriately to the questions, so clear, simple language was used (Floyd, 2014; Menter et al., 2011). This was particularly important when considering participants who may use English as a second language. Furthermore, the survey was designed to be completed in a short timeframe, being mindful that participants would likely give up on answering questions if the survey was too long (Menter et al., 2011). In total, the survey had ten questions, with three of those questions asking for responses to between six and ten statements.

Likert items were used for questions five, six and seven. Participants could select from Strongly agree, Agree, Neither agree or disagree, Disagree and Strongly disagree. Providing a neutral

response under the column ‘Neither agree or disagree’ meant that participants were still required to make a stance, rather than providing them with an option to opt out of the question or respond with ‘No opinion’ (Krosnick et al., 2002). In the data analysis, a neutral response was considered to be as important as a positive or negative response. Questions were also designed to assess the same attitude, but with different wording (Floyd, 2014) with the data for these questions combined in the analysis stage to form Likert scales.

While the online survey provided the platform for participants to share their opinions, and gave sufficient data that could be analysed quickly (Check & Schutt, 2012; Menter et al., 2011), its limitations were considered prior to the study commencing. Most significantly, it was noted that participants were likely to answer questions in a way that aligned with what they assumed the researcher wanted them to say, particularly if they had self-nominated for phase two and gave their name. Mat Roni et al. (2020) call this ‘satisficing’ and note that this is problematic when conducting research with students. To counter this, it was emphasised throughout the study that the purpose of the questions was to elicit the participant’s attitude as understanding their lived experiences and perspective is vital for teachers to plan and implement effective learning programmes.

It was initially anticipated that the survey would be completed prior to the assessment beginning, however, in the two weeks set aside to conduct the survey, the desired quantity of responses had not been achieved. Consequently, the survey remained open for another two weeks, and the researcher visited classrooms to encourage participation. After the first week of assessment, the survey was closed with 34 responses obtained.

An unexpected challenge that arose was obtaining ethnic and cultural diversity among the respondents. Pasifika students were particularly reluctant to participate and would take consent forms when offered by their Pasifika Dean but did not return them. Furthermore, Middle Eastern students are unrepresented in the data, either because they did not complete the survey, or chose to not identify their ethnicity or cultural identity in the first two questions. This suggests that the study design may have inadvertently created cultural barriers that impacted the beneficence of the study for these two groups (Leonardo et al., 2024; Pasque & Alexander, 2023)

The second phase of the study involved one-on-one semi-structured interviews with five participants who self-nominated in phase one. Fetters et al. (2013) state that this type of sequential design integrates data at a method level with the phase two sample nested in the phase one sample (Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007). Phase two began after AS91925 was completed, and for three participants, before they had received their grade. These participants

were purposively selected based on their ethnic and cultural identity. Participants were emailed to arrange a meeting during their study period, and interviews took place in an interview room at the research setting. The interviews provided an opportunity to explore the data from the online survey in more depth, thereby counteracting the limitations of the quantitative method (Maxwell, 2022).

The interviews used for the qualitative phase were underpinned by the study's socio-constructivist epistemology, theorised by Vygotsky (1978). Roulston and Choi (2018) note that this is a key challenge involved in interviews, as the epistemological position of the researcher impacts how data in interviews is collected and understood. Interviews began with an identity activity that encouraged whānaungatanga and allowed participants to share what and who was important to them. This involved filling out an 'identity tree' (see Appendix 1.) which looked at ancestors, whānau, favourite foods and activities and beliefs. The 'identity activity' allowed the researcher to ask probing questions to encourage conversation and make connections about similarities they had with the participants.

When the researcher felt the participant was ready to move on, specific questions were asked which were crafted to allow the participant to share their lived-experience with AS91925. Questions focussed on their self-efficacy in completing the assessment and their general attitudes towards incorporating te ao Māori in the English classroom. The interview included 11 questions, categorised under four headings: Initial questions, Assessment specific questions, Attitudes to mātauranga Māori and Concluding question. These questions were open-ended and emphasised the participant's personal attitudes and experiences, becoming more complex as the interview progressed (Schensul & LeCompte, 2013). The final question, "Is there anything you wish people knew about your experience with this particular assessment in English?" gave the opportunity for the participant to speak about anything that hadn't already been covered in the interview.

The interview was recorded digitally and then transcribed. It was necessary to revisit the recording and make edits to the transcript as some words, particularly Māori vocabulary, were misinterpreted by the technology. Participants were made aware of the process of recording, transcribing, editing and storage of the transcript at the beginning and conclusion of the interview.

3.4 Data analysis

Data analysis was underpinned by Complexity Theory. Complexity Theory recognises how social environments impact individuals and how individuals can impact social environments (Morrison, 2008). It acknowledges that schools are complex systems that change adaptively and supports the idea that education should be student-centered. While Complexity Theory was created to understand the physical sciences, Byrne and Callaghan (2022) argue that it is an ontological position that can be applied to any system and therefore is suitable for social science research.

Hiver (2022) discusses the non-finality of Complexity Theory, recognising that data is a snapshot of the time it was collected, and participant responses could be subject to change. Consequently, the qualitative data in this study helped to understand the quantitative data but it was important to recognise that the timeframe between pre- and post- assessment may have affected the responses. This non-finality of the participants' responses was accounted for in the data analysis.

3.4.1 Quantitative

Quantitative data from the Qualtrics survey was exported to an Excel spreadsheet. Participants were assigned an identity number ranging from P.1 to P34. Three participants accessed the survey but did not answer any questions and consequently, their entry was removed from the dataset prior to assigning identity numbers and were not included in the survey data analysis.

In the quantitative data, there were three areas of focus for the Likert items: Attitudes to school, attitudes to English and attitudes to te ao Māori. This was done purposefully to identify whether participants held different beliefs about their ability using te ao Māori in the English classroom compared to their general attitudes towards school and English as a subject. This ensured that the data reflected self-efficacy beliefs rather than self-esteem or self-concept.

The raw data from the three Likert scale questions was entered into separate sheets to allow for further manipulation to aid in the analysis process. This involved reverse coding questions where necessary and categorising Likert items by their theme. For example, Q.5 investigated general attitudes to school. The seven Likert items were sorted into two categories: 'Experiences at school' and 'Experiences of success at school'. Dasgupta and Morrison (2024) discuss how there is often confusion between the terms 'Likert item' and 'Likert scale' and that a 'Likert scale' is an average of multiple 'Likert items', therefore the mean of the Likert item responses for each participant was found and recorded to the nearest whole number to produce a Likert scale score.

There were three Likert items in the data that were unable to be categorised. These were, Q5.2 I experience success at school most days, Q5.5 Learning is difficult for me and Q5.6 I am better at some subjects than others. These items were unable to be analysed as a Likert scale and therefore provided less reliable data (Dasgupta & Morrison, 2024) regarding the participants' attitudes towards school.

The Likert items were grouped together to create Likert scales and were averaged (Dasgupta & Morrison, 2024) to provide scale scores with the data from the Likert scales described using distribution percentages. It was inappropriate to use the mean of the responses as it could not be assumed that the separation between the response categories were evenly distributed (Dasgupta & Morrison, 2024; Johnson, 2016).

When analysing the Likert scale data in the survey, it was important to consider how participants responded to questions based on their desire for acceptance from the researcher and/or social desirability (Johnson, 2016; Menter et al., 2011; Safrudiannur, 2020). Consideration of how this tendency impacted the quantitative data informed the interview questions in the qualitative phase of the study and how participants responded to questions about the value of te ao Māori in the English classroom.

Cultural identity data was also collected and analysed, comparing it to ethnicity data. There were minor discrepancies among ethnicity and cultural groupings, particularly among Māori students. Cultural groupings were more beneficial to the study than ethnic groupings due to the focus of the research questions.

After the initial sample analysis of data, participant responses were divided into cultural groupings and analysed to view response distribution. This was then compared to the general sample data, and to the other cultural groups. Where a participant identified themselves as belonging to more than one cultural group, their responses were counted for each culture. This stage of the analysis served to answer the quantitative question for the study: What is the relationship between student self-efficacy with using te ao Māori concepts in a high-stakes NCEA Level One English assessment and their cultural identity?

Bar graphs were created to visually communicate the data, highlighting the distribution of responses among culture groups to each of the Likert scales. By examining this data, trends and patterns became more apparent which informed the writing of the questions used in the qualitative follow up interviews.

3.4.2 Qualitative

A thematic analysis was chosen for the qualitative interview data as it offers flexibility and highlights patterns within the data (Clarke & Braun, 2017). This method was preferrable to content analysis (Erlingsson & Brysiewicz, 2017) and discourse analysis (Bhatia et al., 2008) as it allowed the data to be interrogated so that the lived experiences of the participants could be understood rather than observed.

Transcripts from the four interviews were coded, using the qualitative research question as the lens through which the data was viewed. This centered around the participants' perception of their self-efficacy when using te ao Māori concepts in an NCEA internal assessment. Employing the process set out by Braun and Clarke (2006), transcripts were read multiple times and initial thoughts were documented. Initial codes were then recorded onto the transcripts using the comment function available.

As the initial coding phase is the beginning of the analysis process (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008) where the researcher's is constructing meaning from the language of others, the researcher's position in this process is highly influential, as codes are creating by the researcher to create meaning. Therefore, a reflexive approach to coding was necessary (Braun & Clarke, 2006), seeking to challenge interpretations by revisiting the codes regularly and considering alternative understandings.

Once codes were assigned to the data, themes were established to help identity patterns within the data. Themes were then reviewed against the entire qualitative data set, ensuring their suitability and accuracy, and against the qualitative research question to consider how the data reflected the intentions of the interview process (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Data that sat outside the scope of the research question was considered further to understand what it may contribute to understanding the participants' experience of using te ao Māori in an English assessment, returning to the literature to help make sense of the data's ambiguities (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008).

Finally, extracts from the transcripts were selected for use in the discussion section. These extracts were chosen for being typical or a-typical of the themes found in the wider dataset.

3.4.3 Integration

Integration was achieved at the study design level by employing an explanatory sequential design (DeCuir-Gunby et al., 2023; Fetters et al., 2013; Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007). The quantitative data collected from the surveys was analysed to inform the focus of the questions in the subsequent interviews. By obtaining a general overview of the self-efficacy of participants using

te ao Māori in their English assessment, the interviews were able to probe further to explain their experience in more depth. In this explanatory sequential design, the qualitative phase was given priority over the quantitative phase (quan → QUAL) (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). This integration therefore allowed for a breadth and depth in the data which would not have been achieved with quantitative or qualitative methods alone.

The methods used in this study were connected (Creamer, 2018; Fetters et al., 2013) through the nested sampling method of the qualitative phase (Fetters et al., 2013; Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007). Participants self-nominated for the interview in their survey response and then were selected based on their cultural identity and responses to the Likert items. This process connected the quantitative and qualitative phases allowing for greater integration of the data (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018).

In the final data analysis phase of the study, integration occurred by examining themes within the quantitative data and comparing it to the themes found in the qualitative data. This thematic analysis allowed the data to be woven together (Fetters et al., 2013).

3.5 Ethical considerations

As a researcher working with children, there were several key ethical considerations that were noted and mitigated prior to beginning the study. These centered around informed consent, non-maleficence and beneficence. Furthermore, given the nature of the study's exploration of culture, cultural considerations were addressed.

3.5.1 Informed consent

Informed consent was sought from both participants and their parents. The majority of participants were under the age of 16, and therefore required informed parental consent (Massey University, 2017). Consent from the participants was also sought as the researcher is a teacher at the research setting and it was considered necessary to respect the autonomy of participants in the setting (Cohen et al., 2009), especially given the asymmetrical power balance between teacher and students in this environment (Punch & Oancea, 2009).

Information sheets and consent forms were worded carefully to ensure that participants and their parents understood the purpose and process of the study. Multiple methods of communication were used with participants and parents, including talking to students at a level assembly which was followed by their year-level Dean explaining that participation was completely voluntary and

there would be no negative outcomes for students who did not wish to participate. This was further communicated to parents in the information sheet that was later sent to them directly through email.

A key challenge in this process was having participants return their signed consent form. Students who verbally indicated their wish to participate often misplaced their consent form and multiple copies were handed out at the first level assembly, then later by the year-level Dean, the Māori and Pasifika Dean, the classroom English teachers and the researcher who visited classrooms over the course of two weeks. Obtaining consent forms would not have been as successful if it weren't for the collaboration of colleagues at the school.

Initially, consent forms were returned only by Pākeha students, and it was clear that the methods used to gain participant and parental consent were not appropriate for Māori and Pasifika students particularly. An issue that was identified was the lack of personal connection in the process, with parents not having the opportunity to meet with the researcher face to face. The researcher then spoke at the school's combined whānau hui and fono to explain the study and emphasise the importance of having Māori and Pasifika voices heard. Consent forms were given to parents during the evening and a handful signed them on the night. This challenge highlighted a key issue in educational research affecting Māori and Pasifika participants where a different approach was required to ensure that trust was established (Cohen et al., 2009; Hammersley & Traianou, 2014) and illuminated the need for whānaungatanga in this phase of the study, particularly with whānau.

Obtaining consent forms from participants and parents needed to be treated carefully as it was important to give them the opportunity to participate without making them feel coerced into the study (Creswell, 2009). This was mitigated through the opportunity for participants to return their survey anonymously. Although a reminder email was sent to those who returned consents, no further communication was made to ensure that participants did not feel pressured to be involved in the study (Cohen et al., 2009), protecting their autonomy.

Returned consent forms were stored securely, and surveys were sent to participants through an anonymous link in an email. Of the 40 students who returned consents, 34 completed the survey, indicating that the initial consent did not necessarily equate to participation within the study.

3.5.2 Non-maleficence

Non-maleficence was a key area that the researcher focussed on through the study. This was achieved first through the emphasis that the study's aim was to collect information on the

participants' experience using te ao Māori in their English assessment. This message was reinforced in the survey and the interviews to encourage the participants to share their experience without fear of judgement (Creswell, 2009).

As a teacher in the research setting, it was crucial to establish boundaries with the participants that did not impact the established relationship. Consequently, it was decided that students who were taught in Year 11 English by the researcher were excluded from participating in the study. While this negatively affected the sample size, it was an important measure to avoid harm (Cohen et al., 2009).

Ensuring that participants felt comfortable and safe during the interviews was achieved by conducting these interviews in a private location within the research setting but acknowledging that the interview could stop at any time, and that their year level Dean was available in the room next door, should they feel the need to reach out for support. One participant chose not to reply to the email to organise a time and place for the interview, and this participant was not questioned so as to not put undue pressure on them (Cohen et al., 2009). During the interviews, affirmative language was used to encourage participants to feel comfortable.

Anonymity was available to the participants, with them only disclosing their identity in the survey if they wished to participate in the interviews. Furthermore, there were options for participants to not disclose their ethnicity or cultural identity in the survey. These measures allowed participants to have autonomy over identifying themselves to the researcher.

Confidentiality was reinforced to the participants, carefully explaining how their data would be stored, with no identifiable information connected to their responses. This was achieved by storing consent forms separately from survey responses and deleing identifiable information from the survey and interview responses prior to analysis. Participants were assigned a number in lieu of their name, and in the survey, there were options to not disclose identifiable information such as ethnicity and cultural identity.

For the interview transcripts, verbal consent to record the audio was obtained at the beginning of the interview, and participants were told how the recording would be identified anonymously and used by the researcher. This was in addition to the written consent obtained from the participant and their parents at the beginning of the study. It was important that the participant felt reassured and confident in the researcher prior to beginning the interviews so they felt comfortable to share their experience freely. This is not to say, however, that the presence of the recording device did

not have an impact on the participant and their responses to the interview questions (Jenks, 2018).

As the research was conducted during school hours within the research setting, it was important to schedule the surveys and interviews at times where student learning would not be negatively affected. Surveys were emailed to participants at the end of the school day, to encourage them to complete them outside of lesson time. Furthermore, interviews were only conducted during the participant's study period, so they were not expected to miss out on learning time to participate in the study. These measures mitigated harm to their learning.

3.5.3 Beneficence

Participants benefitted from this study by being given the opportunity to share their experience. Particularly for this cohort, who are the first to engage in the mandatory new NCEA standards, their experience has been complex and unique. The final question in both the survey and the interview was open to allow participants to share any further comments or concerns they had about using te ao Māori in an English assessment. Participants frequently used this to share their opinion about their experience outside of the constraints of the research focus. This benefitted the participants by not restricting them to only share what the researcher wanted to know.

There was further beneficence to the researcher, other classroom teachers and the wider school by conducting this study. This was due to the rich conversations that occurred informally as a result of the study and the collaboration between the researcher and members of the pastoral team. While confidentiality was maintained, the study allowed the researcher and colleagues to share their own experience about the process, reflect on their assumptions and consider how the assessment could be improved for next year. Unfortunately, in September of 2024, NZQA announced changes to AS91925 for 2025 which involves changing the assessment from being internally administered to an external assessment. This means that teachers will no longer be able to use the assessment task in the future, which limits the beneficence of this study for future cohorts in relation to this particular achievement standard. Nevertheless, the conclusions drawn from the research about the purpose of English as a subject and the perceived self-efficacy of students when incorporating mātauranga into learning activities are applicable beyond AS91925 and therefore are beneficial to teachers and other educational professionals.

3.5.4 Cultural considerations

This research examines the relationship between culture and self-efficacy with using te ao Māori concepts in AS91925. Consequently, ethical issues as they pertain to culture were a significant

consideration for the study. Firstly, the researcher recognised their position as a Pākeha, examining the experiences of non-Pākeha, particularly as the study concerned attitudes towards the use of te ao Māori in the English classroom.

As Jones (2012) discusses, there is significant discourse around the role of Pākeha in research concerning Māori and mātauranga Māori and there is a concern that Pākeha involvement in these studies undermines Māori self-determination. Accordingly, the researcher acknowledged the importance of Critical Race Theory (Brown, 2011) in the research context. Critical Race Theory supports the notion that race permeates through every aspect of social interaction and social structures and must not be overlooked. The underpinning of critical race theory and other strategies such as engaging cultural advisors, including whānaungatanga in the qualitative phase, and observing tikanga were used by the researcher to address these concerns.

To mitigate the bias of the researcher's cultural perspective, cultural advisors were engaged at the outset of the study. This practice included having colleagues with cultural connections with the student body (Māori Dean, Pasifika Dean, International Dean and a Muslim-community liaison) give feedback on the research methods prior to the initial contact made with students. These cultural advisors were listed on all communication with students and their whānau to provide alternative contacts to access information or advice. Cultural advisors were also approached to support the analysis of data from the quantitative and qualitative phases, supporting the researcher to challenge their reading of the data by providing a different cultural lens. The use of cultural advisors in this study allowed the researcher to consider alternative cultural perspectives at each stage of the study (Csinos, 2018)

At the beginning of the interviews, an 'identity' activity was used to acknowledge the importance of whānaungatanga. This involved each participant filling out the provided template and to identity people, places and activities that were significant to them. This whānaungatanga based activity allowed the researcher to make connections with the participants and aimed to encourage them to view their unique identity to be valuable to the researcher and the research. The researcher was mindful to uphold the cultural values set out by Massey University (2017), particularly 'Kaua e takahia te mana o te tangata' (upholding the mana of participants and their whānau) and 'Aroha ki te tangata' (allowing participants to have autonomy over their time and space).

3.6 Legitimation

Mixed methods research offers an opportunity for researchers to balance the inside and outside view of a phenomenon (Onwuegbuzie & Johnson, 2006). The quantitative methods used in this study gave an outside view (etic) of the phenomenon, which was legitimised through peer review (Perez et al., 2023). This helped to ensure that the researcher remained objective when viewing and analysing the quantitative data. The qualitative method provided an emic, or inside view, of the phenomenon, with the participants subjectively explaining their view of the phenomenon. This was legitimised through the participant's review of interpretations of their data.

The limitations of the quantitative and qualitative methods were minimised in this mixed methods study (Onwuegbuzie & Johnson, 2006). The quantitative survey method gave an overview of the phenomenon, but did little to explain it in any depth, while the qualitative interviews allowed the researcher to explore participant experiences in more depth and helped to make sense of the trends founds in the quantitative data. A limitation of the qualitative method was the time required to complete each interview, making it unfeasible to interview a larger sample of participants. The survey helped to offset this limitation by providing responses from a larger sample to allow for greater generalisability. By employing these two data collection methods, the overall study was enhanced.

3.7 Reflexivity

Taking a reflexive approach to this study required the researcher to consider how the epistemological and methodological paradigms may have limited their view of this complex phenomenon (DeJaeghere, 2024). It also involved the researcher reflecting upon their own epistemological and ontological beliefs and how these impacted the research process.

The researcher holds a socio-constructivist view of learning (Bandura et al., 2003; Vygotsky, 1978) recognising that individuals establish and value learning as a result of their interaction within their socio-cultural environment. Consequently, learning is complex and subject to change as the individual's interactions with their social and cultural context changes over time.

In this study, the research operates under assumption that students are influenced by wider social discourse around education. This is filtered through media and social media, parents, teachers and other influential people in their lives. Consequently, these influences impact their experiences at school and their tendencies to be motivated to learn, particularly when engaging

with new learning. Teachers operate within this influential context by are not in control of it and therefore have to understand the influences on students in order to respond and provide meaningful and engaging learning experiences. This is a complex issue because of the multiple influences, which may be different for each student and are easily changeable.

Furthermore, the researcher believes teachers bring their own attitudes and beliefs that are affected by the same influences as students experience, with the addition of greater past experience with educational change and political influence. This creates an environment where the interactions between teacher, student and learning are heavily influenced and connected to wider social environments. As a result, understanding student self-efficacy when using te ao Māori cannot solely examine what happens in the classroom, but must also include wider examination of participant's value of te ao Māori, parental expectations and perceptions of their own culture.

The pragmatic approach to the methods used in this study combined both positivism and interpretivism paradigms, disregarding the dichotomous view of quantitative and qualitative research methods (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). The pragmatic paradigm doesn't limit the methodology to a single perspective of knowledge and ways of knowing, and allows greater flexibility for the phenomenon to dictate the best methods for data collection (DeJaeghere, 2024). Therefore, pragmatism calls for a reflexive approach when considering how the methods meet the needs of the research questions. Pragmatism also requires reflexivity during data analysis, to establish whether the research questions have been addressed fully by the methods (DeJaeghere, 2024).

Chapter 4: Results

4.1 Quantitative

Data collected from the online survey was analysed to address the following question:

> What is the relationship between students' perceived self-efficacy with using te ao Māori concepts in an NCEA Level One English assessment and their cultural identity?

4.1.1 Sample demographics

For this study, the intention was to have the ethnic demographics of the sample mirror the ethnic demographics of the cohort. However, Pākeha, Māori, Asian and Other students were overrepresented, while Pasifika were underrepresented in the data. Notably, one participant opted to not identify their ethnicity, and no Middle Eastern students participated in the survey. These figures are demonstrated in the table below.

Q1 - What is your ethnicity? (Choose any that apply)

		Pākeha	Māori	Pasifika	Asian	Middle Eastern	Other	Prefer not to say
Sample	Percentage	74%	20%	3%	17%	0%	11%	3%
	Count	26	7	1	6	0	4	1
Cohort	Percentage	59%	11%	5%	11%	5%	9%	-
	Count	75	14	7	14	6	11	-

In addition to ethnicity, participant's cultural identity was collected. Among the Māori respondents, there were disparities between their ethnic identity and cultural identity. Four participants listed their ethnicity as Pākeha and Māori, but only identified their cultural identity as Pākeha. One Māori student identified as ethnically Pākeha and Māori but identified culturally as Māori only. One participant who identified ethnically as American selected both American and Pākeha as the cultures they identified with.

Q2 - What culture(s) do you most identify with?

		Pākeha	Māori	Pasifika	Asian	Middle Eastern	Other	Prefer not to say
Culture	Percentage	71%	9%	3%	17%	0%	11%	6%
	Count	25	3	1	6	0	4	2
Ethnicity	Percentage	74%	20%	3%	17%	0%	11%	3%
	Count	26	7	1	6	0	4	1

4.1.2 Likert scale and item responses

The quantitative data was analysed by examining participant responses to five Likert scales and one Likert item in an online survey:

Likert scales:

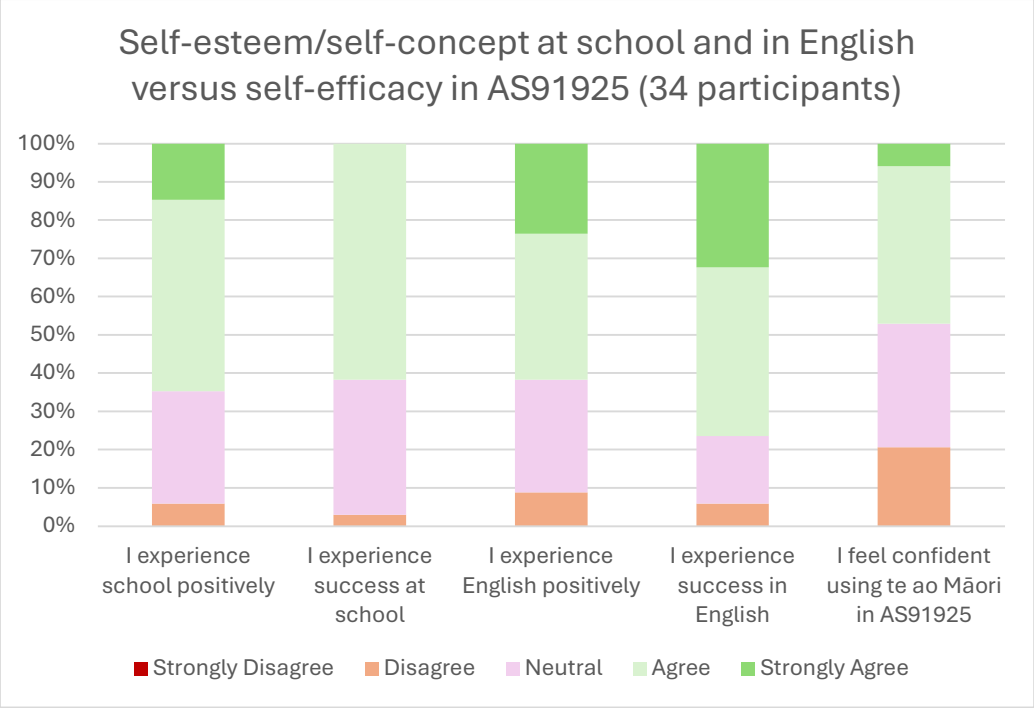
- I experience school positively
- I experience success at school
- I experience English positively
- I feel confident using Māori concepts in AS91925
- It is worthwhile using Māori concepts in English

Likert item:

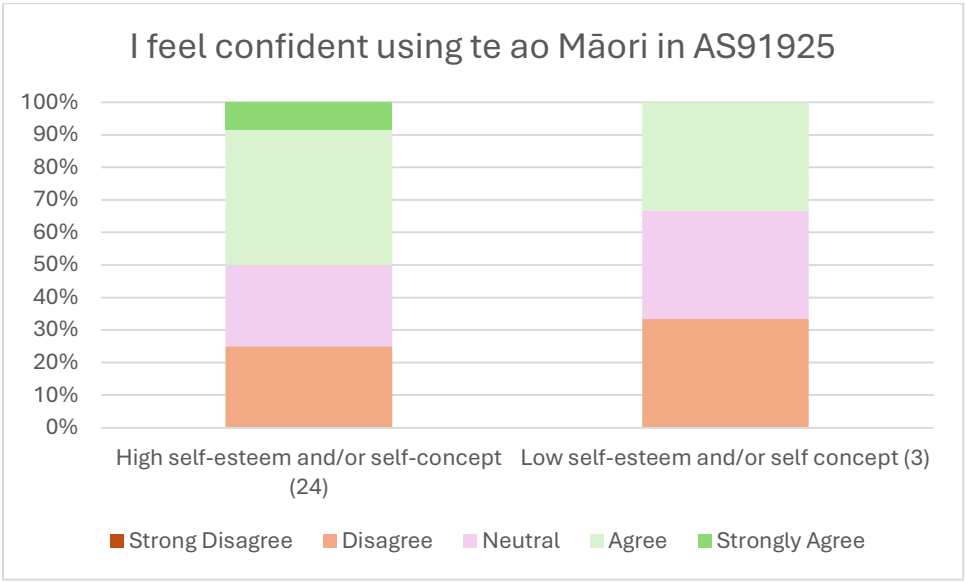
- I experience success in English

Self-esteem, self-concept and self-efficacy

To understand the self-efficacy of participants, it was important to examine how their sense of self-efficacy compared with their self-esteem and self-concept at school and in English as a subject. Self-esteem was observed through the responses to the school experience statements, which focussed on their wellbeing, while self-concept centered around the experience of success. The survey asked participants to describe their experience and success in school, in English and their confidence with AS91925. This was analysed for all participants and then further analysis was conducted for those students who had high and low self-esteem. The graphs below highlight the comparison between self-esteem/self-concept at school and in English and their self-efficacy with AS91925.



The majority of participants had positive self-esteem at school and in English (62% and 76%). This is comparable to less than half of participants who indicated high efficacy in AS91925 (47%). Less than 10% of participants experienced low self-esteem at school and in English (3% and 9%) compared with 20% of participants who perceived themselves to have low self-efficacy in AS91925. No participants responded that they strongly disagreed with any of the statements related to self-esteem or self-efficacy and between 18%-35% responded neutrally.



Of the 34 participants who responded to the survey, 24 were identified as having high self-esteem in school and/or English. These participants were identified based on their positive response (Agree or Strongly Agree) to the statements related to positive experience of school, experience

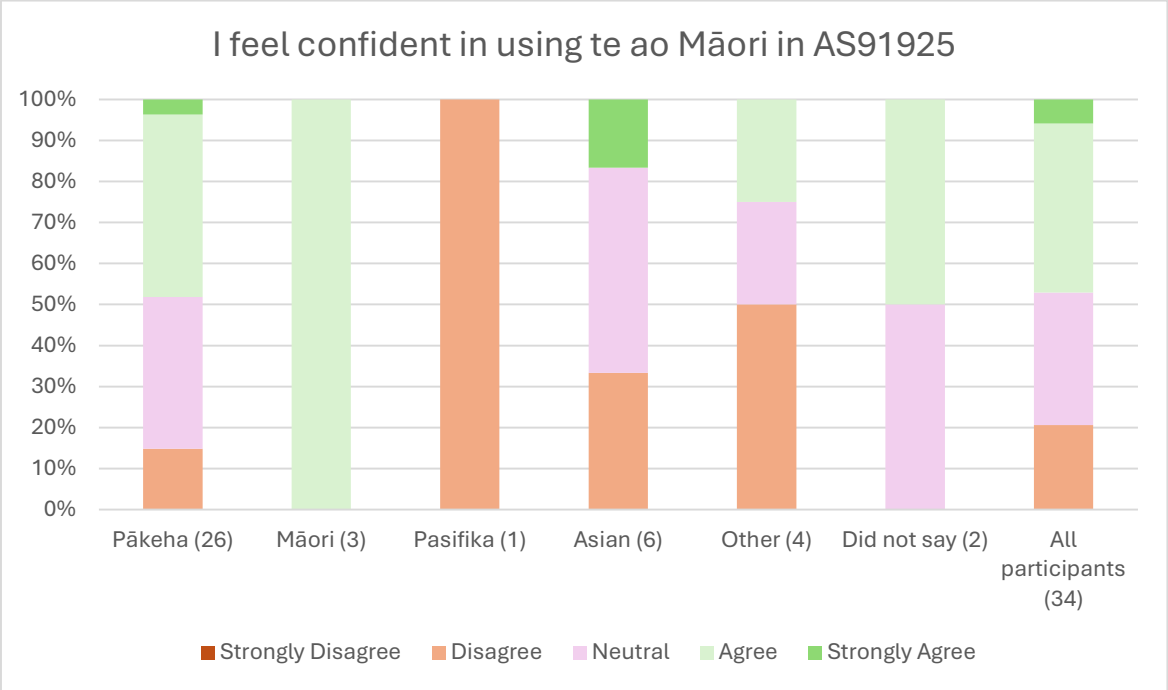
of success at school, positive experience of English and/or success in English. Of these students, only 50% indicated high self-efficacy in AS91925 and 25% perceived a lack of self-efficacy with the task.

There were three participants who were identified as having low self-esteem in school and/or English. These participants all reported different self-efficacy beliefs in AS91925, with one participant responding positively, one negatively and the third neutrally.

4.1.3 Relationship between culture and self-efficacy

Self-efficacy with AS91925

Participant responses to the survey were examined by grouping them into the cultural groups they identified with. Where a participant responded as identifying with more than one cultural group, their responses were recorded for each group. Participant responses are demonstrated in the graph below.

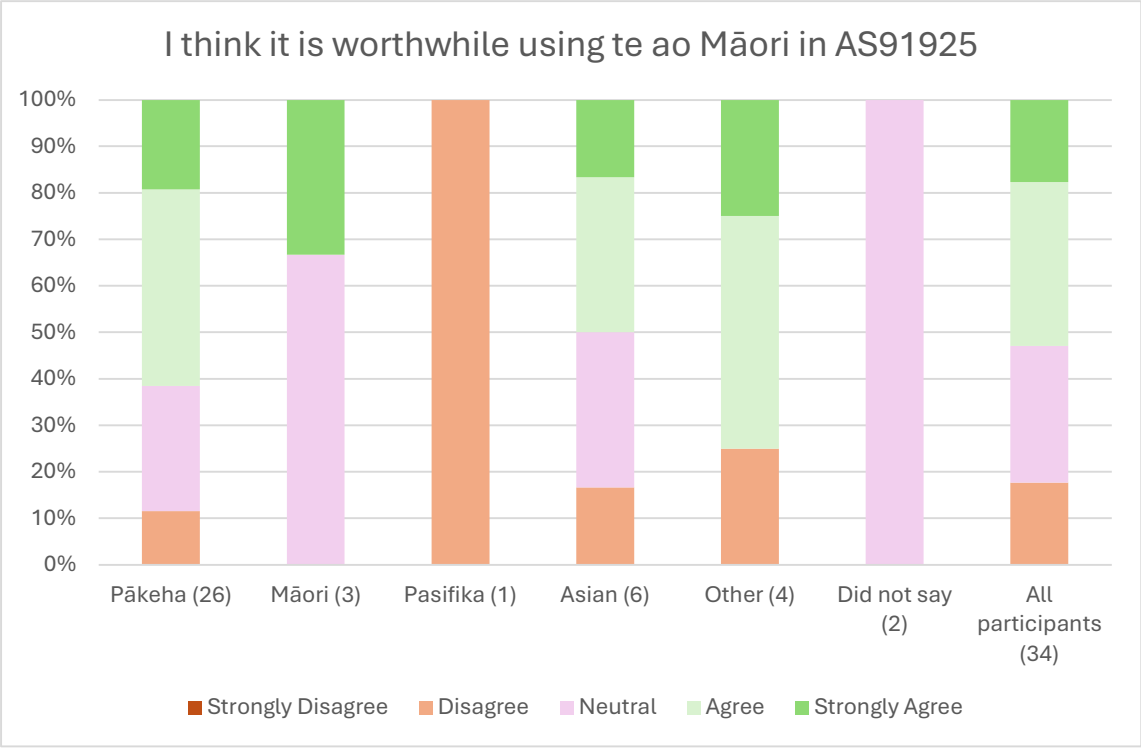


As indicated in the data, Māori students perceived themselves to have high self-efficacy in using te ao Māori concepts in AS91925. 48% of Pākeha students perceived their self-efficacy as high, while 15% held low self-efficacy beliefs among this cultural group. The group who perceived themselves to be the least efficacious was the 'Other' group which was comprised of participants who identified with British, Canadian, American and Russian cultural groups. 50% of Asian

students felt neutrally about their self-efficacy and held the smallest percentage of students (17%) who felt highly efficacious in this task.

When compared with the responses from all participants, the Pākeha students had fewer low-efficacious responses, but showed similarities to the wider sample in terms of those who felt efficacious. In contrast, Asian students were more likely to feel less efficacious, or neutrally compared with their peers. Those participants who did not report their culture were either neutral or perceived themselves to be efficacious in the task, while the one Pasifika respondent perceived themselves to lack efficacy in this assessment. Notably, no students strongly disagreed with the belief that they were confident in using te ao Māori in AS91925.

To gain a better understanding of the attitudes these participants had of using te ao Māori in AS91925, data was collected about whether they believed there was value in using te ao Māori in the English classroom. This is displayed in the graph below.

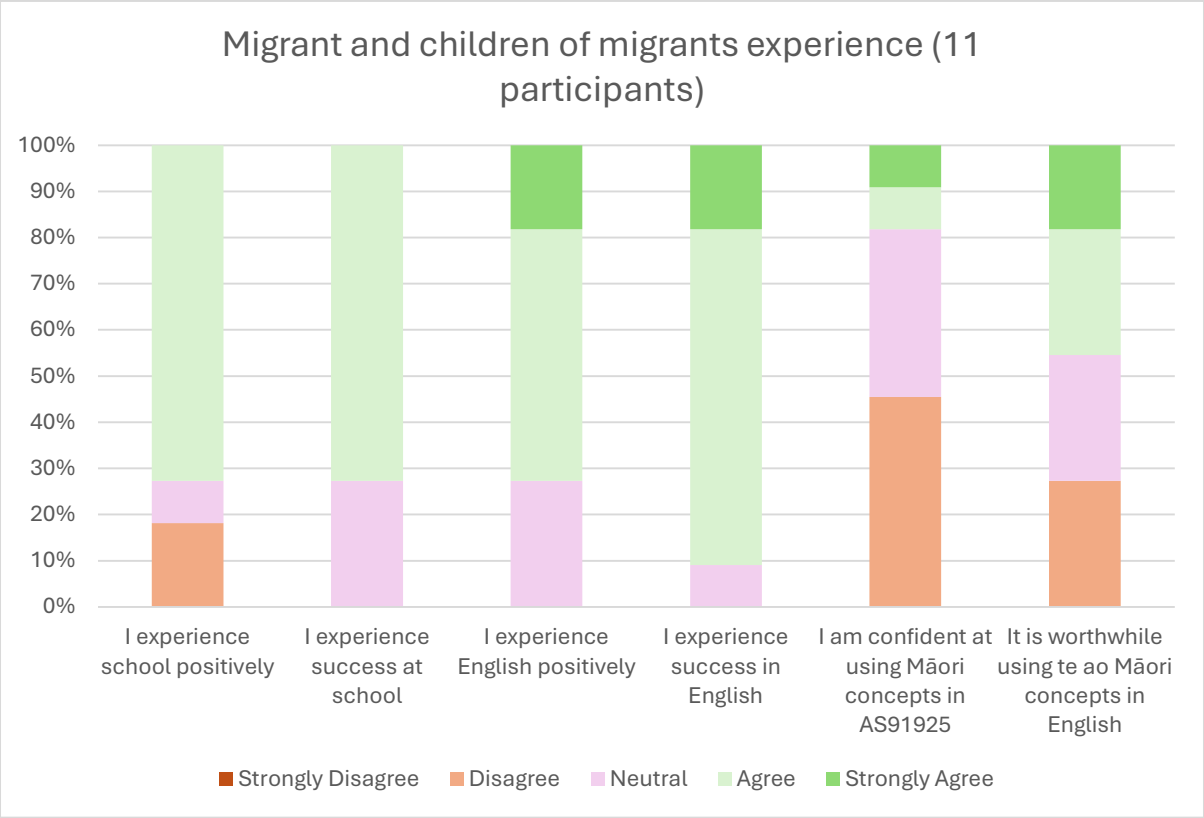


This data shows that there was a higher tendency for participants to value the use of te ao Māori in AS91925 across the Pākeha, Asian and Other cultural groups compared with how they viewed their self-efficacy in the task. However, for the Māori group, the participants were more divided in their opinions, with one participant strongly agreeing with the value of te ao Māori in AS91925 and the other two responding neutrally. The one Pasifika respondent disagreed with the value of using te ao Māori in AS91925, and those who did not reveal their cultural identity responded neutrally.

4.1.4 Migrant experience

Although not considered a cultural group, the experience of migrants and children of migrants was examined as the data showed that there were unique characteristics of this subgroup, which hadn't been anticipated. 11 participants were categorised as being migrants or children of migrants, which was defined as having at least one parent who was born outside of Aotearoa New Zealand.

Across the six areas examined (positive experience of school, success at school, positive experience of English, success in English, confidence with AS91925 and value of AS91925), the data for migrants and children of migrants is shown below.



The data shows that the majority of migrants and the children of migrants experience school and English positively (73% each) and report success at school and in English (73% and 91% respectively). 18% of these participants disagreed that they experienced school positively and none disagreed in the other three categories. This shows that the majority of migrants and children of migrants have strong self-esteem at school and in English in this sample.

Conversely, only 18% of participants in this subgroup felt confident with using te ao Māori concepts in AS91925. Nearly half of the participants (45%) disagreed that they felt confident in this task and 36% neither agreed nor disagreed. However, when it came to valuing the place of te

ao Māori concepts in English, 45% of participants agreed that the learning was valuable and 27% disagreed. While migrants and children of migrants are more positive about school and English in general when compared with the wider cohort, they are more negatively leaning in their confidence and value of using te ao Māori concepts in AS91925.

4.2 Qualitative data

The qualitative data was analysed to address the following question:

> How do students perceive their self-efficacy with using te ao Māori concepts in an NCEA Level One English assessment (AS91925)?

The interview transcripts were analysed to identify patterns amongst the participants. Six major themes were identified which included: self-esteem in English, general attitudes towards AS91925, degree of difficulty in the learning, grade expectations, assumptions of others on their ability in the assessment and the impact of AS91925 on their cultural identity.

Participants were purposively selected from those who self-nominated in the online survey and included four participants as listed below:

Participant	Gender Identity	Ethnicity	Cultural Group(s)	Languages spoken	Migrant status
P.1	Female	Pākeha Māori	Māori	English	NZ born
P.2	Female	Asian	Asian	English	Migrant (10+ years)
P.3	Female	Pākeha	Pākeha	English French	Migrant (5+ years)
P.4	Female	Pākeha	Pākeha	English	NZ born

4.2.1 Self-esteem in English

P.2, P.3 and P.4 reported high self-esteem in English and particularly enjoyed reading and writing. P.3 wished to become an author as a career and preferred writing in English than her native tongue

French, stating “for some reason [English] just feels more fluid”. P.4 stated that she loved English “because of the creative freedom that you have and being able to make it your own.”

P.1 had mixed feelings about English and believed that she was good at writing and speaking but struggled with reading. She stated, “I’m not a very good reader and so I struggle with it…I didn’t do as well [on a reading assignment] because I couldn’t understand what they were saying because some of the words I didn’t know but…I like speaking…I find that quite easy.”

All participants achieved their previous Level One English internal assessment with Excellence which required students to explain how the context of a speech or song of their choice influenced the way the writer used language.

4.2.2 Attitudes towards AS91925

Overall, the four participants reported their experience of using te ao Māori concepts to analyse a film to be a positive experience, although P.2’s comments were contradictory in the interview. All participants noted that the learning was valuable to those living in New Zealand society as it helped them to relate more to others and engage with Māori culture. P.3 stated because she grew up in France and returned recently to Aotearoa New Zealand, learning about Māori concepts made her “more connected to other people in New Zealand.”

P.2 stated early in her interview that she felt like the learning helped her connect with her friends more, because most of her friends were Māori. However, later in the interview she said that she didn’t feel like the learning was useful to her. She stated, “I feel like it’s not that useful but obviously from my eyes. But for some people it will be, but for me, I don’t like it…Some jobs don’t really need the Māori stuff.”

P.1. felt that the task honoured Te Tiriti ō Waitangi. She said “Even for people who aren’t Māori, it’s good for everyone to know a little bit about our culture…because being in New Zealand, our main cultures are Pākeha and Māori and it’s good for people who live in our country to know a bit about us…”

P.2 and P.3 both indicated that they believed it was good to learn about Māori concepts, but disagreed on the appropriate subject to learn it in. P.2 felt like it was well-suited to English and History, but believed it shouldn’t be in Physical Education, whereas P.3 felt like putting te ao Māori in English made the subject more complex and she held a fear of appropriating Māori knowledge. She said, “it’s hard for us as non-Māori, for me as a non-Māori person to get it quite right and I don’t want to dishonour the thing as well…so maybe putting [Māori] concepts in English is kind of hard because you do have to translate it and it’s not always perfect.”

Interestingly, P.1 said that, in her survey responses, she responded negatively towards the use of Māori concepts in the assessment. However, in her interview, she acknowledged that she had changed her mind. She stated, "I changed my opinion when I was actually doing it…I thought maybe English wasn't the place to put te reo Māori because you're learning about English…but now that I'm actually doing it…I think it's good because it's just good to understand…because it's really important."

Two of the four participants noted in their interviews that the changes to NCEA, and the new achievement standards and tasks made their experience of Level One a lot more difficult. P.2 stated, "We're really guinea pigs, so it's kind of a bit more hard," while P.3 used the same terminology, saying "You're constantly told 'oh, you're the guinea pigs. We don't know what we're doing, you don't know what you're doing.' …I feel like people need to acknowledge that it's hard on us."

4.2.3 Degree of difficulty

The participants all felt that the learning they were required to do was more difficult than their previous assessment in Level One English. Their responses indicated that the learning was challenging due to the requirement for them to apply a concept to the film, rather than analysing the techniques used by the director which is what they had done in previous years. However, the challenge of the learning was reported to be a positive thing with P.2 saying, "it being challenging is good." P.4 reflected that she "found it quite challenging but it was also really nice kind of exploring and finding deeper meanings for each of the [concepts] and trying to like intertwine them throughout."

P.3 found it difficult to begin the assessment because she didn't know what to write or how to write it. However, by the end of the assessment, she felt more comfortable. She noted that she didn't think it was the use of Māori concepts that made it more difficult, but the fact that they had to apply a concept to the study of the film. She said, "Honestly, I don't think that with the Māori concept or more of an English concept would have changed much…".

Among the non-Māori participants, there was an assumption that Māori found the task easier because of their cultural knowledge. P.2 noted that "…to me, since I'm not Māori, I think [incorporating Māori concepts] is a bit hard because I'm not familiar. But for my friend ****, she's Māori and she's very familiar with the [concepts]." P.4 believed that Māori students in her class were more confident with the task because "they were very confident with all of the Māori concepts and all that and they're taking Māori and … they've grown up with it."

P.1 noted that being Māori didn't mean that she was confident with the Māori concepts. She said, "...as a te reo Māori person, I'm still like struggling with the words." She believed it was a little easier for her than other non-Māori, but it wasn't easy, remarking "I think it's good if we start slow and yeah, kind of work it out...because then everyone will be together... learning it."

4.2.4 Grade expectations

All four participants believed they were capable of gaining Excellence in this assessment. This was predominantly because of their past level of achievement in English. P.2 said, "If I don't get Excellence, I would probably cry myself to sleep." P.3 said, "I usually get Excellences, so I'm hoping for an Excellence, but I might get a Merit and I'd be OK with that too." P.4 had already received her grade back at the time of the interview; however, she stated, "I did think I could have reached the Excellence point, but once I got through my feedback, I did see that I did not explain on certain things."

P.1's response to the question about her grade expectations was more uncertain. She stated, "I think I have a chance of getting Excellence, which I'm aiming for," but then went on to say that she could easily get a Merit or an Achieved also. Her doubt about her grade was based on her ability to use language features and explanations sufficiently, saying, "I could really get any grade."

4.2.5 Assumption held by others

Participants were asked to reflect upon what they assumed others believed their ability to be in the assessment. They were asked to consider the assumptions of their parents, peers and teachers.

Two of the three non-Māori participants all highlighted that they believed their parents had doubts about their ability to achieve highly in this assessment, due to them not being Māori. P.2 stated that her mum didn't believe she could achieve well, saying, "She said to me, 'oh, you're not Māori. You won't be able to do that.'" Similarly, P.4 stated that her parents, "...did have some doubts about it because some students in my class were very confident with all the Māori concepts..."

P.3 believed that her mum didn't understand the learning that she was doing in English, however, she still felt like her mum was supportive and believed in her ability to succeed. She said, "I think she's a bit confused about using Māori concepts...I think she thinks I'll do OK."

Finally, P.1. noted that she believed her parents thought she would achieve highly. She said, "I think my parents certainly think I can do it....[my dad] has actually been one of the main people that I've learned about my culture [from]...So yes, they definitely believe I can do it."

P.1 felt like her peers believed she could achieve highly, as did P.3, based on the positive comments they were given throughout the assessment. In particular, P.1 noted that her peers were very supportive of her, and that she supported them in this assessment as well. P.3 and P.4 made no reference to whether their peers believed they could achieve highly.

P.1 and P.2 felt like their teacher held high expectations for their achievement in this assessment. This was due to their past achievement in the previous assessment. Unlike the responses regarding parents and peers, these participants made no reference to culture when considering their teacher's assumptions about their ability. P.3 and P.4 did not explicitly state whether they believed their teacher thought they could succeed in this assessment; however, P.4 did note that she felt like her teacher "was kind of just trucking along with us learning and we were learning."

4.2.6 Cultural impact

When asked whether learning about Māori concepts and applying them to a film study affected their own cultural identity, the participants had varying responses. P.2 spoke of their lack of connection with their own cultural identity, acknowledging that she feels little connection to her Filippino culture as she has lost the language. She mentioned that she felt like those who aren't strongly connected to their culture wouldn't have been impacted by this assessment, but those who are, and are not Māori or Pākeha would have been affected.

In contrast, P.4 stated that she knew little about her cultural identity because she wasn't aware of her heritage and where her ancestors were from. She said, "I think [this assessment] did make me think of it more and ask more questions." For P.3, the assessment made her feel more connected to Aotearoa New Zealand, particularly because she was of Pākeha descent, but grew up in France. She said, "Since I grew up in France and now we've come back…adding Māori concepts in schools helps you to connect to [Aotearoa New Zealand culture]."

P.1 felt like the assessment triggered more of a personal identity response, rather than affecting her cultural identity, saying "It has made me think a lot more about what I believe in and what my mana is. And if I could maybe expand it a bit more. Be a better person." She didn't feel like it had an impact on her cultural identity.

4.3 Mixed methods

Quantitative and qualitative data was integrated to align with the sequential explanatory methodology used in this study. The aim of this integration was to address the following question:

How does the perception students have of their self-efficacy explain the relationship between cultural identity and self-efficacy with using te ao Māori concepts in an NCEA Level One English assessment?

Three themes were identified in both the quantitative and qualitative data. These themes include the prior knowledge students had of Māori concepts, the assumptions made about the capabilities of others and the value of learning te ao Māori in English.

4.3.1 Prior knowledge

In the online survey, participants were asked to respond to the statement: I know enough about Māori concepts to achieve well in this assessment. The table below indicates the responses from each cultural group, in addition to the migrant subgroup.

Ethnicity	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	No. of responses
Pākeha	0%	30%	19%	44%	7%	26
Māori	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%	3
Pasifika	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	1
Asian	0%	34%	34%	16%	16%	6
Other	0%	25%	25%	50%	0%	4
Did not say	0%	0%	50%	0%	50%	2
Migrant	0%	45%	36%	9%	9%	11

The cultural group with the highest percentage of students with pre-existing knowledge of te ao Māori concepts was Māori who all agreed with the statement. However, when you compare this with the students who selected Māori and Pākeha for their ethnicity, and only Pākeha for their culture, there is a significant difference. Of these four participants, they disagreed (2) or responded neutrally (2) to the statement. In the interviews, P.1, who identifies culturally as Māori, stated that she had been taught about te ao Māori concepts by her dad growing up. She stated that “he’s one of the main people that I’ve learned about my culture [from]. He knows a lot of stories and it’s really good to learn from him.”

Asian participants were more likely to disagree with the statement or respond neutrally (68%), indicating they felt less confident in their prior knowledge compared with Pākeha students, of which 49% responded negatively or neutrally to the statement. P.2, who is culturally Asian and

also a first-generation migrant, stated, “I know nothing about it, because I’m not from here.” The one Pasifika student disagreed with the statement and half of those belonging to the ‘Other’ group did not believe they had enough prior knowledge to complete the assessment successfully.

The migrant group had the strongest tendency towards a perceived lack of prior knowledge, with only 18% believing they had sufficient prior knowledge of te ao Māori concepts to achieve well in this assessment. Notably, 45% of students in this group believed they did not have the prior knowledge to enable them to be successful. P.3, a recent migrant, stated, “I’ve been in New Zealand a few years now, but I think not growing up with this…I’m not confident with [Māori concepts]. So, I think it was a bit more stressful for me.”

In contrast to this, one respondent who culturally identified as Pākeha and Māori , stated in the survey long answer that she felt te ao Māori concepts were an area of learning that she was required to do throughout her time at school. She wrote: “I feel that it is good and important for us to learn about the Maori [sic] culture, history and concepts. But as we learn about these things all throughout our lives from primary school to high school, I feel that after learning these for a while it gets a bit repetitive and annoying.”

4.3.2 Assumption of other students’ ability

In the interviews, among the non-Māori participants, there was an assumption that Māori found this task easier than non-Māori, and therefore felt more confident with the task. When referring to her Māori friend, P.2 stated, “She’s Māori and she’s very familiar with everything.” Likewise, P.1, who identifies as culturally Māori said “Now that we’re doing [a film study with Māori concepts], I find it easier. It’s quite nice and easier for me to understand,” and “I'm feeling confident in this one.” This theme was not initially seen in the quantitative data, so the data set was re-examined to look for any correlation with the qualitative data.

The below table highlights how different cultural groups responded to the statement: I will achieve poorly if I have to use Māori concepts in an assessment.

Ethnicity	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	No. of responses
Pākeha	12%	35%	31%	26%	0%	26
Māori	33%	33%	33%	0%	0%	3
Pasifika	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	1
Asian	16%	16%	36%	16%	16%	6
Other	25%	25%	25%	25%	0%	4
Did not say	50%	50%	0%	0%	0%	2
Migrant	18%	18%	27%	18%	18%	11

As seen in this table, the assumption by P.2 that Māori are more confident using te ao Māori concepts in this assessment is supported somewhat by the quantitative data. None of the Māori participants in the survey reported that they felt like they would achieve poorly if required to use Māori concepts in their assessment. The data from Māori participants contrasts the responses from the other cultural groups where the data shows a significant spread between those who felt they would achieve poorly compared to those who felt they wouldn't.

Out of the total sample, two participants reported that they strongly agreed with the statement that they would achieve poorly if they were required to use Māori concepts. In contrast, seven participants strongly disagreed with the statement. For Pākeha, Other and Did not say group participants, there was a tendency to disagree with the statement, while Asian and Migrant groups displayed an approximate uniform distribution. When given the opportunity to provide further comments in the survey, one anonymous participate wrote: "I think it is very important to learn Māori in schools, but I do not know enough about Māori concepts to be as confident in this assessment as I usually would be."

4.3.3 Valuable learning

The theme of valuable learning lies slightly outside of the scope of the third research question but became very apparent in both the quantitative and qualitative data, therefore has been included in the results.

As reported in the quantitative section, participants reported a stronger value of using te ao Māori concepts in their English assessment than their confidence rating. This was also evident in the

interviews with P.3 saying, “I think putting Māori concepts and knowledge in schools is great.” P.4 remarked, “I think it’s a really, really good thing…it gives it a more significant feeling.”

In the comments section of the online survey, one participant wrote: “I find it very interesting, and I think it is a very unique thing to learn about that I would not have been taught had I stayed in England or Australia.” This echoes the comments of P.1, who also said, “When we signed the Treaty of Waitangi it was like a collaboration from Pākeha and Māori. And I think it's good that we still have that like togetherness through schools.”

Conversely, some participants did not believe that te ao Māori was appropriate learning in the English classroom. One survey respondent wrote: “I go to English to improve my English. Not to learn a second language. I want to know how to correctly grammar things, write essays, create stories and analyse texts. I won't need to use different Māori concepts in life. If I want to learn Māori, I will go and take Māori.” Another wrote: “It's an English class, not a Māori one, there are classes available at the school for people who are interested in Māori.”

4.4 Conclusion

Quantitative data collected from the online survey was analysed to observe trends among the participant’s responses. From there, the interview data was collected and analysed to help make sense of the quantitative data. As new experiences were identified in the qualitative phases, the quantitative data was re-examined to identify any correlations. Both the quantitative and qualitative data were integrated to examine the mixed methods research question. The analysis of the data in this study informed the researcher’s understanding of how students experience using te ao Māori in AS91925.

Chapter 5: Discussion

5.1 Ethnicity and culture

This study looked at the relationship between self-efficacy in AS91925, which required students to use Māori concepts to analyse a film in the English classroom, and participants' cultural identity. When analysing student achievement in NCEA, the Ministry of Education and NZQA report data based on ethnicity, not culture, making assumptions about the lives of students and how they experience learning within English-medium school. This data fails to address the complexity of each student's cultural identity and contributes to a misguided understanding of how teachers can best suit the needs of their learners.

The conflict between ethnicity and culture is particularly prominent in Māori students, as discussed by Faircloth et al. (2016). Years of marginalisation and generational trauma of Aotearoa New Zealand's Māori population has led to a disconnect for many between the individual and their culture, and the reported academic failings of Māori students in English-medium schools does nothing to highlight the complex social issues involved (Marie et al., 2008). In this study, the issue of the disparities between ethnicity and culture was evident in the participant responses. Of the seven participants who reported their ethnicity as Māori and Pākeha, less than half identified as Māori culturally. Therefore, any assumptions made by educational professionals that all Māori are connected to their culture can negatively impact their ability to teach students in a culturally responsive way.

The issue of the disparity between ethnicity and culture among students was also evident in those who belong to other non-Pākeha ethnic groups. Two survey respondents selected Pākeha as one of the cultures they identified with, despite having no ethnic connection to the group. This reinforces Hoosain and Salili's (2007) comments about cultural identity becoming less stable as a consequence of the rise of globalisation and highlights the need for educational professionals to consider cultural identity when discussing the educational experiences of students. It is unwise to assume that ethnicity denotes cultural identity among our population.

5.2 De-colonising English

The subject of English is deeply connected to colonisation (Bishop & Glynn, 2003; Macdonald, 2018) and its history has led to strongly held convictions about the purpose of the subject

(Macaluso & Macaluso, 2018; McKinney, 2017). These beliefs were evident in the data collected in this study, with participants commenting on their expectations of what should be taught in the English classroom. One participant strongly remarked that English was a place for grammar, writing essay, creative writing and analysing texts, not to study Māori concepts and use te reo Māori, indicating that the opinions held by the general population around the place of mātauranga Māori (Brennan et al., 2021; Dawkins, 2023; Lourie, 2021; Siteine, 2021) in the curriculum exists within the student population also.

It is apparent that beliefs held by students about the place of mātauranga Māori in the English classroom are subject to change. In her interview, P.1 noted how she initially believed that te ao Māori didn't belong in the English classroom, stating in her survey response that "English was for English". However, after completing the assessment, her opinions on the matter changed and she reported that she felt that the assessment upheld Te Tiriti ō Waitangi and was a nice collaboration between Pākeha and Māori. This change in attitude could indicate that students may have formed opinions about the learning prior to doing it, which affected their responses in the online survey but that participating in the assessment has the potential to affect these beliefs.

How students view the place of mātauranga Māori in the English classroom was not a central focus for this study, however the responses from these two participants indicated that the de-colonisation of English is an issue that evokes a range of responses. The literature and media coverage often discuss the de-colonisation of English and the wider curriculum from a policy perspective and these attitudes are generated by adults (Brennan et al., 2021; Dawkins, 2023; Lourie, 2021; Siteine, 2021). It is important to recognise that the social context these adults spent their formative years is significantly different than the one our young people face. To better understand how our students view the de-colonisation of curriculum, we need to examine their beliefs and how their attitudes are influenced by their experiences and the attitudes of those around them. Capturing survey data prior to the assessment limited the ability for this study to examine how attitudes among students can change through the learning experience and this is an area for further study.

An additional issue visible in the study was how de-colonisation of English may have resulted in the fear of cultural appropriation among some students. P.3 noted this in her interview and it highlights the issue facing Aotearoa New Zealand. Less than 10% of secondary teachers are Māori (Turner-Adams & Rubie-Davies, 2023) and students who feel uncomfortable about using aspects of te ao Māori may not get the assurances they need if their teacher is also non-Māori. This fear of appropriation may also be held by teachers who inadvertently pass this fear on to their

students. However, Meier and Culpan (2020) note that the appropriation of te ao Māori can be mitigated through wider social changes to make te ao Māori more widespread. This suggests that as teachers and students become more comfortable with understanding te ao Māori, these fears may decrease. It raises the question about whether it is better to introduce te ao Māori into the English classroom and refine the understanding of teachers and students over time to minimise the risk of cultural appropriation, or continue with the status quo, which is to allow Pākeha-centric ideologies to dominant education.

The attitudes here highlight the challenges facing the move to de-colonise English as a subject. Resistance to the introduction of te ao Māori in English appear to stem from two areas: attitudes about the nature of the subject and a fear of cultural appropriation. In order to authentically de-colonise English, these issues must be addressed. Increasing the number of Māori teachers, making te ao Māori more widespread in schools and promoting wider discussions about the purpose of English as a subject may be ways to mitigate these issues.

5.3 Self-esteem and self-concept and the effect on self-efficacy

Participants were asked in the survey about their experience of school and English as well as their experience with using Māori concepts in AS91925. Their experience was examined in two categories: 1) positive experience (wellbeing lens) and success (academic lens). The results from these statements were compared with the reported self-efficacy in AS91925 statements to examine the link between self-esteem, self-concept and self-efficacy.

The results showed that there was a marginal increase in self-efficacy among those who reported high self-esteem and/or self-concept, compared with those who reported low self-esteem and/or self-concept. Students with high self-esteem and self-concept were also more likely to strongly agree with the statements, than those with low self-esteem and self-concept which may indicate that these attributes encourage students to feel strongly efficacious, compared with those with low self-esteem and self-concept.

However, having high self-esteem or self-concept was not a precursor to high self-efficacy for all students, with 25% of respondents in this group indicating they perceived their efficacy to be low. Additionally, 25% of the group responding neutrally. This supports Bandura's (1997) summation that self-efficacy is task-specific and Anderman and Anderman (2020) argument that students can feel both high and low efficacy with a subject, depending on the task they are asked to complete. With the introduction of te ao Māori concepts into English, students are faced with new

learning that is beyond the scope of what they have previously experienced in the subject, and they lack the mastery experiences on which to build their efficacy beliefs. In this regard, high self-esteem and self-concept did not necessarily have a positive effect in this situation.

What was most notable in the results is the difference in the number of respondents who reported high self-esteem (24 participants) and self-concept in comparison with those who reported low self-esteem and self-concept (3 participants). It could be argued that this is more an indication that those who completed the survey were more likely to have high self-esteem and high self-concept at school and in English, highlighting the need to gather more data from students with low self-esteem and self-concept to get an accurate representation of the student experience with AS91925. Similarly, all four interview participants had achieved highly in previous English assessments and responded as being high in self-esteem and self-concept. This suggests that those who put themselves forward for the interview did not represent the wider student population and therefore, the interview data was limited in its ability to support the understanding of the wider student experience with AS91925.

The impact of self-esteem and self-concept on self-efficacy is an area that needs to be explored further as the literature lacks a specific understanding of their relationship (Pignault et al., 2023). However, do to this meaningfully, educational research needs to address the disparities among those who participate in research and the wider population.

5.4 Prior knowledge and self-efficacy development

Prior knowledge has been linked to self-efficacy in the literature (Ferla et al., 2009; Fulano et al., 2021; Usher & Pajares, 2009) and therefore, is an important consideration for understanding the self-efficacy of students in AS91925. In the long answer responses in the survey and in the interviews, some participants indicated that they felt they did not have sufficient prior knowledge to be confident with the task. This was particularly true for the migrant group; however, it was also evident among the Pākeha, Asian and Other cultural groups. P.2 attributed this lack of prior knowledge to not being from Aotearoa New Zealand, despite migrating when she was five.

In the interview data, non-Māori participants believed that Māori students found it easier to complete the assessment due to their prior knowledge. However, this attitude assumes that all Māori students have been exposed to te ao Māori concepts in their lives and it is not clear whether the term ‘Māori students’ that these participants used relates to those who are ethnically or culturally Māori. For these non-Māori participants, their comments suggest that prior knowledge

is seen to be advantageous in this assessment, and therefore, their perception that they have a lack of prior knowledge may negatively affect their self-efficacy.

However, not all participants viewed Māori concepts as new learning, with one survey respondent writing, “we learn about these things all throughout our lives from primary school to high school I feel that after learning these for a while it gets a bit repetitive and annoying.” This statement suggests that not all students view their prior experiences with te ao Māori concepts the same way. Some students perceive that they have never learnt about these concepts, while others suggest that it has been ongoing learning throughout their time at school. However, student perceptions of their prior knowledge with te ao Māori concepts could reflect their belief that te reo Māori is the same as te ao Māori and indicate their confusion with the focus of the learning for AS91925. Students may view te ao Māori concepts as a repetition of te reo Māori vocabulary if they fail to recognise the learning as a deepening and widening of their understanding of the te reo Māori vocabulary and Māori worldview.

Furthermore, the different perceptions students hold of te ao Māori concept learning could either reflect the difference in learning experiences that students have during their time at school or suggest that students interpret their prior knowledge differently. A student who has been exposed to learning throughout their time at school may interpret this as the acquisition of knowledge, regardless of whether they are able to use this knowledge independently. Conversely, students may view exposure to te ao Māori concepts separately to their knowledge acquisition and believe that they lack prior knowledge if they are unable to use the knowledge independently. While it is difficult to assess definitively the prior exposure students have had to te ao Māori concepts, it is evident that participants have different perceptions of their prior knowledge.

The conflicting responses regarding the participants’ perceived prior knowledge with te ao Māori concepts highlights an issue facing teachers regarding the varying degrees of prior knowledge held by students in Year 11 English. To help them to feel highly efficacious, students need to be adequately secure in their knowledge before commencing the assessment. Teachers can support this by conducting diagnostic testing (Fulano et al., 2021), setting proximal goals and giving enactive feedback (Schunk, 1985). Moreover, teachers need to consider how to address those students in their class who perceive themselves to have sufficient prior knowledge and may find themselves de-motivated to engage with the learning. This may be especially difficult if the student’s perception isn’t in line with the degree of knowledge required to complete the task successfully, as students may perceive their prior knowledge to be sufficient when it is not.

5.5 Self-efficacy with AS91925 and cultural identity

Bandura's (1997) work on self-efficacy introduced the idea that individuals can have different responses to tasks and that these are impacted by four key areas: mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, persuasion and physiological responses. This study examined the efficacy of students from different cultural groups when asked to use te ao Māori concepts to analyse a film in AS91925. This was a task that students had never done before.

Participants who responded to the survey had differing efficacy responses to this task, irrespective of their previous experience at school or in English. Overall, 47% of survey respondents indicated a perception of being efficacious with using te ao Māori concepts in AS91925, while 21% did not and the remaining participants responded neutrally about their efficacy in the task. This indicates that among the sample, more than half of the participants required support to develop high self-efficacy prior to completing the assessment with greater opportunity to experience mastery of the task and/or further verbal persuasion by their teacher, parents and/or peers (Bandura, 1997).

Among the different cultural groups, there were varying degrees of self-efficacy in the task. Those who self-identified as Māori perceived their efficacy positively. Prior knowledge, and the opportunity for mastery experiences is likely to have impacted this (Bandura, 1997), although this may not have been experienced within the classroom, reinforcing the importance of the role of parents in the learning of young people (Eisenberger et al., 2013). P.1 noted that her father taught her a lot about te ao Māori and she enjoyed learning from him. As mentioned, one anonymous survey respondent indicated that she had learned about Māori concepts throughout her time at school. Arguably, Māori students perceived their efficacy more positively than other cultural groups because of their familiarity with Māori concepts, giving them a cultural advantage that isn't experienced when learning is Pākeha-centric (Marie et al., 2008).

The positive self-efficacy experienced by Māori students is significant in light of the history of low-academic performance of Māori students in English-medium schools. Bishop et al. (2009) conclusion that educational reforms of the past have failed to meet the needs of Māori recognising that Māori have still been required to learn through Pākeha-centric contexts, however, the inclusion of Māori concepts as a lens through which a film is analysed challenges this by centering mātauranga Māori in this assessment. This suggests that changes to NCEA, with the need to include mātauranga Māori in every assessment has a positive impact on Māori efficacy, which may have a positive impact on Māori achievement by improving persistence in the face of difficult learning (Bandura, 1997).

It is important to acknowledge those participants who report themselves to be ethnically Māori but do not identity as Māori culturally. These participants are included in NCEA and Ministry of Education's data on Māori students but this data fails to acknowledge how they view themselves or experience their learning. This subgroup of students would benefit from further exploration of their unique experience to better understand how the changes to NCEA impact their learning and their cultural identity.

For non-Māori groups, self-efficacy in AS91925 was affected by a range of factors. For Pākeha participants, there was a tendency for them to report their self-efficacy positively compared with other non-Māori cultural groups. This could be a consequence of the ongoing participation they have had in an educational system that promotes a Pākeha-centric ideology which has allowed them to develop self-efficacy beliefs over time. However, it must also be acknowledged that this may stem from a tendency towards 'satisfying' (Mat Roni et al., 2020), particularly in light of the ongoing discourse around colonisation and the negative impact on indigenous populations. There may be a fear among Pākeha students that if they were to speak against the use of te ao Māori concepts in any way, they would be supporting a colonial agenda. This may have influenced their responses to the survey and the interview questions.

Asian students have traditionally excelled in education in Aotearoa New Zealand (Education Review Office, 2023), however, only 17% of respondents in this group reported feeling efficacious with AS91925. With the exception of Pasifika, this was the lowest rating of efficacious beliefs among the different cultural groups. The interviews highlighted that this could be explained by two factors: parental beliefs and their perception of the purpose of schooling. P.2 was the only interviewee who reported that her parents did not believe she would achieve highly in this assessment because she was not Māori. These beliefs were reflected in her own attitudes towards her efficacy, where she stated that she didn't know a lot because she wasn't Māori. The parents' verbal persuasion (Bandura, 1997) may have negatively impacted the participant's efficacy beliefs and encouraged her to view her culture as a disadvantage.

Furthermore, despite being initially positive towards using Māori concepts in AS91925, she later stated that she didn't believe the learning to be necessary for certain jobs and believed that students should have choice about whether they use te ao Māori concepts or not. It is possible that this participant's response shows that she assigns value to the learning that she believed was meaningful for her future career. Her initial positive responses towards the inclusion of Māori concepts may have been an attempt to satisfy the researcher, but saying what she thought the researcher wanted to hear (Mat Roni et al., 2020). However, P.2's contradictory statements in the

interview highlighted possible conflicts in students between the value of education promoted by their own culture versus what is promoted but others within the school setting. This aligns with the argument made by Brophy (2008) about the cultural divide that can exist between schools and home.

In this study, there was only one participant who culturally identified as Pasifika, indicating a lack of engagement among Pasifika students in the cohort. Similarly, Middle Eastern students did not engage with the study. However, these two cultures could be represented among the participants who chose to not reveal their cultural or ethnic identity, which may indicate a fear of having their identity attributed to their responses. The one Pasifika student generally responded negatively to the statements around the use of te ao Māori in their English assessment, and although self-nominated for the interviews, chose to not respond to communication around arranging a time to meet.

While the responses from the Pasifika participant have been included in the results, the size of the sample limits the understanding that can be gained. Nevertheless, her responses showed a lack of self-efficacy with AS91925 which could be indicative of the how the inclusion of mātauranga Māori in the English classroom fails to meet her cultural needs as a learner (Darling-Hammond et al., 2024). Furthermore, one could argue that her general negative responses highlight the unique experience of some Pasifika students in participating in an educational system that traditionally values Pākeha knowledge and marginalises indigenous knowledge. Moves to give equal status to mātauranga Māori may begin to de-centralise Pākeha knowledge and give way for indigenous knowledge to be more accepted and visible in classrooms. Further progression is needed in the education system to address the cultural needs of Pasifika learners as they make up more than 8% of the population and have historic failings with academic success within the system (Acosta & Hsu, 2014).

The self-efficacy of students participating in this research was impacted by their culture but appeared to be more strongly affected by migrant status. 45% of the migrant and children of migrant participants lacked confidence with using te ao Māori concepts in the assessment despite their strong sense of self-esteem and self-concept at school and in English. This aligns with the literature that reports that migrant students are more likely to experience learning adversely and have poorer educational outcomes (Acosta & Hsu, 2014; Bilgili et al., 2018). This could be attributed to them being less exposed to Māori culture, which is unique to Aotearoa New Zealand. Therefore, teachers need to focus particularly on developing the self-efficacy of migrant and children of migrant learners more so than any other group.

There is significant literature on the actions of teachers and how they can impact self-efficacy development (Bong & Skaalvik, 2003; Schunk, 1985; Zimmerman, 2000). The responses from interviewees showed no animosity towards their teachers. The issue of teacher-efficacy (Eisenberger et al., 2013; Klassen et al., 2011), however, was raised among two interviewees who mentioned the difficulty faced when there was a lack of confidence in their teacher of how to move through the learning, due to it being the first year of implementation. With the changes to NCEA, this may be unavoidable, as teachers attempt to implement new learning to the best of their ability, but ultimately are learning alongside their students. In this regard, a lack of teacher-efficacy may be considered a bi-product of any educational change but as teachers become more confident in their own understanding of the learning, this is likely to diminish.

5.6 Conclusion

This study recognises the unique experiences students face when asked to incorporate te ao Māori concepts in AS91925. The data highlights how the self-efficacy of students is impacted by their culture, their migrant status, the efficacy of their teachers and the pressure of experiencing change within the NCEA framework. How students perceive their cultural identity, the success of their peers and their own prior knowledge adds complexity to their experiences. However, while the responses from non-Māori participants indicate a need for teachers to focus on efficacy development, Māori students have demonstrated a positive response to the NCEA change to incorporate mātauranga Māori. It is this data that promotes the inclusion of te ao Māori concepts within AS91925 as a means to address the academic struggles Māori students have endured as a result of colonisation and consequently, while the change to include mātauranga Māori in NCEA assessment may be challenging, it is greatly beneficial to a group who have been historically marginalised by the centralising of Pākeha knowledge in Aotearoa New Zealand's educational system.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

Self-efficacy is an important part of academic success and is affected by mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion and physiological responses (Bandura, 1997). So how do students perceive their self-efficacy when asked to use te ao Māori concepts to analyse a film in English? And how is their self-efficacy affected by their culture?

This study aimed to answer these questions by surveying and interviewing Year 11 English students completing AS91925, to examine their unique experience as the first cohort attempting this standard, using a task that incorporated an aspect of mātauranga Māori as a lens on which to examine films. Through this study, it has been evident that those students who identify as Māori culturally perceived their self-efficacy positively, while other those identifying with other cultural groups needed further efficacy development in this task.

The experiences reported by students who participated in this study highlighted the complexity teachers face in Aotearoa New Zealand classrooms. It was evident that classrooms are comprised of students with diverse cultural and migratory experiences. These students hold varying assumptions about the ability of their peers and view their prior knowledge differently. Furthermore, teachers face the ongoing challenge of what students perceive the purpose of English as a subject to be. The study's results indicate that while de-colonising English as a subject by including mātauranga Māori more prominently has benefits for Māori students, significant challenges exist in how teachers can implement te ao Māori concepts in AS91925 and cater to the diverse needs of the learners in their class in a culturally responsive way.

The strengths of this research lie in its willingness to give students a voice. It must be recognised that students are the ones affected by the decisions of politicians, policymakers and educational professionals, yet their voice is often unheard and decisions are made based on assumptions about their needs, wants and experiences. By giving students a voice in this study, decision-making adults can better understand what it is like to be a Year 11 student experiencing these educational changes first hand.

This study was not concerned with the academic performance of participants but gave students an avenue to reflect upon their experience of learning and allowed them to communicate their sense of self-efficacy. They reflected on their own strengths and weaknesses in English, their cultural identity, their perspective of their peers, teachers and parents, and articulated their view of their learning. By doing this, these students gave the adults making decisions a better understanding of what is it to be a student in this current educational climate.

This study, however, could not address some of the key issues facing educational research. Notably, the study's participants were those who were willing to volunteer their time and energy. They felt as though they had something valuable to share and felt confident enough to express themselves. Consequently, this study does not capture the voices of those who often are unrepresented in educational research: those who don't view themselves as having a valuable contribution to make. There are major gaps in the data, particularly among Pasifika and Middle Eastern students and those with low self-esteem and self-concept.

As a result of the limitations of time, this study also fails to capture the experiences of students after completing their assessment. This meant that the data only reveals how students felt before they had engaged with the task, based on the assumptions they had about their self-efficacy. In doing this, there has been a missed opportunity to capture the full learning process, where students learn specific content, implement it and then reflect on their capability, effort and attainment.

Further research is therefore required to fully understand how students have experienced using te ao Māori concepts in AS91925. Capturing the voices of those who are unrepresented in this study is vital to gain a better understanding of the student experience. But how to do this responsibly and ethically is a critical issue facing educational researchers.

Closer examination of the experience of students who are ethnically Māori, but do not identify culturally as Māori is necessary. It is important to understand how they respond to the inclusion of mātauranga Māori in English – does it serve to bring them closer to their Māori culture, or does it reinforce the separation by enhancing a feeling of whakamā? There are further issues to explore with this group of unique and significant young people.

Interviewees in this research touched on the role of their teacher, but it was beyond of the scope of this study to examine teacher-efficacy and how it impacted the self-efficacy of young people. Significant changes have been made to secondary education in the last five years, and teachers who have felt confident teaching English have suddenly been pushed out of their comfort zone through the requirement to include mātauranga Māori. What is their experience? And how can teachers be supported to enhance their own efficacy to support the efficacy development of young people?

As the researcher, it has been an honour to work with such insightful, generous young people. Their willingness to participate in this research has benefitted those who will come after them, by giving teachers a better understanding of the diverse experiences their students have. This cohort

has faced a particularly challenging year, as their teachers grapple with the implementation of new NCEA standards, but their resilience has been inspiring. As a teacher, this study has shown me that despite the challenges they face, young people continue to strive for better – for themselves and for others.

Aotearoa New Zealand's young people deserve the best opportunity to thrive in their educational system, and while the changes made to NCEA are necessary to address the educational disparities our Māori learners have faced for generations, it is not without challenges. These challenges need to be highlighted and overcome so that all students in Aotearoa New Zealand experience the greatest success in their learning.

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Appendix

1. ‘Identity Tree’ activity template