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Students' and Teachers' Perceptions  
of the Use of Mobile Technology  
in University Preparation Classes

*A thesis presented in partial  
fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of*

Master in Applied Linguistics

*At Massey University, Manawatu Campus, New Zealand.*

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2017

# Acknowledgements

Firstly, I would like to extend my appreciation to all the students and teachers who participated in this research. Without your input and willingness to express your views, experiences and beliefs this study would not have been possible. Thank you for your time and the valuable insights you shared.

I would like to express gratitude to my supervisors Prof. Cynthia White and Dr. Gillian Skyrme for your supervision, and support. I found your guidance, wisdom, encouragement and gentle navigation through the hurdles of this process invaluable, without which I would have been lost.

To my colleagues, I thank you for your ongoing support and advice. I am particularly appreciative of the constant encouragement and friendship extended to me - especially at the end of writing this thesis.

On a personal level I would like to thank my family Bill, Luke, Eilish, Alie and my friends for their committed support. In particular to my husband Bill, who not only ran our home, but also provided daily encouragement, patience and practical advice. Lastly, I would like to dedicate this thesis to the loving memory of my father Alan Aldrich who passed away young and never knew where my adult life took me.

# Abstract

As in many aspects of society today, mobile technology has a presence in educational arenas. This study investigates and compares the views and perceptions of teachers and students about the appropriate use of mobile technology in university preparation classes, how the presence of mobile technology influences the classroom environment, and about what students and teachers believe to be their respective roles in the regulation of the use of mobile technology.

To investigate this the following instruments were used: a student survey to gather quantitative data about their beliefs about mobile technology in class, their behaviour around devices, and their expectations of teaching practices and regulation of devices; student focus groups using four teacher scenarios (describing different teacher behaviour and attitudes) as a basis for the discussion; and teacher focus groups posing questions gleaned from the results of the student survey and focus groups. The overall objective was to determine if any gaps in perceptions, attitudes and expectations existed between students and teachers.

Both parties agreed that devices were useful educational tools to use in class. However, there were opposing viewpoints about personal use of devices. Students expected teachers to take responsibility for regulating student behaviour around the use of devices, while teachers sought to prepare students to take personal responsibility and become autonomous learners. A need for establishing etiquette in the classroom was recognised. Teachers acknowledged that although students were skilled users of mobile technology, they lacked vital computer skills. Overall, there was a discrepancy between student and teacher beliefs about philosophical responsibility, the scope of technical ability, and logistical possibilities in the classroom. To conclude, the study confirmed that the nature of the classroom had changed and that all stakeholders need to be cognisant about ever-changing technology.



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