

**EVALUATION OF THE
NATIVE-SPEAKING ENGLISH TEACHER
SCHEME IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS
IN HONG KONG
2015 – 2016**

FINAL REPORT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The evaluation of the Native-speaking English Teacher Scheme in Primary Schools (PNET Scheme) described in this report employed a sequential mixed-method approach using online surveys of key stakeholders followed by case studies. It explored the impact of the Scheme on primary students' learning of English with regard to the English-speaking environment of the school, local teachers' and NETs' pedagogical practices, and the use of English in the classroom. The study collected data on stakeholders' background and activities, as well as their views of the effectiveness of NET deployment, utilisation, integration, and support in schools, and the collaboration between NETs and their local colleagues. It also asked stakeholders about the support received from the Advisory Teachers (ATs) and the NET Section, the progress made on the key recommendations from the previous evaluation (Griffin, Woods, Storey, et al. 2007), and how the PNET Scheme might be improved.

In the literature review comparing the NET Schemes in Hong Kong with similar schemes in the region, including Japan, Korea and Taiwan, the research team pointed out that only Hong Kong had conducted and published external evaluations on its NET Schemes. In addition, Hong Kong's NET Schemes had a more fully developed support system for professional and curriculum development.

Questionnaire surveys were developed and piloted, and refined after piloting before links to the online versions were released to participating schools. A similar process of development, piloting and refinement was followed for the interview protocols and observation schedules before they were put into practice in the case studies.

Over 13,000 participants were surveyed, including students, parents, local teachers, NETs, School Heads, and NET Section personnel. To enable the research team to gain a more in-depth understanding of the operation of the Scheme, 40 interviews were conducted, including 32 in eight case study schools with local teachers, NETs, English Panel Chairs and School Heads, and 8 with NET Section personnel, in addition to 24 observations of the English environment of schools, co-planning meetings, and classrooms in which team-teaching took place.

Multi-stage sampling was used to obtain a representative sample of 104 schools willing to participate and 79 schools successfully completed the questionnaire phase of the study, representing 16.9% of the total number of primary schools participating in the PNET Scheme in the 2014/15 school year.

A total of 18 findings identified after statistical analysis of responses to the online surveys indicated that stakeholders generally held positive perceptions of the impact on the PNET Scheme on students' English learning, on the English-speaking environment of the school and on the use of pedagogical practices by English teachers. Findings indicated that the majority of all stakeholders support the Scheme.

Key survey findings (noted as "SF") include the following:

- The majority of stakeholders believe the PNET Scheme contributes to students' English learning (SF1).
- The majority of students hold positive views of NET-LET collaboration (SF3).
- The majority of stakeholders believe the PNET Scheme helps to enhance the English-speaking environment of the school (SF4).

- Stakeholders believe NETs contribute to LETs' use of expanded pedagogical practices (SF7).
- The majority of stakeholders believe the Scheme's professional development activities enhance LETs' pedagogical practices (SF9).
- The majority of all stakeholders support the Scheme and would like more NETs if resources allow (SF17).

Survey responses, and in particular responses to open-ended questions within the surveys were analysed to identify 8 schools for further investigation through case study. While the findings from quantitative analysis of the surveys suggested that a majority of the stakeholders held positive views of the PNET Scheme, there were also challenges and/or strong and divergent views among key stakeholders (NET, LETs, School Heads). The case studies included a representative proportion of schools that, based on these indications of divergence, appeared to be 'struggling' with implementation of the Scheme, as well as schools that were 'excelling' in their operation of the Scheme. This allowed for triangulation to substantiate interpretations of the quantitative data with findings from the qualitative data including responses from the open-ended survey questions, the eight case studies, and the interviews conducted with NET Section personnel. Overall, these data corroborate the positive overall findings in the surveys, but they also shed light on the divergences that raise specific issues that if addressed could improve effectiveness of the Scheme.

37 of the 40 interviews and focus groups were digitally recorded and transcribed; and in three cases in which participants opted not to have the interview recorded, copious notes were taken. Qualitative analysis of 40 transcripts/notes and the 24 observation reports was undertaken by at least two research team members and compared, and supplemented by text mining. This analysis generated a total of 40 additional findings. These generally supported the positive attitudes to the Scheme identified in the survey findings.

Stakeholders reported that the Scheme (including the presence of the NET, the work of the Advisory Teaching Team (ATT) and the various programmes' support of collaboration), helped to improve student English proficiency, demonstrated by what stakeholders perceived as significant advances in students' literacy skills as well as enhanced oral fluency, confidence, and better pronunciation. Stakeholders also stated that the Scheme led to an increased use of English in the classroom and enhanced students' motivation to learn.

Key case study (CS) findings include the following:

- Stakeholders provided indirect evidence of improved student English proficiency in speaking through active, fun, learning activities that motivate students (CF1).
- The emphasis on co-teaching and the presence of a NET in the school has increased student motivation and the degree to which English is used in the classroom (CF3).
- Participants mentioned the value of the contributions of the NET to the English speaking environment of the school including contributions to cultural awareness, decoration of classrooms with English-related material, the operation of the English room, and whole-school activities, school assemblies and 'English Fun Days' and more opportunities for teachers and students to speak English (CF8)
- Several participants mentioned the resources which the PNET Scheme can make available to schools, including programme schools involved in the Primary Literacy Programme – Reading and Writing (PLP-R/W) and the Development of Text Sets (DTS) Project, but also in non-programme schools, where ATs would regularly provide

resources and teaching ideas through their general support roles. The work of the NET in locating suitable additional resources was also mentioned and valued by school personnel (CF10).

- Interviewees generally recognised the role of the Scheme in increasing the amount of English used in the classroom, improving LETs' repertoire of pedagogical practices and their spoken English (CF14 & 15).
- Having teachers (both NETs and LETs) who are open and willing to learn from each other is vital to collaboration, recognised by all participants as a cornerstone of the PNET Scheme (CF20 & 23).
- Holding regular co-planning meetings prior to co-teaching was widely perceived as a key factor in promoting collaboration between NET and LETs. In non-programme schools (schools not signing up for a project like PLP-R/W), the failure to set aside time for co-planning was perceived as an impediment to effective collaboration (CF24 & 26).
- The importance of experience and qualifications among NETs was emphasised and seen as impacting on the nature of the collaboration possible between very experienced LETs and less experienced NETs, as well as on the role of the ATs in supporting the NETs (CF29).
- Another factor that was perceived to impact the effectiveness of collaboration in schools is the degree to which the NET is treated as a team member (CF30).
- The support of the School Head was seen as an important factor in determining the success of collaboration (CF31).
- A common perception among nearly all LETs, English Panel Chairs and School Heads was that one NET was not sufficient (CF36).

The overall findings of the evaluation point to the success of the Scheme in achieving its objectives and having a positive impact on the learning and teaching of English in the primary schools. Stakeholders acknowledge the contribution of the Scheme to enhancing students' English learning by effecting improvements in general proficiency, literacy skills, oral fluency and accuracy, confidence and motivation. Evidence was found of an enhanced repertoire of pedagogical practices and increased use of English in the classroom by local teachers engendered by the co-planning and co-teaching modelled and supported by Advisory Teachers. Effective NET deployment, utilisation and integration were facilitated by the support of the School Head and an openness and willingness to collaborate among both NETs and local teachers. Findings indicate that progress has been made in implementing key recommendations of the 2007 evaluation with the majority of NETs attending English Panel Meetings and reporting on their activities and enhanced collaboration and greater use of English between teachers and students in class and between teachers in the school environment.

In light of these findings, the following nine recommendations are made.

1. Continue to work to create a collegial culture among all teachers in primary schools so that NETs and LETs are treated and viewed as part of a team.
2. Review the current system for NET recruitment to ensure teachers recruited through the Scheme have the appropriate qualifications and experience for the positions and tasks for which they are hired.

3. Continue to explore ways to strengthen support for larger primary schools in the public sector in promoting English Language Education.
4. Continue to improve public relations that will inspire teachers, draw in potential qualified and experienced NETs, and inform and engage the parents, the public, and legislators of what the Scheme is accomplishing.
5. Continue to support schools with ATs, the induction programme for new teachers recruited into the Scheme, professional development workshops for all English teachers, and curriculum development that addresses new areas of need.
6. Continue to establish communication channels with NET organisations and seek out their support to provide insight into NET issues and potential solutions.
7. Continue to monitor and assess the effectiveness of the Scheme including formal evaluations every six to eight years and annual informal assessments.
8. Continue to review and revise the deployment guidelines and disseminate them.
9. Continue to encourage English panel members to focus on students' English language needs and learning, and teachers' curriculum adjustments and professional development.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS (Terms are used in Hong Kong unless specified otherwise)

AI	Artificial Intelligence
AJET	Association of JETs [in Japan]
ALTs	Assistant Language Teachers [in Japan]
APU	Azusa Pacific University
AT	Advisory Teacher
ATT	Advisory Teaching Team
CF	Case Study Finding
CIR	Coordinator for International Relations [in Japan]
Co-I	Co-Investigator
CL	Computational Linguistics
CPD	Centralised Professional Development
CBS	Cross-Boundary Students
DTS	Development of Text Sets
EDB	Education Bureau
ELI	English Language Instructor [used in Korea]
EPC	English Panel Chair
EPIK	English Programme in Korea
ENET	Enhanced Native-speaking English Teacher Scheme in Secondary Schools [in Hong Kong]
FETRP	Foreign English Teacher Recruitment Project [in Taiwan]
JET	Japan Exchange and Teaching [Programme]
JTE	Japanese Teachers of English [in Japan]
KIP	Key Stage 2 Integration Programme
KS1/2	Key Stage 1 (P1 - P3) and Key Stage 2 (P4 - P6)
LET	Local English Teacher
NET	Native-speaking English Teacher
NEST	Native English-Speaking Teacher [in Taiwan]
NLC	NET-LET Collaboration
NLP	Natural Language Processing
NNEST	Non-native English Speaking Teachers
NS	Native [English] Speakers
PD	Professional Development
PI	Principal Investigator
PM	Project Manager
PNET	Primary Native-speaking English Teachers
PLP-R/W	The Primary Literacy Programme – Reading and Writing
SF	Survey Finding
SEA	Sports Exchange Advisors [in Japan]
TM	Text Mining

1. INTRODUCTION TO EVALUATION OBJECTIVES AND DESIGN

1.1 Background

The Native-speaking English Teacher Scheme in Primary Schools (hereafter the PNET Scheme) was implemented in 2002 to provide public sector primary schools in Hong Kong having six or more classes, with a Native English-speaking Teacher (NET). The Education Bureau (hereafter EDB) provided the following goals for the PNET Scheme:

1. provide an authentic environment for children to learn English;
2. develop children's interest in learning English and establish the foundation for lifelong learning;
3. help local English teachers (LETs) develop innovative learning and teaching methods, materials, curricula and activities suited to the needs of local children; and
4. disseminate good practices in language learning and teaching through region-based teacher development programmes such as experience-sharing seminars/workshops and networking activities.

The first territory-wide evaluation of the PNET Scheme took place between 2004 and 2006. This was a longitudinal and cross-sectional study designed to evaluate the extent to which the four key objectives of the Scheme were being achieved. The evaluation was undertaken by a team of researchers from the University of Melbourne and the Hong Kong Institute of Education.

The evaluation involved tracking student language proficiency and attitudinal development, and gathering the views of all key stakeholders – School Heads (SH), NETs, LETs, English Panel Chairs (EPC), students and parents – through questionnaire surveys administered in a longitudinal repeated measures design applied to 140 primary schools.

The key findings of the evaluation were that Scheme effectiveness was linked to productive collaboration between Advisory Teachers (ATs), LETs and the NET, and that the influence of the SH was a key factor in successful NET deployment. The practice of deploying the NET across as many classes as possible was found to be ineffective. There were indications that NETs were most effectively deployed at Key Stage One (KS1), although these were inconclusive.

The key recommendations of the 2004-2006 evaluation related to the operation of the PNET Scheme included the following:

1. NETs should attend English Panel Meetings in schools, and should, in conjunction with participating LETs, report on Scheme-related activities including professional development, teaching strategies, co-planning and co-teaching. Professional development should be provided to NETs and LETs to facilitate evidence-based decision making and evaluation.
2. The deployment of the NET should be determined by the needs of the English programme in the school and decided upon by the English Panel in discussions with the EPC and SH.

3. Strategies should be put in place to encourage greater use of English between teachers and students, between students in the class, and between teachers in the school environment.¹
4. Participation in professional development activities provided by the NET, the AT and the NET Section should be more actively required of LETs. The professional development activities should focus on instructional intervention in the classroom, targeted instruction, and evaluation.

1.2 Objectives

The objectives of this 22-month evaluation study commissioned by the EDB are to evaluate the effectiveness of the PNET Scheme, identify areas for its improvement, recommend strategies for its enhancement, and inform policymaking regarding the implementation of the Scheme. The study began in January 2015 and concluded in October 2016. The scope of the study includes: student learning and the English learning environment in public sector primary schools in Hong Kong; NETs' and LETs' professional development and their collaboration; English language teaching (i.e. pedagogy and curriculum development); and the deployment of NETs in primary schools.

1.3 Research Questions

The study employs an explanatory sequential mixed-method approach using online surveys followed by case studies to address six main research questions:

1. To what extent and in what ways do key stakeholders believe the PNET Scheme helps to improve primary **students'** learning of English?
2. To what extent and in what ways does the PNET Scheme help to enhance the English-speaking **environment** of the **school**?
3. To what extent and in what ways does the PNET Scheme help to improve and increase **local teachers'** use of English in the classroom and enhance and expand their pedagogical practices?
4. What factors determine effective **NET** deployment, utilisation, and integration in schools?
5. What factors foster and inhibit **NET-LET collaboration** according to the various stakeholders?

¹ The wording of the recommendations is: "Classroom strategies that encourage student to student, student to teacher and teacher to teacher use of English need to be identified and made mandatory for classes, taking into account the different levels of proficiency of both the local teacher and the students. Immediate action is required in this regard and the role of the AT in identifying these strategies and providing the professional development is central to the success of these strategies.

Local English teachers must be encouraged and rewarded for practising English. Prizes and awards for spoken English usage are needed. The Scheme's coordination unit should devise ways of monitoring the use of English and this must start with the language medium of the English Panel meetings involving the NET. Regardless of the difficulty encountered, English teachers must know how to speak the language and must be sufficiently professional that they will practise and act as role models to their students."

6. What progress has been made on the key recommendations of the 2007 evaluation report and how might the **PNET Scheme** and the deployment of NETs be improved in light of economic, demographic, social, and political changes since the previous evaluation?

1.4 Rationale for Research Questions

The majority of the research questions address achievement of the objectives of the PNET Scheme, which are stated in the 2012 NET Deployment Guidelines as follows:

1. To provide an authentic environment for children to learn English
2. To develop children’s interest in learning English and establish the foundation for lifelong learning
3. To work with local teachers to develop the curricula, innovative learning and teaching methods, materials, and activities suited to the needs of local children
4. To disseminate good practices in language learning and teaching through region-based teacher development programmes such as experience sharing seminars/workshops and networking activities.

In addition, the brief for the current evaluation required the research team to refer to the key recommendations of the 2007 evaluation report. These have been summarised and included in Appendix A.

The current evaluation focused in particular on recommendations 2, 3, 6, 8, and 9 of the 2007 report. These related to:

	2007 Report Recommendation:
Collaboration, co-teaching, and co-planning, and attendance of NETs at English Panel meetings	2
NET deployment	3
Oral language opportunities for teachers and students	6
The role of NETs in English Panel meetings	8
Professional development for LETs	9

Finally, Research Question Six in the current evaluation looks at how the Scheme and the deployment of NETs might be improved in light of economic, demographic, social, and political changes since the previous evaluation. This encompasses recommendation one of the 2007 report, that ‘the EDB should identify the influence of immigration and the changing economic and ethnic profile of the community and its impact on the Scheme’. The following section sets out the research team’s analysis of relevant changes that have guided them in the evaluation.

Relevant economic, demographic, social and political changes which have taken place since the publication of the 2007 evaluation report on the PNET Scheme conducted by the University

of Melbourne revolve around the continuing move to a service- and knowledge-based economy, the falling birth rate and the aging economy, the increasing socio-economic and political integration of Hong Kong with the People's Republic of China, and the changing balance of Hong Kong, Shenzhen and Shanghai in terms of regional dominance as financial and commercial hubs.

In the education sector, changes at the school level include increasing levels of fully qualified English teachers entering the profession as a result of the adoption of the recommendations of the Final Report of the Language Education Review undertaken by the Standing Committee for Language Education and Research (SCOLAR, 2003). These recommendations included a proposal that teachers of English should be subject specialists with a degree majoring in English and relevant teacher training. The adoption of the recommendations meant that teachers entering the profession as English teachers needed to have majored in English and obtained training in the teaching of English either as part of a Bachelor of Education degree, or by taking an English major degree and studying a Postgraduate Diploma in Education with English as a major subject. Newly recruited English teachers without these qualifications would be expected to achieve them within five years by undertaking further study and training to obtain the necessary level of English subject expertise and pedagogy. Existing English teachers without these qualifications were also encouraged to undertake the further study and training necessary to obtain them.

During the period, accountability has also increased in the school sector. This is illustrated by the School Development and Accountability (SDA) Framework² introduced in 2003 under which public sector schools are required to undergo external review on a six-year cycle and upload three-yearly development plans and annual plans for public scrutiny. Further progress in educational reform has also taken place since the 2007 report, with increasing focus on assessment for learning, school-based assessment and e-learning.

While the increasingly service- and knowledge-based orientation of the Hong Kong economy³ would suggest an increasing role for English in the community, the increasing integration of Hong Kong with the Mainland means that this is not necessarily the case. Massive increases in tourists from the Mainland during this period⁴ have put a greater premium on competence in Putonghua in the service sector. Similarly, increasing numbers of Mainland companies have established footholds in Hong Kong⁵ putting further value on Putonghua in the workplace. It seems inevitable that the rise of Putonghua will impact on the perceived need for good English among parents and children, though generally a good command of English is still perceived as a gateway to success in Hong Kong and in the global community where English remains the dominant lingua franca.

Hong Kong has one of the lowest fertility rates worldwide. In the period 2011-2015, Macau and Hong Kong jointly hold the lowest birth rates per woman among 211 countries listed in a World Bank survey⁶. Falling birth rates have meant that enrolment in primary schools has dropped and a number of smaller schools have been closed or amalgamated into larger units.

² <http://edb.gov.hk/en/sch-admin/sch-quality-assurance/sda/index.html>

³ http://www.gov.hk/en/about/abouthk/factsheets/docs/service_economy.pdf

⁴ 77.7% of all tourists in 2014 came from Mainland China

(http://www.tourism.gov.hk/english/statistics/statistics_perform.html)

⁵ [Report on the Annual Survey of Companies in Hong Kong Representing Parent Companies Located outside Hong Kong](http://www.statistics.gov.hk/pub/B11100042015AN15B0100.pdf) (<http://www.statistics.gov.hk/pub/B11100042015AN15B0100.pdf>) See also

<http://www1.investhk.gov.hk/news-item/more-overseas-and-mainland-companies-using-hong-kong-as-their-regional-command-and-control-centre/>

⁶ <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.DYN.TFRT.IN>

The long-term goal⁷ of the then Education Department was to integrate bi-sessional primary schools (i.e. schools which operated an AM and PM session in the same premises with two separate cohorts of children) into whole-day schools. By 2007, the majority of schools were already operating on a whole-day basis, though a sizeable proportion⁸ remained bi-sessional, with school premises being used by both the AM and PM sessions, and often with the NET shared between the two sessions. By 2014/15, nearly all government and aided primary schools had been converted to whole-day operation. With the successful amalgamation of bi-sessional primary schools into whole-day schools, 455 primary schools were each served by a NET under the PNET Scheme in 2014/15 compared to 480 in 2007/08.

The increasing socio-economic integration of Hong Kong and the Mainland has meant that increasing numbers of Hong Kong citizens have found employment on the Mainland. According to the latest Census and Statistics Department survey of Hong Kong residents working in the mainland of China, published in 2011, there has been a steady increase reaching nearly 9% of Hong Kong residents by the third quarter of 2010⁹. Among these are increasing numbers of Hong Kong families that have settled across the boundary. In addition, there has been increasing incidence of cross-boundary marriage (Leung, 2012). These factors have resulted in increasing numbers of cross-boundary students (CBS) – that is children being bussed across the boundary from Shenzhen to be educated in Hong Kong primary schools (Yuen, 2011). In the 2014/15 school year, there were 4403 children newly admitted to Hong Kong primary schools from the Mainland¹⁰. Indeed there is increasing evidence that local schools actively seek out CBS in order to boost the falling rolls, which have resulted from the declining birth rate¹¹. There are also increasing numbers of Mainland families settling in Hong Kong and sending their children to Hong Kong primary schools.

Cross-boundary children enrolled in local primary schools contribute to diversity in the student population. These students have diverse family backgrounds (Leung, 2012); they may be the children of Hong Kong citizens who have chosen to live on the Mainland, or of Mainland couples who have given birth in Hong Kong. The added diversity which cross-boundary students bring to the English classroom is varied and generalisations are difficult. Perhaps the most significant impact is on the children themselves. They may have travelled up to two hours before reaching their schools every morning, which may affect their attentiveness in class. Their long homeward journey may mean that they cannot take advantage of after-school activities to the same extent as local children.

The inclusive education policy, introduced well before the 2007 report, but being more actively implemented since then has also created greater diversity in primary school classes, with the numbers of mainstream primary school children diagnosed with Autism Spectrum disorders, and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder doubling in the period since 2007¹².

⁷ <http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr02-03/english/panels/ed/papers/ed0616cb2-2883-1e.pdf> `

⁸ A representative sample of 131 schools was drawn up for the 2003-2006 evaluation. More than 35% of these schools were bi-sessional.

⁹ <http://www.statistics.gov.hk/pub/B11301572011XXXXB0100.pdf>

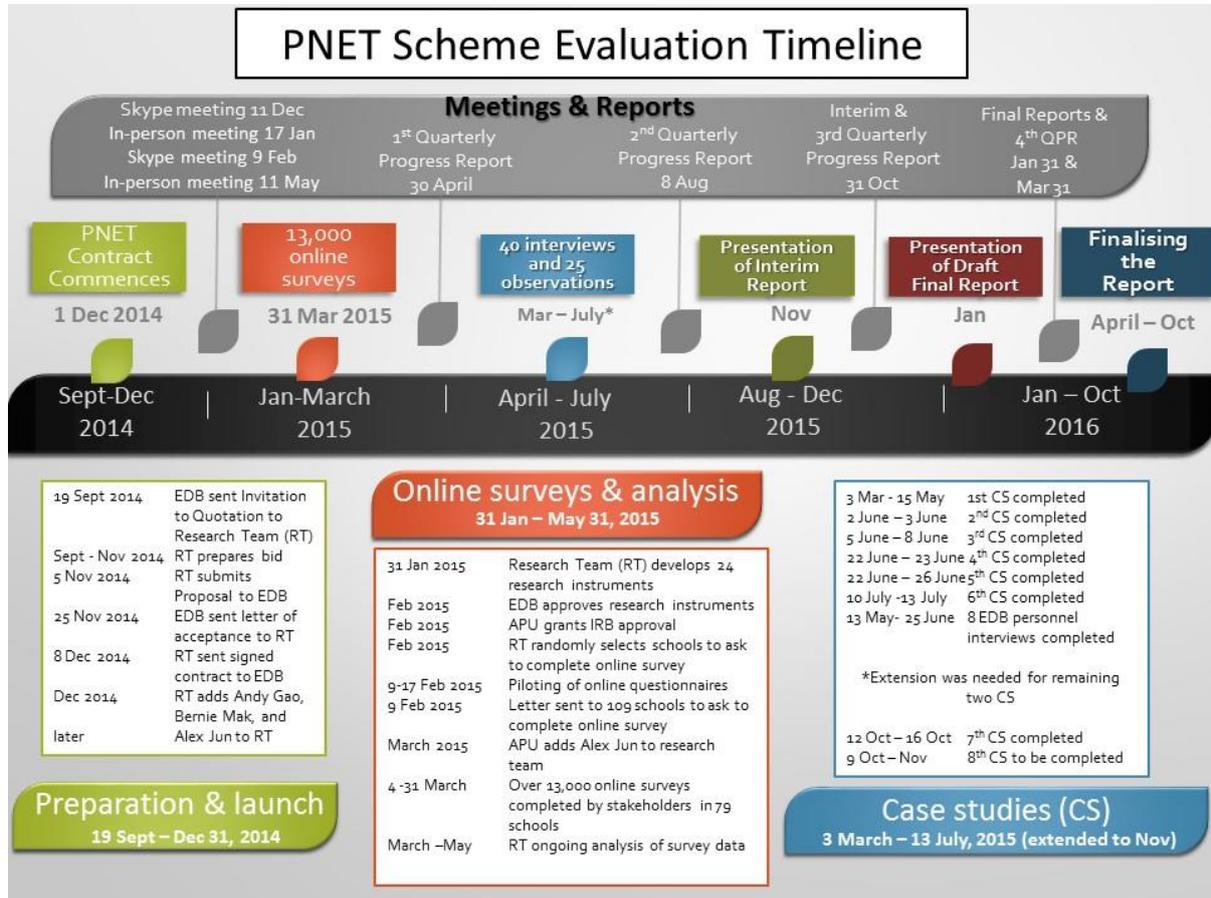
¹⁰ <http://www.edb.gov.hk/en/about-edb/publications-stat/figures/pri.html>

¹¹ <http://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/education-community/article/1834136/hong-kong-teachers-sell-their-schools-fill>

¹² http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr13-14/english/panels/ed/ed_ie/reports/ed_iecb4-1087-1-e.pdf

1.5 Timeline

A timeline of the evaluation is provided below to give an overview of what has been completed.



2. LITERATURE REVIEW OF SIMILAR PROGRAMMES

While there are quite a number of research articles and edited books on the collaboration of Non-native English-speaking teachers (NNESTs) and Native Speakers (NS), recent large scale evaluation reports of state run programmes that recruit, hire, and place Native Speakers in their public schools are harder to find apart from those conducted in Hong Kong. There are however, several topical reports on small scale surveys conducted in Japan on the Association of JETs (AJET) website (see links in the references). With this in mind, we turned to the research on collaboration of NNESTs and NS, and specifically studies focusing on **Japan, Korea, Taiwan, and Hong Kong** as well as studies that compare and contrast aspects of English language teaching in these four countries (Carless, 2006; Wang & Lin, 2013), to inform our evaluation plan and alert us to the challenges that may arise and the potential strategies used to address them.

An overview of the programmes that recruit and place foreign English teachers in these four countries, and a comparison of the challenges, benefits, and recommendations found in the literature are presented below, followed by a brief discussion of the relevance these have to the current evaluation. But before proceeding, a word of caution is needed when interpreting this information. Note that when discussing programmes in different countries there are many differences that make a true comparison difficult. Most of the literature discussing programmes in Japan, Korea, and Taiwan discusses the issues in both primary and secondary schools, while some articles about Hong Kong's Schemes focus on just primary or just secondary. Also, note that differences in policies and in school contexts vary a great deal, and these differences cannot be addressed in a general overview. Readers should be careful not to make hasty generalisations from this overview and are encouraged to refer to the specific articles for further details. This overview is not meant to represent a comprehensive review, but a starting point to identify commonalities and differences across the four programmes and issues pertinent to our evaluation.

2.1 Overview of Similar Programmes

This overview of the literature related to similar programmes in the region includes the Japan Exchange and Teaching Programme (**JET Programme**), the English Programme in Korea (**EPIK**), and the Foreign English Teacher Recruitment Project (**FETRP**) in Taiwan, as well as Hong Kong's NET Schemes. (See Table 0.1. Overview of Similar Programmes.) Data collection in these studies most often took the form of a case study approach, in which observations of one or more classes or schools were followed by interviews and analysis. Some studies used surveys, or a combination of surveys, observations, and interviews. In addition to these methods, Carless (2006) emailed participants and viewed videotaped class sessions that participants provided when face-to-face observations were not an option. Most of the AJET reports explain the findings of surveys conducted among the JET community, such as "Assistant Language Teachers (ALTs) as solo teachers" followed by a presentation and discussion of the findings and a list of conclusions. Most issues discussed related to the logistical, pedagogical, and relational aspects of programme implementation and the perceived challenges, benefits, and recommendations for improvement.

The programme in Japan began in the late 1980's, with Korea and Hong Kong's programmes launching in the mid and late 90's respectively, and Taiwan's starting most recently, in 2008. While Japan has by far the largest number of foreign teachers in their programme (4,786 in

2015, with the goal of 6,000 by 2020), Korea had 1,165 teachers in their programme in 2014, and Hong Kong had 858 NETs that same year. The exact number of current foreign teachers in Taiwan's programme was not found, although they had close to 300 in 2013, with the stated ambitious goal to recruit 3,300. A unique aspect of the JET programme is that it recruits teachers of six different languages—not just English teachers—and is supported by three government ministries. A common stated purpose of all the programmes is to increase the English proficiency of students and a common duty of foreign teachers in all the programmes is to team-teach with local teachers. It appears that only Hong Kong has conducted and published external evaluations. Hong Kong also has the highest standards for recruiting teachers and the most developed professional development support, which extends to local teachers and curriculum development that in many cases requires and supports co-planning and co-teaching. Thus it appears that Hong Kong's NET Schemes in most cases have higher standards for incoming teachers as well as a more fully developed support system for professional and curriculum development compared to what is found in Japan, Korea, and Taiwan.

2.2 Common Challenges

Eleven challenges were identified as issues common to at least two and in most cases all four of the programmes as listed in the table below. Challenges related to the incoming teachers' **lack of qualifications** was noted in relation to Japan (Crooks, 2001; Marchesseau, 2014; Wang & Lin, 2013), Korea (Ahn et al., 1998; Robison et al., 2000), Taiwan (Wang & Lin, 2013), and Hong Kong (Wang & Lin, 2013). Lack of **teaching experience** was also noted in Japan (Carless, 2006b; Crooks, 2001; Marchesseau, 2014; Rabbini et al. 2003), Korea (Ahn et al., 1998; Carless, 2006b; Wang & Lin, 2013), Taiwan (Carless, 2006b; Wang & Lin, 2013), and Hong Kong (Carless, 2006b; Wang & Lin, 2013). More specifically, lack of **team teaching skills** was noted in Japan (Carless, 2006b; Crooks, 2001; Rabbini et al. 2003; Wang & Lin, 2013), Korea (Ahn et al., 1998; Carless, 2006b; Wang & Lin, 2013), Taiwan (Luo, 2010; Luo, 2013; Wang & Lin, 2013), and Hong Kong (Carless, 2006b; Griffin et al., 2007; Wang & Lin, 2013) as well a **lack of cultural understanding** (see the table for specific references). **Lack of support** for the teachers including lack of adequate time allocated to co-planning with local teachers, overall lack of support for the programme and its stakeholders, and **“threatened” local teachers** and **“isolated” foreign teachers** (see the table for specific references for each of these) demonstrates that the challenges were related to not only the quality of the incoming teachers, but also how they were supported and deployed once in the programmes.

2.3 Common Benefits and Perceived Outcomes

With the dearth of published external evaluations on the programmes in Japan, Korea, and Taiwan, it is hard to compare the actual achieved outcomes across all four programmes. Carless (2006b) notes at least five benefits found in two of the programmes (Japan and Hong Kong), namely that the programmes appear to: **bring foreigners to needed areas or schools**, improve the **English proficiency of local teachers**, **motivate students** to learn English, and offer **more support to students** by having two teachers in the classroom. In the case of Hong Kong, Carless (2006a), Griffin et al., (2007), and Storey et al., (2001) confirm these gains, as well as many others. It is hoped that more external and comparative studies will be conducted to investigate programmes in these and other countries and they will be published so that the full range of benefits and outcomes can be known.

2.4 Common Recommendations

Six recommendations found in the literature were made for at least three, and in most cases all four of the programmes. The first three recommendations are to provide **more professional development for collaboration** (Crooks, 2001; Rabbini et al., 2003; Robinson, 2000; Luo, 2014; Carless, 2006a; Griffin et al., 2007; Storey et al., 2001), counselling or **support for foreign teachers** (Crooks, 2001; Rabbini et al., Griffin et al., 2007; Storey et al., 2001), and **national support for programme** (Crooks, 2001; Robinson, 2000; Chang, 2013). Another recommendation is to **follow guidelines** that are already in place, although a related challenge is that one size never fits all, and flexibility is needed to cater for the diverse contextual factors facing schools. Seeking expertise from specialists when needed was also noted (Crooks, 2001; Marchesseau, 2014; Robinson, 2000; Chang, 2013; Luo, 2014; Griffin et al., 2007; Storey et al., 2001). Carless (2006a), Griffin et al., (2007), MA & Ping (2012); Storey et al., (2001) and Trent (2012) recommended that programmes seek out teachers who demonstrate **cultural sensitivity, positive attitudes, and openness**. Finally, Wang & Lin (2013) recommended that all four programmes **remove anti-professional discourse** such as “authentic” and “native” that they state undermines local teachers.

2.5 Relevance to the Current Evaluation

Some of the challenges and recommendations found in these programmes are relevant to the NET Schemes in Hong Kong, but some are not as relevant due to Hong Kong’s colonial past, which provided more exposure to English in Hong Kong compared to Japan, Korea, and Taiwan. The first three recommendations (to provide more professional development for collaboration, increase counselling and support for foreign teachers, and seek out national support for the programmes), are already taking place in Hong Kong, although this speaks to the need to maintain or increase this support. The recommendations to follow guidelines that are in place and/or seek expertise from specialists when needed and to seek out teachers (both NETs and LETs) who demonstrate cultural sensitivity, positive attitudes, and openness are ones the research team underscores. Removing what Wang & Lin (2013) call anti-professional discourse such as “authentic” and “native” that they claim undermines local teachers is one that the EDB might consider.

A final note in comparing the NET Schemes in Hong Kong with similar schemes in the region, including Japan, Korea and Taiwan, is that it appears that only Hong Kong had conducted and published external evaluations on its NET Schemes. In addition, Hong Kong’s NET Schemes had a more fully developed support system for professional and curriculum development.

Table 0.1.
Overview of similar programmes

Issue	Japan JET	Korea EPIK	Taiwan FETRP	Hong Kong NET
Overview of the four programmes				
Start date number of foreign teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1987: start date • 2015: 4,786 from 43 countries • 2020 goal = 6,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1995: start date • 2014: 1,165 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2008: start date • 2013: ~300 • goal=3,300 one in each prim & sec school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1998: (E)NET started • 2002: PNET started • 2014: 455 PNETs • 2014: 403 ENETs total 858.

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Uniqueness of the programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supported by 3 govt. ministries and managed by 1 govt. council, CLAIR Apply through Japanese embassy Not just English, 6 total languages Most from US placed in rural areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launched by MoE for ed reform in foreign language learning and globalisation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May reduce the qualifications so they can get more applications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launched to enhance English environment of schools. Has highest teacher qualifications, Conducted external evaluations
Terms used for foreign and local teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 90% ALTs: Assistant language teachers. 10% CIR, Coordinator for International Relations, a few SEA, Sports Exchange Advisors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ELIs: English language instructors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NESTs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AT LET NET PNET
Stated purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase cultural understanding Improve foreign language proficiency Move toward CLT 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve English Proficiency of Ss and Ts X-Cult exchange Reform methods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upgrade English proficiency of Taiwanese 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (see website, as PNET and ENET differ.)
Duties:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Team teach Assist JTE in teaching PD of local teachers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Team teach Develop materials PD of local teachers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Team teach Develop materials PD of local teachers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Team teach Promote innovative teaching practices Organise co-curricular activities Develop materials and an English-rich environment PD of local teachers
Recruitment criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BA? Yes Teaching Exp? No Teaching Qual? No Interest in Japan? Yes Excellent English skills? Yes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BA? Yes Teaching Exp? No Teaching Qual? No Adapt to K? Yes Citizen? Yes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BA? Yes Teaching Exp? Preferred Teaching Qual? Yes (may lower) NS equivalent? Yes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BA? Yes (except for Cat.5) Teaching Exp? Preferred Teaching Qual? Yes NS equivalent? Yes
Some common challenges found in the literature				
Lack of clarity and understanding of NETs' role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crooks, 2001 Mahoney, 2004 Marchesseau, 2014 Rabbini et al., 2003 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carless, 2006b 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carless, 2006b Griffin et al., 2007 Storey et al., 2001
Lack of team teaching skills of NETs and LETs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carless, 2006b Crooks, 2001 Rabbini et al., 2003 Wang & Lin, 2013 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ahn et al., 1998 Carless, 2006b Wang & Lin, 2013 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Luo, 2010 Luo, 2013 Wang & Lin, 2013 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carless, 2006b Griffin et al., 2007 Wang & Lin, 2013
Lack of time to co-plan with local teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carless, 2006b Mahoney, 2004 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carless, 2006b 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Luo, 2010 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carless, 2006b Griffin et al., 2007
Lack of support from programme or stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carless, 2006b Crooks, 2001 Wang & Lin, 2013 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carless, 2006b Robinson, 2000 Wang & Lin, 2013 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chang, 2013 Luo, 2010 Wang & Lin, 2013 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carless, 2006b Wang & Lin, 2013

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NETs lack of teaching experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carless, 2006b • Crooks, 2001 • Marchesseau, 2014 • Rabbini et al., 2003 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ahn et al., 1998 • Carless, 2006b • Wang & Lin, 2013 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carless, 2006b • Wang & Lin, 2013 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carless, 2006b • Wang & Lin, 2013
NETs lack of knowledge of host language and culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carless, 2006b 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ahn et al., 1998 • Carless, 2006b • Robinson, 2000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carless, 2006b 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carless, 2006b
NETs lack of teaching qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crooks, 2001 • Marchesseau, 2014 • Wang & Lin, 2013 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ahn et al., 1998 • Robinson, 2000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wang & Lin, 2013 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wang & Lin, 2013
Hostile or threatened LETs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crooks, 2001 • Samuels, 2008 • Wang & Lin, 2013 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ahn et al., 1998 • Robinson, 2000 • Wang & Lin, 2013 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wang & Lin, 2013 • Chang, 2013 • Wu, 2009 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trent, 2012 • Wang & Lin, 2013
NETs feeling isolated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marchesseau, 2014 • Samuels, 2008 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Griffin et al., 2007 • Storey et al., 2001
Mismatch of goals of lifelong learning, etc. vs. exam focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crooks, 2001 • Marchesseau, 2014 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Griffin et al., 2007 • Storey et al., 2001
Benefits and achieved outcomes				
Brings foreigners to needed areas or schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carless, 2006b • Samuels, 2008 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carless, 2006b 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carless, 2006b 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carless, 2006a • Carless, 2006b • Griffin et al., 2007
LETs improved English proficiency			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Luo, 2014 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carless, 2006a • Griffin et al., 2007 • Storey et al., 2001
LETs exposed to pedagogical practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carless, 2006b 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carless, 2006a • Carless, 2006b • Griffin et al., 2007 • Storey et al., 2001
Students more motivated and enjoyed English	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carless, 2006b 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Luo, 2014 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carless, 2006a • Carless, 2006b • Griffin et al., 2007 • Storey et al., 2001
2 Ts offer more support for Ss	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carless, 2006b 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carless, 2006a • Carless, 2006b • Griffin et al., 2007
Recommendations				
Professional development needed for collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crooks, (2001 • Rabbini et al., 2003 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robinson, 2000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Luo 2014 (TESL Cert needed.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carless, 2006a • Griffin et al., 2007 • Storey et al., 2001
Counselling for NETs needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crooks, (2001) • Rabbini et al., 2003 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robinson, 2000 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Griffin et al., 2007 • Storey et al., 2001
More national support needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crooks, (2001) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robinson, 2000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chang, 2013 	
Guidelines and expertise from specialists needs to be followed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crooks, (2001) • Marchesseau, 2014 • Rabbini et al., 2003 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chang, 2013 • Luo, 2014 (all stakeholders involved in reform) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Griffin et al., 2007 • Storey et al., 2001
Cultural sensitivity, positive attitude,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carless, 2006b 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carless, 2006b 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carless, 2006b 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carless, 2006b • Griffin et al., 2007 • Ma, 2012

and openness needed in teachers				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Storey et al., 2001 • Trent, 2012
Remove of “authentic” “Native” needed ¹³	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wang & Lin, 2013 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wang & Lin, 2013 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wang & Lin, 2013 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wang & Lin, 2013

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¹³ The research team would like to draw attention to the fact that the Scheme employs a nomenclature that recent thinking on the development of English as an International Language and English as a Lingua Franca would find unacceptable (see Copland, Davis, Garton, & Mann, 2016a; Wang & Lin, 2013). For example, use of the term “authentic” in referring to an English environment or communication in which a native speaker is involved, might imply that the use of English between multilingual speakers whose first language is not English is somehow not authentic. A more obvious example is the term “NET” which although its full form is ‘native English-speaking teacher’ rather than ‘native speaker’, nevertheless implies the latter term. “NET Scheme” is a very familiar term in Hong Kong, for educators internationally, however it carries a ‘native speaker’ bias, which scholars have argued demeans multilingual teachers whose first language is not English. Use of such highly contested terminology might undermine the status of local English teachers.

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3. QUANTITATIVE DATA COLLECTION, ANALYSIS, AND RESULTS

3.1 Preparation for Quantitative Phase

The research team developed eight questionnaires and several supporting documents including survey instructions, informed consent forms, and templates of circulars to notify and seek permission from parents. These instruments were revised by each member of the team and were further edited by members of the NET Section who were asked to comment on drafts.

3.1.1 Preparation of Quantitative Instruments and IRB Approval

IRB Approval

Institutional Research Board (IRB) approval was provided by Azusa Pacific University on 22 February 2015. All seven Research Team members successfully completed the online course of the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) for the protection of human subjects and signed and submitted Potential Conflict of Interest Disclosure forms as required by Azusa Pacific University.

Data Collection Instruments

The Questionnaires (See Appendix E)

1. **The School Head Questionnaire (SHQ)** has 37 main questions and 66 sub-questions. The SHQ was designed to investigate the management perspective and collect information on the background of the school, students, and teachers, as well as the activities and opinions of the SH regarding several aspects related to the PNET Scheme including how effectively the Scheme works at their school. The online questionnaire consists of six sections. The first section has preliminaries, which include the name and purpose of the study, the institutions of the researchers, who commissioned the study, and the objectives of the study. A statement noting that participation in the study is voluntary is followed by a list of the possible risks and a description of how the researchers will maintain the respondent's confidentiality. This section concludes with information as to who to contact if they have questions and a place to indicate their consent. The questions are arranged in five sections, with the name of the section and the number of main questions in each part provided here: *Background: 17; Activities: 4, Effectiveness: 5; Opinions: 4; and Description: 7.*
2. **The Native English Teacher Questionnaire (NETQ)** has 48 main questions and 113 sub-questions. The NETQ seeks to obtain the NET perspective on the operation of the Scheme, with several of the questions cross-referenced to items in the SH and LET questionnaires to facilitate triangulation. The preliminaries and five sections are similar to the SHQ described above, with the following number of main questions in each part: *Background: 12; Activities: 17; Effectiveness: 9; Opinions: 3; and Description: 7.*
3. **The Local English Teacher Questionnaire (LETQ)** has 46 questions and 113 sub-questions. The LETQ seeks to obtain the LET perspective on the operation of the Scheme, with several of the questions cross-referenced to items in the SH and NET questionnaires to facilitate triangulation. The preliminaries and five sections are similar to the SHQ, and

NETQ with the following number of main questions in each part: *Background: 12; Activities: 16; Effectiveness: 9; Opinions: 3; and Description: 6.*

4. **The Student Questionnaire / English Version (SQ-E)** has 37 main questions with no sub-question and no open-ended questions. It seeks students' perspectives, and asks about their background (*5 questions*), views of English teaching and learning (*16 questions*) and thoughts about using and learning English (*16 questions*). Teachers were provided with a script to read to the students and instructions as to how to assist them in entering their answers on the computer (see School Contact Person Instructions under supporting documents). The parents of the students were notified about the survey through a school circular (a template can be found under supporting documents) and only students whose parents agreed that their child could take part in the study completed a survey.
5. **The Student Questionnaire / Chinese Version (SQ-C)** is identical to the English version, except that it is in Chinese. The initial Chinese version was back translated into English, and the two English versions were compared and slight adjustments were made. When more changes were made or questions added, the translations were checked by four members of the research team (Lee, Gao, Yu, and Mak) in addition to several people in the NET Section who were asked to verify that the translation was accurate and appropriate for children in levels P1 to P6.
6. **The Parent Questionnaire / English Version (PQ-E)** has 30 questions with 41 sub-questions. The PQ-E seeks to obtain the perspective of parents or guardians of the students on the operation of the Scheme. The preliminaries are the same as the SHQ, NETQ, and LETQ, but the sections differ slightly as noted here with number of main questions in each part: *Background: 11; Activities: 6; Opinions about English Teaching: 2; and Opinions about the PNET Scheme: 11.*
7. **The Parent Questionnaire / Chinese Version (PQ-C)** is identical to the English version, except that it is in Chinese. The initial Chinese version was back translated into English, and the two English versions were compared and slight changes were made. After this, some more changes were made to some questions, so the translation was checked again by four members of the research team (Lee, Gao, Yu, and Mak) in addition to several people in the NET Section who were asked to verify that the translation was accurate and appropriate for parents in Hong Kong.
8. **The Advisory Teacher Questionnaire (ATQ)** has 40 main questions and 68 sub-questions. This survey seeks the perspective of the Advisory Teachers, who monitor and support the NETs in the schools they are assigned to. The preliminaries and five sections are similar to the SHQ, NETQ, and LETQ with the following number of main questions in each part: *Background: 8; School Support Activities: 9; Effectiveness: 11; Opinions: 3; and Description: 9.*

Instructions, Circulars, and Informed Consent Forms to Assist Data Collection (See Appendix E)

9. School Head Informed Consent form for Conducting a Case Study

This provides information to the SH on the case study interviews and observations, and seeks the consent of the SH for the participation of the school in the study. The form will be used to gather informed consent from the SHs of all eight case study schools.

10. Teacher Informed Consent Form for Interview and Observations

The form provides information on the evaluation and seeks the consent of teachers so that all those interviewed are informed of the study and their rights as participants.

11. AT Informed Consent Form

This form provides information on the evaluation and seeks the consent of ATs so that they are informed of the study and of their rights as participants.

12. The Institutional Review Board Approval

This documents the approval granted by the Azusa Pacific University Institutional Review Board for the conduct of the evaluation and lists four responsibilities of the researchers.

13. Instructions for School Contact Person

This set of instructions was created to inform the School Contact Person about the aim of the study, the roles of respondents who were expected to complete the questionnaires, the timeline for the survey, the selection process for LETs and their student participants in the school, as well as other important details of the data collection.

14. Template of School Circular English (with a reply slip)

This template was provided for the parents of students identified as potential participants in the survey. It explained the value of the parents' participation and discussed the confidentiality of the data to be collected. Schools were free to modify the template when sending it out to the parents

15. Template of School Circular Chinese (with a reply slip)

The template was also provided in Chinese with the same information as above.

3.1.2 Piloting of Quantitative Instruments

A pilot study of the questionnaires was conducted from 9 to 17 February 2015 in a local primary school. The SH, the NET, and all 6 LETs of the school concerned completed the online questionnaire. A total of 102 students completed the online student questionnaire. However, only four parents submitted an online questionnaire.

The Project Manager attended the student surveying sessions at the school and discussed the process with the SH and the EPC. The following notes record the comments they made on the pilot surveys:

- The SH felt the need to seek parents' consent for their children under 18 to complete a questionnaire.
- Many parents, especially those of the higher levels, said that they did not want their children to take the questionnaire, nor did they want to do so.
- Teachers may need to explain to the parents the importance of their participation even if their child is no longer being taught by a NET.

- Lower primary classes asked four teachers to assist the students in completing the survey: two in the computer laboratory for those whose parents permitted them to participate, and two in classrooms to oversee the children who did not take the questionnaire.
- The teacher helping lower primary students complete the questionnaires online could provide explanation for each question and give students sufficient time and pay attention to those who did not keep up.
- They felt that the open-ended question was too difficult for lower primary students and that it would be better if all items were multiple-choice questions.

According to the observations of the Project Manager on the implementation of student survey session:

- Some primary one students complained that there were too many questions, and they choose several N/A options to skip the remaining questions.
- Primary two students finished much faster than primary one students, with the former taking 15 minutes only and the latter at least 45 minutes, but the time required by primary two to primary six students was similar (approximately 10-15 minutes).
- A few primary four students were able to key in their own opinions to the open-ended questions using a touchpad.

After piloting the questionnaires, the following changes were made:

- The open-ended question was dropped from the student survey.
- Senior primary students would be encouraged to complete the questionnaire as they could provide their impressions of the impact that the NET in lower primary had had on their English as they progressed to the higher levels.
- School Heads and teachers would be asked to encourage the parents to complete the questionnaire, as their voice is important.
- More specific instructions for the teachers helping students with online questionnaires were provided in the instructions based on the responses from the pilot teachers and School Head.
- A sample consent letter for SHs to use to inform parents of the study and its importance was drafted in English and Chinese so SHs could use it to get permission for students to take the survey.

3.2 Quantitative Data Collection

3.2.1 Sampling Procedures

In the 2014/15 school year, 465 primary schools in Hong Kong participated in the PNET Scheme. To ensure at least 10% of the schools would take part in the survey, we selected 100 (plus two schools for children with special needs) by multi-stage sampling, anticipating that at least 80 schools would agree to join the study. A total of 79 schools eventually participated in the survey, representing 16.99% of primary schools served by a NET.

All Hong Kong primary schools were sorted by district, and weighted to adjust for size of school. After further refining the list, random numbers were generated for each school and those with the highest random number in each group of each district were selected until the ideal numbers were met. Since some identified schools from the list could not participate for various reasons, only 1 special school and 98 mainstream schools were identified from the list. Five more mainstream schools were further selected from the list. The final number of school participants selected was 104.

3.2.2 Schedule of Surveys

The revised questionnaires were entered onto the online survey development programme, SurveyMonkey (<http://www.surveymonkey.com>). The online survey was officially opened on 4 March 2015, and closed on 31 March 2015.

A letter was delivered by the NET Section of the EDB to the selected schools on 9 February 2015 informing the schools that they had been randomly selected to take part in the study and asking if they would agree to participate. The NET Section confirmed on 3 March 2015 that 76 of the schools had agreed to participate. On 4 March 2015 the contact person of each school received an email containing instructions for survey arrangement, the online survey links, a confidential school code, and two templates (Chinese and English) of school circulars for the parents. Seven more schools agreed to participate on 6 March 2015, and they received the aforementioned email on the same day. At this point, the number of participating schools was 83.

The school-based questionnaires were closed on 31 March 2015 at 5:30pm (HKT). Four schools withdrew from the evaluation later, citing school-based reasons such as a clash between the timing of the online survey and the school's examination timetable. One school withdrew from each of the following districts: Hong Kong East, North Region of NTE, Tai Po, and the Kwai Chung & Tsing Yi districts. In total, 79 Hong Kong primary schools participated in this phase of the evaluation. This is 16.9% of the total primary schools participating in the PNET Scheme in the 2014/2015 school year. Overall, there was a good representation of all districts and regions. However, due to a very low return rate of participants in one district where just a few students returned surveys the survey data for that school was not included. To compensate for not having any survey data from this school, a case study was arranged in that district.

Table 0.2

Summary of number of surveys completed and included

	# of potential people surveyed	# of surveys sub-mitted	# of complete surveys	# of incomplete surveys	# of false starts to exclude ^a	# of incomplete surveys to include ^b	Total included ^c
SHQ	79	76	54	22	18	4	$54 + 4 = 58$
NETQ	79	104	66	38	32	6	$66 + 6 = 72$
EPCQ	79	95	77	18	12	6	$77 + 6 = 83$
LETQ	474	381	320	61	35	26	$320 + 26 = 346$
SQ-E	9,954 estimate	1,017	864	153	N/A	153	<i>Eng & Ch=</i> 10,229
SQ-C		9,212	8,378	834	N/A	834	
PQ-E	9,954 estimate	227	204	23	N/A	23	<i>Eng & Ch=</i> 2,329
PQ-C		2,102	1,856	246	N/A	246	
ATQ	32	26	24	2	0	2	$24 + 2 = 26$
	20,651						13,143

^a False start means a person started, stopped, and then completed a new survey later. When this happened, the more complete second survey was included and the first incomplete attempt was not included.

^b Incomplete means a series of questions were left blank (not just one or two skipped questions). Incomplete surveys were included except for the case of false starts as noted above.

^c A few schools had two EPCs, so that the number of EPC respondents was more than initially estimated.

The following describes the data received by the Research Team after the online school survey was closed on 31 March 2015, and the online AT surveys closed on 22 May 2015.

The number of School Head Questionnaires submitted was 76, of which 54 were complete and 22 were incomplete. 18 of the 22 incomplete surveys were judged to be false starts, meaning the same person later completed another survey so these were repeats and thus excluded, leaving four that could be included in statistical calculation resulting in 58 SH surveys.

The number of NET Questionnaires submitted was 104, of which 66 were complete and 38 were incomplete. 32 of the 38 incomplete surveys were judged to be false starts, leaving six that could be included in statistical calculation resulting in 72 NET surveys.

The number of English Panel Chair Questionnaires submitted was 95, of which 77 were complete and 18 were incomplete. 12 of the 18 incomplete surveys were judged to be false starts, leaving six that could be included in statistical calculation and a total of 83 EPC surveys.

The number of LET Questionnaires submitted was 381, of which 320 were complete and 61 were incomplete. 35 of the 61 incomplete surveys were judged to be false starts, leaving 26 that could be included in statistical calculation and a total of 346 LET surveys. The total number of EPC and LETs is 429.

The number of Student Questionnaires in English submitted was 1,017, of which 864 were complete and 153 were incomplete.

The number of Student Questionnaires in Chinese submitted was 9,212, of which 8,378 were complete and 834 were incomplete. The total number of included student surveys (English and Chinese) is 10,229.

The number of Parent Questionnaires in English submitted was 227, of which 204 were complete and 23 were incomplete.

The number of Parent Questionnaires in Chinese submitted was 2,102, of which 1,856 were complete and 246 were incomplete. The total of included parent surveys (English and Chinese) is 2,339.

The number of Advisory Teacher Questionnaires submitted was 25, of which 23 were complete and 2 were incomplete. No false starts were found. The total of included AT surveys is 25.

3.3 Quantitative Data Analysis Methodology

In this study most variables are categorical and therefore Chi-square analysis was the primary procedure. However, Chi-square analysis is invalid when the expected cell counts are fewer than five. This happens very often throughout most crosstab tables when observations are spread across many categories. To rectify the situation, data reduction is necessary. Specifically, for the Likert-scale of agreement, the responses “strongly agree” and “agree” were combined into “Agree” whereas those of “strongly disagree” and “disagree” were collapsed into “Disagree.” This demarcation is not arbitrary because there is a qualitative difference between “agree” and “disagree.” The same principle was applied to other ordinal-scaled data. For the measurement of usage, the responses “very often” and “often” were re-classified into “Yes” while “seldom” or “never” were classified as “No.” By reducing the number of levels, more data were populated into fewer cells, and also data interpretation became easier after dichotomization of the responses.

Despite these re-classifications, some crosstab tables still had low cell counts. When this happened, the Chi-square statistic was replaced by Fisher's exact test – a resampling procedure in which observed statistics are compared against empirical sampling distributions by simulating all possible outcomes. Thus, the problem of low cell counts was overcome by generating high cell counts in simulations (Fisher, 1935/1960, Yu, 2003, 2007). If Fisher's exact test was not feasible due to too many levels in the table, the data were converted into ordinal scales and non-parametric tests were performed as a remedy (Korosteleva, 2013).

Although the purpose of both Chi-square tests and Fisher's exact tests is to detect whether there is a significant difference between stakeholders in terms of their perceptions, in this case, of various aspects of the PNET Scheme, non-significant results were also reported. This was done because statistical non-significance in these cases indicated a lack of dispute or discrepancy between different stakeholders in their perceptions. In other words, the perceptions of stakeholders on aspects of the PNET Scheme were unanimous. Overwhelmingly in these cases, stakeholders' perceptions of the benefits and/or effectiveness of these aspects of the Scheme were positive.

Because normalised sampling weights were applied to all test procedures, there are decimals in the frequency count. In reality it doesn't make sense to talk about 26.21 individuals. However, each observation has a sampling weight indicating his or her representativeness. If the sampling weight of two particular participants is 1.2, respectively, then they are considered 2.4 persons.

Normalised weights were utilised for adjustment because the data were collected via multi-stage sampling, in which participants from different population segments might have different probabilities of being sampled. Under this sampling scheme, some segments might be over-sampled while some others might be under-sampled. To compensate for this imbalance, three pieces of information as follows were taken into account during the analysis.

1. **Strata:** Strata were the partitioned segments of the population (sampling frame). In this study the strata are the 18 administrative districts in Hong Kong. In order to obtain a comprehensive view of the phenomenon under study, sampling was done in all strata.

2. **Cluster:** A cluster is the sampling unit. In this study a subset of schools was selected from each district and therefore "school" is the primary sampling unit (PSU).

In strata each unit is included and studied whereas in clusters only the selected clusters are studied. The main objective of cluster sampling is to reduce cost; otherwise it will be very labour intensive to include all schools. However, there are only 18 districts in Hong Kong. Therefore, treating them as strata (no sampling) is feasible and we could obtain a more representative sample by doing so. This practice is commonly used in public health research in the US. For example, in a typical multi-stage sampling scheme at the first stage all fifty states in the US are included but in the second stage only some counties or cities are selected out of each state. In other words, clusters are treated as sampling units.

3. **Sampling weight:** The sampling weight is the number for restoring the original importance of each unit within the population segment. In each stage of sampling there is a different weight.

a. **School weight:** The school weight is computed by the inverse of the probability of a school being selected from the district. For example, if there are 10 schools in the region and 2 were selected, then the weight is $1/(2/10)$ or $10/2 = 5$. In other words, each school in this district represents itself and four other schools. The non-response rate, if available, is taken into account.

b. **Student weight:** The student weight is computed by the inverse of the probability of a student being sampled from the school. For example, if there are 100 students in the school and 10 participated in the survey study, then the student weight is $1/(10/100)$ or $100/10 = 10$. In other words, each student in this school speaks for himself and another nine students. However, in some schools the non-response rate is extremely high. In some extreme cases only one student responded to the survey. Needless to say, it is unfair to let one student speak for the entire school. As a remedy, the sampling weight is set at 1.

c. **Raw sampling weight:** The overall raw sampling weight is computed by multiplying the school weight and the student weight. Statistical estimation using the raw weights is based on the population size and the information of population segments rather than the sample size. The estimates are more accurate but the test statistics might have too much statistical power (the probability of rejecting the null hypothesis). In addition, because the weighed frequency is much bigger than the original frequency, it is counter-intuitive and is difficult to interpret.

d. **Normalised sampling weight:** To rectify the preceding situation, the raw sampling weights were converted into normalised sampling weights by dividing the raw weights by the mean of the raw weights.

This weighting procedure is commonly used in other large-scale surveys utilising multi-stage sampling, such as the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2012).

3.3.1 Determining Key Findings

Eighteen key findings were found in the survey data and numbered SF1-SF18, with an “S” noting that the findings came from the survey data as opposed to the case studies. (Forty findings were found in the case study analysis, numbered F1-F40, discussed in the next section.) When significant differences were found among stakeholders, or when the majority of all stakeholders held a similar view on an issue that responded to one of the six research questions, the researchers articulated this into a finding statement and provided supporting data in the form of a graphical depiction and descriptive statistics. Descriptive statistics (frequency counts) and Chi-square/Fisher’s exact test results are presented. The pie charts are the graphical depiction of the descriptive statistics. Logistic regression was used to explore how teacher demographics (e.g. age) and experience (e.g. years of teaching) would affect their perceptions, but no significant results were found and thus logistic regression was not pursued further.

3.3.2 Obstacles and Limitations

Obstacles encountered and measures taken to address them

The Research Project Manager received approximately 60 phone calls and 20 emails about various arrangements throughout the survey period. Problems encountered and the measures taken to resolve them are described below.

1. *Busy schedules.* Many of the selected schools replied that their students would have their mid-term test in March, and found the 19 March deadline difficult to meet. The Research

Team decided to extend the deadline to 24 March, and later to 31 March. Emails were sent to schools to remind the schools of the changes, and most of them stated that this would enable them to participate.

2. *Senior primary students' lack of contact with NETs.* Over 30 of the selected schools asked whether the senior primary students, especially primary five and six, could be exempted from the survey due to limited contact with the NET assigned by the EDB. The school contact person was advised that all levels should be included, because some questions addressed students' experience with the NET in previous years or outside the classroom. After the explanation, most of the schools agreed to include all levels of students in the survey.
3. *Difficulty in persuading parents to participate.* Over 70% of the schools that called expressed concerns about the low number of parent participants. Some parents did not want to complete the survey while others, who were new arrivals or who lived in mainland China, may have lacked Internet access or had limited knowledge of the NET Scheme in Hong Kong. The school contact persons were asked to encourage parents to participate as much as possible, and to consider organising a session to open the computer lab for the parents to finish the survey with the help of a LET. It was also suggested that they invite parents of another class at the same level to participate as replacements.
4. *Selections of LET and student participants.* A few schools claimed that they preferred another sampling method to identify the 6 LETs and the class to participate in the survey. Schools were strongly reminded that they should not purposefully select the "best" class or "best" LET. The Research Team allowed schools to adjust the sampling method when they wanted to ask the LET who had fewer responsibilities or who had a more open schedule to participate.
5. *Amendment of the school circulars to parents.* A few schools asked if they could make minor changes to the school circulars in order that parents could check "Yes" or "No" to permit their children to participate in the survey. Others asked us to extend the deadline for receipt of the reply slip so that parents could have more time. The Research Team agreed to the two suggested changes.
6. *Failure of email delivery:* A few schools replied through the AT that they failed to receive the invitation email sent on 4 March. The individual email was re-sent with the instructions for the school contact persons, the survey links, the confidential school code, and the two templates of school circular to parents to each of these schools, and receipt was confirmed. This verified that all selected schools that had agreed to participate in the survey had received the email and enclosures appropriately.

Limitations

Limitations include the following. Although the statistical analysis is based upon empirical data, readers should be aware that there are certain limitations. First, although the non-response rate at the school level is taken into account for calculating the sampling weight, the non-response rate of students is unavailable. Specifically, we know how many invited schools refused to participate in the study, but we have no ideas about how many students are recruited by the teachers. We cannot assume that all students in the same school are invited and then use the whole population to compute the non-response rate. Doing so would result in inflating the

figure. Second, the original measurement utilised Likert-scales. However, due to sparsity of responses in some categories (strongly disagree) some data are converted from ordinal to dichotomous (agree/disagree) and thus precision is slightly reduced. Third, in some analyses non-parametric tests are employed because the data structure does not comply with the parametric assumptions. Consequently statistical power is weakened and Type II error (missing significant results) might occur. Last, at most statistical analysis can indicate whether there is a significant difference, but it cannot address “how” and “why” questions. Nonetheless, this limitation is compensated by qualitative analysis, which is capable of presenting a rich description of the phenomena under study.

3.4 Quantitative Results and Key Findings

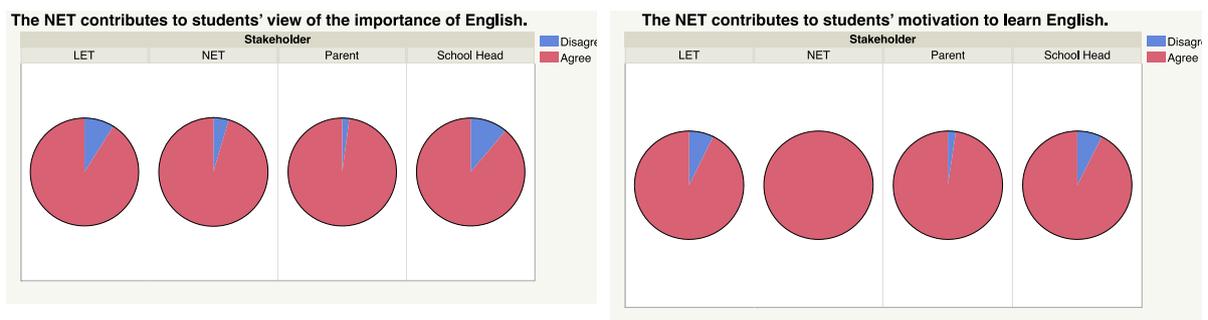
The key findings are organised and presented by the six research questions.

3.4.1 Research Question One: To what extent and in what ways do key stakeholders believe the PNET Scheme helps to improve primary students’ learning of English?

The focus of this question is the impact of the PNET Scheme on students’ learning, which includes more than the contribution of an individual NET in the school (i.e., it includes the work of the LETs, the Advisory Teachers and the NET Section as a whole). One way in which the question was operationalised for stakeholders, however, was to focus on the impact of the individual NET on students’ learning. This is reflected in the results reported below and summarised in the first Survey Finding (SF) below.

SF1. The majority of stakeholders believe the PNET Scheme contributes to students’ English learning.

Based on the crosstab tables and Chi-square analysis of the perceived NET contribution to student learning by stakeholders, it was found that the majority of respondents (in most cases over 90%) from every group of stakeholders believed the PNET Scheme, in the form of the contribution of the individual NET in the school, had contributed to student learning. However, parents tended to have the highest level of agreement to most statements whereas School Heads tended to have the lowest level (except in relation to the NET’s contribution to “students’ improved proficiency in speaking”). The pie charts displayed in Figure 1 and the data in Table 1 are visual and statistical depictions respectively of the different perceptions of different stakeholders.



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Figure 1. Stakeholders' perceptions of the contributions of NETs to student learning.

Table 1
Chi-square analyses of ways in which NETs contribute to student English learning

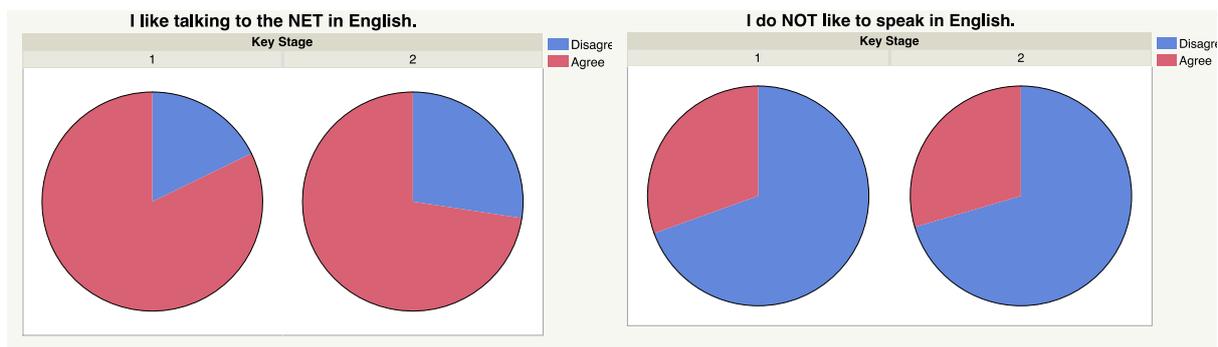
Stakeholder	Weighted Count		Percentage		Chi-square	p value ^a
	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree		
The NET contributes to students' view of the importance of English.						
LET	29.50	362.04	7.53	92.47		<.0001
NET	3.14	62.59	4.78	95.22		
Parent	28.53	2030.44	1.39	98.61		
SH	5.90	48.11	10.92	89.08		
The NET contributes to students' motivation to learn English.						
LET	24.40	374.87	6.11	93.89		<.0001
NET	0	66.53	0	100		
Parent	32.37	2037.25	1.56	98.44		
SH	3.87	50.13	7.17	92.83		
The NET contributes to students' improved proficiency in writing.						
LET	60.93	332.73	15.48	84.52		<.0001
NET	7.92	56.39	12.32	87.68		
Parent	83.22	1959.21	4.07	95.93		
SH	11.32	41.69	21.36	78.64		
The NET contributes to students' improved proficiency in reading.						
LET	24.63	373.14	6.19	93.81		<.0001
NET	0	66.53	0	100		
Parent	94.38	1968.21	4.58	95.42		
SH	2.86	50.15	5.39	94.61		
The NET contributes to students' improved proficiency in speaking.						
LET	9.50	388.26	2.39	97.61		<.0001
NET	2.86	62.78	4.36	95.64		
Parent	21.18	2057.47	1.02	98.98		
SH	0	54.01	0	100		
The NET contributes to students' improved proficiency in listening.						
LET	11.62	386.71	2.92	97.08		0.0004
NET	1.10	64.54	1.68	98.32		
Parent	27.11	2050.66	1.30	98.70		
SH	1.93	52.07	3.58	96.42		
The NET contributes to students' parent's/guardian's valuing of English.						
LET	59.11	313.45	15.87	84.13	7.06	0.0293
NET	12.86	44.15	22.56	77.44		
SH	15.46	35.68	30.23	69.77		
The NET motivates students to use more English.						
LET	7.88	399.76	1.93	98.07		<.0001
NET	0	67.52	0	100		
SH	3.73	48.91	7.09	92.91		
The NET contributes to students' use of English in class.						
LET	6.72	392.13	1.68	98.32		<.0001
NET	0	66.53	0	100		
Parent	34.20	2024.66	1.66	98.34		
SH	3.39	50.61	6.28	93.72		
The NET contributes to students' use of English at the school.						
LET	31.68	367.02	7.95	92.05		<.0001
NET	5.02	61.52	7.54	92.46		
Parent	90.97	1955.53	4.45	95.55		
SH	8.89	44.12	16.77	83.23		
The NET contributes to students' use of English outside of school.						
LET	107.33	263.65	28.93	71.07	70.79	<.0001
NET	20.91	35.85	36.85	63.15		
Parent	305.37	1653.34	15.59	84.41		
SH	22.19	28.96	43.38	56.62		

Note. If 20% of cells have expected count less than 5, then the Fisher's exact test is used and no Chi-square is reported.

^aIf Chi-square is missing, then the p value is yielded from the Fisher's exact test. P values <0.05 are shown in bold.

SF2. Slightly more students in KS1 hold positive views toward English than their KS2 counterparts.

Analysis of the data related to this research question revealed discrepancies between the perceptions of students in Key Stage One (KS1) and Key Stage Two (KS2). In responding to statements expressing a liking for English lessons, for speaking English to the LETs, and for reading English and writing English, larger proportions of KS1 students agreed with the statements than did their KS2 counterparts. These discrepancies are clear from the pie charts for these survey items (Figure 2) and the Chi-square test results (Table 2). However, it is important to emphasise that this is a cross-sectional study, not a longitudinal one. In other words, we did not track the same students moving from KS1 to KS2 over time. Therefore, the results cannot be interpreted as the developing perceptions of the same students over time or as indicative of decreasing motivation in those students. At most we can conclude that concurrently KS1, as an independent group, appeared to be more positive about learning English than KS2. It is worth noting also that, in the negative statement (“I do not like to speak in English”), the proportions of agreement and disagreement between the two Key Stages are almost the same, in sharp contrast to the results for the positive statements. To further investigate this discrepancy, the original scale (1-4) of three items related to speaking English (“I like talking to the NET in English”, “I do NOT like to speak in English”, and “I like to speak English to the LETs”) was used for computing the Cronbach Alpha, a reliability measure of internal consistency. When all three items were taken into account, the Cronbach coefficient Alpha is .6658, which is below the acceptable threshold (.7). However, if the negative statement “I do NOT like to speak in English” was removed, the Alpha surged to 0.722. This may result from a common human tendency to dislike agreeing to something negative. And this disposition leads to measurement errors. Hence, the result of the negatively stated item should be interpreted with caution.



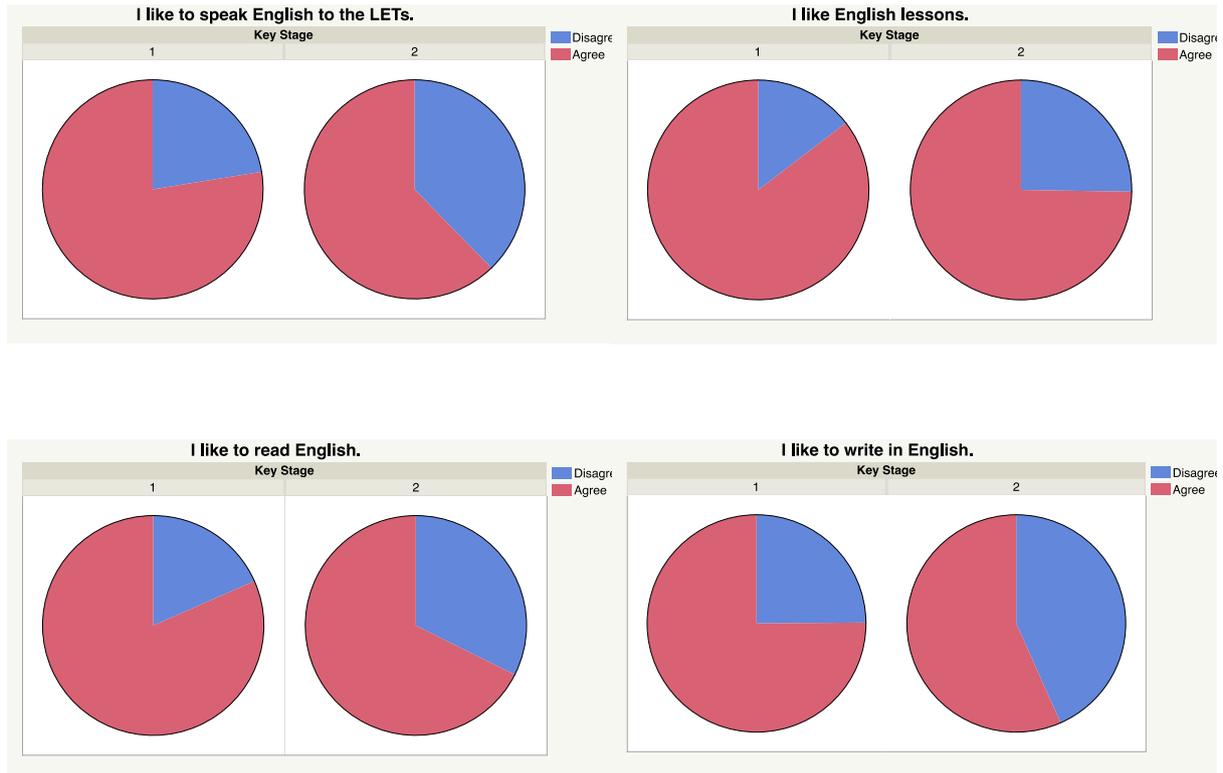


Figure 2. Students' likes and dislikes related to English learning (by Key Stage).

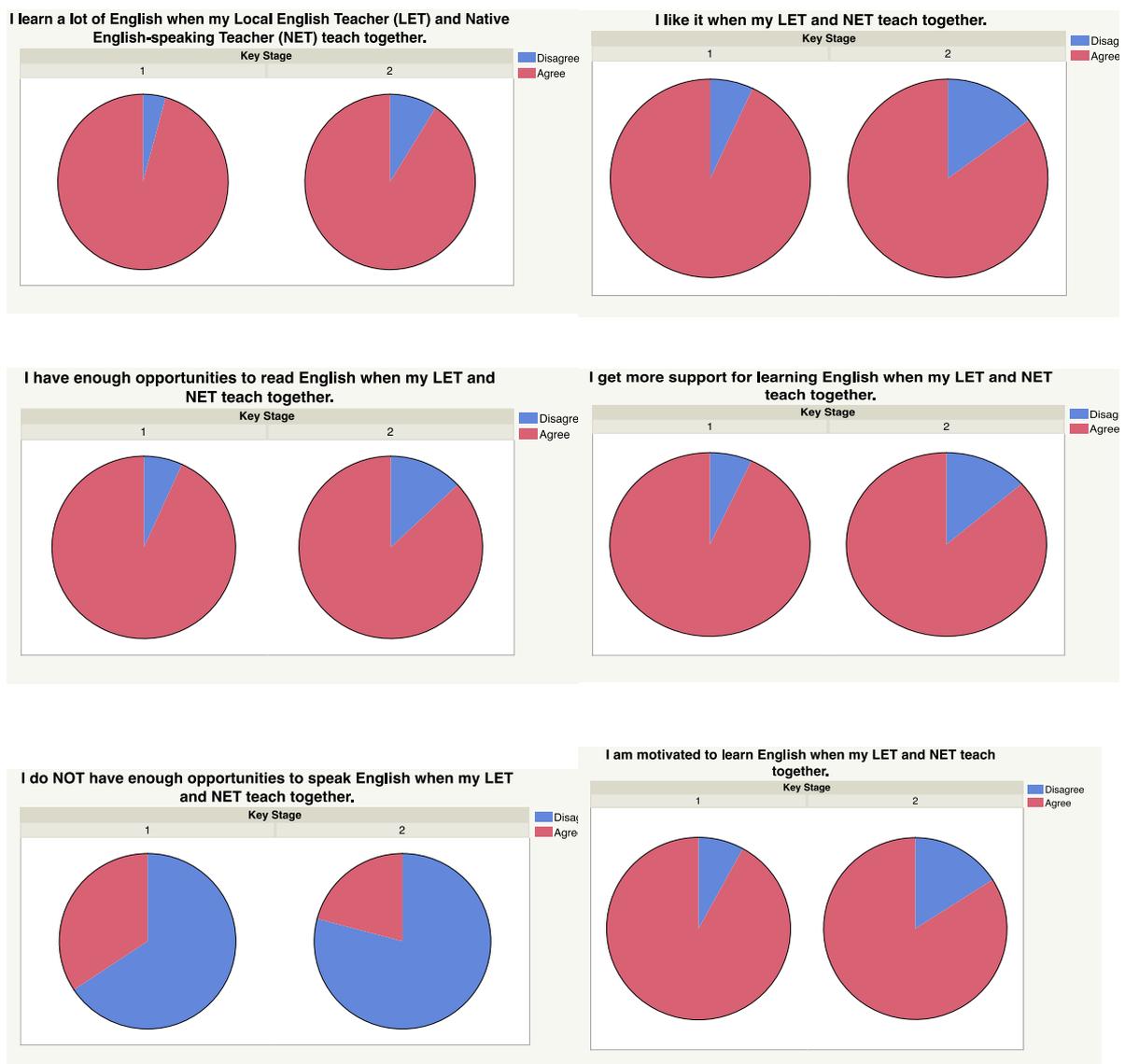
Table 2

Chi-square analysis of student likes and dislikes related to English learning (by Key Stage)

Stakeholder	Weighted Count		Percentage		<i>p</i> value ^a
	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree	
I like talking to the NET in English.					
Key Stage 1	780.26	3849.92	16.85	83.15	<.0001
Key Stage 2	1064.32	3256.66	24.63	75.37	
I do NOT like to speak in English.					
Key Stage 1	3200.61	1346.75	70.38	29.62	0.0514
Key Stage 2	3124.46	1200.24	72.25	27.75	
I like to speak English to the LETs.					
Key Stage 1	981.12	3590.99	21.46	78.54	<.0001
Key Stage 2	1522.81	2694.65	36.11	63.89	
I like English lessons.					
Key Stage 1	621.62	3991.87	13.47	86.53	<.0001
Key Stage 2	997.07	3253.73	23.46	76.54	
I like to read English.					
Key Stage 1	799.01	3767.18	17.50	82.50	<.0001
Key Stage 2	1257.37	3097.13	28.88	71.12	
I like to write in English.					
Key Stage 1	1108.63	3433.17	24.41	75.59	<.0001
Key Stage 2	1708.38	2609.03	39.57	60.43	

SF3. The majority of students hold positive views of NET-LET collaboration.

Another way in which the impact of the PNET Scheme on students' learning of English was operationalised in the surveys, was to explore stakeholders' perceptions of the impact of collaboration, a key emphasis of the PNET Scheme. Students' responses to statements expressing the effectiveness of NET-LET collaboration were overwhelmingly positive. Again, however, there was a difference between KS1 and KS2. Pertaining to their motivation in learning English with LETs and NETs, KS1 students tended to agree more than those in KS2. A possible explanation is that NETs and LETs engage in more co-teaching with KS1 students than with KS2 students, and more KS1 students are exposed to NETs, so KS2 students might have disagreed more with statements extolling the value of NET-LET collaboration because such collaboration did not affect their learning as regularly. To corroborate this explanation, it was observed that NETs reported teaching students in KS1 roughly twice as frequently as teaching students in KS2. With increasing grade level, fewer and fewer NETs were assigned to teach KS2 students. Figure 3 and Table 3 display findings related to student opinions on NET-LET collaboration.



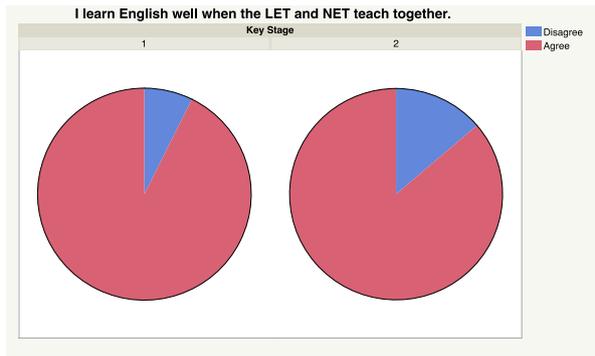


Figure 3. Student opinions on NET-LET collaboration (by Key Stage).

Table 3

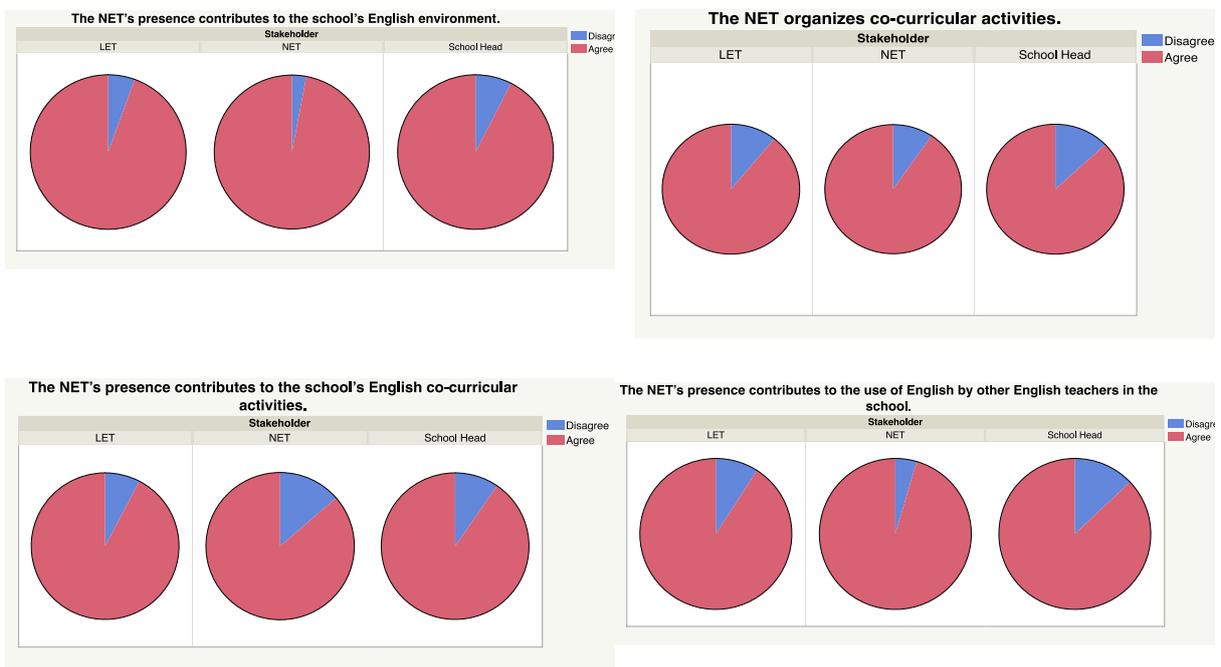
Chi-square analysis of student opinions on NET-LET collaboration

Stakeholder	Weighted Count		Percentage		p value ^a
	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree	
I learn a lot of English when the LET and NET teach together.					
Key Stage 1	205.00	4632.39	4.24	95.76	<.0001
Key Stage 2	419.27	3954.97	9.59	90.41	
I like it when my LET and NET teach together.					
Key Stage 1	321.35	4562.75	6.58	93.42	<.0001
Key Stage 2	692.64	3748.45	15.60	84.40	
I have enough opportunities to read English when my LET and NET teach together.					
Key Stage 1	328.50	4526.91	6.77	93.23	<.0001
Key Stage 2	592.87	3837.37	13.38	86.62	
I get more support for learning English when my LET and NET teach together.					
Key Stage 1	306.54	4522.25	6.35	93.65	<.0001
Key Stage 2	601.44	3749.04	13.84	86.18	
I do NOT have enough opportunities to speak English when my LET and NET teach together.					
Key Stage 1	3131.02	1557.16	66.79	33.21	<.0001
Key Stage 2	3265.60	989.93	76.74	23.26	
I am motivated to learn English when my LET and NET teach together.					
Key Stage 1	361.66	4380.14	7.63	92.37	<.0001
Key Stage 2	698.99	3572.23	16.37	83.63	
I learn English well when the LET and NET teach together.					
Key Stage 1	341.47	4362.98	7.26	92.74	<.0001
Key Stage 2	625.38	3666.08	14.57	85.43	

3.4.2 Research Question Two: To what extent and in what ways does the PNET Scheme help to enhance the English-speaking environment of the school?

SF4. The majority of stakeholders believe the PNET Scheme helps to enhance the English-speaking environment of the school.

The impact of the PNET Scheme on the English-speaking environment of the school was addressed by survey items exploring perceptions of the importance of the presence of a NET in the school in contributing to the English environment in general and to the use of English by teachers. Responses suggested that the majority of respondents (over 80% of NETs, LETs, and School Heads) believed that the PNET Scheme helped to enhance the English-speaking environment. However, a much lower percentage of NETs perceived that their presence was helpful in increasing subject teachers' use of English. Although there was a very high level of agreement to statements regarding NETs' contributions to the English environment, there was a tendency for School Heads to agree significantly less than NETs and LETs. With regard to contributions to the school's co-curricular activities, however, the tendency was reversed. School Heads are administrators and they are not typically involved in classroom activities on a daily basis, therefore, it is possible that they might not observe all of the contributions made by NETs and LETs. In one case study, for example, the NET said the relatively new School Head had not yet observed any of their co-teaching. The NET took advantage of the opportunity of our scheduled class observation, and invited the School Head to join us to see first-hand how the students responded to co-teaching. Figure 4 and Table 4 display findings related to the PNET Scheme and the English-speaking environment of schools.



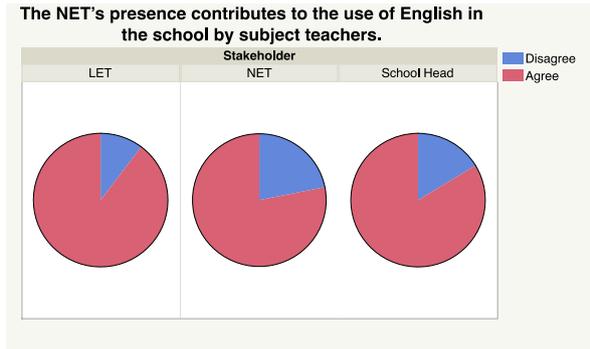


Figure 4. Stakeholder opinions on the effect of the PNET Scheme on the English-speaking environment of the school.

Table 4
Chi-square analyses of ways in which the PNET Scheme has enhanced the English-speaking environment of the school

Stakeholder	Weighted Count		Percentage		Chi-square	<i>p</i> value ^a
	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree		
The NET's presence contributes to the school's English environment.						
LET	19.36	379.46	4.85	95.15		0.0019
NET	2.30	64.23	3.46	96.54		
SH	3.89	49.12	7.33	92.67		
The NET organises co-curricular activities.						
LET	44.76	351.25	11.30	88.70	0.823	0.6626
NET	5.44	56.96	8.72	91.28		
SH	7.59	46.42	14.05	85.95		
The NET's presence contributes to the school's English co-curricular activities.						
LET	29.10	362.83	7.42	92.58	2.77	0.2498
NET	8.77	56.88	13.36	86.64		
SH	5.26	46.43	10.18	89.82		
The NET's presence contributes to the use of English by other English teachers in the school.						
LET	30.13	365.99	7.61	92.39	3.65	0.1617
NET	2.85	62.79	4.34	95.66		
SH	7.35	46.65	13.62	86.38		
The NET's presence contributes to the use of English in the school by subject teachers.						
LET	31.13	357.47	8.01	91.99	13.44	0.0012
NET	14.28	49.52	22.38	77.62		
SH	7.72	41.42	15.70	84.30		

Note. If 20% of cells have expected counts less than 5, then the Fisher's exact test is used and no Chi-square is reported.

^aIf Chi-square is missing, then the *p* value is yielded from the Fisher's exact test. *P* values <0.05 are shown in bold.

SF5. More students in KS1 view the English environment in schools positively than their KS2 counterparts.

In responding to some of the statements related to the English environment, KS1 students tended to agree more strongly than students in KS2. KS1 students, for example, expressed stronger agreement to the statement that "The classroom displays help me learn English." In responding to the statement that "My friends encourage me to use English," a slight majority of KS1 students (65%) agreed, compared to only 45% of KS2 students. It is important to point out that some of these environmental variables were out of the teachers' control. It is also

necessary to treat the data with some caution, as they are concerned with respondents' perceptions of the environment, rather than objective facts. Nevertheless, the different KS1 and KS2 responses to statements may cast more light on differences between students at the two levels. As indicated in the previous section, responses to statements about NET-LET collaboration suggest that the motivational level of KS1 students is higher than that of students in KS2. The data related to the English environment also suggest that peer pressure may be becoming more influential at KS2, something that may be worth investigating further. Figure 5 and Table 5 illustrate student opinions on these environmental variables.

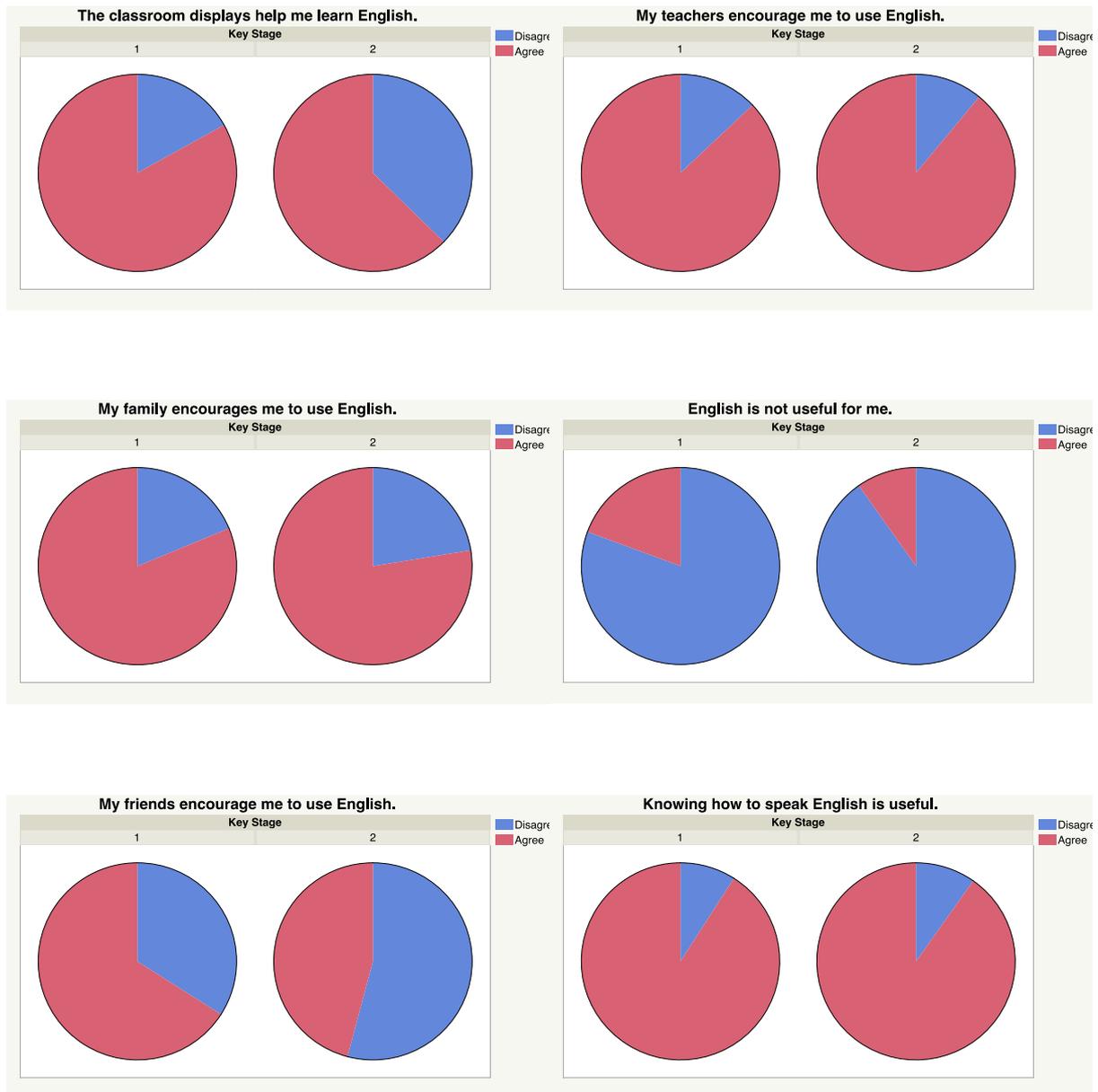


Figure 5. Student opinions on environmental variables affecting English learning (by key stage).

Table 5
Chi-square analysis of student opinions on the effect of the PNET Scheme on the English environment

Stakeholder	Weighted Count		Percentage		<i>p</i> value ^a
	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree	
The classroom displays help me learn English.					
Key Stage 1	802.27	3869.44	17.17	82.83	<.0001
Key Stage 2	1637.12	2605.57	38.59	61.41	
My teachers encourage me to use English.					
Key Stage 1	567.74	3934.88	12.61	87.39	0.6771
Key Stage 2	551.25	3716.05	12.92	87.08	
My family encourages me to use English.					
Key Stage 1	860.56	3614.13	19.23	80.77	<.0001
Key Stage 2	989.60	3202.30	23.61	76.39	
English is not useful for me.					
Key Stage 1	3652.94	856.87	81.00	19.00	<.0001
Key Stage 2	3810.93	491.53	88.58	11.42	
My friends encourage me to use English.					
Key Stage 1	1485.46	2782.89	34.80	65.20	<.0001
Key Stage 2	2168.46	1842.35	54.07	45.93	
Knowing how to speak English is useful.					
Key Stage 1	393.53	4155.78	8.65	91.35	<.0167
Key Stage 2	446.38	3959.65	10.13	89.87	

^aThe *p* value is yielded from the Fisher's exact test. *P* values <0.05 are shown in bold.

SF6. More students in KS1 view the English environment outside of schools positively than their KS2 counterparts.

As shown in Figure 6 and Table 6, similar patterns to those discussed in items related to English learning can be observed in the responses of KS1 and KS2 students to this group of items. When the statement was phrased in a negative fashion, there was no significant difference in agreement between the two groups. However, when the statements were positively written, a wide gap between the two groups was observed, except in the statement "I take extra English classes outside of school." Again, this could be explained by the common tendency for people to dislike agreeing with something negative; however, some of these discrepancies merit further attention. For example, in response to the statements "I speak English with my friends outside of class" and "I read English books at home", surprisingly more KS1 students agreed than KS2. One may suppose that as learners gain more proficiency at the upper level, they should be more confident and more willing to use their language skill outside of class and/or at home. However, the observed results suggest the opposite.

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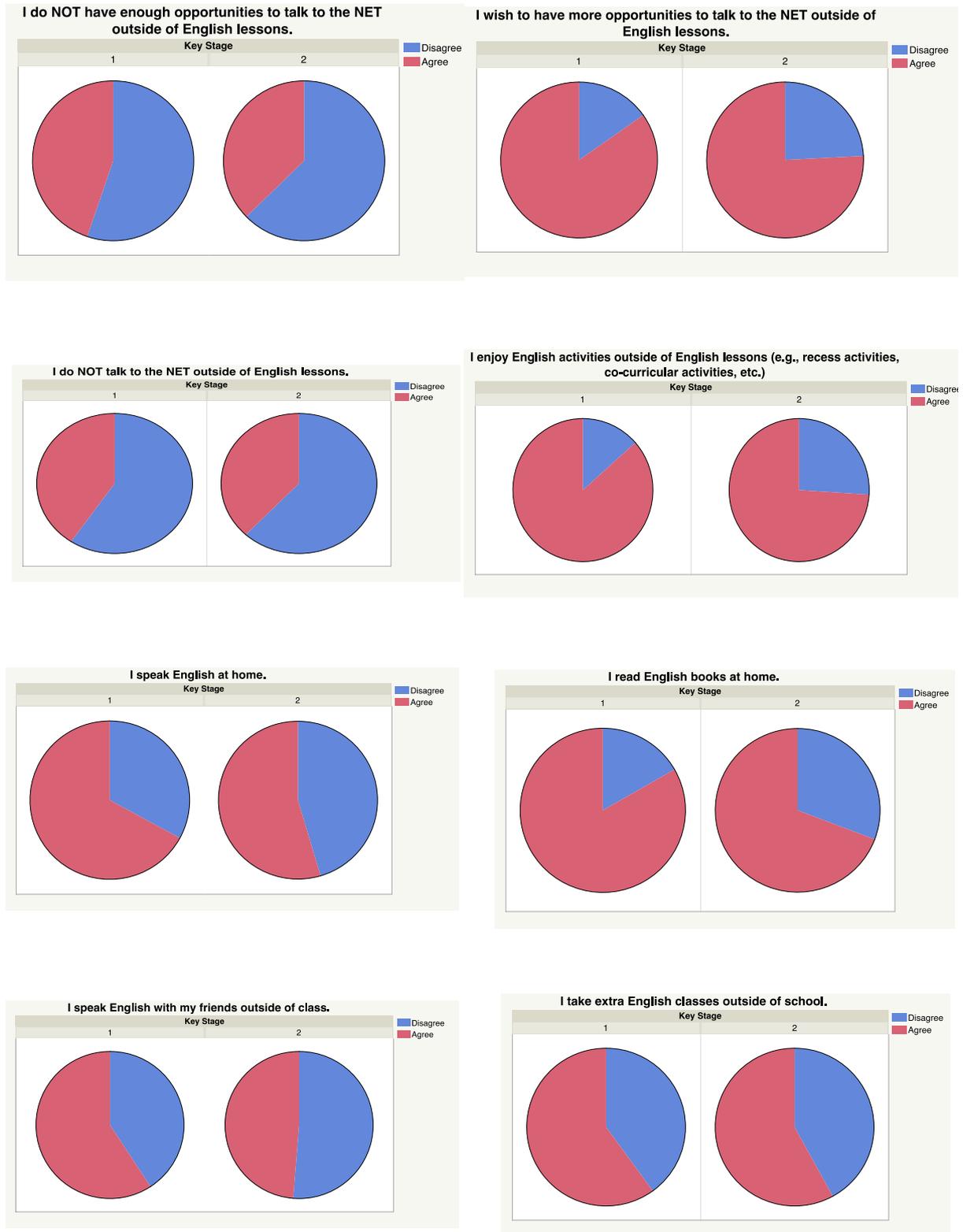


Figure 6. Student opinions on English learning outside of class (by key stage).

Table 6
Chi-square analysis of student opinions on the effect of the PNET Scheme on use of English outside of school

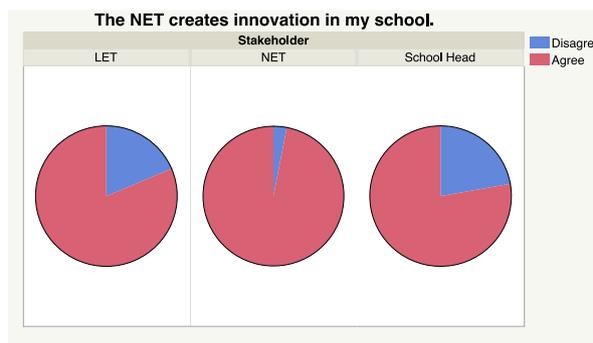
Stakeholder	Weighted Count		Percentage		<i>p</i> value ^a
	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree	
I do NOT have enough opportunities to talk to the NET outside of English lessons.					
Key Stage 1	2593.69	1999.42	56.47	43.53	<.0001
Key Stage 2	2693.93	1551.53	63.45	36.55	
I wish to have more opportunities to talk to the NET outside of English lessons.					
Key Stage 1	664.01	3935.18	14.44	85.56	<.0001
Key Stage 2	934.50	3325.29	21.94	78.06	
I do NOT talk to the NET outside of English lessons.					
Key Stage 1	2728.40	1769.60	60.66	39.34	0.0430
Key Stage 2	2672.30	1582.96	62.80	37.20	
I enjoy English activities outside of English lessons (e.g., recess activities, co-curricular activities, etc.)					
Key Stage 1	603.57	3962.64	13.22	86.78	<.0001
Key Stage 2	1106.42	3130.65	26.11	73.89	
I speak English at home.					
Key Stage 1	1437.28	3136.90	31.42	68.58	<.0001
Key Stage 2	1881.75	2529.52	42.66	57.34	
I read English books at home.					
Key Stage 1	761.33	3885.51	16.38	83.62	<.0001
Key Stage 2	1239.66	3218.82	27.80	72.20	
I speak English with my friends outside of class.					
Key Stage 1	1876.86	2682.42	41.17	58.83	<.0001
Key Stage 2	2135.26	2229.82	48.92	51.08	
I take extra English classes outside of school.					
Key Stage 1	1803.65	2711.10	39.95	60.05	0.0671
Key Stage 2	1841.57	2559.67	41.84	58.16	

^aThe *p* value is yielded from the Fisher's exact test. *P* values <0.05 are shown in bold.

3.4.3 Research Question Three: To what extent and in what ways does the PNET Scheme help to improve and increase the local teachers' use of English in the classroom and enhance and expand their pedagogical practices?

SF7. Stakeholders believe NETs contribute to LETs' expanded pedagogical practices.

A majority of all stakeholders felt that the NETs (and thus the Scheme) had a positive impact on local teachers' use of English and their pedagogical practices, as illustrated in Figure 7 and Table 7. However, a much lower percentage of School Heads perceived that the NET's presence contributed to the LETs' expanded pedagogical practices. A possible explanation, supported by the qualitative data, is that some School Heads may be unaware of specific classroom practices.



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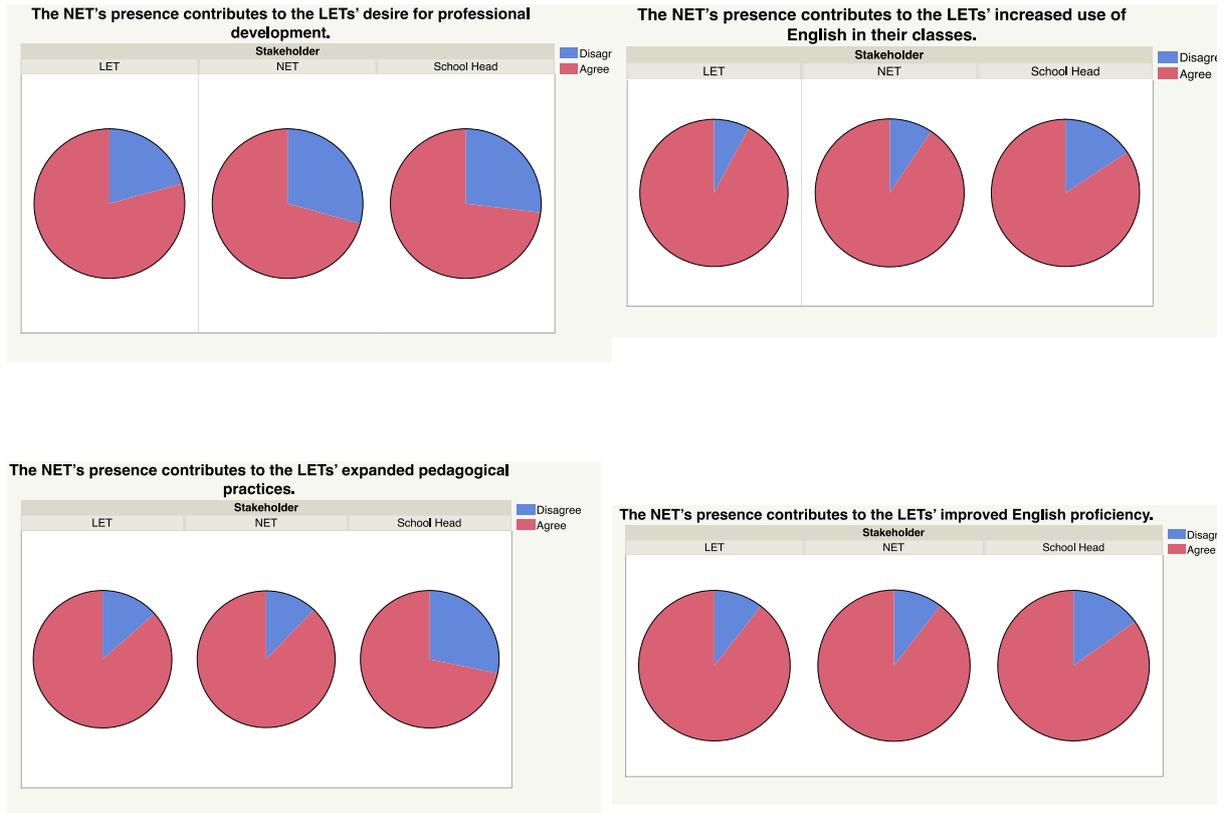


Figure 7. Stakeholder opinions on the effect of the NET on LETs' pedagogical practices.

Table 7

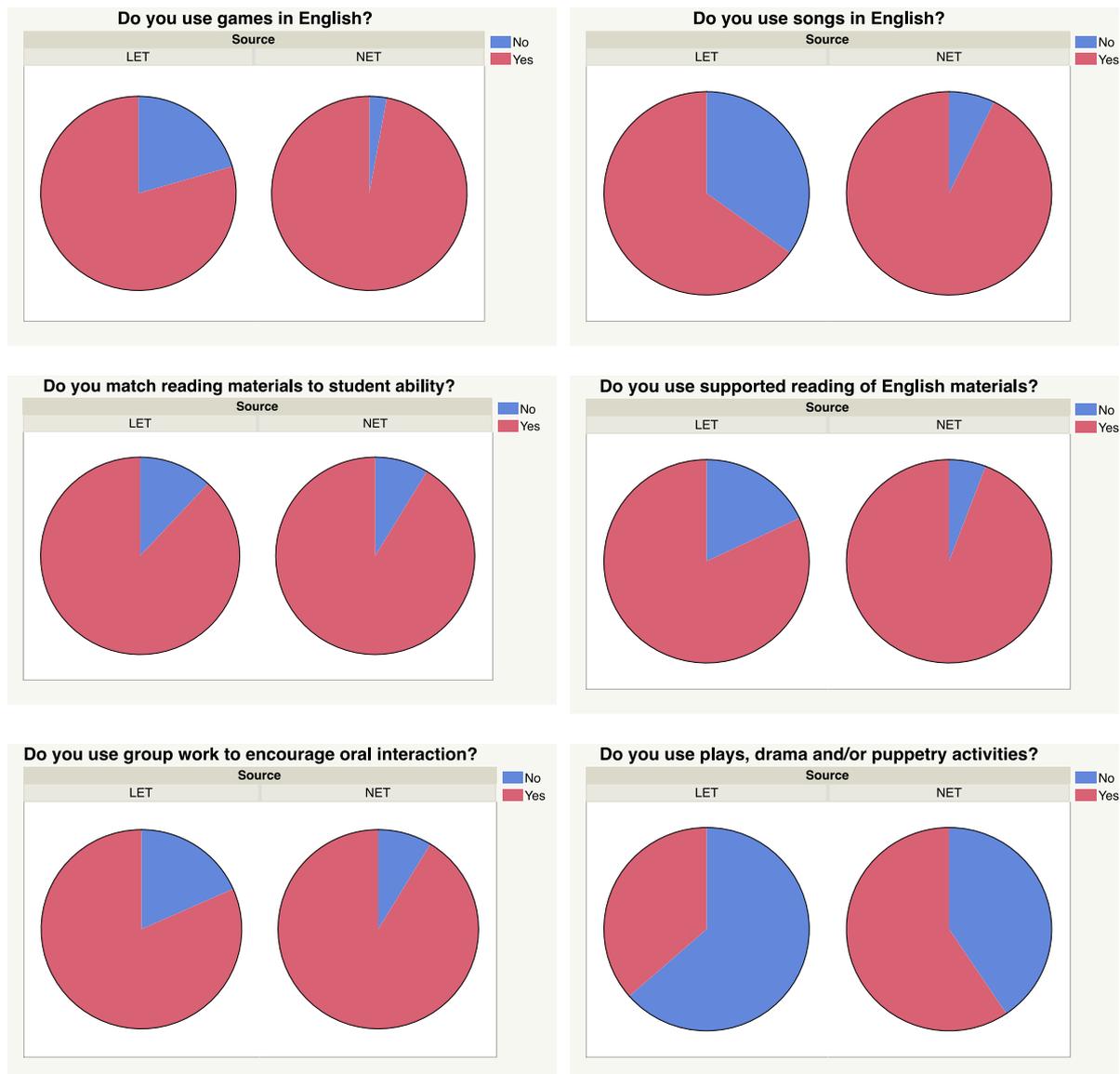
Chi-square analysis of the effect of the PNET Scheme on local English teachers

Stakeholder	Weighted Count		Percentage		Chi-square	p value ^a
	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree		
The NET creates innovation in my school.						
LET	69.88	322.56	17.81	82.19	11.26	0.0036
NET	1.81	63.41	2.77	97.23		
SH	12.61	41.40	23.35	76.65		
The NET's presence contributes to the LETs' desire for professional development.						
LET	72.14	310.61	18.85	81.15	3.87	0.1448
NET	16.18	41.70	27.95	72.05		
SH	13.94	37.83	26.92	73.08		
The NET's presence contributes to the LETs' increased use of English in their classes.						
LET	27.13	370.66	6.82	93.18	4.71	0.0950
NET	5.55	57.63	8.79	91.21		
SH	7.80	42.47	15.52	84.48		
The NET's presence contributes to the LETs' expanded pedagogical practices.						
LET	47.75	343.72	12.20	87.80	9.51	0.0086
NET	7.42	58.11	11.33	88.67		
SH	14.45	38.19	27.45	72.55		
The NET's presence contributes to the LETs' improved English proficiency.						
LET	35.70	351.60	9.22	90.78	1.50	0.4735
NET	6.57	59.96	9.88	90.12		
SH	7.67	44.97	14.57	85.43		

^aP values <0.05 are shown in bold.

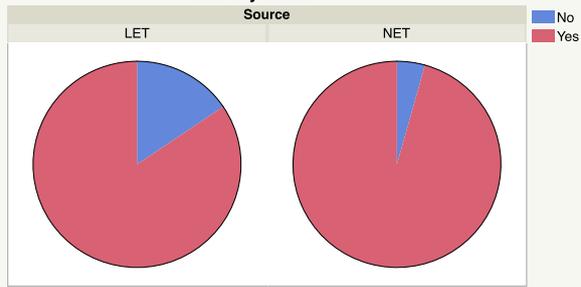
SF8. NETs and LETs use a variety of pedagogical practices, but they believe that NETs do so more than LETs.

Regarding teachers' use of different pedagogical practices, and consistent with expectations, there was a clear pattern showing more NETs than LETs using a variety of different practices (e.g. songs, games, group work, shared reading etc.) outside of traditional, teacher-fronted and textbook-based methods. Note that the teachers were asked how often they used the practices, and for ease of analysis 'very often' and 'often' were combined into one category which is labelled 'yes' in the figure, and 'not often' and 'not at all' were combined and labelled as 'no' as a shorthand, but does not mean 'never'. As most NETs come from the UK, Canada, Australia, and the US, where the use of student-centred learning and teaching approaches is more widespread, this was not surprising. What is encouraging is that, except for "plays, drama/and or puppetry", a majority of the LETs also report that they use these pedagogical practices very often or often. Figure 8 and Table 8 display findings related to the pedagogical practices used by NETs and LETs.

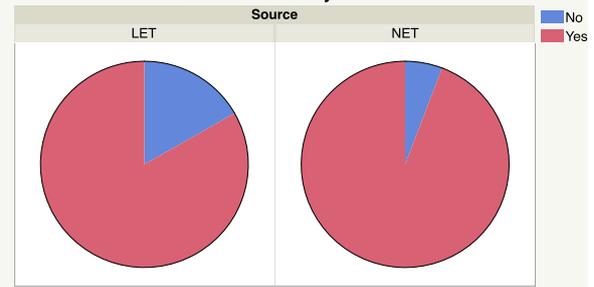


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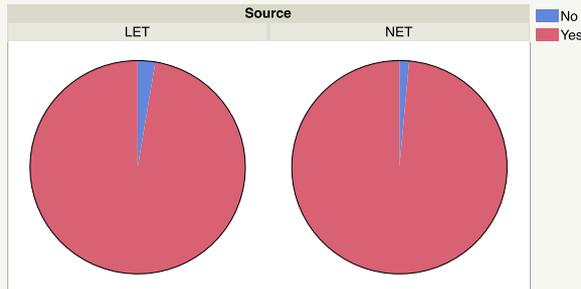
Do you use co-teaching with a LET to develop students' literacy skills?



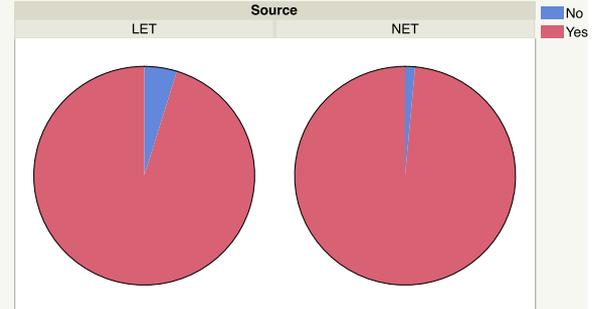
Do you use differentiated tasks and activities to cater for learner diversity?



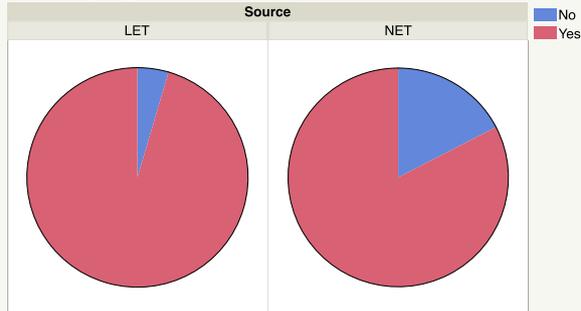
Do you use classroom routines to facilitate learning activities?



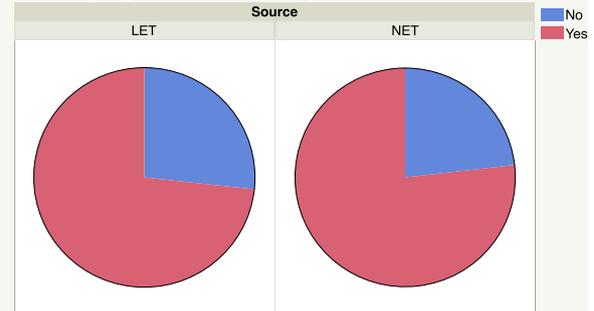
Do you use different questioning techniques?



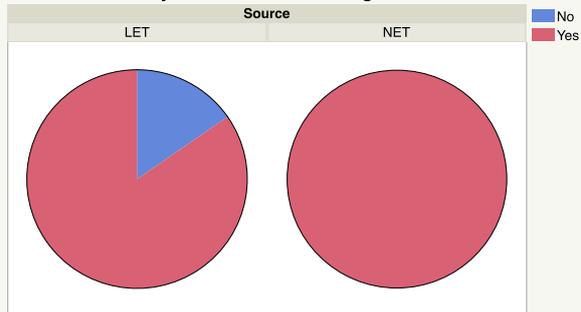
Do you give formative feedback to students?



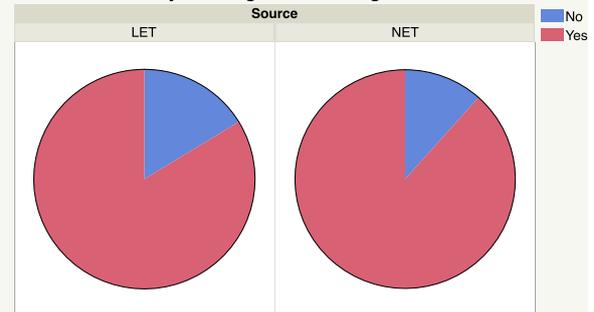
Do you promote self and/or peer assessment?



Do you use shared reading?



Do you use guided reading?



Evaluation of the Native-Speaking English Teacher Scheme In Hong Kong Primary Schools 2016

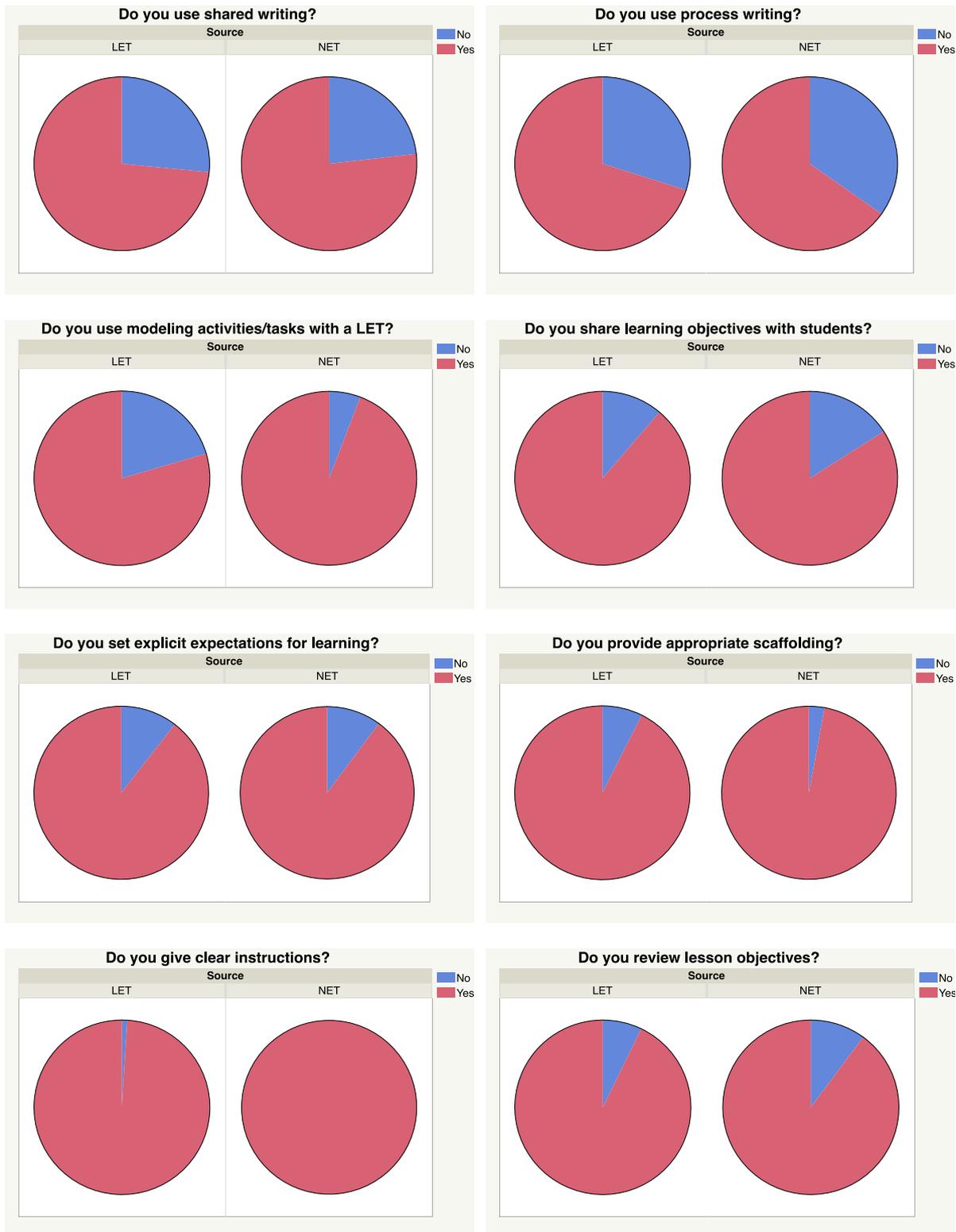


Figure 8. NET and LET responses to items related to pedagogical practices.

Table 8
Chi-square analysis of the frequency of NET and LET pedagogy

Stakeholder	Weighted Count		Percentage		<i>p</i> value ^a
	Not often or not at all	Very often or often	Not often or not at all	Very often or often	

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Scheme In Hong Kong Primary Schools 2016

Do you use games in English?					
LET	68.55	350.04	16.38	83.62	0.0015
NET	1.86	66.76	2.71	97.29	
Do you use songs in English?					
LET	136.59	281.01	32.71	67.29	<0.0001
NET	4.74	63.87	6.91	93.09	
Do you match reading materials to student ability?					
LET	44.26	374.34	10.57	89.43	0.8307
NET	5.91	62.71	8.61	91.37	
Do you use supported reading of English materials?					
LET	68.21	347.44	16.41	83.59	0.0266
NET	4.06	64.55	5.92	94.08	
Do you use group work to encourage oral interaction?					
LET	69.16	349.44	16.52	83.48	0.1068
NET	6.55	62.06	9.55	90.45	
Do you use plays, drama, and/or puppetry activities?					
LET	263.66	153.49	63.21	36.79	0.0005
NET	27.27	41.34	39.75	60.25	
Do you use co-teaching with a LET to develop students' literacy skills?					
LET	66.14	351.80	15.83	84.17	0.0086
NET	3.09	65.53	4.50	95.50	
Do you use differentiated tasks and activities to cater for learner diversity?					
LET	66.27	350.22	15.91	84.09	0.0261
NET	4.07	64.55	5.93	94.07	
Do you use classroom routines to facilitate learning activities?					
LET	11.62	406.98	2.78	97.22	1.000
NET	1.10	67.52	1.60	98.40	
Do you use different questioning techniques?					
LET	13.96	404.63	3.34	96.66	1.000
NET	1.10	67.52	1.60	98.40	
Do you give formative feedback to students?					
LET	15.46	401.54	3.71	96.29	<0.0001
NET	11.65	56.97	16.98	83.02	
Do you promote self and/or peer assessment?					
LET	96.79	321.81	23.12	76.88	0.7593
NET	16.28	52.33	23.73	76.27	
Do you use shared reading?					
LET	57.84	359.51	13.86	86.14	0.0002
NET	0	68.62	0	100	
Do you use guided reading?					
LET	70.56	346.04	16.94	83.06	0.3755
NET	8.07	60.55	11.76	88.24	
Do you use shared writing?					
LET	103.11	314.65	24.68	75.32	0.6519
NET	15.33	53.28	22.35	77.65	
Do you use process writing?					
LET	118.67	299.32	28.39	71.61	0.3169
NET	23.93	44.69	34.87	65.13	
Do you use modeling activities/tasks with a LET/NET?					
LET	83.76	331.47	20.17	79.83	0.0035
NET	3.96	64.66	5.77	94.23	
Do you share learning objectives with students?					
LET	42.31	375.28	10.13	89.87	0.2921
NET	10.33	58.28	15.06	84.94	
Do you set explicit expectations for learning?					
LET	46.32	372.28	11.06	88.94	1.000
NET	6.80	61.82	9.91	90.09	
Do you provide appropriate scaffolding?					
LET	29.50	386.04	7.10	92.90	0.2885

NET	2.08	66.53	3.04	96.96	
Do you give clear instructions?					
LET	2.43	416.16	0.58	99.42	1.000
NET	0	68.62	0	100	
Do you review lesson objectives?					
LET	24.79	392.48	5.94	94.06	0.1775
NET	7.04	61.58	10.26	89.74	

^aThe *p* values are yielded from the Fisher's exact test. *P* values <0.05 are shown in bold.

SF9. The majority of stakeholders believe the Scheme's professional development activities enhance LETs' pedagogical practices.

Analysis of relationships between perceived effectiveness of the PNET Scheme and various pedagogical practices

Generalised regression, instead of conventional OLS regression, was employed to investigate the relationship between the perception of effectiveness of the PNET Scheme and various pedagogical practices. There are 22 different pedagogical types, which were used as potential predictors of the outcome variable. With so many pedagogical practices, it needs to be pointed out that the validity of a conventional regression could be threatened by multi-collinearity when there are too many independent variables (correlations between multiple variables). To rectify this situation, the generalised regression approach tries out different models and at the end adopts the most optimal solution by penalising complexity and filtering out redundant variables.

In this analysis the effectiveness index is the average score of the answers to the following three questions:

- The NET is used effectively at your school
- The NET is supported effectively by your school
- The NET is integrated into the school effectively

The responses to the above three questions are coded in this scheme: 1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Agree, 4 = Strongly agree, missing = N/A. The responses to the various pedagogical practices are coded as follows: 0 = Not at all, 1 = Not often, 2 = Often, 3 = Very often. Sampling weights were input into the modelling for adjusting oversampling and undersampling.

Table 9 shows that only “matching reading materials to student ability”, “co-teaching with the NET to develop students' literacy skills” and “shared reading” were found to be significant at an alpha level of .05 in predicting perceptions of the Scheme's effectiveness.

Table 9
Generalised regression results of both NETs and LETs

Variable	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	Wald X^2	<i>p</i>
Games in English	0.02	0.05	0.10	0.7521
Songs in English	-0.05	0.05	0.97	0.3259
Matching reading materials to student ability	0.16	0.06	6.06	0.0138
Supported reading of English materials	-0.08	0.06	2.05	0.1518
Group work to encourage oral interaction	0.06	0.06	1.18	0.2773
Plays, drama and/or puppetry activities	0.09	0.05	2.83	0.0924

Co-teaching with the NET to develop students' literacy skills	0.13	0.06	6.00	0.0143
Using differentiated tasks and activities to cater for learner diversity	0.01	0.06	0.03	0.8583
Classroom routines to facilitate learning activities	-0.03	0.07	0.27	0.6051
Using different questioning techniques	-0.03	0.05	0.21	0.6447
Giving formative feedback to students	0.07	0.06	1.39	0.2385
Promoting self and/or peer assessment	0.03	0.05	0.35	0.5525
Shared reading	0.13	0.06	4.60	0.0319
Guided reading	-0.06	0.06	0.79	0.3741
Shared writing	-0.02	0.05	0.16	0.6932
Process writing	-0.02	0.05	0.24	0.6273
Modelling activities/tasks with the NET	0.00	0.06	0.00	0.9586
Sharing learning objectives with students	0.04	0.06	0.61	0.436
Setting explicit expectations for learning	0.08	0.08	0.92	0.3373
Providing appropriate scaffolding	0.08	0.07	1.57	0.2108
Giving clear instructions	0.00	0.08	0.00	0.9543
Reviewing lesson objectives	0.01	0.07	0.05	0.8305

Another generalised regression model was run with LETs only ($n = 429$). The outcomes are the same in the sense that the same variables are identified as significant predictors of perceived effectiveness. In the table when the slope (b), the standard error, and the chi-square are all zero and the p value is 1, it means that the data for those variables are insufficient for parameter estimation. In addition, generalised regression modelling for NETs only ($n = 71$) is not possible due to its small sample size.

Although statistical analysis did not reveal a significant relationship between most pedagogical practices and perceived effectiveness of the PNET Scheme, the three methods that are positively related to perceived effectiveness have practical implications for teachers. It is important to point out that in the perspective of statistical modelling, a parsimonious model with fewer significant predictors is superior to a complicated model. First, when there are too many significant predictors, it is very likely that the model is over-fitted and unstable. Second, if many things are important, then nothing is important. When calling for actionable items, it is more manageable to focus on two to three items than to work on 20 to 30 items. Unsurprisingly, “matching reading materials to student ability” is crucial to effectiveness because no matter how sophisticated the teaching techniques are, students cannot learn when they are presented with material well above or well below a level of difficulty which can promote language acquisition. The importance of co-teaching indicates the success of the PNET Scheme because the very essence of the Scheme is enhancement of teaching by LET/NET collaboration. However, the finding that shared reading has more predictive power than guided reading is more difficult to explain.

Table 9.1
Generalised regression results of LETs only

Variable	b	SE	Wald X^2	p
Games in English	0.00	0.00	0.00	1
Songs in English	-0.03	0.05	0.43	0.5115
Matching reading materials to student ability	0.13	0.07	3.92	0.0478
Supported reading of English materials	-0.06	0.06	0.78	0.3758

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Group work to encourage oral interaction	0.08	0.07	1.38	0.2394
Plays, drama and/or puppetry activities	0.10	0.06	3.28	0.0702
Co-teaching with the NET to develop students' literacy skills	0.12	0.04	8.33	0.0039
Using differentiated tasks and activities to cater for learner diversity	0.02	0.07	0.07	0.7858
Classroom routines to facilitate learning activities	-0.03	0.07	0.16	0.6929
Using different questioning techniques	0.00	0.00	0.00	1
Giving formative feedback to students	0.06	0.07	0.81	0.3682
Promoting self and/or peer assessment	0.00	0.00	0.00	1
Shared reading	0.16	0.07	5.64	0.0175
Guided reading	-0.05	0.07	0.49	0.4848
Shared writing	-0.03	0.06	0.21	0.6448
Process writing	-0.04	0.05	0.51	0.474
Modelling activities/tasks with the NET	0.00	0.00	0.00	1
Sharing learning objectives with students	0.08	0.07	1.26	0.2612
Setting explicit expectations for learning	0.01	0.09	0.03	0.8655
Providing appropriate scaffolding	0.11	0.07	2.37	0.1234
Giving clear instructions	0.00	0.00	0.00	1
Reviewing lesson objectives	0.00	0.00	0.00	1

Other survey items related to Research Question 3 asked respondents for their views on professional development activities provided by NETs in the schools, as well as those provided by ATs at the school level and centrally. Results for these items are shown below in Figure 9 and Table 9.2. Both LETs and NETs felt that the AT's professional support, the school-based workshops organised by the ATs, and the NET Section's professional development seminars and workshops were effective. Although over 88% of both these groups felt these support measures were effective, more LETs (97.23%) than NETs (88.56%) felt the NET Section's professional development seminars and workshops were effective.

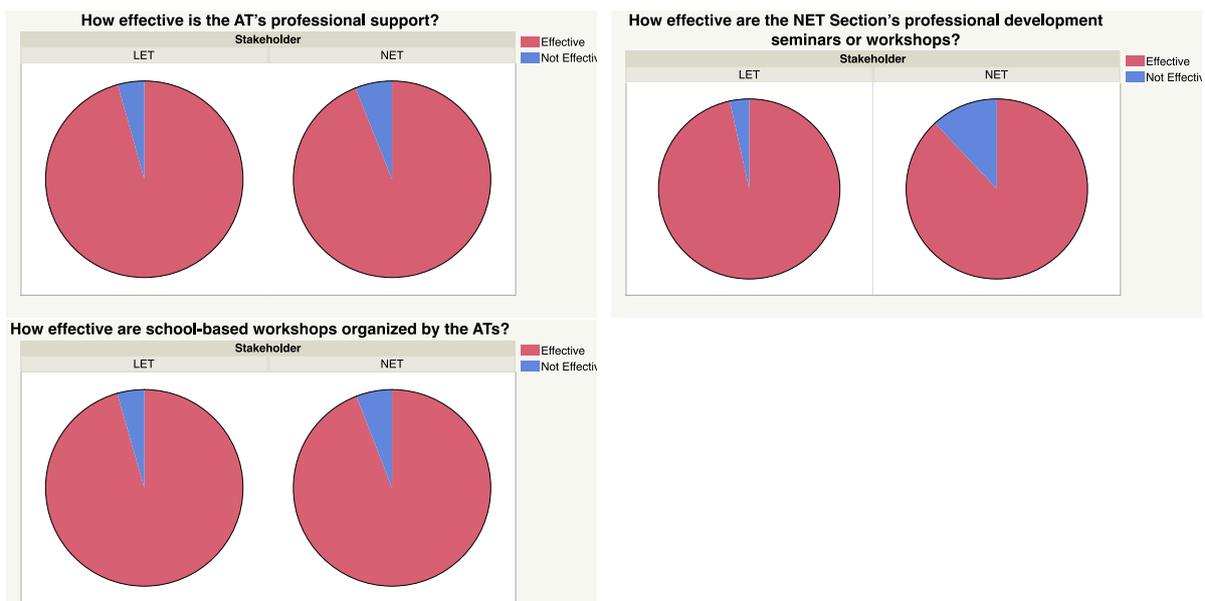


Figure 9. Perceived effectiveness of professional development activities.

Table 9.2

Chi-square analysis of perceived effectiveness of professional development activities.

Stakeholder	Weighted Count		Percentage		Chi-square	<i>p value</i> ^a
	Effective	Not Effective	Effective	Not Effective		
How effective is the ATs' professional support?						
LET	362.39	9.95	97.33	2.67	0.4217	
NET	61.63	4.01	93.89	6.11		
How effective are school-based workshops organised by the ATs?						
LET	336.39	12.56	96.40	3.60	0.4213	
NET	48.12	2.75	94.59	5.41		
How effective are the NET Section's professional development seminars or workshops?						
LET	342.15	9.73	97.23	2.77	0.0021	
NET	58.92	7.61	88.56	11.44		

^aIf Chi-square is missing, then the *p* value is yielded from the Fisher's exact test. *P* values <0.05 are shown in bold.

3.4.4 Research Question Four: What factors determine effective NET deployment, utilisation, and integration in schools?

SF10. Stakeholders, especially School Heads, believe NETs are used and supported effectively in schools.

A majority (over 88%) of all stakeholders in schools (LET, NET, and School Heads) perceived that the NET was used, supported, and integrated effectively. However, School Heads expressed slightly higher levels of agreement regarding the effectiveness of support provided to the NET. One explanation is that support requires distribution of resources, which are under the control of the School Head. Response patterns indicate that while both administrators (givers) and teachers (receivers) believed that sufficient resources had been deployed for support (all over 91.72%), School Heads felt the strongest about this support (96.59%). Figure 10 and Table 10 illustrate stakeholder opinions on NET use, support, and integration in schools.

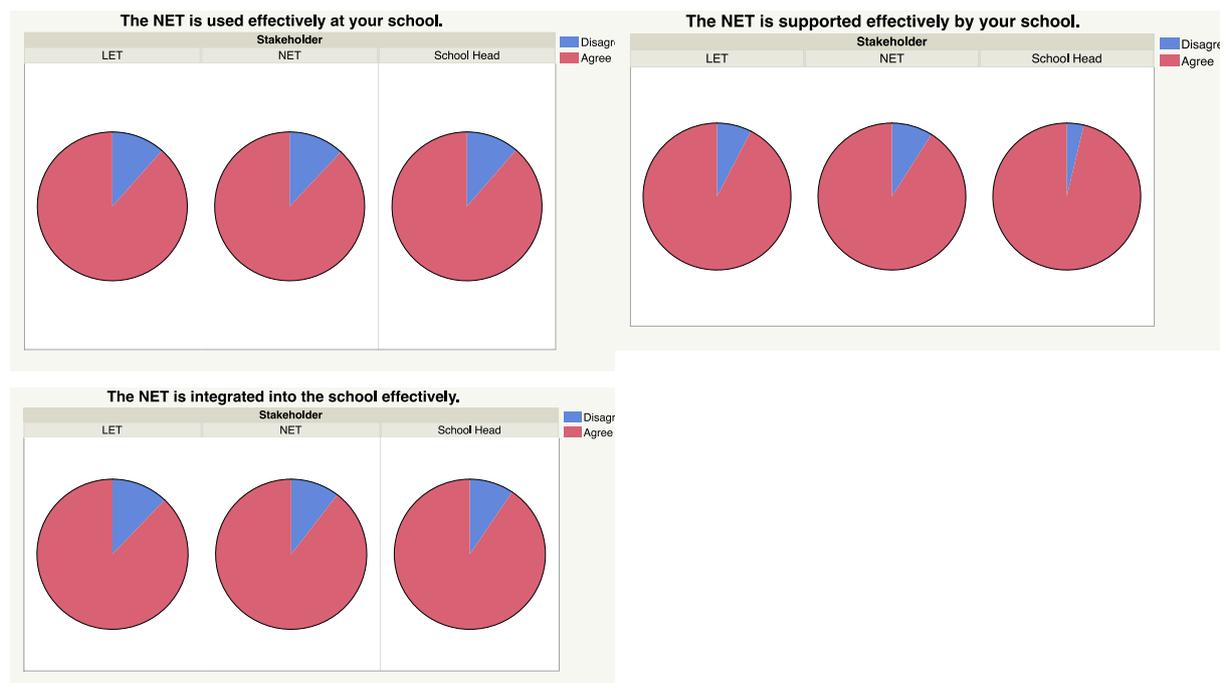


Figure 10. Stakeholder opinions on the effectiveness of NET use, support, and integration.

Table 10
Chi-square analyses of NET deployment, utilisation, and integration in schools

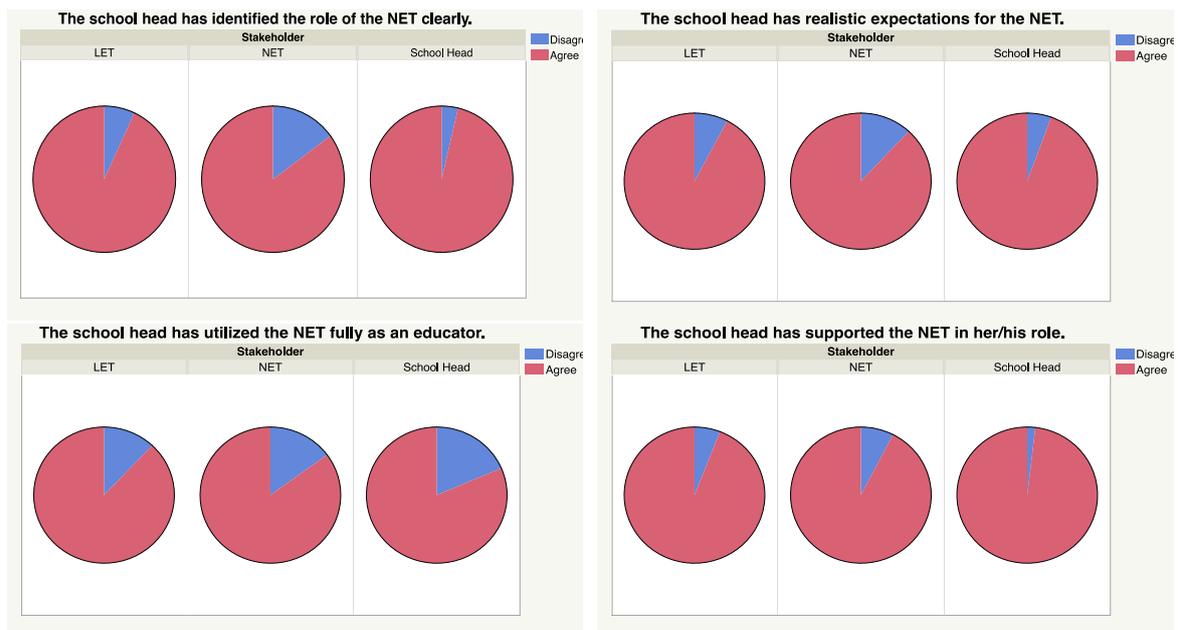
Stakeholder	Weighted Count		Percentage		Chi-square	<i>p</i> value ^a
	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree		
The NET is used effectively at your school.						
LET	44.25	354.91	11.09	88.91	0.02	0.9888
NET	7.79	58.75	11.70	88.30		
SH	5.86	47.15	11.06	88.94		
The NET is supported effectively by your school.						
LET	27.38	367.74	6.93	93.07		1.000
NET	5.51	61.02	8.28	91.72		
SH	1.84	52.16	3.41	96.59		
The NET is integrated into the school effectively.						
LET	44.43	353.40	11.17	88.83	0.24	0.8877
NET	7.53	59.00	11.32	88.68		
SH	4.73	47.91	8.98	91.02		

Note. If 20% of cells have expected count less than 5, then the Fisher's exact test is used and no Chi-square is reported.

^aIf Chi-square is missing, then the *p* value is yielded from the Fisher's exact test. *P* values <0.05 are shown in bold.

SF11. Stakeholders' views regarding the support that they believe School Heads provide NETs with vary slightly, but are generally positive. There are slight differences in perceptions of School Heads' support both vertically (between Schools Heads and teachers) and horizontally (between LETs and NETs).

There were discrepancies in the responses to the questions about the perceived support of the School Head. Although 100% of the School Heads felt that they acknowledged the NETs contributions, only 81% of the NETs felt this way. Figure 11 and Table 11 illustrate findings related to stakeholder perceptions of the School Heads' involvement in the PNET Scheme.



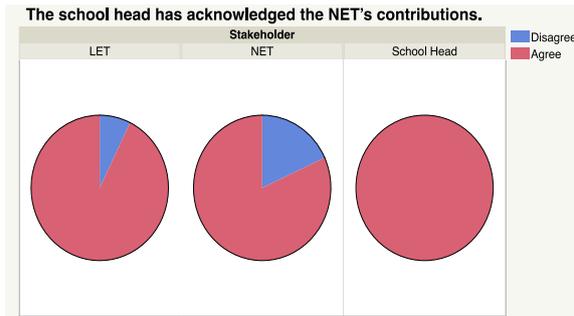


Figure 11. Stakeholder opinions on the School Head's involvement in the PNET Scheme.

Table 11

Chi-square analysis of stakeholders' perspectives on the School Head's role

Stakeholder	Weighted Count		Percentage		Chi-square	p value ^a
	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree		
The School Head has identified the role of the NET clearly.						
LET	20.89	369.25	5.35	94.65		1.00
NET	9.36	57.17	14.07	85.93		
SH	2.06	51.94	3.82	96.18		
The School Head has realistic expectations for the NET.						
LET	27.23	363.65	6.97	93.03	3.04	0.2188
NET	8.52	58.01	12.81	87.19		
SH	3.14	50.86	5.82	94.18		
The School Head has utilised the NET fully as an educator.						
LET	42.18	341.22	11.00	89.00	2.56	0.2777
NET	10.09	56.44	15.17	84.83		
SH	9.55	44.46	17.68	82.32		
The School Head has supported the NET in his/her role.						
LET	17.37	373.07	4.45	95.55		<.0001
NET	4.61	61.03	7.03	92.97		
SH	1.09	52.91	2.03	97.97		
The School Head has acknowledged the NET's contributions.						
LET	24.40	362.79	6.30	93.70	0.0086	0.1660
NET	12.13	53.44	18.50	81.50		
SH	0	54.01	0	100		

Note. If 20% of cells have expected count less than 5, then the Fisher's exact test is used and no Chi-square is reported.

^aIf Chi-square is missing, then the p value is yielded from the Fisher's exact test. P values <0.05 are shown in bold.

To verify these discrepancies and to obtain additional details, non-parametric tests were performed with the original scale (1[strongly disagree]-4[strongly agree]). Although the pre-collapsed ordinal data could be treated as continuous, the data structure cannot meet the parametric assumptions of ANOVA (e.g. normality and homogeneity of variance), and therefore non-parametric tests were more appropriate. The Wilcoxon/Kruskal-Wallis test is a rank-sum test, in which the relative position of each observation is arranged. The so-called mean difference is actually the difference of the sum of the ranks.

Non-parametric test of "The school head has identified the role of the NET clearly" By Stakeholder

Wilcoxon/Kruskal-Wallis test yields an overall significant difference ($p = 0.0012$). The Wilcoxon non-parametric multiple comparison procedure shows that there is a significant

difference between NET and LET, and between SH and LET in their responses to the statement “The school head has identified the role of the NET clearly” (shown in Table 11.1).

Table 11.1
Non-parametric multiple comparison

Level	- Level	Adjusted Mean Difference	Std Err Dif	Z	p
NET	LET	47.01	14.39	3.27	0.0011
School Head	LET	32.15	14.71	2.19	0.0289
School Head	NET	-4.73	5.79	-0.82	0.4135

Note. P values <0.05 are shown in bold.

***Non-parametric test of “The school head has realistic expectations for the NET”
By Stakeholder***

As shown in Table 11.2, Wilcoxon/Kruskal-Wallis test yields an overall significant difference ($p = 0.0038$). The Wilcoxon non-parametric multiple comparison procedure shows that there is a significant difference between NET and LET in their responses to the statement “The school head has realistic expectations for the NET.” Specifically, both the NETs and School Heads have higher ratings than local teachers for this question.

Table 11.2
Non-parametric multiple comparison

Level	- Level	Adjusted Mean Difference	Std Err Dif	Z	p
NET	LET	45.10	14.44	3.12	0.0018
School Head	LET	24.53	14.92	1.64	0.1000
School Head	NET	-5.79	5.745	-1.01	0.3139

Note. P values <0.05 are shown in bold.

***Non-parametric test of “The school head has utilised the NET fully as an educator”
By Stakeholder***

Wilcoxon/Kruskal-Wallis test yields an overall significant difference ($p = 0.0013$). The Wilcoxon non-parametric multiple comparison procedure shows that there is a significant difference between NET and LET, and between SH and LET in their perception of “The school head has utilised the NET fully as an educator” (shown in Table 11.3). To be more specific, NETs have higher scores than local teachers for this question.

Table 11.3
Non-parametric multiple comparison

Level	- Level	Adjusted Mean Difference	Std Err Dif	Z	<i>p</i>
NET	LET	48.80	14.77	3.31	0.0009
School Head	NET	-16.96	5.86	-2.89	0.0038
School Head	LET	-18.04	15.24	-1.18	0.2364

Note. *P* values <0.05 are shown in bold.

***Non-parametric test of “The school head has supported the NET in her/his role”
By Stakeholder***

Wilcoxon/Kruskal-Wallis test yields an overall significant difference ($p = 0.0008$). The Wilcoxon non-parametric multiple comparison procedure shows that there is a significant difference between NET and LET, and between SH and LET in their perception of “The school head has supported the NET in her/his role” (shown in Table 11.4). Between the LETs and the NETs, NETs had a stronger perception that the School Head supported the NET. Similarly, between School Heads and LETs, School Heads had a stronger perception that they supported the NETs.

Table 11.4
Non-parametric multiple comparison

Level	- Level	Adjusted Mean Difference	Std Err Dif	Z	<i>p</i>
NET	LET	50.25	14.63	3.43	0.0006
School Head	LET	31.26	15.17	2.06	0.0393
School Head	NET	-5.45	5.65	-0.97	0.3340

Note. *P* values <0.05 are shown in bold.

***Non-parametric test of “The school head has acknowledged the NET’s contributions”
By Stakeholder***

Wilcoxon/Kruskal-Wallis test yields an overall significant difference ($p = 0.0204$). The Wilcoxon non-parametric multiple comparison procedure shows that there is a significant difference between NET and LET in their perception of “The school head has acknowledged the NET’s contributions” (shown in Table 11.5). Between the School Heads and the LETs, School Heads had a stronger perception that they acknowledged the NET’s contribution.

Table 11.5
Non-parametric multiple comparison

Level	- Level	Score Mean Difference	Std Err Dif	Z	p
School Head	LET	39.68	14.77	2.69	0.0072
NET	LET	20.82	14.43	1.44	0.1490
School Head	NET	3.62	5.73	0.63	0.5274

Note. P values <0.05 are shown in bold.

As indicated by the preceding analyses, sometimes NETs and LETs significantly disagree with each other, and sometimes SH and teachers have different perceptions. These results imply differences in perceptions both vertically (between School Heads and teachers) and horizontally (between NETs and LETs).

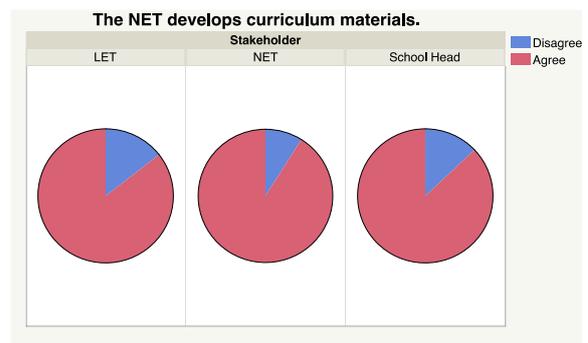
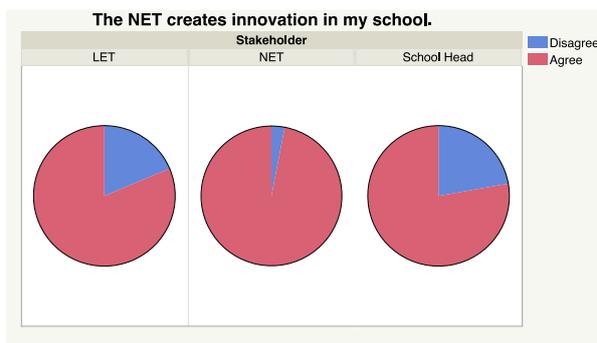
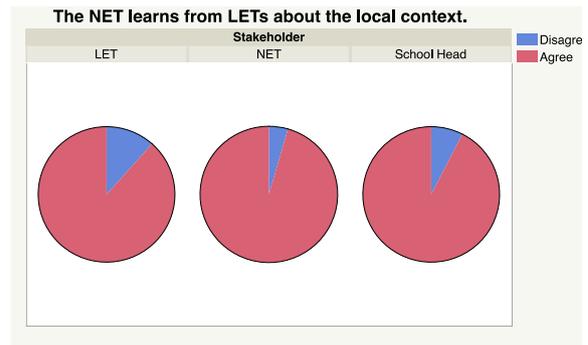
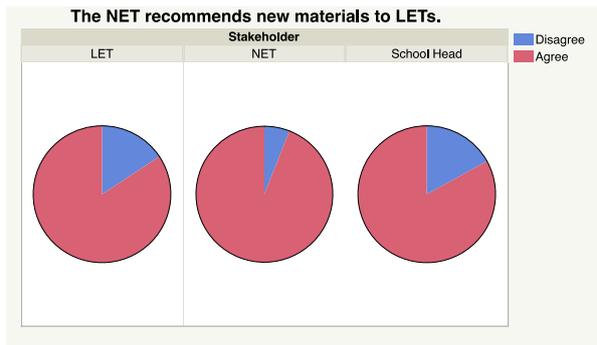
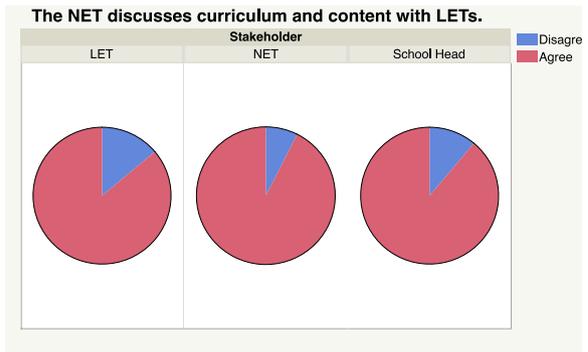
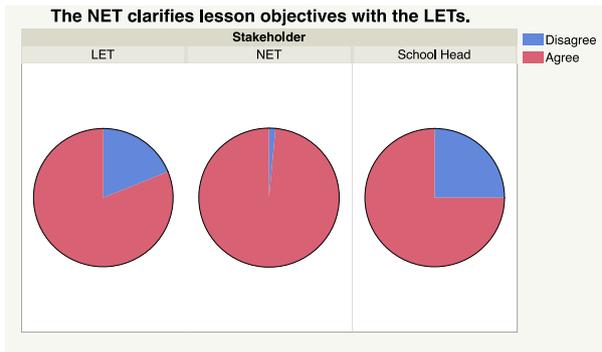
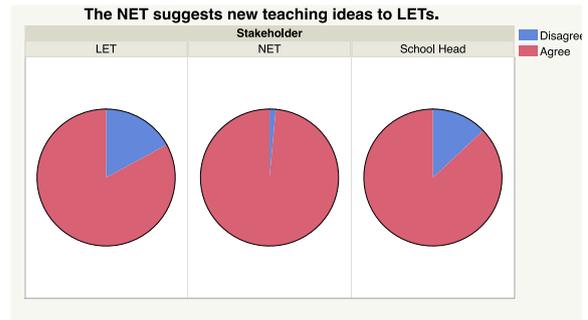
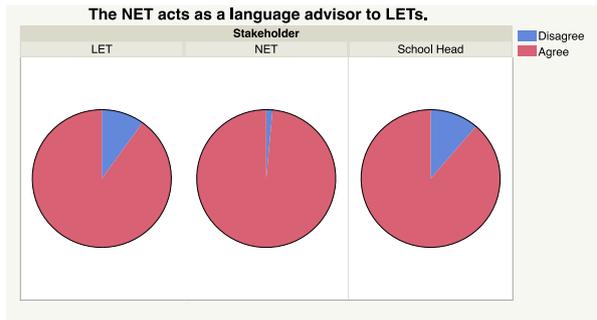
3.4.5 Research Question Five: What factors foster and inhibit NET-LET collaboration (NLC) according to the various stakeholders?

Discussed in this section are responses to survey items which address NET-LET collaboration either directly – pertaining to co-planning and co-teaching, or indirectly – the perceived role of the NET as language advisor to LETs; his or her role in suggesting teaching ideas and new materials, clarifying lesson objectives and discussing curriculum content.

SF12. Stakeholders' views regarding the effectiveness of NET-LET collaboration vary slightly by stakeholder, but are generally positive.

The responses indicate that, in these various roles, most or all of the NETs agreed that they were performing the expected roles effectively, while their colleagues (LETs and School Heads) had slightly lower levels of agreement with the statements. In other words, LETs and School Heads tended to produce similar patterns of agreement, which were in slight contrast to those of the NETs in terms of level of agreement with the statements. For example, almost all NETs agreed that “The NET suggests new teaching ideas to LETs,” but LETs and School Heads had significantly lower levels of agreement with this statement. These differences in the perceptions of the ways that NETs engage with LETs (i.e., acting as a language advisor, suggesting new teaching ideas, clarifying lesson objectives, etc.) merit further investigation in the case studies to understand why NETs feel they are engaged in these collaborative activities, while LETs and School Heads are not as convinced. It appears also that all three stakeholders feel that the NETs do not network much with other schools to share good practices with the LETs. Figure 12 and Table 12 illustrate findings related to factors that foster and inhibit NET - LET collaboration (NLC).

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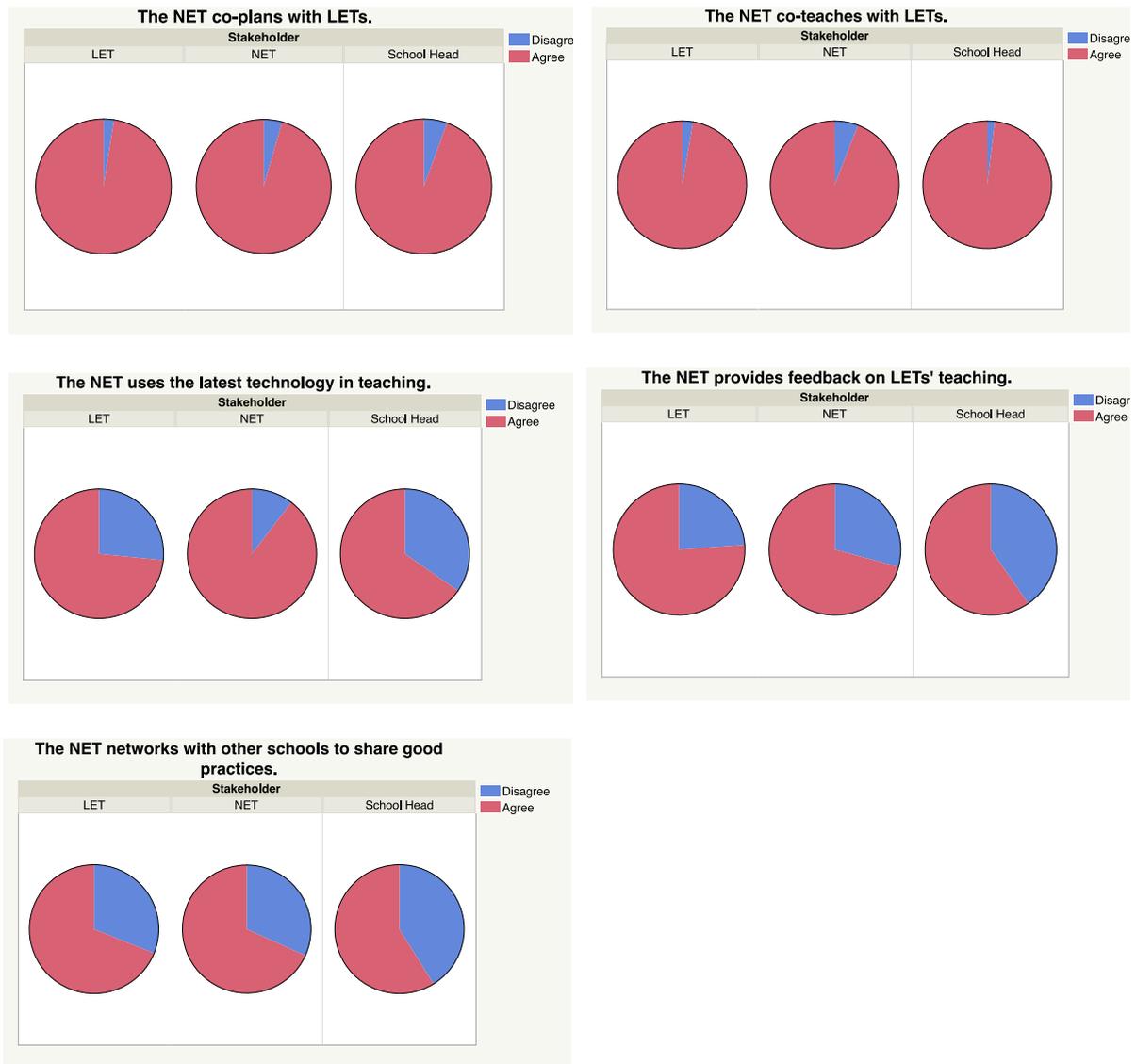


Figure 12. Stakeholder opinions on factors that foster and inhibit NET-LET collaboration (NLC).

Table 12
Chi-square analysis of factors that foster and inhibit NET-LET collaboration (NLC)

Stakeholder	Weighted Count		Percentage		Chi-square	p value ^a
	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree		
The NET acts as a language advisor to LETs.						
LET	32.54	369.07	8.10	91.90	4.62	0.0993
NET	0.88	66.64	1.30	98.70		
SH	5.52	47.49	10.42	89.58		
The NET suggests new teaching ideas to LETs.						
LET	62.91	335.31	15.80	84.20	10.47	0.0053
NET	0.80	66.72	1.19	98.81		
SH	7.18	46.82	13.30	86.70		
The NET clarifies lesson objectives with the LETs.						
LET	64.56	324.62	16.59	83.41	14.05	0.0009
NET	0.80	65.61	1.21	98.79		
SH	12.70	38.94	24.59	75.41		
The NET discusses curriculum and content with LETs.						
LET	47.50	339.42	12.28	87.72	1.51	0.4706
NET	4.78	61.77	7.19	92.81		
SH	5.66	48.35	10.48	89.52		

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The NET recommends new materials to LETs.						
LET	55.58	339.08	14.08	85.92	4.26	0.1192
NET	3.78	62.77	5.68	94.32		
SH	9.15	44.06	17.20	82.80		
The NET learns from LETs about the local context.						
LET	46.12	350.61	11.62	88.38	3.86	0.1449
NET	2.75	63.89	4.12	95.88		
SH	4.12	48.51	7.84	92.16		
The NET creates innovation in my school.						
LET	69.88	322.56	17.81	82.19	11.26	0.0036
NET	1.81	63.41	2.77	97.23		
SH	12.61	41.40	23.35	76.65		
The NET develops curriculum materials.						
LET	54.18	339.68	13.76	86.24	1.44	0.4880
NET	5.68	60.87	8.54	91.46		
SH	6.42	47.59	11.88	88.12		
The NET co-plans with LETs.						
LET	8.01	395.78	1.98	98.02		0.0019
NET	2.88	64.63	4.27	95.73		
SH	2.94	51.07	5.44	94.56		
The NET co-teaches with LETs.						
LET	10.62	396.37	2.61	97.39		<.0001
NET	3.89	63.63	5.76	94.24		
SH	0.97	52.16	1.83	98.17		
The NET uses the latest technology in teaching.						
LET	96.59	291.68	24.88	75.12	11.23	0.0036
NET	6.68	59.94	10.03	89.97		
SH	17.74	31.43	36.09	63.91		
The NET provides feedback on LETs' teaching.						
LET	85.72	304.19	21.98	78.02	8.59	0.0137
NET	18.70	45.51	29.12	70.88		
SH	20.75	31.42	39.77	60.23		
The NET networks with other schools to share good practices.						
LET	105.11	254.30	29.24	70.76	2.46	0.2923
NET	20.10	42.50	32.11	67.89		
SH	20.48	30.82	39.92	60.08		

Note. If 20% of cells have expected count less than 5, then the Fisher's exact test is used and no Chi-square is reported.

^aIf Chi-square is missing, then the *p* value is yielded from the Fisher's exact test. *P* values <0.05 are shown in bold.

SF13. More LETs than NETs believe the English Panel meetings are effective.

An aspect of the effectiveness of NET-LET collaboration which was strongly emphasised in the recommendations of the 2004-2006 evaluation is NET involvement in English Panel Meetings. In this regard it is noteworthy that there was a significant difference in perceptions of the effectiveness of English Panel Meetings among NETs and LETs. Figure 13 and Table 13 below show that fewer NETs than LETs perceived the English panel meeting as effective. This may perhaps be explained by reference to different ideas about how English panel meetings should be conducted among local teachers and NETs recruited from different cultural contexts. Nonetheless, over 99% of both LETs and NETs reported that their collaboration with their counterpart (NET or LET) was effective.

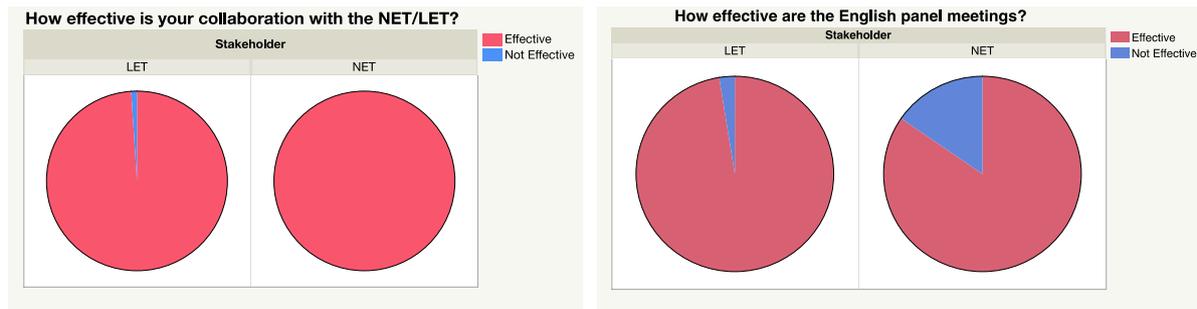


Figure 13. Stakeholder opinions on the effectiveness of various aspects of NET-LET collaboration.

Table 13

Chi-square analysis of factors that foster and inhibit NET-LET collaboration (NLC)

Stakeholder	Weighted Count		Percentage		<i>p</i> value ^a
	Effective	Not Effective	Effective	Not Effective	
How effective is your collaboration with the NET/LET?					
LET	391.44	3.71	99.06	0.94	1.000
NET	66.53	0	100	0	
How effective are the English panel meetings?					
LET	384.93	9.41	97.61	2.39	<.0001
NET	54.60	10.13	84.35	15.65	

^aThe *p* value is yielded from the Fisher's exact test. *P* values <0.05 are shown in bold.

3.4.6 Research Question Six: What progress has been made on the key recommendations of the 2007 evaluation report and how might the PNET Scheme and the deployment of NETs be improved in light of economic, demographic, social, and political changes?

Griffin, Woods, Storey, et al. (2007) provided 14 recommendations in the 2004-2006 PNET evaluation. The topic of each recommendation and a brief summary are provided in Appendix A. See pages 204-209 of the 2007 report for the full version.

The first recommendation discussed the need to “identify the influence of immigration and the changing economic and ethnic profile of the community” (p. 204). Data from the surveys on immigration and the ethnic profile of the community and its potential impact on the schools are provided below.

Data from SHQ item 8 regarding the language background of students in the school was compared to items about School Head's perception of the PNET Scheme, the role of NET, the relation between NETs and LETs, etc., but correlations were insignificant or undetectable due to the asymmetrical nature of the data. Item 9 of the SHQ asked about the rise in cross-boundary students. While 19.1% noted a rise, again the asymmetrical nature of the data meant that correlations with results from other survey items were either non-significant or undetectable by logistic regression or chi-square analysis.

Although multiple options were provided in the item regarding the percentage of Cantonese speaking students (e.g. 0-10%, 11-20%...91-100%), 66.66% of School Heads chose “91-100%.” In order to analyse the results using logistic regression, the multiple levels of percentage in this item were converted to an interval-scale. However, logistic regression did not yield any meaningful or significant result in spite of the data conversion.

SF14. One of the changes noted in some schools that affected the Scheme was an increase in newly arrived students or cross-boundary students as indicated by 19.1% of the School Heads.

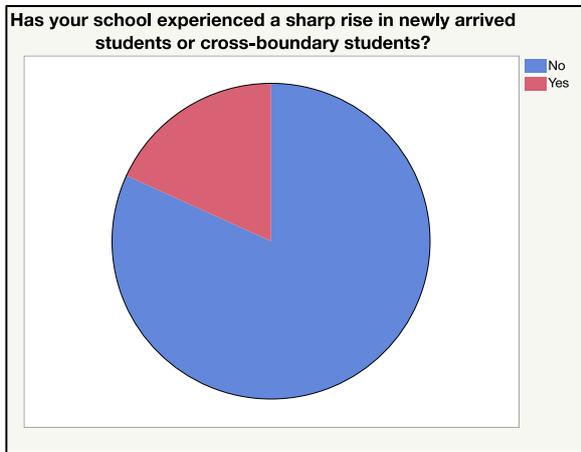


Figure 14

Has your school experienced a sharp rise in newly arrived students or cross-boundary students? Data are pictured in Figure 14.

Table 14
Chi-square analysis of School Heads' responses to whether schools have experienced a sharp rise in newly arrived or cross-boundary students

Stakeholder	Weighted Count		Percentage	
	No	Yes	No	Yes
Has your school experienced a sharp rise in newly arrived students or cross-boundary students?				
School Head	43.69	10.31	80.91	19.09

SF15. The majority of teachers attend English Panel Meetings 1-5 times per year, with over 10% of NETs and 5% of LETs indicating that they never attend.

Many of the recommendations discuss the importance of English Panel meetings (see recommendations 2, 3, 6, 8, and 9). Results for item 26 in the NET and LET surveys, which provides data on how often the NETs and LETs attend English panel meetings, are shown in Table 15 and Figure 15. Of interest here is that over 10% of NETs and over 5% of LETs selected ‘Never’ in response to this item. It is difficult to explain why local teachers would

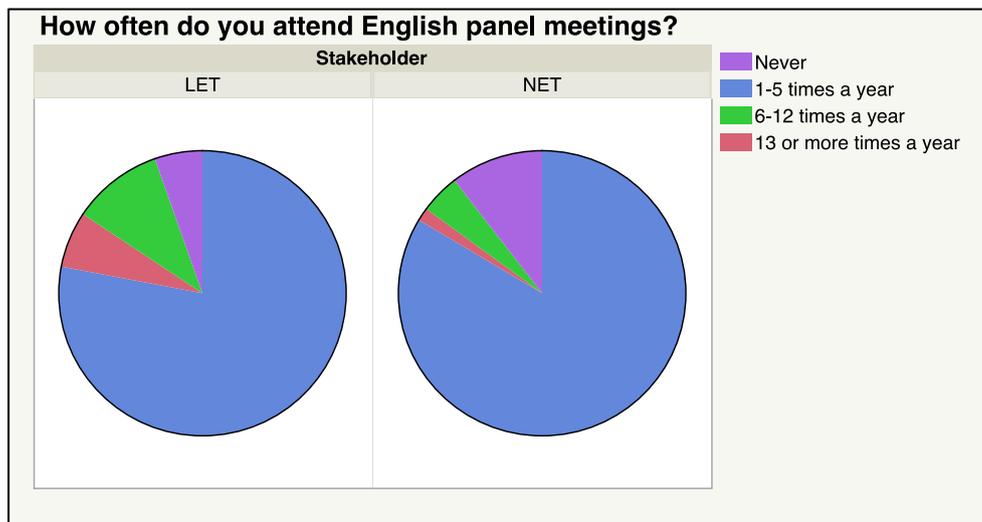


Figure 15. Pie charts showing LET and NET self-reported attendance at English panel meetings

respond in this way, since attendance at English Panel meetings would normally be obligatory. As for NET non-attendance, likely explanations might be that English panel members preferred to discuss issues in Chinese, or that the NET’s role in the school did not include involvement in the mainstream curriculum, discussion of which would have taken up most of the meeting agenda. Another is that, especially in schools taking part in the Primary Literacy Programme – Reading and Writing (PLP-R/W), NETs contribute to curriculum planning by attending more focused meetings such as co-planning meetings and level meetings, instead of English panel meetings which may be more general and often also administrative in content.

Table 15
Chi-square analysis of English panel meeting attendance

Stakeholder	Weighted Count				Percentage			Chi-square	p value	
	Never	1-5 times a year	6-12 times a year	13+ times a year	Never	1-5 times a year	6-12 times a year			13+ times a year
How often do you attend English panel meetings?										
LET	22.06	322.61	46.98	17.27	5.40	78.89	11.49	4.22	6.745	0.0805
NET	6.94	55.91	2.88	0.80	10.44	84.03	4.33	1.20		

SF16. The majority of all stakeholders want to expand the Scheme, but fewer LETs hold this view than other stakeholders.

The final survey item asked five different stakeholders their views regarding the future of the Scheme. As shown in Figure 16 and Tables 16 and 16.1, there was an interesting response pattern regarding the perceived future of the PNET Scheme. The vast majority of parents, School Heads, NETs and ATs tended to favour expanding the current programme as opposed to continuing it as it currently is (Parents 85.07% vs.12.48%; SHs: 72.95% vs. 21.16%; NETs: 72.76% vs. 23.14%, and ATs: 70.83% vs. 29.17%). However, only 52.13% of LETs wanted to expand it and 39.81% wanted to keep it as is. The pie charts in Figure 16 show the different views on these issues.

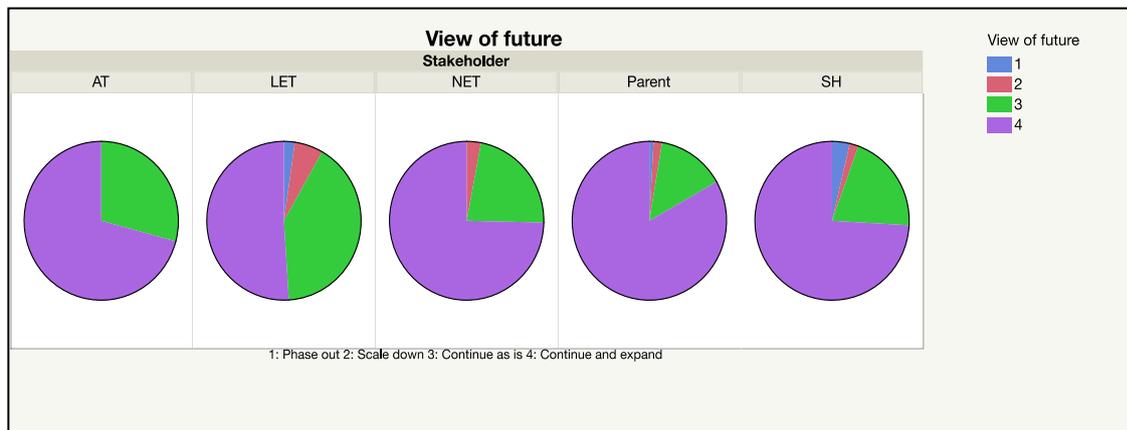


Figure 16. Stakeholder opinions on the future of the PNET Scheme (1: Phase out the PNET Scheme, 2: Scale down the Scheme, 3: Continue the Scheme as is, 4: Continue and expand the Scheme)

Table 16

Chi-square analysis of stakeholders' opinions on the future of the PNET Scheme

Stakeholder	Weighted Count				Percentage				Chi-square	p value
	1 ^a	2 ^b	3 ^c	4 ^d	1 ^a	2 ^b	3 ^c	4 ^d		
AT	0	0	7	17	0	0	29.17	70.83	237.82	<.0001
LET	7.27	24.99	159.27	208.57	1.82	6.25	39.81	52.13		
NET	0	2.72	15.40	48.41	0	4.09	23.14	72.76		
Parent	21.08	29.95	260.46	1774.73	1.01	1.44	12.48	85.07		
SH	1.85	1.33	11.43	39.40	3.43	2.46	21.16	72.95		

^aStatement 1: The PNET Scheme should be phased out.

^bStatement 2: The PNET Scheme should be continued but scaled down.

^cStatement 3: The PNET Scheme should be continued as it currently is.

^dStatement 4: The PNET Scheme should be continued and expanded.

Non-parametric Wilcoxon Rank test yields a significant result (Chi-square = 201.39; $p < .0001$).

Table 16.1
Nonparametric Comparisons for Each Pair Using Wilcoxon Method

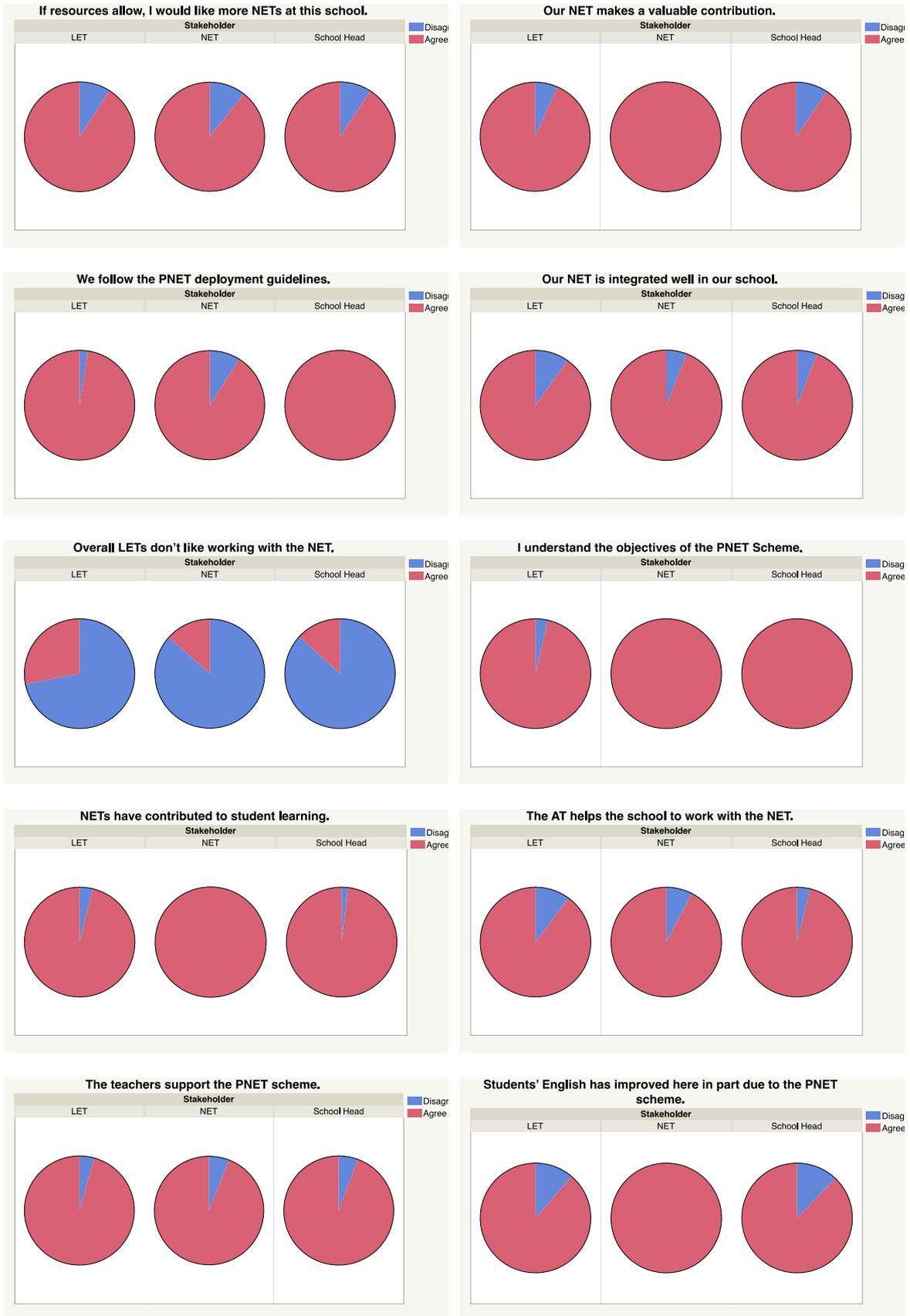
Level	vs. Level	Score Mean Difference	Std. Err. Dif.	Z	p
Parent	LET	400.442	28.2189	14.1906	<.0001
Parent	AT	121.761	81.45151	1.4949	0.1349
Parent	NET	89.666	50.39785	1.7792	0.0752
NET	LET	56.789	15.76941	3.6012	0.0003
School Head	LET	50.634	16.88831	2.9981	0.0027
NET	AT	1.302	4.8134	0.2704	0.7868
School Head	AT	0.602	4.29733	0.1401	0.8886
School Head	NET	-0.769	4.87897	-0.1577	0.8747
LET	AT	-47.126	22.94442	-2.0539	0.0400
School Head	Parent	-100.311	55.58467	-1.8047	0.0711

The Wilcoxon test is a non-parametric test for data that do not conform to parametric assumptions, such as normality and homogeneity of variance. Even though the original scale (1[strongly disagree], 4[strongly agree]) was used for analysis, this narrow scale does not result in data that adhere to the required assumptions. The non-parametric remedy is to ignore the parametric assumptions by examining the location of the scores. Indeed, this approach is more appropriate to this data type than the parametric test, because Likert-scale data is rank-ordered (ordinal) in essence. Specifically, each observation has a rank relative to other observations (higher, lower). In this sense, the so-called mean score in Wilcoxon is nothing more than the sum of the ranks of all observations in the whole sample. Next, the difference between the sums of ranks is computed and the probability of observing this shift of location based on the Z distribution is used to determine whether the difference is significant. For example, in the first row of Table 16.1 the group “parent” is compared against the group “LET”, and 400.442 is the difference between the sum of ranks of parents and that of LETs. Apparently it is a huge difference, and not surprisingly, the p value is extremely small (< .0001), leading to the conclusion that the null hypothesis (no difference between parents and LETs) is rejected. Rows 7 and 8 in Table 16.1 show the comparisons between school head and AT, and between school head and NET, respectively. The differences centre on zero (0.602, -0.769). Needless to say, the differences are not considered significant (p = 0.8886, p = .8747).

SF17. The majority of all stakeholders support the Scheme and would like more NETs if resources allow.

Figure 17 and Table 17 provide data on 13 statements. The three statements that show the most congruence among the three stakeholders (LETs, NETs, and School Heads) are that teachers support the Scheme, that NETs and LETs have a good relationship, and that if resources allow, they would like more NETs at their school. Almost all of them (96.99-100%) agree that NETs have contributed to student learning, although LETs and School Heads are not as willing to attribute student improvement in English directly to the PNET Scheme.

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Evaluation of the Native-Speaking English Teacher Scheme In Hong Kong Primary Schools 2016

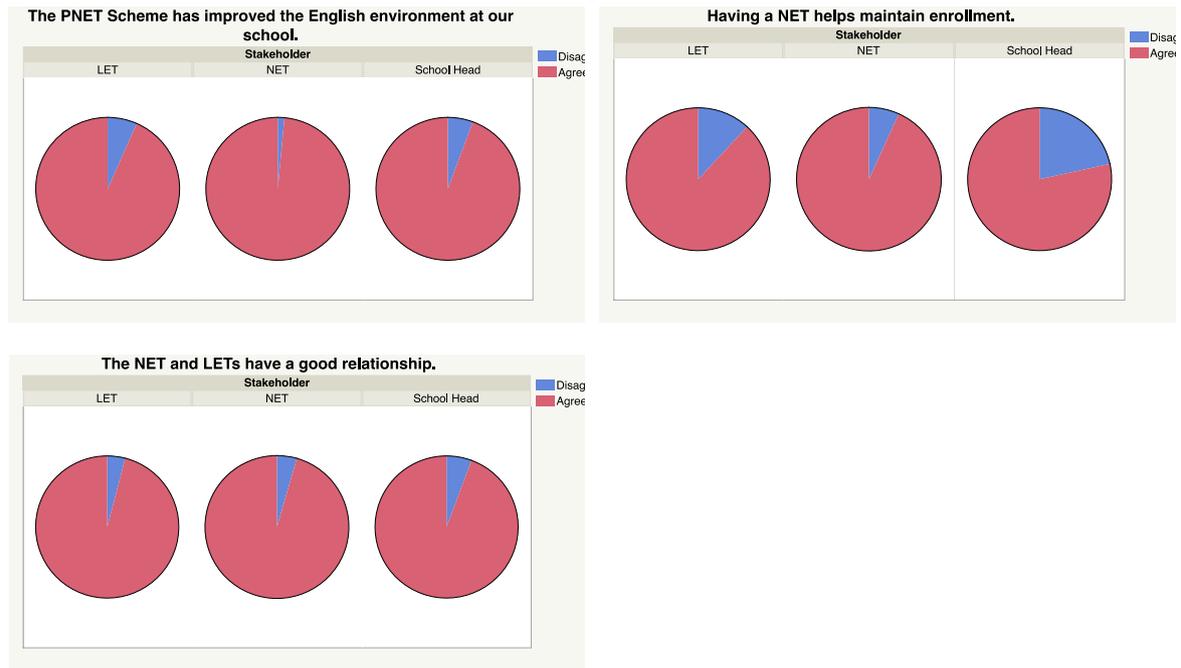


Figure 17. Stakeholder opinions on the NETs' impact in schools.

Table 17

Chi-square analysis of stakeholder opinions on the NETs' impact in the schools

Stakeholder	Weighted Count		Percentage		Chi-square	p value ^a
	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree		
If resources allow, I would like more NETs at this school.						
LET	36.13	359.83	9.13	90.87	0.53	0.7672
NET	7.84	57.90	11.93	88.07		
SH	4.87	49.14	9.01	90.99		
Our NET makes a valuable contribution.						
LET	22.96	371.52	5.82	94.18		0.0019
NET	0	66.53	0	100		
SH	4.50	48.51	8.48	91.52		
We follow the PNET deployment guidelines.						
LET	6.82	370.46	1.81	98.19		1.000
NET	5.74	60.80	8.63	91.37		
SH	0	54.01	0	100		
Our NET is integrated well in our school.						
LET	37.40	358.42	9.45	90.55	1.46	0.4827
NET	4.25	62.29	6.39	93.61		
SH	2.78	49.02	5.37	94.63		
Overall LETs don't like working with the NET.						
LET	283.54	109.30	72.18	27.82	10.66	0.0049
NET	58.01	8.53	87.19	12.81		
SH	45.77	7.24	86.35	13.65		
I understand the objectives of the PNET Scheme.						
LET	12.64	372.65	3.28	96.72		1.000
NET	0	66.53	0	100		
SH	0	54.01	0	100		
NETs have contributed to student learning.						
LET	11.99	386.40	3.01	96.99		0.6309
NET	0	66.53	0	100		
SH	0.96	53.04	1.78	98.22		
The AT helps the school to work with the NET.						
LET	29.60	344.17	7.92	92.08		0.0020

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NET	5.01	59.24	7.80	92.20		
SH	1.75	50.29	3.37	96.63		
The teachers support the PNET Scheme.						
LET	15.31	376.52	3.91	96.09		<.0001
NET	4.07	62.47	6.12	93.88		
SH	2.81	50.20	5.30	94.70		
Students' English has improved here in part due to the PNET Scheme.						
LET	38.95	346.50	10.11	89.89	7.69	0.0214
NET	0	65.57	0	100		
SH	5.94	42.66	12.23	87.77		
The PNET Scheme has improved the English environment at our school.						
LET	24.21	370.07	6.14	93.86		<.0001
NET	0.98	65.55	1.48	98.52		
SH	2.93	49.99	5.53	94.47		
Having a NET helps maintain enrolment.						
LET	47.05	328.22	12.54	87.46	4.73	0.0939
NET	4.07	53.95	7.01	92.99		
SH	10.62	40.32	20.84	79.16		
The NET and LETs have a good relationship.						
LET	14.32	379.08	3.64	96.36		0.0020
NET	2.73	63.81	4.10	95.90		
SH	2.78	49.85	5.29	94.71		

Note. If 20% of cells have expected count less than 5, then the Fisher's exact test is used and no Chi-square is reported.

^aIf Chi-square is missing, then the *p* value is yielded from the Fisher's exact test. *P* values <0.05 are shown in bold.

SF18. Stakeholders hold different views regarding whether funds could be better used elsewhere.

As shown in Figure 18 and Table 18, with regard to whether the PNET funds might be better spent elsewhere, 43% of LETs agreed compared to only 2% of NETs. At first glance this is incompatible with the preceding finding shown in Figure 16 and Table 16, based on levels of agreement with Statements 1 to 4, that the majority of stakeholders, including LETs, supported continuation of the PNET Scheme. However, Statement 3 ('The PNET Scheme should be continued as it currently is') pertains to the PNET Scheme alone while the current statement ('The funds might be better spent elsewhere') does not identify where the respondents felt funding could be better spent. Since there was not a follow up question that asked for what "elsewhere" might refer to, we cannot know what the respondents had in mind. A plausible explanation is that all stakeholders had invested so much effort and resources into the PNET Scheme that they tended to want to maintain the status quo. Even if the programme has some imperfections, they prefer improving the existing programme to cancelling it altogether. Follow up questions in the interviews regarding "where" stakeholders felt funds might be better spent is discussed in the qualitative section under CF39. In one case the reasoning was if the remuneration were somehow adjusted (two EPCs specifically mentioned reducing what they referred to as the 'special allowances' given to NETs), then more NETs could be hired. This is really more of a redistribution of funds within the PNET Scheme than a reduction.

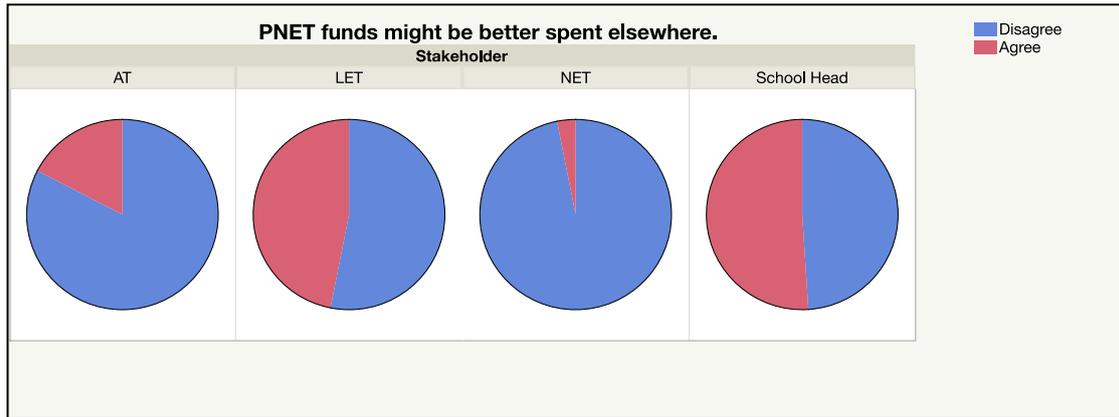


Figure 18. Stakeholder opinions on use of PNET funds

Table 18

Chi-square analysis of stakeholder opinions on use of PNET funds

Stakeholder	Weighted Count		Percentage		Chi-square	p value
	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree		
PNET funds might be better spent elsewhere.						
AT	19	4	82.61	17.39	46.21	<.0001
LET	198.19	155.54	56.03	43.97		
NET	61.77	1.80	97.17	2.83		
SH	24.19	24.88	49.29	50.71		

It is noteworthy that the quantitative analysis did not yield any significant relationships between the parent demographics (e.g. the number of English books at home, father's highest education qualification, etc.) and parents' perception of the PNET Scheme.

4. QUALITATIVE DATA COLLECTION, ANALYSIS, AND RESULTS

4.1 Preparation for Qualitative Phase

4.1.1 Preparation of Qualitative Instruments and IRB Approval

The Research Team developed five interview guides and four observations schedules to assist in data collection in the case studies described below. The interviews were semi-structured, which means the interviewers followed a set of questions, but were free to rephrase the questions and to ask for elaboration based on the interviewees' responses. Some schools suggested the School Head and LET interviews be conducted in Cantonese so that the interviewees could express themselves more effectively and confidently in their first language. As the Research Team also believed that this might gather richer data, the two guides were translated into Chinese. The translated versions were double-checked by bilingual members of the Research Team. Institutional Research Board (IRB) approval was provided by Azusa Pacific University on 22 February 2015 (see Appendix E).

1. **The School Head Interview Guide (SHG)** has *12 questions*. There are three background questions, three questions about activities, two on the effectiveness of the PNET Scheme as it works in their school, and four questions on their views of the PNET Scheme as a whole.
2. **The Native English Teacher Interview Guide (NETG)** has *13 questions*. There are two background questions, two activity questions, six on the effectiveness of the PNET Scheme as it works in their school, and three on their views of the PNET Scheme as a whole.
3. **The English Panel Chair Interview Guide (EPCG)** has *12 questions*. There are two background questions, three activity questions, six on the effectiveness of the PNET Scheme as it works in their school, and one final question on their views of the PNET Scheme as a whole.
4. **The Local English Teacher Focus Group Guide (LETG)** has *10 questions* (fewer than the others as this is focus group of 2-6 people). There are three background questions, five questions on their views of the effectiveness of the PNET Scheme as it works in their school, and two questions on their views of the PNET Scheme as a whole.
5. **The Advisory Teacher Interview Guide (ATG)** has *12 main questions*. There are two background questions, six activity questions, one main question, with seven sub-questions, on the effectiveness of the PNET Scheme as it works in the schools they are involved with, one question on their perception of an effective AT, and two on their views of the PNET Scheme as a whole.

The Observation Schedules (See Appendix E)

Four schedules were developed:

6. **School Observation Schedule** is designed so that comparisons can be made across the eight case studies and is based on the EDB's suggestions to create a rich English language environment for primary school students.
7. **Class Observation Schedule** is designed so that comparisons can be made across the eight case studies. It seeks information regarding the roles of the NET and LET as they engage in team-teaching and for evidence of student learning and engagement.
8. **Workshop Observation Schedule** is designed to document information regarding a workshop developed by the NET Section of the EDB to support the professional development of the NETs and LETs.
9. **Meeting Observation Schedule** is designed so that comparisons can be made across the eight case studies. It seeks to collect and document information regarding the roles of the NET and LET as they engage in co-planning and record evidence of collaboration.

4.1.2 Piloting of Qualitative Instruments

The interview guides were piloted on a similar group of participants not included in the study, and only minor changes were made. Researchers had the freedom to use follow up questions and make clarification statements when needed. The observations schedules were also piloted and only minor changes were made to the categories and questions.

4.2 Qualitative Data Collection

4.2.1 Sampling Procedures

The procedure for the selection of case study schools and the use of survey data to inform the design of case studies is summarised here. Schools were selected for case studies based on several criteria. Since the findings from the case studies are not meant to be used to make generalisations to all schools in Hong Kong but instead to provide a deeper understanding of specific cases, we selected them purposefully and not randomly and sought out a diversity of school types and contexts. Selection of the eight case study schools took into account school size (with at least two large, two medium and two small schools) and region (with at least two from each of the three regions: Hong Kong, Kowloon, and the New Territories). Since we wanted a diversity of contexts, we included schools that had a unique student population, such as an abundance of cross-boundary students.

An initial analysis of the survey data, especially the short-answer questions, played a crucial role in case study selection. Some schools were selected because they were excelling with the Scheme while others because they were finding it challenging. (See section 4.4.1 for a description of what 'very effective', 'somewhat effective', and 'less effective' mean.) Schools in which the responses from several stakeholders in the same school justified further inquiry were also sought out. For example, schools in which stakeholders expressed promising ideas for change or improvements were selected, as well as schools in which different stakeholders

held divergent views, such as a NET who felt satisfied, but local teachers who held a different view.

The Research Team did an initial review of the data from the surveys and found few outliers in the quantitative responses. For example, most School Heads had similar answers and provided answers that one would expect for the most part. However, the qualitative data from the six or seven short-answer questions at the end of the NETQ, LETQ, and SHQ surveys were more helpful in identifying schools to follow up on, and so the research team focused on those responses. The research team articulated their rationale for choosing each of the schools in a narrative, which included specific quotes from the stakeholders, but this was not included in this report as the specifics might identify the school and individuals concerned (especially if there was just one, such as the NET or School Head) and compromise the confidentiality promised to the survey takers.

Eight schools were identified as potential case study schools and seven additional schools selected as alternatives in the event that some of the first eight declined to participate. On 12 May 2015 the first set of schools were contacted by email and later in the week a follow up phone call was sent to explain the study and to ask if they would agree to participate. The remaining seven schools were contacted in the following week when it was determined that some of the initial schools were slow to reply or might decline to participate. Of the 15 schools contacted, two accepted, seven declined, and six did not reply right away. After more time and follow up contact, eight schools agreed to participate in the study; however, four of the schools agreed with the proviso that data collection would be extended until the end of October as it was a busy time for the schools.

4.2.2 Schedule of Case Studies

This study includes a total of 40 interviews, 32 scheduled in the eight case study schools and another 8 in the NET Section of the EDB. The 40 interviews were conducted, transcribed, and prepared for analysis in NVivo, and in some cases IBM SPSS Modeler. While NVivo assists human coders in data management, SPSS Modeler provides the research team with an automated text mining capability. Specifically, the text mining algorithm that is equipped with natural language processing capability will be utilised to extract key concepts from text-based data. Without human preconception, the mined results would be data-driven. Simply put, text mining can structure the unstructured and objectify the subjective (Yu, Jannasch-Pennell, & DiGangi, 2011). In three cases, the interviewees requested that the interview not be recorded, and in those cases, copious notes were taken during and again soon after the interview to document the interview.

The study also includes a total of 25 observations, 24 for the school case studies and one of a professional development workshop provided by the NET Section. For a complete schedule of the case study visits and observations, together with a list of completed transcriptions and their coding (see Appendix C). A section of Appendix C is provided in Table 19, which shows the dates of each case study interview and observation and the initials of the researcher who conducted the interview or observation.

Table 19
Schedule of data collection in case study schools

	SH Int	EPC Int	NET Int	LET FG	Class Obs	Meet Obs	ENV Obs
CS1	mw 16/3	mw 16/3	aj 15/5	aj 15/5	mw 14/5	aj 14/5	mw 15/5
CS2	bm 5/6	ps 5/6	ps 5/6	bm 8/6	bm 20/5	bm 1/6	bm 20/5
CS3	ps 22/6	ps 26/6	Ps 26/6	ps 26/6	ps 18/5	ps 5/6	ps 26/6
CS4	ps 3/6	bm 2/6	bm 2/6	bm 2/6	bm 28/5	bm 27/5	bm 28/5
CS5	ps 27/11	ps 27/11	ps 27/11	ps 9/10	ps 8/12	ps 9/10	ps 9/10
CS6	ps 12/10	ps 16/10	ps 16/10	ps 12/10	ps 16/10	ps 12/10	ps 12/10
CS7	ag 10/7	bm 10/7	bm 13/7	bm 13/7	ps 23/10	ps 19/10	ps 23/10
CS8	ag 22/6	bm 23/6	bm 22/6	bm 23/6	ps 29/10	ps 29/10	ps 29/10

(Note that the CS numbers were shuffled in the report so they do not match the numbers here. This helps to de-identify the schools.)

4.3 Qualitative Data Analysis Methodology

A list of the 32 school-level interviews and 24 observations is provided in Table 21. Twenty-nine of the 32 interviews were digitally recorded. Three participants requested that the interviewer not record the interview and in those cases copious notes were taken. The recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim in their totality and double-checked to ensure accuracy. The researchers told the interviewees that transcripts would be emailed to them at their request for member checking, and changes would be made if requested (Merriam, 1998). Three people expressed an interest in reviewing their transcripts: they were sent their transcript but requested no changes. The comments from the observation schedules used in the 24 observations were typed into a database for analysis. Data analysis of the qualitative data involved listening to each of the recorded interviews, reading the transcripts and field notes of observations, reviewing the stakeholders' responses from their online surveys, and coding the data multiple times.

Table 21
Summary of case study interviews and observations

School level interviews	8	one-on-one interviews with SHs (one in each of the 8 schools)
	8	one-on-one interviews with NETs (one in each of the 8 schools)
	8	one-on-one interviews with EPCs (one in each of the 8 schools)
	8	focus groups with at least 5 LETs (one in each of the 8 schools)
School level observations	8	observations of co-teaching (one in each of the 8 schools)
	8	observations of co-planning meetings (one in each of the 8 schools)
	8	observations of English environment (one in each of the 8 schools)

To be more specific, the transcripts, surveys, and observation notes relating to school level stakeholders are analysed in stages in which “paradigmatic analytic procedures” are used to produce taxonomies and categories out of the common elements across the database for the analysis (Polkinghorne, 1995, p. 5). At least two researchers (and sometimes three when

divergent views are found) analyse the data from each case study. This allows for triangulation and helps to monitor inter-rater reliability. The researchers approach the coding of the data case by case, or one school at a time, reading the three sets of field notes from the observations, studying the four interview transcripts often while listening to the recorded interviews, and reviewing the specific responses from the online survey of the four stakeholders (SH, NET, LETs, EPC) when available. This first reading (and listening) is for a general idea of the various issues involved in this school, and for noting the themes that emerge. At this stage the goal is to get a sense of the impact of the PNET Scheme at the school from multiple perspectives (SH, NET, LET, EPC) as well as to note what was observed in the multiple visits to the school.

Note that one of the eight case studies did not take part in the online survey phase. As noted earlier, not enough participants submitted surveys in one particular district, so one school from that district was invited to participate in the case study. This ensured that some data would be available from that district. Also missing from our eight case studies are surveys from two School Heads and one EPC who failed to submit a survey as requested, but data was acquired from these stakeholders in the interviews so it did not compromise the evaluation design.

The next stage involved a closer reading of the 12 (or more) documents for each school (three observation schedules, four interview transcripts, four survey responses, and other artefacts such as meeting agendas and teaching schedules). A team of two researchers (PI, CoIs, and PM) was assigned to analyse each case study. Each researcher coded the 12 documents and individually wrote a short narrative summarising their findings, provided a title for the school that encapsulated their impressions of the findings, and made a list of their codes and the supporting quotes under each one. They then associated the codes and corresponding quotes with one or more of the six research questions. Finally, they made a note of any outliers and negative cases. Communication among the researchers of the insights gleaned from data analysis, which took place through face-to-face conversations, emails, and Skype, as well as the sharing of the written summaries through a password-protected Dropbox, was ongoing.

4.3.1 Determining Key Findings Versus Outliers

In the quantitative phase of the study, eighteen key findings were found and labelled SF1-SF18, the “SF” noting that the findings came from the survey data as opposed to the case studies. Forty additional key findings were found in the case study analysis, and labelled “CF” CF1-CF40. When a theme (or a “node” when using NVivo) was found repeatedly, or was noted several times by different types of stakeholders (parents and teachers for example) researchers articulated that into a finding statement and provided supporting quotes as evidence. If a divergent view to a “Key Finding” was expressed, but was not found repeatedly in the data, it was noted as a negative case or outlier (not a key finding) provided it was determined to have substance such as a story of support. In some cases, the divergent view was expressed so many times that it, too, became a “Key Finding” rather than just an outlier. Thus it is possible to have two seemingly contradictory key findings when enough participants expressed the same views on opposite sides of the issue.

4.3.2 Text Mining

Another way that we analysed stakeholders' opinions of the Scheme was through text mining, which was especially helpful when analysing the hundreds of responses from the parents' open-ended questions. IBM SPSS Text Analytics (SPSS, 2014), a text mining software application, was utilised to analyse the qualitative data collected from the surveys. Text mining (TM) is a technique of extracting meaningful concepts or constructs from unstructured data (e.g. open-ended responses in a survey) through natural language processing (NLP), which is a subfield of artificial intelligence (AI) and computational linguistics (CL) (Feldman & Sanger, 2007; Mani, 2001; Yu, Jannasch-Pennell, & DiGangi, 2011). A single word can mean different things in different contexts. For example, "sex" in the phrase "Sex and age are included in the demographic data" is different from the same word in the phrase "This conservative school does not provide sex education." To rectify this situation, TM equipped with NLP can look into the context of the passage in order to correctly classify the categories. TM is different from content analysis that counts the frequency of words only. Rather, based on the word count and the context surrounding the words, TM combines similar words into categories (concepts).

It is important to point out that the research team did not completely hand over our judgement to the automated computer system. After categories were generated, the human analyst overrode the computer-coded results by removing generic terms (e.g. "learning," "teacher," "skills," etc.), combining similar concepts ("talking" and "speaking") and renaming certain terms (e.g. rename "pronunciation" to "pronounce"). Listing the terms alone might not be informative. Nonetheless, the concepts and the actual responses are linked; therefore, the human analyst could read the text to gain insight of the concepts and also could cite some examples to illustrate the meaning of the concept.

Further, relationships among concepts were presented in concept maps. In each map, there is an anchor concept so that the relative positions to the focal point of other concepts can be formulated. The strength of the relationship is indicated by the thickness of the line. A thick line symbolises the strongest relationship whereas a thin line denotes weaker relationship. Finally, the size of the circle signifies the popularity (frequency) of the concept.

4.3.3 Limitations

Two issues arose in the process of selecting schools for case study. Details of the issues, the means taken to address them, and the resulting consequences are provided below.

1. Schools declining invitation

Two of the initially selected eight case study schools and five of the alternatives declined to participate, citing as reasons that the school had been engaged in other research projects commissioned by other Sections of the EDB. Some schools indicated that they had manpower shortages that might hinder them from full participation in the case study phase. These schools declined participation either directly to the Research Team or through the ATs who supported the schools. As participation was voluntary, the Research Team no longer contacted or negotiated with these schools after their withdrawal. The ATs helped to liaise with two remaining alternative schools and an extension was granted, (see below) so that we were able to have eight in total.

2. Difficulty in scheduling observations and interviews after mid-May

Four of the schools who agreed to participate stated that they had begun their examination period from mid-May onwards, and therefore there would no longer be any regular co-planning meetings, co-teaching lessons, or accessorised display for enriching an English learning environment at the school until August 2015. The Research Team agreed that observations of a more regular co-planning/co-teaching cycle and a more representative school environment were desirable. The schools suggested the three school-based observations be conducted from September 2015 onwards, to which the Research Team and the NET Section of the EDB formally agreed.

Three of the schools mentioned in the above paragraph also expressed concerns that they would have difficulty in staffing during the examination period, and that the School Heads did not want to increase the teachers' workload by asking them to attend the interviews before the end of the examination period. They suggested the interviews be conducted during the summer holiday or at the beginning of the next school year. The Research Team and the NET Section of the EDB agreed to this suggestion.

The interviews for the two case study schools that agreed to participate were postponed until the fall. The non-participant observations of the four schools were postponed as well. Owing to the aforementioned postponement, at least eight interviews and twelve observations in total were conducted in October 2015.

The postponement implies that at least some of the data to be collected might be gathered from schools where personnel and environmental change had taken place in the new school year. These data might constitute a mismatch between what was analysed in the survey phase (in the 2014-15 school year) and in the case study phase (in the 2015-16 school year). Although this might be seen as a limitation, it could also be viewed as a strength. For example, with this extended time frame we are able to view four schools at the end of term, once the NET has settled in, and four schools at the start of term, where students and the NET are just beginning the term. This adds a temporal triangulation to our study. Any changes in participants are noted. For example, if a different NET is interviewed in the Autumn of 2015 than the one who completed the survey in Spring 2015, this is documented.

4.4 Qualitative Results and Findings

4.4.1 Overview of Case Studies

While the findings from quantitative analysis of the surveys suggested that a majority of the stakeholders had positive views of the PNET Scheme, there were also challenges and/or strong and divergent views among key stakeholders who implement the Scheme (NET, LETs, School Heads). The case studies included a representative proportion of schools that, based on these indications of divergence, appeared to be 'struggling' with implementation of the Scheme, as well as schools that were 'excelling' in their operation of the Scheme. This allowed for triangulation to substantiate interpretations of the quantitative data with findings from the qualitative data including responses from the open-ended survey questions, the eight case studies, and the interviews conducted at the EDB. Overall, these data corroborate the positive overall findings in the surveys, but they also shed light on the divergences that raise specific issues that may threaten effectiveness.

However, it should also be noted that schools did not fit neatly into two separate and distinct categories of schools that had effective and ineffective implementation of the Scheme.

Effectiveness varied over time and stakeholder. In other words, Scheme effectiveness was viewed differently by the various stakeholders at each school and sometimes changed over time. Also, there were indications of pockets of effectiveness in schools struggling with the Scheme, and instances of ineffectiveness in the schools that enjoyed overall success with the Scheme. Variation in effectiveness over time was captured in some case studies through the stories of stakeholders who had been involved with the Scheme for many years. In schools with indications of more effective implementation of the Scheme, for example, stakeholders discussed years in which strong leadership from the School Head and English Panel Chair created a culture and commitment to English speaking not only within the school but also across schools through various English-focused programmes. However, in one case, when people in leadership changed, the NET felt that the commitment to the Scheme waned and resulted in a loss of some of the previous gains in regard to school-to-school collaboration. Two examples of isolated success that emerged in schools that were struggling with the Scheme were a breakthrough a NET had with a particular class of students, and improved teaching practice by NETs and LETs attributed to the professional development provided by the AT who worked with that school.

It should be kept in mind that the purpose of conducting the case studies was not to evaluate the school, but to learn what fosters and impedes effectiveness of the PNET Scheme in specific contexts based on analysis of observations of schools, classes, meetings, and interviews with teachers and administrators. However, in order to get an overall understanding of the situation of the eight case studies, the following scale was used as an initial overall indicator of effectiveness with more nuanced descriptions and exceptions to be presented in the description of each case study. Note that in order to de-identify the schools and to protect the privacy of the participants, some identifying descriptors were removed (such as school location), and in some cases the identifying descriptors were intentionally changed (such as the gender of the stakeholder) so readers would not be able to identify schools or individuals.

The following scale was used as an initial overall description of the Case Study:

Very Effective (VE): Implementation of the PNET Scheme is often characterised by major strengths, attainment of expected outcomes, and outstanding performance of the key stakeholders. It is an exemplary case worthy of dissemination.

Somewhat Effective (SE): Strengths outweigh weaknesses in regard to the implementation of the PNET Scheme. The School is progressing in meeting the outcomes with some minor exceptions, and most of the stakeholders support and value the Scheme with some exceptions.

Less Effective (LE): Weaknesses outweigh strengths in regard to the implementation of the PNET Scheme. Overall, the school is not progressing in meeting the outcomes of the Scheme. Several PNET guidelines are not followed, and there is not sufficient evidence of critical support needed for the Scheme from key stakeholders.

An overview of the case studies is provided below with schools that had more success with the Scheme presented first. A title, set off in italics, which seeks to capture the findings is used to characterise the operation of the Scheme in each school. Half of the schools (four) were classified as “very effective”, two “somewhat effective” and two “less effective.”

1. *Recipe for success: School support, experienced NET, devoted LETs* (VE)

This school serves the working-class children in the local estate in which it resides, including several non-Chinese students and as many as 50% cross-boundary students (CBS) in the P1 to P3 levels. The NET, a former teacher educator, had over a decade of teaching experience in Hong Kong at the time of the interview. The NET plays a significant role in the success of the Scheme in the school by adapting the English language curricula (PLP-R/W) with the help of local teachers to meet the needs of the students and in developing local English teachers' professional competence. The NET is well regarded by the principal, panel chair(s), and local teachers as a colleague and is highly committed to the education and welfare of the children. There is evidence that this NET has helped to foster an effective collaborative culture in the school, is supported by the AT, and has effectively used the PLP-R/W programme to improve student learning and teacher development. The evidence includes the balance of participation in the co-planning meeting and the observed co-teaching lesson. In the co-planning meeting, the NET took the lead as it was the PLP-R/W lesson that was being planned, but the contributions made to the discussion by at least one of the LETs present were significant. In the co-taught lesson, the NET and LET took turns to lead the class. When one was leading, the other was supporting. Both the NET and LET took on the full range of roles, sharing the lead and supporting each other for different tasks, although the LET did more classroom management while in her supporting role. Significantly, the LET was confident to take the lead role and was equally as animated as the NET in getting children engaged.

This case study demonstrates that the PNET Scheme can have a positive impact on students who may lack the support of English-rich home environments and in schools with a relatively diverse and low-income student body. In spite of the many personnel changes and challenges this school has faced, the Scheme has had a positive impact on most of the teachers and the students through the implementation of the PLP-R/W, although there was less evidence that the school environment had been as positively impacted by the Scheme during our three school visits; for example, there were no English displays outside of the classroom nor was English overheard outside the class. Potential threats to continued success according to the NET are the eroding of the PLP-R/W to newer and less field-tested programmes and the practice of hiring of NETs who do not have relevant degrees and have little or no teacher training or teaching experience at the primary level. The Scheme's effectiveness at this school can be attributed to the quality, experience, and commitment of the NET, the initial support of the School Head, EPCs, and AT, and a team effort of the local teachers and NET to adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of their diverse students. The title for this school comes from a 'bake a cake' language activity one LET described the NET had used to motivate students and local teachers.

2. *Like magic*: Open-minded LETs and a NET who goes the extra mile (VE)

The NET at this small school found the type of atmosphere and collegiality that was lacking at his previous school. The NET has a positive impact in the school, and the stakeholders who were interviewed perceive the Scheme favourably. The NET has taught all levels from P1 to P6, and attends six co-planning meetings (one for each level) per week as well as three annual English panel meetings. Stakeholders feel the co-teaching is productive due to the good relationship the NET has with local teachers at this school. Observation of a lesson co-taught by the NET and a young LET corroborated this perception. Although the NET began and ended the lesson and made the decision whether to continue after the bell, both teachers alternated the lead role in the main part of the lesson. When one party took the lead, the other supported by assisting in presentations and monitoring student understanding. Both NET and LET also took

shared responsibility for classroom management, the NET disciplining students in simple English.

The School Head says the school has a “warm family environment” and along with the LETs and Panel Chair, feels that the NET is cooperative and considerate and willing to “go [the] extra mile” as one LET put it, by staying beyond the official end of the working day to help students and interact with LETs. The concerted efforts the LETs and NET make in establishing a harmonious working relationship emerge as an important factor that accounts for the positive collaboration and impact of the Scheme at this school.

Effective implementation of the Scheme in this school seems to be due to the positive attitude and openness of the local teachers to learn from each other. For example, one local teacher praised the value of workshops in an open-ended response in the survey:

I can feel the positive and encouraging attitude in learning and teaching. I especially admire some sharing sessions in which teachers really learn from other schools, their good practices. It is like magic that they understand the teachers' need. Workshops are exciting, not boring. They are fruitful and colourful.

The School Head sees the value of teacher development and learning new teaching strategies from NETs in the exchange of ideas at gatherings of teachers within their own district. The NET feels the Scheme “was a great benefit” to the students, although states that parents and LETs need to be made more aware of the benefits, and that she would like even more co-planning.

3. More NETs, please: Teamwork and planning with an experienced, flexible NET (VE)

The School Head of this large case study school feels that teamwork is their hallmark, a claim that is supported by positive remarks about the co-planning and co-teaching made by the NET and LETs. The effectiveness of this teamwork was clear from the observation data, in particular the co-planning meeting in which the NET adopted a low key, non-dominating presence. He seemed to have deliberately avoided giving his own ideas for the materials under discussion until the LETs had expressed theirs. When he saw that local teachers favoured keeping the worksheets and had some interesting ideas for modifying them, he agreed, even though he personally favoured scrapping the materials. Having noted the general consensus, the NET came up with interesting ideas of his own for modifying them, which were creative, interesting, generally welcomed and finally agreed.

The School Head feels the Scheme had helped both teachers and students and that the NET was instrumental in getting the PLP-R/W started, which in turn introduced the local teachers to shared reading and writing, which the School Head feels helped the many low-income students at her school who didn't have many English resources at their homes. In the interviews, LETs noted that they are happy with the programme-based collaboration and with the NET who they feel is both flexible and experienced. The LETs especially appreciated the NET's sense of humour and work ethic, as he taught 24 lessons each week in addition to participation in extracurricular activities, a workload somewhat similar to local teachers' in their view.

One concern voiced by a LET at this school is that the upper primary students (KS2) are not benefitting from the NET as much, which is a concern echoed in many other schools and addressed in one of the recommendations. A call for more NETs is a common refrain across

many schools, especially for large schools. Of the 429 LETs who submitted a survey, 269 wrote in a response to the open-ended question that asked “If you could change one thing about the PNET Scheme, what would that be?” and over one third of these responses (36.4%) to this question was the same response: they wanted more NETs. In all, over 100 LETs mentioned the desire for “another NET” in the open-ended responses, even when the question did not ask directly about this. In several cases the “one more NET” request is supported with the rationale to ‘cater to KS2’, ‘expand to KS2’, or ‘benefit upper primary levels’ as it is in this school.

4. *Unanimous praise: A committed NET (VE)*

All stakeholders in this school, including the School Head, the EPC and the NET himself, are strongly supportive of the PNET Scheme. The School Head is overwhelmingly positive in her recognition of the value of the NET’s contributions to student learning and to the school as a whole. Local teachers are united in valuing the positive contribution the NET has made in the past six years to student learning in the school. They are unanimous in their praise of the commitment the NET has shown, his use of teaching approaches which they felt were creative and innovative and the pedagogical practices he has passed on to his local colleagues. The EPC, who is the most active among all local teachers in co-teaching with the NET, was strongly positive in her evaluations of his creativity, resourcefulness and contributions generally to student learning and local teachers’ development. Observation of them teaching together clearly indicated effective collaboration. They appeared very comfortable co-teaching together and engineered transitions between stages, and switches of role seamlessly. The roles they performed were similar, with the EPC even taking charge of the phonics component. The diverse range of activities including songs, drills, brainstorming and reading engaged the students actively and created a high level of engagement. This led to some over-excitement and discipline had to be restored. Significantly, both NET and LET played a part in this, the NET expressing dissatisfaction and counselling the students in English, the LET making use of Chinese as well as English to restore control.

The NET and EPC, after several years trying out various alternative venues within the school, successfully negotiated the establishment of an English Room which now serves as a central focus of NET-LET co-teaching and resource-based teaching by LETs working independently. The English Room provides an outstanding English environment, all available wall surfaces of which are covered in a rich array of print-based resources.

There were minor hints of discord among the English Panel in survey responses, with one more senior staff member expressing views, which, while still positive, are a little less effusive than those of her younger colleagues. Finding NLC only somewhat effective, she feels that the Scheme should be scaled down, without elaborating on how this would be achieved. Another reservation was expressed by the EPC who feels that the housing allowance provided to NETs was unjustified and constituted discrimination against local teachers. Resulting from her positive experience of working with a committed NET in this school, she is strongly in favour of increasing the number of NETs in subsidised schools. She sees this as a way of reducing the wealth gap created by the unequal provision of NETs to DSS schools, in contrast to the provision for government and aided schools in poorer districts like the one served by this school. She feels that reducing the benefits paid to NETs might free up resources to fund additional NETs. A further reservation was expressed by local teachers who, while praising the NET for his contribution, noted that LETs in this school are overburdened with work and feel that this impacts the effectiveness of the Scheme, recommending that more teachers should be provided for primary schools generally.

In addition to valuing the work of the NET, local teachers are positive in their evaluations of the support of the AT and the value of school-based and centralised professional development which the Scheme carried with it. The NET found the AT and Centralised PD only somewhat effective and of more value to LETs than to himself.

5. *Hit and miss: A less experienced NET in a large school (SE)*

In this large non-programme school, the School Head is positive about the Scheme but feels additional NETs would better serve the needs of the students, who in this school have a quite diverse level of English proficiency. The young NET was a previous ELTA and has minimal teaching experience. There are two EPCs in this school, one who is more positive toward the NET than the other. While both EPCs are aware that there is a lack of effective collaboration among NETs and LETs in their meetings and in classrooms, one EPC feels that over time it can be resolved. All stakeholders agree that the NET's lowest priority is professional development of LETs, and his highest priority is motivating students; this is probably due to the NET's inexperience. The NET feels collaboration with LETs is "a little bit hit and miss," with more misses among the more experienced local teachers. The NET feels his inexperience is an asset as he is not "stuck on old practices," and feels being energetic is more important than being experienced. In contrast, his lack of experience is a key inhibitor to collaboration in the eyes of the LETs.

LETs gave the impression that they perceive the NET as being there for younger children and noted that, in the upper grades, the students do not interact with the NET. This corroborates the differences found in the survey data between KS1 and KS2 students, namely that students have less contact with NETs in KS2 and are less motivated to speak English. Another point that stands out in this school is that one of the EPCs feels that LETs should be 'assistants' to the NET in co-taught lessons. This interpretation of co-teaching is corroborated by the observed co-teaching which was rather traditional in the sense that it was teacher-fronted and, for the most part, teacher-centred. Students were ranked in rows, in a rather crowded classroom holding over thirty students in desks/chairs. Students were directed to focus on particular errors in a lock-step approach, which did not encourage those who, for example, wanted to draw attention to mistakes other than those which were the chosen focus – such contributions were ignored. One striking aspect of the lesson was the way in which co-teaching had been operationalised. The NET was clearly in control of the lesson, and the LET was only there to provide support for activities. The amount of collaborative modeling and/or interaction between NET and LET was minimal. This appeared more like a traditional lesson taught by a controlling teacher with the help of a TA. (i.e. the LET appeared to play the role of a TA, although evidently she was a fully-qualified teacher, as she took over the class single-handedly when the NET left). This balance of responsibilities might seem inappropriate in light of this imbalance of experience among the older, more experienced LET and the younger less experienced NET.

This case study provides more evidence that while more NETs are wanted and needed in large schools, allowing for different types of NETs with different skill sets that can accomplish different goals, and not assuming a 'one size fits all' approach, may be a more productive strategy. (See the recommendation for multiple levels of NETs).

6. *Out with the old, in with the new: Revitalisation after a period of discord (SE)*

This small school has enjoyed a revitalisation in enthusiasm for the PNET Scheme as a result of the recent appointment of a new NET. The newly appointed NET is spoken of highly by local teachers, by the English Panel Chair and by the School Head who all appreciate his energy and commitment, which is in contrast to their experience in the past six years. The school has a history of recruiting NETs dating back 12 years. However, their recent experience with a NET generated mixed views from stakeholders. A range of views was expressed by local teachers as to the contribution of the outgoing NET, with a general tendency to recognise the contribution as positive in terms of enhancing student learning, but with reservations in respect to other aspects of effectiveness. A minority feel that collaboration with the previous NET has not been effective, that the NET has not contributed to the professional development of local teachers, and that the NET has been somewhat calculating in terms of commitment to the school with a reluctance to contribute to student learning beyond actual class teaching responsibilities. Both the School Head and the EPC feel that the previous NET did not fulfil expectations in a number of areas. He did not suggest teaching ideas to LETs, recommend teaching materials, conduct professional development, provide feedback on LETs' teaching, create innovation in the school, contribute to local teachers' use of English, or assist in providing resources for the school. In common with some of the LETs, the EPC feels that the previous NET was not well integrated in the school and not used effectively and had not made a valuable contribution to the school. The School Head also noted that the NET had not been able to control his temper in dealings with students and local teachers, and had not attempted to learn from local teachers about local culture. These negative perceptions are in strong contrast to the views of the previous NET himself. His survey responses indicated that he perceived himself as a fully integrated member of the English Panel who made a significant impact in all areas including those areas specifically identified by EPC and SH as failing areas.

Stakeholders' views about the previous NET, are very different from their views about the new NET. LETs in the focus group discussion and the EPC in interview, all spoke of the selfless commitment of the new NET. Local teachers mentioned the new ideas he had taught them and his creative imagination in relation to pedagogy generally.

The arrival of a new NET, who is young, energetic, resourceful and respectful towards the local culture, is like a breath of fresh air. Though relatively inexperienced in mainstream primary school teaching, the new NET has a background in drama which is utilised effectively in co-curricular activities, as well as an openness to new ideas which energises the young teaching staff in the school. Although both LETs and EPC described the new NET as experienced, his previous experience was not in mainstream primary teaching and, like the majority of the LETs in the school year, his actual classroom experience is limited. The enthusiasm of both the LETs and the new NET, however, makes up for lack of experience. This was clear from the observed co-teaching lesson, which both teachers approached enthusiastically, although in terms of innovation, the actual content of the lesson was somewhat limited.

The new NET's enthusiasm and desire to be seen as a full team member extends to a slight disappointment at not being fully integrated into the teaching of English as a whole. He feels that his contribution is valuable, but he would like to be much more actively involved in the general English curriculum, and not just in the teaching of Phonics and reading, and co-curricular activities. However, the School Head thinks the NET should mainly be deployed for enhancing students' speaking and listening rather than grammar and writing.

The positive contribution of the AT in providing school-based workshops and other forms of support was also strongly commended by the EPC and the NET, though most of the local teachers interviewed had not served in the school long enough to comment on this aspect of

the Scheme. An exception, who had served the school for two years, spoke of the valuable experience gained from co-teaching with the AT, and the constructive suggestions the AT had provided.

7. *Drowning NET: Out of his depth, but rescued by AT's isolated effectiveness (LE)*

Most of the stakeholders in this case study have concerns about the Scheme's effectiveness there. From the NET's perspective, the local teachers and School Head do not take enough interest in the NET's contribution. The School Head is positive about the value of the PNET Scheme in general, but wants the NET to "do more professional development in order to open the mindset of [the] local teachers." The LETs and the EPC seem to be satisfied with the collaboration with the NET in both co-planning and co-teaching, but the NET feels isolated. Overall the NET felt better integrated at the previous school in which he worked as an ELTA than he did at this school as a NET. The fact that the NET was a younger teacher who had only two full years of teaching experience may have impacted the NET's ability to "develop" more experienced, older local teachers. The survey responses of the LETs reveal they felt the NET contributed little to their professional development. Perhaps the School Head's expectation of professional development needed to be rethought in light of this NET's lack of experience. This was reflected in the co-teaching lesson observed, in which LETs demonstrated more indicators of experience than the NET raised. A simple example was that the NET raised her voice unnecessarily while teaching a small group of students, disturbing the two other groups taught by LETs. On a positive note, the school had an example of an isolated effectiveness, as the LETs spoke highly of the support they received from the AT.

This school did not adopt the PLP-R/W, which requires regular co-planning and co-teaching and thus provides structure for the type and extent of NET-LET collaboration. This structured programme may have mitigated the 'lack of interest' the LETs had toward the NET. The School Head lamented the fact they withdrew from the PLP-R/W and stated, "I believe that I los[t] something after the withdrawal from the PLP-R/W. . ." Perhaps the PLP-R/W would have also provided the structure for more effective teaching for this NET, who in his words "felt quite out of [his] depth" and "didn't really know what [he] was doing" in his first year.

8. *Bogged down:* Resistant LETs, a discontented NET, and limited effectiveness (LE)

This case study demonstrates the adverse effects that poor relationships and negative attitudes among key stakeholders can have on the implementation of the Scheme. The NET, who holds degrees in English language and education, feels ‘lots of negativity’ from a large proportion of local teachers who he feels are too conservative and resistant to new teaching practices and ideas. He feels his contribution is undervalued and that he is too ‘bogged down’ with administrative work. Some local teachers feel the NET does not appreciate their heavy workload. Although some LETs and one of the EPC’s noted that the NET is ‘busier’ than previous NETs, they feel the NET’s contribution is negligible.

The LETs survey responses note the ineffectiveness of the EP meetings, AT workshops, and the School Head’s utilisation of the NET. One of the EPCs is aware of the LET’s negativity and feels that LETs may be part of the problem. LET comments in the open-ended survey questions about the Scheme ranged from “good Scheme” to “reduce the pay and allowances of NETs” and “NETs should share workload of LETs”. The other EPC sides with the LETs and feels the NET is “paid a king’s ransom” in spite of unfulfilled job requirements. The NET believes that it would be difficult to change some of the LETs’ entrenched ideas about teaching and learning, but even in this tense work environment, the NET reports that the PNET Scheme has increased students’ confidence to use English through the ‘more fun and enjoyable group work’ he uses with his students.

Observation data provided further evidence of a mismatch of perceptions of effectiveness and also suggested a possible reason why some negativity may have arisen. In the co-taught lesson, there was little to distinguish between LET and NET in terms of teaching approaches, perhaps because both teachers were following pre-determined routines which originate in the PLP-R/W materials. The lesson was somewhat mundane and formulaic, without a great deal of enthusiasm displayed by either teacher. After the lesson the NET complained about the students’ comprehension problems, finding it difficult to understand why they could not do what he expected them to do, and continued to make mistakes. This echoes comments made by the LETs in the focus group regarding the NET’s difficulties in understanding the problems of local students. In the observed co-planning meeting, although elaborate documentation gave it appearance of being systematic and well-planned, the NET was dominant and local teachers passive. When LETs did contribute, they tended to be overridden by the NET.

It may not be surprising that some of the local teachers at this school feel the Scheme should be scaled down, a view shared by only 6.25% of all LETs who responded to this survey question. Perhaps if LETs were reminded of the lack of promotion and job security NETs face, this would mitigate these ill feelings and reduce the perception of unfair workload and compensation among LETs and NETs.

4.4.2 Interviews with NET Section Personnel

NET Section personnel were interviewed to enable the research team to gain a better understanding of the operation of the Scheme, the role of Advisory Teachers within the Scheme and the priorities for future development as perceived by NET Section staff at different levels. The resulting data were analysed in ways similar to that described in section 4.3 above for school level stakeholders in order to ensure that insights gained were robust and supported by evidence from the views of stakeholders. In addition, one centralised professional development workshop was observed. A summary of these interviews and the observation is provided in Table 22:

Table 22
Summary of NET Section study interviews and observations

NET Section interviews and observation	6	one-on-one interviews with ATs
	2	one-on-one interviews with managers/senior staff
	1	observation of Workshop for LETs and NETs

4.4.3 Qualitative Results and Key Findings

This section provides evidence from the qualitative data that corroborates, contests, and extends the findings of the quantitative data analysis. Key findings are categorised according to the six research questions guiding the evaluation. Each finding is highlighted and followed by supporting evidence from the interview transcripts and from analyses of the open-ended questions in the surveys.

4.4.3.1 Research Question One: To what extent and in what ways do key stakeholders believe the PNET Scheme helps to improve primary students' learning of English?

One of the findings from the survey data (SF1) was that the majority of stakeholders believe the PNET Scheme contributes to students' English learning. It was found from analysis of survey responses that the majority of respondents (in most cases over 90%) from every group of stakeholders believed the PNET Scheme, in the form of the contribution of the individual NET in the school, had contributed to student learning. Although the Scheme involves much more than the contribution of individual NETs, stakeholders at the school level tended to perceive impact as resulting from the contribution of the NET.

Corroboration of evidence from the analysis of qualitative data regarding NETs' positive contribution to student learning

The first finding from the case studies corroborates this, as stakeholders attributed improved student learning to the activities of the NET.

CF1. Stakeholders provided indirect evidence of **improved student English proficiency** in speaking through active, fun, learning activities that motivate students.

Many stakeholders contrasted the more textbook-based and examination-oriented approaches adopted by LETs in their General English lessons, with the more motivation-based, enjoyment-oriented activities employed by many NETs. What stakeholders perceive as more 'lively and authentic' activities created in an environment where children are 'forced' to use English to

communicate with a non-Chinese speaking teacher are considered valuable means of enhancing motivation and hence increasing students' willingness to engage with English in such a way that their proficiency would naturally improve. These perceptions are reflected in the quotes included here:

*The NET can provide **more learning experience for our students with active learning activities**. They can, according to the curriculum, create some lively and authentic activity for the students to use what they have learned in the English lesson.*

[...]

*It definitely provides more fun learning experiences to the students and **forces the students to speak in English, because they know that they can only communicate with [the NET] in English**. Sometimes [the NET and the local teachers] can exchange some cultural and educational views, and ... they can help the student to ... consolidate or **use the knowledge they have learned in the normal English lessons**.*

(SH interview)

The NET asked them to learn through a game called Simon Said, Touch your Head. The NET said "touch your bum bum", and the children would laugh happily. The atmosphere in the classroom was relaxed and full of enjoyment.

(SH interview)

*Well, it did have some effects of course. A NET ... can provide what children would love to see, **the motivation. It is a source of motivation**.*

(EPC Interview)

I think we, when we started the NET Scheme, I can see the changes. Lots of students love to contact the foreigner because they seldom, seldom have this experience. That's why I think it is a good stimulation for them, let them not be afraid of English and then they will start to learn, okay?

(SH Interview)

Direct evidence of improved English proficiency was provided by one NET, who cited increased reading levels among students following the PLP-R/W curriculum, as concrete evidence of improvement, as well as a perception on his part that he needs to modify the level of his own English less when talking to the students:

their reading levels have gone up, so that's some actual hard evidence

[...]

And you can hear, I don't need to slow my voice anymore really, I'll say, group one, dah, dah, dah, group two, dah, dah, dah. Group leader one, group leader two...even PIs now do it now, just because they're used to hearing English just switched on.

(NET Interview)

In the same school, NET, EPC, LETs, and School Head all remarked on the increased willingness of students to communicate in English, and ascribed this to the influence of the NET. Here is the view of the EPC:

[NET's name] is a very outgoing and open-minded person. And so the kids like to talk to him. And in this way, they are less afraid of English. They used to have a kind of English

phobia and, by talking to him and also having lessons with him, and they are less afraid of English. And sometimes they just communicate so naturally.

[...]

... the kids will find that English is a matter of daily life, you know a media of communication rather a simply, a simple academic subject. ... So it just comes naturally. So I think yeah, that, that can break the phobia

(EPC Interview)

Stakeholders in the case studies noted advances in student literacy skills related to not only the NET, but also the programmes the NET was involved with.

CF2. Stakeholders at the school level involved in literacy programmes perceived significant advances in literacy skills resulting from the PLP-R/W and DTS literacy programmes and the related activities that NETs engage in.

[PLP-R/W] provides a very structured environment for them to come into English in the school system. They learn that there are certain elements that recur, like high frequency words ... I think that very structure is very useful for young children coming into something when they're learning a new language.

(NET interview)

*Perhaps before we had **the programme** we taught strictly based on the textbook. Now under the programme we teach through a story, and students can learn a text type or rhyming words. Their learning is more fruitful. As under **the programme** students need to read a lot...*

(LET focus group)

PLP-R** ... was very suitable for those students, because the curriculum ... **PLP-R** covered was simple and contained a classroom routine, together with phonics and knowledge of daily greetings, so that **the students could build up their daily use of English. They learnt well.

(SH interview)

*Since the NETs were familiar with concepts that LETs were not, many ideas and methods of teaching were raised by the NET. So I think the NETs were helpful in developing the **reading and writing programmes**. Without the NETs, of course we might have developed too, but at a slower pace.*

(SH interview)

*I think there are clear results from the students, **we can see clear improvement** and ... the teachers that have participated ... have said there are clear improvements. I mean, there are issues in the DTS, we do need to work on it because it's new but it's a **clear improvement**.*

(NET interview)

These school-level perceptions of significant improvements in literacy skills were reinforced by the views of NET Section personnel, including the ATs involved in supporting PLP-R/W

and DTS in the schools. They noted that the success of PLP-R/W was in achieving significant student learning, and in creating an enjoyable learning experience very different from traditional textbook-based approaches. Both PLP-R/W and DTS supplied participating schools with resources, including e-resources, that exposed children to age-appropriate reading materials, including, in the case of DTS, authentic texts.

Corroboration with survey data regarding NET-LET collaboration

The third finding from the survey data (SF3), “The majority of students hold positive views of NET-LET collaboration” was corroborated in the case studies. The following quotes illustrate the general perception of the positive benefits of having two teachers in the classroom.

CF3. The emphasis on co-teaching and the presence of a NET in the school has **increased student motivation** and the degree to **which English is used in the classroom**.

[With the NET], *the classroom was relaxed and filled with games. For example, they learned new words excitedly. I believe that pedagogies like those are seldom used by LETs, but [NETs] could make students learn happily.*

(SH Interview)

... the NET is relatively humorous, which can alleviate the stress resulting from the lesson. We are worried about the students' learning after all. So his humour creates a relaxing atmosphere for students. They also learn with ease. Also, because he is a NET, the context created by him is sufficient, because all children have to interact with him in English, so their frequency of speaking English in the classroom will be dramatically increased. I think a lesson with the NET will be more interactive. The students will be more active, and their communication skills will be boosted.

(LET focus group)

Because the NETs can't speak Cantonese the children are motivated to speak English, and listen to English.

(EPC Interview)

[The presence of a NET means] *students have more chance to speak English, because reading and writing, the local teachers can do it. We can still do it. In terms of speaking and writing, speaking and listening, especially speaking, I think the native teacher can present an important [model], but they have to have good accent. But I think, most of the NETs have very clear accent.*

(EPC Interview)

With two teachers in the classroom, more small group work is possible.

(EPC interview)

I think the [NET can enrich] the English environment ... enhance the English-speaking culture... because all the English meeting we conduct in English, so not just English teacher we also encourage non-English teacher who can speak English together. ... Then, the [local] teacher will have the confidence to speak [English] with their students.

(SH Interview)

These school-level perceptions of the value of the NET's contribution in the co-taught lessons and in the school as a whole are supported by the views of the ATs involved in supporting the operation of the Scheme in the schools. It was pointed out that having two teachers in the classroom ensures not only that students are given more individual attention, but they are provided with more opportunities to be engaged in using English, by interacting with the two teachers and by engaging in language activities which the presence of two teachers in the class makes more feasible.

Limited parental understanding of the contribution of NETs to student learning

CF4. Parents' views on the NET Scheme were mentioned, but participants generally felt that **parents and others were not fully aware of the value and effectiveness of the Scheme** especially in terms of its positive effect on children's reading and writing.

Stakeholders at the school-level, as well as NET Section personnel recognised a need to inform parents better about the contribution, which a NET could make to the teaching of English in the schools, in particular to the development of literacy skills. NET Section personnel and School Heads acknowledged the need to do more to keep parents informed of what the NET Scheme is about and its successes, because although parents often appreciate having a native speaker in the school, they did not often understand the actual roles NETs performed.

One School Head actively tried to counter this lack of awareness among parents by inviting them to the English Room to observe lessons:

I think it's quite a good programme, very systematic, and then all the children and also the parents [appreciate this], because we open the PLP-R/W lessons for parents to observe – they said 'It's very amazing', because they notice the reading involved in the lesson and then they can have a very good response to the NET teacher.

(SH Interview)

Another School Head wanted to ensure that parents understand all aspects of the approach to English teaching in the school, including the role of the NET:

What we need is marketing, directed at a curriculum that parents want. Of course such marketing is professional. Good marketing is to lead parents to think in a particular way, but not to let parents' thoughts drive the school. Therefore, my thought is that we need to let parents understand what we are doing. In the past few years we have not had enough intake, which made us worried. But after doing more on marketing, parents know our school and understand our approach. The reputation is built up.

(SH Interview)

The rather unfocused parental desire for a native speaker, without really understanding the different contribution a NET could make was echoed in the experience of another School Head who felt the pressure of parental desire for a NET with Western appearance and their rejection of American-born Chinese, or British-born Chinese NETs:

I remember we had four interviewees last year. And my parents like a blue eyed NET, you know, a real foreigner ... with blue eyes and gold hair. And, because last year we found

a ABC, or BBC, you know, because they had a yellow face, parents shared with me that they really wanted [the NET] to look [like] a NET.

(SH Interview)

Limited understanding of the contribution of NETs to literacy development

CF5. Even though the PNET Scheme works on all skills, including reading and writing especially in the PLP-R/W and other literary programmes, stakeholders perceived the impact of the NET more in terms of enhanced **oral fluency and confidence as well as better pronunciation** among students rather than the enhanced literacy skills.

Actually I think one thing from the PNET Scheme that is helpful to our school is the encouragement to students to take part in ... speaking ... The activities are to build up students' confidence in speaking English on the stage, to train them so that they feel happy speaking English on the stage.

(SH interview)

*The NET facilitates a more lively approach to English teaching than the local teachers... more outgoing and 'dramatic' and they **have authentic native accents, good for teaching pronunciation and intonation** ... and can introduce greater variety into the English lessons, using role play, drama and other activities.*

(EPC interview)

Even when an **isolated reference to reading occurs, it is in relation to the accent and pronunciation of the NET**, in comparison to local teachers.

*... the lessons would be conducted in a more open-minded, lively way. One example was that when the NET taught reading she was able to act enthusiastically, which influenced the classroom atmosphere... **since the NET spoke a more pure accent, students would learn pronunciation more differently**, and that during in-group activities the NET would help in looking after a particular group, in order to look after students with different learner diversities.*

(LET focus group)

There is, however, one exception where **reading and writing improvement was mentioned specifically by the NET**, but even this example is moderated by reference to enhanced confidence in speaking in addition to reading and writing.

*The PNET Scheme for me **has had a huge impact, not only on reading but also on writing. So the kids have had the opportunity to look at reading strategies, I think to be able to read more fluently. They also got the opportunity to be able to write at their own pace. ... The material is very well-tailored towards the students' needs. So I think it's had a good impact on the reading and writing.***

[...]

*and not only that but their confidence. It's helped them to grow very much in speaking. **Because it's not all reading and writing but also being able come to the front of the class and interact with a westerner** ... and also the kids enjoy the activities. The impact is that the kids are enthusiastic ... they like, they enjoy the activities.*

(NET interview)

Parents were among the stakeholders who were not aware of the impact the Scheme on students' literacy skills. The top five concepts extracted by SPSS Text Analytics (Modeler) from responses to the question “**Generally, do you think that the NET plays an important role in improving English learning at the school? Please give a brief comment**” in the Chinese parent survey are presented as concepts maps below. Of the 2,329 parents who completed a survey, 2,102 completed the Chinese version and 227 completed the English version. Of these, 1,009 parents typed in a response to this open-ended question, which was most often in Chinese. The Chinese responses were translated by one bilingual speaker and checked by a second.

While concepts related to oral English, such as “pronunciation,” “listening,” “speak English,” “accent,” and “speaker” recur frequently, **none of the concepts related to writing and reading were found**. This is surprising since one of the main programmes designed by the NET Section to support the implementation of the Scheme is the PLP-R/W, which focuses on reading and writing. This supports the claim provided in the case study interviews that parents may not be aware of all that the NETs are doing at the school and what the Scheme is providing. Typical concerns in these concepts are about preparing their children to become fluent in communication. The following are direct quotes of some responses from parents.

*It can prepare the students to become more comfortable with English, also they can learn more **communication**.*

*To gain more exposure to English and listen more to **NETs' pronunciation**.*

*NETs are quite helpful in children's **oral English and listening**.*

*More **practices** in cross-cultural environment can help kids overcome the fear to talk to **foreigners**.*

*To have more **opportunities to contact with foreigners** so as to improve the level of English proficiency.*

*NETs' English **accent** is more authentic.*

*LETs **pronounced some words** inaccurately at local schools.*

*NETs have a **different accent** from the LETs, and this can offer students more opportunities to **practise speaking***

*Kids will be more courageous and confident when interacting with **foreigners**.*

*Their speaking skills will be built on a solid foundation, because people need to **practise listening and speaking** more in order to become a more proficient **speaker**.*

Figures 19 to 23 show how the top five concepts – communication, pronunciation, listening, foreigners and practice – are related to other concepts. The thicker line indicates a stronger association between the two concepts (more co-occurrences). Apparently “communication” co-occurred with “foreigners” most often. “Listening” is the next concept that is strongly associated with “communication.” This might imply that parents view communicating with foreigners as a vital part of learning, and also they are more concerned about listening than speaking and grammar when discussing communication.

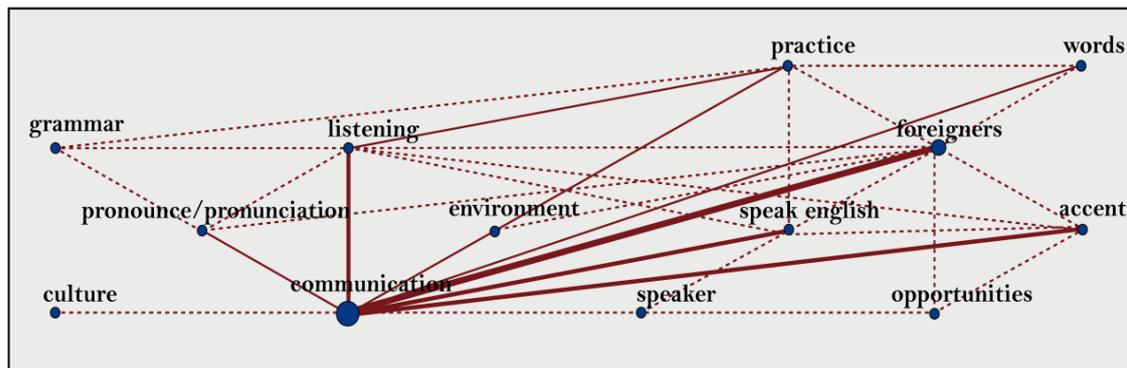


Figure 19. Concept map of communication from parent open-ended responses to the role of NETs.

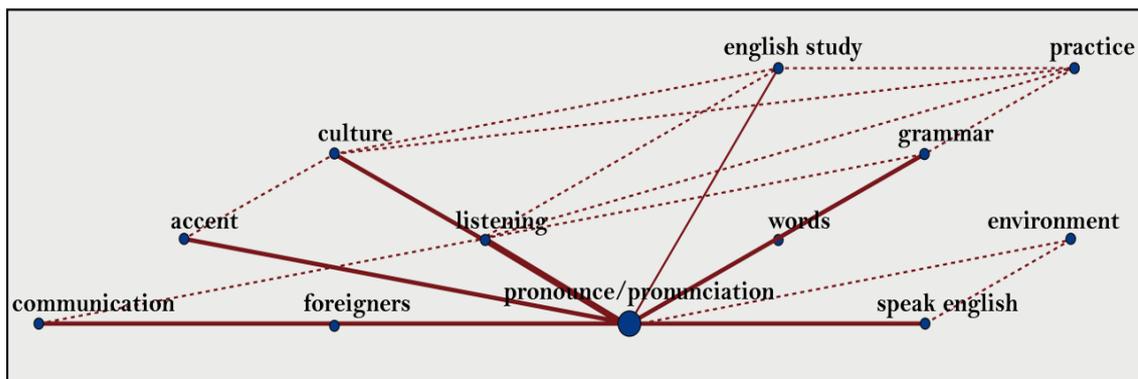


Figure 20. Concept map of pronunciation from parent open-ended responses to the role of NETs.

Figure 20 indicates that the concept “pronuncia[tion]” is often paired with listening, grammar, and words. Surprisingly, its link to “foreigners” is weaker than the previous three concepts. Figure 21 shows that listening is strongly tied to practice and communication. Figures 22 and 23 re-affirm the same pattern: communication, foreigners, and listening go hand in hand, revealing parents’ expectations of what areas English teachers should emphasise.

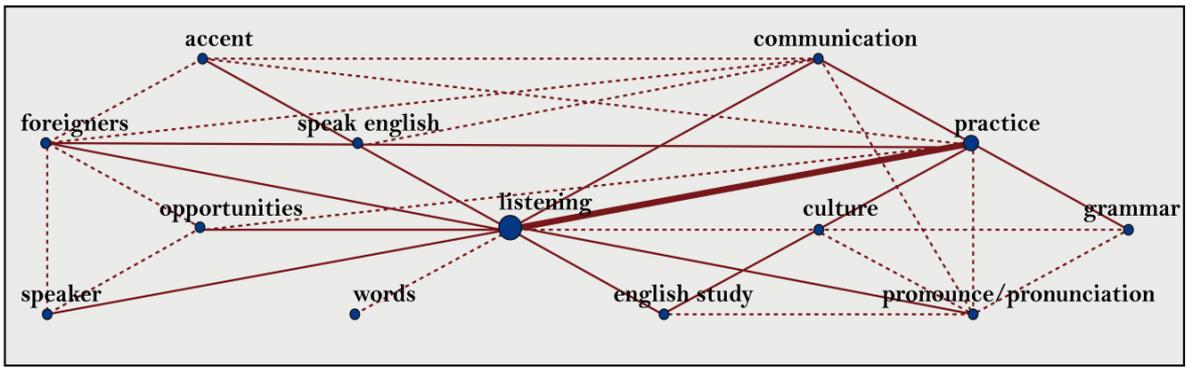


Figure 21. Concept map of listening from parent open-ended responses to the role of NETs.

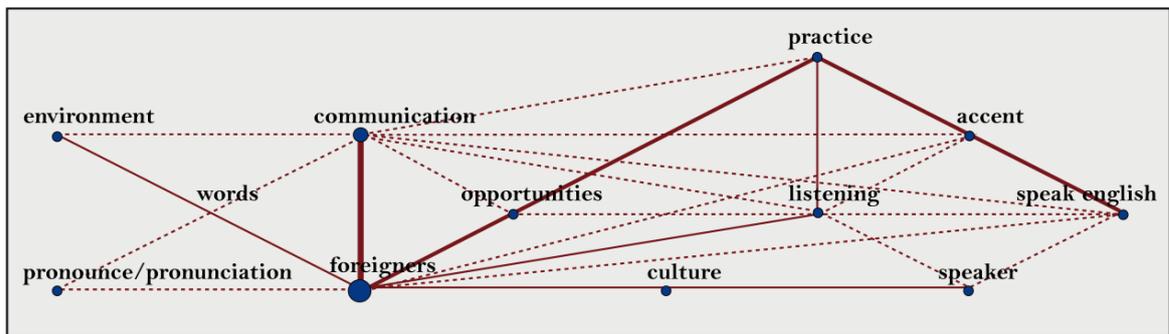


Figure 22. Concept map of foreigners from parent open-ended responses to the role of NETs.

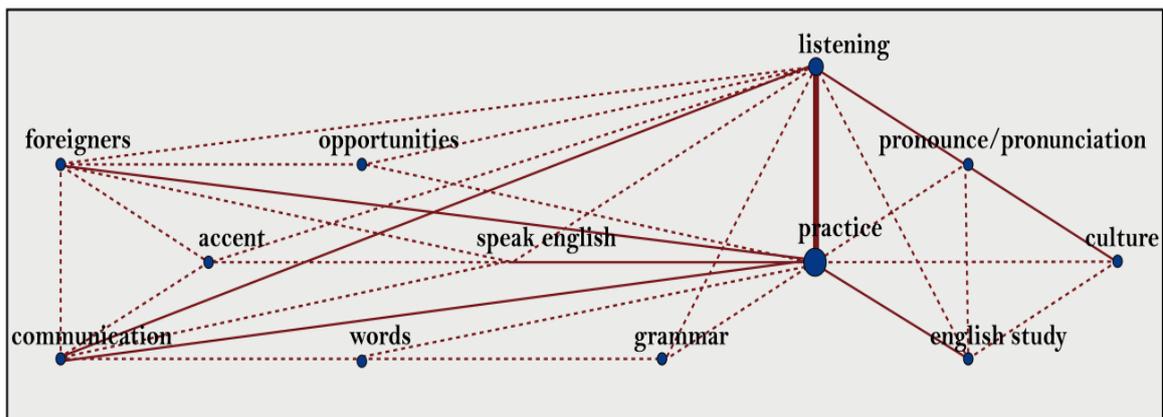


Figure 23. Concept map of practice from parent open-ended responses to the role of NETs.

CF6. Parents who responded to the surveys were aware of the positive contribution that **local teachers made towards their children’s English language learning**, and most notably in the assistance that local teachers provided to help the children overcome communication breakdown with the NET, by providing explanations of terms in the mother tongue. Local teachers’ knowledge of the local culture of Hong Kong was also seen as an asset.

Parents wrote 1,189 open-ended responses to the question, “**Generally, do you think that the LETs play an important role in improving English learning at the school? Please give a brief reason for your choice.**”

Figures 24 to 26 show how the top three concepts (Communication, Explanation, and Culture) are related to other concepts.

Supporting quotes from parents for these concepts are:

LETs are responsible for communication and instruction when the use of English is not enough for explanation. They use the mother tongue to explain the use of English and the meanings involved at a deeper level.

When there's a communication breakdown, the LET can use the local language to respond.

[LETs are] very important because my son doesn't understand English and requires the explanation from the LETs.

The mother tongue is needed for explanation when children don't understand.

There is cultural difference. LETs can help according to the local education needs and design a curriculum that matches well with the local education system.

LETs have more understanding of the cultural norms of local students.

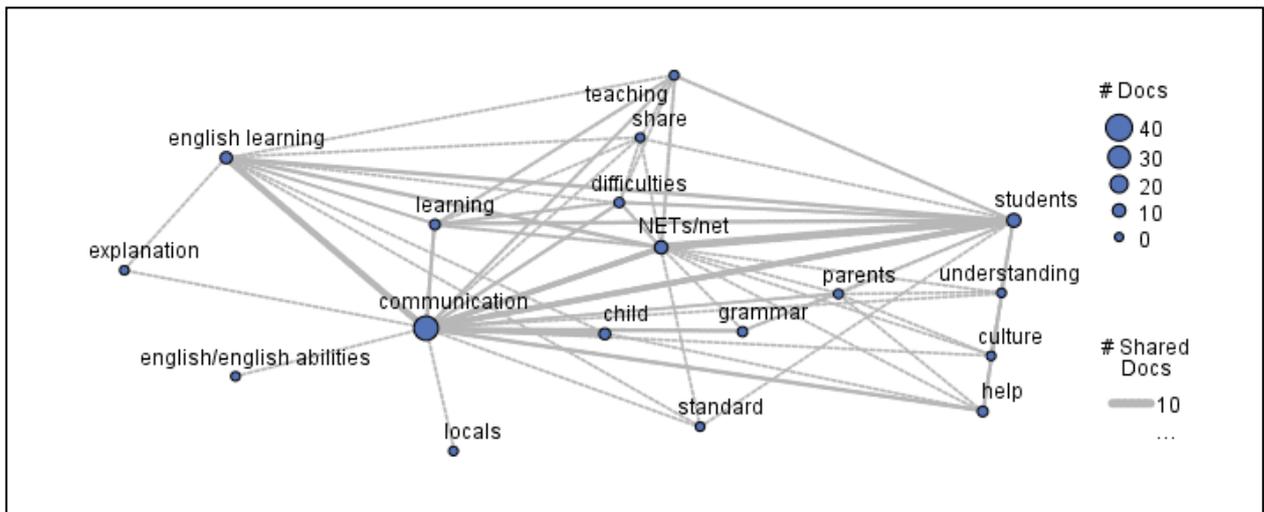


Figure 24. Concept map of communication from parent open-ended responses to the role of LETs.

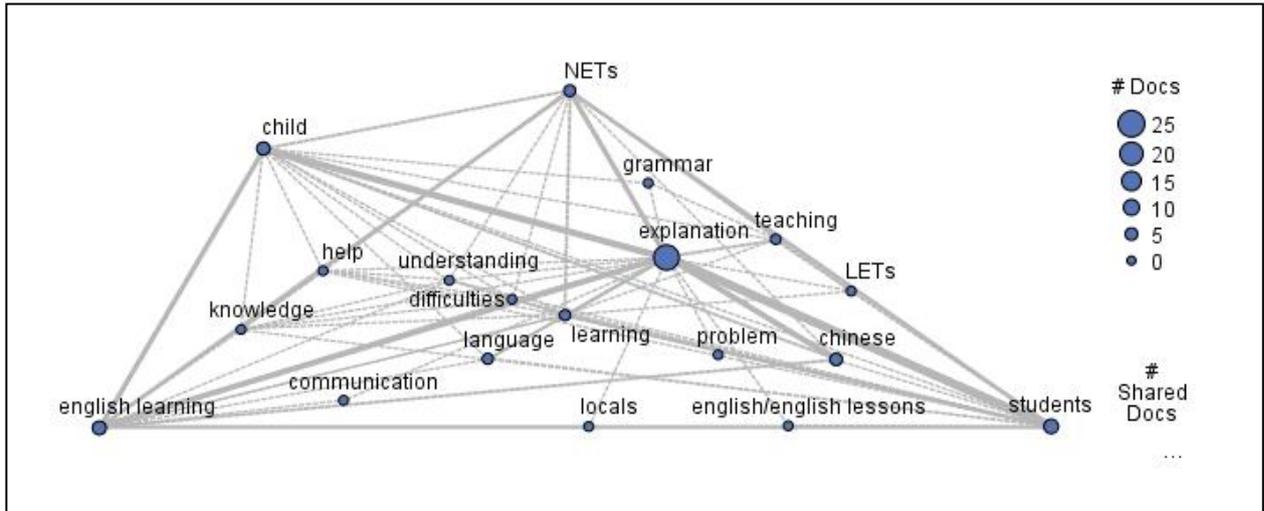


Figure 25. Concept map of explanation from parent open-ended responses to the role of LETs.

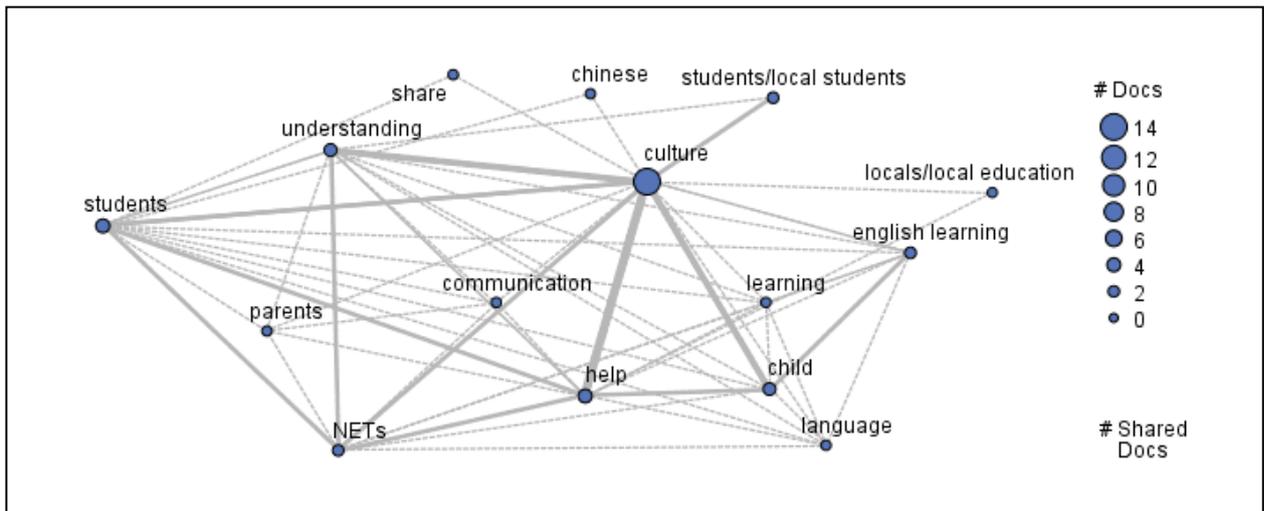


Figure 26. Concept map of culture from parent open-ended responses to the role of LETs.

Corroboration of quantitative analysis of student survey responses regarding difference between KS1 and KS2 related to student learning of English.

Survey responses from KS1 students were more positive about speaking and learning English than those of their KS2 counterparts (see SF2). They were also more positive about the English Environment in class (see SF5) and out of class (see SF6). KS1 students tended to agree more than those in KS2 that they were motivated to learn English through the co-teaching of LETs and NETs. The case study data sheds light on this, as stakeholders noted that NETs are used more in KS1 as noted in CF7.

CF7. Participants noted that NETs tended to be used **more often in KS1 rather than KS2**. But schools were often asked by parents of children in KS2 to justify this.

The policy of deploying NETs more in KS1 than in KS2 was often a bone of contention for the parents of KS2 children. Discussion of this deployment issue, encouraged parents to voice a desire for increasing the number of NETs allocated to schools to enable KS2 students to reap the benefits, as well as those in KS1. School level personnel often sympathised with these parental concerns.

*... every time I hear parents in parents' workshop meetings [they] will **bombard me in asking oh, like their kids are in P4 and P6, why not in my level? My kids do not have any NET teachers.** And I feel sorry for them but I cannot do anything.*

(EPC Interview)

Now not every student can be taught by the NET. Sometimes parents ask us why. It is difficult for us to give them a satisfactory answer. Why those students can be taught by the NET, but not these? Things like these are troublesome. I think one is not enough. It may be difficult to say how many are enough. But I think at least two for each school, so that they have a partner and that all students can be benefited.

(EPC Interview)

... actually upper primary students may need the NET more, because they begin to feel ashamed [inhibited, or self-conscious] to speak English. Lower primary students will take the initiative to answer the NET's questions, but the upper ones actually need more consolidation.

(SH Interview)

Since [NETs] are so professional, I also hope to see development at both lower and upper primary [levels]. Currently the NET is mainly used for lower primary students... LETs can now imitate some teaching strategies for guided and shared reading for them, but why can't upper primary students [have a NET]? NETs are so competent at English. How can we make good use of them to help upper primary students? I look forward to seeing development of this aspect.

(LET focus group)

So if this project can expand, and we can ask for one more NET ... we can expand this project to the upper primary. Our students can have more chance to meet with the NET teacher. Actually we allocate the NET to primary one more and also primary two. We phase out from primary three, because primary three students have already had two years to meet the NET ... before, [but] maybe they need to meet another [NET]

(SH Interview)

A NET for KS1 and KS2, I think at least. That way the NETs can have collaboration. That way actually we'd have that kind of camaraderie also and do professional workshops together. Focusing on whichever strength and helping the local teachers. But certainly it should be enhanced. And I think a program similar to PLP-R/W for KS2. Now, they do have the SuRE program, and they do have KIP, which is another one, but I think if they could enhance it that would be fantastic.

(NET Interview)

One Panel Chair reflected on the reduced enthusiasm among KS2 students in interacting with the NET outside of class. This could be explained by the fact, as noted earlier, that KS2 students are less likely to be exposed to the NET in English classes, and therefore less likely to be familiar with the NET. The EPC in this case however, suggested that KS2 students may be more interested in interacting with their peers, especially when greater effort is required to seek out the NET in the English Room:

Lower grade students love interacting with the NET teacher, but then for higher grade students probably it's more or less the same as other schools, they do talk to the teachers, but the frequency is not that common. The difference is because as I, as far as I have observed the ... upper grade students say they want to stay in the classroom to play and the English room is right down to the hall, so they, and we only have ten minutes for the recess, so probably because of that.

(EPC Interview)

4.4.3.2 Research Question Two: To what extent and in what ways does the PNET Scheme help to enhance the English-speaking environment of the school?

Survey responses suggested that the majority of respondents (over 80% of NETs, LETs, and School Heads) believed that the PNET Scheme helped to enhance the English-Speaking environment as described in SF4.

Corroboration with survey data regarding NETs' presence to enhance English Environment

Data from the case studies, including observation data relating to the school environment, and case study interviews corroborates the finding that the NETs' presence enhances the English Environment as described in finding CF8 and the supporting quotes.

CF8. Participants mentioned the value of the contributions of the NET to the English-speaking environment of the school including contributions to **cultural awareness, decoration of classrooms with English-related material, the operation of the English room, and whole-school activities, school assemblies and 'English Fun Days'** and more opportunities for teachers and students to speak English.

There were few explicit references to 'culture' from school personnel interviews although mention was made of exchanging cultural perspectives – 'Sometimes the NET can exchange some cultural and educational views with the local teacher' (SH Interview), and of contributing to an 'English speaking culture' (SH Interview) in the school. However, contributions to whole school activities on 'festive occasions' and school assemblies led by the NET often presented children with specifically Western ways of celebrating Easter, Halloween and Christmas. The English Room also often provided an opportunity to expose children to examples of English popular culture such as movies, songs and games. NET Section personnel pointed out that while in principle local teachers should be able to replicate these Western cultural celebrations in the schools, they rarely have the time to do so.

Observation data related to the English environment of the school provides supporting evidence of the impact of the PNET Scheme, as felt, for example in the allocation of a

dedicated room for English activities. The English Room in the most effective case study schools was an exemplary model of a resource-rich English environment in which children can learn more effectively during lesson time, for example by referring to vocabulary, language structures and phonics displayed on the walls to support them in their written or spoken production. The English Room also provided a focused space for children to engage in fun-based play activities related to English before and after classes and during recess. Some quotes from field notes taken during site visits to schools illustrate this:

Lots of photos and words. Being in the English Rooms was like being inside a picture dictionary.

(Observation Data)

The English Room has a 'Word Wall' with sight words, sets of graded readers on shelves, a phonics corner, a platform teaching area with projector and screen. Words (colours, dates, weather words) hang from the ceiling, there are board displays of vowels and alphabet letters.

(Observation Data)

What resources in a dedicated English room or English corner help create an English-rich environment? The English Room is an exemplary resource in this respect, richly and elaborately decorated from floor to ceiling with English material.

(Observation Data)

These observations are supported by the perceptions of stakeholders as seen in the following quotes from case study interviews and focus group discussions regarding the English Room, and the outside-class activities facilitated by the NET and the PNET Scheme:

[The NET stays] in the English room and talks with the students. They come into the room, and they play games, and enjoy sharing the movie with him. Our NET... is very good at singing and playing the guitar, so sometimes he plays the guitar with the students, for example, during Christmas time, he leads the student to sing some song altogether.

(SH Interview)

*I consider the NET Scheme important. After all, Hong Kong students have not much interaction with foreigners. **All are Chinese faces at the school. The NET is the only foreigner for them to meet with. I think, other than formal lessons, the NET will open a fun room. The NETs can spend more time in the English fun room, during recess time and lunch,** and then students will have more opportunities to learn English through casual conversation with them. **Learning will not be trapped inside the classroom, but also in the fun room casually.** Students dare to speak English. I think this will increase the effectiveness of the Scheme further.*

(LET focus group)

*[I]t can enhance the English-speaking culture [...] **All the English meeting we conduct in English, so not just English teacher we also encourage non-English teacher who can speak English together.** Because we sit in the same staff room, so close. We have only 14 teachers, 14 teachers, so the relationship is so close ... the other teachers also speak in English. Then, the teacher will have the confiden[ce] to speak with their student[s].*

(SH interview)

... the most significant would be the English environment activities outside of the classroom activities where the children are very free, [and activities are] not so restricted and more enjoyable. As you know, the children perceive it as learning the game rather than an activity and they can use their English in a natural, authentic manner. They don't feel formal, and they don't feel that they are being assessed. ... they own the language; they can communicate with a foreigner ... the students have become accustomed to using English in daily communication.

(NET interview)

During the recess and lunch time, there are extra-curricular activities (hula hoop on my day of visit) in which the coach (i.e. a teacher) will give instruction to students in English. I was told that every year there would be a mathematics competition conducted in English (to train students' listening).

(Observation Data)

We have more extracurricular activities because of the NET. [Students] seldom interact with foreigners after all, so they will be interested in talking to him. ... his presence makes learning English more authentic and natur[al]. The children will be really curious about the NET because he looks so different from other teachers."

(EPC interview)

... the NET teacher ... also work[s] in areas like training the solo verse speaking the elite class, elite writing classes that he offered after school. And also, during recess, from Tuesday to Thursday every week he stays in the English room, reads the story books, plays games and shows the movies to the students so he tries to create a learning atmosphere in a fun way ... lower grade students love interacting with the NET.

(EPC interview)

... lots of little things that I do to help students get involved in using English ... at Easter I did an Easter Egg competition. So they drew an Easter egg and we had a competition and gave out prizes and things like that just to get them involved in maybe my culture and using the language as well.

(NET interview)

A number of stakeholders described the more open attitude of the NETs compared to local teachers. While local teachers may be more aligned to the Chinese cultural concept of a teacher as an individual with whom students are expected to adopt a formal manner, NETs tend to expect less social distance and to welcome more informal relations with students. This is illustrated by the experience of some of the NETs and other stakeholders below:

I think it creates an English learning atmosphere. Because you know students, normally they speak Chinese. They will n-, they dare not speak English, right? But whenever, when there is a NET, I mean, this very excellent NET, right? When they get inside the English room, we request all the students to speak English. That's surprisingly because of him. And all the English, all the students, whoever they are, maybe they are very weak in English, they fail in English, or even they got zero marks in English, but they will speak English in his lesson. It's a miracle.

(EPC Interview)

*... the students generally like to talk to me around school and I think that's good. **I think normally if they speak to a local teacher, even an English teacher, they'll approach them and speak in Cantonese.** They do come up and say "Oh, what are you doing?" and, they're interested and I think that's good for practice*

[...]

*So, let's say for example, maybe in the first recess I might be around the school or try and make myself available if I've got time, I'm not always available but then, for example, **I've got a P3 student that comes up to me every time he sees me and he'll come and see me at recess and...I know he wants to talk so I'll go and just chat to him about whatever he wants to talk about and other students ... want to share, you know, I've been playing, reading this book about computer games and I'll just let them talk to me and talk back ... They are quite active in this school, they'll actually come in and talk...***

(NET interview)

*[NET's name] is **a very outgoing and open-minded person.** And so the kids like to talk to him. And in this way, they are less afraid of English.*

[...]

*I think it's good for me to find that students love English more, like more, they're not afraid of [NET's name], because every time I saw them, when they walk through the corridor, they will shout, [NET's name]! Morning! just like that. **They love to contact him** and then, when I have the lesson observation, I can find most of them can speak English, like to speak out, and like to join the lesson,*

[...]

*So for example, I remember last week erm, I was on the corridor and then I saw a kid in P3 called [name] and he was actually quite shy, 'cause I taught him in P1. And at that time, he did not like to talk, even in Chinese and then they had just gone through the recess games with [NET's name] and so I kind of chatted up with them and then I asked him, oh, so how's the game, what did you play when you were having your recess? and they said, you know, UNO, and I said, okay, who won? And he said very naturally, [NET's name] is the winner, and then I said, oh, and then maybe one day you can win it ... And he said, never. **So it just comes naturally.***

(EPC Interview)

The presence of a NET and the increased use of English in the school, including the regular co-planning meetings, and English Panel Meetings conducted in English, as well as the English-only medium of instruction in lessons co-taught with the NET also has an impact on LET's, increasing their use of English. English Panel Chairs, LETs and the NET all referred to the co-planning meetings rather enthusiastically, testifying to the positive collaboration between the NET and the English panel members. To some extent, the PNET Scheme has provided some impetus for establishing a community of practice within the English panel. These views are illustrated in the following quotes from local teachers and from Observation field notes:

No one is quiet, no one is dominant. And we have no argument, just to simply share ideas.

(EPC Interview)

... we can share our difficulties and challenges and then we can discuss together.

(LETs Interview)

So I've learned a lot from the local teachers and I'm sure they've picked up some things from me as well.

(NET Interview)

I think, maybe it somehow creates an English-speaking environment for the students. [when teaching] with the NET, I may speak less Cantonese ... So it is quite effective for the students to learn English and to hear different accents.

(LET focus group)

... in the English room with the NET ... I will only speak English around the NET, especially with the students. Even when they come in, I still speak to them with English. I think that is the NET effect, here, for us to speak more English.

(LET focus group)

English is used at the English Panel meeting "always" and in the co-planning meetings. The NET said she would often ask LETs what they liked about the lesson after class informally, and provide an idea to improve between two more positive comments.

(Observation Data)

The NET has a prominent place in the staff room, sitting next to the EPC and opposite the ELTA. According to the EPC and SH, he is outgoing and friendly and interacts well with other English teachers. This was evident in the co-teaching, and co-planning I observed. The NET claims to actively seek out contact and friendly relations with all staff. Evidence before and after meetings and co-teaching suggests good interpersonal relationships within the English team, including the NET.

(Observation Data)

Local teachers hold weekly meetings, including ones like the general, sub-panel meeting observed here, as well as level meetings and less formal interactions and exchanges related to specific lessons. The NET does not speak Chinese and hence all interactions involving him are in English. However, he does not sit in the staff room, although there is a place for him there. LETs will come down to the English Room to discuss curriculum matters with him. Relations between NET and LETs are friendly and interactions between them were observed in the general school environment.

(Observation Data)

CF9. **School Heads** felt the NET helped to maximise **the English environment** of the school.

A number of School Heads noted a greater use of English in the classroom, in meetings and in the school as a whole, which they ascribed to the presence of a non-Chinese-speaking NET who was open and accessible and helped teachers and students overcome inhibitions and reluctance to use English to communicate. Some School Heads introduced a policy requiring English teachers to use English not only in English Panel meetings, but also in interactions with students outside the classroom.

*[I]t can enhance the English-speaking culture [...] **All the English meeting we conduct in English, so it's not just English teachers, we also encourage non-English teachers who can, to speak English together.** Because we sit in the same staff room, so close. We have only 14 teachers, 14 teachers, so the relationship is so close ... the other teachers also speak in English. Then, the teachers will have the confiden[ce] to speak [in English] with their student[s].*

(SH interview)

*The most obvious impact is the atmosphere of English, **the whole English environment has been optimised.***

[...]

*In the first year when I came to this school as a school head, our English Panel Meetings were conducted in Cantonese. I thought that could not create an English atmosphere or an English environment. Even LETs didn't use English. At that time the NET was not required to attend the meetings. Then **I wanted to recruit a NET to change that culture and bring some new experience to the school ... I wanted all subject meetings of English to be conducted in English.** The LETs had not got used to this, but they were okay afterwards.*

[...]

*Because of the existence of the NET, **I required all English teachers, whether inside or outside the classroom, to speak English with the students.** It would be better for them to be led by a NET. The LETs might feel very embarrassed ... [a]shamed to speak English even though they are English teachers. They were really shy and feared grammatical mistakes. They were afraid of being laughed at.*

[...]

*I think the community becomes different after the NET Scheme. The LETs used to be not speaking English so often. Now when they are on duty on the school playground, **children will get close to the LETs in communicating in English.***

(SH interview)

*Most importantly, the NET builds up leadership among colleagues in the English teaching team. When they do **whole-school activities, the participation of English teachers is more than they used to be.** Parents also think the product is good, and children learn happily. Then colleagues are willing to be involved into **these whole-school activities.***

(SH interview)

CF10. Several participants mentioned the resources which the NET Scheme can make available to schools, including programme schools involved in PLP-R/W and DTS, but also in non-programme schools, where **ATs would regularly provide resources** and teaching ideas

through their general support roles. The work of the NET in locating suitable additional resources was also mentioned and valued by school personnel.

Project development is one of the range of duties an AT could be asked to undertake. The AT job description includes the expectation that ATs involved in project development will ‘develop effective strategies/activities and resources for the project and to facilitate and monitor their application in schools’, as well as being expected to ‘prepare and conduct professional development activities for English teachers involved’. Such involvement involves proportionate reduction in School Support (from 80% to 60%) and Committee Work (from 10% to 5%).

Perceptions from school-level stakeholders indicate that these AT project development roles are appreciated, despite any reduction in school support that they may entail. The value of the PLP-R/W in terms of resource provision was widely acknowledged. Even schools that had not participated (i.e. non-programme schools) were keen to gain access to the resources packaged with the programme. They were able to learn more about them through ATs who organised inter-school visits to introduce non-programme schools to PLP-R/W resources and procedures. The DTS project, based around authentic texts, was also a resource-rich programme for participating schools in their first one or two years, as the ATs assisted schools in locating suitable texts around which to build thematic units.

Ah, one thing I like very much about [the AT] is that she tries to share the successful experience from other schools so for example, she organised different school visits for us for example the more experienced PLP-R/W schools, and so we could really see how people run this programme and we learn quite a lot from it.

(EPC Interview)

PLP-R/W gives me the resources, so it gives me more time to prepare lessons, and not so much time making everything tailor-making [everything]

(NET Interview)

*I think what the **PLP-R/W does, and does very well**, it provides all those other things, the songs, the chants, the games, the shared reading, the shared writing, the very strong scaffolding for the children.*

(NET Interview)

*[PLP-R/W] has the materials and the worksheets and the books. Yeah. **Many resources we can use.***

(LET focus group)

*One point to add is that **the NET really helps in our pedagogical design**, because he can see whether there is space for refinement or improvement. **He will take the initiative to find materials to work out a unit himself.** We are too busy to do so, but he can help...**After he finds the sources, he will display them in the co-planning session and then seek our advice. Also, he won't find one source only. He will find at least two for us to choose. He also explains how each source can be used, and then asks which one is more appropriate.** This includes his own design. He will also explain why he has designed [it].*

(LET focus group)

*I believe that [the NET's] presence leads to more resources. We LETs used to teach based on local teaching materials or our own learning experiences, but **the NET is good at finding more suitable teaching materials** and searching for online stuff that is appropriate for our students in the classroom. So children find learning interesting and the lesson interactive.*

(LET focus group)

He would give me some advice and would give me some websites and also some group work and how to play the group work or some materials so I think he is very helpful. He can search a lot...

(LET focus group)

He is very good at surfing the, searching the information on the net, on the websites, that means. He can use many skills to search the many interesting themes or movies or, what to say? Ah cartoons, comics, the students ... like very much.

(LET focus group)

4.4.3.3 Research Question Three: To what extent and in what ways does the PNET Scheme help to improve and increase the local teachers' use of English in the classroom and enhance and expand their pedagogical practices?

In the surveys, a majority of all stakeholders felt that the NETs (and thus the Scheme) had a positive impact on local teachers' use of English and their pedagogical practices, although a much lower percentage of School Heads perceived that the NET's presence contributed to the LETs' expanded pedagogical practices. A possible explanation, supported by the qualitative data, is that some School Heads may be unaware of specific classroom practices. The NET from one case study noted that she used our classroom observation as an opportunity to invite the School Head to join us, to see for the first time co-teaching in action in that school. The surveys also noted that except for "plays, drama and/or puppetry", a majority of the LETs also report that they use a wide variety of pedagogical practices. The survey data found that both LETs and NETs felt that the AT's professional support, the school-based workshops organised by the ATs, and the NET Section's professional development seminars and workshops were effective at enhancing pedagogical practices.

Corroboration with surveys regarding professional development (PD) support

CF11. The Advisory Teaching Team as a whole is active in providing professional development activities both at the school level and in the form of centralised PD workshops. There is **evidence that the school-based activities are tailored to the needs of specific schools and well-received as a result**, thus contributing to teachers' desire to develop professionally.

During the whole process of course we ... learn through the collaborations with the NET and also the AT. But then at the end, after finishing the whole project we have invited the AT to help us share the fruit with other Panel members. So to a certain extent that kind of sharing helps promote a sort of professionalism among the Panel members.

(EPC interview)

[Interactions with the AT are] very effective. And sometimes I find that she works so hard for example, I something think of something and then I will 'WhatsApp' with her ... at 8:00 at night or a Saturday night and then she will answer me straight away and then ... I wasn't not expecting her to answer. [She is] so very effective, not just for the PLP-R/W programme but whenever I need some advice from her.

(EPC Interview)

My advisory teacher is great. Really, really good. Email communication, WhatsApp communication, always replies within a couple of hours. I couldn't ask for more, really. ... I'd quite happily meet her once a week. You know, I've got a lot to talk about. I enjoy discussing what I'm doing and trying to improve, and, I see them as quite a valuable resource that I'm going to get as much as I can out of while I can.

[...]

... in the very first meeting that I had with her, she asked if there was anything that I wasn't sure about, or if there was anything that I wanted to discuss or explore or learn or understand and I said that, you know, whilst I can teach a child to read a book, you know, my experience of it, was somewhat limited. I haven't been a teacher for very long, and she has been a teacher for 15 years or something, so I said can you show me what to do, basically? What experiences can you share with me and she within I think it was two weeks came and gave us a workshop for the whole English department, shared basically reading strategies, some teaching practice with us, quite simple things but effective you know, things that you need to know, if you don't. And I picked up enough that I feel a lot more confident about doing it. I'm able now to vary my lessons a little bit more.

(NET Interview)

For the DTS Scheme she has been excellent, so much support, but because so much time and effort has been taken up by her with this, 'cos I know she has a lot of other schools at the same time, any, any other support ... Thankfully I don't feel like have had any crises that I've needed a lot of support. But I think had I, I would have found her time to have been a bit stretched I think. So... but I have seen her very frequently because of this project, and she is always erm, I feel like if I had had a problem she would have made time of course, to kind of help me find a solution.

(NET Interview)

Yes. ... I've actually been to the professional development with my AT. The AT was very good, very good and very interactive, very interactive, and she showed us various

techniques for shared reading and guided reading. She has also sat in ... to observe co-planning meetings. So she was very diligent on saying, you know a particular question should be that we need to go into the detail, detail is very important. So it was all centred around co-planning.

(NET Interview)

While the general level of satisfaction with ATs was high, some local teachers and English Panel Chairs had suggestions that ATs might consider. Some LETs suggested that workshops be provided exclusively for NETs to introduce them to the culture of the Hong Kong primary school (something which is now addressed in the Induction Programme); one participant in a LET focus group suggested that a LET should accompany the NET to such workshops. Another NET suggested that centralised PD might be provided at a more advanced level specifically for NETs, although LETs would also be invited to attend:

I would like to see more briefings and pre-service sessions organised by the ATs or the NET Section. Topics such as Chinese classroom culture and characteristics of a particular school would help NETs to be better psychologically prepared for the school environment where they would work in.

(LET focus group)

I have a suggestion but I am not sure if it has been implemented. I know that the NET Section will organise sharing sessions for the NETs irregularly. They seem exclusively for NETs. If possible, a LET could go with the NET, so that LETs will understand more about what is happening in the NET Scheme immediately. Accompany the NET to these sharing activities...

(LET focus group)

I think [the centralised PD workshops] are good. They certainly help. Because it's mixed, with NETs and local teachers, I would say I personally that I find some of them perhaps a little bit redundant but they really do help the local teachers, some local teachers, I think, have had to approach it. It might be a good idea if there was a NET workshop where we could delve into something else, something, you know, take it a bit further [...]

Perhaps guided reading, talking about maybe instead of just talking about the basics of guided reading, okay, picture books, and look at the book, and so on and so forth, maybe we could talk about how can we assess the students while we guide read? Can we use a checklist? Can we see what skills they are using? Something like this. Whereas for guided reading, how can we make a running track to say, okay, and then we use that at co-planning meetings, okay, I see that they can use these skills but they cannot use these skills. Can we work on this? Something like that, just taking it maybe a step further, for example.

[..]

... but I think they're definitely worthwhile ... I see teachers who went to the workshops, who saw something demonstrated, then used it in the class and it worked very well. So in that regard, I think it's very good. I think they could develop it further, but I think they're useful.

(NET Interview)

One English Panel Chair suggested that the AT could provide more tailored advice and PD offerings:

... the current communication is relatively one-way. Normally it is I who asks her questions. Actually she could ask me as well. For example, [we were given] circulars about puppet workshops organised by the EDB. I think these workshops are not suitable for students at this school. Then I think the AT should understand what workshop we actually need, for example through a survey, to organise something that suits us. ... I never see she ask about what we need. The ATs organise some workshops, because they think we need them. But from our perspective, not all are necessary. I think they need to survey of our comments. This is win-win. They can organise a meaningful workshop, and we are happy to attend it.

(EPC Interview)

Another EPC appreciated the intensive support that accompanied involvement in DTS for the first year (as a P1 seed school), but noted that this entailed less support for other levels.

If the AT can come, not just one level, probably other levels as well, but the visits ... not as frequent as like we have this year joining the seed project, so at least there's someone from the outside want to help or to show, or to signal somebody can offer help from the outside. This is what I want from the AT: more help, more meetings or sharing, not just through the co-planning, probably through different kinds of workshops, school-based workshops, things like that.

(EPC Interview)

CF12. Some LETs found that co-teaching with a NET helped them in professional development and in improving their English.

For teachers, co-teaching enables [the NET] to work as a model or coach. When he is teaching, we also observe and learn his pedagogies. The effect is positive [...]

I think the Scheme is helpful in professional development. For example, we had the PLP-R programme at the beginning, which was led by our first NET. We also had co-teaching in those days. This programme was developed by NETs, so it might not easy for LETs to grasp the key elements involved. But through co-teaching, we LETs understood how to teach shared reading, guided reading, etc. When we were young we might not interact with such learning methods, so we need to learn from NETs now. And the biggest change to me is that after I grasp the key elements, with the opportunities provided by the school I could take up a whole lesson on shared reading. I become similar to a NET. I can put what I have learnt into practice. Therefore, I have a feeling that I become more mature on the aspect of teaching.

(LET focus group)

To my experience, after I cooperate with the NETs, personally I have learnt a lot of phonics from them. Although I learnt when I was a student, I still lack confidence in teaching them now. Through co-teaching, I also learn phonics when students are learning it. Then I will practise it with my students in my own classes. I also understand that phonics is important to students. The knowledge is helpful to them in the future. So I

also learn through co-teaching, and I strengthen my knowledge of it afterwards. This is of great help to students.

(LET focus group)

*Also, we said the NET is similar to a resource, a walking dictionary. Sometimes we LETs are not sure about the usage of English, and we will ask him to offer advice. We also enrich our subject knowledge in this way. **We also need to communicate with him in English, which increases our use of spoken English. I think we LETs also increase confidence in using English...**Sometimes we are not that sure about it, and we will ask for his help. He is able to provide feedback immediately. We learn something as well.*

(LET focus group)

Limitations regarding PD of LETs

CF13. While participants in the interviews generally found professional development effective, some limitations were highlighted. One of these was the **timeframe required for PD to actually result in teacher change**, a problem compounded by the heavy workload of local teachers in both teaching and non-teaching work which detracted from their ability to focus on professional development.

Advisory Teachers with significant experience as teacher educators providing professional development noted that, to be effective, a long-term perspective is needed, allied with ongoing monitoring and support, to ensure that PD results in actual ‘take-up’, that is adoption and implementation of the new procedures and practices introduced to them through PD. This was perceived as important particularly for non-programme schools, where the intensive support associated with a programme might not be available to such a degree and where school personnel may be used to more traditional modes of teaching.

Some local teachers cited heavy workload as a reason for not thinking about ‘how to do better’ in their teaching, as reflected in the following view expressed in one of the focus groups:

When the schedule is so tight, there is a lot of administrative work, there is barely space for us to think about how to do better. I just follow. I don't have time to think about improvement on teaching. Is there anything that I can skip? Fewer forms to fill in, less work, etc. uses up our time. If we don't have to do these, we can do many other things.

(LET focus group)

CF14. Professional development workshops provided by the NET in some schools appear to be relatively rare due to some NETs' lack of experience and training.

The only Professional Development workshops mentioned in the interviews as involving NETs in a facilitating role were sharing sessions related to DTS, which were co-organised with the ATs concerned and involved more than one seed school:

I did ... a workshop at the EDB so I did some, I had some meetings about that as well, quite regularly through the year actually. ... It was actually related to the text sets, so we gave feedback on what we'd done and shared what we'd done with other schools and gave them some ideas of what they could do and kind of, what they need to think about if they want to try and take on something like what we're doing.

(NET Interview)

One NET who had many years' experience of training teachers in her home country talked of the informal training she provided to her local colleagues:

Not that I'm training these teachers. I don't want to imply that, but teachers who are less experienced with the PLP-R/W, I can offer support and so on. Often I'll just meet them over the coffee corner in the staff room and say, "Oh something went really well today. That was really good. I liked the way you did X." Then, "Oh, it didn't work quite so well when we did Y. Perhaps next time we could think about doing X, Y, Z. But that reading at the end went really, really well." I try the sandwich approach, good, improve, good.
(NET Interview)

Another NET felt that NET-directed workshops would be more feasible if the school hired another NET to cover the KS2 classes:

A NET for KS1 and KS2, I think at least. That way the NETs can have collaboration ... and do professional workshops together. Focusing on whichever strength and helping the local teachers.
(NET Interview)

Additional insights on the Scheme's positive impact on LETs

CF15. Interviewees generally recognised the role of the Scheme in increasing the amount of **English used in the classroom** and **improving the LETs' spoken English**.

*I remember the first year she came we worked in a P1 classroom. To me P1 was always not easy to handle. She [the NET] set a good example to me. **She can explain everything very clearly and systematically. [Even though] she's a NET, she never speaks quickly in front of the students. She speaks at the right pace, but I always speak too fast. When I was standing behind a student and looking at her being a teacher I noticed that I was always speaking too fast in my P1 class. I learnt from her.***

(LET focus group)

Because of the existence of the NET, I required all English teachers, whether inside or outside the classroom, to speak English with the students. It would be better for them to be led by a NET. The LETs might feel very embarrassed, because Chinese people are very ashamed to speak English even though they are English teachers. They were really shy and feared grammatical mistakes. They were afraid of being laughed at by their colleagues.

(SH Interview)

We have [used English] many many times [during] assembly in the hall. Whenever an English teacher is in the hall, we ask them to speak in English and deliver the message in English to the students.

(SH Interview)

CF16. Examples of **expanded pedagogical practices** were cited in relation to projects such as PLP-R/W and DTS. There was also some evidence of NETs as agents of change in this regard.

The NET has first-hand life experience and can demonstrate teaching methods to us. This is a good thing through which we have learnt a lot.

(EPC interview)

*Actually I am not very sure about this because this is my first year teaching, but I think if, if I, I talk more and communicate more with the NET, **he will give us more idea of some creative teaching or some activities that we may not usually use in Hong Kong. So he may bring some new ideas like from his own country to help with learning English. I think this is the good thing that affects us.***

(LET focus group)

*Perhaps due to co-planning... in old days LETs didn't have much opportunity to exchange ideas when preparing for a lesson. There were exchanges, but not in-depth. **Now with the programme, we have a chance and time to communicate about teaching and the teaching methods to be used in a class.***

(LET focus group)

NETs can bring new ideas to LETs from the west, such as new pedagogies, process writing, formative assessment. NETs are playing an important role of providing ideas of this kind.

(EPC interview)

*I think textbook is restricted by something. But with the PNET Scheme, the PLP-R/W programme, when the NET Section produces these books as the basis, there should be no business concern. They just run a reading and writing programme from a teacher development perspective. Then the elements of teaching reading and writing are back to the school. I think this enables teachers to move forward without the constraints of textbook. ... **So I think the PNET Scheme allows us to tentatively put aside the textbook and reconsider how to do a better curriculum.***

(SH interview)

*Oh, a lot of... the intonation... for example... a hen. A hen is talking... [the NET] has different voices. [Coo coo... imitating the sound of a hen]... Very interesting. I love her reading the story. Just like the kids. **When she reads the story, I'm like ... just like the kids. When she reads the story...I'm being one of the kids. I'm not as good as her, but yeah yeah. Yeah, I can do the hen talk. Yes, but not as good as her. Okay... but that's why I can... I learned from her.***

(EPC interview)

*I think more games are included in the lesson, more storytelling and singing in it. When we hurry for finishing the syllabus we often neglect the elements in cooperative learning. **But once students enter the English room, they are surrounded by a happy environment. Then I know that I need to implement cooperative learning through gaming. The Scheme increases my awareness of this.***

(LET focus group)

Evidence for the benefit of co-teaching for local teachers was cited by NETs. In one case the NET perceived this as the opportunity to make use of skills local teachers were already trained to use and capable of using but did not have the chance to use in their regular GE lessons. He also noted that practices employed in co-teaching the PLP-R/W curriculum were

impacting on general approaches adopted in GE, related, for example, to the use of readers. Other NETs had similar observations regarding the transfer of skills related to Phonics teaching, and collaborative learning techniques such as ‘Think, pair, share’:

But I would say, actually, I definitely can say [co-teaching is] very effective. And how can I tell? Is because, they're using it in the GE. So for example, they're taking skills that they've learned here or that they've already known but didn't really think that they could apply ...to the style that they have been doing it in, let's say, and using it. So for example, the look, say, spell, cover, write, check kind of formula for, you know, doing, you know, practising for their dictation, let's say, right. 'Oh, I got only 27 in dictation, so the teacher will go, this is in GE, and then do look, say, spell, cover, write, check, teach them the skill, take it from here and do it in there. When they do readers now, they used to have on the, for the English, for GE maybe let's say three readers per term. For GE, now they've cut it back to perhaps two and spending longer time on it, rather than one reader, one lesson, then it's finished, you know. They're doing more of a process, maybe cover, picture walk, reading the book. They're also giving them the books according to their level, because we're now levelling the students.

(NET Interview)

I've had kindergarten experience so, I'm quite good at bringing phonics to the teachers, and the teachers have been quite, quite a lot of the teachers have been open to teaching phonics this year and, and they've put quite a lot of the tech, the techniques that I used at the beginning of the year into their own lessons as the year's gone on. So they've gone and used the phonics whilst they're doing their reading and things.

(NET interview)

I'd say that, Hong Kong teaching is still trying ... I think it's been improving in terms of holistic teaching, but I still think it's quite talk and chalk and quite teacher-based learning and, ... but I can see some of the teachers taking those ideas that we're trying to put through the NET Scheme in terms of pair talk, pair teaching, Think Pair Share stuff, and asking the students to speak together in English before they, the teacher, and you know, creating participation using that kind of thing, rather than just telling them, and then doing the worksheet, which I think is what generally happens.

(NET interview)

There's many terms. I would say number one, important: is "creative". It is important to be creative, and this is something a NET can bring, something different and something different to the lessons. ... And ... resourceful. Definitely, you need to get the resources ready for the teaching. And if the resources are not there, not all the teachers have time to get them, so I need to make sure they're prepared.

(NET interview)

Data from the observation of co-teaching supports the transfer of skills learned from the approaches used by the NET in teaching PLP-R/W, Phonics and Reading to local teachers. The quotations below from observation field notes suggest that, in the more effective case study schools, the roles of NET and LET in the classroom were broadly similar, both equally capable to taking the lead to teach Phonics or other skills:

The NET and the LET took turns taking the lead and supporting learning. The CA distributed stickers and helped get supplies. The LET took a lead role at times, and a supportive role at other times. Both NET and LET took on the full range of roles. They seemed to be very similar in that they shared the lead and supporting roles for different tasks. They were both very animated and engaging. They traded off, so they were not unique. But perhaps the LET did more classroom management while in supporting role, moving a student closer who was not following, etc. The LET was confident to take the lead role and animated the response to get children engaged. One sat and taught, the other got students up to use the pointer etc.

(Observation Data)

The LET led the students into the English Room accompanied by a song; introduced activities, conducted whole class and group activities, maintained discipline, and counselled students on appropriate behaviour in English. NET and LET roles were similar in nearly all respects, the LET even taking charge of the Phonics activity. But the LET was more prominent in dealing with discipline. NET and LET made use of collaboration to expand English learning opportunities by sharing out roles and responsibilities, and swapping the central controlling role for different activities. NET and LET interacted with students, individually and in small groups in the lesson, doing so effectively. The two teachers appeared very comfortable co-teaching together and engineered transitions between stages, and switches of role seamlessly. A diverse range of activities including songs, drills, brainstorming and reading engaged the students actively and created a high level of interest which resulted in some over-excited behaviour at the end of the lesson.

(Observation Data)

CF17. Despite the overall success of literacy programmes, there was some evidence of reluctance among more experienced LETs to adapt to the changes required in a text set approach such as DTS.

Because he can also exchange the teaching skills, because we have many old teachers, who came here for more than 20 years. So think about this. Their teaching style or teaching technique may be old-fashioned. So if we have employed more teachers, then the new idea will come to school. NETs also have ideas, so it can help our old teacher be, become more, more, more, how to say? can, can follow the pace of Hong Kong English education.

(SH interview)

Mmm, I think, as I said there can be some friction from more experienced teachers and I think it would be more difficult for them [LETs] to pick up the skills

(NET interview)

4.4.3.4 Research Question Four: What factors determine effective NET deployment, utilisation, and integration in schools?

A majority (over 88%) of all stakeholders in schools (LET, NET, and School Heads) surveyed perceived that the NET was used, supported, and integrated effectively. The qualitative data revealed the specific qualities stakeholders felt are needed for successful NETs and attributes that are found in less effective NETs, as well as what factors impede their integration into

schools. An overview of the qualities of effective and less effective NETs is provided first, followed by the most prominent findings related to NET deployment, utilisation, and integration.

CF18. Stakeholders mentioned **qualities needed for an effective NET** that included attributes that were personal (i.e., making relationships), attitudinal (i.e., being flexible), and professional (i.e., Western teaching experience).

Personal attributes of an effective NET

Enthusiastic about ideas... Okay... Yeah. Energetic.

(EPC interview)

They need to love kids, like to talk to kids.

(EPC interview)

Attitudinal attributes of an effective NET

Mentality. For example, if the NET is very open-minded, he can accept changes.

(LET focus group)

Resourceful, friendly, adaptable, approachable, flexible

(LET focus group)

Professional attributes of an effective NET

Of course. She needs to be... understand the learning needs of the students. For example, for the primary students, because primary is different from the secondary students.... you have to understand the learning needs. Because they are very young, and you need to... you need a lot of scaffolding. You need detailed scaffolding. I think this is very important for primary NET.

(EPC interview)

I think that he comes up with the activities that Hong Kong students seldom have experienced. He draws on western cultures. I think this is helpful to my students.

(LET focus group)

*I think, first of all, how deep the NET coming from a foreign country understands the mechanism of TESOL. His personality... I believe most NETs enjoy staying with children at school. But whether they could teach and the children could learn is another question. Some NETs just go into the classroom singing a song and playing happily with the children. That's all. This is my personal feeling. But on curriculum development, **only experienced NETs have the expertise in helping to fine-tune the school-based curriculum.** Of course a good heart is needed as well to help the school and foster development of the English subject. ... So when it comes to questions like this, how to*

deal with the English curriculum at the primary school is what we need to think about on the whole.

(SH Interview)

Experienced Advisory Teachers who have worked closely with different NETs over a number of years had valuable insights as to the qualities that make for an effective NET. They mentioned a number of factors including the ability to engage in quality relationships, being an astute observer (including a willingness to listen to others), having a good attitude, being flexible, not being overbearing or wanting to change things too quickly, being able to ‘go into the situation and take everything in and go with the flow’ and having good knowledge and experience. There was a perception that NETs should have Western, rather than local, teaching experience and qualifications because this would help them introduce methods and approaches which might constitute innovations in the local context.

CF19. Stakeholders mentioned **attributes found in less effective NETs** that included aspects that were personal (i.e. lack of energy,), attitudinal (i.e., disrespect), and professional (i.e., lack of experience and training).

Personal attributes found in less effective NETs

*She's like the teacher in the university. **Just lack of... lack of energy. Um... a bit boring.***
(EPC interview)

*They **are not willing** to do... Because we ask him/her to do some things. They are counting... Why should I do that? Why should I? [awkward laugh] Okay, I should... I shouldn't do the... too many this of this or too many of that. That sort of thing.*
(EPC interview)

Attitudinal attributes found in less effective NETs

Respondents in the case study interviews discussed instances in which the attitude of a NET towards their local colleagues had hampered effectiveness. These include relatively rare instances in which NETs failed to show appropriate respect for local colleagues, demonstrating a form of contempt for them and their teaching methods, and showing an unfortunate lack of respect for Chinese culture.

In the past we had a NET and he was quite **self-centered. He didn't accept any opinion from the other teachers and he got angry easily as well** but, so it is really hard. Basically, we would say, no communication. So he did his work, and we did our work, so the students didn't learn much.

(EPC Interview)

Professional attributes found in less effective NETs

The essential professional attributes of a NET, including relevant qualifications and experience, were raised by stakeholders in a number of interviews. Some respondents felt that the minimum

level of qualification and experience for a NET needed to be raised; however, the number of NETs with the minimum level of qualifications responding to the survey was rather small.

*It does concern me that there are a lot of NETs being appointed who are **not trained teachers**. That comes down to the school choice because I mean I guess partly maybe they're not getting, maybe they're not always getting the applicants that are trained. [. . .] We're still talking about children whose education is on the line. I have real grave concerns about putting an untrained NET in the school.*

(NET interview)

Some NETs just go into the classroom singing a song and playing happily with the children. That's all. This is my personal feeling. But on curriculum development, only experienced NETs have the expertise in helping to fine-tune the school-based curriculum.

(SH interview)

CF20. Having teachers (both NETs and LETs) who are open and willing to learn from each other is vital to collaboration.

*I think if a local teacher sees me using a certain strategy or activity of course, **we all borrow from each other**. If I see an activity, oh, that's really working well, [I'll borrow it] but I never saw myself as [the expert] you say one of the initial intents of the Scheme, because of the perceived or real lack of training [of LETs]. I've never seen that. So in my experience, **my role has been to support the English panel and to provide very motivating, authentic learning activities and reading instruction for the kids and they really do enjoy it, they are really motivated and the same here and particularly with the English e-learning activities**. So in my opinion, it's going quite well.*

(NET interview)

It really depends on whether the NET or LET is calculating, resistant to comments or feedback. If yes, then there will be conflicts. But so far the three NETs are quite nice and competent at interpersonal relationships. We haven't encountered any problems of collaboration.

(SH interview)

*We are lucky that all NETs assigned so far are experienced. And the working attitude of a NET is also important. **It is better to have a NET who does not consider him or herself an expert, but a collaborator to understand our situation**. Hearsay is that many NETs consider themselves experts.*

(EPC interview)

I will tell the newcomer that the NET and I are good work partners. The NET is similar to a good mentor for me, and a friend as well. He will share with us, for example, his [children] and his family experiences, and then I will share my things with him. We share about life outside of work. Back to work, as I said, he is like a mentor in that he demonstrates his teaching skills in the classroom, which is educational to me as well. Also, we are good work partners because we often collaborate to develop or adjust the curriculum.

(LET focus group)

*I think some of the, maybe the **more experienced** [local] **teachers maybe aren't quite as open to the new ideas** that we bring, but I think generally in this school, the teachers have been quite, quite good, quite open to taking on those new ideas.*

(NET interview)

*I think number one is adaptability, must be one of the top three, because **you have to integrate into the school, you have to integrate into the society.***

(NET interview)

CF21. Stakeholders did not all agree that *experience* was the highest priority for a NET. In one school, the English Panel Chair who had worked with three more experienced NETs in the past found **experienced NETs tended to place LETs in an assistant role**. Some ATs felt that **enthusiasm could compensate for lack of experience in some NETs**. Based on all the responses, it is fair to say that experience is important, but this needs to be coupled with a willingness to learn from others.

*... last year the NET teacher was very experienced, so he got all the things he wanted to teach and **he just informed us**. And then we, when we came to the classroom, we attended classes, **we just acted like an assistant rather than co-teaching.***

[...]

*It depends on how that person used. So based on my observations and understanding, when [comparing] ... this NET with the previous three, I would say, **I would choose this NET, the new NET. He's comparatively young, he's not got experience to be a NET, this is the first year who, he works as a formal NET, so that's why I can see he tried his best to fit himself into the school, he personally initiates something, and then, or I should say he personally ... suggests something he wants to try and I think that is good for students and I give him room to try that out, so if that teacher is very very experienced, I'm not saying that experienced teachers [are] no good, but the experienced teachers have their own way of thinking.***

(EPC Interview)

The alternative perspective of this EPC was reinforced in the views of some ATs. Although experience, openness and flexibility were viewed as clearly desirable qualities in a NET, as already noted, sometimes enthusiasm could compensate for lack of experience and even for relevant training. Young NETs who have the 'desire and drive to learn' can be a valuable resource for any school and, under the guidance of an AT and within the structure provided by the PLP-R/W, can develop quickly.

Perceived limitations regarding NET recruitment and deployment

CF22. Some stakeholders felt that schools that took the initiative to hire **NETs independently of the EDB** should be guided to make the right choice of teacher, in particular as far as pedagogical expertise and competence were concerned.

NET recruitment can be handled independently by the schools, or done through centralised EDB recruitment. NET Section personnel noted the need to help schools to make sensible hiring decisions, and to prioritise qualities such as professionalism, love of children and of education and of the classroom and to look for NETs who can serve as role models in terms of learning.

Concerns about NET recruitment were voiced by a small number of school-level personnel as reflected, for example, in the NET and EPC interview quotations which follow. These include perceptions that recruitment criteria allowed the hiring of NETs who were not subject trained. Although as mentioned earlier, lack of experience and training can be seen as acceptable, especially if compensated by enthusiasm, it would impact the role of the NET in the school. Recruiting a NET with relatively low levels of experience and qualifications might mean, for example, that local teachers were better qualified and had more relevant experience than the NET. As will be seen in discussion of RQ5, this can also impact collaboration. In addition, the level of support the AT would be required to provide for an inexperienced NET could be significantly increased. As one EPC noted, having a NET without relevant teacher training would also mean that the NET would have to be given time off to attend professional development and upgrading – normally conducted in evening courses in university campuses which might be a long distance from the primary school.

*It does concern me that **there are a lot of NETs being appointed who are not trained teachers**. That comes down to the school choice because I mean I guess partly maybe they're not getting, maybe they're not always getting the applicants that are trained. I don't know. I know that in cases where they've had an applicant who's very experienced, like ... they appointed a non-trained teacher. ... Sometimes when they've got the choice for a trained teacher, they're not taking it. It's not like the school is paying the salary. It's coming from the EDB. ... It's not like they're saving money by choosing someone who's on a low salary as opposed to a higher salary. I really don't know. It's happening a lot. There are lots of non-trained teachers working as NETs.*

(NET Interview)

*While the recruitment process has been improving in recent years, and the quality of NETs has been getting better, **EDB should not hire unqualified NETs** whose educational background is not relevant or those who have already retired. **Unqualified NETs have to study for qualifications part-time which means they have to be released early from school so that they can attend their evening classes, which causes trouble for the school.***

(EPC Interview)

It should be noted, however, that the perception that ‘a lot of NETs’ are being appointed who are not trained teachers, is not borne out by the qualifications profile of NETs in our sample. Some descriptive statistics of the qualifications of NETs and a comparison of qualifications of NETs and LETs are presented here. Figure 27 shows the highest qualification of NET and LET by certificate/degree and Table 23 shows the descriptive statistics of the highest qualifications held by NETs and LETs; whereas Figure 28 and Table 24 show the qualification information

of NETs by Category 1-5 – the five categories for NET recruitment under the PNET Scheme. For the analysis of subjective perception (e.g. agree-disagree) the results were adjusted by sampling weights, meaning that some participants spoke for more people in the under-sampled population segments whereas some participants represented fewer people in the over-sampled segments. However, for **objective, factual** data only the unweighted numbers were reported, meaning that the participants’ degrees or certificates are their own and did not represent anyone else’s qualification.

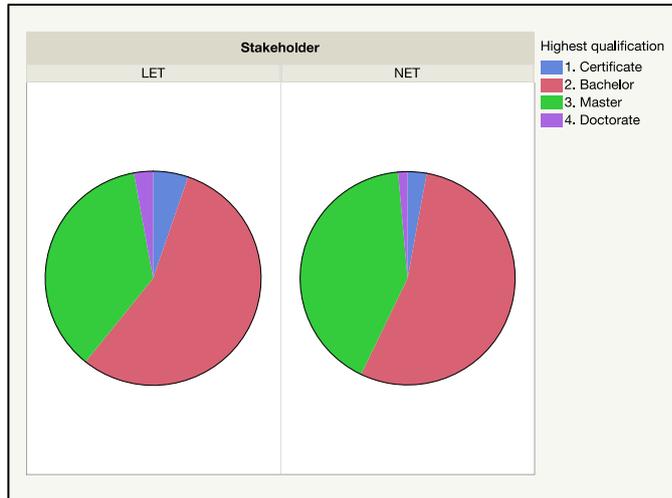


Figure 27. Highest qualification of NET and LET by cert/degree

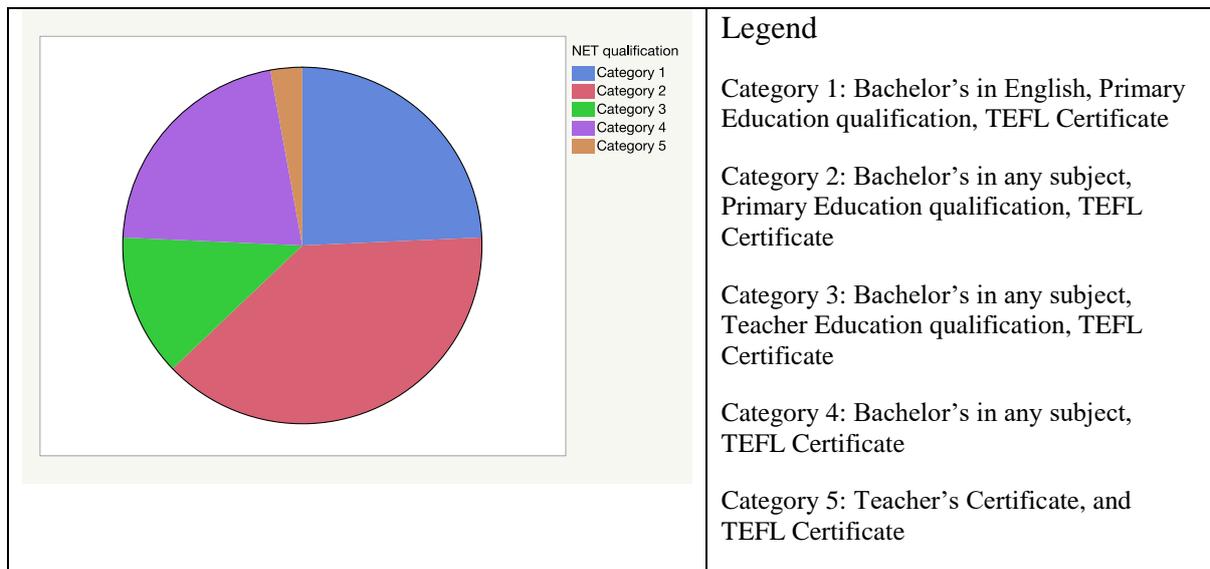


Figure 28. NET qualification by Category 1-5

Table 23
Unweighted count and percentage of NET and LET highest qualification

	Certificate*		Bachelor		Master		Doctorate	
	Count	Row %	Count	Row %	Count	Row %	Count	Row %
LET	22	5.26%	232	55.50%	152	36.36%	12	2.87%
NET	2	2.86%	38	54.29%	29	41.43%	1	1.43%

* See the caution below in comparing certificates.

Table 24
Unweighted count and percentage of NET's highest qualification by category

NET qualification by category	Count	Percent
Category 1 (Bachelor's in English, Primary Education qualification, TEFL Certificate)	17	24.29%
Category 2 (Bachelor's in any subject, Primary Education qualification, TEFL Certificate)	27	38.57%
Category 3 (Bachelor's in any subject, Teacher Education qualification, TEFL Certificate)	9	12.86%
Category 4 (Bachelor's in any subject, TEFL Certificate)	15	21.43%
Category 5 (Teacher's Certificate, and TEFL Certificate)	2	2.86%

This analysis suggests that the qualifications of NETs and LETs are broadly comparable. However, caution is needed in discussing ‘certificates’. The qualification ‘certificate’ is likely to refer to very different types of training – for LETs, it is most likely to refer to a two- or three-year ‘Teacher’s Certificate’ obtained from a College of Education, whereas for a NET it is most likely to refer to a 100-hour TEFL/TESL qualification.

The analysis shows that the proportion of NETs recruited in the lowest category – non-graduates with only a TEFL Certificate – is less than 3%. Assuming that the sample of teachers surveyed is truly representative of the population of all primary NETs, this would suggest that there are only around 12 or 13 Category 5 NETs in the whole of Hong Kong. On the other hand, the proportion of fully qualified NETs– i.e. holding a relevant degree and relevant teacher training – among those surveyed is less than 25%.

Additional insights on NET deployment, PD, and integration

The running of the induction programme for new NETs by the ATs (in previous years, the programme was contracted out) is appreciated by NETs who have taken part and who discussed induction in the interviews. Like centralised PD programmes, the induction provides an opportunity for NETs to develop social networks, enhance their professional skills and their preparedness for serving in the schools, and alerts them to the need for cultural sensitivity.

The programme is designed for NETs who have never had an EDB NET post before, and introduces them to the PNET Scheme and to classroom practices with a focus on how to manage classroom behaviour and how to foster collaboration in their school. Centralised PD sessions are also well-received, as reflected in both the internal NET Section evaluations and the views gathered in interviews and focus groups. These sessions involve a mix of NETs and local teachers which fosters both professional and social networking, helping NETs avoid feeling isolated and lonely in their schools.

4.4.3.5 Research Question Five: What factors foster and inhibit NET-LET collaboration (NLC) according to the various stakeholders?

The survey responses indicate that, in these various roles, most or all of the NETs agreed that they were performing the expected roles effectively, while their colleagues (LETs and School Heads) had slightly lower levels of agreement with the statements. These differences in the perceptions of the ways that NETs engage with LETs (i.e., acting as a language advisor, suggesting new teaching ideas, clarifying lesson objectives, etc.) merit further investigation in the case studies to understand why NETs feel that they are engaged in these collaborative activities, while LETs and School Heads are not as firmly convinced of their engagement. There was a significant difference in perceptions of the effectiveness of English Panel Meetings among NETs and LETS. Fewer NETs than LETs perceived the English panel meeting as effective. (See finding 34 for possible reasons for this.) Nonetheless, over 99% of both LETs and NETs reported that their collaboration with their counterpart (NET or LET) was effective. Before we look at the corroborating evidence in the qualitative data for the different views among stakeholders on the type and effectiveness of collaboration, we will first look at the overall findings the qualitative data provided regarding the importance of collaboration of NETs and LETs to the Scheme, and the factors that might inhibit and foster it.

CF23. Collaboration is recognised by all participants as a cornerstone of the PNET Scheme.

Parents' views of the importance of collaboration were revealed in the open-ended responses to this question: Generally, do you think that the collaboration between the NET and LETs is important in improving English learning at the school? **Please give a brief reason for your choice.** Figure 29 shows the key terms that the 1,009 parents who responded to this open-ended question related to collaboration.

Since we all come from different cultural background, when we collaborate, we can come up with creative ideas or solutions. Therefore, we should encourage the collaboration of all the participants.

Through the collaboration with NETs, I believe it will create the opportunity for LETs to improve their English proficiency, and it can also help NETs to develop more effective approaches for teaching local students' English.

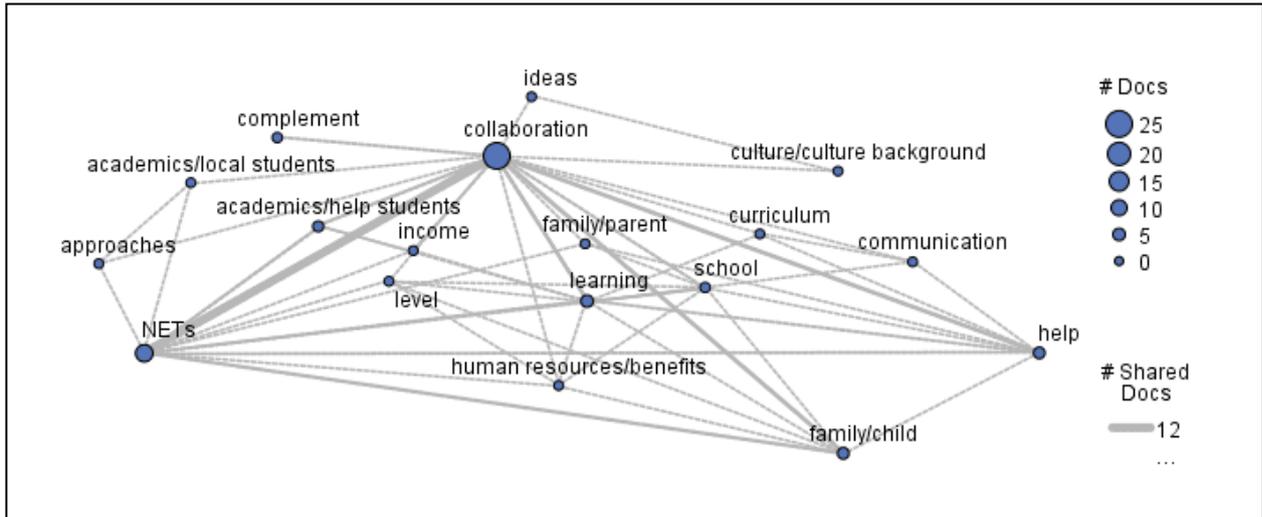


Figure 29. Concept map of parents' view of collaboration.

CF24. Holding regular **co-planning meetings** prior to co-teaching was widely perceived as a key factor in promoting collaboration between NET and LETs.

*I think **co-planning** bridge the RSP [Reading Success Programme] and GE lessons. They are linked together, but not working independently. Of course there're things to be taught respectively. **The co-planning sessions allow us to know the progress of each, so that we can complement each other. Students can learn better in this way.***

(LET focus group)

*Other than sharing what we think about the lesson and telling him [the NET] our need, it is also a good time for us to reflect on our resources and curriculum for further refinement. **The co-planning meeting is a good opportunity for us to reach a consensus.***

(LET focus group)

*... because of the **co-planning, because everyone at each level knows what they're doing, there's a lot of collaboration.***

(NET interview)

CF25. NET Section programmes such as PLP-R/W and DTS depend on effective collaboration.

The PLP-R/W is a vehicle for collaboration, with co-teaching materials providing clear guidelines as to the roles of each collaborating teacher in implementing the lessons. NET Section personnel noted that PLP-R/W was designed to promote teacher professional development and NET-LET collaboration. When first introduced, it was felt to be a breakthrough, giving schools the platform for collaboration through scheduled co-planning and structured co-teaching. The challenge facing ATs and schools is to sustain the momentum for collaboration.

*Because I had taught at a non-programme school, I understand the dramatic difference. In the past, it depended on the proactivity of the NET. I was lucky that the NET at my previous school was professional and took the initiative to work out a lot of things. But when NETs were less mature or without much experience in curriculum development, they would only do what they were asked to do. In that case the effectiveness might be questionable. **After the establishment of the PLP-R/W, NETs can [extend] their strengths. This is because the programme is foreign-oriented but localised to Hong Kong.***

(EPC interview)

In this school, I think the way we're moving is actually quite, the way [the AT is] helping us is really quite good, she's shown us quite a good way of doing co-planning I think in P- in P1 with the DTS. And the ... the way the school has previously run ... means that it's taking, it will take time to get the teachers to really take on board what we're doing and I think doing it level by level and slowly moving, moving it through the levels, will make it so that the teachers are slowly more on board.

(NET interview)

CF26. In non-programme schools (schools not signing up for a project like PLP-R/W), the failure to set aside time for co-planning is perceived as an impediment to effective collaboration.

Non-programme schools rely on the NET and the AT to promote regular co-planning, since it is not built into the curriculum. In these schools, co-planning seems sometimes to be neglected, or relegated to after-school timeslots which means that teachers may be less willing to participate at the end of a busy teaching day. This is reflected in the experience of two NETs working in schools not adopting the PLP-R/W.

*[Co-planning for the DTS project in P1] is really much more regular than my P2 and P3 lessons [in] which ... I'm mainly following stuff that has happened in the past and editing it a little bit so, the teachers, **I only see them maybe once a month because they are already pretty familiar with this, the stuff.***

[...]

*Well, I guess, in this school, **the co-planning is not really as thorough as it should be.** I think we can make it more thorough ... I think we could spend a lot more time, especially with P2 and P3, trying to find a way of integrating more of what we do in terms of skills into the other classes and that's my aim moving forward, I guess.*

(NET Interview)

I wouldn't call it a co-plan, a formal co-planning, but I would have an informal chat with my teachers and give them a basic idea of how I think that unit is going to structure. I give them a unit plan that I have drafted, and ask them if there're any comments, or any suggestions, usually there won't be, usually they'll just give it back to me

[...]

***co-planning is, from this school, not what I expected or had hoped for.** ... I think I've had ONE co-planning meeting and that's it. And, because **co-planning is not in my timetable**, whereas in my previous job it was. And I had weekly co-planning, which was something I was very used to because then I could let everyone know what I was doing, but here there's just no time allocated for co-planning*

(NET Interview)

CF27. The model of co-planning and co-teaching envisaged in the projects (**PLP-R/W and DTS**) is one which specifically promotes teacher collaboration in the classroom. When the model is not followed, what results is often a lesson which is prepared by the NET, in the absence of a system for co-planning, and in which the NET is considered to be in charge, and the LET just an assistant; this practice militates against collaboration.

Effective co-planning would entail the *mutual engagement, reciprocal interaction* and *shared repertoire* associated with a community of practice. As described by NET section personnel, this was a model in which all teachers participate, they all participate in the lesson design, go through the resources, scrutinise them and see whether things have to be adapted. A model of co-planning along these lines was observed in three out of the four more effective schools, as reflected in the quotes for field notes compiled during observation of co-planning:

*No strong organisation of roles, although the NET is the one driving the solicitation of opinions from LETs and AT. **Good level of participation**, including AT who contributes suggestions. **Although the NET drives the meeting, his aim is to solicit the opinions of others and does this in a low key, non-dominating manner.** Strong evidence of **collaborative decision-making** - the NET had inclined to discard the materials, but agreed with the overall view that they could be suitably modified to make them more appropriate and more motivating for students. **Strong evidence of discussion related directly to pedagogical practices** as the discussion related to pedagogical ideas for modifying and exploiting the materials. The relationship between NET and LETs seems cordial and friendly. **The NET seemed to have deliberately avoided giving his own ideas for the materials until the LETs had expressed theirs.** When he saw that local teachers favoured keeping the worksheet, he came up with interesting ideas for modifying it which were creative, interesting, generally welcomed and finally agreed.*

(Observation Data)

*NET is the Chair, other participants contribute with questions (mostly), suggestions and issues. A relatively **high level of participation** is evident in the meeting, equally balanced between all participants. The NET dominated, as the expert on the topic since PLP-R/W is clearly his domain of responsibility and he is very familiar with the content, but there were **no passive participants**. The evidence of collaborative decision-making in the meeting was limited as the PLP-R/W teacher's guide tended to determine direction; discussion was largely related to how to implement the directions effectively. Some collaborative decision-making regarding what the CA should do in her after-school remedial class. **There was significant evidence of discussion related directly to pedagogical practices:** How to deal with Shared Reading, sentence-making, content words and pictures etc. A cordial, friendly atmosphere was observed with mutual respect and familiarity.*

(Observation Data)

The co-planning meeting that was the most carefully prepared meeting of all, with supporting documents prepared by the NET and distributed to all participants, took place in the least effective case study school:

*This was a briefing on planned activities for upcoming PLP-R/W lessons which involve co-teaching, but not always with the NET. Documents tabled contain very detailed lesson procedures. Decisions are not overtly recorded and there is no secretary/note taker. It is a regular, scheduled, weekly co-planning meeting, but within the one hour allocated, both the PLP-R/W and the GE curriculum have to be discussed, the latter in Cantonese. Roles are not allocated beyond the **NET being in charge of the meeting**; other participants make minor contributions. **Very low level of participation. Most LETs say nothing and appear passive.** The AT and EPC make minor contributions. No decisions were reached in the meeting, which was more like a **briefing on what to do in the next unit with highly detailed specifications/steps laid out in advance** than co-planning in which participants discuss and contribute pedagogical ideas equally. Each planned lesson has a detailed specification. Pedagogical practices appear pre-ordained and not subject to discussion. Relations appear cordial and polite, but lacking in warmth. The detailed pre-determined lesson specifications and the 'briefing' style **did not encourage active participation**. The impression was created that while requests for clarification were welcome any alternative suggestions might be less welcome. After discussing the co-taught lessons, local teachers went on to discuss the GE lessons for the same level. The NET was not involved in this part of the discussion, and was excused. This raises the question of how PLP-R/W-GE integration is achieved.*

(Observation Data)

The preferred model of co-teaching was articulated by NET Scheme personnel as one where both teachers have shared responsibility for the success of the lesson, where they are both sharing in delivery of the content, and keeping the kids on task, where they are both active players. In such a model, the NET and the LET would be exchanging ideas, doing demonstrations, taking different roles, and modelling interaction so that the students can do pair work just like the two teachers at the front. There would be a lot of incidental language going on between the LET and the NET that the children could pick up on, so that then they could start using incidental language too.

This kind of co-teaching was observed in the current evaluation (see observation data cited in support of CF16 above), but in the 8 lessons observed in the case study schools, this style of co-teaching was observed twice. In the case-study schools, there was a tendency for co-taught lessons to be 'NET lessons' as reflected in the following quotations from observation data and from interviews with stakeholders in one school where the perceptions of the EPC seemed to contrast with the experience of the NET.

Co-teaching in less effective schools was marked by more distinct roles being performed by NET and LET, rather than the similarity of roles we have noted in relation to CF16 above. In some cases, the LET even performed a role more like that of a classroom assistant than a fully qualified teacher:

The NET was evidently in control of the lesson and for the most part directed the LET, or relied on the LET to provide support and reinforcement. However, the LET did take the initiative to model and drill sounds, independently of the NET on at least one occasion.

(Observation Data)

The NET monopolised the instructional role from the front of the class, capturing attention, eliciting, explaining and delivering instructions. The LET monitored student

performance, distributed and collected materials, provided assistance to students as required (which involved some instruction on a one-to-one basis). The NET was in control of the lesson, the LET played a minor supporting role. Both NET and LET monitored pair and individual performance and provided assistance as required during pair and individual work activities. Instructional and facilitation roles unique to NET. Support role was unique to LET.

(Observation Data)

... sometimes it's difficult to get some teachers to be involved in the lesson. They, they, it's quite maybe the, the role is seen as "NET", it's "NET lesson", so it's quite difficult to get them to be involved in the lesson but, generally it, it's using the opportunity of having two teachers and creating those interactions for the students to see, so "Oh what do you think, Miss Lam?" "Oh I think this, what about you?" and then asking the students to, to interact in the same way and so it's about using the co-teaching opportunity to, to give those interactions that the students maybe normally can't see unless they it's, they read it or they watch it on say YouTube. It's not as easy for them to understand.

(NET interview)

I think we are working on a platform where professional communication is encouraged. Our school in itself stresses the sharing and practices of good things. We have developed such a culture. He naturally integrated himself into it when he started working here. So I think it's related to the mission of our school. We emphasise professional development, [sharing] of resources, and teacher collaboration.

(EPC Interview)

There's a, it's quite difficult in this school, actually particularly in this school, to make those big changes. There's quite a lot of friction from some teachers, I think, not all, but some, there's maybe a split of teachers that, where some are really on board with everything and maybe difficult part is making those changes with teachers who are used to their routines.

(NET interview)

There were also differences in perceptions of co-teaching coming from the NET and from the EPC as well as LETs in another school. EPC and LETs seemed to base their view on the questionable assumption that if the NET can manage the discipline, and 'if he is good', then local teachers should not have a role and simply let him teach the whole lesson:

I mean the main role of ours is to maintain the discipline. We don't need to encourage students to put up their hands or participate because they do. What we need to, they are overjoyed sometimes, so maybe they stand up, and then we have to cool them down, that is our main role. And some students may make trouble. We stop that. That's our main role. Because this NET is a very independent one, and a very experienced one so we don't need to have too much help here in the lesson. ... Really depends on the ability of the NET teacher. If the ability is not good, then we need to co-teach together, like half-half lesson, but if he is good enough, then what is the point of correcting him or disturbing him?

(EPC Interview)

The perception of the LET as assistant, rather than as an equal co-teacher, was shared by LETs from the same school:

I will walk around the classroom and check whether the student can understand or they can hear what the NET is talking about and try to help the student to achieve the task.
(LET focus group)

For the lessons with the NET, um, mainly my role is assist role and for one of the lessons, they will teach some sound, phonics with the students. While they're doing some card games, I will assist [NET's name]. ... After the activities, students need to do the worksheet together and after they complete the worksheet, I will walk around the classroom and to help the students to tick the answer whether it is correct or not.
(LET focus group)

Although the classroom observation data revealed that ‘*the NET was evidently in control of the lesson and for the most part directed the LET, or relied on the LET to provide support and reinforcement*’, the LET did actually ‘*take the initiative to model and drill sounds, independently of the NET on at least one occasion*’ (Observation Data). This more collaborative model of co-teaching was also reflected in the NET’s description of the process. He perceived the role of NET and LET as broadly similar. While he acknowledged the LET’s role in classroom management, he insisted that the actual teaching was shared more or less equally:

*The co-teaching is a new thing for me. Usually, I’m so used to being by myself, so it’s been a learning curve to sort of share the stage with somebody else. But I find that it’s most useful at the moment, because it’s so new to me, for classroom management because the teacher that I teach with is quite often the class teacher of that class as well, so they know students so well, they know if we’re going to do an activity, who should work together, who shouldn’t work together, you know. So, a lot of the classroom management stuff is handled by the local English teacher. **But they’re also very aware of their students’ abilities, they see the students more often than I do, so actually if they know a better way of delivering something, then I’m quite happy for them to take over that part, and I’ll back them up as it is, or the other way around.***

[...]

*No, [it’s] absolutely not [a case of the LET just taking care of discipline]. ... I feel like they have their own classes, I only have my co-teaching classes, I feel like I need to maybe work a bit harder. **There’s that feeling of, you know, ‘You’ve got all your classes and you’re helping me with these classes too, co-teaching with me’.** So there’s an element of [me] wanting to work harder I suppose, and also I enjoy teaching so **I want to teach as much as I can without overpowering.***

[...]

No, not ... When we’re co-teaching, because we’ve discussed everything previously, we know exactly what activities are going to happen before. We both know the lesson plan. We will generally assign roles for activities before the lessons starts, and for things like phonics, the lesson plan is very similar every week so we know now who does what, what happens, when we move from one area to another physically, we know who’s going to be at what table, you know, it’s quite systematic, I suppose.

(NET Interview)

CF28. Another factor which **militates against effective collaboration is unpreparedness for co-planning meetings**, while successful co-planning supports it.

One experienced AT articulated the importance of preparation with the adage ‘Co-planning meetings are only as effective as the preparedness of the people who come to the meetings’. In a situation where time is limited, having read the meeting materials is clearly preferable. Among the observed co-planning meetings in the current evaluation, however, it was more often the case that lesson and unit plans were tabled and that participants were seeing them for the first time, or possibly re-visiting materials that they had been involved in co-teaching a year ago. This is reflected in the notes and quotations from a NET and an EPC below.

He reported that in the co-planning meeting some LETs were not prepared and assumed him to do everything because of being well-paid. Some LETs would critique his lesson plans but without offering productive suggestions.

(NET interview notes)

I can't think of any way to improve the co-planning meeting. I think if teachers are better prepared in advance, the progress would be faster. But I know the limitation of teachers. You know, for the planning, it is in the co-planning itself and if you need to plan for the co-planning beforehand, that's way too much.

(EPC Interview)

CF29. A theme which emerged repeatedly in the interviews was the issue of NET qualifications, with a perception that the level of experience and qualifications among NETs has declined. This was seen as impacting on the nature of the collaboration **possible between very experienced LETs and less experienced NETs**, as well as on the role of the ATs in supporting the NETs.

The objectives of the PNET Scheme include an expectation that the NET will ‘help local teachers develop innovative learning and teaching methods, materials, curricula and activities suited to the needs of local children; and disseminate good practices in language learning and teaching through region-based teacher development programmes such as experience-sharing seminars/workshops and networking activities’¹⁴. A NET capable of meeting these expectations would ideally be an experienced and qualified teacher. The job description of the AT also suggests that the current model of NET deployment is built on the assumption that the NET is a qualified teacher¹⁵. In the interviews, several stakeholders articulated a perception that a proportion of current NETs were not qualified or experienced enough to meet the expectations placed on them, even though it is the schools that do the selection and hiring of the NET at their school. A situation where LETs were better qualified and more experienced than the NET could impact on NET-LET collaboration and the mutual trust and respect collaboration is based on.

We once had a disaster [with a] NET [who was not] not experienced. To be honest, they only speak English and they only knew a little bit ... about English teaching. ... Some just graduated from the university but not in teaching, they learn from us. This is not our target, because we would like to work with the NET and we would like to learn from

¹⁴ <http://www.edb.gov.hk/en/curriculum-development/resource-support/net/pnet-objectives.html>

¹⁵ For example, ATs are expected to ‘support NETs in the preparation and delivery of professional development activities for the English panel on topics which address the interest and needs of the teachers’.

them ... how to teach the students the foreign language. ... He was not a teacher actually. That's why he cannot get used to the teaching system, and don't know how to teach, that's the disaster for us.

(LET focus group)

That's a real concern if you're actually putting that percentage of untrained teachers in front of classes. I mean you have to ask about what people think of as teachers, as a profession, when you're saying, "Well we can just put anyone in front of a class of children and they can do it." You know? Why would anyone train as a teacher? Why would anyone practise their profession if anyone can do it?

(NET Interview)

But on curriculum development, only experienced NETs have the expertise in helping to fine-tune the school-based curriculum. Of course, a good heart is needed as well to help the school and foster development of the English subject.

(SH Interview)

My question is, "Is this a trained teacher who we will be putting in front of our children?" ... Have they done a teacher training course?" I said, "Well, we are responsible for these children's' education. We're responsible for who we put in front of them. Our job is to give them the best staff that they can possibly get.

(NET Interview)

CF30. Another factor that impacts the effectiveness of collaboration in schools is the degree to which the **NET is treated as a team member**. One NET in particular felt isolated and separated from his colleagues in the English panel. Not being allocated a seat in the staffroom, and receiving messages later than other teachers increased the feelings of being distanced. This contrasts starkly with the situation in another school, where the NET was seen as a fully integrated team member, although that did not stretch to socialising together after school.

One NET in particular felt isolated and separated from his colleagues in the English panel. Not being allocated a seat in the staffroom, and receiving messages later than other teachers increased the feelings of being distanced.

I don't have a desk in the staff room, so people have to come to me in my classroom if they want to talk to me. So usually I get, end up getting messages later than everyone else, which I don't like. And just a, just a pervading sense of, this is your job, you do what you want to do. This is my job.

(NET interview)

I think, sometimes I feel like they, they don't, they don't erm appreciate what I have to offer. And, I think that can be quite disheartening. I think if they think that I'm getting, getting, I have this job purely to, to have fun with the students, to play games with the students and then sit on my backside all day, then that's not, that's not the job that I want or expect to have. And I think it's, sometimes it's quite disillusioning to feel that, the people that you work with, think that way about you overall.

(NET interview)

In another school while the EPC felt that he was treating the NET as a full member of the English team, the NET himself felt somewhat distanced by not being as fully involved in all the activities of the English panel, including GE:

And then, we work closely with the NET. We don't treat them as a NET, instead, we treat them as a LET, local teachers, because he joined lots in our school. I mean, he's different from the NET that I have met in the other schools.

(EPC Interview)

I would like to be more involved in the, for this school at least, more involved in the general English lessons as well. I know that I'm here really primarily for reading and phonics, but I think that the NET deployment would be a little bit more useful if I was in more of the general English lessons as well, to support. I don't know. It's Eng-, they're English classes, I'm from, I'm a native speaker, here to teach English, it feels like I should be more involved in those things. And I think it's something that I would like to bring up, but I don't have many hours left in my day to be able to do that really. Which is a shame. You know, I don't really get a chance to go into the nitty gritty of the grammar, and you know, I think that would be, I think that would be more beneficial.

(NET Interview)

This contrasts with the situation in another school, where the NET was seen as a fully integrated team member, although that did not stretch to socialising together after school.

I find the relationship quite good. We don't meet, we don't go out after school, but within the school we have good communication. So, we do communicate, erm, and sometimes you know we, there is events put on. Like, it could be a barbeque, or it could be something which also involves the kids, maybe a trip. So it brings everybody together. I think it helps the relation.

(NET interview)

[The NET] is very good, so cooperative and considerate. Why I say it? Actually our office hours for the NET is from four, from eight to four, but normally he always stays until five or later. And always work with my local teacher. And I just have the interview to evaluate what he did last year, and he shared with me that he liked this school very much. The main point, not the salary, or not the location, because of the environment ... between teacher and teacher, teacher and students. He found it is quite a family approach, like working in a family environment.

(SH interview)

CF31. The **support of the School Head** was seen as an important factor in determining the success of collaboration. The support of the School Head is necessary to allow teachers time to co-plan – scheduling co-planning meetings has been recognised as a key determinant of their success. Prioritising teaching quality over duties including the timely marking of students' homework is also seen as being rooted in the positive attitudes to language learning the School Head can promote.

The Principal quite definitely. When I came here, the Principal had worked in Australia for a long time and was really, really very pro the children learning English. He would often speak English in assembly, just a bit, but when it had anything to do with English,

he would speak in English. ... He really had a real heart for the children. He would read to them at lunchtime when they ate their lunch. He would move around the school reading books to children, not in English always, mostly in Chinese, but sometimes in English. The children just loved him. He would be at the gate and he would be literally mobbed by the little kids. They would be literally hanging on his body and giving him hugs. When he came back, it was like a rock star coming back to the school. [. . .] He really pushed English. I mean I used to do a slot in assembly every week.

(NET Interview)

CF32. The induction programme provided for all new NETs emphasises the importance of collaboration and introduces concrete strategies to make effective collaboration more likely to take place. **The support role of ATs in the schools is also seen as a form of role modelling**, as the effectiveness of AT support depends upon mutual respect and the strength of interpersonal relationships the AT establishes. The structure which programmes like PLP-R/W provide to support collaboration, is also seen as an important factor in determining success in collaboration.

This finding was supported by several participants in the NET Section interviews.

4.4.3.6 Research Question Six: What progress has been made on the key recommendations of the 2007 evaluation report and how might the PNET Scheme and the deployment of NETs be improved in light of economic, demographic, social, and political changes?

The 2007 evaluation report recommended changes to the organisation and membership of English Panel Meetings including the recommendation that they should be conducted in English, that NETs should be active members, reporting on their activities and engaging in discussion of pedagogical issues, and that professional development should be provided to ensure that participants were able to adopt evidence-based approaches to evaluation of activities.

Some of the NET Section interviewees were keenly aware of the recommendations of the previous evaluation and were able to articulate ways in which the Scheme has been adapted to respond to them. These include placing emphasis on collaboration by structuring it into programmes, promoting more individualised instruction (especially Guided Reading), and putting appropriate emphasis on developing oral skills.

CF33. The majority of NETs attended English Panel Meetings and reported on their activities.

The changes recommended to English Panel Meetings in the 2007 evaluation report, had met with some success, as indicated in the quantitative findings, with 90% of NETs attending the meetings. However, one local teacher, formerly a Panel Chair, described her experience of organising the Panel Meeting as a ‘disaster’ largely because teachers were reluctant to participate. She complained that teachers had the attitude ‘just tell me what the school wants me to do, then I will do it. Just tell me what to do. Don't ask me why, don't ask me what I think’. The English Panel Chair of another school discussed her long term goal of promoting a sharing

culture in which local teachers would be willing to contribute openly to discussions in the panel meetings:

*I think still the issue of culture, **the sharing culture** ... we opened our panel meetings for teachers to share their ideas, and let us know their concern before the meeting so that we can better prepared, but it takes a lot of time and a long period of time to, to have teachers really willing to share their concerns.*

(EPC Interview)

Local teachers felt that Panel Meetings had been improved by inviting the NET to participate and by the inclusion of a sharing session:

*In the recent years, our panel meeting has been changed. Not just report, discussion, we have one more part - sharing. That makes the panel meeting more interesting ... the sharing time during the panel meeting we would spend 30 minutes on experience sharing on teaching experience or methodology sharing ... **we invited the NET to share and teach the local teachers something, some new plan, some new idea, which I think was very helpful. Now, all teachers have to share something ... we invited the NET to sit in the panel meeting, so everybody has to speak English.** That's the change*

(LET focus group)

The NET in the one school spoke of the value of such sharing in terms of Professional Development.

I might do a 20-minute presentation on something like poetry or shared writing or shared reading or using games in the programme or just something or presenting the plan for English Day or English Week, depending on what we're having that year, or reporting on something if I'd been to professional development or just something like that. In the early days of PLP-R/W, I made up some little [video] clips of the programme and explained to teachers what was happening and how we were doing that programme; that was new because no one knew about it.

(NET Interview)

The NET in another school described an approach to English Panel Meeting that injected a more pedagogical focus, in contrast to the majority of panel meetings that tended to focus on administrative matters.

We are given the topic and we can talk about it in groups. It may be something like, how could we promote the students' learning. The last one I attended we got all the teachers to bring ... some piece of work that the students had done and we analysed, looked at the work, said what's good and bad about the work what can be improved [we discussed] the way forward for teaching and learning. Should we use ICT? Should we use more computer technology?

(NET Interview)

CF34. English panel meetings conducted only in one language discourage inclusivity and equal participation of all panel members. **While English should be the main medium of communication** so that NETs can be fully involved in all the major proceedings, where there

is a need to make a spontaneous contribution, a LET could choose to express views in Cantonese and others facilitate the discussion by helping with the translation.

*But LETs will feel more comfortable with having the meeting in Cantonese. I understand the feeling. Actually LETs do not want the NET to come, because once he comes everybody has to speak in English to respect him. If our meeting is not limited to making announcement, but also discussions on something, **then we all want to express our views fully, so that the meeting is meaningful.** Therefore, I normally have the NET talk about his things in English, and then explain to him that we are going to discuss other matters in Cantonese. He could stay or leave then. If he chooses to stay, I will translate the Cantonese discussions for him...LETs don't want the NET to be present, not because of not liking him, but because of not being able to spell out. After all, we only have several English Panel Meetings each school year.*

(EPC interview)

One LET thought that the English Panel meetings were effective in that all teachers could discuss the important issues together to gather opinions and suggestions. But another LET said that while the meetings were effective, the fact that they needed to be conducted in English due to the presence of the NET meant that sometimes the LETs could not communicate as smoothly as when using Cantonese.

(LET focus group)

The LETs might feel very embarrassed, because Chinese [people are] very ashamed to speak English even though they are English teachers. They were really shy and feared grammatical mistakes. They were afraid of being laughed at [by] their colleagues, afraid of being laughed by colleagues.

(SH Interview)

[English Panel Meetings can be more effective if conducted in Cantonese]. Because sometimes the situation is quite difficult to express [in English].

(LET focus group)

CF35. The ability of the Scheme to keep up with the education reform in Hong Kong was noted, but there were suggestions for **PD to be digitalised for remote access** and that it be directed to collaborative teams rather than just NETs or LETs.

*As for economic profile change, **I think it is not limited to the Scheme, but the revolution of the education system on the whole. We now have to teach students how to learn. This is why we focus on reading, which is an important area of learning to learn.** We are making progress aligning with the revolution of the education system in Hong Kong.*

(SH interview)

*I attended a sharing session provided by the NET Section before. That's a celebration of the tenth anniversary of the PLP-R/W. The NET Section shared about the fact that they would integrate e-learning into the programme. Many schools are working on it. I think that's good. **Before our school use e-learning completely they have tested and piloted it. They have gained experience and material in advance.** If we are interested, we can join in. Thus I think there is still space for development of the Scheme. ... [If] e-learning is incorporated into the programme [is] timely, which can make the lessons more*

*interactive and students more proactive in several ways. I think now P3 students can have a try on it, to have the PLPR lesson a little differently. **Then I think the NET Section is important. If you asked me to develop e-learning alone, I wouldn't know how many years would be used. I think the NET Section is a forerunner who can inspire many schools on the aspect of development and practice.***

(LET focus group)

*I know that the NET Section will organise sharing sessions for the NETs irregularly. They seem exclusively to NETs. **If possible, a LET could go with the NET, so that LETs will understand more about what is happening in the NET Scheme immediately, accompany the NET to these sharing activities...***

(LET focus group).

*Well, I feel strongly about, and of course, I'm sure you do too, using technology and the new media. **I think, really, the PNET Scheme needs to get more into providing videos of, for example, the professional development session, I think they should videotape those sessions and allow others to view the session. For example, I can't always make it, maybe there's a very interesting topic but I just can't make it that Thursday, for example, I'm too busy. It would be great if I could sign up and see it online. I really feel the NET Scheme should move forward and allow the professional development sessions to be captured and streamed online, or if not streamed then maybe downloaded or something.** ... the NET section could put together you know, a brief introduction to the different forms of co-teaching because of course, there are different ways to [do] co-teaching. And maybe visit the school, something like this. I think it would be a great value because you know, **everyone is so busy and we're so used to using technology, we'll be for me, it would be at least an hour to travel and then back so that's 2 ½ hours out of your day.***

(NET interview)

*I think it can be enhanced as I mentioned with um, **the digitising of professional development resources, whether it is a seminar or a session or a conference, or even some documents. I think there should be a centralised database and a NET can log in, oh, I heard about a great session on guided reading or something like this, and you can watch it at lunch or maybe from the comfort of your home and not necessarily get a credit for it but just to learn. I think a central database is missing but otherwise my personal um, regret, I guess is the word, my personal regret is that I cannot attend more because I am so busy. And so that would really help me to access something digitally.***

(NET interview)

CF36. The request that LETs, English Panel Chairs, and School Heads made most often was **“more NETs”**.

*We want **one more NET to help...** it will... **One person, more than two.** So that will do... do more... more comprehensive. It can cover... a wide range of covering... Not only... when we focus on the KS-1. The Key stage 1. When we focus on the Key stage 2, and also they can help to do some... designing and planning of the curriculum things. And... also when organise the activities, for example, **if we have one more NET,** we can ask him/her to ... maybe to organise a drama club. I think drama is a very good way to help students learn English. Only if we have more resources of course. It is helpful... to improve... to*

make it more... even better... to make it even better. To our teaching and learning environment. And make the teaching and learning more effective.

(EPC interview)

*I think the Scheme is important. English is our second language after all. It is important to get professional support from a NET directly, especially anytime. **Other than the NET**, the AT is also helpful these years as we see. When the NET was changed, we also saw how the AT helped the new NET socialise into the school environment and teaching. I think we can't, if the government wants to cut the Scheme, I think it is difficult for schools because the Scheme has been running at school for many years. In fact, one EDB NET is not sufficient to serve all students. **I said before, higher primary students only have one lesson to see the NET.***

(LET focus group)

*I said we **need to have more NETs**. Nowadays all parents want children to have biliteracy and trilingual skills. They even look for the same in the kindergarten stage. Of course this belief is immature. **Having a NET there doesn't guarantee good English to be learnt. But having a NET can lead to a better English environment. Additionally, only one NET cannot be used equally at different levels. If we have two, one for the upper primary another for the lower, we can be more flexible...** Maybe we can use the multiple of six as we have six levels. For example, 1 NET for 12 classes, 2 NETs for 24, 2.5 NETs for 30.*

(SH interview)

There is only one NET for each school, whether it contains 36, 30, or 10 classes. Should we decide the number on proportion? If we have at least 2 NETs, they could be less lonely.** Now not every student can be taught by the NET. Sometimes parents ask us why. It is difficult for us to give them a satisfactory answer. Why those students can be taught by the NET, but not these? Things like these are troublesome. I think one is not enough. It may be difficult to say how many are enough. **But I think at least two for each school, so that they have a partner and that all students can be benefited.

(EPC interview)

*What I would like to suggest for the future development of the PNET Scheme, I would say would that be possible **to increase the number of NETs, according to the size of the school**, because our school is thirty-six classes we only got one NET and then we have to spend our money to recruit another one, but the we don't, we still have difficulties, so we still have difficulties fixing that out, so the most important thing we'd like to have is... but I don't know this is not possible.*

(EPC Interview)

*Challenges **...we do not have enough NET err, only one NET is not enough to our school I think. Because compared with last year, eighteen classes one NET and now thirty-six classes one NET so it is, the student, the chance for them to communicate with NET, for the chance for the NET to teach in the classroom is less in this year.***

(SH interview)

*In my opinion, I have mentioned a lot of times **it should be enhanced according to the number of classes of the school, I think it is not fair for a twelve-class school to have***

one NET but a thirty-six class school to also have only one NET. It is not fair to our student, I think.

(SH interview)

I would like to see more NETs in the schools.

(NET Interview)

CF37. The **support of colleagues** emerged as a recurring factor for success.

The open-ended responses of NETs to the question “what has helped you the most in fulfilling your role as a NET” in a majority of cases, they mentioned supportive colleagues including LETs, EPC, ATs, and various School Heads (see Figure 30). This importance of the support of colleagues was also mentioned in the interviews.

The English panel head, the headmistress and the staff have been accommodating and supportive.

(NET Interview)

Supportive staff room environment.

(NET Interview)

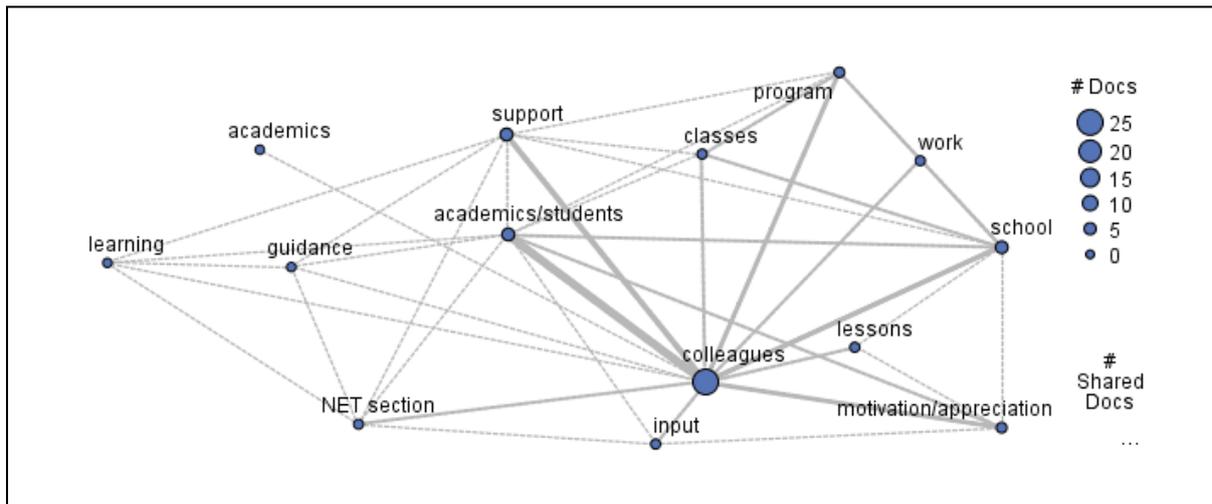


Figure 30. Concept map of the importance of colleagues.

Figure 30 reveals that the concept “colleagues” co-occurs with academic/students very often, and the second strongest link is support. This implies the perceived importance of academic goals and support for collaboration.

CF38. Although this is not an issue limited to just NETs in the Scheme, **lack of time and being spread too thin** were key hindrances for NETs.

The NETs’ responses to the open-ended question about what has hindered them in fulfilling their roles, mentioned colleagues less frequently although some mentions of tensions and unsupportive colleagues and supervisors were noted. Lack of time, difficult teaching circumstances such as being spread too thin, were more often mentioned as hindrances instead of people. This can be seen in the following concept map (Figure 31) in which NETs responded to “What has hindered you the most?” It is important to note that one of the strongest

relationships shown in the concept map is between time and learner diversity, implying that diversity is a time-consuming issue.

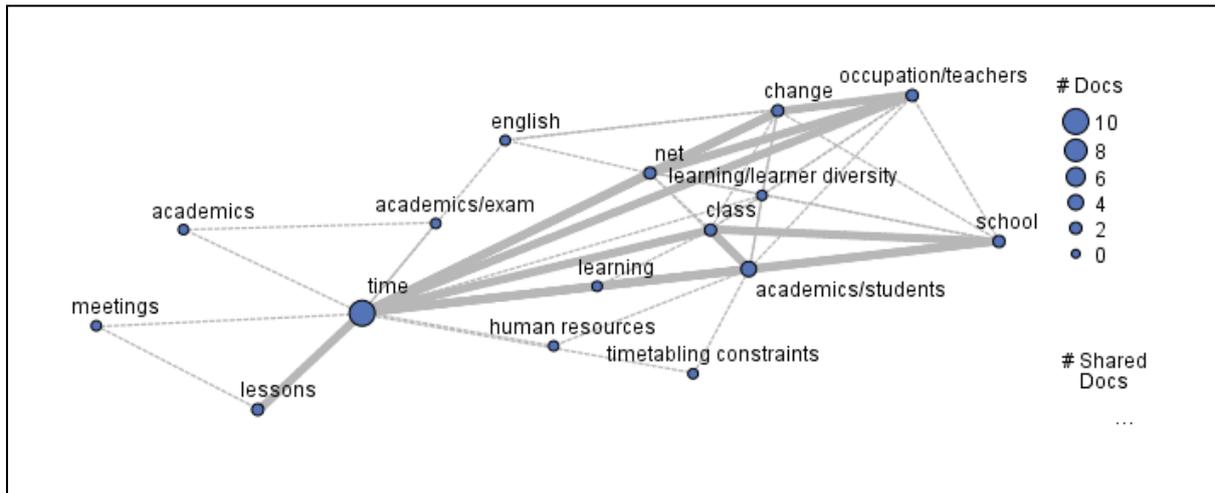


Figure 31. Concept map of NETs' view of time as hindrance.

Time was a more significant factor for LETs as well. ATs supported this in the NET Section interviews when discussing the difficulty of arranging school visits, time was always a constraint. Local teachers complained to one AT frequently about the lack of time. These LETs always had so much administrative work to do after lessons that meetings could be scheduled for 5 o'clock in the evening. As noted in relation to LETs' ability to respond to Professional Development (See CF13 above where a LET cited the tight schedule and amount of administrative work LETs have to do leaving little space to think about self-improvement) lack of time is perceived to be an issue for LETs which could be addressed by schools offering more encouragement to LETs to attend PD events and facilitating such PD within their schools.

CF39. Analysis of the qualitative data provides only some insight to the response in the surveys that **'Funds might be better spent elsewhere'**. While a few made comments about the perceived large salary or extra benefits of NETs, most stakeholders suggested that an overall funding increase for the Scheme would support English learning in Hong Kong and allow for more NETs.

Although the majority of respondents in the surveys did not agree with the comment "PNET funds might be better spent elsewhere", there was a wide disparity between NETs and LETs on this response. Only 2% of NETs agreed with this statement, compared to 43% of LETs. At first glance this is incompatible with the finding that the majority of stakeholders, including LETs, supported continuation of the PNET Scheme. However, the preceding statement (PNET should be continued...) pertains to the PNET Scheme alone while the current statement (The funds might be better spent elsewhere) does not identify where the respondents felt funding could be better spent. We searched the qualitative data to see what might account for this difference in perception and where, specifically, the LETs might think the funds might be better spent.

It is logical to assume that if two groups of workers perceive themselves to be remunerated differently, and you asked them if "funds might be better spent elsewhere", that more people in the group that perceives themselves to be remunerated more highly would disagree with a

redistribution, and more people in the group which perceived themselves to have a lower level of remuneration would agree. A few responses from LETs to the open-ended survey items support this assumption. One suggestion was to “*lower the salary and allowances for the NET.*” Another LET commented “*it is better to **provide funding for school[s] in order to find substitute teachers** [so LETs can attend more professional development workshops]” which would increase indirect benefits to LETs¹⁶. Other LETs suggested that more **resources and materials** be provided, although without any direct reference to a redistribution of funds, so this might be another possible place where they might like more funding.*

One EPC commented that “*PNETs should not be paid so handsomely as status quo. Local teachers do not have a housing allowance (but everyone has to suffer under the exorbitant price of housing in HK). It seems to be positively discriminating against local teachers.*” However, this same EPC in another comment did not ask for the benefits to be given to LETs, but instead be used to hire more NETs as stated here, “*Giv[en] current poor economic situation in Europe, Hong Kong does not need to provide so much housing allowance and such handsome pay to PNETs. **The extra money saved can be spent on employing more PNETS instead.***” When asked in the interviews to comment on the survey item ‘funds might be better spent elsewhere’, two EPCs mentioned that what they characterised as the ‘housing allowance’ granted to NETs might be redirected to the hiring of an increased number of NETs, or perhaps less well-qualified teachers similar to ELTAs.

Most of the comments on funding, however, suggested that an overall increase of funds be provided by the government to the NET Scheme without the stipulation that NETs be compensated differently. Of the 429 LETs who submitted surveys, only three (which are all quoted above) mentioned in their open-ended responses that they felt NETs were over-compensated. In contrast, there were over 100 LET responses requesting additional NETs. This explains how it is possible for LETs to hold the view that they want to expand the Scheme and hire more NETs, which is found repeatedly and in multiple places in the data, while at the same time holding the view the funds be spent “elsewhere,” possibly even within the Scheme, but in different ways such as rethinking NET allowances, supporting substitute teachers for LET professional development, and hiring more PNETs.

The following concept map of more funding (Figure 32) is the response of LETs to the open-ended question: “What would create more support for the PNET Scheme?” Not surprisingly, the idea “more funding” is strongly associated with more NETs and school, whereas school and more NETS also have a strong correlation. This might imply a major concern is finding ways to receive more funding to hire more NETs.

*More funding to **employ more NETs** for each school.*

(LET survey response)

More financial support from the EDB to increase the teaching resources, such as story books or educational toys.

(LET survey response)

¹⁶ It is worth noting that funding is available for the hire of substitute teachers to enable teachers to participate in professional development activities, depending on the length of the PD programme. To avoid having to apply for the funding however, it is more common for teachers to simply swap lessons with another teacher, so that they can take part in the PD. A possible implication of the LET’s comment is that teachers may not actually be aware of the availability of such funding.

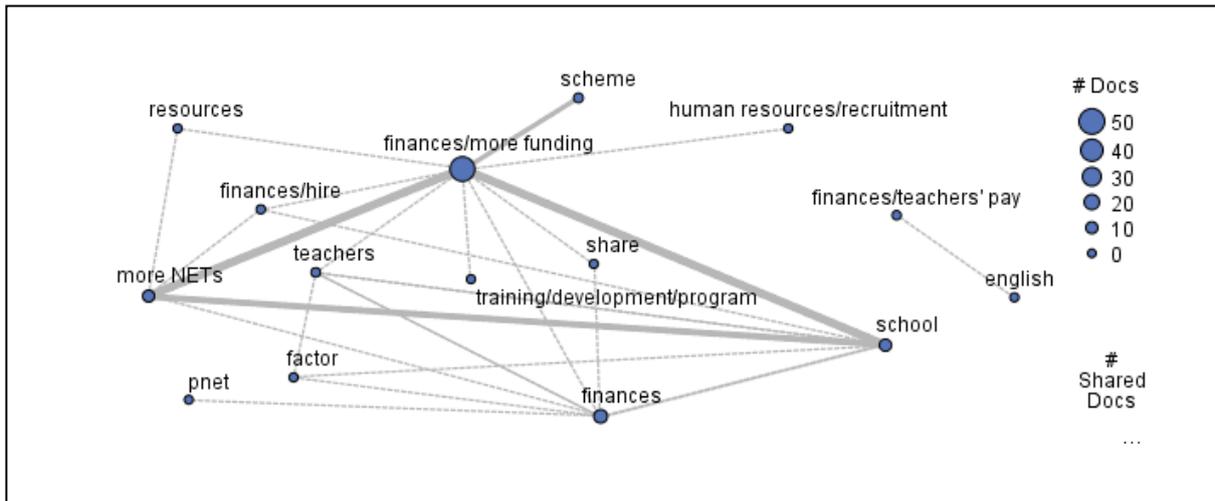


Figure 32. Concept map of LETs' view of the need for funding.

CF40. When asked what would create more support for the Scheme, both NETs and LETs noted **more time** as a key factor. Providing more release time for teachers for professional development and co-planning meetings might be considered.

In the interviews and focus groups, both NETs and LETs complained of time pressure. This supports earlier findings about Professional Development (CF15 above). NETs were sometimes aware of the workload shouldered by LETs in preparing and marking examination papers, and engaging in other, more administrative duties. The perception that NETs were freer to engage in more professional pedagogical pursuits, and exempted from the more routine duties of a primary teacher were also a source of tension, especially when the NET did not acknowledge or show awareness of the differences. This kind of perception represents a misunderstanding on the part of stakeholders of the PNET Scheme and in particular of the role of the NET, and is illustrated by the following quotation from a LET focus group:

... in many ways we LETs are responsible for working out a test paper [we have to] mark it, but could the NET try this sometimes? He has been working for many years. Would NETs try to design a test paper? Would they take the responsibility of marking test papers, or entering data? I think sometimes we can exchange our roles. Not all tasks of data entry [need] go to LETs. I think [NETs] could share some of the workload. Actually we LETs are under great pressure¹⁷.

(LET focus group)

A NET who was aware of the extra burden on local teachers would avoid discussing pedagogical issues when LETs were experiencing time pressure caused by exam preparation:

I just am aware of course that the general English teacher has a responsibility preparing for the summative assessment. The exams. And obviously as you know, these are high stakes exams for many students. And it could determine their secondary school and maybe even their career. I don't know. So I think there's more pressure on the general

¹⁷ It is worth noting here that in other schools NETs are involved in setting test papers and that this practice is encouraged by the NET Section in Centralised Professional Development workshops which focus on assessment.

English LET and there have been times where the LET seems to be very busy and I have felt, okay, maybe this is not a good time to discuss something

(NET Interview)

In a situation where the NET seemed not to recognise the demanding workload of local teachers, one Panel Chair responded that such recognition was difficult for the NET to achieve, because LETs' workload was so 'complicated':

... it is difficult for [NETs] to understand us. How come? The duties of LETs are too complicated. Sometimes [the NET] understands through the co-planning meetings. That's all. For something that does not involve them, how could we tell them the details orally? They could only understand it through hands-on practices. ... for a normal NET, he or she won't understand no matter how much we explain, unless he or she has had experience with the LET duties. ... The gap is impossible to fill in normal circumstances...

(EPC Interview)

Although scheduled co-planning meetings were considered a valuable bonus, very often the agenda was tightly packed as meetings had to cover not only lessons co-taught with the NET, but also General English (GE) lessons which often did not involve the NET at all:

Co-planning is important. Firstly, because we need time to think about the lesson. But my biggest problem concerned with co-planning, is the amount of time. It's very restricted. So 45 minutes for one double lesson and then to plan a single. It's more the time restriction, because you can get to the crux of ... what you need to do, and share the workload but some details need to be ironed out, maybe some practice [of] a song or it might be what questions are we going to use. Because of limited time, there isn't always that time to say well, 'What questions shall we use?' 'Cos the teachers have got to go straight off after. It is a big problem I think an extension of time would be better ... so that we could practise more

(NET Interview)

... it would be better if more time is available for the co-planning meeting, if you ask me to talk about improvement. You know, we only have a planning session of 40 minutes, but we need to talk about our own GE matters, sometimes tests, exams, and dictation, and even process writing for P3-P4 levels. So if we also need to talk about the RSP and evaluate our previous performance, we are running out of time. So more time for the co-planning is needed, but this is an ideal thought. But using one lesson for co-planning is already a good practice.

(LET focus group)

As noted earlier, time pressure was also cited by local teachers as a factor hindering their involvement in professional development (See CF13 above and supporting quotes) and also their adoption of less traditional teaching approaches:

[Asked to choose a word to describe an effective NET] I will use "interesting" because they use a lot of elements from the language arts, like poems, singing songs ... and, I want to do it, but ... because of the time constraint and the tight schedule, I can't really do this every time.

(LET focus group)

I hope, if the Scheme is continued, more space could be created for us ... to think about how to do better [and] think about improvement on teaching.

(LET focus group)

The beliefs of the majority of stakeholders gathered in the questionnaire survey – that the PNET Scheme contributes to enhancing students’ English learning and the English-speaking environment in the schools, were supported by evidence from case studies. Improvements were noted in students’ general proficiency, literacy skills, oral fluency and accuracy, confidence, and motivation and the degree to which English was used in the school environment. Case study evidence also supports survey results indicating that the Scheme has helped improve and increase local teachers’ use of English in the classroom and enhance and expand their pedagogical practices. Co-planning and co-teaching were felt to have enhanced student motivation and, together with the professional development support provided by Advisory Teachers, to have enhanced local teachers’ repertoires of pedagogical practices.

A number of factors were identified which contribute to effective NET deployment, utilisation, and integration in schools, including the support of the School Head, the personal qualities, professional attributes and experience of the NET, and an openness and willingness to collaborate among both NETs and local teachers. The most effective examples of collaboration were seen where co-planning was scheduled regularly and effectively implemented. Advisory Teachers play an important role in modelling such effective collaboration.

Findings indicate that progress has been made in implementing key recommendations of the 2007 evaluation. The majority of NETs were found to attend English Panel Meetings and report on their activities there. AT support had enhanced collaboration and contributed to greater use of English between teachers and students in class and between teachers in the school environment. The overall impact of the PNET Scheme was found to be positive and its objectives were felt to have been successfully achieved. The fact that the most frequent suggestion given by stakeholders for enhancing the Scheme was that it should be extended, and that schools should have more than one NET, provides ample evidence for this conclusion.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

In light of our analysis of the data, the research team makes the following recommendations. Note that the supporting findings are listed under each recommendation.

- 1. Continue to work to create a collegial culture among all teachers in primary schools so that NETs and LETs are treated and viewed as part of a team.** (Supported by SF7, SF10, SF12, SF13, SF15, SF16, CF3, CF7, CF9, CF14, CF17, CF18, CF19, CF20, CF21, CF23, CF24, CF25, CF27, CF28, CF29, CF30, CF37 and CF40.) Some suggestions to create a more collegial culture include:
 - Encourage LETs who have benefited from professional development workshops to conduct workshops with input/feedback from the NET and other LETs. It is important to create a collegial atmosphere acknowledging that both NETs and LETs have something to contribute.
 - Provide more information about professional development and encourage school management to provide release time for English teachers (NETs and LETs) to attend conferences and conduct professional development workshops. Although funding to attend local conferences is available, funding to co-present at regional conferences such as JALT, ThaiTESOL, CamTESOL, or KOTESL could be offered to one or two of the best (accepted) presentations that highlight collaboration between local and international teachers.
 - When hiring, retaining, and promoting teachers, stakeholders should ensure the candidates have the ability, experience, and qualifications to teach, but also that they respect each other's cultures, remain open to learning from each other, and are flexible.

- 2. Review the current system for NET recruitment to ensure teachers recruited through the Scheme have the appropriate qualifications and experience for the positions and tasks for which they are hired.** (Supported by CF14, CF18, CF19, CF22, CF29 and CF40.)
 - The qualifications of NETs should in principle be comparable to those of local teachers recruited into the teaching profession as fully qualified English teachers.
 - NETs should also have sufficient relevant experience to meet the expectation that they will introduce *innovative* learning and teaching methods into primary schools. Learning and teaching methods considered *innovative* in the local context would emerge from training and/or experience acquired in contexts where methods very different from those typical of locally recruited primary English teachers are employed.
 - Additional incentives should be explored to give recognition to and to encourage high-performing teachers recruited into the Scheme to continue to serve Hong Kong schools. Examples could include opportunities for these teachers to co-present with their local counterparts innovative and effective practices which they have jointly developed in their schools in local or overseas conferences or to be appointed as mentors of newly appointed NETs.
 - NET recruitment criteria should be reviewed. The requirement that a fully qualified and experienced teacher who has worked with second language learners in 'Western' contexts needs to obtain a TEFL certificate in addition to the relevant teacher training they already have, may discourage them from applying.
 - For teachers without relevant teacher training, consideration should be given to raising the level of required qualification from Certificate to Diploma level. TEFL certificates

such as those offered by Trinity College and the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate (UCLES) are entry-level requirements acquired in the equivalent of one months' full-time study, and without other supporting qualifications and experience, are not appropriate for those teachers who are expected to make significant contributions to curriculum.

- A final consideration is that if market demands mean that teachers have to be recruited with lower levels of relevant qualifications, administrators might consider supporting these teachers, for example in the form of release time to obtain the necessary subject knowledge and relevant teacher training within a specified time frame.
- 3. The PNET Scheme being one of the measures in support of English Language Education in public-sector primary schools, ways to strengthen support for larger schools should be explored to meet their needs.** (Supported by SF1, SF2, SF3, SF4, SF5, SF6, SF14, SF16, SF17, CF1, CF2, CF3, CF8, CF15, CF16, CF36, CF39 and CF40.)
- Consideration could be given to the strengthening of the provision of school-based support services for such schools and the implementation of grant schemes to enhance their capacity.
- 4. Continue to improve public relations that will inspire teachers, draw in potential qualified and experienced NETs, and inform and engage the parents, the public, and legislators of what the Scheme is accomplishing.** (Supported by CF4, CF5, CF6, CF16 and CF35.) Some suggestions are:
- Produce professionally made clips of co-teaching with engaged students and short interview clips with local and international teachers to put on the EDB website, like the bilingual promotional films on the JET website.
 - <http://jetprogramme.org/en/> (funded by the Japan lottery Association).
 - Create a more visually compelling and inspiring Hong Kong website to draw more international teachers to Hong Kong. Compare the websites below that potential international teachers might visit to see the contrast.
 - <http://jetprogramme.org/en/about-jet/>
 - <http://www.edb.gov.hk/en/sch-admin/admin/about-sch-staff/net-scheme/recruitment-primary-net.html>
 - Create and place professional development videos on the EDB NET website for teachers who would not otherwise be able to take the time off to travel to attend a face-to-face workshop.
 - Advise and support schools working with volunteers from charities who are interested in promoting literacy skills in schools. Guest speakers, including local celebrities and legislators, could be invited to English classes to speak to the children about the importance of English study and the potential of joining public service. This would enable these volunteers to see and be engaged in what the Scheme is doing.
 - Consider ways to find support like the JET programme does, from other government ministries or from businesses that will be the future employers of students. For example, businesses could “adopt an international teacher” and cover the costs for the second NET in school of their choice for two years. Parents could assist in asking their companies to apply for this role.
- 5. Continue to support schools with ATs, the induction programme for new teachers recruited into the Scheme, professional development workshops for all English**

teachers, and curriculum development that addresses new areas of need. (Supported by CF10, CF11, CF13, CF16 and CF32.)

6. **Continue to establish communication channels with NET organisations and seek out their support to provide insight into NET issues and potential solutions.** (Supported by SF13, SF18, CF38 and CF39.)
7. **Continue to monitor and assess the effectiveness of the Scheme including formal evaluations every six to eight years and annual informal assessments.** (Supported by SF18, CF38 and CF39.)
8. **Continue to review and revise the deployment guidelines and disseminate them.** (Supported by SF7, SF8, SF9, SF12, SF13, CF12, CF13, CF23, CF24, CF25, CF26, CF27, CF28, CF33 and CF34.) (Note that the order of the points is not meant to emphasise their priority)
 - Continue to emphasise the importance of co-planning, co-teaching, and being willing and open to learn from each other.
 - Continue to encourage teachers to apply what was learned in professional development soon after the workshop and to continue to reflect on how to adapt their practice in light of what was presented.
 - If possible, discourage NETs from dominating a single kind of activity. For example, even if a school deems it necessary to assign special teachers to take care of students' oral English, or conduct extra-curricular activities, the NET could be paired up with a local teacher so that a team effort is provided.
 - Continue to recommend that all teachers of English attend English meetings, and ensure that they are all treated as regular members of the English department/panel.
 - Meetings which NETs are required to attend should be conducted in English or translation provided if Cantonese is used.
 - Encourage School Heads to provide a plan to support and evaluate the impact of the Scheme at their school. This plan might include a brief description of how the work of the Scheme was supported, including time for co-planning and professional development.
9. **Continue to encourage English panel members to focus on students' English language needs and learning, and teachers' curriculum adjustments and professional development.** (Supported by SF11, CF24, CF26, CF31 and CF38)

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7. APPENDICES

A. Recommendations of the 2007 PNET Evaluation report

B. Sample data and documents

Sample of interview transcript

Sample of coding in NVivo.

Sample of observation notes

Sample email sent to schools to take part in case study

C. Schedule of case study visits and observations

D. Summary of Findings

E. Data collection Instruments (separate document)

Appendix A Recommendations of the 2007 PNET Evaluation Report

1. The EDB should identify the influence of immigration and the changing economic and ethnic profile of the community and its impact on the Scheme.
2. Collaboration, co-teaching, and co-planning: NETs should attend English Panel meetings and be given time to address teaching, learning, and professional development.
3. Teaching: NET deployment should be driven by the needs of the school's English programme, which should be discussed by the English Panel Chair and the School Head, reported on and documented in the minutes of English Panel meetings.
4. Variation in resources and strategies: Resources should be evaluated by NET and EP for their appropriateness to the proficiency level of students and used in targeted teaching groups.
5. Assessment: Assessment strategies need to be competency-based.
6. Oral language opportunities for teachers and students: Teachers and students should be encouraged and rewarded for using English (including teacher-teacher interactions during meetings, and in the school student-student and teacher-student interactions).
7. Schools: Successful School Heads should be identified and invited to mentor others.
8. NETs: Professional development should be offered to NETs so that they can carry out the above recommendations – training should be offered in evidenced-based decision making to facilitate reporting and discussion in English Panel meetings.
9. LETs: Professional development should be offered to LETs so that they can carry out the above recommendations – training in evidenced-based decision making to facilitate reporting and discussion in English Panel meetings
10. System: Accountability procedures should be put in place for reporting on how schools are implementing the recommendations.
11. Professional Development: Professional development should focus on NETs and LETs targeting instructional intervention and its evaluation.
12. School Heads: Professional development in the form of mentoring in managing, reporting on, and evaluating the impact of the Scheme.
13. Long Term Strategy for PNET Scheme: EDB should set strategies to evaluate the Scheme in 3, 5, and 20 years.
14. System Monitoring: Guidelines for NETs, LETs, and School Heads need to be set out and disseminated with appropriate training for each group.

Appendix B Sample Data and Documents

Sample of interview transcript with School Head and two interviewers.

I01: Tell me a little bit about the school. What are the strengths and weaknesses?

SH: We have a strong English team. We have more than eight English teachers here, although we are not a big school. They are willing to learn. They care the students. They love teaching English. So they are all experienced in teaching the English programme here.

I01: How many local English teachers teaching English here?

SH: More than eight. I have to count... maybe ten... [About the] challenges. I have challenges. Because we are nearby the railway station, in current years, the primary one intake about 50% come from Mainland China

I01: Are they Mainland students? Are they cross border students?

SH: Yes, 每天 [every day], 從大陸過來的 [coming from the mainland]

I02: Excuse me would you repeat. Fifteen percent or fifty percent?

SH: Fifty. Half and half. So most of them haven't learnt English before. So this a big challenge to us. And you can think about it. Their family background, their culture, are different from Hong Kong students. So to us, especially English teachers, is a big challenge.

I01: But let me go back as that's a really interesting statistic... fifty percent of like grade one, but what about grade two?

SH: Grades two and three, about forty to fifty...so a large proportion.

I01: Their first language is Putonghua, isn't it?

SH: Yes. 所以我的普通話就是跟他們學的 [So I learn Putonghua from them]

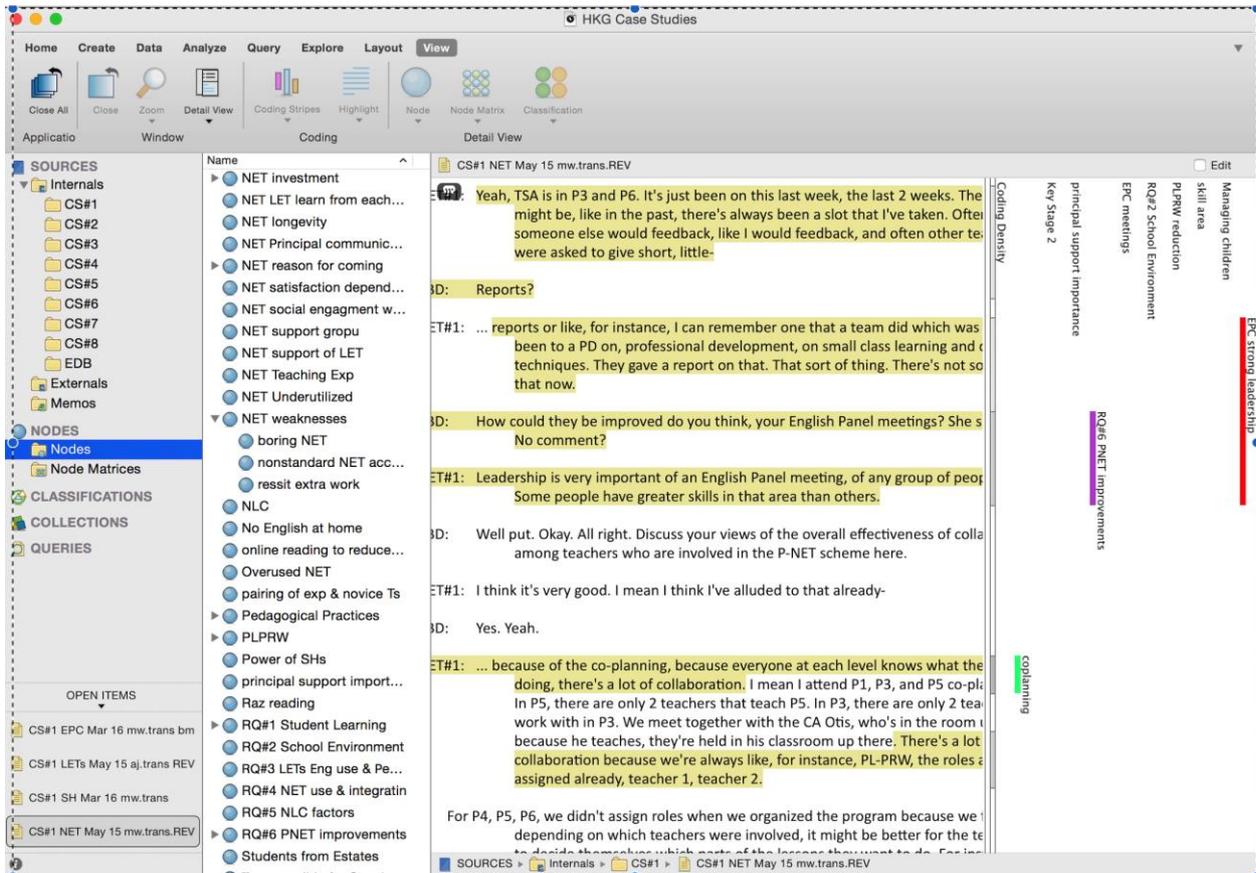
I01: 當然了 [Certainly] Very good. That's interesting. I'll ask you more about that. So how has that impacted the NET, your use of the NET, have all of those Mainland Chinese impacted... how you have used the NET?

SH: I allocate our NET teacher, mainly teaching the key stage one. That means P1 to P3. Let her... more time to speak with the students, especially the ones from Mainland China. They're just like me. They're afraid to talk with the foreigner, [the] NET teacher. I think it is not okay, because Hong Kong is an international city. Our school curriculum needs our students to speak more English and know more English.

I01: You're a good example for them. That's interesting. Do you have other comments about the cross border students?

SH: But their parents want their children to learn more English, especially from our NET. They want, request our school to give more lessons in English for them, because they know it is their weakness.

Sample of coding in NVivo.



Sample of observation notes

Part 2. Co-teaching

How did co-teaching operate?

Record your observations in note form in response to the following questions.

What role or roles did the NET play in the lesson?	The NET monopolised the instructional role from the front of the class, capturing attention, eliciting, explaining and delivering instructions.
What role or roles did the LET play in the lesson?	The LET monitored student performance, distributed and collected materials, provided assistance to students as required (which involved some instruction on a one-to-one basis)
In what ways did NET and LET roles differ?	The NET was in control of the lesson, the LET played a minor supporting role.
In what ways were NET and LET roles similar?	Both NET and LET monitored pair and individual performance and provided assistance as required during pair and individual work activities.
Which roles were unique to NET or LET?	Instructional and facilitation roles unique to NET. Support role was unique to LET.
How did NET and LET make use of collaboration to expand English learning opportunities?	One or two minor 'role playing' interactions relating to material displayed by the NET: e.g. NET: Ms X, what do you think of my letter? LET: I think it's great. But are there some mistakes?
How did NET and LET interact with students, individually or in small groups in the lesson?	Both NET and LET monitored pair and individual performance and provided assistance as required during pair and individual work activities.
What evidence of conflict and/or lack of collaboration did you observe?	No evidence of conflict or lack of collaboration

Post-lesson summation - Straight after the lesson, review your notes and expand them to describe the co-teaching process in more detail.

Sample email sent to schools to take part in case study

Dear Principal [name omitted],

On behalf of the research team of The 2015 Evaluation of the Native-Speaking English Teacher Scheme in Primary Schools (PNET Scheme), we would like to thank you for your school's participation in the online surveys.

We are now in the next phase of the evaluation in which we will conduct follow-up qualitative case studies in eight carefully selected schools. ***Your school has been selected to take part in a case study.***

With your permission, one to two researchers will schedule a time at your convenience to conduct three observations, three interviews, and a focus group meeting at your school by the end of June, as described below:

- 1) One observation of a lesson where the NET co-teaches with a LET
- 2) One observation of a co-planning meeting involving the NET
- 3) One observation of the English environment of your school
- 4) One 1-hour recorded interview with the School Head
- 5) One 1-hour recorded interview with the English Panel Chair
- 6) One 1-hour recorded interview with the NET at your school
- 7) One 1-hour recorded focus group interview with 3-6 LETs who completed the online survey

With careful planning, we anticipate that data collection can be completed in three school visits. Please note that we would like to complete the first two observations (items 1 and 2) by the end of May. Please find more details of the data collection procedures in the attached consent form which we will need to have you sign before we commence the case study.

This evaluation is of great importance as it will inform policy recommendations to enhance the PNET Scheme which could improve student learning. Would you be so kind to indicate the availability of your school to take part in the case study at your earliest convenience? We would be grateful if you would give a favourable reply by 5 pm this Friday.

I will try to contact you tomorrow by phone to discuss any concerns you may have. If I cannot reach you, please feel free to call me at your convenience at [\[number was removed\]](#) if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely,

Bernie Chun Nam Mak (PhD), Research (Project) Manager,
Mary Wong (PhD), Principal Investigator,
Azusa Pacific University, Azusa, CA, USA

Appendix C Schedule of Case Study Visits and Observations

	OBS Class	OBS Co-p mtg	OBSV Eng Env	INT SH	INT SH Trns	INT EPC	INT EPC Trns	INT NET	INT NET Trns	INT LET	INT LET Trns	Coding 8 of 16 done	Survey notes
CS1	mw 14/5	aj 14/5	mw 15/5	mw 16/3	done	mw 16/3	done	aj 15/5	done	aj 15/5	done	mw, ag	no SH Survey,
CS2	bm 20/5	bm 1/6	bm 20/5	bm 5/6	done	ps 5/6	notes	ps 5/6	done	bm 8/6	notes	bm, ps,mw	all surveys in db
CS3	ps 18/5	ps 5/6	ps 26/6	ps 22/6	done	ps 26/6	done	ps 26/6	done	ps 26/6	done	bm ps	all survey in db,
CS4	bm 28/5	bm 27/5	bm 28/5	ps 3/6	done	bm 2/6	done	bm 2/6	done	bm 2/6	done	bm, il	no EPC survey,
CS5	ps 8/12	ps 9/10	ps 9/10	ag 27/11	done	ps 27/11	done	ps 27/11	done	ps 9/10	done	ps mw	all surveys in db
CS6	ps 16/10	ps 12/10	ps 12/10	ps 12/10	done	ps 16/10	done	ps 16/10	done	ps 12/10	done	ps, mw	all surveys in db
CS7	ps 23/10	ps 19/10	ps 23/10	ag 10/7	done	bm 10/7	done	bm 13/7	done	bm 13/7	done	bm, ag	no Surveys
CS8	ps 29/10	ps 29/10	ps 29/10	ag 22/6	done	bm 23/6	done	bm 22/6	notes	bm 23/6	done	bm, il,mw	no SH Survey,

NET Sect	Interviewers and date	Trans	Coders
AT1	aj 13/5		MW, PS
AT2	aj 13/5		MW, PS
APMa	mw 13/5		MW, PS
AT4	ps 7/7		MW, PS
AT5	ps 24/6		MW,PS
AT6	ps 24/6		MW,PS
APMb	mw 13/5		MW, PS
Head	ps 25/6		MW, PS
Work shop	ps	n/a	n/a

Appendix D Summary of Findings

(with recommendations that the findings support noted in brackets)

Research Question One: To what extent and in what ways do key stakeholders believe the PNET Scheme helps to improve primary students' learning of English?

Initial findings from survey data

SF1. The majority of stakeholders believe the PNET Scheme contributes to students' English learning. (Supports R3)

SF2. Slightly more students in KS1 hold positive views toward English than their KS2 counterparts. (Supports R3)

SF3. The majority of students hold positive views of NET-LET collaboration. (Supports R1, R3)

Corroborating and additional findings from case studies

CF1. Stakeholders provided indirect evidence of **improved student English proficiency** in speaking through active, fun, learning activities that motivate students. (Supports R3)

CF2. Stakeholders at the school level involved in literacy programmes perceived significant **advances in literacy skills resulting from the PLP-R/W and DTS literacy programmes and the related activities that NETs engage in.** (Supports R3)

CF3. The emphasis on co-teaching and the presence of a NET in the school has **increased student motivation** and the degree to **which English is used in the classroom.** (Supports R1, R3)

CF4. Parents' views on the NET Scheme were mentioned, but participants generally felt that **parents and others were not fully aware of the value and effectiveness of the Scheme** especially in terms of its positive effect on children's reading and writing. (Supports R4)

CF5. Even though the PNET Scheme works on all skills, including reading and writing especially in the PLP-R/W and other literary programmes, stakeholders perceived the impact of the NET more in terms of enhanced **oral fluency and confidence as well as better pronunciation** among students rather than the enhanced literacy skills. (Supports R4)

CF6. Parents who responded to the surveys were aware of the positive contribution that **local teachers made towards their children's English language learning**, and most notably in the assistance that local teachers provided to help the children overcome communication breakdown with the NET, by providing explanations of terms in the mother tongue. Local teachers' knowledge of the local culture of Hong Kong was also seen as an asset. (Supports R4)

CF7. Participants noted that NETs tended to be used **more often in KS1 rather than KS2.** But schools were asked by parents of children in KS2 to justify this. (Supports R1)

Research Question Two: To what extent and in what ways does the PNET Scheme help to enhance the English-speaking environment of the school?

Initial findings from survey data

SF4. The majority of stakeholders believe the PNET Scheme helps to enhance the English-speaking environment of the school. (Supports R3)

SF5. More students in KS1 view the English environment in schools positively than their KS2 counterparts. (Supports R3)

SF6. More students in KS1 view the English environment outside of schools positively than their KS2 counterparts. (Supports R3)

Corroborating and additional findings from case studies

CF8. Participants mentioned the value of the NET contributions to the English speaking environment of the school including contributions to **cultural awareness, decoration of classrooms with English-related material, the operation of the English room, and whole-school activities, school assemblies and ‘English Fun Days’** and more opportunities for teachers and students to speak English. (Supports R3)

CF9. **School Heads** felt the NET helped to maximise **the English environment** of the school. (Supports R1)

CF10. Several participants mentioned the resources which the NET Scheme can make available to schools, including programme schools involved in PLP-R/W and DTS, but also in non-programme schools, where **ATs would regularly provide resources** and teaching ideas through their general support roles. The work of the NET in locating suitable additional resources was also mentioned and valued by school personnel. (Supports R5)

Research Question Three: To what extent and in what ways does the PNET Scheme help to improve and increase the local teachers' use of English in the classroom and enhance and expand their pedagogical practices?

Initial findings from survey data

SF7. Stakeholders believe NETs contribute to LETs' expanded pedagogical practices. (Supports R1, R8)

SF8. NETs and LETs use a variety of pedagogical practices, but they believe that NETs do so more than LETs. (Supports R8)

SF9. The majority of stakeholders believe the Scheme's professional development activities enhance LETs' pedagogical practices. (Supports R8)

Corroborating and additional findings from case studies

CF11. The Advisory Teaching Team as a whole is active in providing professional development activities both at the school level and in the form of centralised PD workshops. There is **evidence that the school-based activities are tailored to the needs of specific schools and well-received as a result**, thus contributing to teachers' desire to develop professionally. (Supports R5)

CF12. Some LETs found that **co-teaching with a NET helped them in professional development and in improving their English**. (Supports R8)

CF13. While participants in the interviews generally found professional development effective, some limitations were highlighted. One of these was the **timeframe required for PD to actually result in teacher change**, a problem compounded by the heavy workload of local teachers in both teaching and non-teaching work which detracted from their ability to focus on professional development. (Supports R5, R8)

CF14. Professional development workshops provided by the NET in some schools appear to be relatively rare due to some NETs' lack of experience and training. (Supports R1, R2)

CF15. Interviewees generally recognised the role of the Scheme in increasing the amount of **English used in the classroom and improving the LETs' spoken English**. (Supports R3)

CF16. Examples of **expanded pedagogical practices** were cited in relation to projects such as PLP-R/W and DTS. There was also some evidence of NETs as agents of change in this regard. (Supports R3, R4, R5)

CF17. Despite the overall success of literacy programmes, there was some evidence of reluctance among more experienced LETs to adapt to the changes required in a text set approach such as DTS. (Supports R1)

Research Question Four: What factors determine effective NET deployment, utilisation, and integration in schools?

Initial findings from survey data

SF10. Stakeholders, especially School Heads, believe NETs are used and supported effectively in schools. (Supports R1)

SF11. Stakeholders' views regarding the support that they believe School Heads provide NETs vary slightly, but are generally positive. There are slight differences in perceptions of School Heads support both vertically (between Schools Heads and teachers) and horizontally (between LETs and NETs). (Supports R9)

Corroborating and additional findings from case studies

CF18. Stakeholders mentioned **qualities needed for an effective NET** that included attributes that were personal (i.e., making relationships), attitudinal (i.e., being flexible), and professional (i.e., Western teaching experience). (Supports R1, R2)

CF19. Stakeholders mentioned **attributes found in less effective NETs** that included aspects that were personal (i.e. lack of energy,), attitudinal (i.e., disrespect), and professional (i.e., lack of experience and training). (Supports R1, R2)

CF20. Having teachers (both NETs and LETs) who are **open and willing to learn from each other** is vital to collaboration. (Supports R1)

CF21. Stakeholders did not all agree that *experience* was the highest priority for a NET. In one school, the English Panel Chair who had worked with three more experienced NETs in the past found **experienced NETs tended to place LETs in an assistant role**. Some ATs felt that **enthusiasm could compensate for lack of experience in some NETs**. Based on all the responses, it is fair to say that experience is important, but this needs to be coupled with a willingness to learn from others. (Supports R1)

CF22. Some stakeholders felt that schools that took the initiative to hire **NETs independently of the EDB** should be guided to make the right choice of teacher, in particular as far as pedagogical expertise and competence were concerned. (Supports R2)

Research Question Five: What factors foster and inhibit NET-LET collaboration (NLC) according to the various stakeholders?

Initial findings from survey data

SF12. Stakeholders' views regarding the effectiveness of NET-LET collaboration vary slightly by stakeholder, but are generally positive. (Supports R1, R8)

SF13. More LETs than NETs believe the English Panel meetings are effective. (Supports R1, R6, R8)

Corroborating and additional findings from case studies

CF23. **Collaboration is recognised by all participants as a cornerstone** of the PNET Scheme. (Supports R1, R8)

CF24. Holding regular **co-planning meetings** prior to co-teaching was widely perceived as a key factor in promoting collaboration between NET and LETs. (Supports R1, R8, R9)

CF25. PNET programmes such as PLP-R/W and DTS depend on effective collaboration. (Supports R1, R8)

CF26. In non-programme schools (schools not signing up for a project like PLP-R/W), the failure to set aside time for co-planning is perceived as an impediment to effective collaboration. (Supports R8, R9)

CF27. The model of co-planning and co-teaching envisaged in the projects (**PLP-R/W and DTS**) is one which specifically promotes teacher collaboration in the classroom. When the model is not followed, what results is often a lesson which is prepared by the NET, in the absence of a system for co-planning, and in which the NET is considered to be in charge, and the LET just an assistant; this practice militates against collaboration. (Supports R1, R8)

CF28. Another factor which **militates against effective collaboration is unpreparedness for co-planning meetings**, while successful co-planning supports it. (Supports R1, R8)

CF29. A theme which emerged repeatedly in the interviews was the issue of NET qualifications, with a perception that the level of experience and qualifications among NETs has declined. This was seen as impacting on the nature of the collaboration **possible between very experienced LETs and less experienced NETs**, as well as on the role of the ATs in supporting the NETs. (Supports R1, R2)

CF30. Another factor that impacts the effectiveness of collaboration in schools is the degree to which the **NET is treated as a team member**. One NET in particular felt isolated and separated from his colleagues in the English panel. Not being allocated a seat in the staffroom, and receiving messages later than other teachers increased the feelings of being distanced. This contrasts starkly with the situation in another school, where the NET was seen as a fully integrated team member, although that did not stretch to socialising together after school. (Supports R1)

CF31. The **support of the School Head** was seen as an important factor in determining the success of collaboration. The support of the School Head is necessary to allow teachers time to co-plan – scheduling co-planning meetings has been recognised as a key determinant of their success. Prioritising teaching quality over duties including the timely marking students' homework is also seen as being rooted in the positive attitudes to language learning the School Head can promote. In addition, the support of the School Head is needed to facilitate centralised professional development, which is a better use of resources than school-based workshops. (Supports R9)

CF32. The induction programme provided for all new NETs emphasises the importance of collaboration and introduces concrete strategies to make effective collaboration more likely to take place. **The support role of ATs in the schools is also seen as a form of role modeling**, as the effectiveness of AT support depends upon mutual respect and the strength of interpersonal relationships the AT establishes. The structure which programmes like PLP-R/W provide to support collaboration, is also seen as an important factor in determining success in collaboration. (Supports R5)

Research Question Six: What progress has been made on the key recommendations of the 2007 evaluation report and how might the PNET Scheme and the deployment of NETs be improved in light of economic, demographic, social, and political changes?

Initial findings from survey data

SF14. One of the changes noted in some schools that affected the Scheme was an increase in newly arrived students or cross-boundary students as indicated by 19.1% of the School Heads. (Supports R3)

SF15. The majority of teachers attend English Panel Meetings 1-5 times per year, with over 10% of NETs and 5% of LETs indicating that they never attend. (Supports R1)

SF16. The majority of all stakeholders want to expand the Scheme, but fewer LETs hold this view than other stakeholders. (Supports R1, R3)

SF17. The majority of all stakeholders support the Scheme and would like more NETs if resources allow. (Supports R3)

SF18. Stakeholders hold different views regarding whether funds could be better used elsewhere. (Supports R6, R7)

Corroborating and additional findings from case studies

CF33. The majority of NETs attended English Panel Meetings and reported on their activities. (Supports R8)

CF34. English panel meetings conducted only in one language discourage inclusivity and equal participation of all panel members. **While English should be the main medium of communication** so that NETs can be fully involved in all the major proceedings, where there is a need to make a spontaneous contribution, a LET could choose to express views in Cantonese and others facilitate the discussion by helping with the translation. (Supports R8)

CF35. The ability of the Scheme to keep up with the education reform in Hong Kong was noted, but there were suggestions for **PD to be digitalised for remote access** and that it be directed to collaborative teams rather than just NETs or LETs. (Supports R4)

CF36. The request that LETs, English Panel Chairs, and School Heads made most often was **“more NETs”**. (Supports R3)

CF37. The **support of colleagues** emerged as a recurring factor for success. (Supports R1)

CF38. **Lack of time and being spread too thin** were key hindrances for NETs. (Supports R6, R7, R9)

CF39. Analysis of the qualitative data provides insight to the response in the surveys that **'Funds might be better spent elsewhere'**. While a few made comments about the perceived large salary or extra benefits of NETs, most stakeholders suggested that an overall funding increase for the Scheme would support English learning in Hong Kong and allow for more NETs. (Supports R3, R6, R7)

CF40. When asked what would create more support for the Scheme, both NETs and LETs noted **more time** as a key factor. Providing more release time for teachers for professional development and co-planning meetings might be considered. (Supports R1, R2, R3)