

**EVALUATION OF THE
ENHANCED NATIVE-SPEAKING ENGLISH TEACHER
SCHEME IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS
IN HONG KONG
2016 – 2017**

FINAL REPORT

**Submitted to
Education Bureau of the Hong Kong SAR Government
in 2018**

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This evaluation study was funded by the Education Bureau (EDB), Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. The authors of this report wish to thank staff from the Native-speaking English Teacher (NET) Section, EDB, whose contributions and insights were important for the success of this evaluation.

We also wish to acknowledge the generous contributions of the members of the Regional NET Coordination Team of the NET Section, School Heads, English Panel Chairs, native-speaking English teachers, local English teachers, parents and students who took part in online surveys, interviews and focus groups, and facilitated the school visits conducted in this evaluation study.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Overview of the Evaluation and Outline of the Report

The evaluation of the Enhanced Native-speaking English Teacher (ENET) Scheme in Secondary Schools was commissioned by the Education Bureau (EDB). It commenced on 14 January 2016 and concluded on 31 December 2017. The evaluation was conducted by a team of scholars headed jointly by Dr Mary Shepard Wong and Dr Chong Ho Yu of Azusa Pacific University in collaboration with scholars from The Open University of Hong Kong, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, and New South Wales University.

The evaluation employed a sequential mixed-method approach using online surveys of key stakeholders followed by case studies of schools. 69 schools completed the surveys and they represented approximately 17% of the total number of secondary schools participating in the ENET Scheme in the 2015/16 school year. As to the case studies, eight schools took part. Interviews and focus groups of a variety of stakeholders were conducted before, during, and after the surveys. The evaluation explored the impact of the Scheme on secondary 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 school. 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 Regional NET Coordination Team (RNCT) members and the Native-speaking English Teacher (NET) Section, the progress made on the key recommendations of the 2009 evaluation, and how the ENET Scheme might be improved.

This report includes six sections: 1) Objectives and Rationale; 2) Literature Review of Similar Programmes; 3) Findings and Key Observations of the Quantitative Data Analysis followed by the Qualitative Data Analysis; 4) Synthesis of the Quantitative and Qualitative Analysis; 5) Recommendations; and 6) Appendices.

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.

Quantitative Data Collection Overview

Four questionnaire surveys were developed and piloted, and further refined after they were piloted before links to the online versions were released to participating schools and stakeholders. Table 1 provides the numbers of completed online surveys by each group of stakeholders who were sent surveys. A total of 66 Principals, 65 NETs, 456 local teachers, and 6,523 students completed the online survey.

Table 1. Summary of number of surveys completed and included in data analysis

*	Potential # of respondents	# of schools involved	# of surveys submitted	# of completed surveys	# of incomplete surveys	# of invalid data to exclude	# of wrong codes to include	Total
SPQ	69	66	82	72	10	6	4	66
NETQ	69	65	76	68	8	3	2	65
LETQ	468	69	483	459	24	3	12	456
SQ	9,960 (estimate)	67	7,818	7,259	559	736	N/A	6523
	10,566							7110

* SPQ = The School Principal Questionnaire
NETQ = The Native English Teacher Questionnaire
LETQ = The Local English Teacher Questionnaire
SQ = The Student Questionnaire

Qualitative Data Collection Overview

To enable the research team to gain a more in-depth understanding of the operation of the Scheme, in addition to the over 7,000 online surveys, 32 interviews and focus groups were conducted with the local English teachers, NETs, English Panel Chairs (EPCs) and School Principals in eight case study schools. Case studies also included 26 observations of the English environment of schools, co-planning meetings, and classrooms in which NETs were teaching and shadowing of the NET. Observations were also conducted of a school-based workshop and a workshop by the EDB. In addition, nine non-school based interviews and focus groups were conducted with a variety of stakeholders, including EDB personnel, and groupings of various teachers, parents, students, and principals.

Overview of 57 Findings and Six Research Questions

A total of 57 findings were identified resulting in eight recommendations. There were 28 findings based on the statistical analysis of responses to the online surveys (preceded by “SF” for survey findings). These indicated that stakeholders generally held positive perceptions of the impact on the ENET scheme on students’ English learning, on the English-speaking environment of the school and on the use of pedagogical practices by English teachers. There were 29 findings based on the case studies (preceded by “CF” for case study findings) and non-school-based data analysis. Findings indicated that the majority of all stakeholders supported the Scheme although several areas of possible improvement were noted.

The evaluation was guided by six research questions (RQs). Looking at both sets of findings together, the research team concluded that the ENET Scheme overall has a positive impact on English language teachers’ pedagogical practices (RQ1), that the Scheme helps to improve student learning of English (RQ2), helps to enhance the English-speaking environment of the school (RQ3), helps support curriculum development (RQ4), and promotes professional development and collaboration between NETs and local English teachers (RQ5). Since 2009, some progress has been made towards addressing the recommendations of the University of Melbourne evaluation report, responding to curriculum initiatives and provided additional support for NETs in the schools (RQ6).

These conclusions as to the overall effectiveness of the ENET Scheme suggest that positive achievements are being made and that the Scheme is successful on the whole. At the same time, the evaluation has highlighted a number of factors affecting success and identified possible ways in which the Scheme might be modified in order to achieve greater success. Interpreting results in relation to the research questions helps to draw out these caveats to the overall success of the Scheme.

Research Question 1 investigated the extent to which the ENET Scheme impacts local teachers' English language teaching and the ways it does so. The findings suggest that NETs adopt more culturally-focused and language-arts-oriented activities in their teaching than local teachers, and that this has an influence on the approaches local teachers adopt. The qualitative results throw some additional light on this issue. Although stakeholders agreed that the influence of the NET has a unique impact on the teaching approaches of local English teachers, and local English teachers valued the different perspective that the NET had brought to English language teaching, they themselves felt constrained in their ability to adopt similar practices in their own teaching (CF2).

Research Question 2 focused on the impact of the Scheme on student learning of English. Online survey and case study results identified perceptions of improvements in student attitude and motivation to engage with English, and increased opportunities for them to use English, although it was felt that not all students could benefit significantly from being taught by a NET, or from the NET Section competitions.

Research Question 3 focused on the extent to which the ENET Scheme enhances the English-speaking environment of the school, and the ways it does so. A number of findings both from the online surveys and from case study interviews and observations indicate that the Scheme enjoys considerable success in this area. SF6 showed that local English teachers and School Principals placed particular value on the NET's role in organising and conducting co-curricular activities, which, they felt, enriched the English learning environment. In case study interviews, stakeholders confirmed the importance and the value of NET involvement in organising activities outside of lesson time, which, they agreed, helped enhance the English-speaking environment in the school (CF11).

Research Question 4 explored the extent to which the ENET Scheme supports curriculum development and implementation in secondary schools, and the ways it does so. Findings from the case study investigation involved one school which had applied for School-based Support Services from the NET Section, and found the support stimulating and worthwhile (CF16). Survey findings, reinforced by findings from case study interviews, suggested that NETs themselves tend not to get involved in activities which stakeholders would describe as 'curriculum development', although NETs often develop teaching and learning resources for sharing among panel members teaching the same levels (SF14).

Research Question 5 investigated the extent to which the ENET Scheme contributes to professional development and collaboration among the teachers, and the ways it does so. It is a two-pronged question, since professional development may not be related to collaboration. Findings from the online surveys and case studies indicate that professional development in the form of centralised workshops and cluster meetings were found to be helpful (CF20) and that

ideas and materials explored in them were practical and could be applied in the school context (SF18).

Research Question 6 is a three-pronged question with progress made on the key recommendations of the 2009 evaluation report, the impact of curricular initiatives since 2009 on the Scheme and the impact of changes in the support provided for NETs being explored. The 2009 evaluation report made a number of recommendations, some of which would entail major organisational changes in the teaching of English at the school level. The current evaluation found indications of the more practical of these recommendations having been acted upon. With respect to the impact of changes in the support provided for the NETs since 2009, the 3-day induction programme and RNCT support for new NETs are generally well-received, and the School-Based Support Services have been seen as valuable (SF27).

Additional Findings, though not directly related to the research questions, have provided further support for the effectiveness of the ENET Scheme. There was a perception that the number of suitable potential NETs was shrinking (CF25). Underlying this perception were a number of expectations as to the characteristics of a ‘good’ NET, which were revealing, as well as some misapprehensions as to the roles and responsibilities of the NET Section (CF27).

Summary of Recommendations

In light of the analysis of the data, the research team makes the following recommendations. Recommendations are grouped according to the area they address, but not necessarily in order of importance. Note that the supporting findings are listed under each recommendation.

NET Deployment

1. Continue to encourage schools to integrate the NET into the English panel as a whole both socially and professionally. (Supported by SF1, 2, 3, 7, 9, 14, 15, 17, 26, 28 & CF3, 4, 5, 10, 14, 17, 18, 19, 23, 24)
2. Continue to encourage schools to consider the unique experience, qualifications, and interests of the NETs when determining deployment. (Supported by SF 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 10, 11 & CF 1, 3, 5, 9, 11, 13)

Scheme’s Support for Schools

3. Continue to support schools with RNCT members by providing and evaluating the induction programme for new teachers recruited into the Scheme, professional development workshops in areas of interest, and providing assistance as requested with curriculum development and the improvement of pedagogy. (Supported by SF 8, 13, 18, 27 & CF 2, 6, 7, 13, 15, 16, 20, 21)
4. Continue to encourage and assist schools to promote a culture of collegiality and collaborative professional development. (Supported by SF 4, 5, 12 & CF 2, 4, 8, 12, 13, 17, 18, 19, 22, 23)

Public Relations

5. Continue to communicate the ENET Scheme's goals to stakeholders and seek to remove misconceptions about the Scheme's work. (Supported by SF 16, 17, 23, 24, 25, 26 & CF 26, 27, 28)
6. Continue to establish communication channels with NET communities and seek out their support to provide insight into NET issues and potential solutions. (Supported by SF 23, 24, 25, & CF 26, 27, 28)
7. Continue to monitor and assess the response of the Education Bureau to the recommendations in this report as well as the effectiveness of the Scheme. (Supported by SF 23, 24, 25)

NET Recruitment

8. Consider how to support NETs and Schools in the selection and retention process in ways that provide transparency and flexibility. (Supported by CF 25, 26, 27, 28)

More detailed suggestions under each of the recommendations can be found in the report.

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

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
CPD	Centralised Professional Development
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
FETRP	Foreign English Teacher Recruitment Project [in Taiwan]
JET	Japan Exchange and Teaching [Programme]
JTE	Japanese Teachers of English [in Japan]
LET	Local English Teacher
NET	Native-speaking English Teacher
NEST	Native English-Speaking Teacher [in Taiwan]
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
SCMP	South China Morning Post
SF	Survey Finding
SEA	Sports Exchange Advisors [in Japan]
TM	Text Mining

1. OBJECTIVES AND RATIONALE OF THE FINAL REPORT

1.1 Background

The evaluation of the Enhanced Native-speaking English Teacher Scheme in Secondary Schools (hereafter ‘The ENET Scheme’) was commissioned by the Education Bureau (EDB). It commenced on 14 January 2016 and ran until 31 December 2017. The evaluation was conducted by a team of scholars headed jointly by Dr Mary Shepard Wong and Dr Chong Ho Yu of Azusa Pacific University in collaboration with scholars from The Open University of Hong Kong, The Chinese University of Hong Kong and New South Wales University.

The evaluation aimed to assist the EDB in informing the public of the effectiveness of the ENET Scheme as a territory-wide initiative in support of English language education in public-sector secondary schools; to identify areas for improvement in the operation of the Scheme; to recommend strategies for enhancing the impact and effectiveness of the Scheme; and to inform policy making regarding the development and implementation of the Scheme.

To achieve these aims, the evaluation comprised a cross-sectional study of the effectiveness of the ENET Scheme with a specific focus on the impact of the ENET Scheme on:

- the implementation of the senior secondary and the junior secondary English language curriculum;
- student learning attitudes, learning outcomes and learning experiences, and the English learning environment in schools;
- NETs’ and local English teachers’ professional development and collaboration;
- English language teaching (i.e. pedagogy and curriculum development).

The evaluation was also charged with investigating progress in implementing the recommendations of the latest of the two previous evaluations, namely, the Second Territory-wide Evaluation of the ENET Scheme (2008-2009) conducted by the University of Melbourne. The 2008-2009 evaluation focused on the role of NETs in contributing to changes in language teaching, language attainment, and resource use; the development of a model of optimal NET deployment in light of new curricular initiatives; and future trends and directions for the ENET Scheme.

1.2 Objectives and Rationale

This report begins with a brief contextual description of the ENET Scheme, its history, its place in the NET Scheme as a whole, the roles of the different EDB units responsible for implementing it, and the recommendations of previous evaluations of the Scheme. The report includes a review of the literature relating to programmes in Japan, Taiwan, and South Korea, which also involve the recruitment of native English speakers to teach in local schools. The report goes on to present the results of the analysis of over 7000 online surveys and of case study investigations in eight schools. It concludes with recommendations arising from the survey and case study findings.

1.3 Contextual background

The NET Scheme comprises the NET Scheme in Primary Schools (PNET Scheme) and the Enhanced NET Scheme in Secondary Schools (ENET Scheme). The Scheme is an important element of the support for English language teaching in Hong Kong and part of an orchestrated policy for the involvement of ‘native-speaking English teachers’ (that is, teachers of English who speak the language with native-like competence) in the teaching of English which stretches back to 1997 and beyond.

In 1997, the newly established HKSAR Government undertook to implement a NET Scheme, providing more than 700 additional native-speaking English teachers in order to ‘make an immediate impact on improving the English language standards of our students’¹. The ENET Scheme was duly introduced to secondary schools in the 1998/99 school year with the recruitment of 388 NETs. The 1997 Guidelines on the duties of NETs carried the expectation that the Scheme would effect improvement in the professional profile of English language teachers, leading to advances in the quality of language teaching through a system where NETs produced teaching resources, served as models of good practice, effected gains in student language proficiency and were integrated into the life of the school². In 2002, the Scheme was extended to the primary sector with the introduction of the PNET Scheme. Both ENET and PNET Schemes are operated by the Education Bureau through the NET Section, the NET Administration Team and the School Development Sections.

The NET Section

This section was established in 2002 and is now a unit under the Curriculum Development Institute (CDI) charged with steering and facilitating the implementation and evaluation of the NET Scheme in Hong Kong. The NET Section is the professional arm of the Scheme. It provides professional support for schools to maximise the benefits of the Scheme through the functioning of an **Advisory Teaching Team (ATT)** for the NET Scheme in Primary Schools and a **Regional NET Coordinating Team (RNCT)** for the ENET Scheme.

The ATT comprises a mix of NETs and local English teachers. The team designs and operates professional development programmes for NETs and local English teachers as well as conducting school development visits to individual schools. It facilitates the effective deployment of NETs, provides support for the development of innovative and effective teaching strategies and related curriculum resources, and disseminates good teaching practices in language learning and teaching. The ATT also provides peripatetic support for schools with fewer than six classes. Each Advisory Teacher is responsible for between 12 and 18 primary schools.

The RNCT supports the implementation of the updated English Language Education KLA (ELE KLA) curriculum and the ENET Scheme in a variety of ways. The team organises competitions for students; conducts professional development workshops for teachers;

¹ *Building Hong Kong for a new era: Address by the Chief Executive The Honorable Tung Chee Hwa*. 8 October 1997. Hong Kong: Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government.

² *Guidelines on the duties of NETs appointed under the enhanced NET Scheme*. HKSAR: Education Department, 1997.

supports schools with collaborative research and development ‘Seed’ projects; holds regional cluster meetings to disseminate good teaching practices; and assists in the development of school-based English Language curriculum and learning and teaching resources through its School-Based Support Services (SBSS). The team comprises eight NET members, i.e. Regional NET Coordinators (RNCs), serving about 400 public-sector secondary schools in Hong Kong, two RNCs are responsible for schools in Hong Kong Island, two RNCs are responsible for schools in Kowloon, four RNCs are responsible for schools in the New Territories, and three Curriculum Officers and the one Project Officer, who were in service during the evaluation.

According to information provided on the EDB website³, the key duties of the NET Section are:

- to provide on-site professional support for English teachers, including NETs, in public-sector primary and secondary schools to maximise the benefits and potential of the NET Scheme and to facilitate the implementation of the CDC ELE KLA Curriculum Guide for P1 to S6;
- to design and implement literacy programmes and ‘Seed’ projects in participating primary and secondary schools, with professional support provided for the English teachers concerned, including the NETs, as a means of fostering their professional development, promoting curriculum and pedagogical innovations and facilitating the implementation of the CDC ELE KLA Curriculum Guide for P1 to S6;
- to organise centralised and school-based professional development programmes and networking activities for English teachers, including NETs, in public-sector primary and secondary schools in Hong Kong;
- to organise competitions to provide opportunities for primary and secondary school students to develop and demonstrate their ability to use English creatively and collaboratively and to foster participating teachers’ professional growth; and
- to disseminate good practices, innovative teaching methods and resource materials developed by English teachers, including NETs, and to encourage professional networking.

The NET Administration Team

This unit is responsible for providing support for NET Scheme-related administrative matters, such as the recruitment of NETs and the remuneration package for NETs. The relevant section of the EDB website ‘NET Scheme - NET Appointment Matters’ serves as an information repository for schools and NETs providing links to relevant EDB Circular Memoranda detailing the administrative aspects of NET recruitment, templates for various key documents and information about the remuneration package for NETs under the NET Scheme.

The School Development Sections

Eighteen School Development Sections, under the four Regional Education Offices in Hong Kong, Kowloon, New Territories East and New Territories West respectively, oversee the

³ <http://nets.edb.hkedcity.net/page.php?p=456>

quality of education in schools and provide a full range of professional support services, such as school administration, curriculum development, learning and teaching, student guidance and psychological services⁴.

1.4 Previous evaluations of the NET Scheme

Since its inception, the NET Scheme has been subject to regular evaluation, with the PNET Scheme and the ENET Scheme each evaluated twice by external experts.

The first territory-wide evaluation of the PNET Scheme was undertaken between 2004 and 2006 by a team of researchers from The University of Melbourne and the then Hong Kong Institute of Education. The second evaluation was undertaken between December 2014 and October 2016 by a team of scholars from Azusa Pacific University, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, The Open University of Hong Kong and The University of Hong Kong.

The two previous external evaluations of the ENET Scheme were conducted between 1998 and 2000 by scholars from the then Hong Kong Institute of Education. The second evaluation was conducted by scholars from The University of Melbourne between 2008 and 2009.

The first ENET evaluation addressed the three objectives of the Scheme, which were to enable native-speaking English teachers to enhance the teaching of English by:

- a) acting as English language resource persons in the schools;
- b) assisting in school-based teacher development; and
- c) helping to foster an enabling environment for students to speak English and practise their oral skills.

The Evaluation Report, published in 2001, concluded that the Scheme had enjoyed its greatest success in meeting the first and third objectives. Strong evidence was found that NETs were creating language learning resources, introducing pedagogical innovations in areas such as drama, creative writing, task-based activities and culturally-related aspects of the language, as well as enjoying success in a number of other areas such as instilling greater confidence in students to use the language. There was evidence that the work of NETs was particularly appreciated through the organisation of co-curricular activities which involved modelling appropriate language, and coaching students in culturally appropriate behaviour. Less evidence was found to suggest that the second objective, that NETs would assist in school-based teacher development, was being achieved. This was ascribed to the working culture of Hong Kong secondary schools, in which sharing of professional practices was not widely facilitated.

Twelve recommendations were made by the evaluation team. These focused on a reconceptualisation of the NET as performing a unique role, different from and complementary to that of a local English teacher. NETs would engage in classroom practices that involve modelling and coaching culturally appropriate ways of speaking and behaving; they would specialise in cultural, language arts and co-curricular activities. The school-based resource person role was recommended to be maximised by not expecting NETs to carry a full teaching load, nor to assign NET to teach only oral lessons for all classes.

⁴ <http://www.edb.gov.hk/en/contact-us/reo.html>

The second evaluation of the ENET scheme was conducted from December 2008 to July 2009. The broad conclusions of the evaluation were that:

- Schools were generally satisfied with the role and function of the NETs in schools, which were providing a stimulus to the oral language context in school, complementary to the text-based approach among local English teachers.
- The presence of NETs in the school was valued by parents as an indication of the serious nature of the English language curriculum in the school system.
- NETs had adopted a role consistent with the anticipated changes to be introduced with the new six-year curriculum.
- Students were appreciative of the presence of NETs in schools. The opportunity to practise their English and to become accustomed to people from other cultures was valued.
- The role of the NET within the English Panel in the secondary schools varied from one focussing on oral language practice with students, support and professional development for staff, development of materials and strategies for the classroom, administrative support for the Panel Chair and leadership in English language curriculum, to one in which the NET was seen as an additional English teacher in the school.
- English Panel meetings appeared to focus more on administrative matters and test scores rather than on pedagogical or curriculum issues. This focus was felt to be related to a reduction in the pedagogical and leadership roles of the NET. The role of the NET had become a valuable complement to the main business of the English Department, but it was not seen as central to the improvement of examination performance.

The recommendations of the 2008-2009 evaluation are presented most clearly in the Executive Summary to the report in the form of three major recommendations as follows:

- a. Panels need to shift their emphasis from administrative to curriculum and pedagogical foci.
- b. The English Department needs to be reorganised so that teams of teachers act as collaborative specialists in the implementation of the new English curriculum. This is an extension of the teaching model that currently exists in some schools under the rubric of the NET's duties. Local teachers need to de-privatise the classroom and begin to work in collaborative teams of teachers.
- c. The organisation of the Panel meeting needs to be altered.

The third recommendation has eleven sub-recommendations, setting out ways in which the Panel meeting needed to be altered. These can be summarised as follows:

- i. English Panel Meetings should be conducted in English.
- ii. They should be more pedagogical than administrative in orientation.

- iii. Panel Chairs should not dominate, but should encourage open discussion and sharing.
- iv. Teachers need to develop the confidence to challenge the effect of teaching strategies on student performance.
- v. There should be a shift of focus from examination scores to learning outcomes.
- vi. There should be a collaborative system that enables joint ownership and responsibility for learning outcomes.
- vii. Record keeping should be supplemented with records of student proficiency progress and development.
- viii. Teachers should be given responsibility for progress reporting and collecting student work samples for discussion.
- ix. NETs and local teachers should report on the progress of individual pupils and interventions and monitoring work they have undertaken. Local teachers should adopt a culture of challenge so that the NET is accountable for recommendations.
- x. NETs and local teachers should be supported by professional development.
- xi. Panel Chairs and NETs must ensure that every Panel member is participating in the discussion and learning from and with each other.

To accompany these formal recommendations, less formal observations were made with respect to the role of the RNCT:

RNCT members should play an important role in altering the culture and process of the Panel meetings. Their role needs to be expanded to become more in line with role of the Advisory Teachers in the Primary NET Scheme. However, the role of the RNCT should be broader than just development and provision of teaching materials.

(Griffin & Woods, 2009:8)

Finally, the report suggested that there was a need for professional development of both the NETs and the local Panel members which focuses more on a developmental rather than a deficit model of pedagogy in order to prepare them to implement the new secondary curriculum.

1.5 Research Questions

To guide the current evaluation, a set of research questions was formulated, focusing on the perceived effectiveness of the Scheme in achieving its stated objectives. These research questions are constructed in the form of one overarching general research question and six more specific questions as follows.

1.5.1 Overarching Research Question

How effective is the ENET Scheme in accomplishing its stated objectives:

- to enrich the English language learning environment in schools?
- to enhance the learning and teaching of English with linguistically and culturally

- authentic materials and resources?
- to strengthen teaching capacity through school-based professional development and collaboration between NETs and English Panel Members?

1.5.2 Specific Research Questions:

1. To what extent and in what ways does the ENET Scheme impact teachers' English language teaching (pedagogical practices)?
2. To what extent and in what ways does the ENET Scheme improve student learning of English?
3. To what extent and in what ways does the ENET Scheme enhance the English-speaking environment of the school?
4. To what extent and in what ways does the ENET Scheme support curriculum development and implementation in secondary schools?
5. To what extent and in what ways does the ENET Scheme contribute to professional development and collaboration among the teachers?
6. What progress has been made on the key recommendations of the 2009 evaluation report and how have the various curricular initiatives since 2009 and changes in the support provided for NETs impacted the implementation of the Scheme?

The evaluation aims to explore these questions and make recommendations as to how the operation of the Scheme can be enhanced so as to more effectively meet its expectations.

1.6 Timeline

Figure 1 shows the overall timeline of the evaluation.

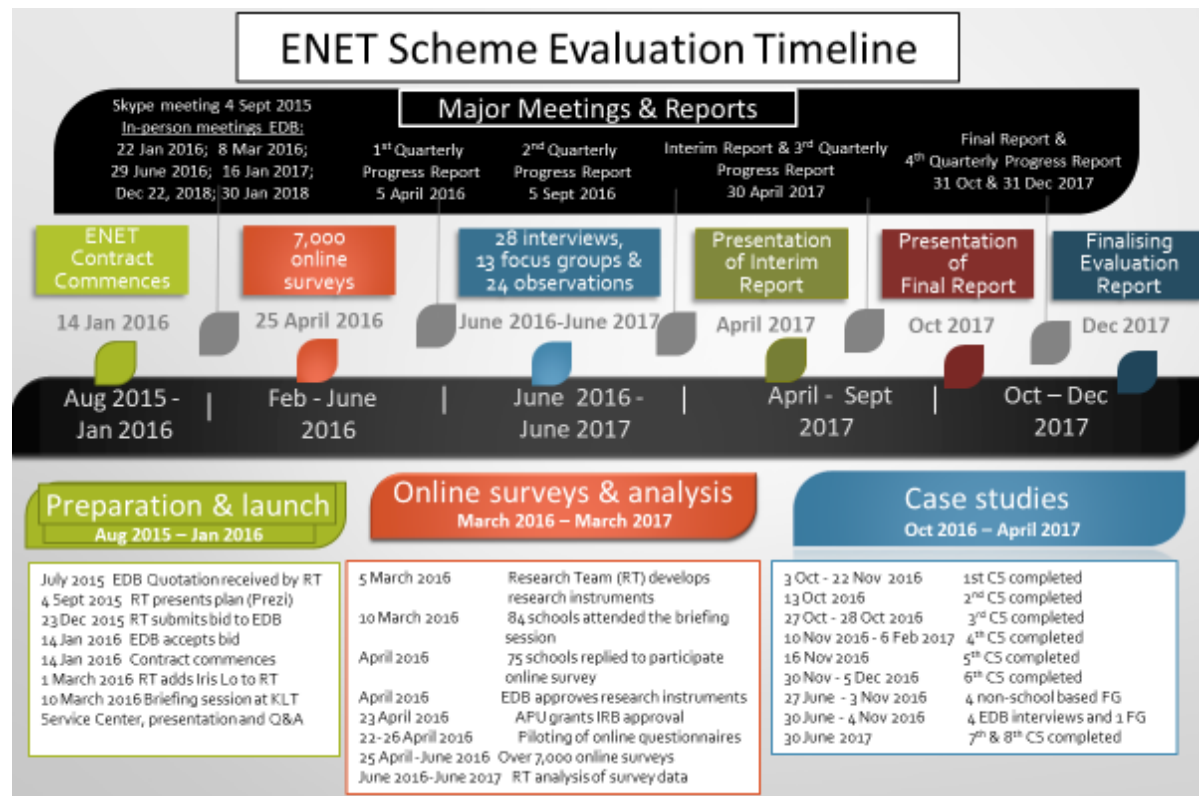


Figure 1. ENET Scheme evaluation timeline

2. LITERATURE REVIEW OF SIMILAR PROGRAMMES IN THE REGION

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 of English in their public schools are harder to find. Reports of evaluations conducted in Hong Kong are the exception, though there are several topical reports on small scale surveys conducted in Japan found on the website of the Association for Japan Exchange and Teaching (AJET) (see links in the references).

Research on collaboration between NNESTs and NS, specifically studies focusing on Japan, Korea, Taiwan, and Hong Kong and studies that compared and contrasted aspects of English language teaching in these countries (Carless, 2006; Wang & Lin, 2013) informed the current evaluation plan and alerted the team to the challenges that may arise and the potential strategies used to address them. Data collection in these studies most often took the form of a case study approach, where 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 video recordings of lessons that participants provided when face-to-face observations were not an option. Most of the AJET reports present findings from surveys conducted among the Japan Exchange and Teaching Programme (**JET** Programme) community, such as ‘Assistant Language Teachers as solo teachers’ followed by a discussion of the findings and a list of conclusions.

The current review looked at literature relating to similar programmes in the region including the JET Programme in Japan, the English Programme in Korea (**EPIK**), and the Foreign English Teacher in Taiwan (**FETiT**). The review identified several challenges found in the logistical, pedagogical, and relational aspects of programme implementation. Some of the challenges found in these programmes are relevant to the ENET Scheme. However, Hong Kong’s colonial past has provided more exposure to English compared to Japan, Korea, and Taiwan. In addition, higher recruitment standards in terms of expected levels of qualifications and experience for entry to the ENET Scheme mark out this scheme from those operated elsewhere in the region. The ENET Scheme also provides a more fully developed support system for professional and curriculum development compared to those found in Japan, Korea, and Taiwan. The following table and list of references is not a comprehensive review, but a starting point to identify commonalities and differences across the four programmes and issues pertinent to the current evaluation.

Table 1. Comparison of state-run NET programs in the region

Issue	Japan JET	Korea EPIK	Taiwan FETIT	Hong Kong NET
Overview of the four programmes				
Start date; number of foreign teachers	1987: start date 2015: 4,786 from 43 countries. 2020 goal = 6,000	1995: start date 2014: 1,165	2008: start date 2013: ~300 Goal = 3,300 one in each primary & secondary school	1998: ENET Scheme started 2002: PNET Scheme started 2016: 850+
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 Majority are US, in year 1 placed in rural areas 	Launched by MoE for educational reform in foreign language learning and globalisation	May reduce the qualifications so they can get more applications.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launched due to dissatisfaction with English proficiency of students Has highest teacher qualifications Conducted external evaluations
Terms used for foreign and local English teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 90% ALTs: Assistant language teachers 10% CIR, Coordinator for International Relations A few SEA, Sports Exchange Advisors 	ELIs: English language instructors	NESTs	NET Local English Teachers Advisory Teachers (AT) Regional NET Coordinators (RNC)
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 of students and teachers Cross-cultural exchange Reform methods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upgrade English proficiency of Taiwanese 	ENET Scheme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To enrich the English language learning environment in schools; To enhance the learning and teaching of English with linguistically and culturally authentic materials and resources; and To strengthen teaching capacity through school-

				based professional development and collaboration between NETs and English panel members.
Duties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team teach • Assist JTE in teaching • Professional Development (PD) of local English teachers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team teach • Develop materials • PD of local English teachers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team teach • Develop materials • PD of local English teachers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team teach classes • Develop materials • PD of local English teachers • Enrich the English language environment
Recruitment criteria: teaching experience, teaching qualifications, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BA? Yes • Teaching experience? No • Teaching qualifications? No • Interest in Japan? Yes • Linguistic skills? Yes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BA? Yes • Teaching experience? No • T qualifications? No • Adapt to Korea? Yes • US Citizen? Yes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BA? Yes • Teaching experience? Preferred • T qualifications? Yes (they may downgrade) • NS equivalent? Yes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BA? Yes, for the ENET Scheme, not for the PNET Scheme • Teaching experience? Yes, for the ENET Scheme, not for the PNET Scheme • T qualifications? Not a must • 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 • Marchesseau, 2014 • Rabbini et al., 2003 • Mahoney, 2004 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carless, 2006 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education Bureau, HKSARG, 2009 • Storey et al., 2001 • Carless, 2006
Lack of team teaching skills of both teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crooks, 2001 • Rabbini et al., 2003 • Wang & Lin, 2013 • Carless, 2006 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wang & Lin, 2013 • Carless, 2006, p.344 • Ahn et al., 1998 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wang & Lin, 2013 • Luo, 2013 • Luo, 2010 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wang & Lin, 2013 • Carless, 2006
Lack of time to co-plan for local English teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carless, 2006 • Mahoney, 2004 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carless, 2006 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Luo, 2010 • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carless, 2006
Lack of support from programme or stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crooks, 2001 • Wang & Lin, 2013 • Carless, 2006 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robinson, 2000 • Wang & Lin, 2013 • Carless, 2006, p.344 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wang & Lin, 2013 • Chang, 2013 • Luo, 2010 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wang & Lin, 2013 • Carless, 2006

NETs lack of teaching experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crooks, 2001 • Marchesseau, 2014 • Rabbini et al., 2003 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wang & Lin, 2013 • Ahn et al., 1998 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wang & Lin, 2013 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wang & Lin, 2013
NETs lack of cultural sensitivity		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robinson, 2000 • Ahn et al., 1998 		
NETs lack of teaching qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crooks, 2001 • Marchesseau, 2014 • Wang & Lin, 2013 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wang & Lin, 2013 • Ahn et al., 1998 	<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"> • Robinson, 2000 • Wang & Lin, 2013 • Ahn et al., 1998 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wang & Lin, 2013 • Chang, 2013 • Wu, 2009 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wang & Lin, 2013
NETs feel isolated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marchesseau, 2014 • Samuels, 2008 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education Bureau, HKSARG, 2009 • Storey et al., 2001
Mismatch of programme goals vs exam focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crooks, 2001 • Marchesseau, 2014 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education Bureau, HKSARG, 2009 • Storey et al., 2001
Critics ask about wasteful spending	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marchesseau, 2014 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South China Morning Post
Benefits and achieved outcomes				
Brings Foreigners to needed areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Samuels, 2008 			
LETs improved speaking			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Luo, 2014 (but LET pedagogy not changed) 	
Students motivated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carless, 2006 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Luo, 2014 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carless, 2006
More support offered for students with 2 teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carless, 2006 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carless, 2006
Recommendations				
Compulsory professional development	<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.) 	(see this report for a summary of the recommendations from previous reports.)
Need for NET counselling or peer support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crooks, 2001 • Rabbini et al., 2003 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robinson, 2000 		

More national support	• Crooks, 2001	• Robinson, 2000	• Chang 2013	
Need for Guidelines and expertise from specialists	• Crooks, 2001 • Marchesseau, 2014 • Rabbini et al., 2003		• Chang, 2013 • Luo, 2014 (all stakeholders involved in reform)	
Foster and hire teachers with sensitivity and openness	• Carless, 2006			
Remove anti-professional discourse ‘authentic’ ‘Native’	• Wang & Lin, 2013	• Wang & Lin, 2013	• Wang & Lin, 2013	• Wang & Lin, 2013

Glossary of Terms Used in the Above Table

ALT	Assistant Language Teacher	JTE	Japanese Teacher of English
BA	Bachelor of Arts	LET	Local English Teacher
CIR	Coordinator for International Relations	MoE	Ministry of Education
CLAIR	Council of Local Authorities for International Relations	NEST	Native English-Speaking Teacher
CLT	Communicative Language Teaching	NS	Native Speaker
ELI	English Language Instructor	PD	Professional Development
EPIK	English Programme in Korea	SEA	Sports Exchange Advisors
FETiT	Foreign English Teachers in Taiwan	TESL	Teaching English as a Second Language
JET	Japan Exchange and Teaching Programme	TESL Cert	Certificate in Teaching English as a Second Language

Two British Council reports, *Investigating NEST schemes around the world: supporting NEST/LET collaborative practices*, and *Global NEST Schemes – An Audit*, both compiled by Copland et al. (2016), provide an overview and comparison of several NET Schemes and programmes that recruit and send teachers overseas. The Audit has 35 pages of tables, with details of the following 11 programmes, with only four that would qualify as state-sponsored Schemes recruiting NETs from foreign countries, and seven that send English teachers overseas.

Programmes that send English teachers abroad:

1. Australian Volunteers International (AVI)
2. British Council English Language Assistants
3. Volunteer Service Overseas (VSO)
4. Centre for British Teachers (CfBT) (Brunei)
5. Cuso International (Canada)
6. Fulbright English Teaching Assistants (ETAs)
7. Peace Corps

State-run Schemes that recruit and hire NETs:

8. English Programme in Korea (EPIK)
9. Foreign English Teachers in Taiwan (FETiT)
10. Japanese Exchange and Teaching (JET) Programme
11. Native-speaking English Teacher (NET) Scheme

The *Global NEST Schemes – An Audit* lists in table format the entry criteria, selection process, contract details, benefits, duties, training, and support of the various Schemes, making comparison easier.

The 45-page report *Investigating NEST schemes around the world: supporting NEST/LET collaborative practices* states that their aims were to:

1. Discover which countries currently use NESTs (Native English Speaker Teachers) in state education.
2. Investigate how NEST schemes operate in different countries and the training and support received by participants.
3. Observe what happens in NEST classes and what are the typical roles played by LETs (Local English Teachers) and NESTs.
4. Highlight what can be learnt from the experiences of LETs and NESTs to improve classroom teaching.
5. Identify what support can be offered to LETs and NESTs to improve training and support.

Copland, et al, 2016, p. 3

The study found a great deal of diversity in operational practices. Schemes are classified into two categories: those that require teachers to be qualified/experienced, and those that do not. The major findings of the study were that communication and planning were key factors for successful co-teaching, and that cross-cultural understanding and flexibility were crucial in forming successful partnerships.

The study includes six recommendations based on their findings:

1. Induction programmes should not be limited to NESTs but should be provided for both NESTs and LETs.
2. Induction should include time for NESTs and LETs to discuss their expectations of their roles. Ideally the discussion should be between partner teachers and be on-going.
3. Teachers should be encouraged to maintain a healthy regard for the value of L1 and L2 in the classroom.
4. Time should be made available for planning, especially where the NEST is peripatetic and moving from classroom to classroom or school to school.
5. Planning should be a joint endeavour between the LET and the NEST and time should be created to allow this to happen.
6. On schemes that do not require NESTs to be qualified/experienced, status issues between LETs and NESTs should be carefully monitored. LETs and NESTs in these contexts should be given opportunities to discuss the impact of their roles.

(Copland, et al, 2016, p. 3)

The report includes the following remarks about Hong Kong:

The current scheme – called NET (or PNET if teachers work in primary schools) – recruits **experienced and qualified teachers** to work with LETs on designing and delivering interactive lessons on certain aspects of the curriculum. There was a widely held perception in Hong Kong that there are not enough trained and linguistically competent local English teachers (Lee, 2005), which may contribute to the belief that NESTs should be hired from overseas. The Hong Kong Education Bureau website, which provides details about the schemes, suggests that the purpose of hiring NESTs is to ‘enhance the teaching of English Language and increase exposure of students to English’. Not all NESTs working in Hong Kong belong to the NET/PNET Scheme. Many are locally hired with varying degrees of success.

(Copland, et al, 2016b, p. 11 (emphases added))

There is a common perception that NESTs often have little teaching experience and lack formal teacher training (Carless, 2002; Tajino and Tajino, 2000). **The Hong Kong NET Scheme is one exception to the general trend to employ inexperienced, untrained teachers**, as is the CfBT scheme in Dubai and Koto-ku in Tokyo.

Copland, et al, 2016b, p. 12 (emphases added)

It is encouraging to see that in a comparison of Schemes by outside scholars, the Hong Kong Scheme is valued for its requirements that Native English teachers recruited to serve in secondary schools should have both experience and training.

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3. FINDINGS AND KEY OBSERVATIONS

3.1 Quantitative Data Collection

A mixed methods design was adopted for the evaluation involving online questionnaire surveys, focus group discussions and case studies. Online surveys were administered to selected students and local English teachers (including the English Panel Chair), the NET and the School Principal.

This section describes the finalised survey instruments.

Questionnaires

1. **The Native English Teacher Questionnaire (NETQ)** has 55 main items. The NETQ aims to evaluate the effectiveness of the ENET Scheme from the NET perspective. Effectiveness is assessed through items exploring the pedagogical practices claimed to be adopted by the NET, student learning, school environment, curriculum development, professional development, collaboration and responses to the recommendations of the 2009 evaluation. The online questionnaire contains six sections in total. The first section is the informed consent that functions to notify the participants of the name and purpose of the study, the institutions of the researchers, who commissioned the study, and the objectives of the study. This is followed by a statement noting that participation in the study is voluntary, with 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 survey items are arranged in six sections, with the name of the section and the number of main questions in each part provided here: *Consent: 1; School Code: 1; Background: 14; Activities: 22; Effectiveness: 1 (7 sub-items); NET Section School-based Support: 2; Opinions: 11 (19 sub-items); and Descriptions: 3.*
2. **The Local English Teacher Questionnaire (LETQ)** has 43 main items. The LETQ aims to evaluate the effectiveness of the ENET Scheme from the LET perspective. Several of the questions are cross-referenced to items in the NET questionnaire to facilitate triangulation. The informed consent and six sections are similar to the NETQ described above, with the following number of main items in each part provided here: *Consent: 1; School Code: 1; Background: 7; Activities: 16; Effectiveness: 2 (with a total of 17 sub-items); NET Section School-based Support: 2; Opinions: 11 (with a total of 44 sub-items); and Descriptions: 3.*
3. **The School Principal Questionnaire (SPQ)** has 31 main items. The SPQ aims to evaluate the effectiveness of the ENET Scheme from the School Principal perspective. Several of the items are cross-referenced to items in the NET/LET questionnaires to facilitate triangulation. The informed consent and five sections are similar to the NETQ described above, with the following number of main items in each part provided here: *Consent: 1; School Code: 1; Joining Case Study: 1; Background: 8; Activities: 3; Effectiveness: 5 (with a total of 25 sub-items); Opinions: 9 (with a total of 20 sub-items); and Descriptions: 3.*

4. **The Student Questionnaire (StudentQ)** has 9 main items. The StudentQ aims to evaluate the effectiveness of the ENET Scheme from the student perspective. The items are presented bilingually (in English and Chinese) and are arranged in three sections, with the name of the section and the number of main questions in each part provided here: *Consent: 1; School Code: 1; Background: 4; Opinions: 1 (16 sub-items); and Descriptions: 2.*

After obtaining approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of Azusa Pacific University, the questionnaire surveys were piloted in three local secondary schools. Piloting allowed the team to identify any unpredicted problems with the survey items and their implementation and refine the instruments accordingly. The pilot focused on the clarity of item wording; the operation of the user-interface; the time allocation for survey completion; any logistical problems that might occur in the process, and the general functioning of survey items and options.

The Principal and six English teachers from one of the schools taking part in the pilot completed the online questionnaire on 22 April 2016. The English teachers were asked to take both the NET and local English teacher surveys. Three of them completed the NET survey after the local English teacher survey and the other three teachers completed the local English teacher survey first and then the NET survey. The sequence in which they completed the two surveys and the time gap between the first and the second were controlled to avoid carry-over effects, such as contrast and assimilation effects in which the experience of taking the first survey might influence responses to the second. The Project Manager asked for their feedback on the following day and recorded the following notes:

- The NET questionnaire was too long. It included over 90 questions and it took the teachers 30-45 minutes to complete it. The number of items relating to ‘activities’ could be reduced, and some of the open-ended questions might be combined or deleted.
- English teachers felt that the questionnaire focused too much on lesson planning and academic matters and ignored the core issue of NETs’ adaptation to the local school culture. If NETs could not adapt in Hong Kong or in school, they might not be able to perform their function effectively. It would be helpful to ask about how NETs’ sense of belonging in school could be increased, what factors hinder the effectiveness of the NET Scheme, what the major problems and challenges, etc are.
- There were too many categories in the items related to academic qualifications; ‘others (please specify)’ might serve the purpose more efficiently. It was not necessary to list out all the possibilities.
- Some open-ended questions in the Principal and local English teacher questionnaires were difficult to answer. Respondents were not sure what was expected of them and some examples might be helpful.

A total of 21 students from the other two schools completed the online student questionnaire on 25 and 26 April 2016. The Project Manager attended the student sessions at the schools and discussed the process with the Principal and the English teachers. After observing and discussing the process, the Project Manager noted some aspects of the student surveys where refinements could be made, such as reducing the number of open-ended questions by removing

overlapping items, and introducing simpler ways of responding to certain items.

Based on the feedback received from the piloting exercise, the following changes were made:

- The number of questions in the NET questionnaire was reduced to 55.
- Some of the open-ended questions were combined or deleted in all four of the surveys.
- One more option, 'N/A', was added in question 6 of the student questionnaire and question 7 was deleted.

After further refinement based on suggestions raised by the NET Section of the EDB, the revised questionnaires were entered onto the online survey development programme, SurveyMonkey (<http://www.surveymonkey.com>) and further testing of the operation of the online surveys was carried out.

The online SPQ, NETQ and LETQ surveys were officially opened on 26 April 2016, and the student survey was opened on 2 May 2016.

Following the 10 March 2016 Briefing Session, which included an invitation to schools to indicate willingness to participate in the evaluation, the NET Section of the EDB issued invitations to the sampled secondary schools. Confirmation was received from 72 schools by 5 April 2016. Three more schools agreed to participate in the week beginning 11 April 2016. At that point, the number of participating schools was 75. Six of these schools later withdrew from the evaluation, citing school-based reasons such as the NET or the English Panel Chair being hospitalised, or a clash between the timing of the online survey and the school's examination timetable.

Two different approaches were adopted to invite selected stakeholders to complete the survey. For the Principal, the NET and local English teachers, an email invitation including a unique link to the survey was sent to each individual. By using this method, the email address would be included with the survey responses enabling the data to be tracked, if necessary. Using this method meant, in addition, that participants did not have to complete the survey in one sitting. Rather, they could start, pause, and then return to the survey later. However, a universal link was sent to students because collecting their email addresses would be laborious, and also allowing them to pause the survey might potentially lower the response rate.

On 21 April 2016, the contact person of each school received an email containing instructions for survey arrangements and two templates (Chinese and English) of school circulars for parents requesting permission for their children to participate in the survey. On 26 April 2016, a confidential school code was delivered to each school and participating Principals, NETs and English teachers were asked to provide their email addresses. The survey invitations were sent out through Survey Monkey to each participant when their email addresses were received. On 2 May 2016, the online student survey link was delivered to each school through email.

A total of 69 schools completed the online surveys. The surveys were closed on 25 June 2016 at 5:30pm (HKT). The following describes, in more detail the data received by the research team after the online school survey was closed. See Table 2.

Table 2. Summary of number of surveys completed and included in data analysis

	Potential # of respondents	actual # of schools involved	# of surveys submitted	# of completed surveys	# of incomplete surveys ^a	# of invalid data ^b to exclude	# of wrong codes to include	Total
SPQ	69	66	82	72	10	6	4	66
NETQ	69	65	76	68	8	3	2	65
LETQ	468	69	483	459	24	3	12	456
Stud ^{nt} Q	9,960 (estimate)	67	7,818	7,259	559	736	N/A	6523
	10,566							7110

Note ^a. Incomplete means a series of questions were left blank (not just one or two skipped questions). Incomplete surveys were excluded from the statistical calculation.

Note ^b. Invalid data 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 removed.

The number of School Principal Questionnaires submitted was 82, of which 10 were incomplete. Six of the 72 completed surveys were judged to be invalid because the same respondent later completed another survey so these were repeats and thus excluded. Respondents in four of the completed surveys had entered the wrong school code, but the data were valid and therefore included. The resulting number of SPQ surveys that could be included in statistical calculations was 66.

The number of NET Questionnaires submitted was 76, of which 8 were incomplete. Three of the 68 completed surveys were judged to be invalid and thus excluded. In two of the completed surveys, respondents had entered the wrong school code, but the data were valid and therefore included. The resulting number of NET surveys that could be included in statistical calculations was 65.

The number of Local English Teacher Questionnaires submitted was 483, of which 24 were incomplete. In 12 of these, wrong school codes had been entered, but the data were valid and included in the statistical analysis. Three of the 459 completed surveys were judged to contain invalid data and thus excluded, resulting in a total of 456 surveys for inclusion in statistical calculations.

The number of Student Questionnaires submitted was 7,818, of which 559 were incomplete. In addition, 736 of the completed surveys were judged to be invalid and thus excluded resulting in 6,523 student surveys. It is important to point out that in every survey some participants skipped questions, and therefore in each analysis the analysable sample size is less than the total sample size. In some instances, outliers or questionable responses are considered invalid data and thus are removed (e.g. age > 80). By default in each analysis the number of valid observations is: (total sample size – invalid observations).

3.2 Quantitative Data Analysis Overview

3.2.1 Data Processing Methodology and Analysis of Surveys

The design of the survey instruments for Principals, local English teachers and NETs involved a number of common items included to enable comparisons to be made between the perceptions of different stakeholders. To facilitate these comparisons in the data analysis, cross-referencing codes were assigned to similar items across all surveys.

In all analyses, the normalised sampling weights were taken into account to adjust for over-sampling and under-sampling. For inferential statistics, the ordinal 5-point Likert scale was collapsed into two categories (agree or disagree; often or not often), and then Chi-square analysis was run. Chi-square analysis is invalid if any cell count is less than five. When this happens, Fisher's exact test results were reported instead. In addition, pie charts were presented to assist readers in interpreting the Chi-square results. It is important to note that sampling weights were applied to analysis related to opinions and perceptions, but not demographics (e.g. teaching qualifications) as these are fixed attributes of the respondents which have to be kept constant for the analysis. While opinions should be weighted by their relative representativeness, an individual's gender, age, and teaching experience reflect one's own attributes and thus there is no need for adjustment.

Textual analytics was employed to analyse open-ended responses in the survey. Various textual analysis software modules were utilised, including Text Explorer in JMP Pro Version 13, Text Mining in IBM SPSS Modeller Version 18, and Code Relation Analysis in MAXQDA 2018.

3.3 Quantitative Analysis

3.3.1 Overall Findings

This first section presents selected findings, data, and narratives that address a cluster of research questions to provide an overall picture of the Scheme's impact through the work of NETs in secondary schools. The following sections present the findings and the supporting data presented in the order of the six research questions. Note that in these sections there is some overlap in terms of which questions the data responds to, as some clusters of questions and analyses address more than one research question.

Qualifications of Local English Teachers and NETs

NETs and local English teachers were asked to indicate what type of academic qualifications they had attained and in what areas by selecting from a list of qualification types – doctorate, master's, bachelor's, postgraduate diploma/certificate, teacher's certificate, and others – and by filling in the subject area of each qualification in a box provided. Of the 65 NETs and 456 local English teachers who took part in the online survey, 47 and 355 respectively reported their qualifications.

Analysis of the results revealed the highest qualification claimed by respondents, and these are shown in Figure 2 and Table 3 below.

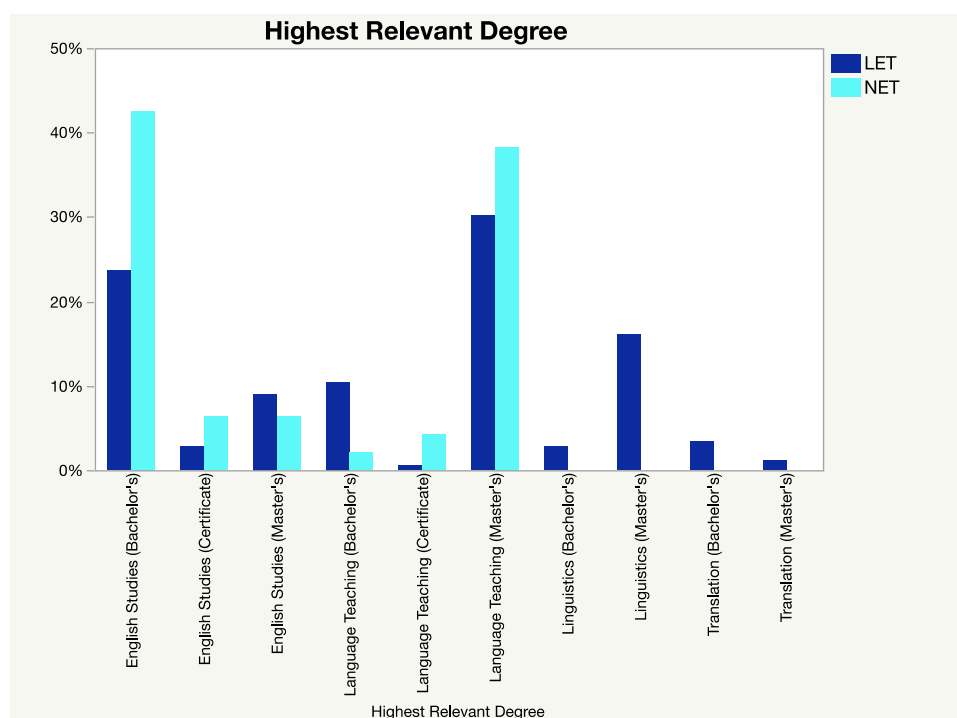


Figure 2. Distribution of Highest Relevant Degree among local English teachers and NETs

Table 3. Breakdown of distribution of Highest Relevant Degree among local English teachers and NETs by number and percentage

Highest Relevant Degree	Local English Teachers		NETs	
	N	%	N	%
English Studies (Bachelor's)	84	23.66	20	42.55
English Studies (Certificate)	10	2.82	3	6.38
English Studies (Master's)	32	9.01	3	6.38
Language Teaching (Bachelor's)	37	10.42	1	2.13
Language Teaching (Certificate)	2	0.56	2	4.26
Language Teaching (Master's)	107	30.14	18	38.30
Linguistics (Bachelor's)	10	2.82	0	0.00
Linguistics (Master's)	57	16.06	0	0.00

Translation (Bachelor's)	12	3.38	0	0.00
Translation (Master's)	4	1.13	0	0.00

According to this analysis, local English teachers appear to have higher overall qualifications than NETs since 56.34% of them claim a relevant master's degree as their highest qualification, compared to 44.68% of NETs.

The numbers and percentages of teachers with relevant bachelor's degrees, master's degrees and other qualifications, including doctoral degrees are further analysed in the following. It is noteworthy that not all respondents reported their qualifications. The reasons that they skipped qualification-related questions are unknown and there is no evidence that there is any systematic pattern of skipping.

Bachelor's Degrees

Reference was made to the Education Bureau list of 'recognised language major degree programmes'⁵ in order to classify degrees considered directly relevant to English language teaching according to the major subject, or one of the major subjects in the case of a double degree. Degrees which fall into the 'Other' category are degrees in subject areas not listed in the EDB document. These include degrees in areas such as social science, psychology, economics, engineering and business among others. The percentages of teachers with relevant and 'Other' bachelor's degrees are displayed below in Figure 3, with the numbers and percentages shown in Table 4, which follows.

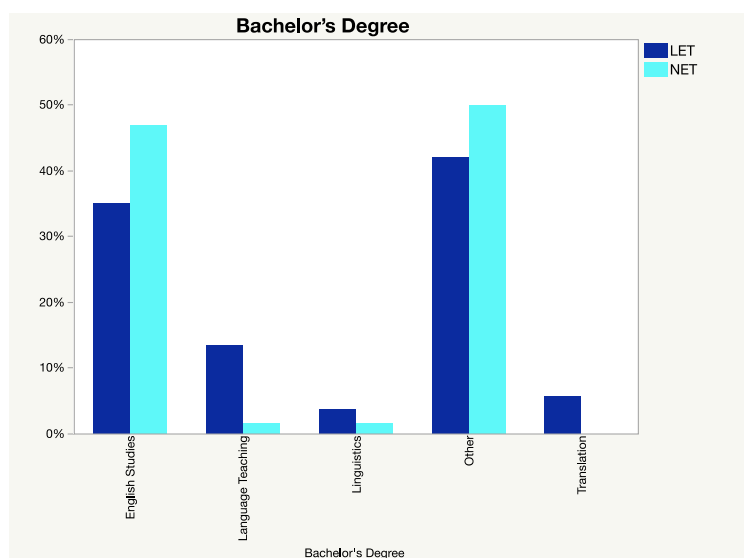


Figure 3. Distribution of Bachelor's Degrees among local English teachers and NETs

⁵ 'Revised Annex 2' on the EDB website: <http://www.edb.gov.hk/en/teacher/qualification-training-development/training/language-edu/index.html>

Table 4. Breakdown of distribution of Bachelor's Degrees among local English teachers and NETs by number and percentage

Bachelor's Degree in:	Local English Teachers		NETs	
	N	%	N	%
English Studies	153	35.01	30	46.88
Language Teaching	59	13.50	1	1.56
Linguistics	16	3.66	1	1.56
Other	184	42.11	32	50.00
Translation	25	5.72	0	0.00

The results suggest that 50% of NETs and 42% of local English teachers have first degrees classified as 'Other' in this analysis, i.e. degrees considered not directly relevant to English language teaching. However, the results may need to be treated with caution as respondents entered subjects such as 'education' and 'arts' in the subject area box, which could feasibly include degrees such as a Bachelor of Education, or Bachelor of Arts with English as a major subject. In addition, analysis of the qualifications overall reveals that a significant number of teachers with an undergraduate degree which is not directly relevant to English language teaching have compensated for this by studying for a master's degree in a relevant area.

Master's Degrees

The percentages of teachers with relevant and 'other' master's degrees are displayed below in Figure 4, with the numbers and percentages shown in Table 5 which follows.

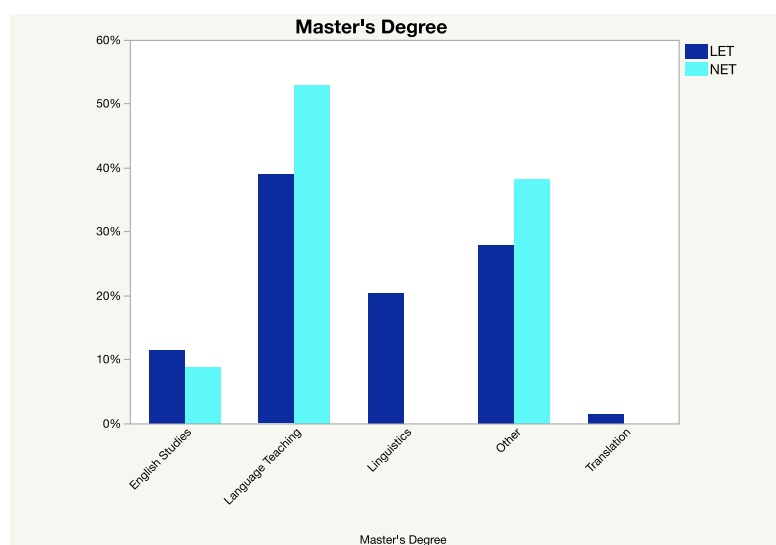


Figure 4. Distribution of Master's Degrees among local English teachers and NETs

Table 5. Breakdown of distribution of Master's Degrees among local English teachers and NETs by number and percentage

Master's Degree in:	Local English Teachers		NETs	
	N	%	N	%
English Studies	32	11.43	3	8.82
Language Teaching	109	38.93	18	52.94
Linguistics	57	20.36	0	0.00
Translation	4	1.43	0	0.00
Other	78	27.86	13	38.24

Reference was again made to the Education Bureau list of 'recognised language major degree programmes' in order to identify master's degrees considered directly relevant to English language teaching according to the subject of the major. Master's degrees which fall into the 'Other' category are degrees in areas such as social science, psychology, counselling, education and media studies among others.

According to this analysis, 61.76% of NETs had relevant master's degrees, compared to 71.48% local English teachers. Again, caution may need to be used in interpreting the results as a number of respondents wrote 'arts,' which may mean that they were referring to the name of the degree, rather than its major subject.

Doctoral degrees

Five respondents (3 local English teachers and 2 NETs) indicated that they had attained doctoral degrees, although none of these degrees were in subject areas directly relevant to English language teaching.

Teaching Qualifications

Tables 6 and 7 display the frequency and percentage of teaching qualification by teacher (local English teachers and NETs). The teaching qualification is categorised by the combination of their post-graduate diploma and teaching certificate. If the participant did not report anything in either one, then that participant is classified as having no teaching qualification; otherwise, 'yes.' Among those who reported that they have either a post-graduate diploma or a teaching certificate, any field related to English teaching (e.g. TESOL, ESL, language arts) is classified into 'English' and anything else is categorised as 'Other', as shown in Table 7. Chi-square test indicated that there is no significant difference between having a teaching qualification or not

between local English teachers and NETs ($X^2=1.4$, $p=.2367$). Neither is there any significant difference between having a relevant qualification or not between local English teachers and NETs ($X^2=0.265$, $p=.6067$).

Table 6. Teaching Qualifications

Stakeholder	No		Yes	
	N	%	N	%
LET	103	22.59%	353	77.41%
NET	19	29.23%	46	70.77%

Table 7. Relevance of Teaching Qualifications

Stakeholder	English		Other	
	N	%	N	%
LET	240	67.99%	113	32.01%
NET	33	71.74%	13	28.26%

It is noteworthy that 34.53% of participants who have a Bachelor's Degree in 'Other' also have a Master's Degree in 'Other.' When broken down by stakeholder, similar numbers are observed: 34.15% among local English teachers and 37.50% among NETs. Out of 501 respondents, 241 reported having a Bachelor's Degree in 'Other' Or 'Translation.' Among those 241 teachers, 16 of them earned a Master's Degree in English Studies, 55 had a degree in Language Teaching, 30 in Linguistics, and 130 of them reported 'None', 'Other' or 'Translation.' If the total number of participants who reported their qualifications (i.e. 501) is divided by this figure (i.e. 140), it is discovered that 28% of the total respondents did not have a degree directly relevant to English teaching though 'Translation' might be indirectly related to the subject matter they taught.

Qualifications Overall

Overall, analysis of the qualifications of NETs and comparison with local English teachers reveals that NETs are slightly less well-qualified than their local counterparts, with 50% of NETs having non-relevant bachelor's degrees, compared to 42% of local English teachers ($X^2=.719$, $p=0.39$). In addition, a higher percentage of local English teachers have relevant masters' degrees than NETs, the percentages being 70.7% compared to 61.76% ($X^2=.1159$, $p=0.28$). As indicated by the Chi-square analysis, these differences are not significant, however.

Teaching Experience

NETs and local English teachers were asked broadly parallel questions related to teaching experience in order to facilitate comparison, and to determine the types of experience NETs in particular had gained. Two questions are identical: 'How many years in total have you been teaching full time?' and 'How many years in total have you been teaching English full time at your current school?'. Another question asked about years of experience teaching English (for

local English teachers) or English as a Second or Other Language (for NETs).

NETs were asked two questions related to their experience of working in Hong Kong secondary schools, and of working as an EDB-funded NET; they were also asked in how many different schools they had worked in that capacity.

Results of these items are shown below in the form of histograms followed by tables presenting the means and standard deviations of responses. The height of the bar indicates the frequency of the observations within the interval of the x-axis. For example, in Figure 5, the first bin (interval 0-1) is teaching full time for 1 year. The bar is very short, meaning that only a few local English teachers who completed the survey have such a short period of teaching experience. As shown in Figure 5, the height of the bars is getting taller and taller as the number of years increase. However, the bar becomes shorter and shorter again near the right end. Hence, very few local English teachers who completed the survey are extremely inexperienced or extremely experienced; the majority has a reasonable amount of teaching experience. It is important to point out that the purpose of the histogram is to show the overall pattern (e.g. distribution), not the exact values. The boxplot above the histogram is a five-point summary. The middle line inside the box indicates the median, and Figure 5 shows that the median of the number of years in teaching full time is 16. The first outer-edge of the box shows the first quartile (25%) of the distribution. According to Figure 5, 25% of the teachers have 9-year experience or less. In a similar vein, the second outer-edge of the box indicates the third-quartile, which is 75% of the entire distribution. In this case, 75% of local English teachers have at least 24-year teaching experience. Table 8 provides the summary statistics corresponding to the preceding information.

Teaching Experience (local English teachers)

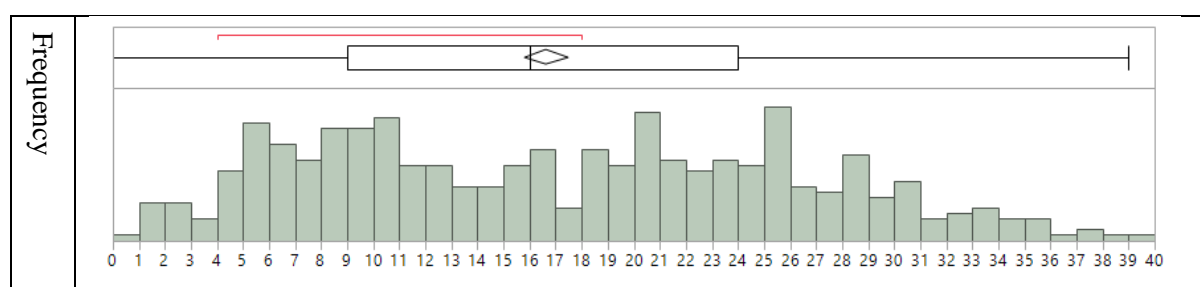


Figure 5. Number of years in total teaching full time of local English teachers

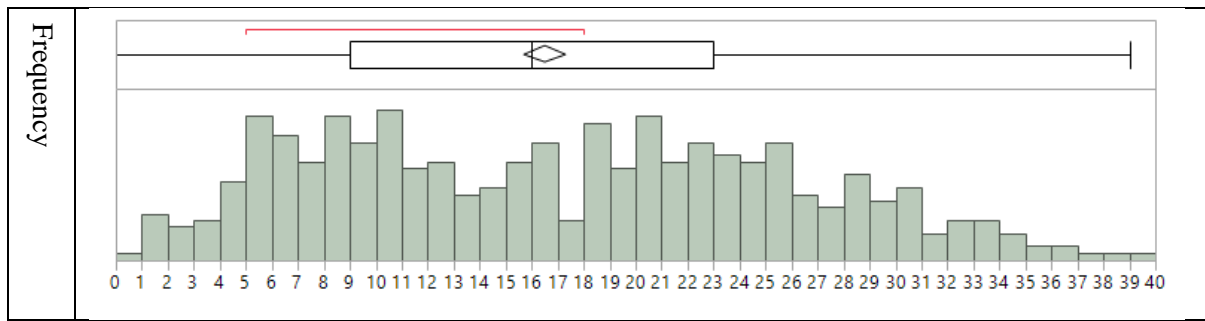


Figure 6. Number of years in total teaching English full time of local English teachers

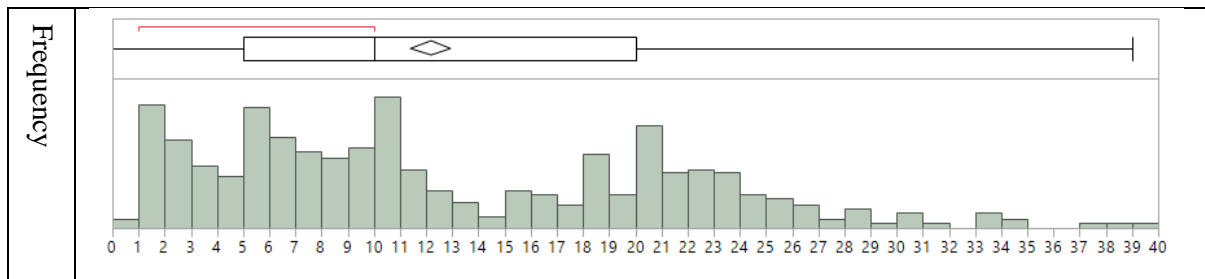


Figure 7. Number of years in total teaching English full time at the current school by local English teachers

Table 8. Mean and Standard Deviation of responses of local English teachers

Item	Mean	SD
How many years in total have you been teaching full time?	16.64	9.03
How many years in total have you been teaching English full time?	16.50	8.87
How many years in total have you been teaching English full time at your current school?	12.17	8.52

Teaching Experience (NETs)

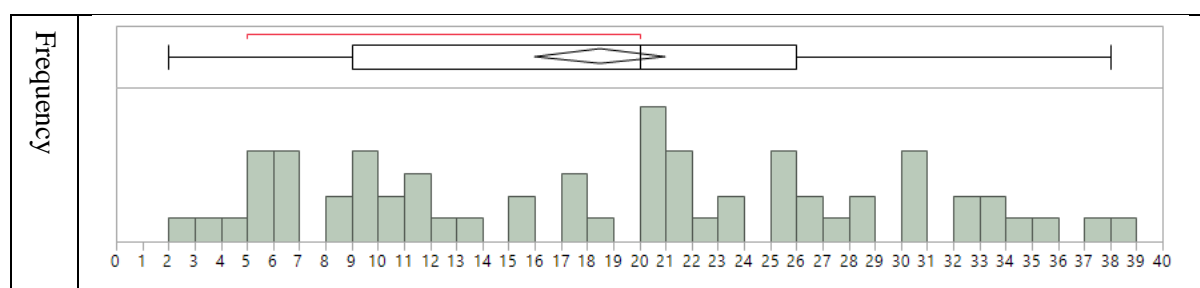


Figure 8. Number of years teaching full time

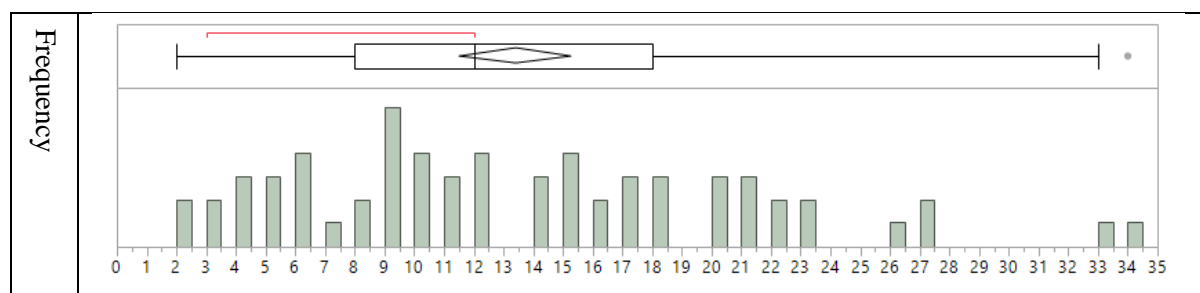


Figure 9. Number of years teaching ESOL full time.

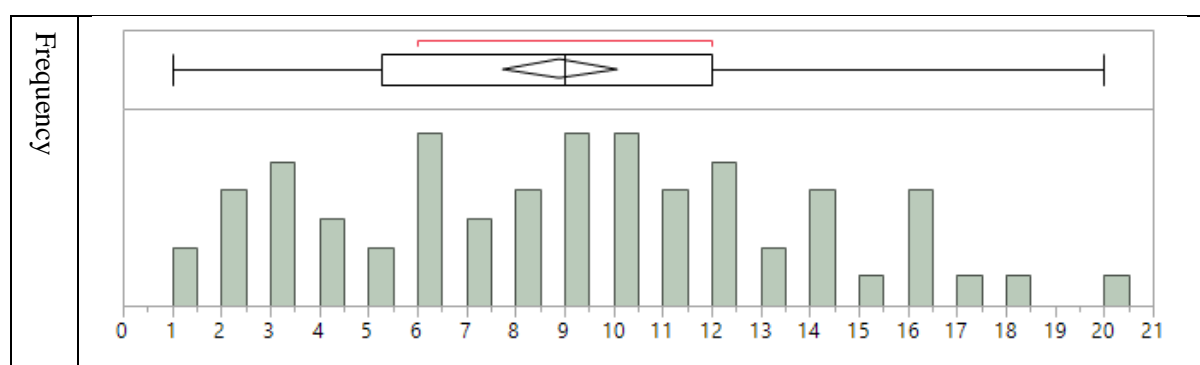


Figure 10. Number of years teaching English full time to secondary students in Hong Kong

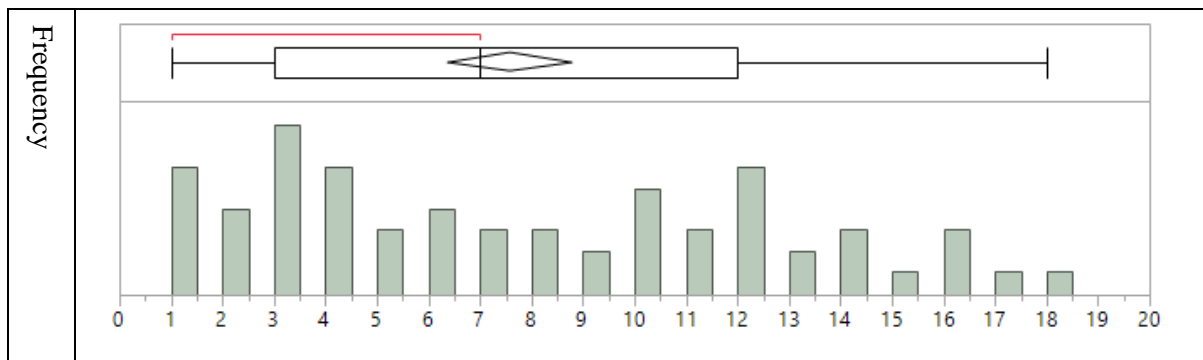


Figure 11. Number of years working as an EDB-funded NET in Hong Kong secondary schools

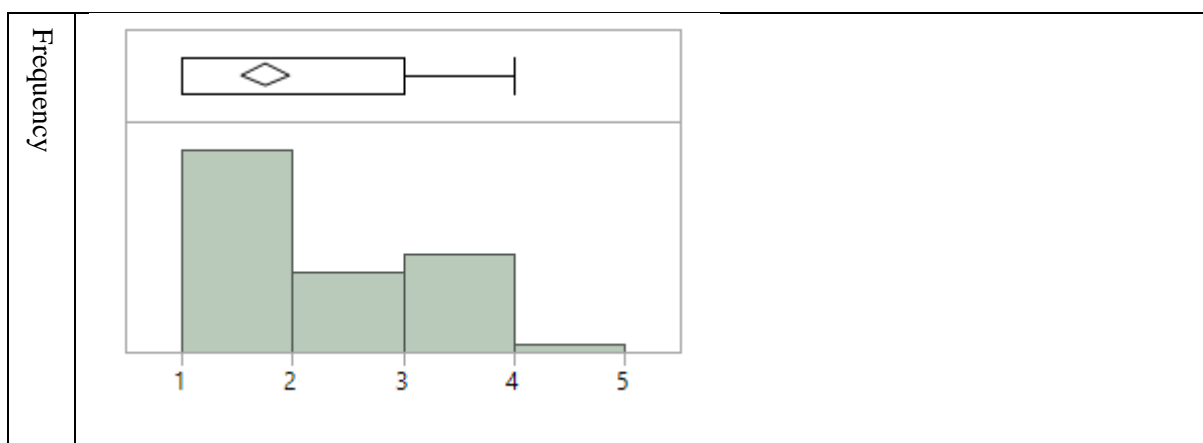


Figure 12. Number of schools taught in as a NET in Hong Kong

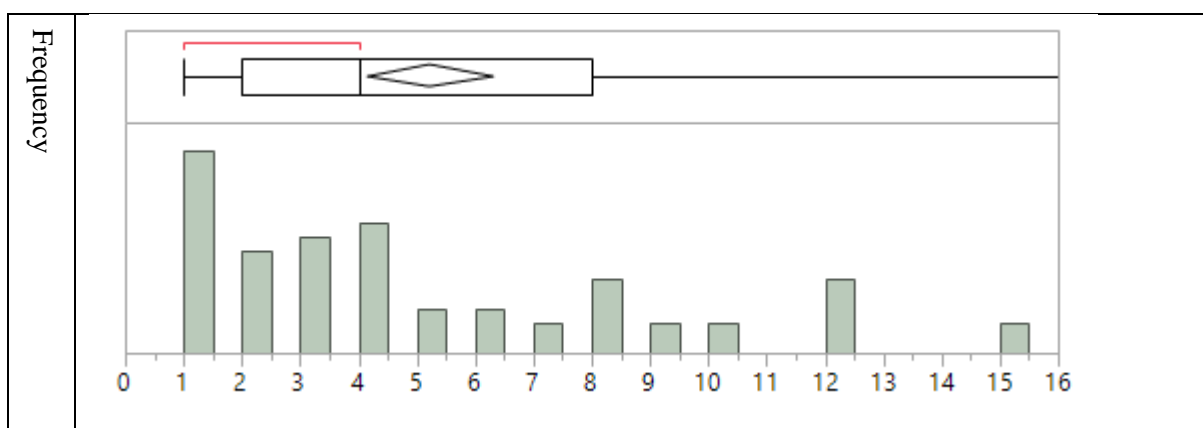


Figure 13. Number of years taught as a NET at your current school

Table 9. Mean and Standard Deviation of responses of NETs

Item	Mean	SD
How many years in total have you been teaching full time?	19.12	11.14
How many years in total have you been teaching English as a Second or Other Language full time?	13.25	7.57
How many years in total have you been teaching English full time to secondary school students in Hong Kong?	8.89	4.64
How many years have you been working as an EDB-funded NET in Hong Kong secondary schools?	7.36	4.93
How many schools have you taught in as an EDB-funded NET in Hong Kong?	2.05	1.84
How many years in total have you been teaching English at your current school?	5.17	4.27

The results for parallel items are compiled in Table 10 below and suggest that NETs claimed slightly more years of teaching experience than local English teachers, but slightly fewer years of teaching English. This suggests that a small proportion of NETs may have changed their teaching specialism to focus on English.

Table 10. Mean and Standard Deviation of responses by stakeholder

	Local English Teachers		NETs	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
How many years in total have you been teaching full time?	16.64	9.03	19.12	11.14
How many years in total have you been teaching English/ESL/ESOL full time?	16.50	8.87	13.25	7.57
How many years in total have you been teaching English full time at your current school?	12.17	8.52	5.17	4.27
How many years in total have you been teaching English full time to secondary school students in Hong Kong	NA	NA	8.89	4.64

Predictably, local English teachers have substantially more years of experience in the current school (Mean = 12.17, SD = 8.52). However, the mean number of years that NETs had been teaching English to secondary students in Hong Kong was approaching 9 years (Mean = 8.89, SD = 4.64). This experience gap might cause discrepancy in expectations between the stakeholders. To be specific, experienced local English teachers might be resentful of being advised by less experienced NETs.

Figure 14 below indicates the levels of teaching by NETs. 43 NETs reported that they teach all levels, varying from S1 to S6 whereas 18 of them teach the lower levels (S1-S3). Only three NETs exclusively teach upper levels (S4-S6).

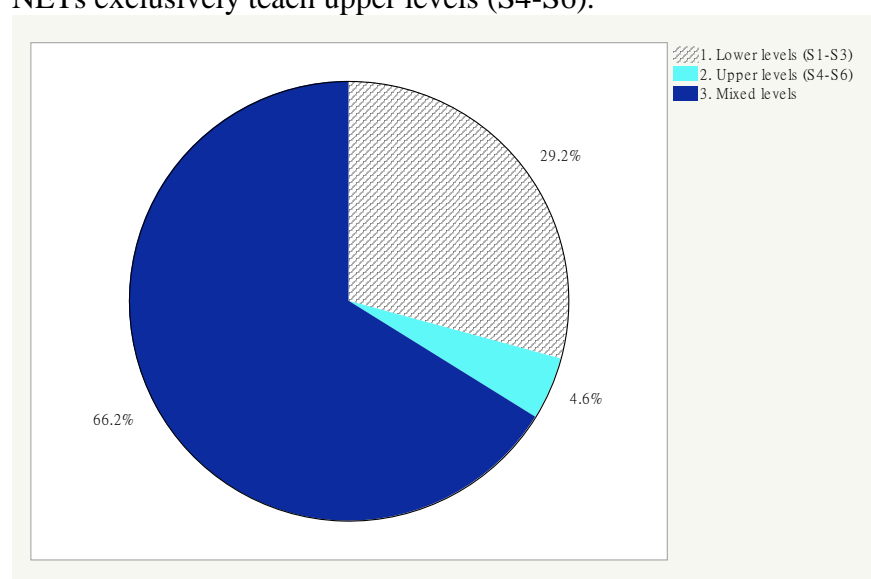


Figure 14. Levels taught in the current school year by NETs

3.3.2 Key Findings

Twenty-eight key findings were identified in the survey data and numbered SF1-SF28, with an ‘S’ noting that the findings came from the survey data as opposed to the case studies. (Twenty-nine findings were identified in the case study analysis, numbered CF1-CF29. These are 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 the 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.

SF1: The majority of stakeholders (ranging from 80% to 94% of local English teachers, NETs, and School Principals) agree that the ENET Scheme contributes to student learning, that the Scheme has improved the English environment at school, and that local English teachers and NETs enjoy a good relationship.

SF2: The majority of stakeholders (between 79% and 88% of local English teachers, NETs, and School Principals) agree that they would like more NETs if resources allow.

Local English teachers, NETs and School Principals were asked to indicate their level of agreement to a number of statements related to the impact of the NET Scheme. The item stem and cross-referencing code are shown below, followed by analysis of the responses in Table 11, which are then presented in the form of pie charts in the figures.

Question [OPNGa-g]	[NET]/[LET]: To what extent do you agree with the following statements in relation to your current school? [SP]: To what extent do you agree with the following statements in relation to your school?
---	---

Table 11. Fisher's exact tests/Chi-square analyses of the general evaluation of the ENET Scheme.

Stakeholder	Weighted Count		Percentage		Chi-square	p value
	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree		
If resources allow, I would like more NETs at this school (a)						
NET	7.45	56.39	11.67	88.33	2.924	0.2318
LET	93.22	359.72	20.58	79.42		
SP	11.94	54.06	18.10	81.90		
The ENET Scheme has contributed to student learning in my school (b)						
NET	3.73	60.11	5.84	94.16		<.0001*
LET	56.77	396.16	12.54	87.47		
SP	11.55	53.60	17.73	82.27		
The NET Section has helped the NET and school to work together (c)						
NET	24.59	39.25	38.51	61.49	7.056	0.0294*
LET	143.68	309.25	31.72	68.27		
SP	10.30	49.35	17.27	82.73		
The teachers support the ENET Scheme (d)						
NET	10.79	53.05	16.90	83.10	1.571	0.4560
LET	70.62	382.31	15.59	84.41		
SP	6.15	56.13	9.88	90.12		
The ENET Scheme has improved the English environment at my school (e)						
NET	5.06	58.78	7.93	92.07	3.629	0.1629
LET	74.44	378.49	16.43	83.57		
SP	12.57	53.43	19.04	80.96		
Having a NET helps maintain enrolment (f)						
NET	14.94	48.90	23.40	76.60	8.808	0.0122*
LET	116.99	335.94	25.83	74.17		
SP	24.72	31.56	43.92	56.08		
The NET and local English teachers have a good relationship in my school (g)						
NET	5.91	57.93	9.25	90.75	1.159	0.5601
LET	58.40	394.53	12.89	87.11		
SP	6.04	57.57	9.49	90.51		

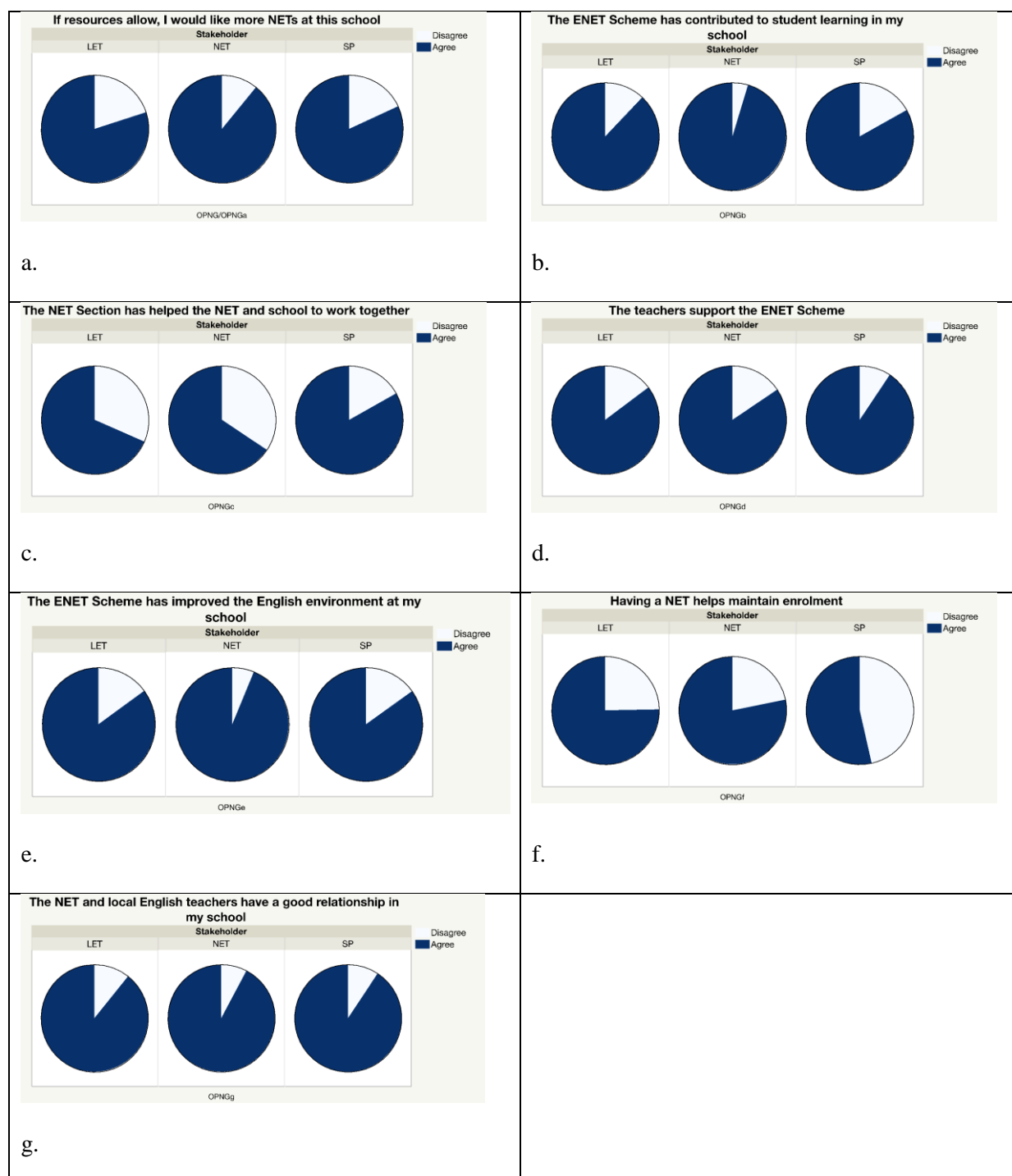


Figure 15(a)-(g). General evaluation of the ENET Scheme

Responses to these items were broadly similar, but three differences between the views of different stakeholders were found to be statistically significant. Although the majority of respondents indicated that they believed that the ENET Scheme makes a contribution to student learning, the NETs responded more positively to the relevant statement (Figure 15b).

For the NETs, the results are based on self-rating, and hence are likely to be more subjective than those of local English teachers and School Principals. The results suggest that NETs tend to have a positive self-image and to perceive value in the contribution that they make, and that the Scheme makes, to student learning. If NETs generally perceive the work they do to be valuable, it will sustain their motivation and promote professional satisfaction which can be seen as inherently beneficial to the schools. Local English teachers and School Principals, on the other hand, may view the work of the NET more objectively and be concerned not to undervalue the contribution of local English teachers, and this may explain their slightly less positive view.

Although a majority of teachers felt the NET Section helps the NET and the school work together, School Principals responded most positively to the statement (82%) (Figure 15c).

Some aspects of the work of the NET Section that contribute to helping the NET and the school work together are likely to be familiar to all three stakeholder types – NETs, local English teachers and School Principals – while other aspects may be more familiar to School Principals than to NETs and local English teachers. Local English teachers, for example, may be unfamiliar with the document Principles and Guidelines for Deployment in the Enhanced Native-speaking English Teacher (ENET) Scheme in Secondary Schools⁶ (hereafter the NET Deployment Guidelines), issued in 2014, or with the Induction Programme for new NETs, or even with the work of RNCs in helping NETs settle in to schools and to deal with emerging issues. School Principals should be very familiar with these NET Section functions, and perceive them, together with the cluster meetings and the Centralised Professional Development programmes the NET Section provides, as combining to provide a substantial support package assisting the NET and the school to work together. This provides positive evidence of the visibility of the NET Section and appreciation of its work among School Principals.

School Principals were less likely to perceive NETs as helping to maintain enrolment (Figure 15f). School Principals may be more aware than other stakeholders of the factors influencing enrolment. Their higher level of disagreement with the statement suggests that the impact on school enrolment of having a NET is declining. Since nearly all schools have at least one NET, and have done so for a number of years, the Principal's more realistic perception is not surprising.

SF3: The majority of stakeholders (between 76% and 92% of local English teachers, NETs, and School Principals) agree that NETs contribute to the school in many ways, with the greatest agreement seen in relation to the statement that NETs engage in activities that enrich the English environment (76-92%).

Local English teachers, NETs and School Principals were asked to indicate their level of agreement to a number of statements related to the role of the NET at the school as delineated

⁶ Principles and Guidelines for Deployment in the Enhanced Native-speaking English Teacher (ENET) Scheme in Secondary Schools (http://www.edb.gov.hk/attachment/en/curriculum-development/resource-support/net/Principles%20and%20Guidelines%20for%20ENET%20Deployment_140323_final.pdf)

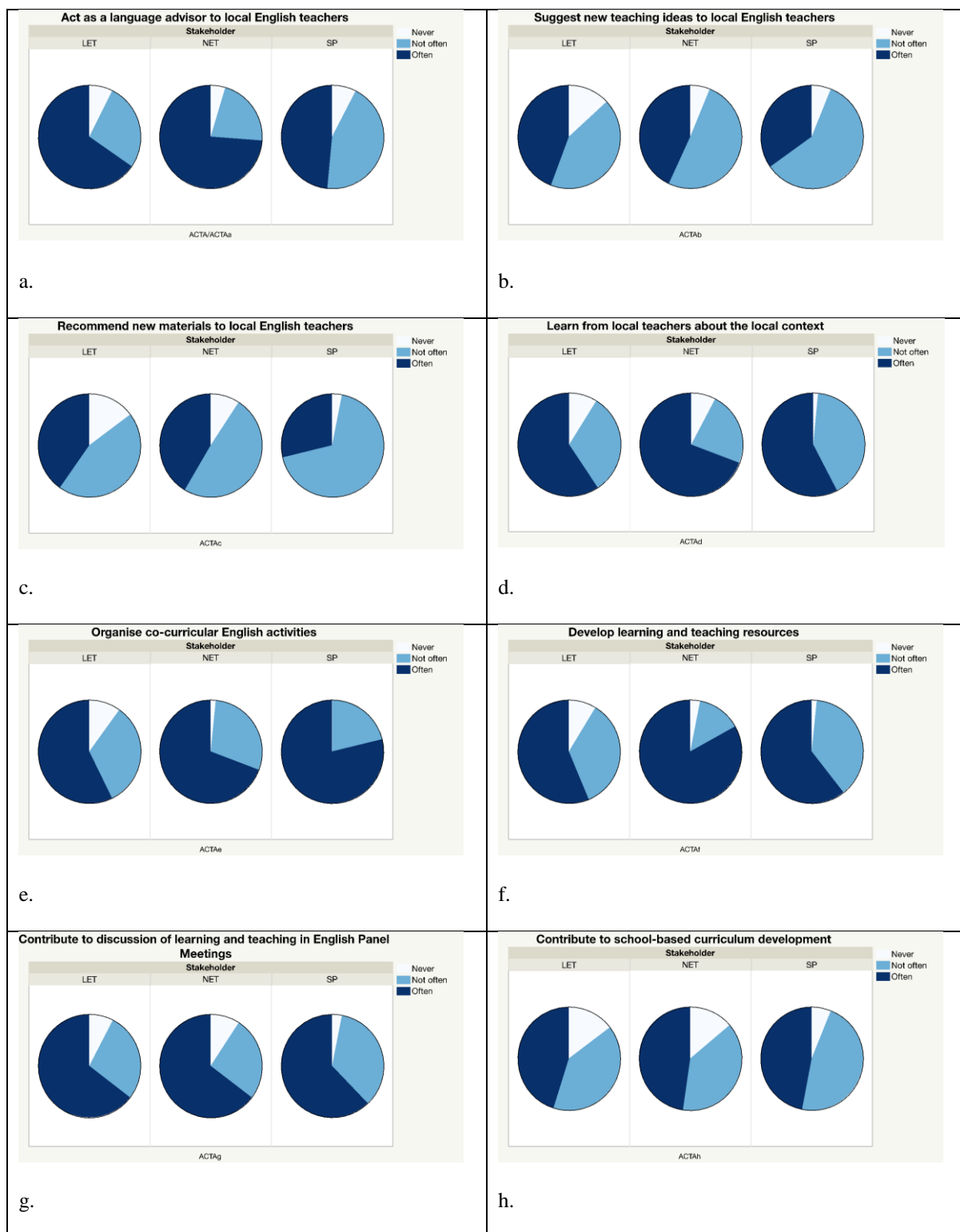
in the NET Deployment Guidelines. The item stem and cross-referencing code are shown below, followed by analysis of the responses in Table 12, which are then presented in the form of pie charts in Figures 16a to n.

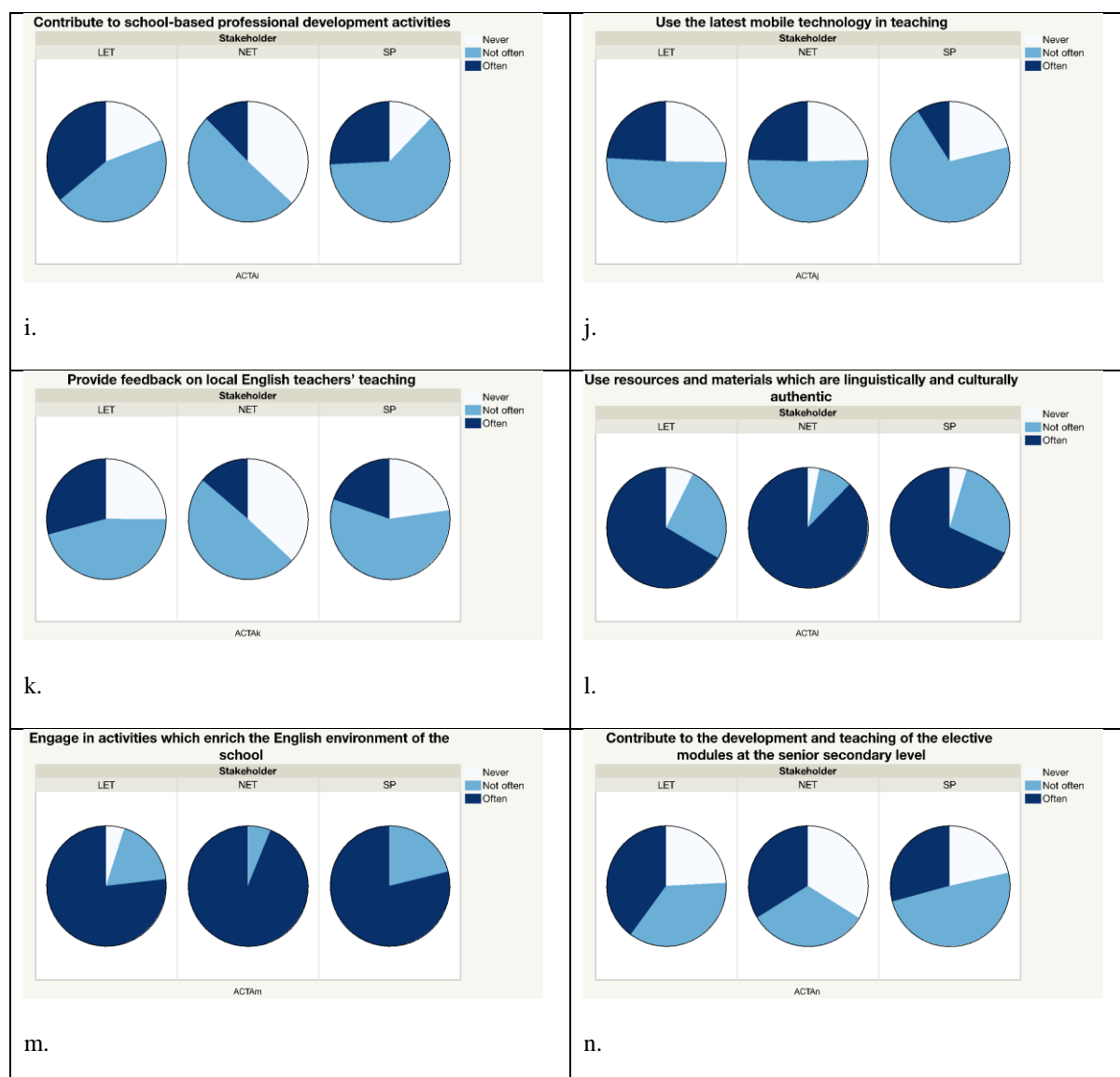
Question	[NET]: At this school, how often do you...
[ACTAa-n]	[LET]: How often does the NET in your school...
	[SP]: How often does the NET at this school...

Table 12. Fisher's exact tests/Chi-square analyses of NET's involvement in the school

Stakeholder	Weighted Count			Percentage			Chi-square	p value
	Never	Not often	Often	Never	Not often	Often		
Act as a language advisor to local English teachers (a)								
NET	3.65	12.99	48.36	5.61	19.99	74.40		1.0000
LET	30.41	122.68	291.25	6.84	27.61	65.55		
SP	7.23	27.34	31.44	10.95	41.42	47.63		
Suggest new teaching ideas to local English teachers (b)								
NET	3.39	31.86	29.75	5.21	49.01	45.78		< .0001*
LET	59.11	184.57	197.25	13.41	41.86	44.74		
SP	6.06	37.56	22.38	9.18	56.91	33.91		
Recommend new materials to local English teachers (c)								
NET	5.79	30.85	28.36	8.91	47.46	43.63		< .0001*
LET	63.74	191.82	184.66	14.48	43.57	41.95		
SP	3.59	43.26	19.15	5.44	65.55	29.01		
Learn from local English teachers about the local context (d)								
NET	4.91	13.53	46.56	7.56	20.81	71.63		0.0018*
LET	35.96	141.66	247.13	8.47	33.35	58.18		
SP	1.35	25.36	39.29	2.04	38.43	59.52		
Organise co-curricular English activities (e)								
NET	0.82	19.13	45.05	1.26	29.43	69.32		0.0018*
LET	40.87	138.78	254.97	9.40	31.93	58.67		
SP	0.00	16.22	49.78	0.00	24.57	75.43		
Develop learning and teaching resources (f)								
NET	2.54	9.92	52.55	3.90	15.26	80.84		0.0018*
LET	38.46	151.66	247.70	8.78	34.64	56.58		
SP	0.85	25.71	39.45	1.28	38.95	59.77		

Contribute to discussion of learning and teaching in English Panel Meetings (g)								
NET	6.25	15.87	42.87	9.62	24.42	65.96		1.0000
LET	33.50	122.42	290.01	7.51	27.45	65.03		
SP	2.54	22.25	41.20	3.85	33.72	62.42		
Contribute to school-based curriculum development (h)								
NET	8.13	24.62	32.25	12.51	37.88	49.61	2.787	0.5941
LET	62.91	160.01	194.96	15.05	38.29	46.66		
SP	6.21	30.97	28.82	9.41	46.93	43.67		
Contribute to school-based professional development activities (i)								
NET	22.97	35.21	6.81	35.34	54.18	10.48	27.427	< .0001*
LET	82.13	178.83	148.53	20.06	43.67	36.27		
SP	8.98	42.03	14.99	13.61	63.68	22.72		
Use the latest mobile technology in teaching (j)								
NET	16.18	32.55	16.27	24.89	50.07	25.03	11.437	0.0221*
LET	95.78	183.88	96.38	25.47	48.90	25.63		
SP	14.61	45.50	5.89	22.14	68.93	8.92		
Provide feedback on local English teachers' teaching (k)								
NET	25.95	31.08	7.96	39.93	47.82	12.25	12.981	0.0114*
LET	101.99	188.73	120.82	24.78	45.86	29.36		
SP	16.43	35.94	13.62	24.90	54.46	20.64		
Use resources and materials which are linguistically and culturally authentic (l)								
NET	1.31	5.84	57.85	2.01	8.98	89.01		1.0000
LET	30.88	97.02	274.33	7.68	24.12	68.20		
SP	4.94	15.24	45.83	7.48	23.09	69.43		
Engage in activities which enrich the English environment of the school (m)								
NET	0.00	4.96	60.04	0.00	7.64	92.36		0.9375
LET	21.07	86.24	430.83	4.70	19.24	76.05		
SP	0.00	15.82	50.18	0.00	23.97	76.03		
Contribute to the development and teaching of the elective modules at the senior secondary level (n)								
NET	21.83	22.52	20.65	33.59	34.65	31.77	5.715	0.2215
LET	97.54	148.32	169.04	23.51	35.75	40.74		
SP	14.62	29.21	21.17	22.49	44.93	32.57		





Figures 16(a)-(n). NET's involvement in the school

To simplify the analysis and interpretation, the four-point scale ('very often', 'often', 'not often', 'not at all') is reduced to two levels ('Very often' and 'often' are collapsed into 'often' and all the rest are treated as 'not often'). Overall, local English teachers, NETs, and School Principals broadly agreed that NETs act as language advisors to local English teachers (Figure 16a), often learn from local English teachers about the local context (Figure 16d), organise co-curricular English activities (Figure 16e), develop educational resources (Figure 16f), contribute to discussions of learning and teaching in English Panel Meetings (Figure 16g), contribute to school-based curriculum development (Figure 16h), use resources which are both linguistically and culturally authentic (Figure 16l), and engage in activities which enrich the English environment of the school (Figure 16m).

There are two caveats relating to these findings that should be noted. First, the level of

agreement regarding the extent to which these NET functions were being performed varied among stakeholders. Second, the extent to which these NET functions were perceived as being performed were sometimes lower than might have been expected given the anticipated role of the NET in the school context.

With some exceptions, the responses of local English teachers and NETs were generally similar, while School Principals differed more in their responses (See Figures 16a, b, c, e, & j). The differences in the response patterns of School Principals to those of the teachers may result from the greater familiarity of local English teachers with the frontline work of the NETs resulting from their more frequent professional contact with each other. With greater professional contact, enhanced communications and mutual understanding would naturally emerge between them.

NETs and local English teachers generally shared the perception that NETs suggested new teaching ideas (Figure 16b) and recommended new materials to local English teachers (Figure 16c) and used the latest mobile teaching technologies (Figure 16j), (but this might be lower than expected as noted below). School Principals' perceptions of the extent of these activities were markedly lower. While these contributions would be well-known to both NETs and local English teachers, they may not be so visible to School Principals due to their less frequent contact/communication with NETs. Some more visible collaborative activities, however, such as organising co-curricular English activities (Figure 16e) were recognised by School Principals.

On the other hand, in some respects, local English teachers and School Principals reported in a similar fashion (See Figure 16d & f), while NETs' perceptions of the extent of these activities were markedly higher. For example, School Principals and local English teachers gave lower frequency ratings (e.g. 'not often') to statements relating to NETs learning from local English teachers about the local context (Figure 16d) and developing learning and teaching resources (Figure 16f), while NETs rated these activities significantly higher.

The higher ratings given by NETs in respect of their own activities compared to the relatively low ratings of both local English teachers and School Principals may be explained by reference to the visibility of NET activities within the school. For example, in response to survey items regarding how often the NET suggests new teaching ideas and materials to local English teachers, School Principals had the lowest percentage (Figures 16b & c). One plausible explanation is that NETs might design many teaching resources for their own lessons, but they might not share them with other English teachers and hence the School Principal might not be aware that such materials were being developed. In addition, even if these contributions were known to both NETs and local English teachers, they may not be highly visible to School Principals due to their less frequent contact/communication with NETs. On the other hand, School Principals would be more likely to be aware of school-wide activities.

The other observation regarding the findings in relation to NETs' involvement in the school is that perceptions of the frequency of some of the anticipated NET roles were not as high as might be expected. For example, there was less than 50% agreement among all stakeholders that NETs suggest new teaching ideas or recommend new materials to local English teachers, contribute to school-based curriculum development or professional development, use the latest

mobile technology in their teaching, provide feedback to local English teachers on their teaching or contribute to the development and teaching of elective modules at senior secondary level.

These findings suggest that some of the anticipated roles for NETs in secondary schools are not being fulfilled to the expected extent. For example, the revised NET Deployment Guidelines, issued to schools in 2014, suggested that NETs in the role of a resource person should ‘compile/design teaching materials based on sound teaching strategies, and integrate them into the curriculum’. They should collaborate with other English teachers on ‘developing each other’s professional knowledge and skills’. They should ‘research, compile and present teaching materials and strategies that address the objectives of the ENET Scheme and the targets of the school-based English Language curriculum’. They might also assist the English Panel Chairs in ‘developing and facilitating professional development workshops... to model effective teaching strategies and facilitate or participate in mentoring activities’.

Responses to the survey items reported in this section suggest that less than 50% of stakeholders, including the NETs themselves, perceive these suggested roles as being fulfilled. This apparent discrepancy between expected and actual outcomes is further investigated in the qualitative section.

3.3.3 Findings Addressing Research Questions

This section provides findings and supporting data from the quantitative analysis as they relate to the six research questions.

Research Question 1: To what extent and in what ways does the ENET Scheme impact teachers’ English language teaching (**pedagogical practices**)?

The research question was explored by two means: First, by investigating the use, by local English teachers and NETs, of a set of pedagogical practices deemed to be aligned with the envisaged role of the NET in the school context; second by asking respondents to rate the importance of designated NET roles and responsibilities.

The pedagogical practices investigated included activities recognised as being cultural in orientation. They included those characterised as ‘language arts related’, that is involving popular culture and literary elements, e.g. reader’s theatre, songs, poetry and creative writing; activities providing more opportunities for meaningful interaction and self-expression through English including drama and debates, as well as games, use of multimodal texts and IT-based activities.

The impact of the Scheme would be considered significant if NETs modelled the use of such practices in their own teaching, and if local English teachers were influenced by this to adopt such practices in their teaching.

Results of online survey items related to these pedagogical practices suggest that, to a large extent, the Scheme was having an impact. First, NET self-reports indicate that they *often* made use of the pedagogical practices, or used them occasionally in their teaching – here ‘not often’

responses are interpreted to indicate occasional use. Second, although local English teachers used the practices significantly less frequently, when they did use them, they ascribed their use to the influence of the NET, or indicated that it resulted from collaboration with the NET.

The second means of exploring the research question was by inviting respondents to the online survey to rate the importance of designated NET roles and responsibilities. The roles and responsibilities of particular interest in relation to the research question are those which involved NETs engaging with local English teachers. All of these roles were rated as important by key stakeholders. They include the NET's role in co-planning with English panel members, co-teaching with English panel members, introducing and implementing good teaching practices and contributing to school-based curriculum development. Again, the results suggest that to a large extent the Scheme was having a positive impact on local English teachers' teaching since NET roles involving engagement and collaboration between NETs and locals were all rated highly.

SF4: In most cases, NETs stated that they used a greater variety of in-class activities than local English teachers. These included drama, films, songs, games, debates, poetry, short stories, creative writing, and reader's theatre.

Local English teachers and NETs were asked to indicate the frequency with which they used a range of pedagogical practices including language arts-related and technology-oriented practices. The activities listed in this survey item were compiled in discussion with NET Section representatives. They are derived from the NET Deployment Guidelines and relate closely to the overall objectives of the Scheme, in particular the enhancement of the *learning and teaching of English with linguistically and culturally authentic materials and resources*.

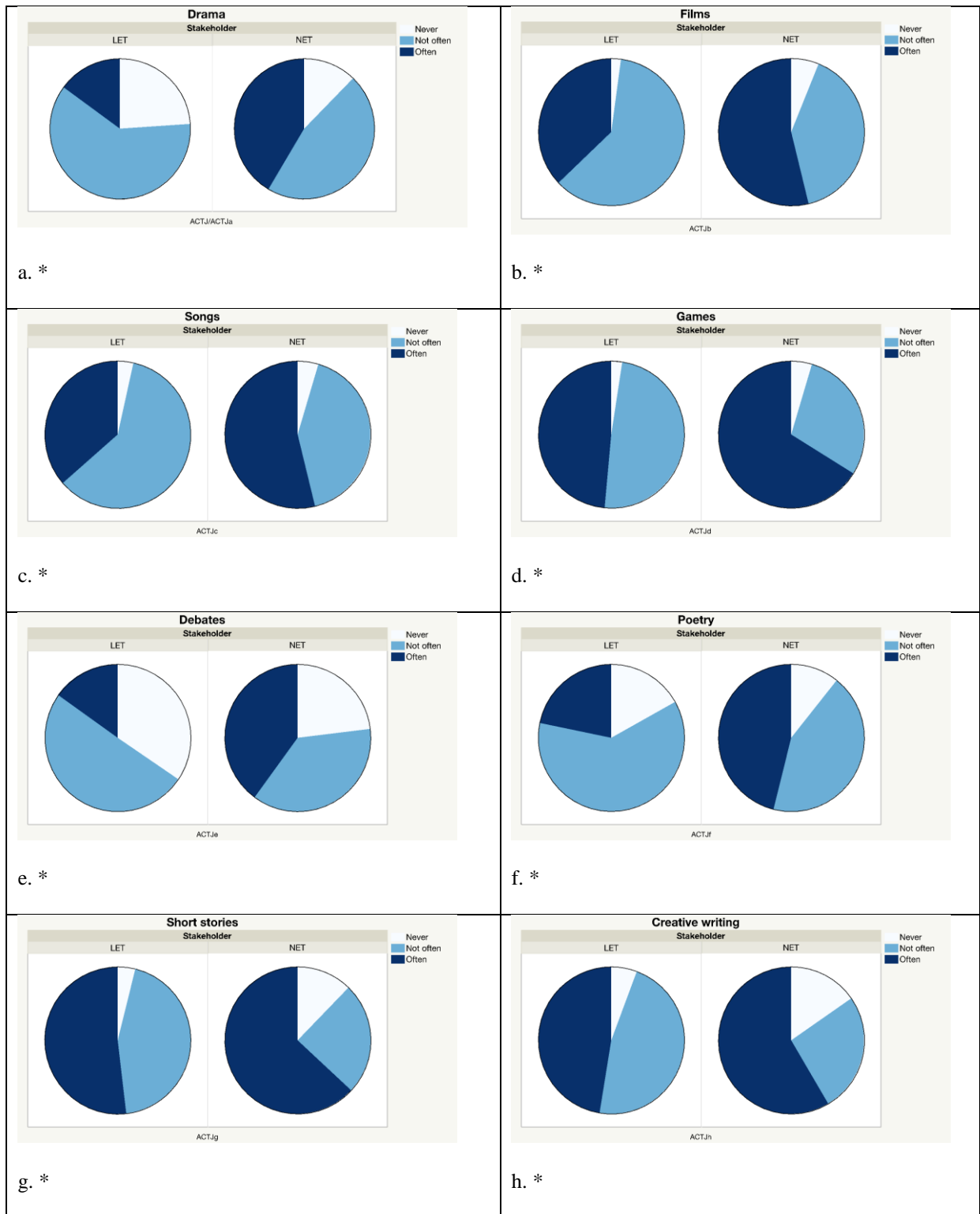
The item stem is shown below followed by the tabulated responses from NETs and local English teachers in Table 13, which are then presented in the form of pie charts in Figures 17a to l.

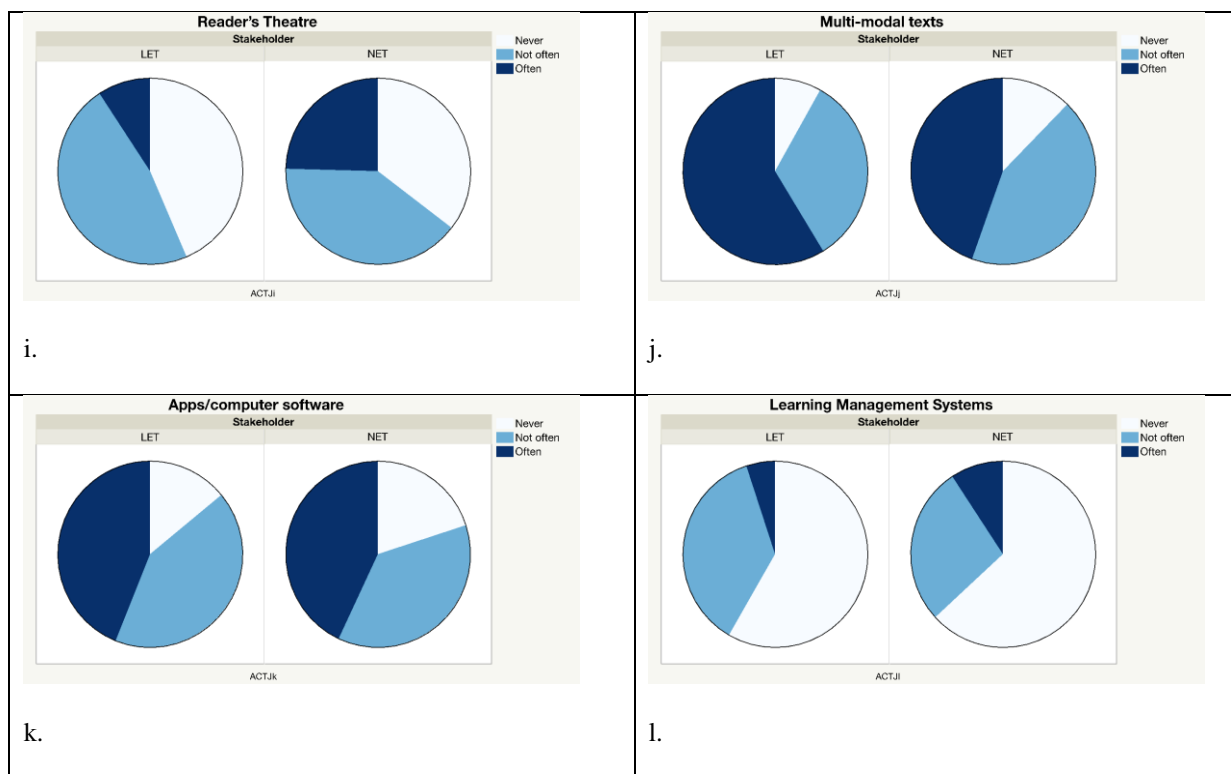
Question	[NET]/[LET]:
[ACTJa-l]	How often do you use the following in your lessons?

Table 13. Fisher's exact tests/Chi-square analyses of teacher's administration of in-class activities

Stakeholder	Weighted Count			Percentage			Chi-square	<i>p value</i>	
	Never	Not often	Often	Never	Not often	Often	32.003	< .0001*	
Drama (a)									
NET	7.87	29.84	27.29	12.11	45.90	41.99			
LET	116.46	275.52	63.53	25.57	60.49	13.95			
Films (b)									

NET	4.68	25.75	34.57	7.20	39.62	53.19		< .0001*
LET	8.18	272.24	175.10	1.79	59.77	38.44		
Songs (c)								
NET	3.23	28.70	33.07	4.97	44.15	50.88		< .0001*
LET	14.25	275.85	165.41	3.13	60.56	36.31		
Games (d)								
NET	2.91	18.98	43.11	4.47	29.21	66.3		< .0001*
LET	10.02	222.80	222.70	2.20	48.91	48.11		
Debates (e)								
NET	13.91	24.08	27.01	21.40	37.04	41.56	29.509	< .0001*
LET	155.91	235.00	64.61	34.23	51.59	14.18		
Poetry (f)								
NET	7.40	25.32	32.28	11.38	38.96	49.66	24.109	< .0001*
LET	80.90	276.81	97.81	17.76	60.77	21.47		
Short stories (g)								
NET	8.25	13.87	42.88	12.69	21.34	65.97	18.337	< .0001*
LET	17.19	200.41	237.90	3.77	44.00	52.23		
Creative writing (h)								
NET	10.20	15.30	39.50	15.69	23.53	60.78	18.407	< .0001*
LET	24.23	214.49	216.80	5.31	47.09	47.59		
Reader's Theatre (i)								
NET	23.53	24.03	17.44	36.20	36.97	26.83	20.802	< .0001*
LET	194.28	223.53	37.71	42.65	49.07	8.28		
Multimodal texts (j)								
NET	8.00	29.44	27.56	12.31	45.29	42.41	6.577	0.0373*
LET	34.48	152.46	268.57	7.57	33.47	58.96		
Apps/computer software (k)								
NET	13.89	25.03	26.08	21.37	38.51	40.12	2.532	0.2820
LET	63.21	192.72	199.58	13.88	42.31	43.82		
Learning Management Systems (l)								
NET	41.11	17.05	6.84	63.25	26.23	10.53	5.409	0.0669
LET	264.04	169.22	22.25	57.97	37.15	4.88		





Figures 17(a)-(l). Local English teachers' and NETs' use of in-class activities

Significant differences were found between the ratings that NETs and local English teachers gave indicating that NETs make greater use of a range of activities related to their anticipated role in promoting linguistically and culturally authentic uses of English and cultivating students' interest in and understanding of the cultural assets of the language. However, given the importance of this aspect of the work of NETs in secondary schools, the percentages of positive responses that NETs gave to these survey items appear somewhat low. For example, there was less than 50% agreement among NETs that they *often* use drama (Figure 17a), debates (Figure 17e), poetry (Figure 17f) or readers' theatre (Figure 17i) in their lessons. Another way to look at the response pattern is that, when teachers responded to these survey items, it may not have occurred to them that these pedagogical practices represented a prominent part of their lessons. If this is a valid interpretation, the *not often* responses may be as significant as the *often* ones.

What is perhaps more surprising than the relatively low percentages of *often* responses is that a number of NETs indicated that they *never* use the activities. Percentages of NETs claiming to *never* use such activities range from 12% to 36%: drama 12%, debates 21%, short stories 12.69%, creative writing 15.69% and readers' theatre 36%. This suggests that more may need to be done to achieve the Scheme objective of enriching the English language learning environment in schools by promoting the learning of English through the use of language arts resources and activities. The relationship between these response patterns and deployment modes is also worth exploring to determine whether NETs are being provided with sufficient opportunities to use these activities in their *lessons* (the wording of the survey item) as opposed to in co-curricular activities.

While acknowledging the general expectation that NETs should promote these language arts-related activities, and the observation that the low percentages of positive responses across several activities suggest that NETs were falling short in meeting such an expectation to the fullest, the results may be tempered by factors which may affect interpretation. Firstly, the wide variety of possible activities and resources available to an English teacher needs to be taken into account. When activities and resources are used too frequently, the novelty effect would be diminished. The novelty effect is the tendency for performance to improve when a new and interesting method is introduced. However, this effect could disappear when the method is overused. In the interest of variety, teachers would rotate the activities that they use, rather than using everything all the time, and thus some relatively low frequencies of use of individual activities should not be surprising.

Another factor which may help explain the results is the possible interpretations which could be placed on the survey items by stakeholders as they respond. Each of the language arts-related activities could comprise a complete course curriculum in its own right. So, a teacher who makes no claim to ‘often’ use drama, debates, poetry, short stories or readers’ theatre in their teaching, could nevertheless use *drama techniques* and *debate elements* (argument and rebuttal, for example, in discussions) in their teaching; they could draw attention to *poetic devices* in their handling of reading texts, they could ask students to act out a dialogue without actually perceiving themselves as ‘often’ using poetry or readers’ theatre in their lessons.

SF5: A majority of both local English teachers and NETs tended to agree that NET influence and/or their interactive collaboration contributed to the use of various in-class activities such as drama, films, songs, games, debates, poetry, short stories, creative writing, and readers’ theatre.

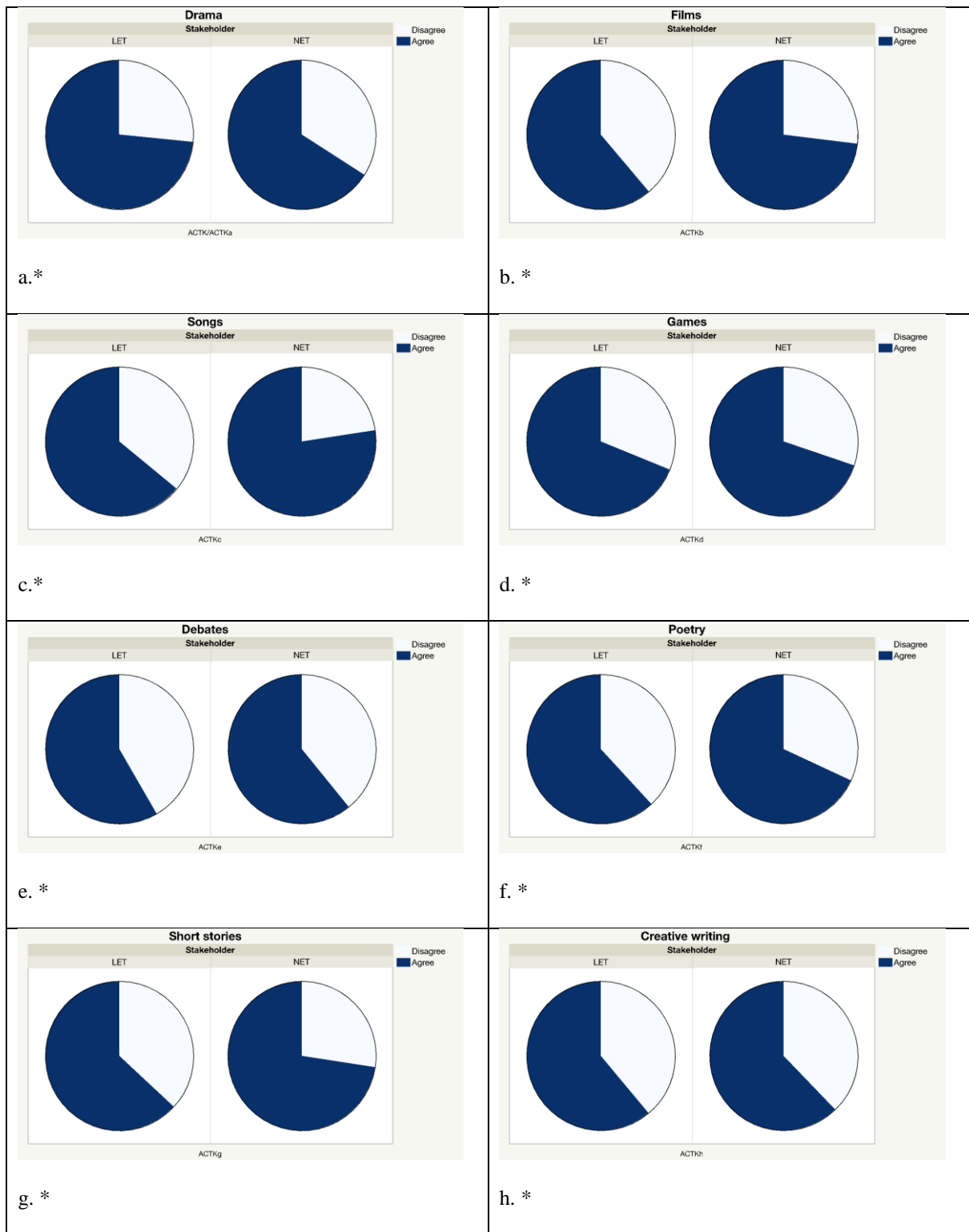
Local English teachers and NETs were asked to indicate the extent to which the influence of the NET and collaboration between NET and local English teachers contributed to their use of the pedagogical practices mentioned above.

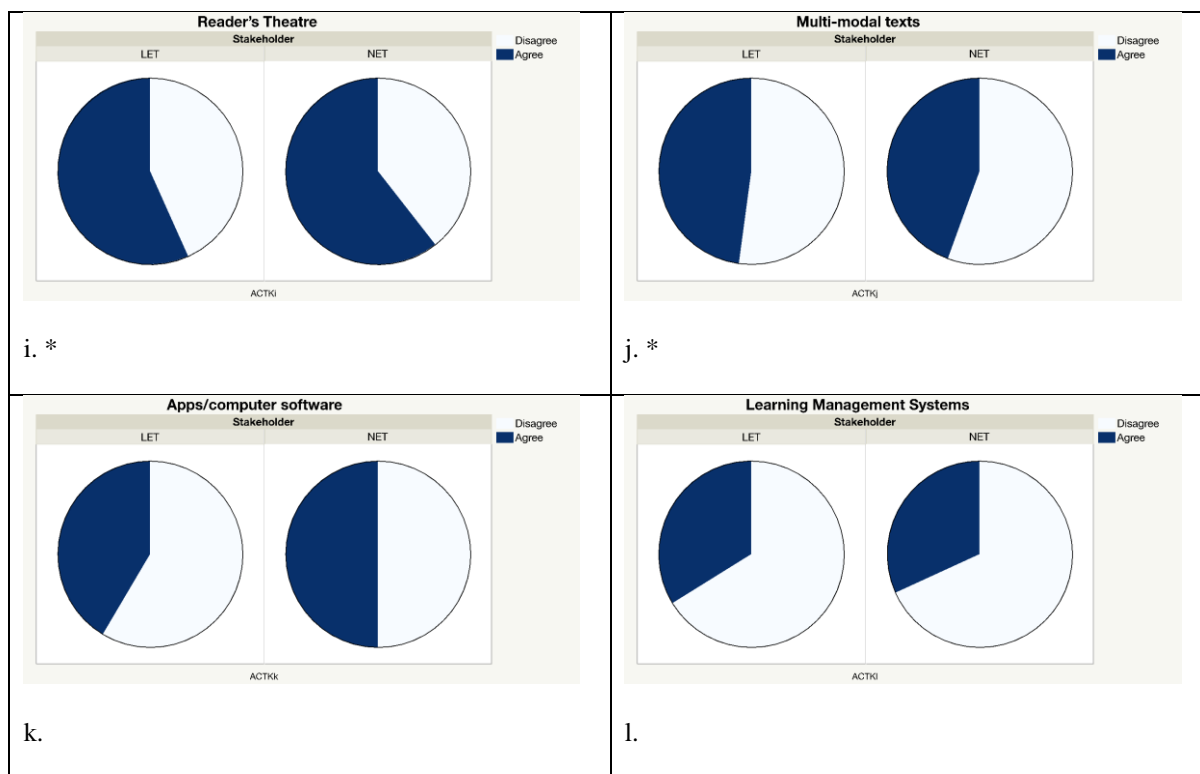
The item stems are shown below followed by the tabulated responses from NETs and local English teachers in Table 14 which are then presented in the form of pie charts in Figures 18a to l.

Question [ACTKa-l]	<p>[NET]: Please indicate to what extent you agree that your influence and/or your collaboration with local English teachers is contributing to the use of the following in your lessons.</p> <p>[LET]: Please indicate to what extent you agree that the influence of the NET and/or your collaboration with the NET is contributing to the use of the following in your lessons.</p>
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Table 14. Chi-square analyses of NET's contribution to the use of activities

Stakeholder	Weighted Count		Percentage		Chi-square	<i>p value</i>
	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree		
Drama (a)						
NET	18.29	32.55	35.98	64.02	2.479	0.1154
LET	88.18	257.61	25.50	74.50		
Films (b)						
NET	13.99	38.29	26.76	73.24	1.603	0.2055
LET	135.48	244.66	35.64	64.36		
Songs (c)						
NET	11.30	41.05	21.58	78.42	3.713	0.0540
LET	130.54	242.55	34.99	65.01		
Games (d)						
NET	17.02	36.96	31.52	68.48	0.042	0.8368
LET	118.74	275.07	30.15	69.85		
Debates (e)						
NET	19.08	28.59	40.03	59.97	0.180	0.6718
LET	130.04	170.32	43.29	56.71		
Poetry (f)						
NET	14.67	33.20	30.65	69.35	1.319	0.2508
LET	136.33	211.02	39.25	60.75		
Short stories (g)						
NET	14.64	37.13	28.28	71.72	1.170	0.2794
LET	136.96	244.26	35.93	64.07		
Creative writing (h)						
NET	18.55	28.63	39.31	60.69	0.102	0.7496
LET	135.68	231.73	36.93	63.07		
Reader's Theatre (i)						
NET	12.90	20.36	38.79	61.21	0.234	0.6286
LET	114.52	150.65	43.19	56.81		
Multimodal texts (j)						
NET	27.34	19.63	58.20	41.80	0.625	0.4293
LET	172.78	159.15	52.05	47.95		
Apps/computer software (k)						
NET	21.13	18.36	53.52	46.48	0.309	0.5781
LET	176.11	126.67	58.17	41.83		
Learning Management Systems (l)						
NET	15.54	7.44	67.63	32.37	0.004	0.9495
LET	133.45	65.80	66.98	33.02		





Figures 18(a)-(l). NET influence on the use of activities

In the responses to all the items related to the provision of language-arts-related activities (Figures 18a to i), the results suggest that both local English teachers and NETs agreed that the influence of the NET was instrumental in some way. There is a relatively high level of agreement between local English teachers and NETs in their responses to the items.

This provides evidence to suggest that NETs believe that they are having an influence on local English teachers' perceptions of the importance of 'linguistically and culturally authentic' activities such as drama, songs, poetry, short stories as well as creative writing, debates and readers' theatre, with some impact on local English teachers' actual practice.

The results suggest that local English teachers who include language-arts-related activities in their teaching acknowledge the influence of the NET in their use of the activities. Even though, as discussed in relation to SF4 above, local English teachers claimed to use these activities significantly less frequently than NETs, when they do use them, they appear to have been influenced by the NET in doing so. Prior research indicated that there is always a discrepancy between intention and action no matter how good the idea is. One of the main reasons is lack of implementation intentions, meaning that when people must make conscious efforts to implement an action, it is very unlikely that they would do it as often as they expected. The solution is to automate the action so that it becomes a routine without devotion of extra efforts. In this case, the evaluation team recommends that at the beginning these activities can be scheduled on a regular basis in order to build a momentum. After these tasks are automated and have a life on their own, the routine can be relaxed.

The response to these items may also suggest a possible change of attitude among local English teachers, which does not affect their actual practice. This is corroborated by findings from the qualitative analysis of case study data (see CF2) which suggest that local English teachers look to NETs for insights related to the culture of the language, an area they feel less well-equipped to teach.

SF6: NETs perceived all the duties they performed as important. Local English teachers and School Principals also perceived NET duties in general to be important, placing particular value on organising and conducting co-curricular activities and enriching the English learning environment.

Local English teachers, NETs and School Principals were asked to rate the duties performed by NETs from very important to not important. NET duties listed in the survey items (OPNAa-i) are mainly based on the information presented in the ‘Roles and Responsibilities of the School Stakeholders’ in the ENET Scheme, which can be found on the NET Scheme webpage⁷ and represents what the EDB expects NETs to perform for the successful implementation of the Scheme.

The item stem is shown below. This is followed by the tabulated responses in Table 15, which are then presented in the form of pie charts in Figures 19a to i.

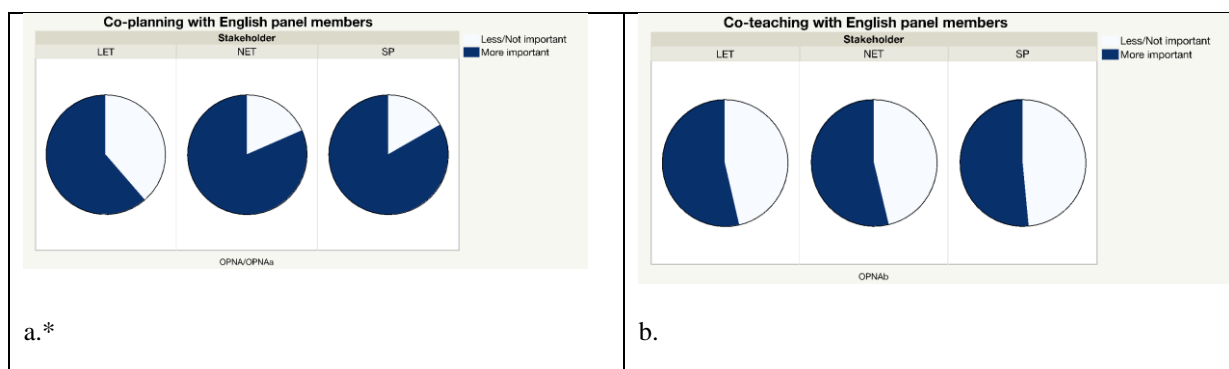
Question	[NET]/[LET]/[SP]:
[OPNAa-i]	Please rate the following duties of a NET:

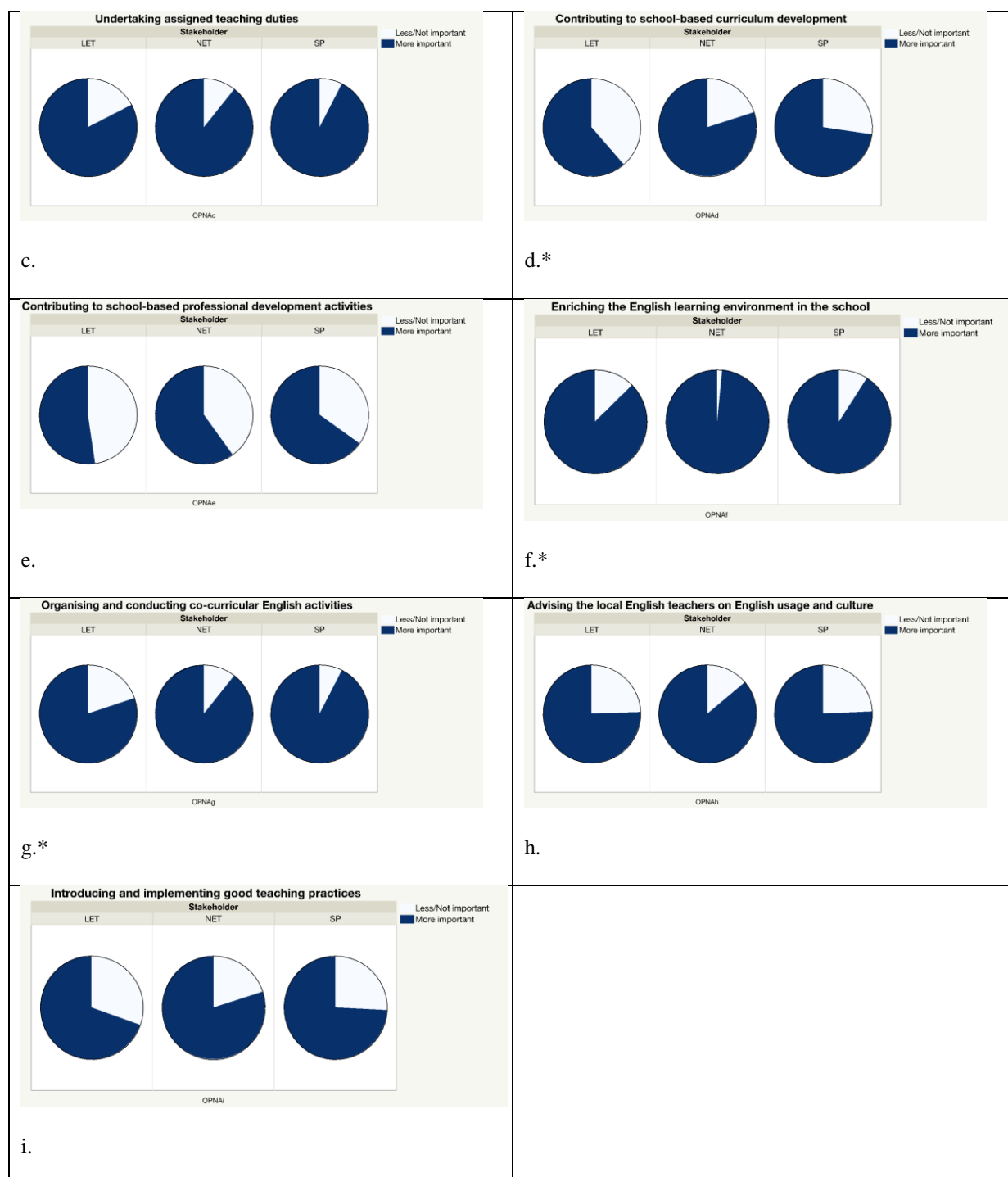
Table 15. Fisher’s exact tests/Chi-square analyses of the importance of NET’s duties

Stakeholder	Weighted Count		Percentage		Chi-square	<i>p value</i>
	Less/Not important	More important	Less/Not important	More important		
Co-planning with English panel members (a)						
NET	8.96	56.04	13.78	86.22	20.987	< .0001*
LET	168.97	283.96	37.31	62.69		
SP	12.24	53.76	18.55	81.45		
Co-teaching with English panel members (b)						
NET	29.28	35.72	45.04	54.96	0.146	0.9298
LET	205.99	246.94	45.48	54.52		
SP	31.59	34.41	47.87	52.13		
Undertaking assigned teaching duties (c)						
NET	5.45	59.55	8.38	91.62	4.002	0.1352

⁷ <http://www.edb.gov.hk/en/curriculum-development/resource-support/net/enet-stakeholders-roles-responsibilities.html>

LET	75.46	377.47	16.66	83.34		
SP	7.28	58.72	11.03	88.97		
Contributing to school-based curriculum development (d)						
NET	9.95	55.05	15.30	84.70	14.500	0.0007*
LET	175.16	277.77	38.67	61.33		
SP	19.75	46.25	29.93	70.07		
Contributing to school-based professional development activities (e)						
NET	21.78	43.22	33.51	66.49	5.754	0.0563
LET	212.86	240.07	47.00	53.00		
SP	24.54	41.46	37.18	62.82		
Enriching the English learning environment in the school (f)						
NET	0.74	64.26	1.14	98.86		< .0001*
LET	56.03	396.90	12.37	87.63		
SP	7.67	58.33	11.63	88.37		
Organising and conducting co-curricular English activities (g)						
NET	5.81	59.19	8.94	91.06	7.934	0.0189*
LET	88.64	364.29	19.57	80.43		
SP	6.01	59.99	9.10	90.90		
Advising the local English teachers on English usage and culture (h)						
NET	8.20	56.80	12.62	87.38	4.230	0.1206
LET	105.45	347.48	23.28	76.72		
SP	17.05	48.95	25.83	74.17		
Introducing and implementing good teaching practices (i)						
NET	11.13	53.87	17.12	82.88	4.559	0.1023
LET	133.73	319.20	29.52	70.48		
SP	16.78	49.22	25.42	74.58		





Figures 19(a)-(i). Importance of NET's duties

The general agreement shown by NETs, local English teachers and School Principals as to the importance of the duties assigned to NETs is noteworthy in the responses to these survey items. A significant majority in each group of stakeholders agreed as to the importance of the NET co-planning with English panel members (Figure 19a), undertaking assigned teaching duties (Figure 19c), contributing to school-based curriculum development (Figure 19d), enriching the English learning environment in the school (Figure 19f), organising and conducting co-

curricular activities (Figure 19g) advising local English teachers on English usage and culture (Figure 19h), and introducing and implementing good teaching practices (Figure 19i).

The majority of these results align with the ratings assigned by the three stakeholder groups to survey items exploring the actual roles of the NETs (see the analysis of responses to Question ACTAa-n above). In responding to those items, both local English teachers and School Principals perceived the NET as often serving as language advisors to local English teachers (Figure 16a), organising co-curricular English activities (Figure 16e), using linguistically and culturally authentic resources (Figure 16l), and engaging in activities which enrich the English environment within the school (Figure 16m).

However, some of the differences in the levels of agreement between the three stakeholder groups are also worthy of comment. For example, in comparison to local English teachers, NETs and School Principals valued two NET duties more highly: co-planning with English panel members (Figure 19a), and organising and conducting co-curricular English activities (Figure 19g). NETs, on the other hand, rated enriching the English learning environment in their schools (Figure 19f) and contributing to school-based curriculum development (Figure 19d) more highly than did local English teachers and School Principals.

The survey item asks respondents to rate the importance of different duties of *a* NET, rather than the current NET. However, different ratings of the importance of *the* NET (i.e. the current NET) in enriching the English learning environment in particular schools also emerged in responses to the open-ended question, ‘What do you like most about the ENET Scheme and the NET’s work at your school?’ When responding to the question, one local English teacher wrote: ‘enriching the English learning environment (but not now in our school)’; another local English teacher wrote: ‘[the NET] can’t improve the English learning environment in our school. He is just a normal English teacher.’ Such responses reflect local English teachers’ belief in the importance of the role, and their ‘... disappointment at their current NET’s failure to perform the role effectively’. It may mean that these local English teachers are not seeing NETs providing results in enriching the English learning environment.

Research Question 2: To what extent and in what ways does the ENET Scheme improve student learning of English?

Positive findings related to this research question have been reported above under ‘Key Findings’. There the very high level of agreement among stakeholders that the ENET Scheme had contributed to student learning in the school was reported (see SF3 and Figure 15b above).

The extent to which the ENET Scheme improves student learning of English was further explored by three different items in the online survey.

First, local English teachers, English Panel Chairs and School Principals were invited to indicate the extent to which they agreed with a series of items related to the impact of the NET on student motivation, proficiency in the four skills and the frequency of their use of English.

Second, respondents were asked to rate the effectiveness of the NET Section competitions in enhancing student learning of English.

Third, improvement of student learning was viewed indirectly through the impact of different NET activities on students' English proficiency, including collaboration between NETs and local English teachers; English Panel Meetings; peer lesson observation; professional development activities conducted by the NET, curriculum and/or lesson planning meetings, professional development seminars, workshops or cluster meetings organised by the NET Section and resources developed by the NET Section.

The results suggest that, to a large extent, the ENET Scheme helps to improve student learning of English. This was reflected in high levels of agreement among local English teachers and School Principals that the work of the NET contributes to student motivation, and their proficiency in reading, writing, speaking and listening. NET Section competitions were seen as effective in improving the learning and teaching of English in the school, though NETs rated them more highly than local English teachers. Views on the items which might be considered to have an indirect impact on student learning were mixed, but collaboration and co-planning meetings were generally agreed to have a positive impact.

SF7: Both local English teachers and School Principals acknowledged the contribution of NETs to student learning of English. This involved a wide spectrum of improvement in student motivation, proficiency, frequency in using English and also perceptions of the importance of English held by students and parents.

Local English teachers and School Principals were asked to indicate the extent of their agreement to ten statements related to NET impact on student learning of English. The item stem is shown below followed by the tabulated responses from School Principals and local English teachers in Table 16, which are then presented in the form of pie charts in Figures 20a to j.

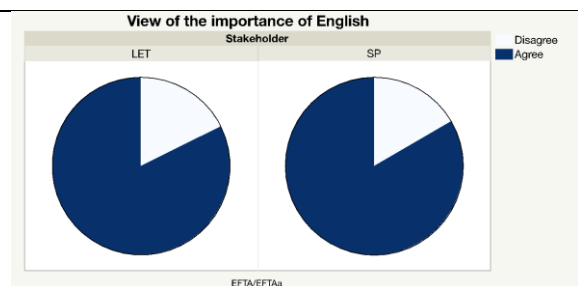
Question	[LET]/ [SP]:
[EFTAa-j]	To what extent do you agree that the NET contributes to students'...

Table 16. Chi-square analyses of improvement made in student learning of English by the ENET Scheme

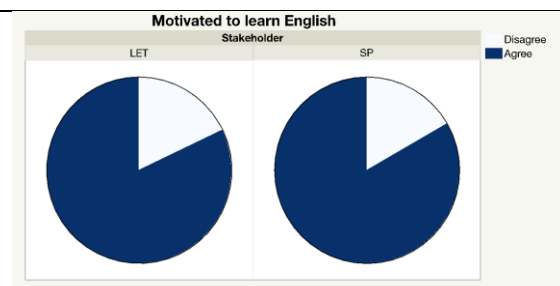
ENET Scheme

Stakeholder	Weighted Count		Percentage		Chi-square	<i>p value</i>
	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree		
View of the importance of English (a)						
LET	83.31	369.62	18.39	81.61	0.034	0.8529
SP	11.52	54.48	17.45	82.55		
Motivation to learn English (b)						
LET	84.78	368.15	18.72	81.28	0.014	0.9056
SP	12.76	53.24	19.33	80.67		
Improved proficiency in writing (c)						
LET	168.17	283.43	37.24	62.76	0.833	0.3615
SP	20.76	45.24	31.45	68.55		

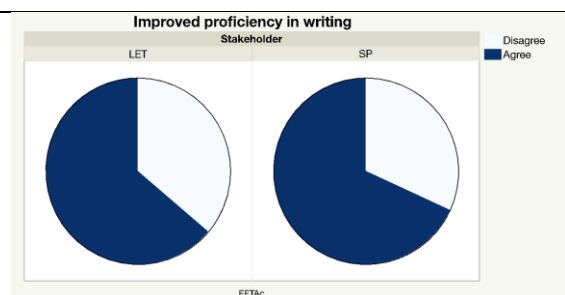
Improved proficiency in reading (d)						
LET	159.75	292.56	35.32	64.68	0.046	0.8309
SP	22.42	43.58	33.98	66.02		
Improved proficiency in speaking (e)						
LET	21.07	431.86	4.65	95.35	1.716	0.1902
SP	5.59	60.41	8.46	91.54		
Improved proficiency in listening (f)						
LET	44.72	408.22	9.87	90.13	0.857	0.3545
SP	8.97	57.03	13.59	86.41		
Use of English in class (g)						
LET	50.10	402.83	11.06	88.94	0.016	0.9000
SP	6.96	59.04	10.54	89.46		
Use of English at the school (h)						
LET	88.94	363.39	19.66	80.34	1.041	0.3075
SP	16.55	49.45	25.08	74.92		
Use of English outside of school (i)						
LET	228.77	224.16	50.51	49.49	0.288	0.5918
SP	31.00	35.00	46.98	53.02		
Parents’/ guardians’ valuing of English (j)						
LET	205.48	245.62	45.55	54.45	0.200	0.6549
SP	32.00	34.00	48.49	51.51		



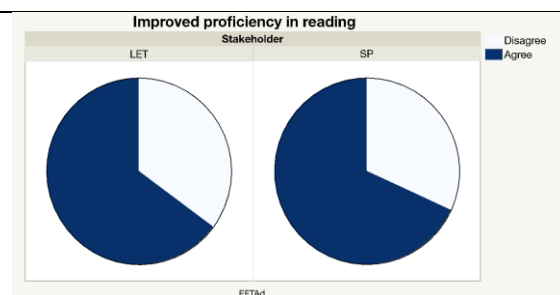
a.



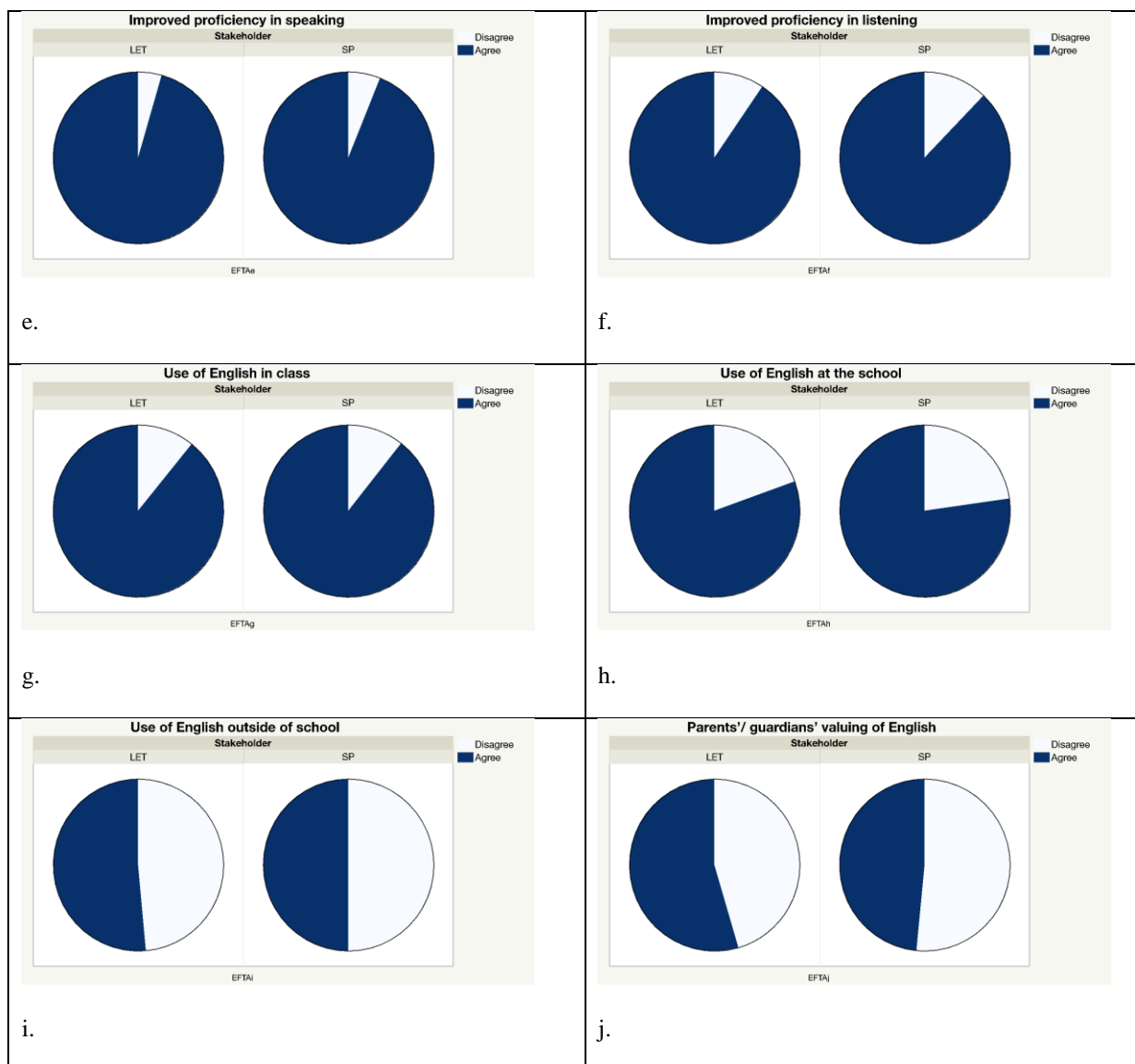
b.



c.



d.



Figures 20(a)-(j). Improvement made in student learning of English by the ENET Scheme

Although there are no significant differences between the perceptions of local English teachers and School Principals regarding the contributions of NETs to student's learning of English, it is noteworthy that the percentages of agreement regarding improved proficiency in speaking and listening are higher than those for improvement in writing and reading. This may be a reflection of deployment patterns where NETs are assigned oral classes throughout the school, and hence have their greatest impact on listening and speaking skills, even though such oral skills teaching may be aimed at integrating skills. However, academic success is more dependent on reading ability and formal writing skills than on oral-aural competencies

(American Institutes for Research, 2013⁸; Hernandez, 2012⁹; OECD, 2012¹⁰). In future evaluations, it would be worth investigating the relationship between deployment modes and perceived impact on student learning of English in these different skill areas.

SF8: While the majority of NETs (64.87%) viewed the NET Section competitions as effective, a slight majority of local English teachers (55.64%) were sceptical about the effectiveness of the NET Section competitions in the improvement of English learning and teaching.

A key NET Section activity related to enhanced student learning of English through motivational activities is the organisation of competitions. Local English teachers and NETs were asked to indicate how effective they found the competitions in improving student learning of English.

The item stem is shown below followed by the tabulated responses from NETs and local English teachers in Table 17, which are then presented in the form of pie charts in Figure 21.

Question	[NET]/[LET]:
[ACTQ]	Generally, how effective do you think the NET Section competitions are in improving the learning and teaching of English at your school?

⁸ American Institutes for Research (2013) *Predictors of Postsecondary Success*. November 2013, pp. 5-9. (http://www.ccrscenter.org/sites/default/files/CCRS%20Center_Predictors%20of%20Postsecondary%20Success_final_0.pdf)

⁹ Hernandez, D. 'Double Jeopardy: How Third-Grade Reading Skills and Poverty Influence High School Graduation.' Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2012, p. 4. (<http://www.aecf.org/~media/Pubs/Topics/Education/Other/DoubleJeopardyHowThirdGradeReadingSkillsandPoverty/DoubleJeopardyReport030812forweb.pdf>)

¹⁰ 'Predicting success: Key characteristics of youth affecting transitions to education and the labour market' In *Pathways to Success: How knowledge and skills at age 15 shape future lives in Canada*. OECD Publishing (<http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264081925-6-en>) (http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/pathways-to-success/predicting-success-key-characteristics-of-youth-affecting-transitions-to-education-and-the-labour-market_9789264081925-6-en)

Table 17. Chi-square analyses of the effectiveness of the NET Section competitions

Stakeholder	Weighted Count		Percentage		Chi-square	p value
	Not effective	Effective	Not effective	Effective	3.788	0.0516
NET	10.51	19.42	35.13	64.87		
LET	450.54	40.30	55.64	44.36		

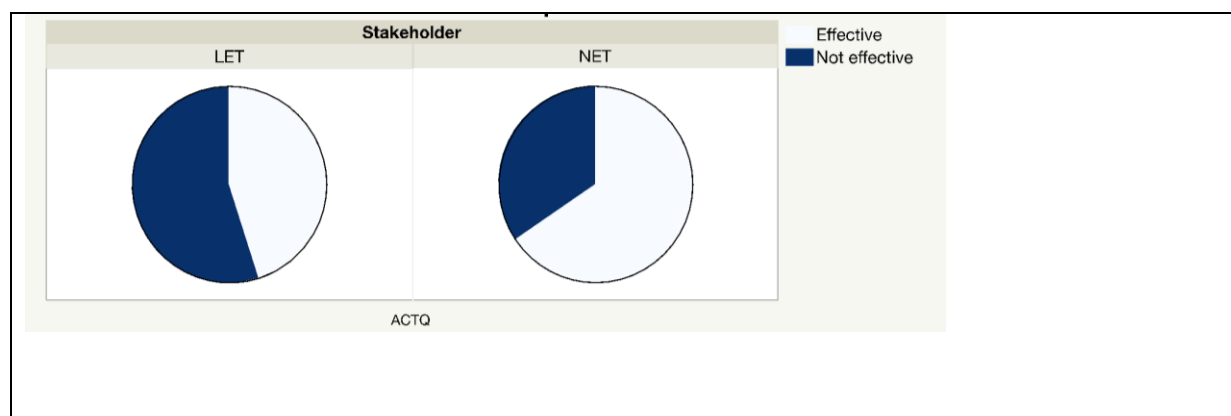


Figure 21. Effectiveness of the NET Section competitions

Generally speaking, more NETs than LETs are involved in the NET Section competitions (46% of NETs compared to 21% of local English teachers help prepare students for these competitions). This should be taken into account in interpreting the findings. Given their greater involvement, NETs would have more direct evidence of the impact of the competitions on the learning and teaching of English, and this adds weight to their perception. On the other hand, NETs may be influenced by their greater involvement to make a less objective judgement, and/or to address the question in relation to the students actually involved in the competitions. Since the competitions generally involve small groups of students, local English teachers may be evaluating the competitions more objectively by looking at their impact on the teaching and learning of English in the school as a whole.

SF9: Teachers and School Principals agreed on the effectiveness of collaboration between local English teachers and NETs. In particular, both NETs and local English teachers valued the effectiveness of curriculum meetings.

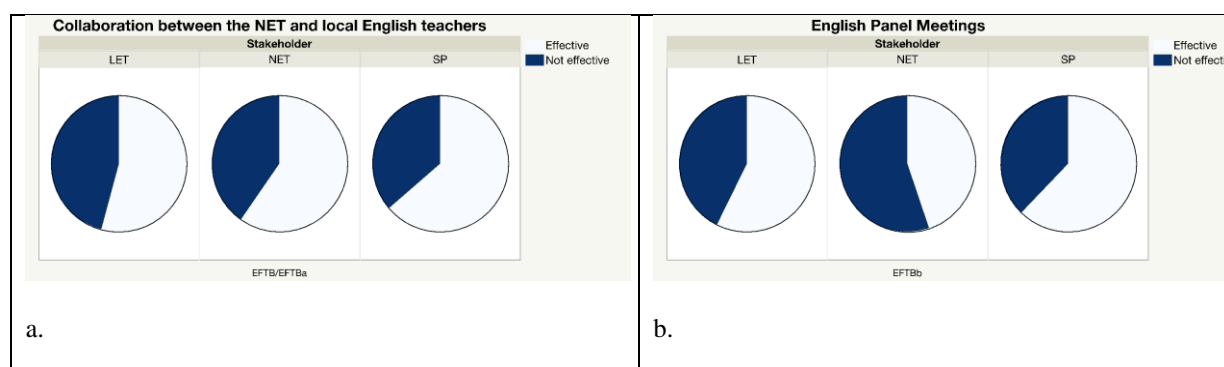
Local English teachers, NETs and School Principals were asked how effective they thought a range of professional activities were, involving local English teachers and NETs working together. The item stem is shown below. This is followed by the tabulated responses in Table 18, which are then presented in the form of pie charts in Figures 22a to g.

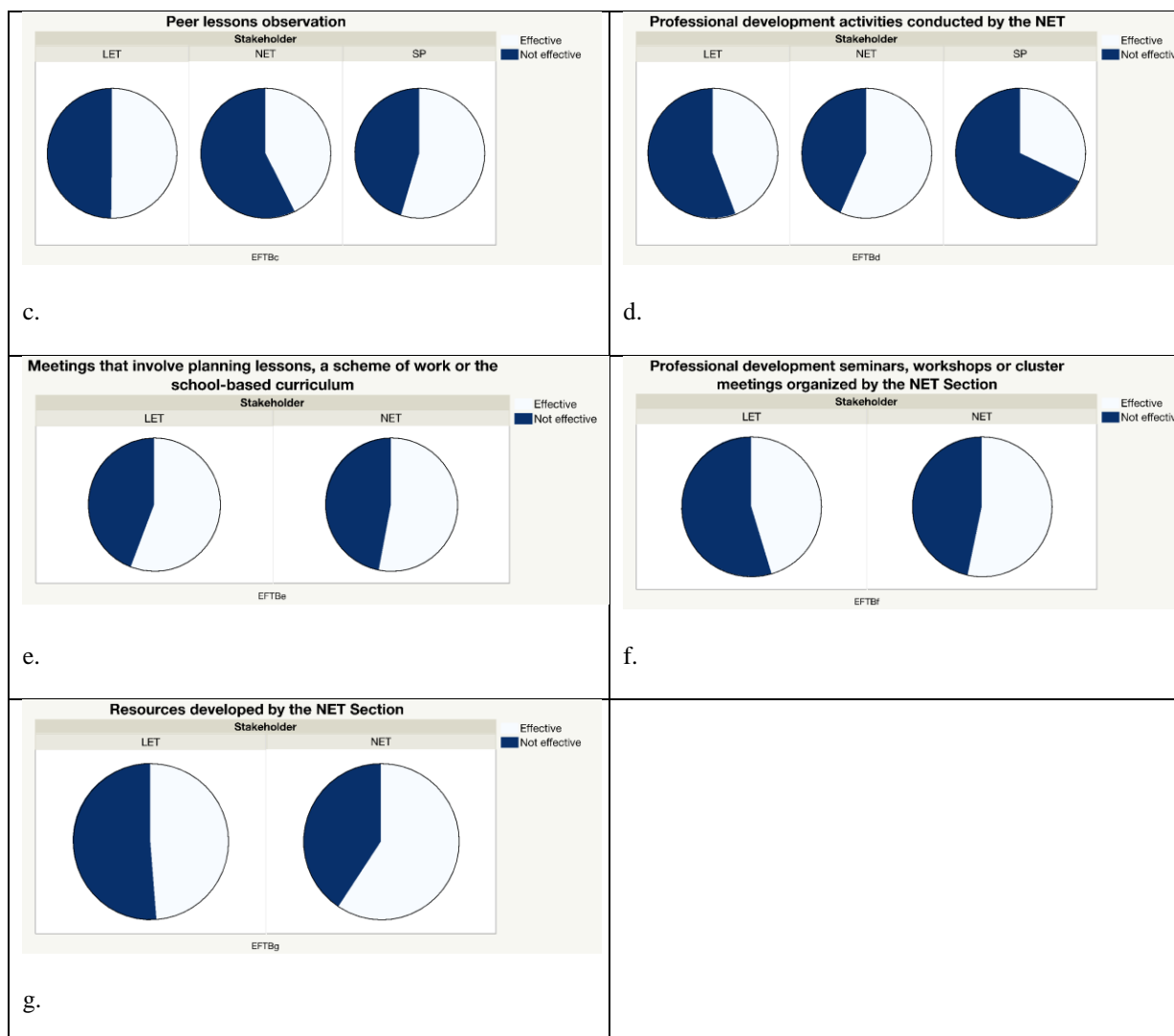
Question	[NET]/[LET]/[SP]:
[EFTBa-g]	Generally, how effective do you think the following are in improving the learning and teaching of English at your school?

Table 18. Chi-square analyses of improvement made in learning and teaching of English

Stakeholder	Weighted Count		Percentage		Chi-square	<i>p value</i>
	Not effective	Effective	Not effective	Effective		
Collaboration between the NET and local English teachers (a)						
NET	23.99	33.68	58.41	41.59	3.114	0.2107
LET	209.47	235.04	47.12	52.88		
SP	23.90	42.10	36.22	63.78		
English Panel Meetings (b)						
NET	31.66	26.59	54.35	45.65	3.012	0.2218
LET	198.65	245.91	44.68	55.32		
SP	25.79	40.21	39.08	60.92		
Peer lesson observation (c)						
NET	32.13	22.95	58.33	41.67	1.648	0.4388
LET	200.92	203.37	49.70	50.30		
SP	31.53	34.47	47.77	52.23		
Professional development activities conducted by the NET (d)						
NET	10.18	14.56	41.16	58.84	5.824	0.0544
LET	174.30	142.73	54.98	45.02		
SP	36.49	16.62	68.71	31.29		
*Meetings that involve planning lessons, a scheme of work or the school-based curriculum (e)						
NET	24.01	26.42	47.61	52.39	0.085	0.7708
LET	187.60	225.19	45.45	54.55		
SP						
*Professional development seminars, workshops or cluster meetings organised by the NET Section (f)						
NET	22.69	24.02	48.58	51.42	0.476	0.4902
LET	181.60	154.99	53.95	46.05		
SP						
*Resources developed by the NET Section (g)						
NET	22.96	30.41	43.02	56.98	1.539	0.2148
LET	187.63	172.40	52.12	47.88		
SP						

* School Principals were not asked for their views on these items.





Figures 22(a)-(g). Impact of collaborative activities on the learning and teaching of English

Given that no significant differences were found between responses to these items among the three groups, it can be assumed that NETs, local English teachers, and School Principals understood the items in a similar way. However, there are differences in levels of agreement between the three groups. More than 50% of local English teachers and School Principals perceived collaboration between the NET and local English teachers (Figures 22a), English Panel Meetings (Figure 22b), and peer lesson observation (Figure 22c) as effective, while NETs were less positive. NETs showed a higher rate of agreement to the effectiveness of activities planned and managed by the NET Section: More than 50% of NETs agreed that professional development activities conducted by the NET (Figure 22d), professional development seminars organised by the NET Section (Figure 22f), and resources developed by the NET Section (Figure 22g) were effective. The majority of both NETs and local English teachers perceived meetings that involve planning lessons, a scheme of work or the school-based curriculum to be effective (Figure 22e).

Possible explanations for the discrepancy between the perceptions of School Principals and those of the other two groups may relate to the tendency for School Principals to prioritise

administrative functions, such as panel meetings. Very often, teachers prefer interacting with students to administrative tasks and meetings. On the other hand, while teachers would value professional development for themselves, administrators might doubt whether the resources were well-spent.

Research Question 3: To what extent and in what ways does the ENET Scheme enhance the English-speaking environment of the school?

Positive findings related to this research question are reported above as ‘Key Findings’ of the evaluation. There it was noted that over 80% of respondents (School Principals, local English teachers and NETs) agreed that the ENET Scheme had improved the English environment of the school (see SF1 and Figure 15e above). Under SF3, we reported that there was a high level of agreement among respondents (92% of NETs and more than 75% of School Principals and local English teachers) that NETs engage in activities that enrich the English environment of the school (see Figure 16m above).

The extent to which the ENET Scheme enhances the English-speaking environment of the school was further explored through online survey items investigating engagement in and perceptions of the effectiveness of English activities organised in the school.

First, School Principals, NETs and local English teachers were asked to indicate how often NETs organised co-curricular English activities and engaged in activities which enrich the English environment of the school.

Second, respondents were asked to indicate how often they assisted in preparing students for a range of activities including school drama performances, Speech Festival, public speaking, English Club activities, English Ambassador programmes, debating competitions, English Day or English Week activities, morning assembly presentations and Campus TV. Then, respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which the influence of the NET or collaboration between the NET and local English teachers had contributed to the use of these activities in the school. Involvement in organising or preparing students for NET Section competitions was also investigated, as well as the extent to which this involved collaboration between NETs and local English teachers.

Respondents broadly agreed that NETs often organised and engaged in co-curricular activities. NET engagement in a number of the activities listed appeared to be lower than might be expected given the expected role of a NET. However, with respect to a small number of activities – Speech Festival, English Club, English Day/Week and morning assemblies – a high level of agreement was found that both NETs and local English teachers helped prepare students for the activities.

There was a high level of agreement that the use of these activities in the school was influenced by the NET or by collaboration between the NET and local English teachers.

Responses to the open-ended survey item ‘What do you value most about the ENET Scheme and the NET’s work at your school’ are also reported in this section as it was found that a

recurring theme in the responses related to enrichment of the English learning environment of the school.

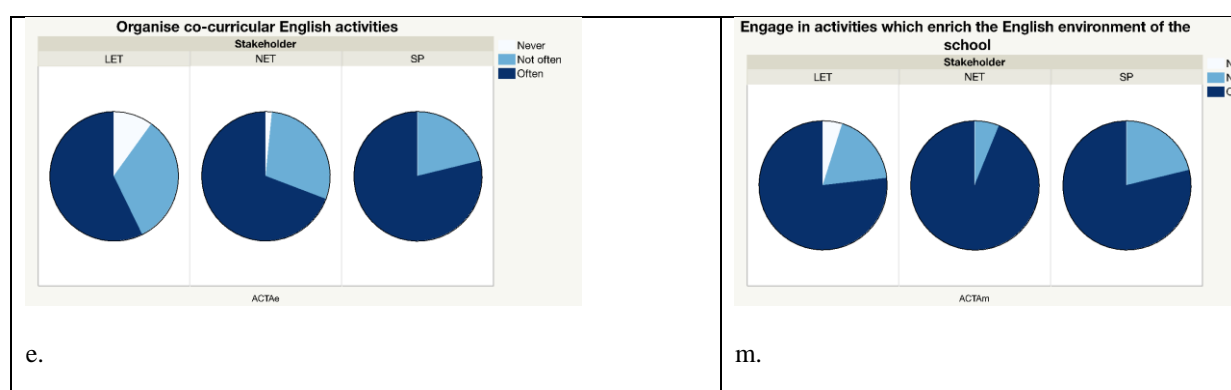
SF10: The majority of teachers and School Principals agree that the NET at their school organises co-curricular activities and engages in activities that enrich the English environment.

Local English teachers, NETs and School Principals were asked about the frequency of NET organisation of and engagement in these activities. The item stems are shown below. These are followed by the tabulated responses in Table 19, which are then presented in the form of pie charts in Figure 23e & m. These results were first reported above in Figure 16e & m.

Question	[NET]: At this school, how often do you...
[ACTAe & n]	[LET]: How often does the NET in your school...
	[SP]: How often does the NET at this school...

Table 19. Fisher's exact tests/Chi-square analyses of NET's involvement in the school

Stakeholder	Weighted Count			Percentage			Chi-square	<i>p value</i>
	Never	Not often	Often	Never	Not often	Often		
Organise co-curricular English activities (e)								
NET	0.82	19.13	45.05	1.26	29.43	69.32		0.0018*
LET	40.87	138.78	254.97	9.40	31.93	58.67		
SP	0.00	16.22	49.78	0.00	24.57	75.43		
Engage in activities which enrich the English environment of the school (m)								
NET	0.00	4.96	60.04	0.00	7.64	92.36		0.9375
LET	21.07	86.24	430.83	4.70	19.24	76.05		
SP	0.00	15.82	50.18	0.00	23.97	76.03		



Figures 23(e) & (m). NET involvement in enrichment activities

SF11: Overall, NETs and local English teachers reported that they both help prepare students to take part in activities that enrich the school's English environment. However, with the exception of local and overseas excursions, NETs reported higher engagement than the local English teachers reported for themselves on all the activities.

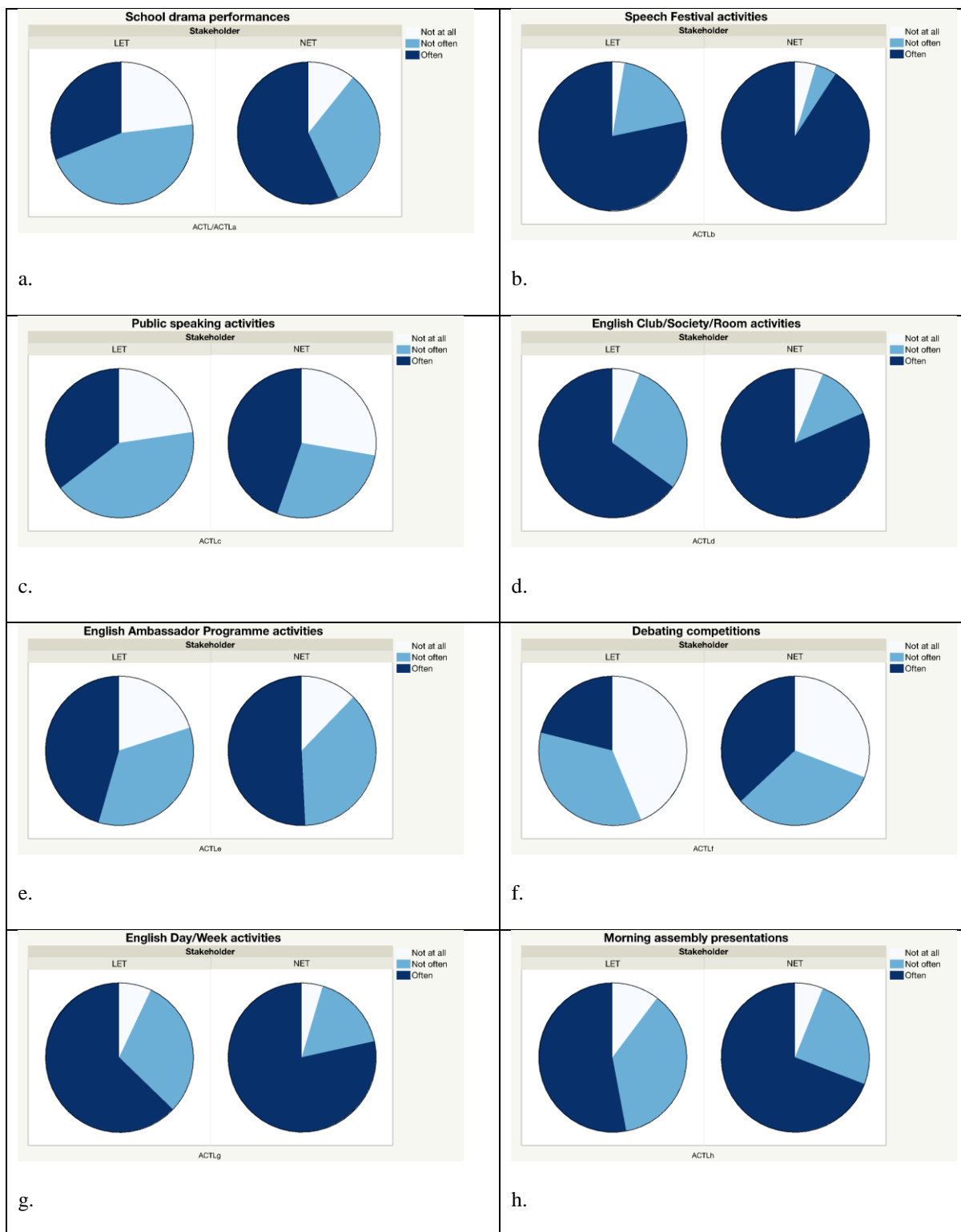
Based on the evaluation team's experience of typical secondary school activities for which the English Panel normally takes responsibility, a list of activities was drawn up and endorsed by the NET Section for inclusion in the online survey. Discussions with NETs in the NET focus group confirmed the validity of the listed activities as those in which NETs typically engage to enhance the English environment of the school. The activities also accord with the expectations for NETs embedded in the NET Deployment Guidelines. A number of the listed activities are mentioned in the Guidelines, including debating competitions, English Day activities and cultural exchanges, and others were included based on experience of NET involvement in School English activities, e.g. School drama performances, Speech Festival activities, Public speaking activities, English Club/Society or English Room activities, English Ambassador Programme activities, Morning assembly presentations, and Campus TV/Radio activities.

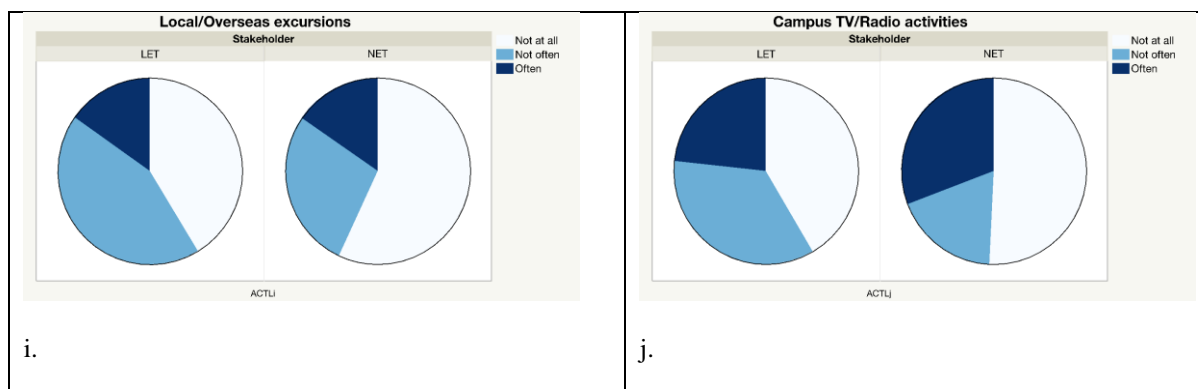
Local English teachers and NETs were asked how frequently they prepare students for these performance-based activities. The item stem is shown below. This is followed by the tabulated responses in Table 20, which are then presented in the form of pie charts in Figures 24a to j.

Question	[NET]/ [LET]:
[ACTLa-j]	How often do you help students prepare for the following to enrich the school English Environment?

Table 20. Fisher's exact tests/Chi-square analyses of teacher's contribution to student preparation

Stakeholder	Weighted Count			Percentage			Chi-square	p value
	Not at all	Not often	Often	Not at all	Not often	Often		
School drama performances (a)								
NET	6.19	20.52	38.30	9.52	31.56	58.92	24.167	< .0001*
LET	107.35	216.87	131.30	23.57	47.61	28.82		
Speech Festival activities (b)								
NET	2.24	2.73	60.03	3.45	4.19	92.36		0.0066*
LET	10.99	88.37	356.16	2.41	19.40	78.19		
Public speaking activities (c)								
NET	16.78	19.46	28.76	25.81	29.94	44.25	3.669	0.1597
LET	100.00	193.03	162.49	21.95	42.38	35.67		
English Club/Society/Room activities (d)								
NET	3.74	7.77	53.49	5.75	11.96	82.30		< .0001*
LET	29.97	128.66	296.88	6.58	28.25	65.17		
English Ambassador Programme activities (e)								
NET	7.71	24.14	33.16	11.86	37.13	51.01	3.008	0.2223
LET	95.74	154.15	205.63	21.02	33.84	45.14		
Debating competitions (f)								
NET	18.28	21.21	25.51	28.12	32.63	39.25	13.489	0.0012*
LET	201.02	164.79	89.71	44.13	36.18	19.69		
English Day/Week activities (g)								
NET	2.47	13.18	49.35	3.80	20.27	75.93		< .0001*
LET	35.30	138.68	281.54	7.75	30.44	61.81		
Morning assembly presentations (h)								
NET	2.78	17.12	45.10	4.27	26.35	69.38		< .0001*
LET	40.97	165.75	248.80	8.99	36.39	54.62		
Local/Overseas excursions (i)								
NET	36.85	18.42	9.73	56.69	28.34	14.96	6.051	0.0485*
LET	192.08	199.96	63.47	42.17	43.90	13.93		
Campus TV/Radio activities (j)								
NET	32.69	12.45	19.87	50.29	19.15	30.56	6.728	0.0346*
LET	178.97	160.77	115.76	39.29	35.29	25.41		





Figures 24(a)-(j). Local English teachers' and NETs' preparation of students for enrichment activities

For several items, which address activities generally conceived of as expected responsibilities of the NET (e.g. drama, public speaking, debate, etc.), the percentages of 'often' were lower than expected (i.e. around or below 50%). There is a great deal of variety in the range of activities which different schools facilitate. Hence, one explanation of the low percentages could be that some of the surveyed schools do not provide these activities. A similar explanation to that postulated for items ACTJa-l above may also apply here. That is, the low percentages of positive responses could be explained by reference to the rich plethora of resources involved. When these activities are overused, the diminishing novelty effect might not enrich the learning outcomes as planned. Hence, it is reasonable for the NET to rotate their involvement in such activities.

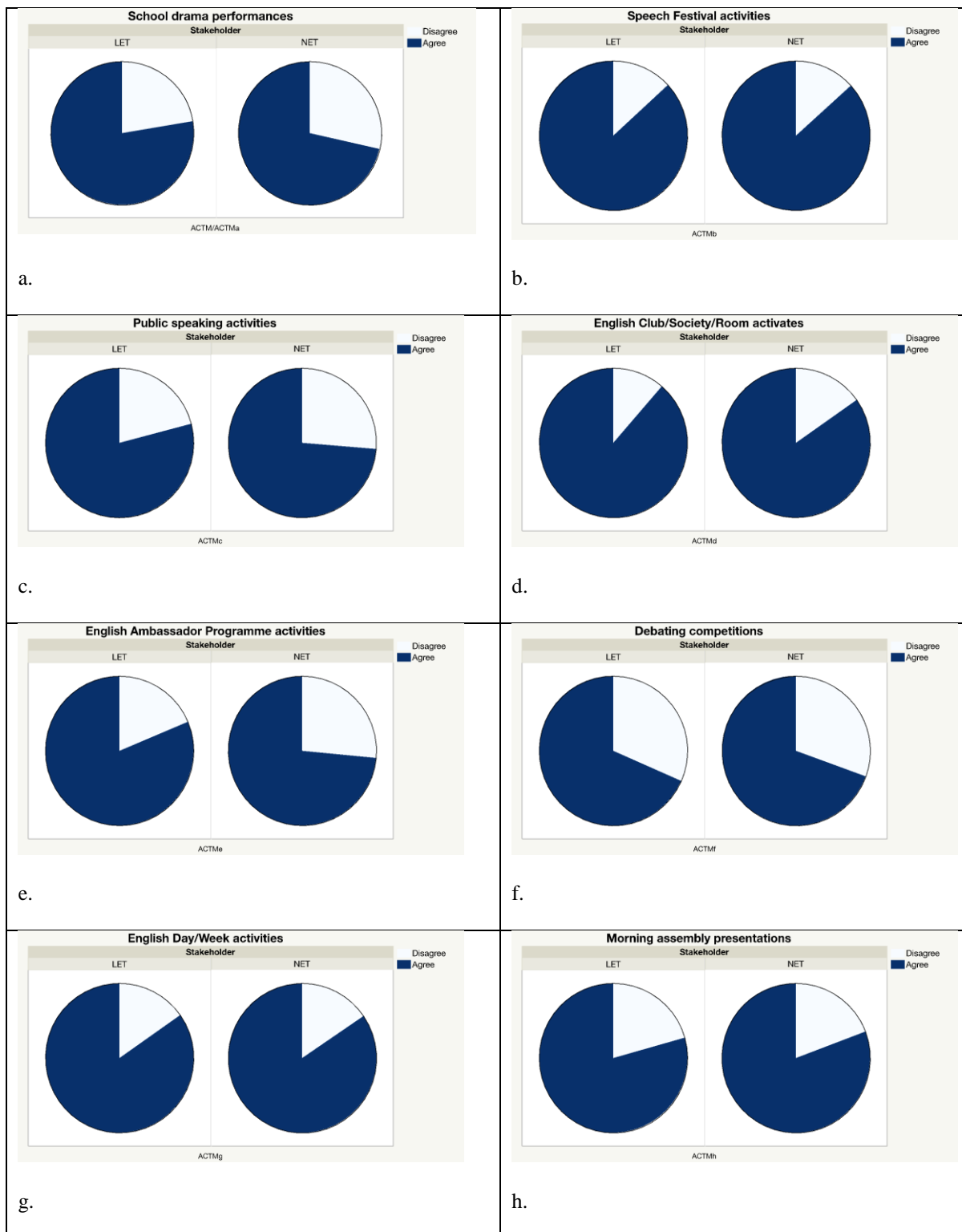
SF12: Both local English teachers and NETs agreed that the influence of the NET and their mutual collaboration contributed to the use of activities to enrich the English environment at their school.

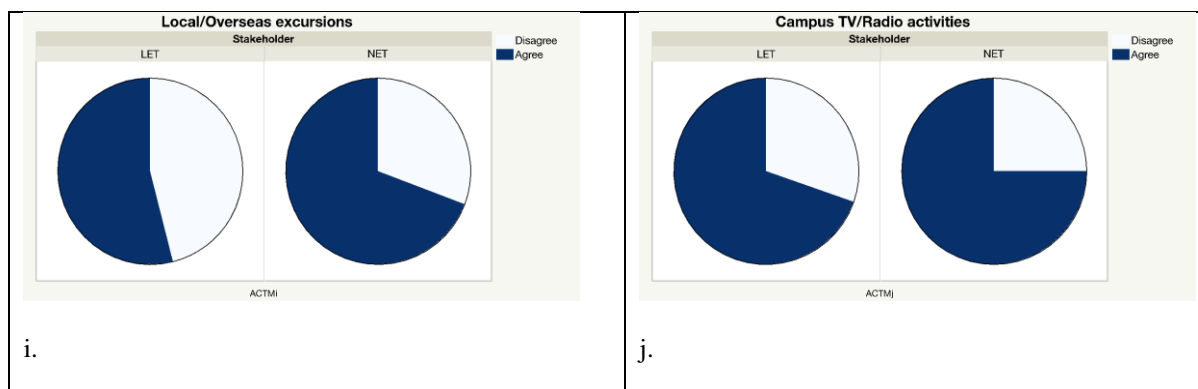
Local English teachers and NETs were asked how far they agreed that the influence of the NET and collaboration between the NET and local English teachers contributed to the use of enrichment activities in the school. The item stems are shown below. These are followed by the tabulated responses in Table 21, which are then presented in the form of pie charts in Figures 25a to j.

<p>Question</p> <p>[ACTMa-j]</p>	<p>[NET]: For each activity, please indicate to what extent you agree that your influence and/or your collaboration with local English teachers is contributing to the use of the activity in your school to enrich the English environment.</p> <p>[LET]: For each activity, please indicate to what extent you agree that the influence of the NET and/or your collaboration with the NET is contributing to the use of the activity in your school to enrich the English environment.</p>
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Table 21. Chi-square analyses of NET's contribution to the use of activities to enrich the English environment

Stakeholder	Weighted Count		Percentage		Chi-square	<i>p value</i>
	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree		
School drama performances (a)						
NET	15.32	35.10	30.39	69.61	1.590	0.2074
LET	81.40	282.47	22.37	77.63		
Speech Festival activities (b)						
NET	10.65	50.47	17.42	82.58	0.642	0.4230
LET	57.77	366.74	13.61	86.39		
Public speaking activities (c)						
NET	10.10	28.95	25.86	74.14	0.512	0.4743
LET	71.50	270.50	20.91	79.09		
English Club/Society/Room activates (d)						
NET	10.56	49.21	17.68	82.32	1.672	0.1960
LET	49.25	369.45	11.76	88.24		
English Ambassador Programme activities (e)						
NET	13.53	36.08	27.27	72.73	1.749	0.1860
LET	68.18	286.53	19.22	80.78		
Debating competitions (f)						
NET	12.94	24.57	34.50	65.50	0.184	0.6679
LET	89.95	197.59	31.04	68.96		
English Day/Week activities (g)						
NET	9.76	48.31	16.81	83.19	0.096	0.7565
LET	62.51	347.73	15.24	84.76		
Morning assembly presentations (h)						
NET	12.92	45.93	21.96	78.04	0.099	0.7525
LET	82.16	324.89	20.18	79.82		
Local/Overseas excursions (i)						
NET	8.62	17.89	32.53	67.47	2.223	0.1360
LET	121.54	133.27	47.70	52.30		
Campus TV/Radio activities (j)						
NET	7.40	20.36	26.65	73.35	0.132	0.7165
LET	83.46	195.20	29.95	70.05		





Figures 25(a)-(j). The contribution of NET influence and NET-local English teacher collaboration on use of enrichment activities

The response patterns of NETs and local English teachers to these items show a high degree of similarity with almost no variation, providing strong evidence of agreement and supporting the conclusion that both local English teachers and NETs recognised that the influence of the NET and their mutual collaboration contributed to the use of activities to enrich the English environment at their school.

SF13: NETs reported greater participation in preparing students for the NET Section competitions compared to local English teachers. Both NETs and local English teachers reported that they collaborated in the preparation process, with local English teachers reporting more incidents of collaboration.

The NET Section organises a number of competitions for secondary schools, some of them with support from external organisations like the RTHK, HKEdCity and international schools. These include:

a puppetry competition, ‘Hands on Stage’¹¹, which aims to give students an opportunity to use English in a creative and motivating way; experiment with script writing; and learn about puppet design, puppetry techniques and how to stage a puppet show;

an improvised drama competition, ‘Speak Out – Act Up!’¹², which aims to give students an opportunity to learn improvised drama techniques and use English in a creative way; experiment with the use of English in different roles and dramatic contexts; and support the learning and teaching of the Elective Module, *Learning English through Drama*, in the Senior Secondary English Language Curriculum;

a film competition, ‘Clipit’¹³ which aims to: develop students’ English language proficiency; enhance their awareness and appreciation of English; give them an opportunity to use English in a creative way involving multimodal technology; promote the use of English language to discuss relevant topics; and support the learning and teaching of English generally.

¹¹ <http://www.edb.gov.hk/en/curriculum-development/resource-support/net/hand-on-stage-2018.html>

¹² <http://www.edb.gov.hk/en/curriculum-development/resource-support/net/speakout-actup-2018.html>

¹³ <http://www.edb.gov.hk/en/curriculum-development/resource-support/net/Clipit-2017Secondary.html>

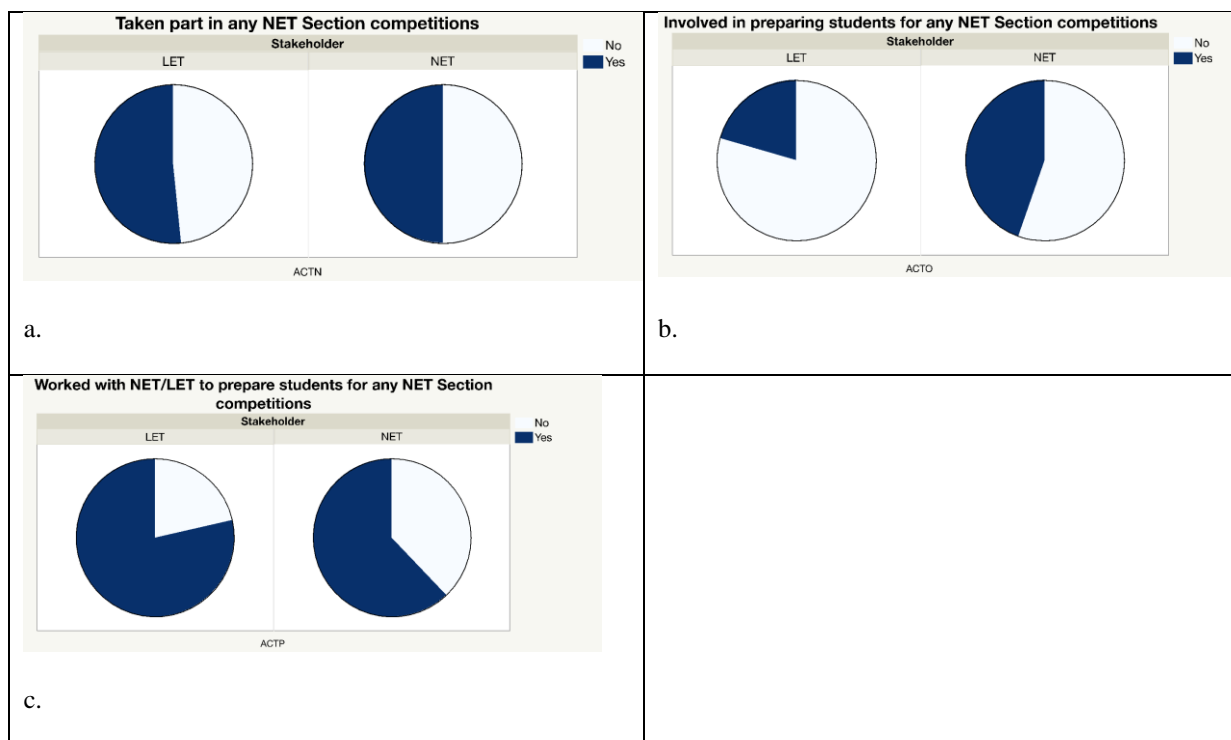
The competitions are supported by professional development workshops for teachers and students and training sessions for students in some of the more technical skills such as film editing.

Local English teachers and NETs were asked whether they had prepared students for the NET Section competitions, and whether this preparation had involved collaboration. The item stems are shown below. These are followed by the tabulated responses in Table 22, which are then presented in the form of pie charts in Figures 26a to c.

Question	[NET]/[LET]:
	[ACTN]: Has your school ever taken part in any NET Section competitions (i.e. Speak Out-Act Up!, Hands on Stage, Shorts on Stage, Shorts and Clipit)?
	[ACTQ]: During your time working as an EDB-funded NET/ English Language teacher , have you been involved in preparing students for any NET Section competitions?
	[ACTP]: During your time as an EDB-Funded NET/ English Language teacher , have you ever worked with local English teachers/ NET to prepare students for any NET Section competitions?

Table 22. Chi-square analyses of teacher's involvement in NET Section competitions

Stakeholder	Weighted Count		Percentage		Chi-square	p value
	No	Yes	No	Yes		
Taken part in any NET Section competitions						
NET	23.69	26.69	47.02	52.98	0.164	0.6857
LET	126.74	126.01	50.14	49.86		
Involved in preparing students for any NET Section competitions						
NET	35.07	29.93	53.95	46.05	20.469	< .0001*
LET	359.99	92.94	79.48	20.52		
Worked with NET/LET to prepare students for any NET Section competitions						
NET	11.91	18.02	39.79	60.21	4.962	0.0259*
LET	18.26	74.68	19.64	80.02		



Figures 26(a)-(c). Involvement and collaboration in NET Section competitions

The results suggest that about 50% of surveyed schools had taken part in NET Section competitions. NETs claimed a greater level of involvement in preparing students for the competitions. A large number of NETs and local English teachers indicated that they had worked together to prepare students for the competitions.

Open-ended Question Responses

Responses to the open-ended question in the online survey ‘What do you value most about the ENET Scheme and the NET's work at your school?’ are also relevant to Research Question 3. In the responses, it was found that the overarching theme was about enriching the English learning environment. This was revealed by content analysis conducted in the Text Explorer facility in JMP Pro. Table 23 below shows that the most frequently recurring theme was ‘rich English environment’ and its related idea ‘authentic English environment’.

Table 23. Content analysis by JMP Pro’s Text Explorer for the question ‘What do you value most about the ENET Scheme and the NET's work at your school?’

Phrase	Frequency
English learning	31
Learning environment	30
English speaking	26
Speaking environment	23

English learning environment	22
English speaking environment	22
English activities	18
Local teachers	14
Authentic English	13
English teachers	13
English environment	12
English language	11
Native English	10
NET teacher	9
Use English	9
English rich	8
Rich environment	8
ENET Scheme	7
English rich environment	6

The following direct quotations can illustrate the context of these phrases:

The NET can enrich the English-learning environment of the school and help organise different activities using his invaluable knowledge of English language, history and culture.

NET's support both inside and outside classroom. They enrich the English learning environment and provide students chances for to speak with a foreigner.

Research Question 4: To what extent and in what ways does the ENET Scheme support **curriculum development** and **implementation** in secondary schools?

Findings related to this research question have been presented above in the ‘Key Findings’ section. The results of survey items relevant to the impact of the Scheme on curriculum development and implementation were reported. It was noted that a sizeable proportion, although less than 50%, of NETs, local English teachers and School Principals agreed that NETs *often* contribute to curriculum development in the school, with between 37% and 46% of respondents agreeing that they do not do so often (see SF3 and Figure 16h above).

In the same section, ratings of other NET activities loosely related to curriculum development were reported. It was noted that stakeholders agreed that NETs recommend new teaching ideas to local English teachers (see Figure 16c above) and contribute to the development of senior secondary elective modules (see Figure 16n above) although it was generally agreed that these activities did not take place often. There was a higher level of agreement that NETs often develop learning and teaching resources (see Figure 16f above).

Under SF6 above, it was reported that stakeholders agreed that contributing to school-based curriculum development was an important aspect of the duties of a NET (see Figure 19d above).

These findings are drawn together in this section in order to address Research Question 4 more directly. In addition, the research question is further explored by analysing findings related to attendance at curriculum planning meetings. The findings suggest that NETs and local English teachers did meet to discuss the curriculum, although perceived such meetings as not taking place often. By selecting ‘not often’ when asked how often they attend these meetings together (i.e. meetings that involve planning lessons, a scheme of work or the school-based curriculum’), NETs and local English teachers acknowledged that such meetings do not take place frequently. This accords with our understanding of teachers’ workload and the place of curriculum development within it. Such development most likely takes place at times during the year when workload is reduced, rather than being achieved through regular and frequent meetings.

The results of two survey items related to the NET Section’s School-based Support Services may also be relevant to Research Question 4, although it depends on the nature of the support provided. Results for these items are reported below under ‘Additional Findings’ (see SF27, and Figure 42 below).

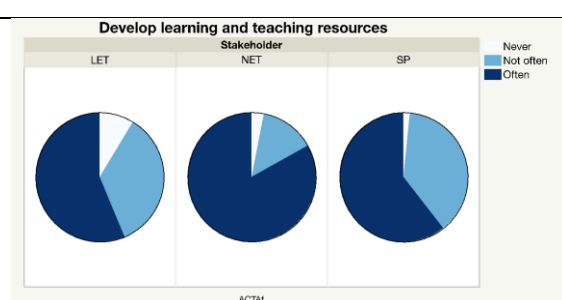
SF14: While more than half of local English teachers, NETs, and School Principals are in agreement that NETs do not often or never contribute to school-based curriculum development, the majority of all three groups state that NETs often develop learning and teaching resources.

NETs, local English teachers and School Principals were asked how frequently the NET engages in materials development and contributes to school-based curriculum development. The item stems are shown below. These are followed by the tabulated responses in Table 24, which are then presented in the form of pie charts in Figures 27f and 27h.

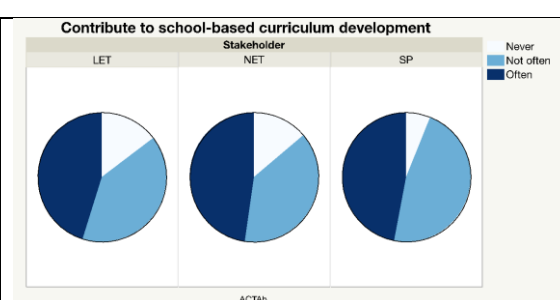
<p>Question</p> <p>[ACTAa-n]</p>	<p>[NET]: At this school, how often do you...</p> <p>[LET]: How often does the NET in your school...</p> <p>[SP]: How often does the NET at this school...</p>
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Table 24. Fisher's exact tests/Chi-square analyses of NET's involvement in the school

Stakeholder	Weighted Count			Percentage			Chi-square	<i>p value</i>
	Never	Not often	Often	Never	Not often	Often		
Develop learning and teaching resources (f)								
NET	2.54	9.92	52.55	3.90	15.26	80.84		0.0018*
LET	38.46	151.66	247.70	8.78	34.64	56.58		
SP	0.85	25.71	39.45	1.28	38.95	59.77		
Contribute to school-based curriculum development (h)								
NET	8.13	24.62	32.25	12.51	37.88	49.61	2.787	0.5941
LET	62.91	160.01	194.96	15.05	38.29	46.66		
SP	6.21	30.97	28.82	9.41	46.93	43.67		



f.



h.

Figures 27(f) & (h) NET involvement in resource and curriculum development

There is a marked and significant discrepancy between the perceptions of NETs on the one hand, and local English teachers and School Principals on the other with respect to the involvement of the NETs in developing teaching and learning resources (Figure 27f). The same possible explanation as that given in relation to the frequency items (ACTA a-n) reported above may apply here. The higher ratings given by NETs in respect of their involvement in curriculum development may be explained by reference to the visibility of NET activities within the school. NETs might design many teaching resources for their own lessons, but they might not share them with other English teachers and hence local English teachers and the School Principal might not be aware that such materials were being developed.

SF15: A majority of both local English teachers and NETs reported not often attending curriculum planning meetings together, although 35-40% said they did this often.

Local English teachers and NETs were asked how often they attend curriculum planning meetings together. The item stems are shown below. These are followed by the tabulated

responses in Table 25, which are then presented in the form of pie charts in Figure 28.

Question	[NET]: How often do you attend meetings that involve planning lessons, a scheme of work or the school-based curriculum with local English teachers at this school?
[ACTC]	[LET]: How often do you attend meetings that involve planning lessons, a scheme of work or the school-based curriculum with the NET at this school?

Table 25. Chi-square analyses of teacher's participation in meetings on school-based curriculum

Stakeholder	Weighted Count		Percentage		Chi-square	p value
	Not often	Often	Not often	Often	0.476	0.4903
NET	32.43	21.90	59.69	40.31		
LET	256.76	141.42	64.48	35.52		

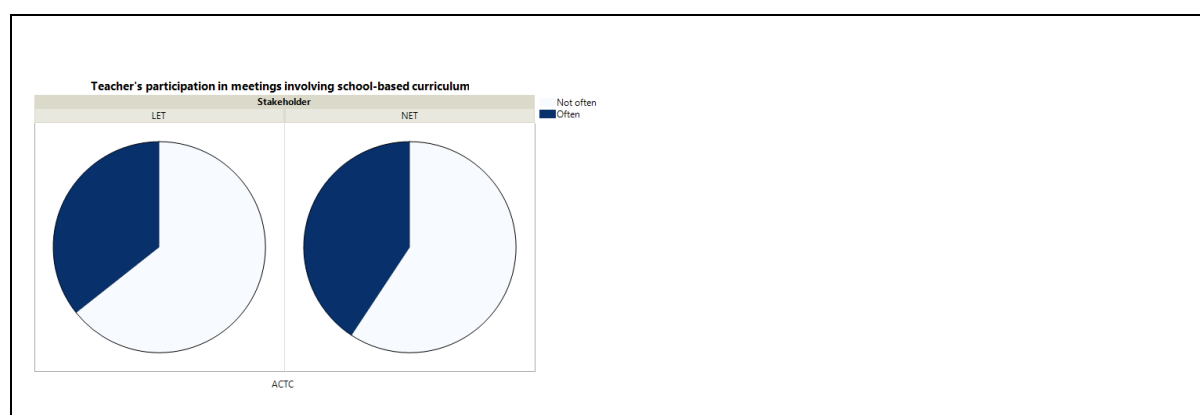


Figure 28. Local English teacher and NET participation in curriculum planning meetings

No statistically significant difference was found between local English teachers and NETs in the self-reported ratings of their involvements. The low percentage of *often* responses by NETs and local English teachers to this item may be interpreted to suggest that curriculum planning meetings were not conducted with a high degree of frequency. The low *often* responses should also be viewed in conjunction with the high percentage of *not often*. These suggest that curriculum planning meetings were taking place, but their frequency was not high. For example, if such meetings take place two or three times each semester, a *not often* response would be an accurate description of their frequency. The case study investigation will throw more light on the actual frequency of such meetings.

It is instructive to view the findings for these survey items with the later item ACTB which asked NETs, local English teachers and School Principals how often they engaged in discussion of English learning activities, school-based professional development or other academic matters. The results for this item are reported below as they relate more to Research Question 5, however they paint a rather different picture of the professional discussions that take place between local English teachers and NETs, with a majority of NETs and local English teachers reporting that they often discussed these matters together.

Research Question 5: To what extent and in what ways does the ENET Scheme contribute to **professional development and collaboration among the teachers?**

Results relevant to Research Question 5 have been reported in the ‘Key Findings’ section (see SF3 and Figures 16(a)-(n) above). A very high level of agreement was shown in response to the statement: ‘NETs and local English teachers have a good relationship in my school’ (see Figure 15g above). A selection from these results is gathered together here to more directly address the research question.

The results suggest that NETs often engage in activities which involve collaborating with local English teachers, including acting as a language advisor, learning from local English teachers about the local context and contributing to discussions of teaching and learning in English Panel Meetings. Less frequent collaborative activities included suggesting new teaching ideas and recommending materials to local English teachers.

The extent to which the ENET Scheme contributed to professional development and collaboration among teachers was further explored by inviting respondents to the online survey to indicate how often they engaged in discussion together on issues related to English learning, professional development and other academic matters. The results suggest that such discussions were taking place often between NETs and local English teachers, but School Principals seemed to rarely engage in such discussions.

Finally, the research question was investigated by inviting survey respondents to indicate whether they had attended regional cluster meetings and professional development workshops organised by the NET Section, and if so whether they had been able to put the ideas learnt there into practice in their own teaching. The results suggest a healthy level of participation in NET Section facilitated professional development opportunities among NETs, and a good level of implementation of the new ideas the NETs had acquired there. However, NETs were much more likely to attend regional cluster meetings, although such meetings are designed for all English teachers. In this regard, it is worth noting that there were indications in the case study data that local English teachers tend to wrongly perceive regional cluster meetings as aimed primarily at NETs rather than local English teachers. According to the results of this survey item, NETs were also more likely to participate in other professional development workshops offered by the NET Section.

SF16: Overall, local English teachers, NETs, and School Principals reported that NETs were actively involved in several school-based activities; however, School Principals reported lower frequencies of NET involvement in acting as language advisor (a), suggesting new teaching ideas (b), and recommending materials to colleagues (c).

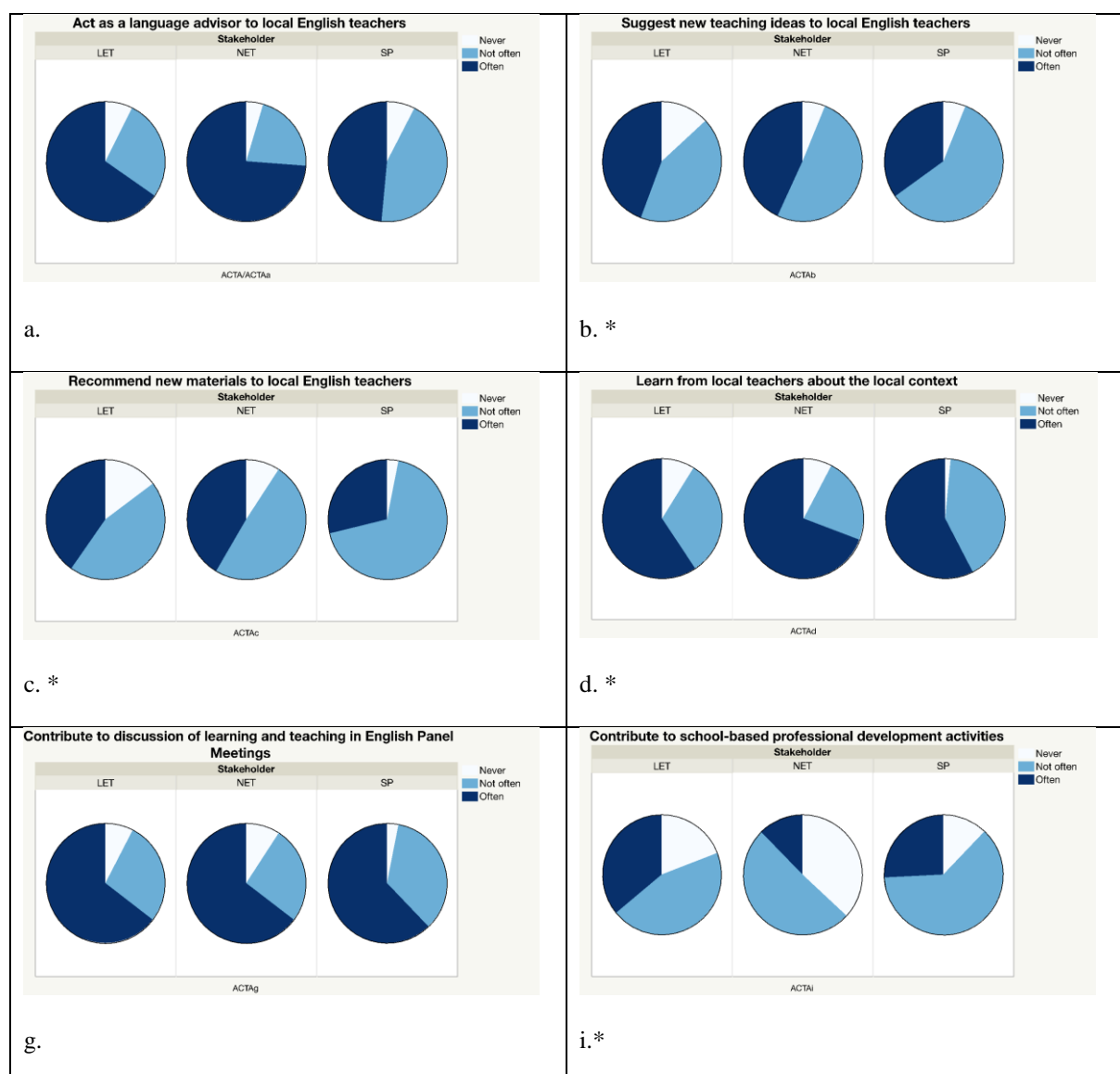
NETs, local English teachers and School Principals were asked how frequently the NET engages in a range of activities relating to the learning and teaching of English in the school, and how often NETs learn from local English teachers about the local context. The item stems are shown below. These are followed by the tabulated responses in Table 26 which are then presented in the form of pie charts in Figures 29a to k.

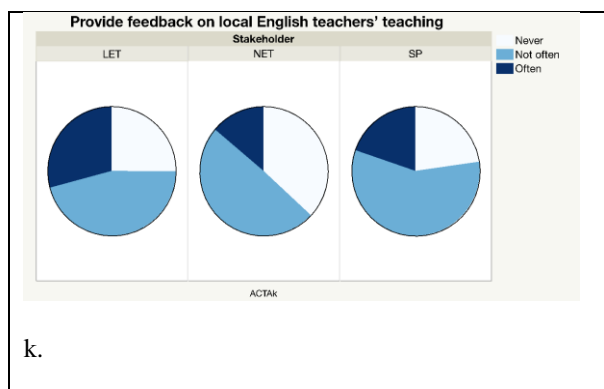
Question	[NET]: At this school, how often do you...
[ACTAa-n]	[LET]: How often does the NET in your school...
	[SP]: How often does the NET at this school...

Table 26. Fisher's exact tests/Chi-square analyses of NET's involvement in the school

Stakeholder	Weighted Count			Percentage			Chi-square	p value
	Never	Not often	Often	Never	Not often	Often		
Act as a language advisor to local English teachers (a)								
NET	3.65	12.99	48.36	5.61	19.99	74.40		1.0000
LET	30.41	122.68	291.25	6.84	27.61	65.55		
SP	7.23	27.34	31.44	10.95	41.42	47.63		
Suggest new teaching ideas to local English teachers (b)								
NET	3.39	31.86	29.75	5.21	49.01	45.78		< .0001*
LET	59.11	184.57	197.25	13.41	41.86	44.74		
SP	6.06	37.56	22.38	9.18	56.91	33.91		
Recommend new materials to local English teachers (c)								
NET	5.79	30.85	28.36	8.91	47.46	43.63		< .0001*
LET	63.74	191.82	184.66	14.48	43.57	41.95		
SP	3.59	43.26	19.15	5.44	65.55	29.01		
Learn from local English teachers about the local context (d)								
NET	4.91	13.53	46.56	7.56	20.81	71.63		0.0018*
LET	35.96	141.66	247.13	8.47	33.35	58.18		
SP	1.35	25.36	39.29	2.04	38.43	59.52		
Contribute to discussion of learning and teaching in English Panel Meetings (g)								
NET	6.25	15.87	42.87	9.62	24.42	65.96		1.0000
LET	33.50	122.42	290.01	7.51	27.45	65.03		
SP	2.54	22.25	41.20	3.85	33.72	62.42		
Contribute to school-based curriculum development (h)								
NET	8.13	24.62	32.25	12.51	37.88	49.61	2.787	0.5941
LET	62.91	160.01	194.96	15.05	38.29	46.66		
SP	6.21	30.97	28.82	9.41	46.93	43.67		
Contribute to school-based professional development activities (i)								
NET	22.97	35.21	6.81	35.34	54.18	10.48	27.427	< .0001*

LET	82.13	178.83	148.53	20.06	43.67	36.27		
SP	8.98	42.03	14.99	13.61	63.68	22.72		
Use the latest mobile technology in teaching (j)								
NET	16.18	32.55	16.27	24.89	50.07	25.03	11.437	0.0221*
LET	95.78	183.88	96.38	25.47	48.90	25.63		
SP	14.61	45.50	5.89	22.14	68.93	8.92		
Provide feedback on local English teachers' teaching (k)								
NET	25.95	31.08	7.96	39.93	47.82	12.25	12.981	0.0114*
LET	101.99	188.73	120.82	24.78	45.86	29.36		
SP	16.43	35.94	13.62	24.90	54.46	20.64		





Figures 29(a)-(k). NET engagement in English teaching and learning activities

SF17: A majority of NETs and local English teachers reported that they often discussed English learning activities, collaboration, school-based professional development, or other academic matters together, although School Principals (98.08%) seldom engaged in such discussions with their NET.

NETs and local English teachers were asked how frequently they engaged in discussions of academic matters together, while School Principals were asked about their engagement with the NET in similar discussions. The item stems are shown below. These are followed by the tabulated responses in Table 27, which are then presented in the form of pie charts in Figure 30.

[ACTB]	[NET]: How often do you meet with the local English teachers at this school to discuss English learning activities, school-based professional development or other academic matters?
	[LET]: How often do you discuss English learning activities, school-based professional development or other academic matters with the NET at this school?
	[SP]: How often do you discuss English learning activities, collaboration, school-based professional development or other academic matters with the NET at this school?

Table 27. Fisher's exact tests of NET's collaboration with local English teachers

Stakeholder	Weighted Count		Percentage		Chi-square	p value
	Not often	Often	Not often	Often		
NET	21.60	35.78	37.65	62.35		< .0001*
LET	154.14	280.52	35.46	64.54		
SP	61.25	1.20	98.08	1.92		

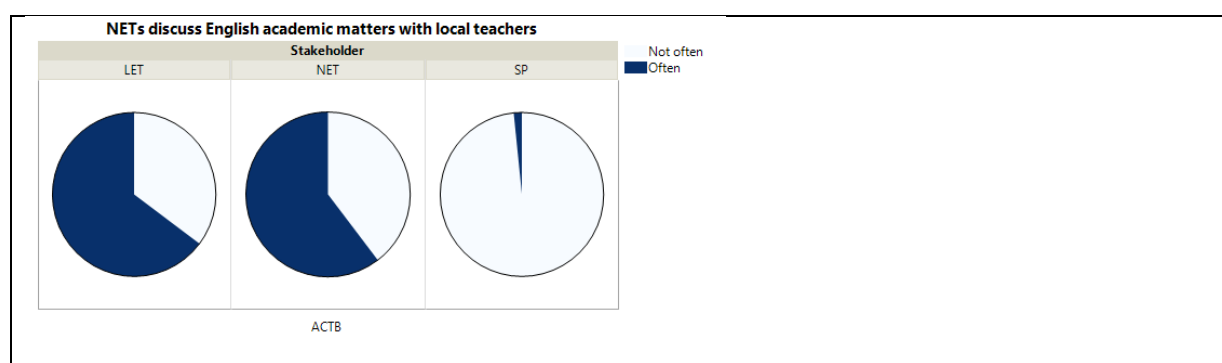


Figure 30. Frequency of discussions of academic matters

The results provide strong evidence that professional discussions between NETs and their local colleagues take place on a regular basis, with a majority of both parties indicating that they engage in such discussions often. The results also clearly indicate that School Principals rarely discuss academic matters including English learning activities with NETs. Given the importance of NETs in the English teaching and learning activities in the school, as well as the relatively high profile of the NET in the public image of the school, the apparent hands-off approach of the Principal suggested by these results is unexpected. The finding may be interpreted as indicating that School Principal delegates responsibility to the English Panel Chair for the professional role of the NET. This interpretation is corroborated by the case study investigation. School Principals with a background in English language teaching were active in monitoring and even directing NET deployment, but most Principals would only engage with the NET on a social basis, and in some cases to perform a pastoral role in counselling NETs who experienced difficulties.

SF18: NETs were more likely to attend *Regional Cluster Meetings* or other workshops conducted by the NET Section than local English teachers, although both groups said they implemented what they learnt from the meetings they attended.

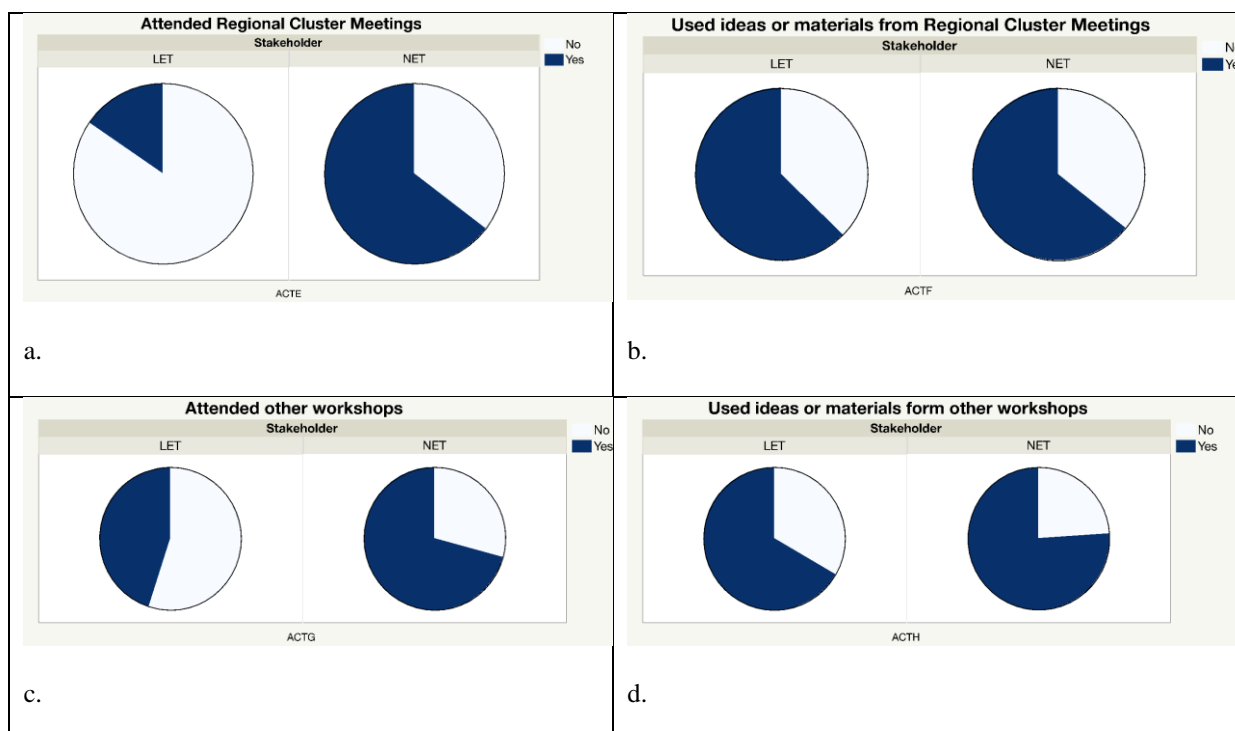
NETs and local English teachers were asked how frequently they engaged in cluster meetings and the NET Section professional development activities. The item stems are shown below. These are followed by the tabulated responses in Table 28, which are then presented in the form of pie charts in Figures 31a to d.

Question [ACTE] - [ACTH]	[NET]/[LET]:
	[ACTE]: Have you attended Regional Cluster Meetings conducted by the NET Section?
	[ACTF]: Have you used ideas or materials from Regional Cluster Meetings?
	[ACTG]: Have you attended workshops (excluding Regional Cluster Meetings) conducted by the NET Section?

	[ACTH]: Have you used ideas or materials from these workshops?
--	--

Table 28. Chi-square analyses of teacher's participation in Regional Cluster Meetings or other workshops

Stakeholder	Weighted Count		Percentage		Chi-square	<i>p value</i>
	No	Yes	No	Yes		
Attended Regional Cluster Meetings						
NET	20.33	44.67	31.28	68.72	94.485	< .0001*
LET	385.68	69.83	84.67	15.33		
Used ideas or materials from Regional Cluster Meetings						
NET	15.30	29.36	34.26	65.74	0.206	0.6503
LET	28.46	45.66	38.40	61.60		
Attended other workshops						
NET	17.97	47.03	27.64	72.36	16.846	< .0001*
LET	249.82	205.70	54.84	45.16		
Used ideas or materials from other workshops						
NET	10.94	36.59	23.01	76.99	1.975	0.1599
LET	69.83	138.55	33.51	66.49		



Figures 31(a)-(d). Teacher's participation in Regional Cluster Meetings or other workshops

A majority of NETs attended Regional Cluster Meetings (68.72%) and other workshops (72.36%). Local English teachers showed lower participation levels than NETs did, while their implementation (e.g. using ideas or materials) from those workshops showed no significant difference between the two groups of teachers.

Research Question 6: What progress has been made on the key recommendations of the 2009 evaluation report and how have the various curricular initiatives since 2009 and changes in the support provided for NETs impacted the implementation of the Scheme?

Progress made in addressing recommendations of the 2009 evaluation

For a list of the recommendations of the 2009 evaluation report, see Section 1.4. The online survey included a number of items designed to elicit perceptions from stakeholders related to the 2009 recommendations regarding English Panel Meetings (recommendations c(ii), c(viii) and c(ix)) and to collaboration between NETs and English panel members (recommendation c(vi)). Survey items relating to professional development are also pertinent to recommendation c(x) of the 2009 report (see current report SF9, Figures 22f and SF18, Figures 31(a)-(d) and discussion), although the authors of the 2009 report were referring to a specific focus in proposed professional development on evidence-based, outcomes-related monitoring and reporting which is not addressed in the current evaluation.

Findings from these items have been reported in various sections above and are summarised below here for ease of reference. Findings related to other recommendations made in the 2009 report are reported in the qualitative section of the report (Section 3.7.3 below).

Recommendation c(ii) that English Panel Meetings should be more pedagogical than administrative in nature was directly addressed in the survey and findings are reported above in discussion of SF9 and later in discussion of SF26. The majority of NETs perceived English Panel Meetings to be more concerned with administration than teaching and learning (SF26) and rated them as ineffective in improving teaching and learning of English (SF9,) in the school. For both items, there was a difference in the perceptions of local English teachers and NETs, with the majority of local English teachers disagreeing that the meetings were more administrative than pedagogical, and finding them effective, even though the differences were not statistically significant. On the other hand, our discussion of SF9 also notes that the majority of both NETs and local English teachers perceived meetings that involve planning lessons, a scheme of work or the school-based curriculum to be effective (Figure 22e) although the actual percentages were relatively low at 52.39 for NETs and 54.55 for local English teachers. These results suggest that although English Panel Meetings remain largely administrative in nature, pedagogical issues are discussed in other meetings specifically convened to discuss curriculum issues at different class levels in the school, even though nearly half of respondents did not consider such meeting effective.

Some support was found indicating progress in addressing 2009 recommendations c(viii) and c(ix) regarding reporting in English Panel Meetings in that local English teachers, NETs, and School Principals broadly agreed that NETs contribute to discussions of learning and teaching in English Panel Meetings (SF3). On the other hand, although the majority of NETs agreed that

they were provided with time for sharing good practices in the English Panel Meetings (SF21), they showed a higher level of disagreement than local English teachers related to this. Nearly 80% of local English teachers felt that such sharing took place, whereas only about 55% of NETs agreed. This suggests a different perception of what ‘sharing good practices’ might mean in practice.

Recommendation c (vi) suggested that there should be a collaborative system that enables joint ownership and responsibility for learning outcomes. The discussion above of findings relating to Research Question 5 is relevant here (see SF16 and SF17). There is support for progress towards promoting collaboration between NETs and local English teachers in survey results relating to the extent to which local English teachers are influenced by collaborations with the NET in their use of pedagogical practices (see SF5 and SF9) and their involvement in co-curricular activities (see SF12 and SF13).

Impact of curricular initiatives on implementation of the Scheme

The key curricular initiative in secondary education in Hong Kong since 2009 is the introduction of the new senior secondary (NSS) curriculum involving the move from a four-year senior secondary curriculum to a three-year system, the removal of the Year 11 public examination (the Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination) and the introduction of a new public examination at the end of Year 12 – the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE). The new curriculum includes elective modules, as well as the core components, and involves School-based Assessment (SBA) of certain skill components of the core curriculum.

Analysis of NET responses to survey items related to deployment showed that only 4 out of 65 NETs reported that they teach S6 classes preparing students for public exams. Since NETs tend not to be deployed to teach full classes at S6 level, changes in the senior secondary curriculum have not had significant impact on their full class teaching work. This is reinforced by the results of LET Survey item #40, which asked respondents to agree or disagree with the statement ‘*The deployment of NETs in your school has changed since the New Senior Secondary curriculum was introduced*’. The results shown below (Table 29) indicate that less than 37% of the 146 respondents agreed with the statement: ‘*The deployment of NETs in your school has changed since the New Senior Secondary curriculum was introduced*’.

Table 29 Responses to ‘The deployment of NETs in your school has changed since the New Senior Secondary curriculum was introduced’

Category	Count	Percentage
Agree	54	36.98
Disagree	58	39.73
N/A	34	23.29
Total	146	100

Despite this relatively low level of agreement that NET deployment had changed as a result of the curricular initiative, there are other indications of impact on those aspects of the English Language curriculum NETs are assigned to deliver. The elective modules introduced with the NSS curriculum include cultural areas which might be seen as potential strengths of a NET. Survey items included questions specifically related to the areas covered by these elective modules – those categorised as related to language arts – Learning English through Drama/Short Stories/Poems and Songs – as well as one of the non-language arts electives – Learning English through Debating.

Results have been reported above of survey items directly related to perceived frequency of NET contributions to elective module teaching and development (see SF3 above). In ‘Other Findings’ below we discuss the perceived extent of NET contributions to the development and teaching of the modules (see SF21 below). In addition, SF4 and SF5 present findings indicating that NETs include a greater variety of these NSS elective areas in their teaching and exert an influence on local English teachers encouraging them to adopt similar activities in their teaching.

Another significant change to the orientation of the secondary curriculum which has come into operation since the publication of the 2009 evaluation report is the ‘fine-tuned’ Medium of Instruction (MOI) arrangements, under which schools are enabled to teach more subjects through the medium of English to students who have attained the necessary language ability threshold. However, NET involvement in fine-tuned MOI arrangements was not investigated in the current evaluation.

Impact of changes in the support provided for NETs on the implementation of the Scheme

Since 2009, there have been a number of changes in the support provided directly for NETs with a revised induction programme and strengthened support for new NETs, with mandatory visits to new NETs organised at the start of the school year. These visits allow RNCT members to identify potential problems early and ensure that they are dealt with as soon as possible. Minor changes were made to the NET Deployment Guidelines in 2014. Greater emphasis has been placed on district- or region-based cluster meetings and focused professional development programmes related to key initiatives in English Language Education.

Since the 2013/14 school year, the NET Section has been offering school-based support services (SBSS). The SBSS was launched as an attempt to address the recommendation in the 2009 evaluation report that the Advisory Teaching Team’s contributions to the NET Scheme in Primary Schools could be used as a basis upon which the RNCT could build. Schools which would like to be supported in specific curriculum areas can request support by submitting an application form with a brief proposal. These services are designed to enable the RNCT members to reach out to more schools by working more closely with the English Panels. Unlike competitions, professional development workshops, cluster meetings and resources, SBSS require the team to provide customised support for schools. This is seen as a way for the team to keep in touch with the pulse of curriculum development at the school level.

The regional cluster meetings are designed to support the professional development of both NETs and local English teachers, but it has been noted earlier that local English teachers tend

to interpret them as largely designed for NETs. It has also been reported earlier that these meetings are well-received by NETs as a means of professional sharing among fellow NETs and English teachers.

In addition to regional professional development sessions, the NET Section has provided support for NETs through centralised training, some specifically for NETs, such as the 3-day induction programme provided by the NET Section for newly recruited NETs, and some designed for all English language teachers including NETs and focussing on key initiatives including debating, critical literacy, applications of technology, etc. In addition, the NET Section competitions are supported by dedicated workshops for participating teachers.

The online surveys contained items addressing attendance at cluster meetings, and the NET Section workshops, and whether participants were able to put ideas and materials into practice in their teaching (NET Survey #22 -#25; LET Survey #12 -#15). Findings from these items are reported above in relation to SF9 and SF18.

Other survey items addressed participation in the NET Section competitions (NET Survey #35 – #37; LET Survey #22 – #24). Findings from these items have been reported above in relation to SF8 and SF13. Two items asked respondents about the SBSS (NET Survey #40 & #41; LET Survey #28 & #29) and results are reported below in relation to SF27.

3.3.4 Additional Findings

This section reports on a number of survey items which do not directly address the Research Questions that guided the evaluation but nevertheless provide valuable insights into stakeholder perceptions of the effectiveness of the Scheme. It contains items exploring perceptions among stakeholders of the role of the School Principal in effectively implementing the Scheme in the school, identifying an appropriate role for the NET and ensuring that NETs were supported and mentored effectively. It also includes items eliciting perceptions from NETs and local English teachers of the support provided for the NET, the contributions made by the NET and the place of the NET in the school learning community. Finally, this section reports on the open-ended questions, exploring stakeholder perceptions of the public image of the Scheme, of the future of the Scheme and whether the funding allocated to the Scheme is justified.

SF19:

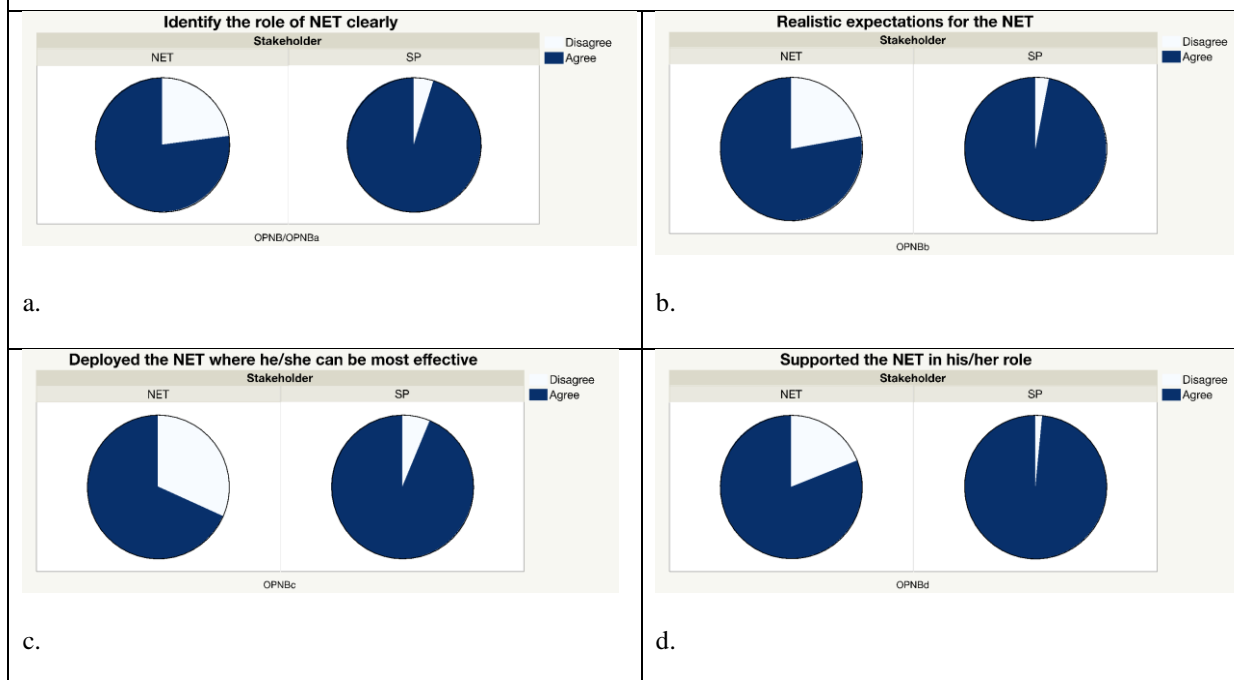
A majority of NETs agreed that their role had been clearly identified, that they had been effectively deployed and supported in that role, and that their contributions had been acknowledged by the Principal of their school.

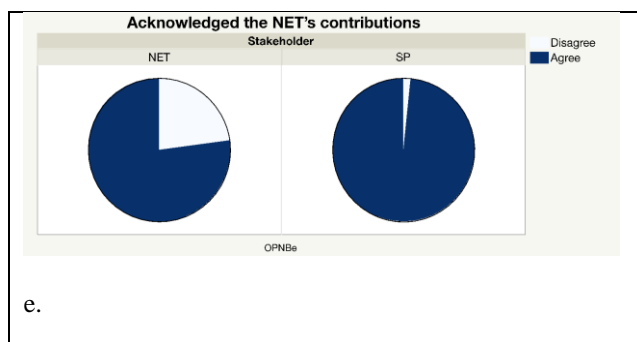
NETs and School Principals were asked to what extent they agreed with statements regarding the role of the Principal in NET deployment. The item stems are shown below. These are followed by the tabulated responses in Table 30, which are then presented in the form of pie charts in Figures 32a to e.

Question	[NET]: To what extent do you agree that the Principal of your school has...
[OPNBa-e]	[SP]: To what extent do you agree that you as the School Principal have...

Table 30. Fisher's exact tests of way in which School Principal contribute to NET's deployment

Stakeholder	Weighted Count		Percentage		Chi-square	<i>p value</i>
	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree		
Identified the role of NET clearly (a)						
NET	13.97	48.26	22.44	77.56		<.0001*
SP	3.35	59.67	5.32	94.68		
Realistic expectations for the NET (b)						
NET	14.80	48.89	23.24	76.76		0.0014*
SP	1.93	62.72	2.98	97.02		
Deployed the NET where he/she can be most effective (c)						
NET	20.70	40.29	33.94	66.06		<.0001*
SP	3.58	59.57	5.67	94.33		
Supported the NET in his/her role (d)						
NET	11.25	51.94	17.81	82.19		0.0010*
SP	1.35	62.53	2.11	97.89		
Acknowledged the NET's contributions (e)						
NET	13.59	48.52	21.88	78.12		<.0001*
SP	0.58	60.44	0.95	99.05		





Figures 32(a)-(e). School Principals' contribution to NET deployment

SF20: Overall, NETs perceived that they received mentoring and information from their school or colleagues and acted as effective, well-adapted educators. The majority of local English teachers also agreed, but had a higher rate of agreement as to the mentoring and communication NETs received and a lower agreement rate compared to the NETs on the NETs' contribution and sensitivity.

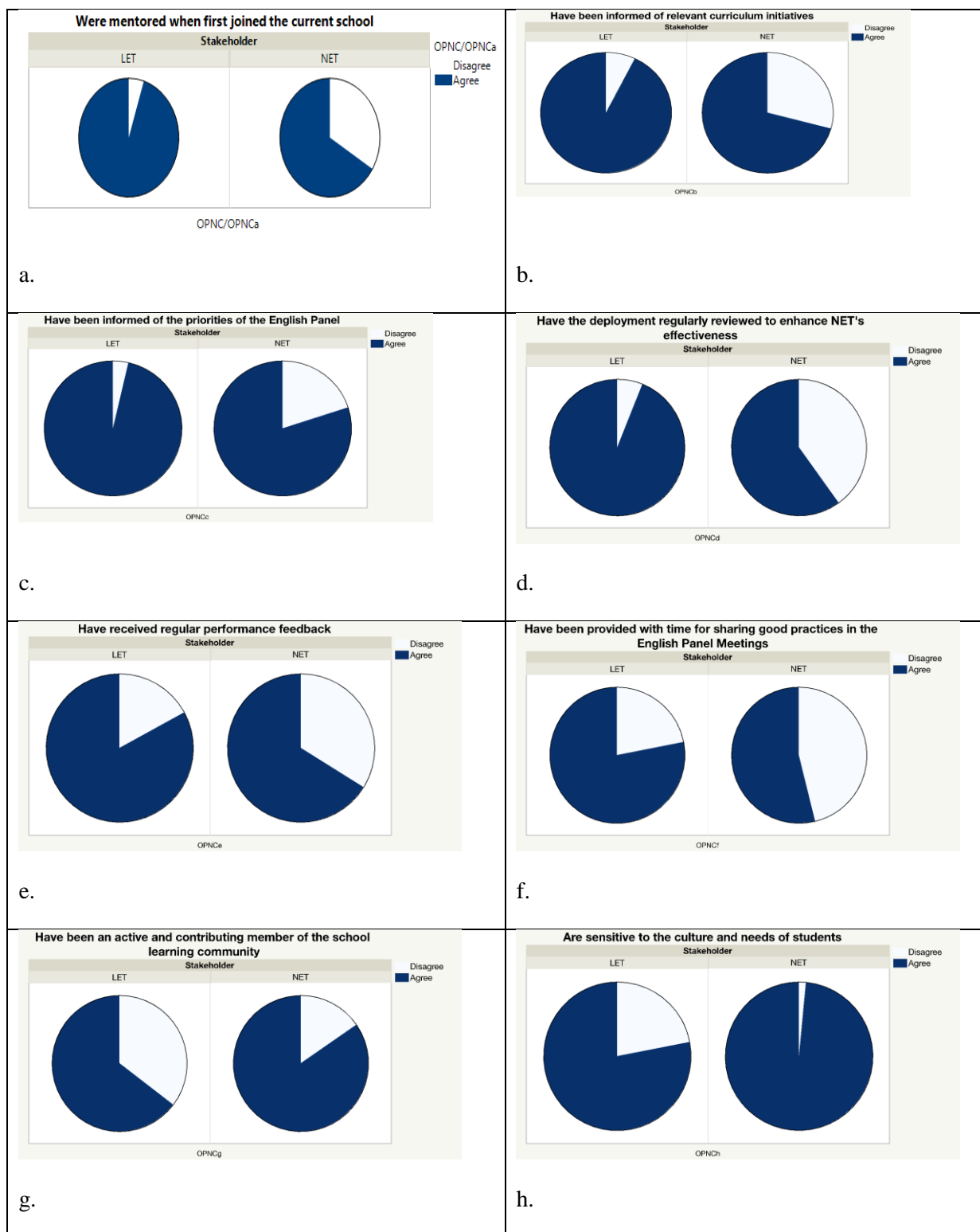
SF21: Both local English teachers and NETs agreed that NETs have contributed to the development and teaching of secondary elective modules, enriched the English environment of the school, and been made aware of the professional support provided by the NET Section.

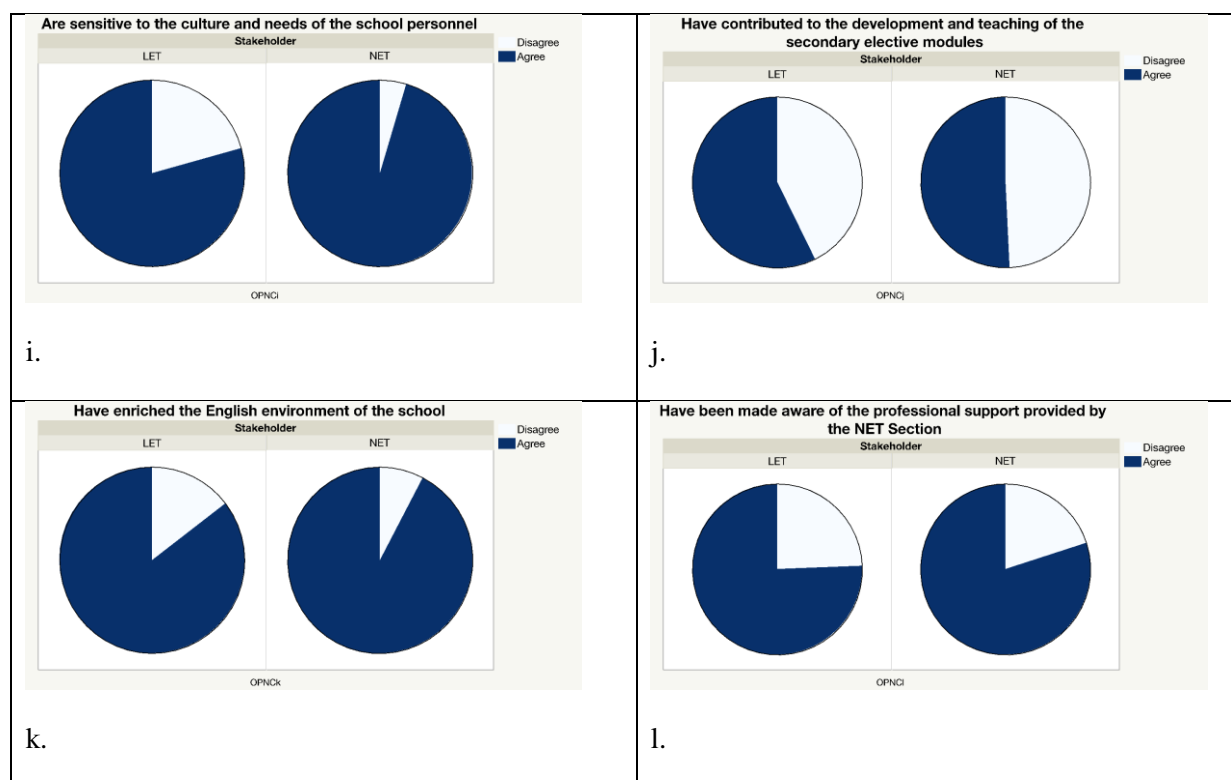
NETs and local English teachers were asked how far they agreed with statements relating to support given to the NET. The item stems are shown below. These are followed by the tabulated responses in Table 31, which are then presented in the form of pie charts in Figures 33a to l.

Question [OPNCa-l]	<p>[NET]: Considering your current school, to what extent do you agree that you...</p> <p>[LET]: To what extent do you agree that the NET in your school...</p>
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Table 31. Fisher's exact tests/Chi-square analyses of overall opinion of NET deployment

Stakeholder	Weighted Count		Percentage		Chi-square	p value
	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree		
Were mentored when they first joined the current school (a)						
NET	22.53	42.47	34.66	65.34	18.685	<.0001*
LET	5.78	79.27	6.79	93.21		
Have been informed of relevant curriculum initiatives (b)						
NET	19.36	45.64	29.79	70.21	13.327	0.0003*
LET	6.12	78.92	7.20	92.80		
Have been informed of the priorities of the English Panel (c)						
NET	15.07	49.93	23.18	76.82		0.0001*
LET	3.55	81.49	4.18	95.82		
Have the deployment regularly reviewed to enhance NET's effectiveness (d)						
NET	25.83	39.17	39.74	60.26	24.991	<.0001*
LET	5.37	79.67	6.32	93.68		
Have received regular performance feedback (e)						
NET	22.81	42.19	35.09	64.91	4.927	0.0264*
LET	16.20	68.84	19.05	80.94		
Have been provided with time for sharing good practices in the English Panel Meetings (f)						
NET	29.51	35.49	45.40	54.60	10.985	0.0009*
LET	17.12	67.92	20.13	79.87		
Have been an active and contributing member of the school learning community (g)						
NET	10.04	54.96	15.45	84.55	7.084	0.0078*
LET	29.57	55.47	34.78	65.22		
Are sensitive to the culture and needs of students (h)						
NET	1.88	63.12	2.90	97.10		<.0001*
LET	21.47	63.58	25.24	74.76		
Are sensitive to the culture and needs of the school personnel (i)						
NET	4.91	60.09	7.55	92.45		<.0001*
LET	20.04	65.00	23.57	76.43		
Have contributed to the development and teaching of the secondary elective modules (j)						
NET	33.25	31.75	51.16	48.84	0.573	0.4489
LET	38.21	46.84	44.93	55.07		
Have enriched the English environment of the school (k)						
NET	6.34	58.66	9.76	90.24	2.563	0.1094
LET	16.33	68.71	19.21	80.79		
Have been made aware of the professional support provided by the NET Section (l)						
NET	13.44	51.56	20.68	79.32	0.275	0.5999
LET	20.66	64.38	24.30	75.70		





Figures 33(a)-(l). Overall opinion of NET's deployment

A majority of both local English teachers and NETs reported agreement to the statements provided, with high levels of agreement that NETs had enriched the English environment of the school (Figure 33k) and had been made aware of the professional support provided by the NET Section (Figure 33l). There was also a degree of agreement between local English teachers and NETs regarding the NET's contribution to senior secondary electives (Figure 33j). For other items, there was a statistically significant discrepancy between the groups. The majority of NETs agreed to all the statements, but in comparison to local English teachers, they showed more disagreement about being mentored when they first joined the current school (Figure 33a), being informed about relevant curriculum initiatives (Figure 33b), being informed of the priorities of the English panel (Figure 33c), experiencing regular deployment review to enhance their effectiveness (Figure 33d), receiving regular performance feedback (Figure 33e), and being provided with time for sharing good practices in the English Panel Meetings (Figure 33f).

On the other hand, NETs were more likely to agree that they had been active and contributing members of the school learning community (Figure 33g), sensitive to the culture and needs of students (Figure 33h) and to the culture and needs of school personnel (Figure 33i). Looked at from a slightly different perspective, NETs were more likely than local English teachers to agree with statements which present them as active agents (Figure 33g, h & i) rather than passive recipients of support (Figure 33 (a) to (f)).

A possible explanation for these discrepancies may relate to different expectations arising from cultural differences. Specifically, when a NET arrives in a foreign land, they may experience different degrees of culture shock, particularly if it is their first visit to the country concerned. In the case of Western NETs experiencing Hong Kong for the first time, they may be exposed

to a lot of cultural practices they are unfamiliar with, compounded by language barriers and a lot of administrative procedures that have to be completed related to immigration status, accommodation, income tax, and so on. In addition, NETs new to Hong Kong, and perhaps traveling abroad for the first time, may have expectations regarding the degree of support that it is reasonable for them to expect which may not be appreciated by local residents. In other words, NETs may feel it is reasonable to expect a degree of support which local English teachers and school staff may consider unreasonable, or may not have considered necessary at all, since they have not had to provide the same support for newly recruited local English teachers in the past.

SF22: A majority of NETs, local English teachers, and School Principals thought that the ENET Scheme should be continued as it is and/or expanded in the future. However, nearly 15% of School Principals thought the Scheme should eventually be phased out, whereas only 1.14% of NETs and 4.16 % of local English teacher reported similar views.

NETs, local English teachers and School Principals were asked to choose a statement most closely corresponding to their view of the future of the ENET Scheme. The item stem is shown below, followed by the tabulated responses in Table 32 which are then presented in the form of pie charts in Figure 34.

Question	[NET]/[LET]/[SP]:
[OPND]	Which statement most closely represents your view regarding the future of the ENET Scheme in Hong Kong?

Table 32. Fisher's exact tests of the ENET Scheme's future in Hong Kong

	Weighted Count				Percentage				Chi-square	p value
	Continued and expanded	Continued as it currently is	Continued but scaled down	Phased out	Continued and expanded	Continued as it currently is	Continued but scaled down	Phased out		
NET	44.80	17.23	2.23	0.74	68.93	26.50	3.43	1.14		0.1037
LET	186.17	199.69	48.25	18.82	41.10	44.09	10.65	4.16		
SP	36.09	16.79	3.62	9.51	54.68	25.44	5.48	14.40		

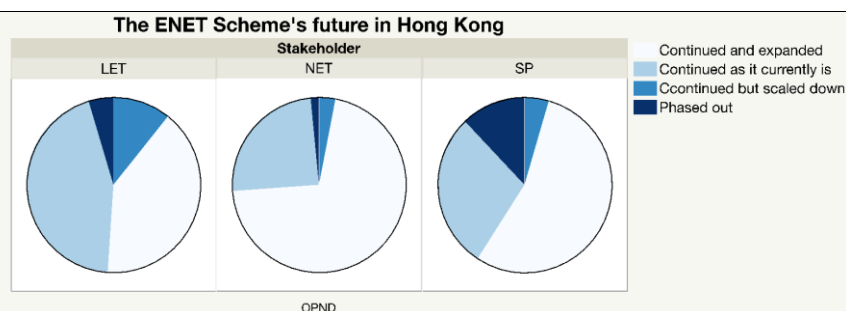


Figure 34. The ENET Scheme's future in Hong Kong

The majority of views expressed on the future of the ENET Scheme as reflected in these results are strongly in favour of continuing the Scheme as it is or expanding it. A minority of other respondents reported that they thought that the ENET Scheme should either be scaled down or phased out. Although the majority of School Principals (80%) are in favour of these two options, with nearly 55% favouring expansion and another 25% for continuation, a small number of Principals expressed rather different views. Approximately one in five Principals responding to the survey suggested that the Scheme be scaled down (5.48%) or phased out (14.40%). This contrasts markedly with views expressed by Principals interviewed in the case study schools. Here Principals were generally supportive of the Scheme, although views similar to the less positive views expressed in response to this item did emerge from two Principals. Perhaps a clue to the reasons for these less positive views on the future of the Scheme can be found in the view of one of these case study school Principals (see summary of case study #1 below) who felt that the Special Allowance paid to NETs should be removed – effectively scaling down the Scheme – in order to allow schools to make use of the money to support English learning in other ways.

The open-ended explanations to this question were categorised using MAXQDA in order to understand respondents' reasons for supporting the continuation or expansion of the Scheme as well as the criticisms of the minority who favoured scaling down or phasing out the Scheme.

Examples of the written comments of local English teachers are listed below, starting with the view of those who supported expanding the NET scheme, followed by a sample of views of

those who favoured maintaining the current scale of the Scheme.

The Scheme should be expanded

The ENET scheme should be expanded so as to maximise students' using and learning English.

Having more NETs may solve the problem of decreased proficiency in speaking among HK students.

If each school can have two NETs, I think the effectiveness will be enhanced as the two NETs can collaborate and support each other.

English drama takes a very important role in learning English language and foreign culture. It would be good if there is one NET teaching drama at school.

It is important for local students to learn English through the interaction with the ENET Scheme. But, the current scale of ENET Scheme is not sufficient.

The Scheme should be continued as it currently is

The scheme is currently working fine but [it] seems NET teacher(s) can contribute more to the school (e.g. preparing creative teaching materials). Also, there is no proof that more benefits will be gained by students if the scheme expands.

There is a need for the local students to be exposed to more native English. However, it is not easy to find more NETs if the scheme is to be expanded.

I believe that as long as the rationale in the Scheme is being practised in real situations, then the help is already good enough for a school and its teachers.

If the expansion of NET scheme means the replacement of one local teacher, the burden of local teachers will be much higher as a NET teacher usually cannot take the full load of a local teacher; and it is not the function of NET to take regular, exam-oriented classes. If the expansion is to supply one additional NET without replacing a local teacher headcount, then the scheme should be beneficial to both teachers and students.

It totally depends on the quality of the NETs you are hiring. If you can get GREAT NET teachers, then expand!! Schools and students can really benefit, even if they resist change, because outside people can often promote change.

As indicated above, many local English teachers supported expanding or keeping the NET Scheme at its current scale. Their views also include evidence of their interpretation of the role of the Scheme and of a NET within the Scheme. For example, local English teachers mentioned the role of the NET in enhancing students' English proficiency and maximising students' use of English, developing teaching materials and collaborating with local English teachers.

Even though some local English teachers suggested keeping the Scheme as it is, this does not mean that they saw no benefit in expansion. For example, one of them worried that there would not be enough NETs to support the expansion, implying that if there were more qualified candidates, he or she might endorse expansion. A few respondents also stated their preference in conditional terms. One participant said that if the school can get good NETs, then the scheme should be expanded. Another said that if the expansion did not entail replacing local English teachers, it should be expanded. In short, local English teachers' preferences for the continuation or expansion of the current scheme were often contingent on other factors.

As indicated in Figure 34 above, a small minority of survey respondents felt that the Scheme should be scaled down or phased out. Although these views are not representative of local English teachers or School Principals generally, it is worth exploring the reasons such views were held. MAXQDA was therefore employed to explore respondents' reasons for their views. As shown in Tables 33 and 34, the most frequent explanation critical respondents offered was related to the quality of NETs. There were also concerns about the allocation of resources to NETs, with some NETs saying that resources would be better utilised on local English teachers. Figures 35 and 36 indicate the relationships between the various reasons given by local English teachers for scaling down and phasing out the ENET Scheme respectively. For example, in Figure 35, reasons related to NET quality issues were associated with improper use of NETs and NETs being over-paid.

In the following textual analysis, only responses from participants who wanted to scale down or phase out the scheme are analysed. It is worth noting that 83.3% of these participants are local English teachers, and 13.1% are school principals.

Scaling down

Table 33. Recurring reasons for scaling down the ENET Scheme

Code	Frequency	% Coded segments
NET quality issues	16	28.07
NET over-paid but under-worked	10	17.54
Improper use of NET	8	14.04
More resources for local teachers	5	8.77
Ineffective or partially effective	4	7.02
Allows school flexibility	3	5.26
NET unfamiliar with local	3	5.26
NET-local collaboration issues	2	3.51
Need top-down	1	1.75
NET needs engagement	1	1.75
Fails to address learners' diversity	1	1.75

NET functions by Internet and social media	1	1.75
Class size	1	1.75
Cannot help low achievers	1	1.75

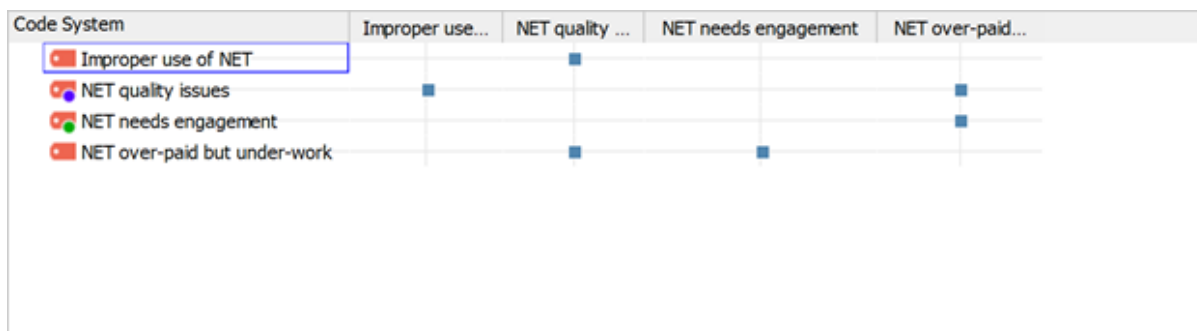


Figure 35. Relationships between reasons for scaling down the ENET Scheme

The following are direct quotations from local English teachers reflecting the context of some of these major themes.

Direct quotations of major themes

Local English teachers' concerns regarding NET quality

The aims are justified but the implementation relies heavily on NETs' quality and commitment. Less privileged schools like ours find it impossible to hire ideal NETs. It is not individual schools' duties to recruit them but the authorities' so that the officials can better ensure the standard of the NETs. They will then be assigned to schools so that less privileged schools can work with more proficient and motivated NETs.

Realistically, not many NETs coming to HK are passionate enough to take up the noble mission of cultivating an English-rich language environment.

A lot of NETs can't really help our students as they are not willing to work overtime. To refine the scheme, more screening of NETs is needed and some should be blacklisted!

It is of great difficulty to collaborate with the NET. The possibility of hiring a great NET who can enhance and enrich English is low. From our experience, the NETs showed a high rate of absence and did not meet deadlines and the requirement of the curriculum. Students' English level might have been hindered by their high absence rate and low commitment in education. They also in turn, increased the workload of the local teachers in terms of job allocation.

Local English teachers' concerns regarding NET workload and deployment

The previous NET was always on sick leave (more than 20 days in the first year and more than 40 days in the second year) and the colleagues of the English Panel needed to take up substitution duties.

Some NETs refuse to carry out fundamental teaching duties such as marking of writing and teaching of grammar, which is unfair to the workload of the local teachers.

They do not usually share the same amount of workload as local teachers and they need extra grooming and assistance in school admin, the use of computer, discipline and sometimes creates a little burden to local teachers.

More and more NETs are being used as local teachers or even as class teachers so that their strengths cannot be maximised. I do agree that NETs should only be helping with the English rich environment, English activities, Junior form phonics lesson and Senior form Speaking advisor.

The school expects too much from the NET and in real situation, they don't really provide what the school needs like conducting English-related activities.

Local English teachers' concerns about effective use of funds on NETs

The administrative process is too costly for the school. Time-consuming indeed - but no guarantee to employ a dedicated NET.

Deploying a NET to every school does not help much in improving the language environment of a school. It may be more effective to pool the money together to arrange better program for students. (e.g. immersion program, exchange program, e-Learning platform, etc.)

More resources are needed to employ local teachers to reduce the workload of individuals so that there will be room for improving teaching practice.

It makes more sense to upgrade local teachers' English proficiency, for the reason of sustainability.

Phase out

Table 34. Recurring reasons for phasing out the ENET Scheme

Code	Frequency	% Coded segments
NET quality issues	11	35.48

Waste of resources	8	25.81
More resources to local teachers	4	12.90
Cultural difference	3	9.68
NET over-paid but under-work	2	6.45
Local teachers can out-perform the NET	2	6.45
NET duties replaced by technology	1	3.23

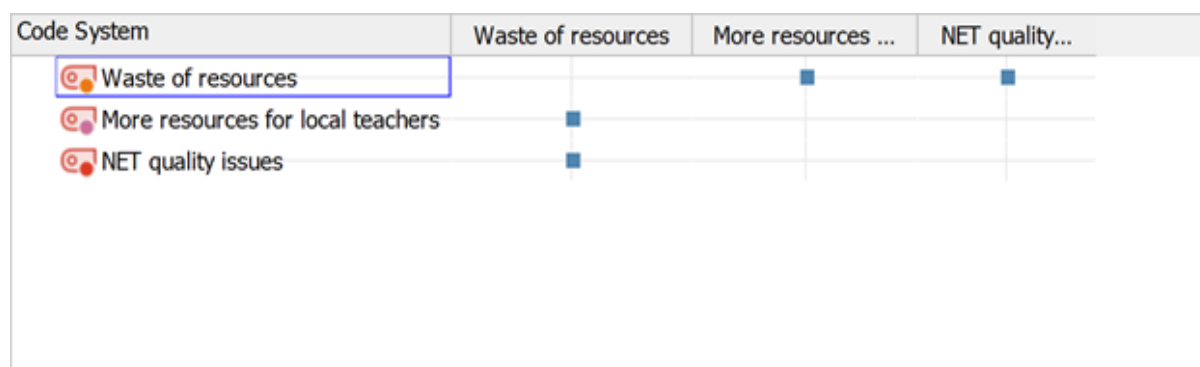


Figure 36. Relationship between reasons for phasing out ENET Scheme

As noted above, the view represented in these quotations from responses to the online survey items (see Table 34) those of a small minority. Nevertheless, it is instructive to note the disappointment which results from a poor NET experience, although such experience clearly encourages a response which is subjective and overgeneralised to the whole population of NETs.

It is important to point out also that some of the views expressed here present a somewhat one-sided view. An example of this are those views related to NET recruitment and quality. Some schools undertake recruitment independently of the centralised service provided by the NET Administration Team and would therefore need to take full responsibility for determining the suitability of a NET and checking references before hiring them. However, even schools relying on the centralised service are responsible for checking on the suitability of the applicants the system proposes for them by seeking character and employment references and testimonials.

SF23: Overall, a majority of local English teachers, NETs and School Principals agreed that the ENET Scheme is viewed favourably by local English teachers and teachers of non-English subjects at the school, and by the general public.

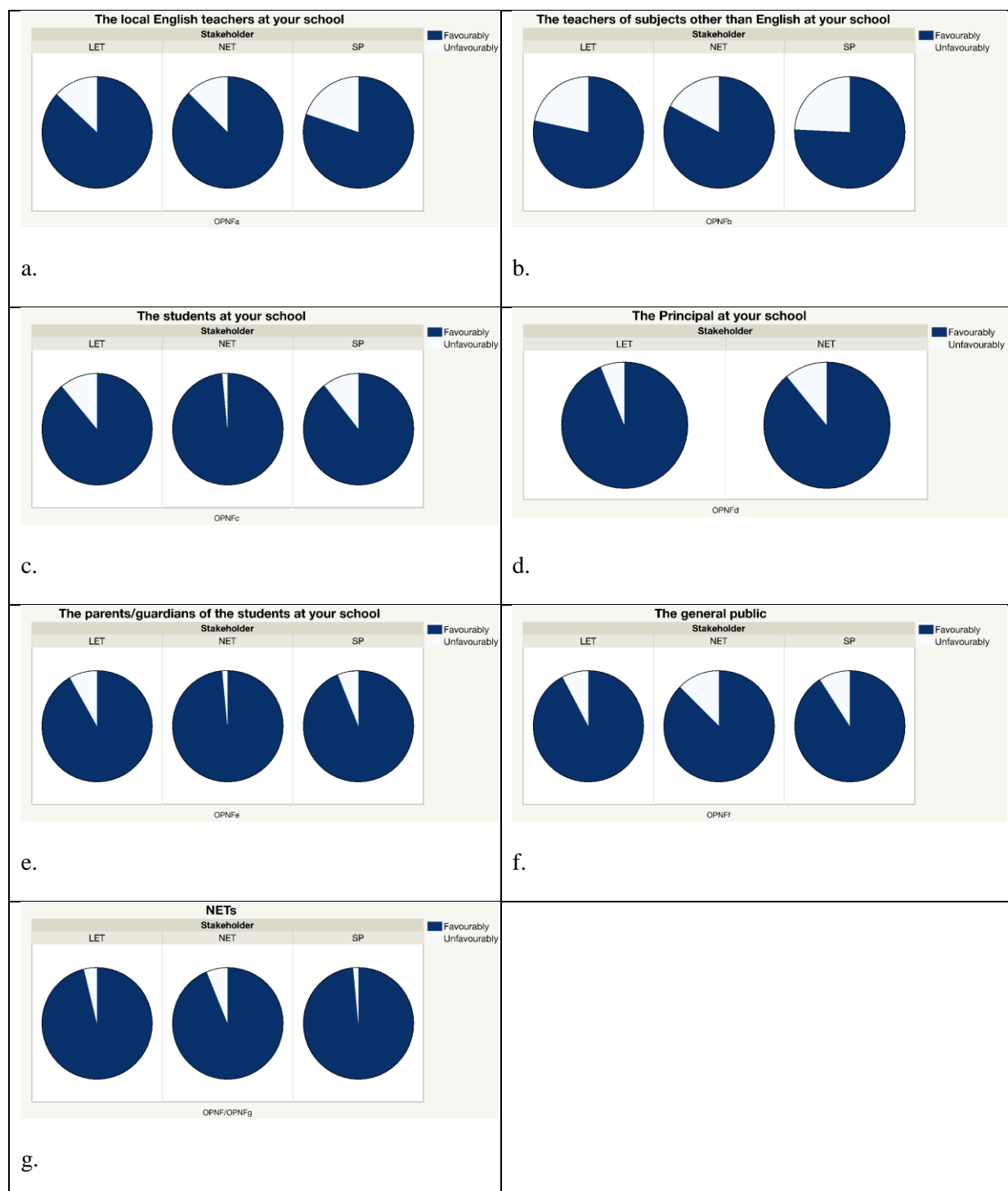
NETs, local English teachers and School Principals were asked how favourably they thought the ENET Scheme was viewed by different stakeholders. The item stem is shown below, followed by tabulated responses in Table 35, which are then presented in the form of pie charts in Figures 37a to g.

Question	[NET]/[LET]/[SP]:
[OPNFa-g]	In your opinion, how favourably is the ENET Scheme seen by

Table 35. Fisher's exact tests/Chi-square analyses of how favourable the ENET Scheme is viewed

Stakeholder	Weighted Count		Percentage		Chi-square	p value
	Unfavourably	Favourably	Unfavourably	Favourably		
The local English teachers at your school						
NET	8.47	55.37	13.26	86.74	2.952	0.2285
LET	62.62	390.31	13.83	86.17		
SP	14.31	51.69	21.68	78.31		
The teachers of subjects other than English at your school						
NET	10.48	53.36	16.41	83.59	1.609	0.4474
LET	99.41	353.52	21.95	78.05		
SP	16.70	49.21	25.44	74.56		
The students at your school						
NET	0.65	63.19	1.02	98.98		<.0001*
LET	54.70	398.23	12.08	87.92		
SP	8.67	57.34	13.12	86.88		
*The Principal at your school						
NET	7.31	56.53	11.46	88.54		<.0001*
LET	31.59	421.34	6.97	93.03		
SP						
The parents/guardians of the students at your school						
NET	0.65	63.19	1.02	98.98		0.0003*
LET	36.93	416.99	8.15	91.85		
SP	4.36	61.63	6.61	93.39		
The general public						
NET	7.91	55.93	12.39	87.61	1.398	0.4971
LET	36.18	416.75	7.99	92.01		
SP	5.45	60.55	8.26	91.74		
NETs						
NET	3.30	60.54	5.17	94.83		<.0001*
LET	18.16	434.77	4.01	95.99		
SP	0.58	65.42	0.88	99.12		

* School Principals are not asked to respond to this item.



Figures 37(a)-(g). How favourably the ENET Scheme is viewed

The results for this item suggest that the ENET Scheme is perceived to be very well regarded in the school community and outside it. Positive perceptions of the favourable regard in which the Scheme is held are expressed by majorities ranging from 74 to 99%.

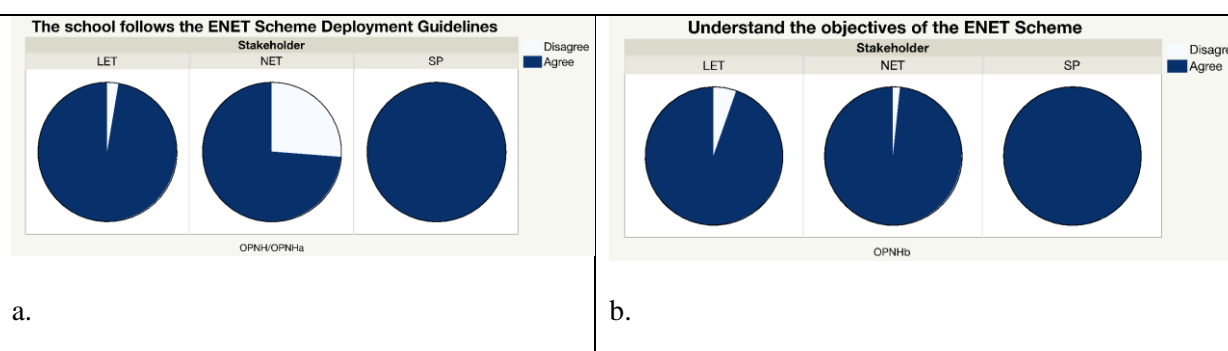
SF24: All School Principals firmly believed that the school followed the NET Deployment Guidelines and that they fully understood the objectives of the ENET Scheme. In contrast, NETs were more likely to disagree that the school followed the guidelines and local English teachers were slightly more likely to disagree that their schools understood the ENET Scheme objectives.

NETs, local English teachers and School Principals were asked to what extent they agreed that their schools followed the NET Deployment Guidelines and understood the objectives of the Scheme. The item stem is shown below, followed by tabulated responses in Table 36, which are then presented in the form of pie charts in Figures 38 a & b.

Question	[NET]/[LET]/[SP]:
[OPNH-a-b]	To what extent do you agree that...

Table 36. Fisher's exact tests of the administration of the ENET Scheme policies

Stakeholder	Weighted Count		Percentage		Chi-square	<i>p value</i>
	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree		
The school follows the ENET Scheme Deployment Guidelines						
NET	18.79	42.36	30.73	69.27		<.0001*
LET	7.43	299.46	2.42	97.58		
SP	0.00	66	0.00	100		
Understand the objectives of the ENET Scheme						
NET	0.65	57.43	1.13	98.87		0.0086*
LET	20.10	357.55	5.32	94.68		
SP	0.00	66	0.00	100		



Figures 38(a)-(b). The administration of the ENET Scheme policies

More than 30% of NETs felt that their school was not following the NET Deployment Guidelines, while all School Principals and an overwhelming majority of local English teachers

felt that the guidelines were being followed. This discrepancy is large and significant and indicates differences in the ways NETs, on the one hand, and School Principals and local English teachers on the other, interpret the NET Deployment Guidelines. In light of the finding, it is perhaps surprising that NETs interviewed in the case studies did not raise concerns about adherence to the guidelines. On the other hand, one school (see summary description for CS#6 below) was felt by the evaluation team to have interpreted the guidelines in a way that did not maximise the potential contribution of a well-qualified and experienced NET.

The only direct comment about the guidelines came from NETs participating in the non-school-based focus group. They raised the issue of the guidelines, but not in relation to adherence or non-adherence. They felt that the guidelines needed to be more comprehensive, but did not suggest that schools were not following the existing guidelines.

SF25: Nearly 95% of NETs disagreed that ENET Scheme funds might be better spent in other ways. But nearly half of School Principals (48.05%) as well as 44% of local English teachers agreed that ENET Scheme funds may be spent on alternative initiatives.

NETs, local English teachers and School Principals were asked whether they agreed that ENET Scheme funds might be better spent elsewhere. The item stem is shown below, followed by tabulated responses in Table 37, which are then presented in the form of pie charts in Figure 39.

Question	[NET]/[LET]/[SP]:
[OPNI]	In relation to your school, do you agree that the ENET Scheme funds might be better spent in other ways?

Table 37. Fisher's exact tests of if the ENET Scheme funds might be better spent in other ways

Stakeholder	Weighted Count		Percentage		Chi-square	p value
	No	Yes	No	Yes		
NET	38.05	2.03	94.93	5.07		
LET	98.12	77.70	55.81	44.19		
SP	20.09	18.58	51.95	48.05		

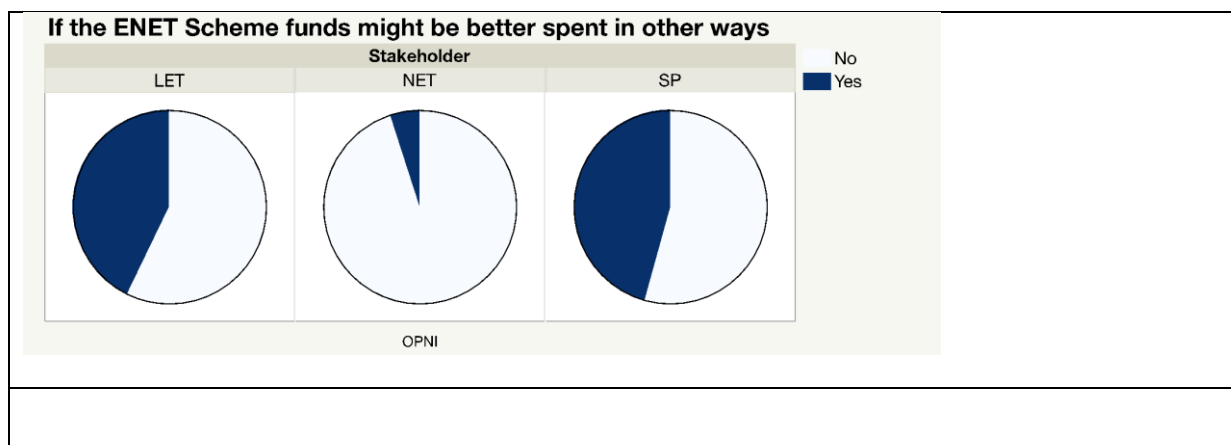


Figure 39. If the ENET Scheme funds might be better spent in other ways

Respondents who agreed that ENET Scheme funds might be better spent elsewhere were asked to respond to an open-ended survey item to explain their reasons. The responses to this open-ended item were analysed and three broad categories were identified - that the funds might be better spent on hiring more local English teachers, supporting student programmes and activities and enhancing the quality of NETs.

Quotations illustrating these three views are reproduced here:

Resources should be given to local English teachers

The local English teachers have to teach 3 full classes, which makes it impossible to prepare /refine materials oriented to learners' need.

Funds can be used to buy more English resources and employ more local English teachers.

The ENET Scheme funds should be used to employ more local English teachers, so the school can have more remedial classes.

The funds might be better spent on hiring other local English teachers who could share other administrative duties.

Their salary plus fringe benefit is too high, it is even higher than the salary of the vice principal of the school! If the amount is encashed, the school can deploy 2 to 3 GM English teachers.

Resources should be given to student programmes and activities

ECA like drama instructors and debate instructors.

More activities for students can be organised.

It could be spent on custom-made, relevant programmes aimed at specific groups of

students.

Provide in-class activities.

Help students to enhance their motivation.

I would suggest organising more excursions or visits for students which could help students broaden their horizons to the outside English world.

Improve NET's qualifications

[The Scheme] should make sure that the quality of all the NETs is up to the standard.

More 'experienced' NETs might not be more effective teachers. The funds should be wisely spent on proactive and effective NETs. To raise their teaching effectiveness, some mechanisms in granting their gratuity and allowances should be introduced and monitored.

[The Scheme should] be more flexible for our school to recruit a NET teacher.

Enhance the English learning environment. NET should conduct more English activities instead of just socialising with students and teachers.

The written responses to the open-ended survey item were further analysed to identify emerging themes, using the Text Explorer function of the JMP software (see Tables 38 & 39). This yielded two most important themes used by local English teachers based upon the frequency of recurring phrases. The most dominant theme is 'employ more local teachers' and the second one is 'reduce class size.' These could be conceptualised as two sides of the same coin, meaning that reducing class size necessitates employing more teachers in order to achieve a lower teacher-learner ratio. This is understandable because local English teachers perceive that NETs compete with them for resources, and that the money could be better invested in local English teachers themselves.

Table 38. Recurring phrases from teachers

Phrase	Frequency
local English teachers	56
employ more local	6
class size	5
employing more local	4
local English teacher	4

reduce the workload	4
employ more local English	3
employ more local teachers	3
employing more local English	3
class size smaller	3
teachers to help	3
ENET Scheme	3
English activities	3
help students	3
learning environment	3
size smaller	3

Table 39. Repeated phrases from school principals

Phrase	Frequency
English teachers	27
local English	26
local teachers	20
local English teachers	19
English teacher	8
employ more local	7
local English teacher	7
class size	5
NET teacher	5
employ more local English	4
employing more local	4
reduce the workload	4

English activities	4
one NET	4
employ more local teachers	3

School principals appear to agree with the opinions of local English teachers. Using JMP Text Explorer, employing more local English teachers and reducing class size are again prominent themes in answers to this question.

SF26: Compared to NETs, local English teachers were more likely to agree that the English Panel had fostered collaboration between local English teachers and NETs to support English education. Also, they agreed that the English department led the facilitation of communication between NETs and the school. In contrast, the majority of NETs (53.69%) reported that the English department fails to facilitate communication between the NET and parents.

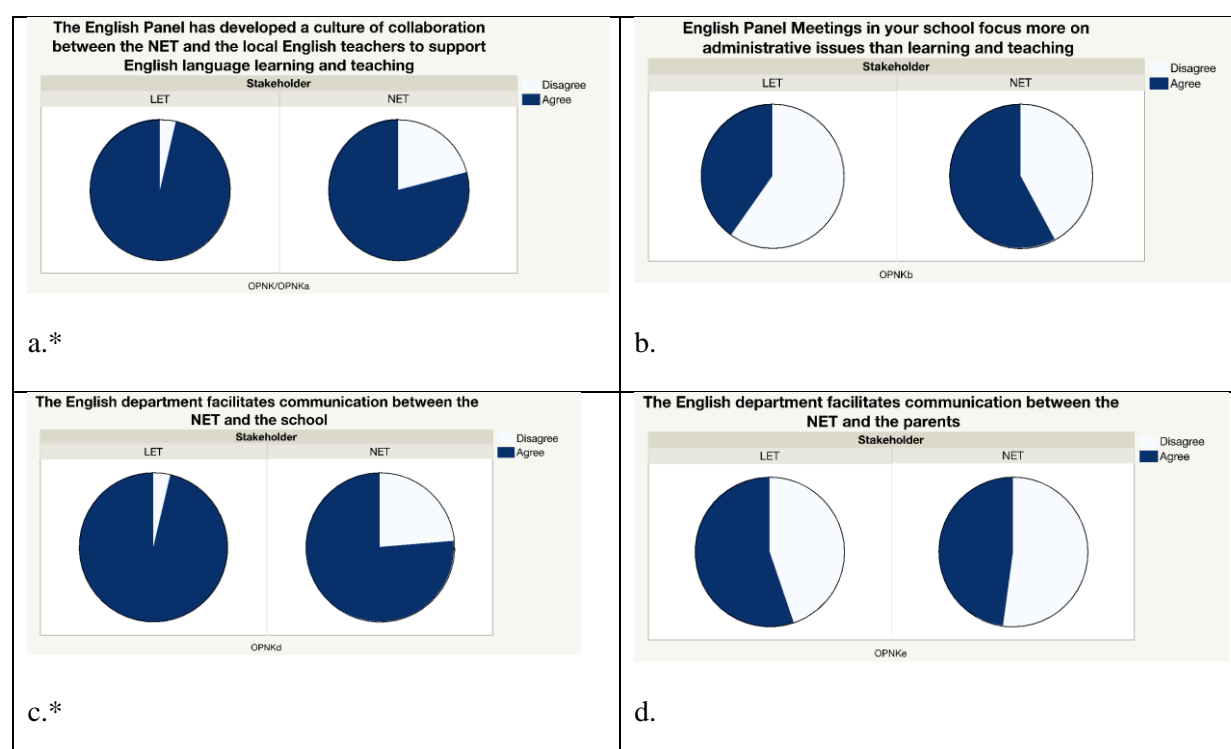
NETs, local English teachers and School Principals were asked whether they agreed with statements relating to the role of the English Panel in supporting collaboration and communication between NETs and local English teachers. The item stem is shown below, followed by tabulated responses in Table 40, which are then presented in the form of pie charts in Figures 40a to d.

Question	[[NET]/[LET]/[SP]:
[OPNKa-e]	To what extent do you agree with the following?

Table 40. Fisher's exact tests/Chi-square analyses of the function of the NET Scheme-related parties

Stakeholder	Weighted Count		Percentage		Chi-square	p value
	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree		
The English Panel has developed a culture of collaboration between the NET and the local English teachers to support English language learning and teaching (a)						
NET	14.15	48.29	22.66	77.34	8.578	0.0034*
LET	5.14	78.89	6.12	93.88		

English Panel Meetings in your school focus more on administrative issues than learning and teaching (b)						
NET	25.08	31.44	44.37	55.63	2.434	0.1187
LET	49.10	35.94	57.74	42.26		
The English department facilitates communication between the NET and the school (c)						
NET	15.61	43.95	26.22	73.78		<.0001*
LET	3.03	80.69	3.62	96.38		
The English department facilitates communication between the NET and the parents (d)						
NET	25.55	22.03	53.69	46.31	1.245	0.2644
LET	31.07	40.72	43.28	56.72		



Figures 40(a)-(d). The function of NET Scheme related parties

The results indicate a significant difference between the perceptions of NETs and local English teachers regarding the extent to which a culture of collaboration has been established in the English Panel (Figure 40a) and the extent to which communication between the NET and the school is facilitated by the English Panel (Figure 40c). In addition, the results suggest that contact between the NET and parents is not facilitated to the degree that might be expected. These findings are worth explored further in the analysis of the qualitative data, in particular in relation to Research Question 5.

Analysis of written responses to the open-ended survey item ‘What has hindered the impact of the ENET Scheme and the NET’s work at your school?’ sheds further light on this difference in perceptions.

Responses to the question suggest that cultural differences have an impact on collaboration between local English teachers and NETs. Content analysis using JMP Text Explorer indicates that ‘cultural differences’ was the most frequently repeated phrase in local English teachers’ responses. Additionally, the IBM SPSS Modeler concept map (Figure 41) shows the strength of the link between ‘cultural differences’ and ‘education system.’ Note that the thickness of the line indicates the strength of the relationship between concepts. The thicker the line is, the stronger the relationship is between the two concepts. These findings might explain why local English teachers view themselves as more cooperative than NETs, as NETs are less familiar with the Hong Kong education system and school policy.

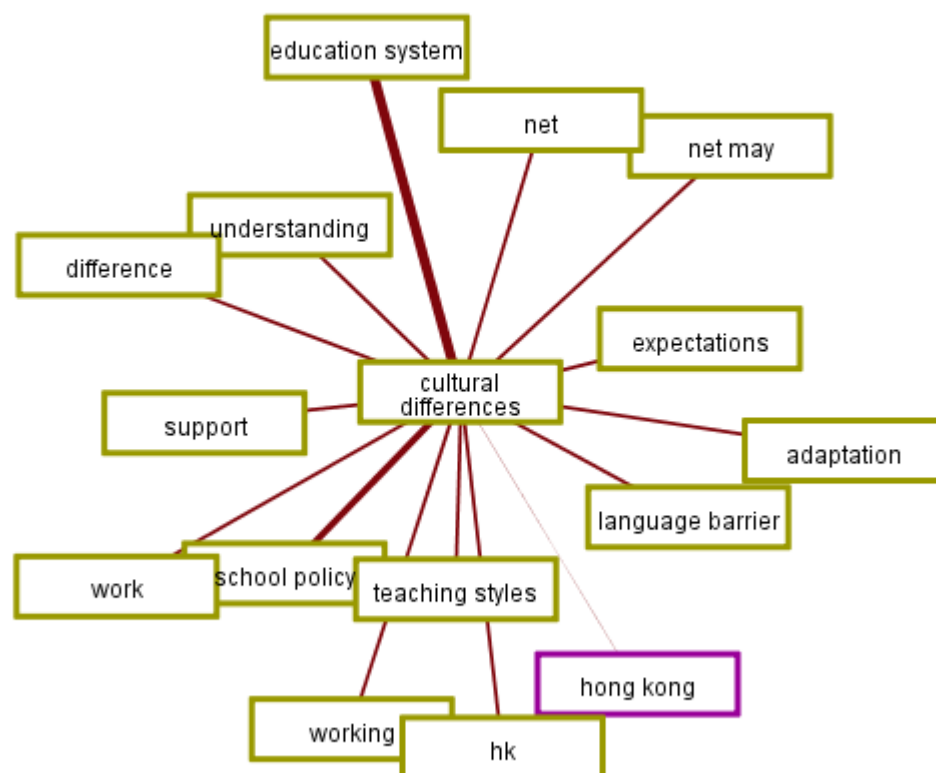


Figure 41. Concept map of 'What has hindered the impact of the ENET Scheme'

The following direct quotations indicate the context of the issues and the phrase count results are tabulated in Table 41 below:

I do think cultural differences play a role, and the NETs are not necessarily familiar with the local system or the local teachers, so it takes time for both parties to be used to each other, which might bring up conflict. Race is also an underlying problem.

Cultural differences and the NET adapting to the local education system and their view of themselves as superior than local English teachers

Cultural differences - sometimes. Also, as they may only focus on English teaching, sometimes, they may not understand the rationale of some school policies.

Table 41. Repeated responses from local English teachers

Phrase	Frequency
Cultural differences	73
Education system	72
Local education	67
Local education system	65
Adapting to the local	45
NET adapting	42
Local teachers	19
Cultural difference	14
English teachers	8
Adapt to the local	6
Public exam	6
Attitude of the NET	5
Exam system	5

SF27: Nearly half of all local English teachers reported that their schools had received school-based support from the NET Section and a majority (62.47%) of these teachers perceived the support they had received to be effective.

NETs and local English teachers were asked whether their school had received school-based support from the NET Section and, for those who indicated their schools had, how effective they thought it was. The item stems are shown below, followed by tabulated responses in Table 42 which are then presented in the form of pie charts in Figure 42.

Question	[NET]/[LET]:
[SPRTA]	[SPRTA]: Please indicate below whether your school has received school-based support from the NET Section:
-	
[SPRTB]	[SPRTB]: Generally, how effective do you think the school-based support provide by the NET Section has been in improving the learning and teaching of English at your school?

Table 42. Chi-square analyses of the effectiveness of school-based support from the NET Section

Stakeholder	Weighted Count		Percentage		Chi-square	<i>p value</i>
	No	Yes	No	Yes		
Received school-based support from the NET Section (a)						
NET	19.27	17.49	52.42	47.58	0.007	0.9339
LET	102.01	89.87	53.16	46.84		
	Not effective	Effective	Not effective	Effective		
Effectiveness of the school-based support provided by the NET Section (b)						
NET	8.87	8.62	50.70	49.30	1.061	0.3031
LET	33.73	56.14	37.53	62.47		

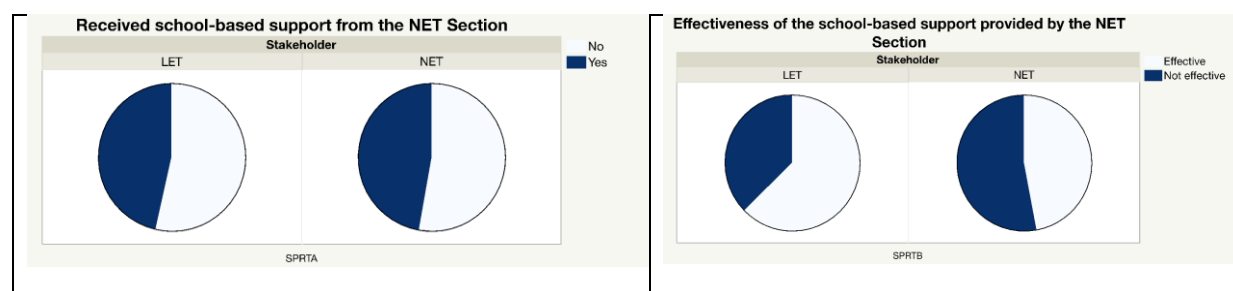


Figure 42. Extent and effectiveness of NET Section support

School-based support services (SBSS) have been offered since the 2013/14 school year. Schools are invited to apply for support in an area of need. If the application is accepted, schools receive customised support from the RNCT. The results suggest that nearly half of the schools surveyed had taken advantage of the school-based support services in one form or another offered by the NET Section, and a majority of local English teachers who had taken part in these SBSS activities found them effective. The less positive response from NETs who were asked the same question may need to be treated with some caution as our case study investigation found that in the case study school which was taking advantage of SBSS, the NET was not involved as a participant in the SBSS sessions. This suggests that NETs may not be well-placed to comment on the effectiveness of SBSS.

3.3.5 Student data analysis

There are 6,523 valid student surveys. Results of the analysis of selected items are shown below.

SF28: Students who had been taught by a NET in their regular English classes perceived themselves as participating more actively in English lessons, being more motivated to speak English, and feeling more comfortable when doing so, than students who had not been taught by a NET.

Students were asked the question ‘Do you have a Native-speaking English Teacher (NET) teaching you in your English classes in this school year (2015/16)?’ 3406 students (64%) answered ‘yes’ and 1913 (35.96%) answered ‘No’. Hence, the following analysis aims to examine whether there is a significant difference in the attitude towards learning English between students who were taught by a NET at the time of responding and those who were not. The tabulated responses are shown in Table 43, which are then presented in the form of pie charts in Figure 43.

Table 43. Chi-square analyses of student attitudes towards learning English by having a NET

Stakeholder	Weighted Count		Percentage		Chi-square	<i>p value</i>
	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree		
English is important for me to learn (a)						
No NET	100.40	1849.57	5.15	94.85	0.782	0.3785
NET	148.33	3072.34	4.61	95.40		
I am satisfied with my English proficiency (b)						
No NET	1014.15	910.26	52.70	47.30	29.24	<.0001*
NET	1414.10	1736.44	44.88	55.12		
I enjoy my English classes (c)						
No NET	571.60	1317.62	30.26	69.74	26.14	<.0001*
NET	731.80	2357.08	23.69	76.31		



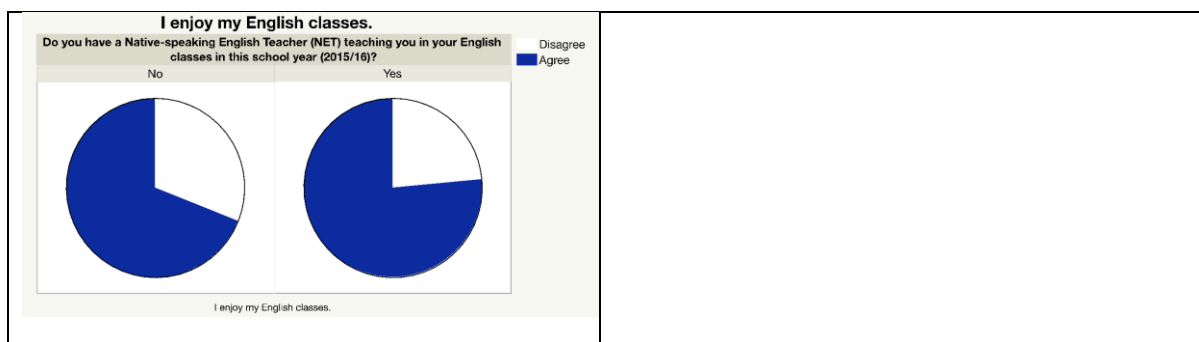


Figure 43. Student attitudes towards learning English by having a NET

As indicated by Chi-square analysis (Table 43) and the pie charts (Figure 43), although students who are taught by a NET and those who are not both regard learning English as equally important, the results suggest that students who are taught by a NET tend to be more satisfied with their English proficiency and also enjoy their English classes more.

These findings are corroborated by the results of other student survey items, which are reported below with a more finely tuned categorisation of students by reference to their experience of being taught by a NET in their English classes. To achieve this categorisation, students were asked, with reference to their English lessons, to indicate whether they were currently taught by a NET (i.e. in the 2015/2016 school year) or had been taught by a NET in the previous (2014/2015) school year, or in previous years. This enabled item responses to be analysed in four categories:

- Students who had been taught by a NET in the 2014/2015 school year in their English lessons (**NET14/15**)
- Students who were currently being taught by a NET in their English lessons (**NET 15/16**)
- Students who had been taught by a NET in their English lessons in the current and previous school years (**NET 14-16**)
- Students who were not currently, and had not previously been taught by a NET in their English lessons (**No NET**)

Table 44. Chi-square/Fisher's exact test of student perceptions of English by NET's presence (have NET in 2014/2015, have NET in 2015/2016, have NET from 2014 to 2016, have had no NET at all).

Stakeholder	Weighted Count		Percentage		Chi-square	<i>p value</i>
	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree		
English is important for me to learn (a)						
NET 14/15	93.98	1982.66	4.53	95.47	13.97	0.0029*
NET 15/16	23.90	315.99	7.03	92.97		
NET 14-16	124.43	2756.35	4.32	95.68		
No NET	55.28	725.94	7.08	92.92		
I am satisfied with my English proficiency (b)						
NET 14/15	920.89	1121.79	45.08	54.92	32.04	<.0001*
NET 15/16	169.04	164.55	50.67	49.33		

NET 14-16	1245.05	1571.89	44.20	55.80		
No NET	427.08	350.53	54.92	45.08		
I enjoy my English classes (c)						
NET 14/15	498.43	1516.34	24.74	75.26	26.82	<.0001*
NET 15/16	88.84	236.91	27.27	72.73		
NET 14-16	642.96	2120.17	23.27	76.73		
No NET	245.38	514.06	32.31	67.69		

The more finely categorised results further support the impact of NET exposure on students' attitudes towards having a NET, with significant differences shown in the perceptions of those who were currently or who had been taught by a NET previously in their English lessons compared to those with no experience of being taught by a NET in their English lessons. No-NET students have slightly lower perceptions of the importance of English, and significantly lower perceptions of their own English proficiency and of the enjoyment they gain from English classes.

Students were asked to indicate their level of agreement to statements relating to co-curricular activities organised by the NET, and whether they agreed that materials used by the NET were interesting and relevant to their daily lives. Students taught by a NET currently and/or in previous years showed significantly higher levels of agreement than students who had not been taught by a NET in their English lessons. These results are shown in Table 45 below.

Table 45. Chi-square analyses of student attitudes towards NET activities, materials and approaches

Stakeholder	Weighted Count		Percentage		Chi-square	p value
	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree		
The NET organises co-curricular activities (a)						
NET 14/15	301.05	1583.68	15.97	84.03	72.26	<.0001*
NET 15/16	56.47	247.17	18.60	81.40		
NET 14-16	354.62	2334.84	13.19	86.81		
No NET	157.14	418.49	27.30	72.70		
The NET uses interesting materials (b)						
NET 14/15	442.94	1449.74	23.40	76.60	25.87	<.0001*
NET 15/16	73.01	232.81	23.87	76.13		
NET 14-16	656.09	2072.09	24.05	75.95		
No NET	160.37	306.35	34.36	65.64		
The NET relates the learning materials to my daily life experiences (c)						
NET 14/15	501.68	1327.79	27.42	72.58	28.44	<.0001*
NET 15/16	92.99	209.06	30.79	69.21		
NET 14-16	665.73	2056.44	24.46	75.54		
No NET	167.86	305.82	35.44	64.56		

Students were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed with statements relating to the value they placed on English learning when taught by local English teachers. They were asked

to indicate their level of agreement with similar statements relating to being taught by a NET. Results are shown in Table 46 below.

Table 46. Chi-square analyses of student attitudes towards English taught by local English teachers and NETs

Stakeholder	Weighted Count		Percentage		Chi-square	<i>p value</i>
	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree		
What I learn about English from the local English teachers is valuable to me (a)						
NET 14/15	292.24	1709.70	14.60	85.40	11.62	0.0088*
NET 15/16	54.50	279.87	16.30	83.70		
NET 14-16	397.83	2401.56	14.21	85.79		
No NET	142.24	604.17	19.06	80.94		
I value learning English from the NET in an English environment (b)						
NET 14/15	350.84	1632.81	17.69	82.31	3.45	0.3269
NET 15/16	65.74	257.05	20.37	79.63		
NET 14-16	463.11	2312.41	16.69	83.31		
No NET	118.09	526.41	18.32	81.68		
I value learning English from the NET by being immersed in an authentic English cultural context (c)						
NET 14/15	387.05	1548.73	19.99	80.01	1.22	0.7490
NET 15/16	67.25	245.72	21.49	78.51		
NET 14-16	528.50	2227.17	19.18	80.82		
No NET	117.04	484.72	19.45	80.55		

There were no significant differences between the perceptions of students who had been or had not been taught by a NET. There was a very high level of agreement to all three items ranging from 78 to 85% agreement, indicating that students generally were motivated to learn English.

Students were asked to respond to statements relating to their active participation in class, their level of motivation to speak English with a NET or a local English teacher and their comfort levels when speaking English with a NET or with a local English teacher. The results of these items are tabulated below in Table 47 and then presented in the form of pie charts in Figure 44.

Table 47. Chi-square analyses of student attitudes towards class participation and speaking English to local English teachers and NETs

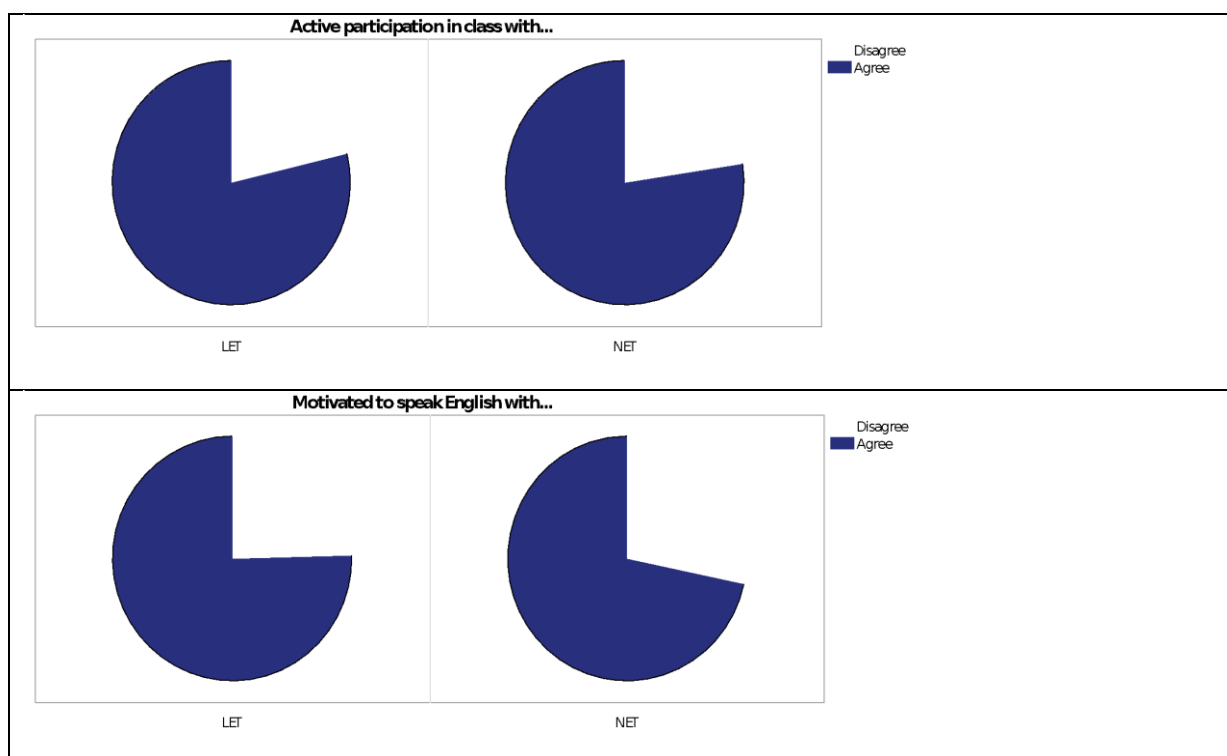
When the local English teacher is teaching, I participate actively in class (d)						
NET 14/15	406.32	1599.62	20.26	79.74	20.00	0.0002*
NET 15/16	72.52	254.55	22.17	77.83		
NET 14-16	530.75	2288.34	18.83	81.17		
No NET	193.78	547.43	26.14	73.86		
When the NET is teaching, I participate actively in class (e)						
NET 14/15	431.66	1505.76	22.28	77.72	18.72	0.0003*
NET 15/16	85.04	233.61	26.69	73.31		
NET 14-16	577.83	2199.36	20.81	79.19		

No NET	144.41	359.99	28.63	71.37		
I am motivated to speak English with the NET (f)						
NET 14/15	570.04	1404.20	28.87	71.13	27.89	<.0001*
NET 15/16	107.45	219.23	32.89	67.11		
NET 14-16	704.55	2094.43	25.17	74.83		
No NET	220.32	424.73	34.16	65.84		

I am motivated to speak English with a local English teacher (g)						
NET 14/15	484.17	1543.35	23.88	76.12	7.493	0.0578
NET 15/16	93.07	242.64	27.72	72.28		
NET 14-16	631.48	2178.81	22.47	77.53		
No NET	197.85	565.12	25.93	74.07		

I feel comfortable when speaking English with my local English teachers (h)						
NET 14/15	615.29	1403.79	30.47	69.53	10.62	0.0140*
NET 15/16	102.78	228.22	31.05	68.95		
NET 14-16	742.90	2042.92	26.67	73.33		
No NET	228.95	525.56	30.34	69.66		

I feel comfortable when speaking English with my NET (i)						
NET 14/15	747.40	1214.45	38.10	61.90	25.87	<.0001*
NET 15/16	126.99	188.68	40.23	59.77		
NET 14-16	892.19	1862.33	32.39	67.61		
No NET	241.19	360.91	40.06	59.94		



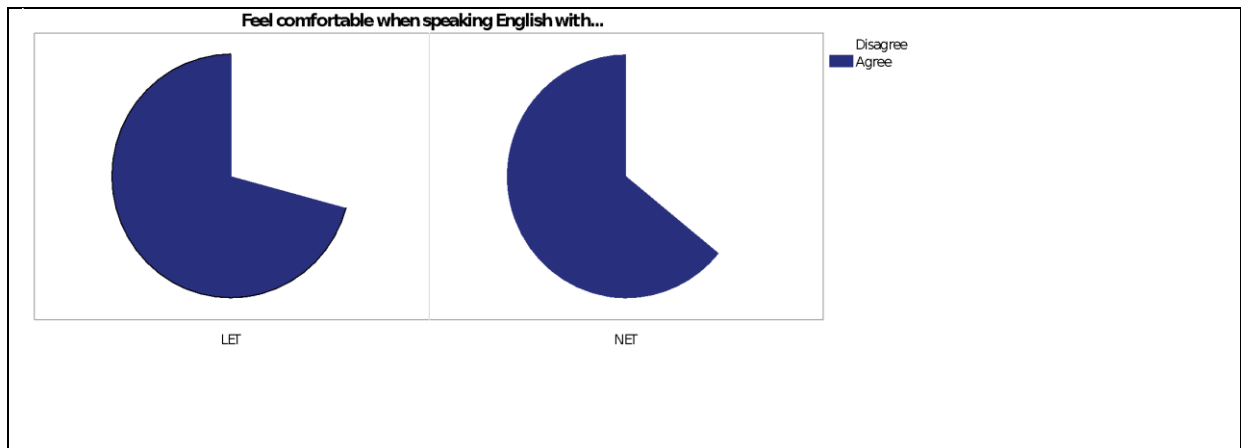


Figure 44. Student attitudes towards class participation and speaking English to local English teachers and NETs

Significant differences were found between the responses to these statements among students in different categories. Broadly speaking, students who had been taught by a NET in their regular English classes perceived themselves as participating more actively in English lessons, being more motivated to speak English, and feeling more comfortable when doing so, than students who had not been taught by a NET.

The findings from the student survey provide evidence of the effectiveness of the Scheme in creating an enhanced English learning environment in the schools. Students taught by a NET tend to be more satisfied with their English proficiency and also enjoy their English classes more than those taught only by local English teachers. Being taught by a NET appears to impact on students' attitudes towards the language with students taught by a NET having higher perceptions of the importance of English. Similar support for the effectiveness of the Scheme is provided by perceptions of co-curricular activities organised by the NET. Table 45 above indicates high levels of awareness that NETs organise co-curricular activities, with significant differences between students taught by a NET for a longer period and those taught by a NET for only one year or who have not benefitted from NET teaching at all.

3.4 Qualitative Data Collection

3.4.1 Preparation of Qualitative Instruments

The Research Team developed five interview guides, five focus group guides and four observation schedules to assist in data collection in the case studies. These are described below. The interviews would be semi-structured, which means the interviewers would follow a set of questions, but were free to rephrase the questions and to ask for elaboration based on interviewees' responses.

Interview Guides

1. **The Principal Interview Guide (PG)** has *14 questions*. There are five background questions about the Principal and their context, seven on the effectiveness of the ENET Scheme as it works in their school, and two questions on their views of the ENET Scheme as a whole.
2. **The NET Interview Guide (NG)** has *14 questions*. There are two background questions about the NET and their context, seven on the effectiveness of the ENET Scheme as it works in their school, and three on their views of the ENET Scheme as a whole.
3. **The English Panel Chair Interview Guide (EG)** has *13 questions*. There are three background questions about the English Panel Chair and their context, eight on the effectiveness of the ENET Scheme as it works in their school, and two questions on their views of the ENET Scheme as a whole.
4. **The Regional NET Coordinator Interview Guide (RG)** has *12 questions*. There are two background questions, eight questions on their work and the effectiveness of the ENET Scheme as it works in the schools, and two on their views of the ENET Scheme as a whole.
5. **NET Section Leader Interview Guide (LG)** has *11 questions*. There is one background question, eight questions on their work and the effectiveness of the ENET Scheme as it works in the schools, and two on their views of the ENET Scheme as a whole.

Focus Group Guides

6. **The English Panel Members Focus Group Guide (EFG)** has *9 questions*. There is one background question, six questions (with three sub-questions) on their views of the effectiveness of the ENET Scheme as it works in their school, and two questions on their views of the ENET Scheme as a whole.
7. **The NET Focus Group (from different schools) Guide (NFG)** has *9 questions*. There are two background questions, five questions (with three sub-questions) on the

effectiveness of the ENET Scheme as it works in their school, and two on their views of the ENET Scheme as a whole.

8. **The Parents Focus Group (from different schools) Guide (PFG)** has *9 questions*. There are three background questions about their children's and their own experience of the NET at school, three on the effectiveness of the ENET Scheme as it works in their school, and three questions on their views of the ENET Scheme as a whole.
9. **The Students Focus Group (from different schools) Guide (SFG)** has *7 questions*. There are two background questions about their experience with the NET at school, three on the effectiveness of the ENET Scheme as it works in their school, and two on their views of the ENET Scheme as a whole.
10. **The All-stakeholders Focus Group Guide (AFG)** has *7 questions*. There is one background question about their involvement with the NET at school, three questions on their views of the effectiveness of the ENET Scheme as it works in their school, and three questions on their views of the ENET Scheme as a whole.

Observation Schedules

Four schedules were developed as follows:

11. The **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 secondary school students.
12. The **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 local English teachers as they engage in team-teaching and for evidence of student learning and engagement.
13. The **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 local English teachers.
14. The **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 local English teachers as they engage in co-planning and record evidence of collaboration.

3.5 NET Section Personnel Interviews

Interviews and focus group discussions were conducted with a selection of stakeholders in the NET Section, EDB. A key objective of these interviews and discussions was to gather information about the operation of the Scheme. Specifically, and referring to the Evaluation Proposal, interviews with EDB personnel and RNCT members were proposed as means of gathering information on RNCT support practices that:

- are linked to enhanced pedagogical practices and student outcomes;
- contribute to the development and implementation of resources and materials;
- help enhance the English environment in schools; and
- contribute to the professional development of, and collaboration among, teachers.

A second objective of the interview and focus group discussions was to contribute to data triangulation. By inviting the NET Section personnel to comment on issues addressed in the research questions, the Evaluation Team hopes to generate data to assist in the data triangulation process and enhance the reliability of the overall evaluation findings.

3.5.1 Selection of the NET Section Personnel to Interview

The pool of NET Section personnel proposed to be involved in interviews or focus group discussions included the NET Section Head, the RNCT Leader, the 2 Curriculum Development Officers (CDOs) working with the team and the 8 RNCT members.

The Evaluation Proposal mentions ‘Interviews with the 8 RNCTs’ as a research method and further specifies that this should be interpreted as interviews with 6 RNCT members and 2 EDB personnel. Following a suggestion from the NET Section that a focus group discussion might replace some or all of the individual interviews, it was agreed to conduct individual interviews with 2 RNCT members and one CDO, and to invite the others to participate in a focus group discussion. In addition, the other CDO working with the team and the RNCT Leader were to be interviewed.

On 30 June 2016, individual interviews were conducted with 2 RNCT members, and a focus group discussion was conducted with 4 other members of the team. On the same day, one of the 2 CDOs working with the RNCT was interviewed collecting data from a total of seven NET Section personnel.

In November 2016 and January 2017 interviews were conducted with the RNCT Leader and NET Section Head respectively.

3.5.2 Qualitative Data Collection Instruments

Interview and focus group guides were developed and submitted for ethical clearance to the IRB of Azusa Pacific University.

In response to the suggestion to replace some individual RNCT interviews with a focus group, an RNCT Focus Group Guide was created with the same sections and main questions, but fewer sub-questions than in the RNCT Interview Guide. The NET Section Leadership Interview Guide also used a similar structure with four sections as set out below:

Part I Preliminaries	Highlighting the main points of the Informed Consent form - the voluntary nature of the discussion, confidentiality, anonymity, etc.; inviting questions; asking participants to sign and return the Informed Consent; stating that the discussion would be recorded and that participants could request sight of the transcript of their contributions to check for accuracy.
Part II You and Your Context	The experience of each participant as a teacher and as an RNCT member. A request to specify the role the leadership participant played in the NET Section.
Part III Your Work	Request for more detailed information about the interview/focus group participant's work, how it impacts student learning and the school environment, student motivation and the professional development of teachers.
Part IV Suggestions	Aspects of the ENET Scheme participants would like to see changed in order to improve effectiveness.

3.5.3 The Interview and Transcription Process

Focus group participants and interviewees of the EDB NET Section personnel were sent copies of the relevant guide in advance of the interviews and the focus group. In the interviews, the interview guides were closely followed, with additional probing as deemed necessary to explore what the interviewer judged to be interesting and relevant points. For the focus group, the questions in the guide were treated with more flexibility in order to encourage a more free-flowing and spontaneous discussion and avoid the mechanical person-by-person approach which following the questions too closely might have produced.

The RNCT focus group discussion was facilitated by two Evaluation Team members, with the assistance of the Project Manager. The interviews were conducted by one Evaluation Team member in each case. All were recorded using Sony IC recorders.

The recordings of the RNCT focus group discussion and the CDO interview were transcribed by one of the two Evaluation Team members present and checked for accuracy by the other. Transcription of the individual RNCT interviews, and the interviews with the RNCT leader and NET Section head have been completed by evaluation team staff and checked by team members.

3.5.4 Methodology of Data Processing and Analysis

The NET Section personnel focus group discussion and interviews were conducted primarily in order to assist the Evaluation Team in learning more about the work of the stakeholders concerned in the operation of the Scheme. They enabled the Evaluation Team to enrich their understanding of the operation of the Scheme in general and of the specific roles and concerns of the stakeholders who participated. The interviews and discussion therefore fulfilled their primary objective successfully. The data gathered served as a source of reference against which to evaluate qualitative data emerging from the case studies. In addition, like the NET Focus Group, these meetings with the NET Section personnel helped the Evaluation Team in identifying issues for further investigation in the analysis of patterns that emerged in the survey data and alerted team members to issues to look for in the qualitative phase of the evaluation. Finally, triangulation of data from these interviews with data gathered from different sources in the evaluation contributed to reliability in the evaluation as a whole.

3.6 Case Studies

3.6.1 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.

By means of a question at the beginning of the School Principals' Survey, Principals were invited to express willingness to be involved in the qualitative phase of the evaluation as case study schools. Nineteen indications of willingness to participate were received. These schools were prioritised based on selection criteria designed to create a sub-sample of schools which, while being broadly representative in terms of school types and contexts, could provide the Evaluation Team with a deeper understanding of specific cases in those contexts.

The case study phase of the evaluation involves 8 case study schools. Criteria to select these 8 schools from the 19 schools willing to participate took three factors into account: (i) representativeness in terms of size, location, student ability, medium of instruction, funding basis and whether the school was single sex or co-educational; (ii) NET characteristics and deployment pattern; and (iii) qualitative analysis of views expressed in completing the survey.

In terms of size and student ability, the team looked for balance, with at least two large, two medium and two small schools and at least two schools from each of the three bands. At least two schools should be included from each of the four regions: Hong Kong, Kowloon, the New Territories East, and New Territories West. A balance of aided and Government schools should be included, with a representative number of schools having different Medium of Instruction arrangements.

In terms of NET characteristics, the team sought a balance of genders. Number of years' teaching experience in total, and number of years in the current school, as well as age, were also taken into consideration. Finally, deployment modes were looked at to ensure that a suitable balance of oral only, full-class only and mixed deployment modes was included.

Finally, responses provided by NETs, Principals, local English teachers and English Panel Chairs to open-ended survey questions were examined to identify schools where stakeholders perceived the operation of the Scheme positively or negatively and schools where there were inconsistencies in the positivity or negativity of views between different stakeholders.

Through this selection process, 8 schools were identified as potential case study schools. The other 11 schools were ranked as alternatives to be approached if some of the first eight declined to participate.

3.6.2 Final Selection of Case Study Schools

On 13 September 2016, the eight schools initially identified as potential case study schools were contacted by email and later in the week a follow up phone call was made to explain the study and to ask if the school would agree to participate. Three schools confirmed their participation, three declined and two were slow to reply. Six of the remaining eleven schools were contacted in the following week when it was suspected that the two schools which had not yet replied were unlikely to accept the invitation to participate. On 29 September 2016, three of the second batch of six schools declined the invitation and the three other schools asked for an extension to the case study period. Another four schools were contacted in an attempt to find schools willing to adhere to the proposed schedule, but all of these declined the invitation. On 27 October 2016, one of the slow responders from the initial eight schools accepted the invitation, giving a total of seven schools which had agreed to participate in the study with the proviso, for three of them, that data collection would be extended until the end of January 2017. In order to create a better balance of contexts in one district, one more school was included on January 2017, which was identified with the help of the EDB. Table 48 below provides a summary of the characteristics of the final selection of eight case study schools, all of which were co-educational schools.

Table 48. Summary of Characteristics of Case Study Schools

	Size	Student Ability	Main MoI	NET gender	NET deployment	Survey responses
1	4 classes /level 56 teachers	High	English	M	3 FC	Positive
2	4 classes /level 52 teachers	High	Chinese	M	1 FC + Oral	Positive
3	4 classes /level 54 teachers	High	Chinese	M	Oral & Language Arts	Neutral
4	4 classes /level 60 teachers	Low	Chinese	M	Oral	Positive

5	4 classes /level 55 teachers	High	English	M	2 FC + Oral	Negative
6	4 classes /level 55 teachers	Low	Chinese	F	Oral & Reading	Positive
7	4 classes /level 55 teachers	Medium	Chinese	F	1 FC + Oral	Neutral
8	2-3 classes /level 34 teachers	Low	Chinese	F	1 FC & Oral	Negative

'FC' here indicates that the NET was teaching all the English lessons; 'Oral' indicates that the NET was assigned to teach lessons focussing on speaking skills.

3.6.3 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

Four of the initially selected eight case study schools and seven of the alternatives declined to participate, citing as reasons that the schools were very busy and had been preoccupied at the beginning of school year. Some local English teachers thought that the evaluation would increase their workload and were not willing to participate. School Principals were respectful of their local English teachers' decision and declined although they had indicated their willingness to join the case study when responding to the survey. Some schools indicated that they had manpower shortages that might hinder them from full participation in the case study phase. Other schools declined to participate because the EPC, NET or SP had changed in the new school year. As participation was voluntary, the Research Team no longer contacted or negotiated with these schools after their withdrawal. The EDB helped to liaise with one more school which had not joined the survey and an extension was granted, so that a total of eight case study schools was finally achieved.

2. Difficulty in scheduling observations and interviews in the beginning of the school year

Four of the schools mentioned in the above paragraph expressed concerns that they would have staffing difficulties at the beginning of the school year, and that the School Principals did not want to increase teachers' workload by asking them to attend interviews and focus group discussions. They suggested the interviews be conducted between November and the beginning of the second semester. The Research Team and the NET Section of the EDB agreed to this suggestion.

One case study school stated that they would be able to arrange the meeting observation, the focus group of local English teachers and the interviews starting between March and April 2017. Owing to the aforementioned postponement, at least three interviews, two focus groups and four observations in total were conducted in April to June 2017. This delay in data collection also delayed data analysis.

3.6.4 Schedule of Case Studies

For each school, seven data-collection activities were planned to be conducted (i.e. School Principal interview, NET interview, English Panel Chair interview, local English teacher focus group, school observation (including NET shadowing), class observation, meeting observation). A summary of these interviews and the observations is provided in Table 49.

In total 56 data-collection activities in eight selected schools were planned to be completed by 31 October 2016, but due to the extensions explained above, data gathering continued until the end of June 2017. All interviews were audio recorded in the sessions with participants' informed consent. In cases where participants declined to be recorded, copious notes were taken during and written up soon after the interview to document the interview. After the data collection was completed, interviews were transcribed and prepared for analysis in NVivo.

Table 49. Summary of Data Collection Activities in the Case Studies

Data collection activities in each school	One 1-hour recorded interview with the School Principal
	One 1-hour recorded interview with the NET
	One 1-hour recorded interview with the English Panel Chair
	One 1-hour recorded focus group interview with 3-6 local English teachers who completed the online survey
	One observation of a lesson taught by the NET
	One observation of an English Panel meeting involving the NET
	Shadowing of the NET during one school day and observation of the English environment of the school

3.6.5 Methodology of Data Processing and Analysis

Recorded interviews and focus group discussions conducted as part of the case studies were transcribed verbatim in their totality and double-checked to ensure accuracy. Member checking was provided – that is researchers informed participants that transcripts would be emailed to them at their request for checking, and changes would be made if requested.

Notes and comments from the observation schedules used in the 24 observations were typed into a database for analysis. Analysis of the qualitative data involved listening to each of the recorded interviews and focus group discussions, reading the transcripts and field notes of observations, reviewing the stakeholders' responses from their online surveys, and coding the data multiple times.

To be more specific, the transcripts, surveys, and observation notes relating to school level stakeholders were analysed in stages in which 'paradigmatic analytic procedures' were used to produce taxonomies and categories out of the common elements across the database for the analysis. At least two researchers (and sometimes three when divergent views were found) analysed the data from each case study. This allowed for triangulation and helped to monitor inter-rater reliability. The researchers approached 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 (School Principals, NETs, local English teachers and EPCs) when available. This first reading (and listening) was for a general idea of the various issues involved in this school, and for noting the themes that emerged. At this stage, the goal was to get a sense of the impact of the ENET Scheme at the school from multiple perspectives (School Principal, local English teachers, NETs and EPCs) as well as to note what was observed in the multiple visits to the school.

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 or more documents and individually wrote a short narrative summarising their findings, provided a title for the school that encapsulates their impressions of the findings, and made a list of their codes and the supporting interview, focus group and field note 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.

3.7 Qualitative Results and Findings

3.7.1 Overview of Case Studies

It is important to note that, while one can generalise from the quantitative data in this report, one cannot do so from the qualitative findings. In qualitative research, one seeks to find nuanced contextualised understandings rather than findings that can be generalised to all contexts. While the findings from quantitative analysis of the surveys suggested that a majority of the stakeholders had positive views of the ENET Scheme, there were also divergent views among key stakeholders who implement the Scheme (NETs, local English teachers, School Principals). The eight case studies include a representative proportion of schools that, based on 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 for 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.

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 ENET Scheme in specific contexts based on analysis of observations of schools, classes, meetings, and interviews with teachers and administrators. The views expressed by different informants were specific to their own school contexts, and/or shaped by their personal experiences and perceptions. For this reason, case study findings cannot be used to make generalisations about secondary schools as a whole.

In order to present an overall picture of the situation of the case study schools, 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 ENET 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 ENET 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 ENET Scheme. Overall, the school is not progressing in meeting the outcomes of the Scheme. Not all the ENET guidelines are followed, and there is not sufficient evidence of critical support needed for the Scheme from key stakeholders.

An overview of the eight case studies is provided below. A title which seeks to capture the findings is used to characterise the operation of the Scheme in each school. They are presented from the most to least effective in terms of how the NET Scheme was working at that school.

CS1. A flourishing NET in a school that values him (VE)

English panel members, including the two Panel Chairs, in this successful, well-established school that adopts English as the main medium of instruction are very well-qualified. Among the seven respondents to the online survey, six held Master's degrees, including three in linguistics or applied linguistics. They were a relatively young staff, with an average age of less than 35 and an average of more than 10 years' experience of teaching English, 7 of which, on average, had been gained in the current school. The school had transitioned from CMI to EMI eight years previously and school sponsors had been determined to create a true English medium experience with cultural subject – PE, Music Visual Arts, as well as Liberal Studies all taught through the medium of English. The School Principal had hand-picked the current NET after having interviewed a large number of applicants, recognising in his self-confidence, extensive relevant experience and classical educational background, exactly what was needed to help the school develop its EMI programme, and branch into the teaching of English Literature. Local English teachers and the Panel Chairs spoke glowingly of the NET and of the teamwork, trust, clear communication, and support the NET offered not just the English panel, but the whole school. They felt they were lucky to have him, and spoke of him as a 'real teacher', 'an insider', 'one of us', 'a friend'. With a degree in classics with English literature, and experience of teaching literature, classics, ESL and history in three other countries, he had a lot to offer, and they were keen to make the most of his expertise. They valued him so much that he has been offered several contracts and asked to support other departments. Teachers

and administrators commented on his ability to help students to produce longer responses, to be more vocal, and make cross-curricular connections. But his greatest contribution seemed to be to his peers, who listed several ways that their teaching was enriched by his presence, such as a deeper analysis of poetry and a new emotional connection to literature.

It seems the success of this case is not due entirely to a ‘stellar NET’ but to several factors such as the right fit between the NET and the school, and the willingness of all parties to adjust, listen, and support one another. The NET had to adapt to the ‘culture shock’ of a heavier workload and learn about the educational system and differences in cultures of teaching and learning in Hong Kong. The school responded by offering support, ensuring that even little things, like having English commands on computers and communication structures in place, which allowed him to thrive. Pizza with the school head and socialising with the teachers after hours were regular occurrences. The teacher meetings were described as think tanks, and the hallways and teacher room places for impromptu learning, where colleagues were not afraid to ask each other for advice. The NET was not restricted to just oral courses, or co-teaching with a few teachers in a few courses, but was infused into the whole school. The NET had limitations of course, and asked local English teachers for help when dealing with parents for example. The School Principal defended the NET when parents called to complain about his teaching methods, and would ask parents to just wait and see the results of the NET’s non-conventional ways of teaching. A unique NET allowed to flourish has left teachers in this school asking for more NETs. They also suggested that this NET might be used to help mentor others.

A number of features of the operation of the Scheme in the school were noted as factors possibly contributing to its success in the school:

- Local English teachers, as well as being well-qualified, experienced and dedicated, are aware of their own shortcomings in relation to cultural aspects of the language, and keen to develop that aspect of their expertise under the trusted guidance of the NET.
- The NET, as well as being well-qualified with relevant degrees and experience of teaching English as a second language and English Literature, is highly sociable and keen to mentor his local colleagues in their cultural development.
- The NET is ‘old school’, demanding and insistent with respect to a number of key tenets – that reading is crucial; that copying is plagiarism; that interaction is essential; that teaching should be Socratic, not based on rote learning.
- The School Principal is strongly supportive of the NET, even when he adopts approaches which others consider idiosyncratic and inappropriate for the Hong Kong educational context.
- The NET is deployed to teach full classes so that he can truly understand what English teaching is like for other teachers, neutralising any tension created by unequal treatment of the NET compared to local English teachers.
- In order to facilitate cross-curricular links as well as connections within the English curriculum, the NET is asked to support the History as well as the English panels.

The NET was observed teaching a Form 3 class. The strengths of the lesson lay in the skilful use of incidental opportunities generated by current events and rich authentic input (newspaper,

video clips, literary text) to teach vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation. Students were challenged by being given strict time limits for all activities, the timer used effectively to keep them on their toes and actively engaged. Despite the fact that the 40-minute period was shortened by 10 minutes because of whole-school activities, a great deal was achieved. Students were also challenged by exposure to current events, on which they were required to express a view, as well as to the cultural heritage of the English language. The experience of the teacher was evident from the outset – he walked into the classroom empty-handed and started teaching straight away, and there was no let-up until the bell rang. Classroom language was natural in terms of speed and content. Instructions were minimal but tasks were simple enough for procedure to be transparent. Classroom management was effectively done. Elicitation was effectively combined with explanation, so that all new content taught was built on existing knowledge.

An English Panel Meeting was observed, involving the entire English panel as well as the School Principal with the NET serving as secretary. Participants discussed issues actively and decisions were reached based on participants' suggestions rather than being imposed from the top down. The decisions were made by the whole team of teachers, but when a teacher obviously felt uncomfortable with a decision, her concerns were listened to, found to be convincing and the issue was opened up for further discussion. The meeting was focused, serious and professional, but the atmosphere was relaxed, teachers shared snacks, chatted with each other, expressed their feelings freely and happily. As well taking minutes, the NET reported on his activities. Some teachers helped the NET to note down some important points and explained issues to him when he could not follow. The Principal explained the rationale for some key decisions to the NET.

Even though all stakeholders are very satisfied with the contribution that the NET makes to the English curriculum and to the English medium of instruction in the school, the Principal is pragmatic in his evaluation. He noted that the NET earns something similar to what a vice-Principal would earn, and that for the Scheme to be able to continue, the special allowance enjoyed by NETs should be removed.

CS2. Team work leading to harmonious working relationships (VE)

The ENET Scheme in this school is successful in a number of respects. The Principal and English Panel Chair are appreciative of the commitment, energy and resourcefulness of the NET. Local English teachers who responded to the survey and took part in the focus group discussion evaluate the NET's contribution highly. The observed lesson taught by the NET was well-prepared, well-resourced and effectively implemented. The teacher was enthusiastic, energetic and lively in his approach. He was very familiar with the students, addressed them by name and aware of their strengths and weaknesses. He was able to manage the class efficiently while actively engaging the students throughout the lesson. There was a clear learning focus with a balanced emphasis on form, meaning and use and on higher levels of understanding.

The curriculum planning meeting, which was chaired by the NET, was collaborative, collegial and well-organised. The level of English in the school environment was high and students enjoyed participating in recess and after-school English activities.

Seven local English teachers responded to the survey. They are a mature, well-qualified and experienced team with around 20 years' experience of teaching English and long service in the school. They were very positive about the influence of the NET, even in pedagogical approaches and co-curricular activities that they did not claim to use or engage in often themselves. They were extremely positive about the role of the NET as a language advisor, in developing teaching resources (especially those considered culturally and linguistically authentic) and in engaging in activities which enriched the English environment of the school. They agreed almost unanimously that the NET had contributed positively to students' views of the importance of English, their motivation to learn English, their proficiency in the four skills, their use of English in class, in the school and outside it and their parents valuing of English.

A number of features of the operation of the Scheme in the school were noted as factors possibly contributing to the success of the scheme:

- The NET is well-qualified with relevant first and second degrees and a TESL certificate and is engaged in a local post-graduate course in education. In discussions, the NET makes reference to current practice in ESL teaching and describes the enjoyment felt in employing modern methods and helping students develop their language ability.
- Local English teachers participating in the survey are well-qualified and experienced with long service in the school. They claim to make use of a number of modern approaches to English teaching, and ascribe many of these to the influence of the NET.
- The NET has a mixed deployment, teaching one full class, and a range of other classes focusing on speaking, listening and reading skills from S2 to S4. The NET appreciates the variety and the range of challenges this deployment pattern brings.
- The deployment of the NET results from a strategic decision on the part of the Principal and EPC to expose the NET to standard practices in class teaching, while actively exploiting the strengths the NET brings to oral-aural skills teaching as a native speaker.
- The Principal and EPC are experienced in working with NETs in other contexts and have taken steps to ensure the smooth transition of the NET into the working practices of the school and the local community by means of a mentoring scheme.

The school has participated in the competitions organised by the NET Section with some success in the past. Some local English teachers and the NET have participated in cluster meetings and Centralised Professional Development activities and evaluated them positively.

The school is involved in a seed project that involves them in intensive regular meetings with the NET Section personnel. While they value aspects of this involvement, the time commitment it involves is a source of frustration. Local English teachers also comment that their existing experience and level of expertise, as well as their heavy workload do not appear to be appreciated by those responsible for conducting the project.

Local teachers were aware of the limitations of a non-Chinese speaking NET in a CMI school. They felt that NET deployment should take advantage of the NET's 'edge as a native speaker' rather than deploying NETs in the same way as a local teacher:

NET teachers are precious resources to local schools and students as they can bring us inspiring ideas. Yet, due to the language barriers with other school staff and parents, there are some duties, particularly administrative ones, which they cannot perform. Their contribution is undoubtedly great but they should not be counted in normal staffing. As extra help, NET Scheme is welcome and should be expanded.

Some schools ask their NET to teach 2 classes the regular curriculum, which I think is a waste of their edge as a native speaker. In my opinion, NETs should – except in special situations – just teach speaking, organise English-related activities and act as a resource person to local teachers.

However, one of the factors ensuring that the NET is professionally satisfied in his present role is the mixed mode deployment he enjoys.

CS3. Side-lined NET due to unmet expectations (SE)

In this school the local English teachers, English Panel Chair, and principal were somewhat disappointed in the NETs they had had over the years. They wanted a NET who was skilled in teaching drama and debate, something they felt would motivate students to learn and use English. But the NETs they had were not particularly experienced in this, so they paid private companies for short-term native-speaking drama and debate coaches and assigned their NET to teach Language Arts. This appeased parental demands for all students to have a class with the NET, but diminished the NET's ability to build rapport with any one group since he had to meet with 800 students each term. While co-teaching was done in previous years, it is no longer practised at this school, as the local English teacher's role had been reduced to that of a disciplinarian. So currently no co-teaching and little collaboration takes place and the NET focuses on English corner, competitions, assemblies, and widespread but shallow academic interaction with all students.

Although the interview participants spoke of the NET's open-mindedness and friendly disposition, they were hard pressed to provide stories of how the students' English had been enhanced by the NET and felt the NET had a lacklustre impact on the English environment of the school. Other aspects of the Scheme were similarly under appreciated. The NET Scheme's workshops were described by local English teachers as disappointing, and the mentoring of their NET (two meetings in the first year) was assumed to be ineffective by the local English teachers, as there was little improvement. Finally, the NET Section's drama competitions were not regarded as highly as other competitions (such as the British Council's), which required students to write their own scripts and not just act out roles on the spot.

The local English teachers had plenty of suggestions of how to improve the Scheme, starting with helping stakeholders better understand the Scheme by clearly articulating the purpose of the NET in secondary schools and how they might best use and support their NET. They felt the NETs would benefit from a more complete orientation and ongoing training, and that NETs should have to complete the same 50 hours of professional development that was required of local English teachers. They stated that NET training should help NETs better understand the school's curriculum, the HKDSE grading criteria for spoken English, and local work

expectations, such as working on Saturdays and sometimes staying after hours. Local teachers mentioned they heard NETs were paid more than local English teachers but worked less. The principal wanted NETs trained in curriculum development since they were expected to develop materials, and the local English teachers wanted NETs trained in specific subjects, such as drama and debate. Although there were several unmet expectations, the NET was not viewed negatively as school stakeholders felt he raised the school's reputation in the parent's eyes, exposed students to another culture, forced students to use English when talking to him, and sometimes had creative ideas.

Differing expectations of stakeholders seemed to be factors that contributed to the moderate effectiveness of the NET and the Scheme in this school. They can be summarised as follows:

- There is evidence that the stakeholders at the school wanted to spread the NET too thin, providing all students contact with NET, which seemed to appease parental demands, but did not allow the NET to build rapport with any one group of students, and thus was a disappointment to the NET.
- While the local English teachers wanted someone skilled in drama and debate, the School Principal wanted someone skilled in curriculum development. They felt that the NET had neither one of these particular skill sets, so were somewhat disappointed.
- Initial co-teaching was not successful due possibly to the lack of co-planning, and was abandoned and not used after that resulting in little collaboration.
- There was some resentment among local English teachers about possible unfair differential in pay and work between the NETs and local English teachers.
- Local teachers felt that the NETs could benefit from more professional development and a deeper understanding of the educational system and work expectations in Hong Kong.

CS4. Out with the young, in with the experienced NET: light up the team (SE)

This school serves the working-class families of one of the areas of Hong Kong commonly regarded as being deprived in various respects, with a reputation for serious social issues. The school has a young team of local English teachers who are very positive about the contribution and influence of the new NET. All the stakeholders felt that the previous NET was too young and only had two years' teaching experience in Hong Kong, which made it difficult for her to fulfil their expectations. Although the previous NET had many creative ideas, most of them could not be carried out effectively because she did not understand the situation and needs of this school, nor the education system in Hong Kong. The EPC felt that her suggestions were not what they needed and the NET was not happy to accept their counter suggestions. Stakeholders' views about the current NET are very different. Local English teachers, EPC and School Principal all expressed a high level of satisfaction and their relief was sometimes palpable at having found a NET who is cooperative, friendly and familiar with the local context, as the previous incumbent was perceived to be lacking in all these respects and relations were reported as being tense as a result.

A number of features of the operation of the Scheme in the school were noted as factors possibly contributing to the moderate success of the scheme in the school:

- Local English teachers are experienced and well-qualified and dedicated to enhancing the English ability of their students.
- The Principal has been very supportive of the previous NET and the current incumbent, despite having some reservations about the Scheme.
- The school was recovering from a negative experience with the previous NET, whose immaturity, inexperience and difficulty with interpersonal relations created problems.
- The current NET, in contrast, is cooperative and very familiar with and willing to adopt local educational practices, all of which make him a most welcome relief for stakeholders who still vividly recall the difficulties of their previous NET experience.
- Despite being a welcome relief in many respects, the current NET has no international experience apart from that gained in Hong Kong secondary schools, and demonstrates some shortcomings in his classroom performance.

The new NET is older than the average local teacher. He is a graduate in language and literature with 8 years' teaching experience. This experience was acquired exclusively in Hong Kong secondary schools, after he completed his PGDE at a local university. This gives him the familiarity with the local context that school stakeholders valued highly, but it also means that he does not bring with him experience of having taught in contexts different from those of his local colleagues, nor does he bring with him experience of having trained in contexts different from those where his local colleagues obtained their training. It may have been awareness of this aspect of the NET's background that prompted the Principal to suggest: 'It is better to let local teachers to know more about the language learning in western countries. So, I think that government can arrange some exchange program for local teachers. Or... invite some experts from other countries to share their experiences with local teachers'.

Local English teachers in the focus group discussion and the EPC in the interview all spoke of the selfless commitment of the new NET, who knew what they needed and was willing to cooperate with them. The NET was responsible for co-teaching language arts and speaking lessons with local English teachers in Form 1 and speaking classes in Forms 4 and 6. They mentioned some creative ideas the NET had taught the students.

Asked how frequently they engaged in the 12 pedagogical practices mentioned in the online survey¹⁴, the percentage of often/very often responses was 29%. Asked about NET influence on their use of these practices, the percentage agreement was 71%. Disregarding the apparent anomaly here, the pattern of responses can provide evidence that local English teachers who engaged in the pedagogical practices felt that the influence of the NET was important in their doing so. The finding suggests that the NET was held in high regard and his influence was perceived to be strong. A similar, but less marked mismatch between local English teachers' claims of involvement, and of NET influence on their involvement applied to co-curricular activities. Here, claimed involvement was 51% but perceived NET influence on involvement was 79%.

The highly positive views of staff generally towards the NET are reflected in responses to other

¹⁴ Respondents were asked to indicate how frequently they used drama, films, songs, games, debates, poetry, short stories, creative writing, readers' theatre, multimodal texts, apps and learning management systems in their teaching and to what extent their use of these practices could be ascribed to the influence of the NET.

survey items regarding the importance of responsibilities assigned to the NET and effectiveness of NETs in carrying out these responsibilities. This positive evaluation of NETs and the NET Scheme was true of 6 of the 7 respondents. One dissenting voice was heard, however. This teacher felt that NETs would be better deployed in providing activities rather than in classroom teaching, as in this teacher's experience often NETs were not effective classroom teachers.

Observation of the NET's teaching of a F1 class reinforced this teacher's view. Although the NET was comfortable in front of the class, he had the support of a local teacher throughout the lesson, handling administrative details and helping to teach the more abstract concepts that arose. There was little evidence of extensive preparation – the teacher seemed to be working through centralised materials provided by the Panel. He was not familiar with students and could not address them by name. He used a style of informal spoken language in asides which was natural, idiomatic and 'authentic' but also seemed to be pitched at too high a level for students to understand, and communication breakdown was sometimes evident. While students worked on preparing a presentation, the NET and his co-teacher engaged in a personal conversation in a way that was considered by the observer as being unprofessional. However, all stakeholders claimed that co-teaching with the NET, as well as regular contact with the NET in meetings, was important. They believed the Scheme was effective and asked for more NETs.

The NET was generally positive about his involvement in school activities to develop the English environment, and his engagement with local English teachers. Although he had some different views from those of the EPC and his local colleagues, he was willing to follow them. He is sensitive to the relationships with colleagues in school as he said, 'It's something we have to be very sensitive about. And I wouldn't say that's something that makes me inert, it just makes me simply sensitive to how far I can push things, you know? But I'm always happy to help, willing to help, not patronise, it's important that we don't patronise people, we help colleagues.' This attitude enabled him to have good relationships with colleagues in school, although he might only contribute in a limited way to the work that the EPC and local English teachers assigned him.

Despite the generally positive evaluations of the current NET expressed by key stakeholders, including the School Principal himself, the Principal was realistic in his evaluations of the possible impact of one NET on the school and also aware of the financial implications of the NET Scheme. His views were markedly less positive than those of the majority of the English teachers in evaluations of the contributions of NETs generally and of the ENET Scheme to improving English teaching and learning. He expressed the view that having one NET in a secondary school would only have minimal impact in improving the teaching and learning of English, and that a minimum of three NETs per school would produce worthwhile results. He made the suggestion that schools should be granted the freedom to make use of the funding required to recruit a NET in other ways, for example using the money to buy outside services; recruiting a number of native speakers to create an English environment or inviting some companies to hold English activities and events in school so that more students would be benefited.

CS5. Strong EPC, devoted local English teachers, but limited NET effectiveness (SE)

This successful school, which adopts English as the main medium of instruction, appears to be enjoying a relatively successful experience with the current NET, after an unfortunate experience with the previous incumbent. English panel members are experienced and active in organising English activities, including successful participation in the NET Section competitions. They talk with some pride of the strength of the panel and the harmonious nature of relations within it. The current NET is experienced and well-qualified and feels satisfied with a deployment which he feels grants recognition through equality, that is by being treated like an ordinary English panel member teaching whole classes.

However, the surface appearance of harmony and satisfaction mask a certain tension within the English panel, which focuses on NET workload and deployment, and differences of opinion between the NET and his colleagues over approaches to English teaching. This tension was revealed first in the online survey responses by English panel members which, despite being generally very positive, included evaluations of the contributions of the NET by one teacher and by one of the two English Panel Chairs, which were almost wholly negative. The English Panel Chair expressed the view that the NET Scheme *‘doesn't help either teachers or students in learning and teaching. It only creates workload for the administration. The NET has always a cultural difference with local ones. Often their language standard and teaching ability are not particularly good’*. Another teacher, whose evaluations of the NET were generally positive, volunteered the observation that *‘The NET is totally wasted in my school. He is just asked to do some normal teaching duties like local teachers do, not even giving speeches at school assemblies’*. The NET himself, however, clearly preferred the whole class mode of deployment, stating in written comments in the survey, *‘Being treated as an equal by students and other teachers allows my work to have impact and be influential in the life of this school’*. The views of the NET, elicited in interview, reveal fundamental differences of opinion between the NET and the English Panel Chair as to the way the curriculum is implemented in the school and the way the Panel is managed. He also expressed views about integrated skills, approaches to the teaching of grammar, amount of homework, discipline policies and learner autonomy all of which he felt represented major differences between himself and other English Panel members, whose views he felt were often *‘blatantly wrong’*. The NET remarked that *‘in the internal context of this school, there is little opportunity to implement anything new or innovative’*.

The Principal values the Scheme and is aware of the strengths of the current NET and acknowledges his contributions and his willingness to adapt despite holding different viewpoints. The Principal outlined the systematic ways in which the school had smoothed the NET's integration into the school and the local community. However, the Principal also echoed reservations about the provision of NETs by the EDB which were voiced by the English Panel Chair and by some of the English panel members in the interview. These revolved around levels of expertise in English language teaching and language knowledge. It seems that the experience of dealing with previous NETs, one of whom produced exam papers peppered with grammatical mistakes and logical errors, and another who refused to take up certain assigned duties and then quit the school without formal notice during the Christmas holidays leaving the school without a NET, had coloured their perceptions of the Scheme.

The observed lesson taught by the NET confirmed his experience and teaching expertise, within a traditional paradigm. Experience was evidenced in the efficient handling of traditional answer-checking routines, neat board work, adherence to an examination orientation and calm confidence in all these things. The teacher was familiar with the students, addressed them by name, appeared to know their strengths and weaknesses and kept them under control by counselling them. While the teacher was focused on effective student learning and achievement, the means adopted were traditional and teacher-centred. Classroom language was effectively deployed to elicit answers to the reading comprehension questions, there was concern that the correct answer be understood, but there was little if anything in the lesson that could not have been done equally well by a local teacher.

A number of features of the operation of the Scheme in the school were noted as factors possibly contributing to the relatively moderate success of the scheme:

- The NET is well-qualified with appropriate, but not subject relevant, first and second degrees as well as a Masters in TESL. He is also engaged in a local post-graduate course in education. In discussions, the NET made reference to sound educational practices relating to motivation and assessment which he feels are not followed in this school.
- Through his online survey responses, the NET presented himself as relatively traditional in terms of classroom-based pedagogical practices and curriculum content. Although he indicated involvement in drama performances and debating competitions as co-curricular activities and that he often used drama in his classes, he made no claim to use films, songs, games, debates, poetry or creative writing in his classes. Crucially, he indicated that he did *not* introduce culturally and linguistically authentic resources and materials into his teaching.
- Local English teachers participating in the survey are well-qualified and experienced, although the average length of service in the school is comparatively low. They claim to make use of few of the modern approaches listed in the survey and do not ascribe the use of many of these to the influence of the NET.
- The NET was deployed to teach three full classes in the first year, and in the second year was given a more mixed deployment, teaching two full classes, and a range of other classes focusing on speaking, listening and reading skills in S1 and S6.
- The deployment of the NET in a mode similar to that of a local teacher is justified by the Principal and other English panel members in interviews as a means to enable the NET to understand the local curriculum and the needs of the students, while exploiting the strengths the NET brings to oral-aural skills teaching as a native speaker in preparing S6 (and later S5) students for the DSE oral.
- However, whole class deployment meant, in the words of one of the local English teachers, ‘the role of the NET teacher is really not that important because we treat him as just another English teacher’. Other teachers reinforced this view by reference to student ability and their own expertise, ‘... in our school, the students have got a lot of exposure in English themselves so they don’t rely that heavily on NET teachers as a source of authentic English speaking’.
- Even though the NET has more than 15 years of experience of teaching English in an Asian context, the relevance of this was seen as marginal by the English Panel Chair in preparing him for whole class teaching in Hong Kong, which entails dealing with all

the skills, grammar and exam preparation, not all of which figure so prominently in the English curricula in other Asian contexts.

- The Principal is experienced in working with NETs in other contexts and has taken steps to ensure the smooth transition of the NET into the working practices of the school and the local community by means of a mentoring scheme.

The school has participated in competitions organised by the NET Section with some success in the past. None of the local English teachers, or the NET have participated in cluster meetings, though both have attended a limited number of Centralised Professional Development activities.

CS6. Non-collaborating isolated NET assigned oral only work with small groups (LE)

Stakeholders at this school which adopted Chinese as the main medium of instruction, spoke of their long and successful record of working with NETs, but the deployment of the current NET was a break with tradition. Perceptions of the contribution made by the former NET recorded in online survey responses were highly positive, and the NET herself was very satisfied with her role as a class teacher, her contributions to resource development and her collaborations with colleagues. Local English teachers with experience of working with NETs over the past several years were highly positive in their evaluations of the quality of the NETs the school had employed and of the contributions these NETs had made to class teaching and learning, curriculum resource development and whole school activities. However, these online survey responses were gathered in May 2016 and related to the outgoing NET, who retired at the end of the school year, and the full-class mode of deployment that NET had been assigned.

The interview and observations in the case study involved the new NET, who had worked in the school since August 2016, that is for a period of less than four months at the time of interview. In view of the short length of service of the NET interviewed initially in the case study in November 2016, a follow-up interview was conducted in October 2017. The new NET had had a difficult time getting set up in Hong Kong having to dip into her savings in order to finance her accommodation.

In addition to the EDB-funded NET, the school sponsors had provided funding to support the hiring of two other native speakers of English responsible for organising game-like language activities in recess and after school as well as taking withdrawal groups for oral practice during class time. Local English teachers valued their contributions, but noted that they were not trained teachers and that one of the two exhibited problems with his English linguistic competence.

Stakeholders noted that the success of the previous NET in whole class teaching was reflected particularly in the confidence and well-developed language skills of the Form 6 students she taught. However, some reservations were expressed by the School Principal regarding the impact of whole class NET deployment on less able students. This was echoed by local English teachers, who were highly positive about the whole class mode of deployment of all the previous NETs they had worked with, but pointed out that in a whole class mode, more reticent students might have been able to avoid interacting with the NET altogether.

In the 2016/17 school year therefore, a new deployment pattern was introduced in an attempt to cater better to the needs of lower ability students, to spread NET impact more widely, if less intensively, and to maximise the perceived strengths of NETs in oral skills development. The new mode involved the EDB-funded NET operating in a similar manner to the two other native English speakers in that she was asked to teach students in groups of four or five, instead of on a whole class basis. The NET would take one group from classes from Forms 1 to 6 for one period a week. Each group would be taught by the NET for a period of four weeks, after which another group would take their place. In a year-long cycle, all students in a Form would have been taught by the NET for two to three lessons. In this new mode, the two untrained non-EDB funded native speakers of English would continue to focus on oral, game-like activities with the groups they handled. According to the Panel Chair, the EDB-funded NET would also focus on oral skills. However, the NET herself, whose views were echoed by local English teachers in the Focus Group, saw her strengths in literacy development rather than only on oral skills, and this was reflected in the lesson which was observed. The roles of the three teachers was seen by the School Principal as being broadly similar, although he did note that the EDB-funded NET would also be given responsibility for curriculum development and would teach students from the DSE class.

A number of features of the operation of the Scheme in the school were noted as factors possibly contributing to the only limited success of the scheme as implemented currently:

- While the non-EDB funded native English speakers were assigned the English Corner for their teaching and activities, the EDB-funded NET was housed temporarily in a corner of the Library while a new space (a newly partitioned area of a storage room) was being prepared for her. The Library arrangement was not very satisfactory, as there might be frequent interruptions as other students in the school made use of the Library facilities.
- The NET was highly experienced in her home country, in other overseas TESL contexts and in Hong Kong during an earlier NET contract. While she could teach oral skills effectively, she perceived her strengths to be in reading strategies and she felt sorely underutilised in the new deployment mode assigned to her.
- A more systemic problem lies in the mismatch between what the NET wanted to achieve in the small group lessons with the senior students and what the EPC seemed to want her to focus on. The EPC spoke of maximising the strengths of the NET by focusing more on oral skills. The observed lesson was intended to be an oral presentation lesson. However, the NET had provided an elaborate white board display of a wealth of hints covering reading strategies, goal-setting, self-evaluation etc which was geared up to a model of reciprocal teaching. This did not seem to match up with the actual lesson content or with the EPC's desired focus.
- The question arises, also, as to the feasibility of the goals that the NET had set for these classes given their frequency. The whiteboard display was on permanent show in the Library corner, and so it is possible that students might come back to refer to the hints provided there, when their four lessons with the NET were over. But what the NET was aiming for would seem require a sustained approach with regular and repeated practice that appeared unrealistic given the amount of time she had with each group, and the other demands on students' time as they prepared for the DSE papers they would take just four months later.

- The NET is isolated from local English teachers in a different staff room, along with the non-EDB funded native-speaking teachers. There is no co-planning or co-teaching either with the regular English panel members or with the other foreign English teachers. The NET reported regretfully that the three foreign teachers worked individually with little or no collaboration in spite of her efforts to encourage them to share and learn from each other.
- The NET was not involved in the mainstream teaching of the panel, reinforcing feelings of separation and isolation.
- There are no longer any social gatherings with the NETs and local English teachers, since that did not go well in the past. This led to feelings of isolation.

Observation of the small-group mode in operation revealed some limitations. Firstly, although it was at least the second time she had taught them, and although there were only four of them, the NET was not familiar enough with the students to be able to address them by name. Secondly, they had not done the required homework set a week earlier, which may say something about their prioritisation of the lesson. More importantly, the homework involved reading and text analysis prior to doing a presentation on the topic. Since the reading had not been done, the NET's own perception of her role as focussing on reading strategies – in contrast to the oral skills focus of the other native-speaking teachers – was called into question.

The School Head stated that a good NET is someone who cannot speak Cantonese, ironically identifying a 'good' language teacher as someone who is not able to speak the local language. He wanted more NETs but did not want the NET Section to get involved with the internal management of the school. He lamented that there were few good NETs in the pool and that finding a good NET is difficult, although he was satisfied with the quality of the newly hired NET.

The local English teachers felt that they didn't need meetings with NETs since NETs would just tell them what they think, but the current NET had a very different view. The culture of isolation and restriction deprived her of the professional collaboration that she felt would have enhanced her job satisfaction.

CS7. Activity-focused NET surviving in a negative atmosphere (LE)

The NET Scheme in this school is not perceived as being successful by key stakeholders, although the performance of the NET is generally appreciated in terms of her commitment to students, ability to organise activities, rapport with students and willingness to engage them in enjoyable activities. However, cultural differences seem to have hampered her full integration into the school. Examples of such differences include perceptions of when it is acceptable to go home at the end of the school day and when it is acceptable to take sick leave. Local English teachers, EPC and SP feel that the NET should adapt to local norms in such matters, while the NET appears to adhere to a different set of standards, leaving as soon as her work is done and taking sick leave when she does not feel well enough to work. Differences such as these, compounded by what one local teacher perceives as an excessively high level of remuneration, appear to have soured relations with some of the local English teachers and created a negativity which has also filtered down to the English Panel Chair and the Principal.

Some possible reasons for this negativity may be found in the comments of the English Panel Chair and Principal:

- Age differences were mentioned by the English Panel Chair as a problem. In fact, local English teachers responding to the questionnaire included teachers younger than the NET. However, older, more experienced teachers were the ones who were more sceptical about NET contributions.
- Apart from age, and different cultural norms, another factor that may influence collaboration may lie in differences in qualifications and experience. The NET has six years' teaching experience in the current school, more than the younger local English teachers, but below average for the Panel as a whole. Although she has a relevant degree obtained locally, she does not have a teacher training qualification.
- The Chinese medium culture of the school may be another factor hindering collaboration and integration, with all staff meetings, English Panel Meetings and email communication conducted in Chinese. While the NET is racially Chinese, she grew up in the United States and has no knowledge of the Chinese language.

The level of negativity is reflected in survey responses, where two of the 7 LETs surveyed recommended that the Scheme be discontinued citing as reasons 'the NET teacher in our school cannot arouse students' interest in learning English' and 'No evaluation involved in the scheme and I doubt the effectiveness of it'. One of the 7 felt the scheme should be scaled down because 'Most NETs are not performing what've been stated in the scheme'.

The English Panel Chair, who felt the Scheme should continue as it is, commented that 'NETs can help establish a better English learning environment at school, but whether it is successful or not depends on the motivation, willingness and experience of the NETs'. He went on, however, to remark that 'The salaries and other fringe benefits that NETs receive can be used to hire more local English teachers who have the same qualifications and standards', noting that 'The experience and the personality of the NET may hinder the impact' of the Scheme.

While he valued the NET contribution, and voiced some appreciation for aspects of her character, the Principal also voiced a number of reservations about the current NET and about the NET Scheme in general. Based on more than 25 years' experience in the school working with different NETs, and with the current NET, he felt that committed and hard-working NETs were very difficult to find. He felt that ultimately schools should be allowed to opt out of the Scheme, and to make use of the funding used to support NETs for the hiring of 1 to 2 additional local English teachers, whom he felt could perform as well as the NET in the roles assigned to her. He noted that the NET reimbursement was sometimes equal to that of a vice-Principal, and yet NETs were rarely as hard-working as such a salary would lead one to expect.

In contrast with the negative views of the older local English teachers, and the muted negativity of the EPC and School Principal, there was a refreshing degree of sympathy and appreciation expressed by local English teachers in the focus group discussion. These four teachers were generally sympathetic towards the NET, and welcomed the fact that she provided a more enjoyment-related treatment of English to lighten the exam-oriented teacher they felt it necessary to adopt in their own lessons.

Local English teachers also expressed appreciation for the considerable organisation skill of the NET in arranging activities, and appreciated her achievement in motivating so many students to engage in the drama activities, and in preparing students for the speech competition.

The NET has one full class of S1 – 9 lessons per 8-day cycle. Then she teaches oral lessons to other forms and is responsible for the Monday after school drama activities. In previous years, the NET had taught only oral classes, but this year she had been assigned a full class. The NET stated her preference for oral only mode, as it gave her more opportunities to offer activities, which she loved doing. This enthusiasm applied especially to the drama activities she is responsible for. These involve competition entry and might involve classes of up to 50 children. The NET felt this was manageable and was clearly enthused when discussing drama. The same enthusiasm was noted in her discussion of other activities, including participation in the competitions organised by the NET Section such as Clipit, which had kept her in school until 9 pm three days in a row helping her students prepare.

However, the NET did not speak with such enthusiasm about her scheduled classes. Indeed, there was evidence of a rather routine handling of the class in her observed lesson. The teaching was adequate, but lacking in enthusiasm. The lesson focused on poetry, with a potentially lively, vivid and humorous poem provided as input. The materials were from a school-based textbook and the NET could have done more to bring them to life for the class in motivating them to write their own poems.

CS8. Alienated and isolated NET deployed to teach students least in need of help (LE)

A primarily Chinese medium school, but with a highly diverse cultural mix, characterised by key stakeholders as a three-way split between groups of students with very different language needs. Thirty percent are local Hong Kong Chinese students of below average ability, lacking the confidence to display their English knowledge and not motivated to develop it. Another thirty percent are newly arrived children (NAC) who have had less exposure to English than local students and may also need to develop their ability to learn other subjects through the medium of Cantonese. The remainder are non-Chinese speaking (NCS) students who are confident and have well-developed abilities in English, but struggle to learn other subjects through the medium of Chinese.

The three groups present different challenges for English language educators, including, in the perception of local English teachers, behavioural problems amongst the NCS students. One way in which the school responds to these challenges is to deploy the NET to teach only NCS students. This aspect of her deployment satisfies the NET, as she finds the NCS students more stimulating to teach than the local Hong Kong Chinese students she has taught in other schools. The implication of this deployment is that NAC and local students do not have any scheduled classes with the NET, and, since co-curricular involvement in English activities is voluntary, their exposure to a NET may be restricted to listening to her reading aloud English passages over the public-address system on Friday mornings.

The NET contributes to the enhancement of the English-speaking environment by running weekly activities in the English Corner, the most frequently mentioned of which is craft-based

(making boomerangs). Other activities mentioned by stakeholders include a quiz competition along the lines of ‘Are you smarter than a fifth grader?’, topical activities on special occasions such as Valentine’s Day, and a fashion show. The NET has also coached groups of 5 to 6 students for two NET Section competitions – Clipit and Speak Out - Act Up!.

A number of features of the operation of the Scheme in the school were noted as factors possibly contributing to the relatively low level of success of the scheme:

- There is evidence of disharmony which appears to stem largely from communication problems between local English teachers and the NET.
- Internal communications within the English panel are conducted in Chinese, with a Teaching Assistant charged with the responsibility of communicating important decisions to the NET.
- The NET feels alienated and ‘out of the loop’ in respect of English curriculum issues due to the lack of systematically organised co-planning.
- There is resentment among local English teachers about what is seen as unfair treatment of the NET in respect of annual leave allocation.
- Local English teachers appear apprehensive about approaching the NET to keep her informed of relevant decisions, using the excuse ‘We don’t know what she doesn’t know’ to justify their failure to communicate with her directly.
- The chosen NET deployment pattern means that the NET only teaches the best English speakers in the school. There is minimal NET exposure for students with the greatest language need.

Disharmony was apparent in the responses to the online survey in May 2016 by the then NET and local English teachers. The NET strongly disagreed that an appropriate role had been identified for her in the school or that expectations of her work were realistic. She strongly disagreed that she had been deployed appropriately or that her contributions were recognised. There was resentment among local English teachers at what was perceived as over-generous remuneration not justified by the workload undertaken by the NET. Another clear indicator of disharmony was discrepancy in perceptions of collaboration from the NET on the one hand and local English teachers on the other. Through her responses to survey items, the NET claimed that she did not suggest new teaching ideas to local English teachers, learnt nothing at all from them about the local context and did not engage in any co-planning or discussion of curriculum in general with them. These claims were contradicted by responses of the local English teachers to parallel survey items.

Although a new NET was appointed in September 2016, the disharmony appeared to have been perpetuated. The NET described unpleasant confrontations with local English teachers. There were indications of disagreements about NET working hours in the comments of local English teachers who hinted that the NET objected to having to work on Saturdays and did not report duty in time to attend preparation meetings before the start of the school year. Although the EPC and SP claimed that the NET was involved in co-planning with local English teachers, as well as in a school-based professional development project, both the NET and the local English teachers contradicted the claims, confirming that the regular co-planning and collaboration which EPC and SP believed to be taking place was not in fact happening.

3.7.2 Key Findings

Findings from the eight case study investigations are presented below, supplemented by findings from the non-school-based NET and student focus group discussions and from interviews with NET section personnel. Findings which help address the six specific research questions that have guided the evaluation are presented first. Some additional findings not directly related to the six research questions are then presented in the following section.

3.7.3 Findings addressing the six Specific Research Questions

Research Question 1: To what extent and in what ways does the ENET Scheme impact teachers' English language teaching (pedagogical practices)?

A key objective of the Scheme is 'to strengthen teaching capacity'. The stated objective envisages that this strengthening would be achieved through school-based professional development and collaboration between NETs and English Panel Members¹⁵. Findings related to these two aspects of the Scheme are reported below in relation to Research Question 5. This section focuses on the impact of the NET on the pedagogical practices of his or her colleagues in the English Panel.

CF1: School Principals, English Panel Chairs, and local English teachers felt that the influence of the NET has an impact on the teaching approaches of local English teachers.

As noted above in the descriptions of individual schools, responses to the online survey items about teaching approaches often suggested that the NET influenced local English teachers to adopt approaches involving drama, films, songs, games, debates, poetry, short stories, creative writing, readers' theatre and multimodal texts. Interviews with key stakeholders helped to substantiate this influence, as well as suggesting that NETs influence other aspects of pedagogy including catering to student needs, focussing on more colloquial varieties of English, making use of media resources, adopting cross-curricular approaches and adopting a more student-centred approach generally:

[The NET] can give us some suggestions in the curriculum how we can perform better or how we can teach better to meet our students' needs.

(SP Interview)

... as panel members, we like to learn from [the NET] and the students of course, the teaching is very clear and the students follow him closely.

[the NET] is very important in the school because he helps not only the students but the teachers.

(EPC Interview)

... when we talk about colloquial English or we may say, everyday English, actually, we need [the NET], okay, to give us some more ideas.

¹⁵ <http://www.edb.gov.hk/en/curriculum-development/resource-support/net/enet-objectives.html>

(Local English teachers FG)

Because really the way she speaks, um, the games she introduced, it's something which we may not have heard before because we all were brought up in Hong Kong. [The NET] can bring us some new ideas like she is from America, something that is popular in the United States, I think this can widen our horizons.

(Local English teachers FG)

The influence of a NET on the pedagogical practices of local English teachers can be facilitated in different ways. In one school, an 'open classroom' policy encouraged local English teachers to walk in and observe and learn from the approaches that their outstanding NET employed. Three local English teachers from this school shared their experience of watching the NET:

I think this year because our NET teacher got an open classroom, so we went to his classroom, we were quite surprised and amazed that – it's a form 2 class, the students can actually answer everything in a full sentence and the vocabulary bank is wider than we expect. So, it's only two months and they're form 2 this year, we asked him how he could do that?

(Local English teachers FG)

Actually, he was talking about the refugees problem and the news of the refugees and I think he could integrate both historical knowledge and also English in that lesson because he made use of the South China Morning Post and he also relates students' knowledge to what he had talked about and history lessons and for example, Hong Kong history, our ancestors who might have been a refugee and he could integrate a lot of examples in that lesson and I can see the students not only focus on the text and then can also de-compartmentalise the whole knowledge that they have learnt in other lessons.

(Local English teachers FG)

I guess [our] classrooms [have] become more student-based because we always used to have a teacher-centred classroom, like we do all the talking and the students act as a receiver in the classroom. But what he has been doing is inquiry-based learning so he tends to ask quite a lot of intriguing questions and then sometimes have students find the answer at home first and then present in class. I guess he is trying to bring this learning style into our classrooms and we can all actually learn from that as well.

(Local English teachers FG)

CF2: Local English teachers valued the different perspective that the NET had brought to English language learning and teaching and the different practices associated with this perspective, but some felt constrained in their ability to adopt similar practices in their own teaching.

One of the local English teachers quoted above prefaced her remarks by saying that the NET in her school could provide insights, but local English teachers did not have the same abilities. This can be interpreted as implying that ‘insight’ would not necessarily lead to ‘impact’ on her own pedagogical practices:

I think I can get insights from a NET teacher. It’s better to have a NET teacher than not to have one . . . If we have a NET teacher, it’s easier, like the organisation of the activities this is something which I think we local English teachers may not be that professional in doing.

(Local English teachers FG)

I like having a NET teacher because I think she’s the only person in the department who dare not to follow, not to be so examination-oriented. To a certain extent I think learning English is not only for examination but because of the existing education system, we local teachers have to force our students, to spoon feed our students to learn everything for their examinations, this is something I don’t like very much. Having a NET teacher, I think we could do something not so examination-oriented, more relaxing, something really like the learning of English, learning culture, learn fun, having fun is very important.

(Local English Teachers FG)

One English Panel Chair expressed this kind of limitation in a very positive way, and the NET in the same school reinforced the point by mentioning the discretion and sensitivity needed to operate successfully as a NET:

The NET is very friendly and helpful. He knows what we need in school. He also understands that there are some limitations in school when we cannot follow his suggestions.

(EPC Interview)

Well, I help them out with recordings, videos, with the English enhancement scheme we’ve got going on here I’m part of that as well. So, I like to help out as much as I’m asked to do, you know, for us NETs going into schools, we have to be very careful.

(NET Interview)

Another teacher in another school was rather neutral in evaluating the impact of the NET on their own practices, while recognising that the NET has the ability to build learner confidence to use English.

I think he doesn’t affect much, right? My class, my autonomy. But in this school, I think, we just treat the NET teacher as a normal guy. Instead of a special figure in school. I think in this way, students would be more, would be feeling more comfortable,

easier with a foreigner or English speaker. And this helps build their confidence in speaking or using English. They are just talking to a normal guy, a normal teacher. We don't take him as special figure.

(Local English teachers FG)

Teachers in another school valued the different perspective that the NET had brought to the accuracy-fluency dichotomy and the place of examination-orientation in motivating students to learn.

I think she shows me how we can tolerate students' mistakes. For a Hong Kong teacher, it's really sad that we can't tolerate students making mistakes she shows me how she can do it and then it will be fine if we can communicate and she shows it to students and I find that without correcting students' mistakes, they can improve. So, I think she can set a really good example to all the colleagues, that we don't need to focus on accuracy so much, so I think it's a really good example, a good role model.

... being a local teacher [we focus on] correct grammar, correct English. But I guess they are from different background, and they learn how you can communicate with others effectively, and so they are less concerned about grammar or sentence structure, as long as you can communicate with other people well and each other understand what they are talking, it's fine. So, it really depends on what kind of principle [you follow]

(Local English teachers FG)

Local teachers in another school expressed a lack confidence in their own ability to create an English-speaking environment, and they relied on the NET to provide this English atmosphere in the class:

I feel that the effectiveness is larger in the NET's lesson as local teachers cannot create the English environment. Students know that local teachers speak Cantonese and feel the NET is more special.

(Local English Teachers FG)

Teachers in other schools valued the unique contribution that the NET could bring, since it could help raise their awareness of aspects of English they had not been so aware of before exposure to a NET, such as differences between written and spoken discourse:

I think NET's function is for exposure. Since Hong Kong [puts] more emphasis on the written form (e.g. grammar), foreigners might use language or the words in many different ways in their culture. As we are living in Hong Kong, we do not know that and the NET can tell us and students. He brings the real use of language to us. I think it is the most valuable to the NET.

(Local English teachers FG)

The perceptions of local English teachers in this section can be further illuminated by reference to the views expressed by NETs in the non-school-based NET focus group discussion. In that gathering, NETs expressed the view that some teaching approaches employed in their schools could be changed to better meet the needs of children growing up in the Internet age. Teachers

spoke of adopting a multimodal stimulus approach, often based on video input, as a necessary way of getting through to the new generation of school children. These approaches were often contrasted with approaches more commonly adopted by local English teachers which, NETs felt, were based on the teacher's own successful learning experiences, but failed to stimulate lower ability students or meet their learning needs:

... Now what's interesting there, from my experience is that you've got [local] teachers teaching students the same way that they learnt, in the sense that they were successful at learning in this particular exam-driven mode. They were good at linguistic intelligence and whatever, mathematics, but when they come back, when we're dealing with these Band 3 students, it's a different type of learning. And these are smart kids, but in a different way.

(Non-school-based NET FG)

Lower ability students, participants agreed, needed a different style of teaching in which the focus was on self-esteem and confidence rather than on academic achievement.

[The Principal] wanted the NET's opinion on the school, so I prepared twenty pages of notes over the years, but one thing was this, and she was agreeable to it, although I haven't seen it happen yet ... I think we'd agreed that the focus tends to be on student achievement rather than self-esteem. As a teacher, my starting point is the student's self-esteem. If you start with their self-esteem and giving them confidence, you'll get a lot more achievement. And, I've found that throughout the years. If you give them a little bit of achievement in something simple, you know, the experience of success makes you feel good about yourself. And so many of our students have their self-esteem and self-confidence totally shattered. From the beginning. I saw that on my first day.

(Non-school-based NET FG)

CF3: The impact of the NET on local English teachers' pedagogical practices is affected by NET deployment patterns.

A diverse range of views was expressed by stakeholders regarding the most appropriate deployment for a NET. Some considered the NET as bringing added value in the teaching of oral skills and co-curricular activities. Others felt that it was important for the NET to gain experience of mainstream teaching in addition to organising activities in order that they could acquire the local knowledge which was considered essential to effective teaching in Hong Kong.

I think if I only have the NET teach the oral lesson, then he [will not be] so familiar with the syllabus or the curriculum in Hong Kong. Therefore, I talked to the panel [and] we thought that the NET needed to have a full class, so that he can [become] familiar with what is going on in Hong Kong, otherwise he just has his mindset in England... In Hong Kong, it's different, totally different... Therefore, I do think that [for] the NET the first thing is not only create an English learning environment at school but also perform... the tasks just like other teachers.

(SP Interview)

In teaching one whole class in this way, the likelihood that the NET's different approaches would impact on local English teachers' approaches is enhanced through the development of shared curriculum resources discussed below in relation to Research Question 4 and the co-planning discussed in relation to Research Question 5.

Another School Principal deployed the NET to teach full classes for other reasons, including acknowledging the expertise of local English teachers, avoiding tension arising from assigning the NET an easier workload when he or she is seen as being paid more than local English teachers, and also maximising the potential of the NET in different curriculum areas:

[First,] I think [if] NETs only teach oral lessons... it is degrading what Hong Kong education is for our local teachers. It seems [to imply] that our local secondary school or universities are not providing enough support for local teachers to be able to teach oral in the classroom and I think this is wrong... we have different strengths so we should have a better mix... [Second] NET teachers are better paid so to speak and other teachers might have some tension with him or her if they only do two periods a week in a class and no marking, no preparation, if he is only teaching oral lessons, he will be preparing once and then he will be teaching five classes. Same thing. So, I was thinking, to ease the tension between the NET teacher and the local teacher. And a NET teacher has a lot more to offer than just being a speaker in the classroom. [Our NET] is also teaching our teachers how to teach literature. If I only gave him oral lessons, he would not be contributing any of these.

(SP Interview)

In another school, the Panel Chair deployed the NET to teach full classes, because he felt the NET was not able to offer any specialist expertise which would justify assigning him to teach non-mainstream areas:

[The NET is assigned full classes], and in some forms, maybe speaking classes. It actually depends on the expertise of the teacher. If we can find a good drama teacher, then we will organise drama classes. Then he may not have so many regular lessons. If the NET has no special skill in any aspect, then he can only be an ordinary teacher in a classroom. And of course, you have to teach three classes. Otherwise, how can you justify it? Because even his non-teaching duties are not as many as we local teachers. And you cannot give them too many, they won't entertain you. And that could create a conflict.

(EPC Interview)

Other deployment practices were also coloured by perceptions of what the NET could offer. For example, NETs are rarely assigned to senior form classes, as local English teachers are not confident that NETs can prepare students in the most effective ways to help them meet the challenges of the HKDSE:

... one of the NETs taught form 6 level class... we thought that it was better for him to teach a senior class so that students would understand him. The fact was that he didn't teach the right level of English. He thought that their English was very poor so he tried to use some simple stuff for them so you can see the discrepancy here, they expected to learn something so that they can get into university, but he thought that their English was very poor... they spent a year together and then we had to change teachers.

(EPC Interview)

And also, honestly, NET teachers are new to Hong Kong, the culture, the exam syllabus, so they could be a nightmare if they take up senior forms, they don't know much about the exam-orientedness. They don't like exam-orientedness, that's not how they grew up, that's why students would prefer some local teachers actually.

(Local English teachers FG)

In one school, the English Panel Chair evaluated the NET as having strength in speaking, and with less to offer in the teaching of other skills:

... because their strength is speaking. So, if we ask them to teach reading and writing, they may not be using their potential.

(EPC Interview)

The NET referred to in this quote was deployed to teach small withdrawal groups of students in need of oral practice for a variety of reasons – exam preparation, remedial support etc. The NET herself, however, had a very different view of her potential contribution and felt severely under-utilised as a result:

I think that we bring ideas, I mean, it's so variable the person who comes in, but we [NETs] do have experiences especially the older ones, we have a whole breadth of experience, a whole breadth of studies, so I've got my master's in education, I've done studies recently in pedagogical frameworks and studied educational leadership, so there's this whole thing that we bring that is often untapped.

(NET Interview)

Although the NET in this school felt under-utilised, the Panel Chair and the Principal clearly did value that NET's strength in teaching and modelling spoken English and cultural aspects of the language which would be maximised in small group mode.

We think that small group is easier to get started and build up relationship with NET. So, we arrange five students with one NET in a lesson. The NETs can input some cultural elements in the activities and have more interactions with students.

(SP Interview)

This recognition of the unique contribution of a native-speaking teacher is reflected in other quotes in this section valuing the ability to model and expose students to everyday colloquial English. It is reflected also in the views of another English Panel Chair:

... with him as a symbol, then the students will work very hard, and [they will think] 'Oh, this is the perfect English, we have to model on'.

(EPC Interview)

Changes in the linguistic landscape of Hong Kong in the 20 years of the NET Scheme's operation in secondary schools mean that NETs may no longer be the sole source of natural English in the way that they used to be. This complicates decisions as to how best to deploy the NET to have maximum impact on student learning.

I think it's because times have changed. Before, I remember when I was young, the NET teacher was considered as the source of authentic English speech but now because of the media, because of the technology the kids no longer rely solely on the NET and so I think the kids know American culture or Canadian culture better than the NET. Right? So, I think there's another approach from the school, why don't we put him as an ordinary... teaching staff to be responsible for the teaching load, share the teaching load like the local English teachers. I think this is a very high order question, how can the NET benefit the school... whether the approach should be the NET teaching a few forms but each form, each class, one lesson, the old way of treating the NET like an authentic English speaker... Or should we put him or her as one of the teaching staff, to be responsible for a three-class teaching load.

(Local English teachers FG)

The impact of the Primary NET Scheme is also felt in secondary schools, in that students entering secondary school are already familiar with native-speaking teachers, as well as being more confident in using English, after having been taught by PNETs.

I don't think having a NET changes a lot in my school but students coming from primary schools which had very strong NET programmes does help. In the recent five years, we see students more vocal, they are not afraid of speaking English at all. And this is the merit coming from primary schools, not secondary schools, we didn't do that. It's all the merit from primary school. So, it really doesn't matter if we have a foreign teacher teaching mathematics or geography, students can handle that. All because of

the NET programme in primary school. In that aspect, I don't think there is much impact because we have a NET in our school.

(SP Interview)

Changes in the way NETs are perceived were noted by one NET who had returned to Hong Kong after a prolonged absence.

... in terms of how NET teachers are received in schools, that's another shift that I've found. In the beginning when I got here [in 1998], I may have just been in a particularly lovely school, I don't know... but there was a general excitement from local teachers and a willingness to work together and to kind of buddy you, and all those things. After my absence, I came back, I felt a cynicism had set in towards the Scheme and towards NET teachers... and I think that's kind of built up a, in some places, a bit of a resentment or an intolerance towards having a NET.

(NET Interview)

CF4: Impact on the pedagogical practices of local English teachers is more likely to happen when NETs are more closely integrated into the work of the panel than when they are relegated to a role that effectively separates them from the mainstream concerns of the panel.

The decision of the School Principal quoted above to assign a whole class to the NET to ensure that he could familiarise himself with the local curriculum was also to ensure that the NET's contributions were integrated into the work of the panel as a whole. This view was echoed by local English teachers in another school in which the NET was assigned full classes:

I think NETs in recent years seem to be more ready for teaching normal classes with exam syllabus. If they want to know the students better, they should understand the difficulties students face and undoubtedly they should have some experience of teaching them the normal grammar and normal exams curriculum. Only that way can they bring more adaptation to the curriculum. ... more and more NETs seem to be accepting normal teaching duties. I think it helps with the school's administration... [it helps] share the teaching burden of other English teachers... NET teachers, I think they have found the advantages as well, because when they teach them the normal curriculum, they will know the difficulty the student's face. So, there will be better interaction with the students.

(Local English teachers FG)

Such integration is also possible even with the oral-only mode of deployment, when pedagogical discussions are facilitated by, for example, seating the NET in the staff room alongside other English teachers, instead of in the English Corner, as illustrated by the words of another teacher, and by the Principal of another school:

[In the staff room] we talk, because we talk about our teaching a lot, and so, you know... and then through the conversations, we know how we teach and then our expectations with students and then we talk about the students, you know, because we swap the students, so we can exchange information before we meet the new students so that I

know that it is fine.

(Local English teachers FG)

... after two years, we find that the English teachers find quite difficult to communicate or not so easy to communicate with her if she is sitting not in the staff room so we moved her to a normal staff room just sitting next to all teachers and there is better communication there so we treat her as you can say a normal teacher

(SP Interview)

However, seating the NET in the staff room alongside other English teachers does not guarantee that professional communication will take place. In one school, characterised as having a series of less successful NET experiences and ongoing communication problems between NET and local English teachers, the NET was seated in the staff room, but openly complained that no-one talked to her there. Local teachers in the same school explained that the NET might not be fully informed of policies or decisions because 'We don't know what she doesn't know'.

... the panel members are open that she can come and talk to us anytime and if she has any questions, we do welcome her to come to ask us. Yeah, but sometimes maybe she may need to take the initiative to start the conversation because we don't know what she doesn't know. Because it could be a problem. Because for example, like, setting exam papers, or like, speaking exam papers, we just use the marking scheme or the guidelines from the public exam, we use the same thing, but maybe the NET don't, doesn't know about it and then she would think 'Oh, why nobody tells her this?' But because we don't know she doesn't know.

(Local English teachers FG)

Research Question 2: To what extent and in what ways does the ENET Scheme improve student learning of English?

NETs and local English teachers were asked to discuss ways in which the ENET Scheme impacts on English learning at their school. Specifically, they were asked to what extent and in what ways they believed the Scheme helps to improve secondary students' learning of English and to provide examples to support their views.

Respondents noted that being taught by a NET who is engaging, and who does not speak their first language is a powerful stimulus to learners to make use of English in order to communicate. The situation was characterised as students 'needing to' or even being 'forced to speak' English, in the sense that there was no other option if they wanted to communicate with the NET. This facilitated greater use of English, providing opportunities to practise and also to negotiate meaning with the NET, both of which were seen as contributing to the improvement of student learning of the language.

This finding was moderated by the issue of student readiness to use English to communicate. Respondents noted that students who were motivated to improve, and who had attained a minimum required level of proficiency for them to be able to use the language with sufficient confidence and fluency would prosper in this situation. However, they also reflected that

students who were below the threshold and lacked the motivation to make the effort to improve through practice, may not be able to function in this monolingual English situation and might even pose discipline problems as a result.

Local English teachers perceived NETs as having greater flexibility in catering to students' needs and interests and being less constrained by a rigid syllabus. This was evident in reflections from NETs which suggested that they may use the syllabus as a guide, but introduce their own materials and ideas in order to implement it. Local teachers generally welcomed this greater flexibility on the part of the NET, perceiving it as a way of providing a more balanced English learning experience overall to learners. However, local English teachers were also critical of NETs who did not adhere to standard practice with respect to valued aspects of the local English learning context, including insistence that homework is completed, and ensuring that feedback is provided on homework tasks in a timely manner.

CF5: Stakeholders felt that the presence of a NET impacts student learning of English at junior secondary level by placing students in a situation where they need to use English in order to communicate.

There were suggestions in the interview data that even though English lessons were conducted in English, lower ability students are reluctant to make use of English to respond to local English teachers who they know understand Chinese. Students might get away with passive non-response, or with a Chinese response which might be accepted if it indicates understanding. Faced with a non-Chinese speaking teacher who adopts an interactive approach, these options are no longer available, and students need to make use of their English resources in order to engage in the interaction. Local teachers referred to this as *forcing* students to speak in English, something that they could not do.

The NET helps to provide some situations that students need to speak in English as they know the NET cannot speak Cantonese. That's [what] local English teachers cannot do. Since our lower form students are quite passive, the NET can force them to talk more. Students will speak in English when they want to join the NET's activities.

(Local English teachers FG)

The process of negotiating meaning in order to overcome a communication barrier, which research suggests facilitates language development, can thus be engaged in a lesson which is interesting and which is taught wholly in English by a teacher who cannot understand the students' mother tongue.

I think it's quite obvious if the NET takes the initiative to talk to students it's helping them to communicate with others and improve their spoken English.

(Local English teachers FG)

As one Panel Chair noted, this process of *forcing* students to use English by exposing them to a NET can help students develop a better understanding of the language.

I think to a very large extent the NET Scheme can help students to have a better understanding about English especially for us, you know, we are a CMI school, most

probably the students coming from a bit low social economic [group], so that's why when they come closer to our NET they have no choice but to use English and they really understand that this teacher is something special because she doesn't use any Chinese and I think that's very good way for them to use English outside of the classroom.

(EPC Interview)

One of the students in the non-school-based Student Focus Group expressed a similar view:

The NET acts as the 'medium' to allow students to use English more. The school should provide more opportunities to 'force' the students to get involved with the NET teachers. The process can be as fun, although it's a semi-compulsory activity. For example, in a set period of time every week, a few students will meet the NET teacher for a casual chat around a light topic. Everyone is forced to speak in English. Perhaps the conversation is irrelevant to their studies, but they can use English to talk about current affairs and their daily lives. On one hand, it can cultivate your interest in English for the topic is relaxing. You can learn the use of English in daily lives. On the other hand, in the confined English speaking environment, it helps improve your language sense in the long run. I suggest more opportunities for face-to-face chat.

(Non-school-based Student FG)

Some of the views of students gathered in the focus group support this perception of a 'struggle after meaning', which can have beneficial effects on language acquisition, even though it may involve difficulty and confusion:

Sometimes we don't understand what he was talking about. Some people thought that since you don't understand, he needs to explain in English, making it even harder to understand.

When she taught us English, we couldn't speak to her in Chinese because she didn't understand what we said. She kept speaking in English. She spoke fast. At the beginning, it was quite difficult for me to adjust and to understand, because she spoke too fast. After some time, when you get more familiar with the teacher and when you pay attention in class, there were some improvement. Even if the speech was not fluent, the listening part became smoother, as you already got used to the speed.

(Non-school-based Student FG)

Even if local English teachers are able to engage students in communicative use of English in a similar manner, perhaps by forbidding the use of Chinese in the classroom, the teachers themselves often believe that such NNS-NNS use of English is not as significant as successfully communicating with a 'foreigner', which is seen as an achievement in itself.

And then for students, I think it's a pity if a student cannot meet a foreigner in their secondary school learning, right? Because if they just face local English teachers, they are Hong Kong's way, so this is different from talking to a foreigner, so I think this is a kind of exposure to students. So that's why I really think that it is valuable to have at least one NET in secondary school... I think if students find that they are confident

enough that they can communicate with foreigners, there would be no problem for them to talk with others as well.

(EPC Interview)

The clear implication of these perceived benefits on student learning of exposure to a NET is that all students should have the opportunity of being taught by, or at least interacting with, a NET, something which can also be facilitated by reward schemes.

So that means the whole school should know him. That's why when they have a problem they want to talk to a foreigner, they can go to him. And also they have an English award scheme if you want to speak with a teacher, then you can get a stamp, meaning one mark in our oral coursework.

(EPC Interview)

CF6: Stakeholders felt that the NET impact in forcing students to use English was more likely to involve more highly motivated and better able students, and that it depended on the willingness of the NET to approach students.

Lesson observation data suggested that NETs can be highly interactive in their teaching style, making use of interesting content, injecting humour and engaging students actively. However, when the NET was not teaching the full class, but just saw the students once a week or cycle, the interaction was limited to students that the NET was familiar with. In instances where the NET was teaching oral lessons, as distinct from full classes, students were not addressed by name and the interaction that took place only involved a small number of students, while the majority managed to avoid any interaction with the teacher at all. This kind of scenario was described by local English teachers in one of the focus groups:

I think it's good for students who are highly motivated in English. Of course, they can you know, learn something more authentic from a native speaker. But I just wonder for the less ready students, sometimes okay, if they put them in the class with a NET teacher, whether they really can you know, really make good use of this resource.

(Local English teachers FG)

Deployment mode can clearly impact on the ability of the NETs to effectively encourage greater use of English in class. In the school environment, other factors come into play including the openness of the NET, his or her willingness and availability to engage with students in recess times and after school, and also the extent to which students value the opportunity of engaging with a native speaker, or simply with that particular person, i.e. whether they like the NET or not.

I think the students, especially the junior students regard him as a special guy because of his outlook, because of his appearance and then some of his students who like English very much, they like to talk to him, make friends with him, and that's true. And that provides the students a chance to talk to the native speaker.

(Local English teachers FG)

I can say a small number of students love her, no matter boys or girls, and that group of students always have lunch with her. If they have spare time, they would go to the English corner to chat with her. But what I can say is quite a small number, not a big number. It's a matter of initiative. If [the NET] she can be take more initiative to communicate more with the students, to approach the students, I think the group of numbers will increase.

(SP Interview)

In a school with an ongoing history of poor relationships between NET and local English teachers, the fact that students responded well to the NET appeared to have created some envy:

It's weird because sometimes students listen to the NET only because she has blonde hair, it's not because of the language barrier of the local teachers but just they are more afraid of the foreigner the teacher with blonde hair. Yes, so it may be because of her image, because the NCS student have a feeling that western people are more superior, so they think whatever she said is better than the Chinese teacher. They respect the NET teacher more than the local teacher.

(Local English teachers FG)

CF7: Stakeholders in one school felt that students who have attained a threshold level in their English are likely to benefit more from NET teaching. They felt that students who have not attained a minimum threshold level, and are not motivated to do so, might pose classroom management problems for NETs.

The limited amount of co-teaching that was observed or discussed in the case study schools was more a matter of a local English teacher, or in one case a Teaching Assistant, helping the NET to manage the class, than of fully-fledged co-teaching. There were two instances in the classroom observation data of a NET overseeing a classroom atmosphere that the observer felt would be characterised as overly boisterous if a local English teacher had been teaching it. There were other indicators, in discussions of the rationale for NET deployment for example, that NETs were often seen as not capable of managing the whole class without assistance. This kind of scenario is described by one Panel Chair recalling previous experiences:

In my previous school, students couldn't or weren't willing to try to understand the NET and so there were conflicts between the NET and the students. They even shouted foul language at the NET when the NET tried to control their behaviour. I have worked with four NETs in the past and all of them had problems with students... if [the NET] had limited knowledge about how to make the lessons lively, then they suffered with the lower band students.

(EPC Interview)

In the case study schools, two of the NETs who were assigned full classes were given classes which they were considered more capable of handling, or which the Panel Chair or Principal felt would be better able to benefit from NET teaching. In one case, it was a class of Non-Chinese Speaking (NCS) students; in another a specially streamed EMI class in a CMI school. In all this, there is evidence that stakeholders believed that there was a need to select the

students who would benefit most from being taught by a NET, and that it was not the most linguistically deprived students who were selected, but those who had already attained a certain level of English ability.

The concept of a threshold level below which students may not benefit from being taught by a NET was echoed by one students in the non-school-based student focus group:

Sometimes, when we speak in Chinese and the NET teacher doesn't understand... it can be quite confusing when the classmates weren't very focused. The teacher finds it hard to control the atmosphere. Meaning classmates may take advantage of the teacher, if the NET teacher is not very firm.

So we knew the stronger class was taught by NET teacher ... because it is a concern that the weaker students won't understand what the NET teacher says.

(Non-school-based Student FG)

Some NETs felt that Hong Kong students' language difficulties may not be addressed by contributions which the NET is deployed to offer. This was particularly true in relation to reading. Because of their limited vocabulary knowledge, students struggle with reading, but NETs may not be deployed to help them in this regard.

Their challenge is their vocabulary. They're very weak in vocabulary because they're not willing to read. Once they find a book, they read the first page, they don't know half of the meanings of the words or the ideas and they give up. So that's a really big challenge for them. They can't find the need to read English books. And they find it too difficult. Something they are willing to do is play English games. They love any kind of games I do in class they're okay with, even if it's in English or a lot of talking, they're fine.

(NET Interview)

I think that reading is lacking in Chinese education, not only Hong Kong but Chinese and perhaps Asian culture. I don't know why, but my suspicion is that far too much time is spent on learning how to write the characters so for example, all these children are getting frustrated learning how to get these perfect pieces of art which are Chinese characters whereas their counterparts are reading for six years. So, there's a huge gap between processing, analysing, learning vocabulary passively and of course as consequence, these kids don't develop their sense of decoding context clues, they don't have any context historically of what's going on around them because they don't have any books to rely on, and the big problem is in form 1, for example, they can't even read Mr. Men books but in five years' time, they're reading Dickens. So, there's the big chasm that I'm responsible for bridging.

(NET Interview)

CF8: NETs were often perceived as being less constrained than local English teachers by formal elements in the curriculum in their approaches to English teaching, creating a more relaxed classroom atmosphere which was valued by local English teachers.

Local teachers and Panel Chairs often described the teaching approaches adopted by NETs as catering more to students' interests, involving a greater focus on enjoyment and relying less on the extrinsic motivation of a looming dictation, quiz or examination than approaches local English teachers adopted. NETs appeared to have licence to exercise more flexibility in taking student interest as the starting point of their planning, focusing on enjoyment and introducing cultural elements into their lessons.

Local English teachers and Panel Chairs valued this flexibility as a means of enhancing motivation and a willingness to learn more English. In a school where the NET was assigned full class teaching:

I think the NET's curriculum design is different from local teachers'. Theirs should have more activities, be relaxing and fun. Students will love it. The NET is good at creating the English environment in which students will feel playful and fun, then they are willing to learn English. It is different from local teachers' lessons which are related to homework and exam... the NET does not need to handle traditional teaching tasks like dictation, quiz, exam, teaching grammar, et cetera. Otherwise, he would be just the same as other local teachers. So, we assign a role to the NET which is different from local teachers. He will play with students and teach them through activities and games. He will also go to see films with students.

(Local English teachers FG)

In a school where the NET was deployed to teach a mixture of full classes and some split-classes focusing on part of the curriculum:

... when they go to the class of the NET teacher, I really want them to enjoy the learning of the English more because in my class, I will be a little more examination oriented. If you ask me, I think this is the difference between that NET teacher and me... I really want the students to enjoy, it means I want the NET teacher to motivate the student, to make them enjoy the English, that is the most important thing.

(Local English teachers FG)

There were suggestions, among some teachers, that this focus on fun constituted a departure from the formal syllabus which might mean that parts of that syllabus might be neglected. However, most teachers recognised that putting more emphasis on interest, enjoyment and need was a valued aspect of the NETs' teaching. For example, in the mode c school represented above, the NET had the flexibility to depart from the formal syllabus in her full class teaching:

... sometimes in her class she wants to play some games, this may not happen in my class, so it really depends. We will share the same scheme of work but you know she has some kind of flexibility, if she finds that the students really need to learn something, maybe she will focus on that thing. But for us, the ordinary teachers, we have to follow the scheme of work so we have to make sure the students cover everything on the syllabus. I think this is what the big difference is, you know?

(Local English teachers FG)

Students in the focus group verified these perceptions of the different approach adopted by NETs compared to local English teachers:

He taught us less grammar. Perhaps because his first language is English, he seldom taught us grammar...In terms of grammar, there weren't many exercises. He focused more on the listening.

He uses pop music and asked us to fill in the lyrics. He makes the lessons less boring.

I find it very fun and interesting. They help students find the interest in English. At least they won't lose interest in learning English. As to the effectiveness, there's only one lesson per week, unless students take the initiative to interact with the teacher, otherwise there's little chance.

Their emphasis is different, I can feel that. NET teacher puts emphasis on the communication skills and your basic English level. ...The local teachers emphasise more on the exam skills. They will teach you some skills in order to help you gain points in the DSE, but NET teachers do not. They emphasise on the daily lives English.

(Non-school-based Student FG)

To balance these positive perspectives of the flexibility that some NETs appear to be given in implementing the curriculum, it is interesting to note the experience of one of the RNCs when she was a NET. The interview extract below suggests that some schools would expect NETs to follow the syllabus more closely and perceive it as a problem if a NET fell behind in the textbook because of her concern to ensure that students actually learn the content effectively, rather than cover the required number of pages:

So when I came to Hong Kong, I was teaching an oral class and um, it was a split class so I had 20 kids and the regular teacher had 20 kids and I can't remember if that was for one term and then we were swapping. But she asked me one day, where I was up to in the textbook and I was about 20 pages behind her and you know, this was a great concern to her and I said, yeah, but do your students actually understand the book? I'm taking the time to make sure that they do and she said, no, but we've got to cover the curriculum. And that's when I realised, that's the mindset in Hong Kong, you've got to cover the curriculum and it's kind of like it's the students' responsibility in a way to work hard and to listen to the teacher and to do the exercises and to practise, practise, practise, until they get it, but it's also the teacher's responsibility to make sure that they get lots of practice and I don't know, in (country of origin of the RNC), it was just, it was more about where the students are coming from, how do we help them get to the next level.

(RNC Interview)

CF9: In most of the classrooms observed, the NETs made use of language arts related materials, content drawing on current issues and approaches involving debating skills, and exposed students to more colloquial English, but the practices varied.

Seven lessons taught by NETs were observed by evaluation team members. Two of the seven observed lessons involved language arts activities, both focussing on poetry. In one observed NET lesson, students were asked to debate a current issue. In other NET lessons, the use of a more colloquial form of English than would be found in local English teachers' classroom language was evident. These lessons demonstrated that NETs were using 'linguistically and culturally authentic materials and resources', thus contributing to achievement of an ENET Scheme objective.

Although they provided evidence of achievement of an important ENET Scheme objective, the lessons observed as part of the evaluation also raised some areas of concern. One of the NETs using poetry as stimulus material 'appeared to have a relatively superficial understanding of the mechanics of poetry, as evidenced in the problematic treatment of phonetic aspects of poetic rhyme and alliteration' (Lesson Observation Report). In the other poetry lesson, linguistic aspects of the chosen poem were not exploited:

The poem offers the opportunity to focus on pronunciation (rhyming sounds, intonation and rhythm), lexical meanings (stink, sink, explode, porcupines), connotations (spinach and liver), idiomatic meanings (giving me fits, you're last on my list, tickle me pink) as well as poetic features (rhyme scheme, juncture). Some of these aspects of the text were touched on in a rather superficial manner, none was covered in any depth.

(Lesson Observation Report)

One of the English Panel Chairs interviewed reinforced this reservation about the expertise of NETs in language-arts related areas, expressing the view that NETs were not always well-equipped to contribute in these culturally-related areas.

First, the NET must be an English expert, and... should be able to come up with some skills that we may not have. Debating, drama, poems and songs and these are language arts. And usually local English teachers are not particularly good at these language arts. And if we are going to employ someone to help the students, at the same time, the teachers can benefit. In my experience, I don't think too many NETs can fulfil this purpose. [...] One area that the NETs can help is drama but not so many NETs know about drama. But at the same time, [the curriculum talks] about learning English through drama; not so many NETs know about poems but at the same time we are talking about learning English through poems and so on. Not so many NET teachers know about debating. Not so many of them know about the current issues in Hong Kong.

(EPC Interview)

The lesson which involved debate was the sole example of debating skills being used as a classroom teaching tool, as distinct from an activity organised after school in the context of a debating club or debating competition. The same applies to drama. Although several of the case study schools emphasised drama, and teachers claimed to use drama in their teaching, most of the discussion of drama focused on drama performances, competitions and productions rather than incorporating drama techniques in teaching. No instances of such techniques were observed in any of the observed lessons.

The use of a more colloquial variety of English, while exposing students to language which might be characterised as more ‘authentic’ also carries the risk of communication breakdown when idiomatic or ironic colloquialisms are not explained. In an observation of a Form 1 class in a low ability school, the following examples of idiomatic or ironic colloquialisms were employed by the teacher in interactions with whole class and individual students. The observer noted that students did not demonstrate understanding in their responses as shown in Table 50.

Table 50. Teacher utterances that may not be appreciated by students

Teacher’s Utterances	Intended meaning which may not be appreciated by students
‘There you go. James Dean in the making’	(Irony) The stick figure I have drawn is not as handsome as James Dean
‘Oh, here we go! Do you like going to school? I have to confess I don’t leap out of bed on a Monday morning. I must confess’	No, I am ashamed to admit that I don’t like going to school, especially the first day back after a holiday.
‘It’s an interesting question, though, isn’t it?’	Do you agree that this question could produce some interesting information?
‘Hang on a minute, something wrong here’	I have identified a problem; can you find it?
‘Do you understand what to do? Yes? Well, go on, get on with it then.’	This is what a strict teacher would say when commanding you to get on with a task assigned to you, but I’m not really so strict, I’m just pretending to be strict for a joke.
‘Do you want to be famous? Hundreds of girls chasing you around? Get on your nerves after a while, wouldn’t it?’	Although it might seem to be a pleasant thing for you as a man to be chased by lots of girls, do you agree that you would soon find it irritating?

CF10: Involving NETs more widely in the work of the English panel would entail some NETs adopting a different attitude to traditional mainstays of the local English curriculum such as the collection and marking of homework.

Several stakeholders noted a different attitude to homework among NETs. In one of the observed lessons, which depended on students having prepared a text at home for presentation in class, the work had not been done and the teacher did not comment on this at all. The challenge facing NETs in this regard was noted by one Panel Chair and, in another school, local English teachers spoke at length about what they perceived as a shortcoming of their current NET.

But one of the things facing NET teachers may be the collection of homework. That will require a lot of effort and tactics. And most NETs may just, they may not be too

serious about collecting students' homework, if they hand in homework, they may mark it, if they don't then forget it. And that is something that we [local English teachers] may not be able to accept. Because we know that we have to force the students to hand in their homework.

(EPC Interview)

... when students hand in their homework, I don't think the NET will chase them to hand in their homework or enforce them to hand in their homework as we the Hong Kong teachers do ... I don't know about teachers in other countries, but I think when you are the teacher and you find the students have problems in discipline, homework problem or they don't hand in their homework, at least you try to talk to them and find out why they are not turning in their homework just like us, when we come across students who don't hand in their homework, we'll try to talk to them very personally and try to find out from them or contact their parents. Maybe it's hard for the NET to contact the parents, the parents may not speak English, but at least the NET can help the class teacher but I can't see the NET teacher helping, I don't think so. Even the discipline department can help.

(Local English teachers FG)

NETs may not deal with homework as seriously as local stakeholders expect. This may stem from different perspectives on the value of homework.

[One of the things] that stand out in Hong Kong is the amount of homework. It's a lot. I think it's a little overboard. I think you definitely need homework. At the other extreme, too much is also not healthy. There's an optimum balance I've learnt in psychology and all my studies, there's a well-researched curve, so optimal performance, or optimal learning comes with the right quantity of work done. If you do too much, it breaks down, and not enough, there's not enough stimulus.

(NET Interview)

Adapting their teaching style to deal with larger classes than those they were used to teaching, in which students are not streamed for ability was another challenge faced by NETs.

Class size is something I personally found quite challenging when I arrived because in the UK, I was teaching a maximum of twenty students at one time, maybe thirty-five, sometimes forty in the classroom environment it can be quite difficult to do communicative, task-based activities, it can get very loud in the classroom, it can be difficult to hear all of the vowels that the students are producing. Mixed ability in the lessons is a real big challenge for me and a weakness for the students because for example, in another form 3 class that I teach, there is a girl who I've seen doing form 5 level work on her English outside of lessons where she's in a form 3 class where there's a handful of students in there who struggle to have a simple conversation with me sometimes.

(NET Interview)

Adapting to a different belief system regarding language education was a further challenge NETs may need to face. This may include different beliefs about discipline, assessment and

language learning itself.

Difficulties that I have not adapted to or I'm having a hard time adapting to? In the school: there's just a couple that I'm kind of accepting – the whole detention system, I do not like, but I'm accepting it because that's the way things are done here. ... Another hard one is, we're back to teacher beliefs about language learning, so I don't always agree with some teachers and I think sometimes they're just blatantly wrong, period. So, I just have to be tolerant to that, or patient with it. So that's the hardest thing within the school. the execution of some of the items, this is not what it's what it was intended to be. Its intention has transformed from what its main intent is. [For example,] if you're doing formative assessment, it shouldn't be included in the marks, in the grades, it should be a way to show students where their weakness is and to redo it with the feedback and to improve it. And that's the whole meaning of formative but it doesn't happen here. ... Basically, it comes down to the way you use motivation. So, if students are motivated if they can see a goal that's within their reach [that works] but sometimes the goal is set beyond their reach purposely. Without being more specific. And I saw the consequence of that with the lower ones going, '[NET's name], we're not going to study because we're going to fail anyway.'

(NET Interview)

Research Question 3: To what extent and in what ways does the ENET Scheme enhance the English-speaking environment of the school?

Many of the observations made by stakeholders quoted under findings 5, 8 and 9 above are also relevant to Research Question 3 – creating a need for students to communicate in English (F5); having the flexibility to cater more to student interest and focus on enjoyment in learning the language (F8); the provision of culturally-related, language arts-focused activities (F9).

CF11: NET involvement in organising activities outside of lesson time helps enhance the English-speaking environment in the school.
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Most of the case study schools deploy their NET to organise activities outside of lesson time. Examples of such activities mentioned in the interviews include: English Club, debating team (leading to competition entry), drama club (leading to competition entry), production of a school play or musical, a scrabble competition, screening of English movies, English Ambassador programmes, a bingo competition, a fashion show, a talent show, an English singing competition, a dance competition (students have to give an English interpretation of their dance), a radio show, a spelling bee, an Easter Egg hunt, Halloween activities, English Speaking Days and English assemblies.

One NET organised activities designed to broaden students' horizons by exposing them to different English-speaking cultures – 'activities about British culture or American culture or Australian culture or different cultures outside of Asia that they've never thought about before'.

Evaluations of NET involvement in these activities are generally very positive, as reflected in the selection of stakeholder quotes below:

[NET name] uses our English Club as the medium to train students to speak more English, to use more English, and... in the extracurricular activities. [NET name] is in charge of our drama club and then our debating team. He always trains our students on how to be a good debater.

(SP Interview)

But for the NET teacher, only one way to communicate with them is using English. Therefore the English environment really can create more practice using English in oral practice or debating practice or drama or music or something like that.

(SP Interview)

Our NET teacher organises some kind of activities, which are quite meaningful, educational, and creative, for example, she organises activities called bingo. It's quite useful and arouses some kind of interest in English especially for form 1 students.

(EPC Interview)

She does a lot. A lot. Especially in drama. And she has trained a group of English ambassadors, I think she has done a very good job it is pretty hard to recruit a group of students who are eager to use English to speak with other students or even teachers so I think she has done a very good job. Also, I think she is really very good at organising different kinds of activities. Last year, she did organise a lot of activities during lunchtime for students to enjoy, I think it's a pretty, very good job.

(Local English teachers FG)

And I would like to say that our NET is a really humble person, sometimes she organises a whole series of activities for groups of students during lunchtime but um maybe we are not involved. Can I add one more activity, because it is pretty large scale, it's a talent show. Ah, yes. Involve the students of the whole school. Some students perform on the stage. Like Hong Kong's got talent. I think it is very wonderful because everybody did enjoy it

(Local English teachers FG)

Because one of the advantage [of the activities] organised by the NET is she gives a lot of chances for the students to act as emcee or hold the microphone to speak more English. That's good practice.

(SP Interview)

I really appreciate [that] the NETs organises the activity, we call it the talent show. ... it can be quite interesting, not only singing but they can dance, they can do drama. The team has to interpret the dance and the music in English first ...it is organised wholly by the NET and she enjoys it also. That is a great impact here.

(SP Interview)

[The NET] helps us with like the speech day... or reception, receive the guests and also make good use of him with these things. We asked him to help receive the guests and then chat with the guests as well. We think of every means to make use of him.

(EPC Interview)

If [we] can create a more natural English environment for students, I think we as Hong Kong would be on the right track to giving less fortunate students in Hong Kong better opportunity to see English as something they can do, not something only for the privileged. That they care a tiny slice of the cake about.

(NET Interview)

CF12: Case study schools which also involved local English teachers in helping the NET to organise activities outside of lesson time maximised opportunities to enhance the English-speaking environment in the school.

The effective organisation of English co-curricular activities demands organisational skills and the ability to mobilise school resources and facilities, which may not be strong points of a NET. NETs deployed to teach oral classes also may be less familiar with students than local English teachers. Also, the organisation of such activities is something that local English teachers have often developed expertise in doing. All these reasons, as well as the opportunity for professional collaboration it provides, argue for not making a NET solely responsible for activities.

We have a very strong team in this school and so basically we're the expert organisers of activities so again, we do not need to rely heavily on the NET teacher to organise activities for our students.

(Local English teachers FG)

... ask the English local English teachers to help instead of just the NET teacher, that would probably be more helpful for students because I don't see all the kids all the time so I know their ability but I can't force them because I'm not their English teacher. So if a local teacher came with me to an activity, I think that would help more than just me searching and then asking each student from a different class.

(NET Interview)

NET will work with other local teachers in these activities. He also helps to hold some English program for us, e.g., creating quizzes for students in morning assembly, making some audio/video recording for announcement, phonics program, etc. It aims to raise his profile in school and we found that students like him. The cooperation between the NET and local teachers is [also facilitated by] holding these activities.

(EPC Interview)

CF13: Many of the activities organised by NETs include debating and are often language arts-related, exposing students to culturally authentic language and contributing expertise in culturally-related areas local English teachers feel less comfortable operating in.

Although debating skills were not as evident in the classroom as might have been hoped or expected, NETs willing to take on the training of the school debating team for entry into local competitions enjoyed considerable success and professional satisfaction in doing so. This is well illustrated by the joy of the following NET on noticing how well his students from the previous year had developed in their use of English, perhaps as a result of their involvement in the debate team.

... there were three form 5 boys last year who were really, really motivated, self-motivated to be part of the debate team... I went to those now form 6 boys and said, can you introduce to the debate club what you have learnt from your experience on the debate team and they loved the idea, and said, yes of course we'll do it. I had no input on the presentation and so when they did it, it was excellent, they had so much persuasive language in there that you would use in a debate although they weren't even taking part in a debate they were you know, expressing their ideas.

(NET Interview)

NETs have been instrumental in attracting greater involvement in debating since 2000 when NESTA began to organise an annual debating competition. However, the history of debating competitions in Hong Kong pre-dates the introduction of NETs into secondary schools and many local English teachers have enjoyed considerable success in training students for such competitions. The same applies to the activity known as the 'Speech Festival'. The Hong Kong Schools Music and Speech Association organised the first Speech Festival in 1949, and many local English teachers have enjoyed considerable success in training students in the various elements of the competition including solo and choral recitation or performance of poems. Although many local English teachers continue to exercise their expertise in training students for the competition, the advice of the NET, and sometimes the involvement of the NET in the training can prove invaluable. This is illustrated by the experiences of a local English teacher and an English Panel Chair in the following interview quotes:

... the NET teacher has helped us a lot with the speech festival. Last year, I got a student really very hard for me to make her speak in the right way, then she sought help from the NET teacher. Well, after, around two to three week's training she completely changed to another person. She could come, I don't know what's the magic's there. She could stand on the stage confidently, because she's a very timid kind of girl, when I trained her, she could only mumble some words, but after the help of the NET, she could go on the stage and wow, how come your accent is so beautiful!

(Local English teachers FG)

Let me tell you a very good example, I can remember for example a time when I went to this school, the NET at that moment was very experienced lady coming from Australia, I still remember she was majored in English literature and that's why when we start on Hong Kong School's Speech Festival project, she had a very, very good interpretation on this piece of poem, actually, this piece of poem is very difficult, even though I looked for some kind of help from different parties like my colleagues or even my teachers, okay, you know, when my NET teacher simply read this aloud and then she can give me a lot of good advice and that's why I still remember at the end, we came in second, even though we can't be champion, after all, I think she had made some

kind of miracle because this is our very first time to have some kind of awards in the choral speaking. So, I can draw a conclusion that it quite depends on the NET's character whether very regular, if she is an expert in the field like English literature, she can bring us a lot of benefits.

(EPC Interview)

Drama is another language arts-related area where NETs have contributed significantly in schools' co-curricular activities programmes. Among the case study schools examined in the current evaluation, one NET enjoyed considerable success in this area, which was advertised by means of a poster on the fence surrounding the school. Here the English Panel Chair shares his enthusiasm for the NET's contribution:

... having drama club or drama team is quite time consuming because we have to deal with so many problems like props, backstage, part of coaching the main characters of the drama, but because of our NET, we can coach our students more effectively and we can work with each other very closely and so that we can make students understand how we can you know, conduct the drama or writing scripts or you know, working with each other very happily.

(EPC Interview)

Western Festivals, which may also be celebrated in Hong Kong, may be given a more authentic flavour when the NET is involved in introducing associated cultural activities to the students. Pumpkin carving is a vivid example mentioned by more than one school:

Example, we held an activity (i.e. pumpkins for decoration) for Halloween last year. It was NET's suggestion and he taught students how to do it. Many students approached to the NET. Very successful.

(EPC Interview)

Okay, the NET teacher it's like the English Club, right, we ask him to have different input to our activities like we have Halloween activities, he even introduced how to carve a pumpkin lantern for Halloween so it's kind of culture which is strongly emphasised in western countries, so he can bring us some cultural knowledge from his own country or different countries because he has been teaching in different countries as well, not just Canada but the United States and Korea as well. So he is having a lot of experience teaching in different places.

(EPC Interview)

We all trained in university of how to teach English or whatever, but if we really have a figure, a person who grew up in foreign countries, then he or she can really bring their culture to us and he or she can show us the cultural difference and how the classrooms are like in other places. So I think this role is a really valuable asset to schools. The cultures that he can bring us, perhaps this is not something that we can learn in the university or professional training so I guess he really brings a lot of information about the Western cultures and for students, I think he can tell them a lot about cultures and he or she can teach the students about poems, literature, stories, giving them information about perhaps other teachers may not be able to provide... the entire lesson

becomes more informative and rich, for example, real world culture and these sorts of stuff.

(Local English teachers FG)

CF14: Some local English teachers felt that full-class NET deployment might reduce the impact on the larger English environment. But full-class NETs who are visible and approachable in the school environment can still have a significant impact in enhancing the English-speaking environment in the school.

In five out of eight case study schools, NETs were deployed to teach at least one and up to three full classes of students. Echoing the remark of one local teacher in the online survey quoted earlier that *‘The NET is totally wasted in my school. He is just asked to do some normal teaching duties like local teachers do ...’*, some local English teachers in these schools felt that the unique contribution that the NET can make in exposing students to a native accent seemed constrained by deploying the NET to take full classes, which involved a number of tasks which could just as easily be done by a local teacher, freeing up the NET to focus on providing wider exposure to English for a greater number of students:

I think it depends on how we organise our curriculum. Like right now, we ask our NET to teach a class of form 1 students and then to teach some speaking lessons. Then I wonder what our goals are. It seems that she has to manage part of the teaching and at the same time, she has to manage the speaking part. But at first... my impression [was that] we are having a NET in each school in Hong Kong because we want our students to be exposed to more native accents, to speak more English. Then, right now it seems a bit vague... [the NET is] like a regular teacher, but we have irregular expectations. She has to teach a class, she has to manage all the marking and then all the language development, the exam-oriented environment, at the same time, she has to be responsible for the English-speaking environment [of the school]. So, that’s why I feel really doubtful, I have no answer for this, I found it really challenging. And then if I were her, I would have no idea how to do it. Like I have to speak to the students all the time but at the same time, I’m a regular teacher.

(Local English teachers FG)

One of the teachers sharing this viewpoint made reference to the perceived pay differential between local English teachers and NETs by suggesting that more should be expected of a NET than of a local teacher:

... ideally I think every student in the school should know him, should be a friend to our NET teacher. So, in my opinion maybe he can talk on every Friday morning assembly maybe one or two minutes, a presentation, some sharing, I think that would really create the English environment. I think I wouldn’t treat him as one of us because he’s special, he’s a NET, he receives a special payment scheme on ENET that’s why it may be wasting this resource if we don’t make special use of him, so I say he should be more exposed, in different occasions at the school. So, give him the microphone. If I were the school management I would make him, ah, yes, put him more on the stage.

(Local English teachers FG)

Other stakeholders responsible for deploying the NET to take up a mixed mode – teaching one or two full classes as well as taking responsibility for activities – expressed appreciation for the contributions which a NET with the appropriate temperament, attitude and willingness could make in such a deployment mode:

I think... if the NET can be more willing to communicate with students, not waiting the student to come to her but she can approach them effectively, that is the most important thing, for a NET to be effective.

(SP Interview)

Well, I think with him, the students are highly motivated. We had two NETs in the past, they worked really well and motivated the students to join different activities. And one of them, was a bit funny. He attracted a lot of students to talk to him and basically they worked really well in motivating our students to speak. [The current NET] motivated our students to join the debating team and the debating team members worked really hard on the encouragement or you may say help, he helped them a lot on preparing the speeches and also motivating them to think critically and gather some motivation.

(EPC Interview)

One NET who was deployed to teach three full classes demonstrated the ideal level of willingness to engage with students in order to enrich the English environment:

I'm everywhere and I'm challenging students all of the time in case anybody has to call some out, so I'm always asking them what they're doing, why they're doing it, and when they see me, they know they have to say 'Hi', they have to say, 'Good morning'... I'm always around, I'm always asking questions, students come up and talk to me, sometimes I have to hide because they have so many questions but I'm always in the canteen at lunch, I'm always on duty somewhere, they always come up and ask me questions about my culture, for example. And of course, they see me talking with the teachers and the teachers are talking to me in English and sometimes they just kind of try to eavesdrop because they're curious. I'm very visible in the public, I'm always in the mall, I see the kids outside of business some days, I go and talk to them unabashed, I go up and sit with them at McDonalds happy to say, 'Hi', and I think the students recognise I'm approachable.

(NET Interview)

CF15: Stakeholders felt that competitions organised by the NET Section provide an effective means of enhancing the English-speaking environment in the school by providing additional practice opportunities for the students willing and able to get involved.

The competitions organised by the NET Section were well received generally. Stakeholders recognised the opportunities they provided to enable students to have greater exposure to English, and develop their language skills and creative problem solving ability:

The activities and competitions they organise actually they are quite interesting. And it does arouse our students' interest in making activities such as the Clipit competition and I do think that these activities help students to develop their English-speaking skills actually and they become more innovative and I do agree that these competitions help.

(Local English teachers FG)

However, stakeholders noted the challenges which involvement in competitions brought with it, including having to persuade students to take part (to 'dig for students') and having to overcome logistic constraints imposed by the school or by parents, for example on leaving the school premises during school time, or after school to take part in competitions staged elsewhere. In one school, according to the NET, parents were reluctant to accept that learning can take place elsewhere than sitting at a desk in a classroom:

Mm, well, the competitions they come up with, I think it's fun for the kids. I think it's part of the NET Scheme, it's a radio competition¹⁶ that we joined. The kids really loved that one. But the problem is they only take a few students and our school, there's not a lot of students willing to try English. Like I would have to search and dig for students who are willing to.

(NET Interview)

It gives students exposure to English because in school they don't really use English. ... So more exposure, basically, I would just pick the students and go out but it's about the time as well. A lot of them the school may not allow student to go out maybe during the exam period or other activities, or the parents do not allow... the competitions involve them leaving the schools and so some parents at this school they think that joining activities are not helpful for them. So, we would have to do a lot of persuading saying these exposures are good for your kids. Um, because this school is a low-income family area so a lot of the parents, they think that education is where you sit at a desk and just intake [instead of] going out to explore.

(NET Interview)

Teachers in a lower ability school felt that their students were not up to the linguistic challenge of taking part in competitions. They felt that an improvised drama performance in English – which they mistakenly perceived as required in the 'Speak Out-Act Up!' competition, and the required number of words in another competition – possibly 'Shorts' which ran up to 2015, were beyond the ability of their students to achieve. These teachers had misinterpreted the requirements of the puppetry competition as requiring memorised lines, when in fact students are allowed to refer to the script when voicing the words of the puppets:

We have received a lot of circulars from the NET Section... about the competitions... however, we haven't joined any because we find that the competition organised by the NET Section, most of them require really high English skills. Then our students are really not capable of doing it. For example, I think they do have a puppet show competition going on with the kids but for their competition, they require the students

¹⁶ In fact, the NET Section does not organise a competition relating to radio play.

to do the scripts live. Our students, they can't do the acting live script at the same time. So, for us, we usually record what the students do and then we help the kids do the acting. And usually for the writing one, they require lots of words from our kids. Our kids might not be able to do that.

(Local English teachers FG)

Despite their misinterpretation of the actual competition guidelines, teachers in this school had been inspired by the NET Section puppetry competition to devise their own alternative versions of the activities, in which they felt the language demands were reduced

Research Question 4: To what extent and in what ways does the ENET Scheme support curriculum development and implementation in secondary schools?

Although we found NETs engaged in materials development in the first all-NET Focus Group (two of the eight NETs claimed to have developed textbooks specially tailored to their school contexts. Others described significant materials development efforts), there is not a great deal of evidence from the case study interviews that individual NETs contributed to curriculum development much in their schools. The lack of evidence suggests that some NETs might tend to operate independently of the work of the panel as a whole. This is particularly the case when they are deployed to teach oral lessons to a large number of classes. When NETs are assigned whole class teaching, they are involved in co-planning meetings and, in some cases, contribute materials for sharing by all the teachers teaching that level. One of the schools in the study was part of a NET Section Seed project and teachers gave some views on their involvement in the project.

CF16: One case study school had taken advantage of School-based Support Services (SBSS) and found the process rewarding and the outcome effective.

Teachers in one school which had benefited from school-based support from the NET Section reported that their involvement in the project was beneficial to their professional development.

Our school is working with the NET section in developing some materials basically developing reading strategies, well, actually, we started last year, and then we are... They will come regularly to develop some materials with us **but the NET teacher is not involved in the project.** Yes, only some local teachers, and then we, we try out the materials in class and then evaluate, and discuss how to modify the information, or the exercises provided to the students. It is very useful ... especially I am teaching the NCS class so I can use the material quite often. (emphasis added)

(Local English teachers FG)

This single instance provides support for the effectiveness of SBSS. It is noteworthy that this support was found valuable by a teacher teaching NCS students, while the NET was not invited to participate in the support service. Surprisingly, however, the NET had been given sole responsibility for teaching NCS students. While noting the success of SBSS in this instance, the exclusion of the NET from professional development clearly relevant to her work is curious.

In the context of the school, it provides further evidence of the alienation felt by the NET as a result of the poor relationship and lack of communication between the NET and local English teachers in this school.

Teachers in another school were engaged in a Seed project run by the NET Section. These teachers valued the opportunities the Seed project provided for their professional development but they took the opportunity, when engaged in a focus group discussion, to express some frustrations about the support process. Some of the teachers were constructive in their comments, making suggestions for alternative ways of achieving the same outcome. Others suggested that more groundwork was needed before engaging the school in the project. They felt that their skills had been undervalued, and the pressure on their time commitment underestimated.

To put these views in perspective, it is worth mentioning that project schools are selected by the NET Section based on an agreed understanding that the schools were willing to allocate time for collaborative lesson planning. Moreover, the mode and focus of support were negotiated with the teachers before the project began.

CF17: In case study schools where NETs and local English teachers were both teaching whole classes at the same year level, the NET was able to contribute valuable materials for sharing with the whole team teaching that level. In schools where NETs were teaching oral classes, and were treated as one of a team of teachers teaching the same level, sharing of curriculum materials was also seen. Oral-only NETs who were working independently of the mainstream curriculum had fewer opportunities for sharing of curriculum materials.

In the case study schools, NETs had limited involvement in school-based curriculum development, but some of them were active in producing or modifying materials for their own classes, which they then shared with other teachers by various means. In one school, the co-planning meeting that was observed as part of the evaluation was called to discuss materials which the NET had prepared for oral lessons, and shared with other teachers taking oral classes at the same level. Local teachers in this school noted that the NET shared the materials he developed by posting them on an internal school drive. The NET remarked that these materials were developed through a collaborative process, even though the initial development was done by him alone, since he received feedback from colleagues and adapted the materials accordingly:

[The] NET only teaches our oral lessons. He will put his notes and teaching materials in the school internal drive, which is very useful and helpful. Teachers will share resources in this way in our school. NET is very creative and knows the students' need. Since I'm Form 1 coordinator, I am responsible to handle the handout to other teachers. But, the NET will do the handout and assessment tasks for me actively. He is willing to share our workload and his output is in high quality. For example, he will suggest students to watch a video of advertisement and then go for a discussion. It is out of our expectation.

(Local English teachers FG)

I've developed oral materials for form 1, form 2, 3 and form 4 which I have shared with all of my colleagues. Sometimes it wasn't collaborative when I developed them which just means I created them but I have had feedback on some of them saying, oh, this one worked quite well or this didn't work well, so I've adapted them along the way based on what colleagues have said to me.

(NET Interview)

Co-teaching should in principle provide an opportunity for collaborative materials development. However, co-teaching was only found in two of the case study schools and in both cases, there was little evidence of collaboration in the development of materials.

Two teachers in another school expressed the desire to be able to co-teach with the NET since one of them had found the practice rewarding in another context. In her current school, she lamented the fact that everything was 'so isolated', reinforcing the impression that collaborative materials development was not taking place:

And um, I taught in another school for a couple of years and... we were having kind of co-teaching together so the NET teacher was in front of the class and I was the one at the back to assist the other students. I personally like this type of co-teaching style but here, it seems everything is so isolated

So if resources really allow, at least in junior form, form 1 and 2, we can have some sort of co-teaching lessons with the NET teacher. Even for some weaker students, they can with the help of the local teacher, they can know what's going on and later they can enjoy their lesson.

(Local English teachers FG)

In another school, the Panel Chair informed the interviewer that the NET was co-teaching all her oral lessons. However, while the NET enjoyed co-teaching at one level, she was not aware whether she should also be co-teaching at other levels, as 'nothing was ever said to her clearly' and the local English teachers 'never showed up'. Despite the unfortunate lack of communication between panel members and the NET in this school, the NET was happy to share her teaching materials:

Yeah, only some of them [involve co-teaching]. Mainly [it] was form 2 that I did that with. I'm not sure whether I'm supposed to do it with all those other classes because nothing was ever said to me explicit[ly]... clearly. But I know that with form 2 the teacher's always there, but with the other forms, they never showed up. ... [anyway] I like to share materials with teachers. It's something I just do. I'll see something, and I'll think oh, that person is teaching it, this might be useful, and just pass it on to them. I do tend to do quite a bit of that. Sometimes it's just something I think it would be a nice thing to try but I'm not teaching that theme or that topic at the moment, so I just pass it on. They can use it if they want to or adapt it.

(NET interview)

Research Question 5: To what extent and in what ways does the ENET Scheme contribute to professional development and collaboration among the teachers?

This question is formulated to explore the extent of collaboration between NETs and local English teachers and the professional development opportunities such collaboration provides for both parties. To explore the effectiveness of professional development opportunities offered by the NET Section through cluster meetings and Centralised Professional Development workshops, stakeholders were also asked whether they had taken advantage of these opportunities, and if so, to comment on their effectiveness.

Findings from the range of schools examined in the case studies yielded a range of different levels of professional development and collaboration among teachers. Respondents in schools which deliberated and strategically targeted collaboration were positive in their evaluations. The views of respondents in schools where collaboration was not effectively achieved indicated that mutual respect between NET and local colleagues had been eroded by different ideologies, different expectations of workplace behaviour and different values placed on education and pedagogy.

When discussing professional development opportunities facilitated by the ENET Scheme, respondents were very positive in their evaluations, finding centralised workshops well planned, practical and relevant to their needs. However, there was a misconception regarding the target audience of regional cluster meeting, local English teachers perceiving them as designed more for NETs than for local English teachers.

Regarding the role of the NET in contributing to professional development in the school context, only one instance was found among the case study schools, suggesting that NETs generally are not invited to contribute by the schools, or do not feel ready to do so.

CF18: Structuring collaboration into the work of the NET creates a more harmonious working relationship for all parties.

As noted in relation to collaborative curriculum development above, co-teaching would have been welcomed by local English teachers as one way of establishing collaboration-based practice and they regretted that their current system did not allow it.

I just focus on my part and I don't even know what the other teacher is teaching. This is not what I like. I find that cooperation is far more important than, you know, just being by myself and doing my bit.

(Local English Teachers FG)

Practices adopted in other schools demonstrated how collaboration could be effectively promoted through management strategies. Deliberately assigning pairs of teachers to be responsible for co-curricular activities, rather than making them the sole responsibility of one party, was clearly a successful strategy, as the views of the Panel Chair and the NET concerned indicate:

And we carefully arranged a local teacher to work with him okay, so the debating team will have two teachers, him and [local teacher's name], and then we have drama, [local teacher's name] and him, of course speaking, [local teacher's name] and him, so I think he is well supported by our staff here so in case of administrative work, the local English teachers can help, I mean, in terms of the skills and activities, then we'll have a lot of help for him.

(EPC Interview)

I really enjoy the extracurricular collaboration. It's really good, because there are two or three of us each year who are in charge here for debate, you're here after school for a very long time sometimes until 6pm so it's nice to say sometimes oh, you get to go in late, I'll go early tomorrow, or also it's nice to bounce ideas off to each other for students.

(NET Interview)

Another management strategy which successfully encouraged collaboration was promoting the concept of the school as a family, operating through team work. This was accompanied by an open classroom arrangement, where teachers have time to observe each other's classes and discuss what went on in post-lesson discussion:

The NET came here then he joined our school then he enjoyed very much just like a family because I always indicate that we need to work in a team, not individually because we have over 800 students. If every teacher works independently, it's very difficult for them. Therefore, we work as a team. He told me that some of his experience, he reflected that our school just like a family, something like that.

[...]

I wish them to work in team to share their expertise or their success with the others and then we can take a look [at what they are doing] and then use it in our classroom. Open classroom in our school is quite common. We encourage teachers to learn from the others... after the lesson observation, we have the post discussion when the teacher will share... the objectives... some good practice etc.

(SP Interview)

The team approach creates a feeling of shared purpose and shared responsibility, which encourages professional communication between teachers:

So the first thing, obviously, we all communicate on students' progress, especially when you share classes because there is a lot of shared classes, especially if there's a student that I'm worried about. Or yesterday, for example, one of my colleagues got a phone call from parents from a student, she was worried about his progress in English so the teacher had to come and speak to me because we both teach that class.

(NET Interview)

CF19: Effective collaboration was evident in case study schools when there was mutual respect and communication between all parties.

In some of the case study schools, productive collaboration between the NET and local English teachers was clearly in evidence; in others there was a clear lack of collaboration in situations where communication between teachers was an obvious problem. In the best practice schools, stakeholders identified factors which had helped to make collaboration more effective. Goodwill, a friendly atmosphere, a willingness to communicate and the mutual respect which comes with recognising others' valued experience, expertise and dedication to the task in hand were some of the factors stakeholders mentioned:

Well, to maintain a relationship, I think goodwill is very important. I think first of all, all of the panel members are very friendly. And at the same time, the NET is a very nice person. Okay so nobody is afraid of speaking to him even other panel members, okay they are willing to talk. And of course our English panel members love to talk to him and to involve him in every activity and in a lot of activities too. There are no conflicts of interests. It's very important, right? Okay, so we just try to help each other out.

(EPC Interview)

I really enjoy the extracurricular collaboration, it's really good, because there are two or three of us each year who are in charge here for debate, you're here after school for a very long time sometimes until 6 pm ... it's nice to bounce ideas off to each other ... And with regards to collaborating with materials, and I've only really done it formally with form 3, and the form 3 teachers, and that's been I think it's quite good and we're still adapting it now, and I would like to do more, you know, with form 4 trying to get more opinions about what works well.

(NET Interview)

In another of the case study schools, the EPC identified communication as a key factor, as well as dedication, qualification and experience, although in this school the NET did not rate collaboration highly (she gave it a 6 on a scale of 1 to 10) and did not value it highly, being content to pursue her own interests unhampered by the views of others.

Okay, I think communication is one of the ways to you know, help each other, have a different understanding with each other and also it quite depends on the NET's character if she really wants to make a change helping the kids, I think that will be okay, especially for those that are very devoted and they have a very good English background and also something maybe more even obvious is if they have some kind of experience teaching English as a second language or foreign language I think that's very beneficial because what I came across is my own NET that actually she has a lot of experience teaching some Chinese students in Australia and that's why no matter in terms of classroom discipline or any other thing else happening she can handle them very efficiently.

(EPC Interview)

On a scale of 1 to 10, most of my colleagues are pretty good. I have a good bond with them, communicate with them, we collaborate so it's hard to say ... I would say about

a 6. [A higher level of collaboration would] not necessarily [improve my work]. because sometimes for me, getting things done by yourself is more efficient than sharing it with ten people.

(NET Interview)

In another of the case study schools where collaboration was less successful, local English teachers demonstrated refreshing frankness and empathy in trying to explain the problem. First, they expressed their liking for the NET and acknowledged the significant contributions she had made:

She is really charming, she is humble, and we are lucky to have her, so this is really personal, but I think we can get more insight from their culture. [As local teachers,] ... we couldn't help but talk about exams ... so I'm lucky ... that there is at least one person who tries to push us back to the normal track...

(Local English teachers FG)

Against this background of a sympathetic attitude towards the NET as an individual, local English teachers elaborated some of the reasons they believed collaboration was not successful between NETs and local English teachers generally. They identified the working culture as one factor: NETs often find it hard to accept local practices they might consider 'weird', for example concerning working hours, sick leave and not understanding the 'hidden rules' which govern working life in Chinese society:

I think it's the working culture. In a school I worked in years ago, I found that [NETs] find our working culture really weird. Like they don't understand. That's what I believe... [there are] a lot of hidden rules that they don't understand so... there will be a lot of misunderstandings. Like the time that we can leave school. Yes, we Chinese, we like to show that we are very hardworking to our principal, we seldom leave school sharp at the time which we are allowed to leave. But, for the NET, it's very obvious, it's the time for me it's the official time I just go because I finished my job, why couldn't I leave? Oh, no, that's not nice, that shows you are not hardworking, you are not devoted. ... Can anyone organise a workshop for them, you know, because I think they are having a hard time. Yes, like asking for sick leave, I think this is also a very big issue because I know that for the NET teachers, they think that I really do not feel well, because people have different definitions of feeling well, right? I don't feel well, that's why I stay at home, tomorrow come back and give very good lessons. But for we Chinese, we have to go to work until we die, you know? This is how hardworking we are. That's really sad.

(Local English teachers FG)

It appeared that local English teachers had complained that the NET in this school had taken too much sick leave. The School Principal spoke about the case. He had found that the amount of sick leave the NET had taken was 'not very few, but not very abnormal'. But underlying this analysis was the hidden rule elaborated by the teachers above, that you only take sick leave when you are dying, and since taking sick leave meant that someone else had to do one's work, this created tension among teachers in the school:

Some of our English teachers thought that the NET sometimes got sick leave quite often, they thought that the NET teachers always took sick leave when she has quite a lot of lessons on that day, something like that. And as a principal, I checked the frequency and the days the NET was having sick leave [and I found it] normal. Maybe in one academic year she had about eight to ten sick leave days: not very few, but not very abnormal. But the relationship became a bit tense because most of the time if she was absent, the TA had to substitute the lesson, or even the English teachers, because they split the oral speaking class, but once she was absent, the teacher has to take up the whole class and that will make some hard feelings, so the relationship cannot develop so well here. In the past, there even some more tense relationship between NET and some particular English teachers.

(SP Interview)

Another possible factor explaining the lack of collaboration in this particular school could be traced to the NET herself. She had an independent personality and claimed to prefer working independently. In other words, she did not value collaboration because it meant that she might have to accept other people's ideas when she preferred to pursue her own direction:

If there was a higher collaboration, would it improve my work? Not necessarily. Because sometimes for me, getting things done by yourself is more efficient than sharing it with ten people. ... Like I said, more collaboration we have, it could equal more problems too because everyone has their own opinions. This team is very opinionated. Some are very opinionated but like if it was more collaboration, I don't know how much more we would get done.

(NET Interview)

Mutual respect between NET and local English teachers is threatened when one party adopts practices or espouses beliefs which the other party cannot accept. One example of this concerns attitudes to homework, which is elaborated in relation to another finding later in this report. Here the problem threatening mutual respect is illustrated by a direct quote from a local teacher recalling experience acquired earlier with their current NET:

Sometimes the NET teachers will just blame on the students being lazy or not obeying his instructions, something like that, but does he really see the difference in culture? Does he try to cope with the difference and solve the problems? I don't know. I'm not really sure about that. Sometimes we can't really put the blame on the students by saying they are lazy [when] we can help. We can simply ask them to do something instead of just leaving them, not asking them to turn in homework, because I remember maybe last year or two years ago, all students in my class received zero score, from one of the writings [assigned by the NET] The NET just said, that student didn't hand in their work. But if the student hands in work to me, they should be able to hand in homework [to him], it's just about whether you encourage the student to submit their work or not.

(Local English teachers FG)

One of the case study schools appeared to be the site of an ideological struggle between the NET and other teachers including the English Panel Chair. This is also discussed in more detail

in CS5 of the report. Here it will suffice to give the NET's viewpoint, illustrating how lack of respect for each other's views would lead to tense relations hampering collaboration:

Another hard one is, we're back to the beliefs of teachers in language learning, so I don't always agree with some teachers and I think sometimes they're just blatantly wrong, period. So, I just have to be tolerant to that or patient with it. So that's the hardest thing within the school... It depends on the teacher. So, some people I can discuss it with. And others, no, because it'll just raise tensions and produce a not positive effect. It depends.

(NET Interview)

CF20: NETs and local English teachers in case study schools had attended professional development workshops and found them helpful.
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Stakeholders were unanimous in their appreciation of the NET Section professional development workshops characterising them as 'important', 'authentic', 'active', 'creative', 'wonderful', 'really interesting', 'special' and 'inspiring' as the following quotes from interviews illustrate:

I've been on debate courses that were run by the NET Section which is important because I'm quite involved with the debate club at the school.

(NET Interview)

[Our teachers have attended a] number of workshops or panels conducted by the NET Section... and what they are teaching or working on is something very, very useful. Especially they can provide us with some very authentic examples and most probably the activities, they organise are very active and creative. Sometimes I think the activities provided by the NET Sections are quite wonderful sometimes.

(EPC Interview)

Yeah, I did last year, or the year before, so it's about debating and I think it's a real high-quality course and the reason why I joined was because frankly speaking it's my expectation that if a group of native speakers teach me how to debate or how to use different techniques that would be nice so this is the reason why I joined it. And I found it really interesting.

(Local English teachers FG)

I joined their workshop called 'workplace communication' and they taught some new approaches and activities. We experienced some activities. I think it's special and a bit different from our normal practices. Quite inspiring. The workshop was for local teachers and the NET.

(Local English teachers FG)

Regional cluster meetings were generally valued by NETs as a means of sharing ideas. The potential value of such meetings was also recognised by School Principals.

I was starting to attend cluster meetings but I just started my PGDE part time... which is two evenings a week so quite busy. I would like to [go], so probably when my course is finished, I will try and go to the cluster meetings.

(NET Interview)

I think we need more training definitely and we do find the NET regional meetings very useful, you come away with some great ideas, it's a great opportunity to share ideas, I find them very useful.

(NET Interview)

NET can share some good practices or experience with other NETs in their gathering, like a learning circle. New elements might be brought to schools from those sharing.

(SP Interview)

The NET [asked to] join these cluster meetings. I said, of course. Go ahead... because some interschool NET teachers, they are very, very good. ... the cluster meeting for the NET is very good. They support my NET.

(SP Interview)

Of the eight NETs interviewed, two had attended cluster meetings and made use of activities introduced there in their own teaching, another three had attended but were not able to put ideas into practice. Two of these NETs claimed that ideas were pitched at a level which did not match the needs of their students, or that there was no time in a tight timetable to incorporate the ideas:

I think my first year, I went to a few cluster meetings, I hosted one cluster meeting, and I did not find them very rewarding. I found that because I'm in a band one school, that's EMI, what they were talking about wasn't relevant to me.

(NET Interview)

I often find their activities a little bit challenging for our students... What I should say is, I sometimes find that they're unworkable because... often students don't have much time... Their timetables are very tight.

(NET Interview)

Another NET commented on the atmosphere of early meetings he had attended, where NETs were 'venting' and he found little sympathy for their problems.

And I found it to be a very negative environment. And a lot of NET teachers were venting and it really didn't help me at all because I'm either sitting there feeling pity for them or getting angry because they're wasting my time. I think that from rumour, [the meetings have] improved, but from that experience, I've never gone back

(NET Interview)

It should be noted that the nature of cluster meetings has evolved over time and they are now occasions for genuine professional development through sharing of teaching ideas. The ‘venting’ this NET mentioned was characteristic of early cluster meetings and the fact that he still espouses this view may suggest that he had not been in touch with the pulse of the NET Section or the NET Section has not done enough to reach out to NETs like him. The developing nature of cluster meetings was described by one RNC in interview:

We still have the cluster meetings, but in the beginning in my areas, it was pretty well attended because it gave the NETs an opportunity to sort of get away from school and to be with people who are here for a similar reason and to have similar take on things, kind of the same way so that they can vent, they can you know, find solace, support, whatever, but then we decided to change the cluster meetings into meetings that have a certain academic focus, pedagogical focus, you know, this meeting was how to teach reading, that meeting was about how to teach speaking and listening, and then we started opening up the meetings to local English teachers as well because here we want to promote collaboration and want to not only between the NETs but also between schools, you know? That wasn’t well received, so the attendance drastically dropped. The NETs stopped coming.

(RNC Interview)

Several participants in the non-school-based NET focus group agreed that NET Section Professional Development workshops were valuable, but they noted that permission to attend them was often denied by the Principal who would prefer teachers to stay in school and provide more activities for students:

[The NET Scheme Professional Development workshops are] ... fantastic, but my Principal, it was very hard for me to get time off to do that. I only went for ... one every 2 years, because [the Principal would say] ‘You’re better here in the school. You can take an extra class after school, err, you can take a Form 6 class, I’d rather you do that than go.’ So, it was a real hard, but when I did go, the few times I did go I really enjoyed it.

(Non-school-based NET FG)

CF21: Some local English teachers had the misconception that Regional Cluster Meetings and workshops were targeted more at NETs than at local English teachers.

Some local English teachers had a misconception about the NET Section cluster meetings and professional development workshops, believing that their target audience was NETs alone. Because they were organised by the NET Section, these teachers believed that the workshops were designed primarily for NETs, and that local English teachers were not expected to attend. This was a belief held by local English teachers who had never attended any workshops, and was also the view of one Panel Chair who had attended a workshop and felt uncomfortable there because there were so few other local English teachers present. This Panel Chair recommended that workshops be separated into those designed for NETs and those designed for local English teachers, reinforcing their initial misconception:

Yeah, I have but I have never joined them. I know it popped up from the training calendar we can apply if we want to...[but] I got the feeling it wasn't for me. First it's organised by the NET Section whenever I see the NET Section, [I think] it's none of my business. I thought it was for the NET teacher in that area so I didn't know that I could join so I'm aware of that.

(Local English teachers FG)

I attended some workshops about phonics and reading in NET Section. I felt that most of the workshops are for NETs only, not for other teachers. I was a bit odd when I was there. Most of the attendants were NETs and only a few were local English teachers. There were some different points of view from the NETs and local English teachers in group discussion. It is better to separate into two groups I think... or to have more local English teachers to join in order to balance the views from local. But, anyway, it was a good exposure for me.

(EPC Interview)

CF22: There was only one instance of school-based professional development activities conducted by a NET.
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One of the objectives of the ENET Scheme is 'to strengthen teaching capacity through school-based professional development and collaboration between NETs and English Panel members'. A legitimate interpretation of this would suggest to some that NETs should take responsibility for organising school-based professional development workshops. This was the view of one School Principal whose views are further discussed below:

... the NET can do much more... we expect the NET [to be] an expert in school. ... For example, the NET is supposed to be able to help in curriculum development and professional development and give advice to our English department teachers... But I have not found the NETs can do it in my experience. ... Some NETs may be only interested in teaching students, but not training teachers.

(SP Interview)

Among the eight case study schools, there was one whose NET had been deployed in various ways over a number of years to do precisely what the School Principal above wanted NETs to do, to train local English teachers:

We have him... give us some workshops like literature workshops for the teachers ourselves.

(Local English teachers FG)

This was achieved through various means. First, the school instigated an open classroom policy and deployed the NET to teach a Shakespeare curriculum over a period of two years specifically so that local English teachers could observe his lessons with a view to developing expertise and taking over the teaching of Shakespeare in the following year:

I had a very interesting responsibility because I had to model teaching *Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Twelfth Night*, *Macbeth*, *Hamlet*, *Romeo and Juliet*... for all three junior forms. That means for one period a week, I would come in, basically... bring the play into life other than just a flat piece of paper... And I had to do that with so many plays because the teachers didn't know how to teach Shakespeare otherwise they'd say, just sit there and read it or go home and read it... And so I modelled for two years and after that, [School Principal name] felt the other teachers felt comfortable enough to teach it on their own.

(NET Interview)

Secondly, the same NET arranged voluntary lunchtime poetry workshops for his local colleagues:

And quite often we'll have poetry workshops amongst ourselves where the teachers volunteer to come in and I hold the workshop on a poem, I've had about thirty of them in the last five years. And of course, the purpose of that is to get teachers more comfortable with poetry so they can be more confident in the classroom and of course that can have an effect on the students.

(NET Interview)

Research Question 6: What progress has been made on the key recommendations of the 2009 evaluation report and how have the various curricular initiatives since 2009 and changes in the support provided for NETs impacted the implementation of the Scheme?

Progress made on recommendations of 2009 report

The recommendations of the 2009 evaluation report are presented in the introductory section of this report (section 1.4). The survey findings that responded to this question can be found above under Research Question six. Case study data provide evidence of progress made in response to the three key recommendations of the 2009 report:

- a. The English Panel should shift the emphasis from administrative to pedagogical matters.
- b. Teachers should act as collaborative specialists working in collaborative teaching teams.
- c. The organisation of the Panel meeting needs to be altered.

Evidence has already been reported (see SF18 and SF19 above) relating to the effectiveness of collaborative team-based working in creating a more harmonious and more effective working relationship. Progress on re-orienting English Panel Meetings is not much in evidence in the case study schools, however.

The 2009 Evaluation recommended that English Panel Meetings should always be conducted in English, which was the case in six out of eight of the case study schools. The report also suggested that Panel Meetings should be more interactive, 'more of a collaborative teaching team focussing on improving student learning outcomes and English competence in particular'

(Griffin & Woods, 2009: 51). Rather than focussing on examination score improvement, Panel Meetings should focus on learning outcomes.

CF23: In most case study schools, English Panel Meetings continue to be largely administrative rather than pedagogical, but more pedagogical issues are discussed in level meetings. Best practice schools model a more academic orientation in Panel Meetings.

English Panel Meetings involve all teachers teaching all levels from S1 to S6 and deal mostly with issues which affect all teachers and all levels. To a large extent this characteristic of English Panel Meetings makes a focus on administrative issues inevitable, since matters concerning learning outcomes would be more effectively discussed in level meetings. In their focus on the large-scale Panel meetings, which take place three or four times a year, the 2009 evaluation may have disregarded other curriculum planning meetings, and collaboration opportunities. With the implementation of the curriculum reform, there have been more and more avenues for professional exchanges and deliberations, such as peer observation, post-observation exchanges, school-based project meetings and school-based professional development workshops.

In interviews, all stakeholders were asked about the English Panel Meetings, and most confirmed that the meetings were largely administrative in nature. Local English teachers seemed more resigned to the routine nature of such meetings, and the fact that the meetings were not designed for decision-making but for the handing down of instructions and policies.

English panel meetings? Just some routine things. At the beginning of the year, the arrangement of the classes, homework policies, these kinds of things. Spend a lot of time talking about the homework. How many pieces of writing we have to read. And, oh, we should have so many, we should, blah, blah. That would be a lot of time. Not decision making or discussion, report for most of the time... Yeah. Like a lot of announcements. Decisions which have been made beforehand.

(Local English teachers FG)

A NET with experience of a different style of meeting gave a more critical evaluation of this style of meeting:

I'd say those are the worst meetings I've ever seen in my life. So, my experience... is that meetings are supposed to be where you hash things out and make decisions... but it doesn't happen in this school. At this school, there's already an agenda, the decisions have already been made, by one person, at the top, and we just go through the list for acceptance. The meetings are very quiet, unlike [the level meeting] you saw today. There was a decent rapport today.

(NET Interview)

In one of the schools we have identified as enjoying a Very Effective ENET Scheme experience, a rather different model of Panel Meeting was observed by the evaluation team. The NET in this school gave a trenchant description of a typical meeting, which was clearly more in line with the recommendations of the 2009 evaluation report. Apart from the focus on

student learning progress, when reference is made to examination results, it is not a reference to scores but to learning outcomes, as Griffin and Woods recommended:

Oh, yeah, they're super long. They're scheduled for about an hour, they last three. And they're very thorough. Everybody has two delegated responsibilities so they have to give back the proper information and we do a reflection on what went well, what could be done better, so we're very proactive, we have so many facets to our teaching load, so you know, scaffolding, so we try to scaffold everything from form 1 to form 6 so that everything is interconnected, we know what the form 2 teachers have taught so we don't have to reteach it in form 3, and we know what the form 4 teachers have to do so we have to get our students to a certain standard. And the constant struggle is making sure that we're all interlocking perfectly and seamlessly so that when we [come to the end of term] it's not so stressful for the students, they know what they've done, they know what their expectations are, and the teachers can trust the teachers below them and above them so the students just keep on going down the river so to speak until they graduate. [The content of the meeting] is curriculum-based, we always deconstruct something that's new, try to put it back together so that it's better, we try to find problems in our teaching because sometimes we find that based on our student's results or their answers in exams that they haven't grasped a certain concept and we have to go back and say, what was wrong with our teaching? Why were the students writing this in the third person when it should have been first person? I mean, that's a big problem so something's gone wrong.
(NET Interview)

It is worth noting here that the NET quoted above was an experienced teacher with a rich educational background, who had taught in prestigious schools worldwide. The recommendations of the 2009 evaluation report in general, when discussing the role and responsibilities of NETs, clearly have such a NET in mind. The recommendations made in the report, for example, that the NET should be accountable for recommendations, should advise the English Panel Chair, should be responsible for making sure other English panel members were on track academically, clearly envisage a NET with a more elevated standing in the school than is the case in seven out of eight of our case study schools.

CF24: More than one instance was found of an English Panel Meeting conducted in Chinese, in schools in which email communication relating to English curriculum matters was also in Chinese.

Two of the eight case study schools conducted their English Panel meetings in Chinese. In one of the schools, teachers seemed to find this choice acceptable. In the other school, teachers regretted the decision of the English Panel Chair to use Chinese not only for Panel meetings, but also for internal English panel communications, thus effectively reducing the direct involvement of the NET in the work of the Panel. Fortunately, the NET was involved in level meetings, and these were conducted in English:

The NET is there [in the English Panel Meeting], but sadly, it is in Cantonese. That's why she really depends on the person who sits next to her to interpret everything.

(Local English teachers FG)

So this school is very special. Their meetings are all in Chinese and all of their emails are in Chinese. I don't really get the message and they complain that I don't get the message, and so it's very difficult. Even messages related to English teaching are in Chinese. So just the curriculum meetings are in English. I mean, the English panel meetings are in Chinese. But the panel meeting is the whole team but the curriculum where I teach form 1 is in English because it's just a few people.

(NET Interview)

Personally, I think that if [the NET] can understand more of our school culture, then that would be better. Then, when we talk about whole school approach, when we talk about the policy, all the meetings are in Cantonese. So like we spent a lot of time to talk about how we should improve our English environments in our staff meetings but I doubt whether anyone tells [the NET] that. And then all documents are in Chinese. Even the emails. So that's why I think in certain extent, I wonder you know, if she feels lonely or isolated at certain points. If you really want me to work well with the school, I think at least you need to involve me. So you know, in a lot of situations I find that she may be the last one to know the arrangement.

(Local English teachers FG)

Impact of curricular initiatives on implementation of the Scheme

As discussed above in reporting quantitative findings related to Research Question 6 (3.3.3 above), the key curricular initiative in secondary education in Hong Kong since 2009 is the introduction of the new senior secondary (NSS) curriculum and the inclusion of elective modules in that curriculum.

We have reported findings that Panel Chairs and local English teachers tend not to deploy NETs to teach examination classes. It was reported that students tend to prefer local English teachers to teach HKDSE classes, and that NETs tended to dislike the examination orientation of such classes and found lower level classes more rewarding. The only exceptions to these trends were the deployment of NETs to teach split Form 6 classes or small groups of Form 6 students to prepare them for the oral component of the HKDSE examination, and the deployment of one of the NETs in the case study schools to teach a full Form 6 class in a previous year. In the latter case, the Principal of the school had received complaints from parents about the teaching style that the NET adopted in preparing their children for the HKDSE examination. The Principal had supported the NET's approach and students' results were no better or no worse than those of HKDSE classes taught by local English teachers in the same school in the same year.

NETs in the case study schools were rarely involved directly in teaching elective modules for the HKDSE, but several NETs were engaged in teaching language arts topics in lower forms, which can be seen as a means of preparing for the senior secondary electives – Learning English through: Drama, Short Stories, Poems & Songs, and Popular Culture. Possibly, therefore the NSS curriculum reform had influenced the decisions of English Panel Chairs and School Principals in deploying NETs to assist in these areas. We have reported that local English teachers often felt that NETs were better equipped to teach these culturally loaded subjects.

The other change to the orientation of the secondary curriculum since the publication of the 2009 evaluation report is the ‘fine-tuned’ Medium of Instruction (MOI) arrangements. There is little evidence that the fine-tuned MOI arrangements have impacted the implementation of the ENET Scheme in any significant way in the case study schools. In one school, the NET was assigned to the ‘EMI class’, a class of Form 1 students with higher English ability all of whose subjects were taught through the medium of English in the predominantly Chinese medium school. However, there was no attempt on the part of the NET or the English Panel Chair to integrate the work of the NET with the English medium instruction provided by the content area teachers. In another school, the NET had been assigned to teach one class of History in order to model cross-curricular integration between the literature elements included in the English curriculum and History curriculum. However, this school was an EMI school with a NET who was exceptional in many respects and therefore not a sound basis for generalisation about impact on the ENET Scheme as a whole.

Impact of changes in the support provided for NETs on the implementation of the Scheme

Changes in the support provided for NETs since the 2009 evaluation report were summarised above in reporting quantitative findings related to Research Question 6.

The impact of these changes was discussed in interviews with NETs and others in the case study schools and they were generally well received. However, a number of stakeholders in the schools offered suggestions for additional elements or emphases to be added to the initial training provided for NETs.

I think [the NET Section] need[s] to make it very clear to all the NETs what they’re expected to do. If they always think that we are NETs, we are superior to local teachers, we should not be doing everything like the local teachers then you need to prove to us that you are doing a lot of other things that we local teachers cannot do. Then you prove your value, you know? And communication with the whole school is also important... I think the NET Section should think of a system how to maintain the quality of NETs, their attitude, their language proficiency, what things they need to do.

(EPC Interview)

And also I think it would be great if the ENET Scheme or the NET Section can provide some kind of, like cultural help or immersion or whatever programme for the NET because, from my observation... the NET may find it difficult to get along or to cooperate with others because he or she may not know every one of them and then and they may not have the chance to work together because not every teacher teaches English in the school. So it would be great if the NET Section could provide some kind of cultural immersion or help... for them to adapt to the environment because it may be quite different from schools to schools.

(Local English teachers FG)

[Parents] don’t have time on weekday afternoon to come the school, so we have to make it Saturday. So, maybe... the NET Section can help to tell the NET that they have to expect [that] this kind of situation may happen.

(Local English teachers FG)

One of the case study schools had applied for SBSS and English Panel members discussed the service in interviews. Another school was participating in a seed project. It is worth noting that in both schools, the NET was not invited to participate in the support service, reinforcing the impression we have reported of NET isolation from the concerns of the Panel as a whole in those schools.

SBSS were well-received in the school, and the expertise of the RNCT was acknowledged by participants. However, teachers in a Seed project school raised a number of suggestions regarding the service, and expressed some frustration with the additional workload it entailed. These suggestions are reported in relation to CF16 above.

3.7.4 Additional Findings

CF25: The number of suitable potential NETs was perceived to be shrinking. Underlying this perception were a number of expectations as to the characteristics of a ‘good’ NET.

Some local English teachers and School Principals mentioned that they felt there were not many experienced NETs in the pool to choose from, noting that they did not consider Asians, such as American Born Chinese (ABCs) or Indians to be ‘real NETs’.

One School Principal felt that the best NET was a monolingual English speaker, in spite of the goal for students to become trilingual in Hong Kong. Moreover, he preferred NETs who were not Chinese, in spite of the cultural knowledge this added background might bring.

I think that an ‘effective’ NET is a foreigner who cannot speak and listen to Cantonese, not a Chinese who born in other countries. Student’s confidence will be built up if they can communicate with a foreigner. It also helps students to develop social skills with strangers. Students agreed too. It’s better to develop when they were young.

(Local English teachers FG)

When hiring NETs, we also experience some difficulties. Right now, I think the pool the EDB has, they don’t really have lots of experienced NETs. Many of the experienced NETs, after they retired, they just go back. And for the new NETs, not many of them are real NETs. Many of them are ABC’s [American born Chinese] which is not what we are looking for.

(Local English teachers FG)

The Indian NETs, they are alright but somehow when you dig into it, you actually find out they were born and raised in Hong Kong.

(Local English teachers FG)

But, it is not easy to find a good NET in the pool. There were not many applicants in the pool. I think that NETs are not willing to come to Hong Kong because the workload, policy, atmosphere is not very good in Hong Kong, etc. Compare with a more relaxed [working life] in other countries, NETs may not choose Hong Kong. The whole

atmosphere is also not good in Hong Kong education.

(SP Interview)

As far as NET characteristics are concerned, stakeholders in the schools put the highest premium on relevant educational background and expertise in English. Other preferred characteristics varied depending on the school's previous experience with NETs. One school, after having struggled with a young NET with no knowledge of the local educational context, placed a very high value on familiarity with the local education system acquired through teaching in a local school and having been trained in a local university. Another school valued the education and training their NET had acquired in the home country and the teaching experience gained there as well as in other overseas contexts. Some schools preferred NETs who were not so experienced, preferring someone 'not too old, not too strict and authoritative... funny, at the same time firm'.

Other preferred NET characteristics include willingness to communicate with students, and also willingness to assimilate into local school culture.

And really willing to talk to the kids no matter where they are, at the tuck shop, along the corridor, outside school participating in any other English activities. It really depends on the NET's character, if she really wants to be more devoted, I think it would be so wonderful

[...]

[someone who] really wants to make a change helping the kids, I think that will be okay, especially for those that are very devoted and they have a very good English background and also something maybe more even obvious is if they have some kind of experience teaching English as a second language or foreign language

[...]

before they start teaching in any secondary school in Hong Kong, they need to have some kind of training so that they can have a deeper understanding how a general secondary school works

(EPC Interview)

I think the most important thing is that the NET is willing to be active and to adapt in the Hong Kong context. Since there are some standards or requirements in Hong Kong culture and education system, the NET needs to communicate and to collaborate with the English department members actively in order to assist in teaching work in School. [A good NET] has social skills and many strengths... can contribute and help us in many different ways... has teaching experience. We also... want the NET to meet the academic standard, especially [since] they will teach grammar, writing skills, etc., not only to enhance English environment.

(SP Interview)

CF26: English Panel Chairs and local English teachers in some case study schools had experienced difficulty in recruiting a NET who was suitable for their school. They felt that they did not have the option of deciding whether to employ a NET in school or not. Others wanted the freedom to determine the period of contract, suggesting a probation period and reduction of the length of a NET contract from two to one year.

Two of the case study schools were still able to recall the unfortunate experiences they had had with their previous NETs. Although they were more satisfied with their current NETs, they still had reservations and wanted to set out what their requirements were. Some stakeholders were critical of the centralised NET recruitment process, suggesting that the list of NETs schools were provided with might contain some unsuitable candidates. In the words of one Panel Chair, 'If [applicants] are not qualified or they do not major in English or they cannot get through a very tough test, then they should not be shown on the list'.

It should be pointed out that this comment represents a misunderstanding on the part of this Panel Chair whose school was classified as only enjoying limited effectiveness in operating the Scheme. Only qualified NETs are placed in the central pool for schools to select from. The same Panel Chair went on to set out a list of specifications, although his final comment suggested he realised some of his expectations might be unrealistic:

[NETs should have] good teaching experience... [Reference letters should be provided] because from the letters, we can tell from the principals if they really recommend them or not. And then they should be very hardworking. They should be willing to contribute the extra time to organising activities for our students and they should be willing to handle documents, to deal with document support. There is a big gap between what we expect and what they are willing to do.

(EPC Interview)

Other schools suggested that they should have a choice as to whether or not they wanted to employ a NET. Stakeholders in Government Schools felt that they had no choice in the matter:

I think if schools can choose whether to employ a NET or not, not so many schools would be willing to employ one. Yeah. But basically, these schools may not have a choice, especially government schools, we [have to] support government policies.

(EPC Interview)

In recording the views of stakeholders here, it is important to note that some misconceptions are evident in some of these views. Each secondary school is provided with the opportunity of hiring a NET, either through entrusting the EDB with recruitment or recruiting the NET by themselves, and schools are asked to inform the NET Administration Team which option they choose for recruitment.

School Principals in aided schools indicated that they had considered other options for making use of the money allocated to the hiring of a NET.

I have a really high expectation for the NET here but for so many years, [when I was] not the principal, I have been serving here for twenty-seven years, working with different NETs, to me I think just as I mentioned, if I cannot find a suitable NET. I suggest whether I can use the resource, the money, to employ two English teachers, or English TA or some English professional t[o] train up our students to do a similar thing to arouse our students' interest to improve their standard. So, maybe this is a suggestion is for the EDB to think about whether they can let the school... change the mode, how

about you give us the money? Of course, we would have to do a proposal, we have the monitoring mechanism, so that the money is [spend] on some English teacher or TA just like the government wants us to do.

(SP Interview)

The more the better but perhaps shorten the contract for flexibility. If the existing arrangement allow you to overwrite the contract one year on trial and then two-year contract and if the performance is unsatisfactory at the end of the first year then we can terminate.

(Local English teachers FG)

I think there should be one-year contract, not two years. This is a more effective way for the NET to work harder. They can enjoy a lot of extra fringe benefits, housing allowance, return ticket, and even at the end of their contract some gratuities. I think it is even fairer to say that if they can receive some fringe benefits that local teachers didn't, they can play a more active role in establishing a more authentic English environment.

(EPC Interview)

Yes, some NETs have resistance in following the arrangement from school. They use their own way to handle the classes and students. It is difficult to manage. I also think that NET's two-year contract is too long for school. If the NET is not suitable to school, it is hard to wait the contract end. I wonder if it is possible to review NET's performance after the first year. Or is there any reference about NET's past working experience? If we have the record, we can contact the NET's former schools to ask about his/her personality and past performance. We will work with him/her at least two years, so we worry about what kind of colleague that we employed.

(Local English teachers FG)

Local teachers here are also showing evidence of misconception regarding the recruitment of NETs. Firstly, there are circumstances in which an incumbent NET might be offered a one-year extension of contract. However, the circumstances which would allow this to happen are exceptional and there is a raft of logistic reasons why a one-year contract would not be feasible for a newly recruited NET. For example, a NET currently working outside Hong Kong is unlikely to be attracted by a one-year contract given the logistic challenges of finding accommodation and settling into a different culture. Stakeholders clearly value a NET who is willing and able to integrate into the school culture, a one-year time frame is not sufficient to achieve that integration effectively.

Secondly, notwithstanding the provisions of the Privacy Ordinance, which would limit the amount of personal information which could be made available, there is nothing to stop the hiring school, after obtaining permission from the prospective NET, to contact that NET's former employers to seek a character and/or professional reference. Indeed, the 2017/18 edition

of the School Administration Guide (SAG)¹⁷ states, in chapter 7.2.1, that in relation to the appointment of teaching staff, it is the school management's responsibility, during the staff selection process, with the applicants' prior consent, to consult previous employers about the applicant's job performance to ensure that the selected candidate is suitable for the post.

CF27: Some stakeholders expressed misconceptions about the recruitment of NETs, stating the view that schools were not provided with sufficient information about potential NETs, to enable them to make an informed choice of NET at the recruitment stage.

Misconceptions about the shortlisting and recruitment process for NETs were expressed by stakeholders, particularly by those who had experienced difficulties with NETs in the past. These stakeholders expressed the desire for more information about potential candidates at the recruitment stage. In doing so, they indicated misconceptions both about the role of the NET Section, which is the professional arm of the NET Scheme, not responsible for recruitment matters at all, which is the domain of the NET Administration Team, and also about the responsibility of the school in any staff recruitment process, not only that concerning NETs.

Could I put it this way? If it is from the service provider, you have the chance to interview them to find their qualifications. There may be more choices for you. If it is from EDB, they give you the names and resumes of NETs lot by lot, then the EDB actually may not know that, very honestly. ... They just know they passed the test and met the minimum requirements. And many of the NETs on the list are already rejected by many schools in Hong Kong but still on the list. But usually we will be very careful, we will ask different schools about the performances of those NETs. But should it be the job of the NET Section, you know? Yeah, if it is not very good, then why do you give the names to the school? So many of them cannot even attend lessons from time to time. They will be absent.

[...]

The NET Section may not be able to help you. It depends, I don't know, on luck. For example, among fifty applicants it may be difficult for you to find even one good one. Then you don't know how to tell, you know, just like when I say, this one is from majoring in engineering, then I would ask, why did you send me this? And when I request, I want a drama NET, then some of them may not be relevant. For example, if you want a drama NET, the drama NET may think that they only teach drama in the school. But that is not the real case. Drama is only part of it. You still need to go to the classroom, the regular classes. We cannot afford, this is not a private school.

(EPC Interview)

The Panel Chair may be expressing frustrations arising from poor experiences with NETs in the past, or perhaps simply relying on hearsay, but the picture presented in the views expressed

¹⁷ http://www.edb.gov.hk/attachment/en/sch-admin/regulations/sch-admin-guide/SAG_E.pdf.

here include a number of misconceptions. As with any staff recruitment and selection process, whether for local staff or for NETs, the SAG states that formal selection procedures should be set up under the principles of fairness and transparency. It is the responsibility of the school to determine, through interview and by obtaining reference reports from prior employers, whether the candidate is suitable for the school. It would not be feasible for the NET Administration Team to make any recommendations about suitability, as they are not aware of the particular needs of the school.

Respondents in more than one school suggested that applicants for a NET position should be given an aptitude test and that schools should be provided with the results at the recruitment stage.

I wonder if they should be okay if we can have some kind of aptitude test so that we can have a better understanding about the NET teachers who really want to spend more time to become more devoted to helping our students.

(EPC Interview)

And I think my suggestion would be first to have aptitude test because... I do believe that choosing the right person for this teaching role, is important.

(Local English Teachers FG)

Participants in the Regional NET Coordinator's focus group discussion (RNC FG) shared some relevant perspectives on the issue of NET recruitment. In particular, they discussed the problems that might arise when a suitable match could not be found between the needs of the school and the expertise a NET could offer, leading to discontent among all stakeholders. The RNCs saw this as a problem which should be addressed by requiring school leaders to attend a workshop on how to match a NET to the needs of the school:

I'd like Principals to be workshopped on how to deploy their NETs according to their skills, because often a NET with a literature degree will come into a school and then be told to look after the English corner. So they're not being utilised as well as I think they can be, but that's the Principal's responsibility and often the Principal will have something in his mind, 'Yes I want a NET to take thirty-seven lessons of oral'. And they'll employ someone with a master's degree in, you know, literature and there's just this huge mismatch between what the NET can offer and bring and is never asked about. And that will not be a happy NET. And it won't be a happy Principal either because the NETs get fed up. That's when we start getting the emails. 'I didn't know it was like this in Hong Kong. I didn't know that I'd be having to work from a textbook and they're not interested in ...'

Yes, as a [former] NET myself I could say that's pretty much how I was used [in my first two schools]. 'Oh well, we'll just stick her in here. We need another member in here. Oh ...' They didn't ask me anything about what I was good or what I was interested in. Even after I'd been there a year, they didn't bother to change it. ... in the first two schools out of three, it was not taken into any consideration at all. I don't think

they bothered to spend any time on thinking about my duties or anything.

I think that if you're going to have a NET in your school, maybe it should be a mandatory thing that school leaders should have some workshop or some guidelines on how to hire a good NET for your school.

(RNC FG)

CF28: Some stakeholders demonstrated lack of awareness of the objectives of the ENET Scheme and the role of the NET Section.

Further evidence of misconceptions about the operation of the Scheme were found in the views of some School Principals. One Principal felt that the expectations which the EDB had set for the NET were unrealistic, involving higher level roles in the school community that younger, less experienced NETs may not be capable of fulfilling.

Because I know in the EDB scheme, okay, the NET is supposed to be the English consultant, but in our school... but I don't think she needs to be an English consultant and sometimes my panel head mentioned that the NET makes some English mistakes.

(SP Interview)

In fact, the deployment guidelines issued to schools by the Education Bureau make no mention of the term 'consultant' in relation to the roles NETs may be asked to perform. The guidelines suggest that NETs might be asked to undertake non-teaching duties, but these are suggested to be done through collaborating with English Panel Members, or as an assistant to the English Panel Chair.

The NET Deployment Guidelines appear to have been interpreted by another Principal to imply that a NET should be a change agent in schools capable of helping in curriculum and professional development and of 'training' local English teachers.

They may think that it is not their job duty... they only focus on students and didn't like to train teachers. It is difficult to negotiate with them. I'm not sure if it is possible that NET Section would help to explain to the NETs. It is about their role is not only teaching students, but also to help English and non-English department teachers in order to enhance the whole English standard in school. Example, we are EMI school and have a package of medium instruction. We hope NET could help to re-organise it.

(SP Interview)

The relevant wording of the NET Deployment Guidelines describe 'NET's Duties that Support the Objectives of the Scheme' and in relation to Objective 3: 'to strengthen teaching capacity through school-based professional development and collaboration between NETs and EPMs', the NET duties include 'To assist the English Panel Chairs (EPCs) in developing and facilitating professional development workshops or planning panel meetings'. There is no suggestion here or elsewhere in the Guidelines that NETs are expected to take a lead role in training other English Panel Members.

The 2014 Guidelines are presented as:

Guidelines that set out principles and define practices... necessary to facilitate the implementation of the ENET Scheme in schools. When drawing up NET deployment plans, schools should consider the guidelines in the context of site-specific factors to meet the objectives of the school-based English Language Education curriculum and those of the ENET Scheme.

The wording clearly acknowledges the principle of school-based management and autonomy. However, rather than take up the mantle of school-based management and deploy the NET according to the ‘site-specific’ needs of the school, some teachers seemed to prefer a fixed set of deployment rules applicable to all schools:

Since the job duties of the NETs are quite different in different schools, it is very unclear. If the NET Section think that NET’s duties are very clear, I hope them to list out and make it clear. Some NETs can perform as class teacher in some school. Of course, we think that the NETs cannot act as class teacher in our school. That’s why the NET is arranged to focus on activities. But, when some NETs had some working experience in different schools, they might expect that one working model in one school can be applied to all schools in Hong Kong. I think the job duties have to be written clearly in the documents, black and white.

(Local English Teachers FG)

Case study interviews with school personnel concluded by asking stakeholders whether they had any suggestions for improving the ENET Scheme to make it more effective in meeting the needs of students in the schools. Local English teachers and English Panel Chairs were asked ‘What do you want to change about the ENET Scheme and the work of the NET so that it would better meet the needs of the students and teachers at your school?’ School Principals were asked ‘What would you like to **change** about the ENET Scheme? How can it be improved?’

The most common initial response to these questions generally included a request for more than one NET in each secondary school. This is discussed below. Other responses demonstrated misunderstanding of the objectives of the ENET Scheme and of the professional role of the NET Section within it. For example, local English teachers suggested that the NET Section could develop and publish teaching and learning resources. Although this may be based on an analogy with the PNET Scheme, where materials for literacy programmes have been developed for primary schools, it indicates a misconception of the role of the RNCT within the ENET Scheme (refer to section 1.3 above, where the roles and functions of all units responsible for implementing the Scheme are set out).

The NET Section can produce some teaching software, e-books, etc. For example, theme-based learning units, listening tasks in Hong Kong context, assessment and exercises for TSA listening. Then, teachers can use them. It is what the NET Section can do outside classroom. They can do some IT support or publish some books.

The teaching materials would be about social issues, a whole set of reading, listening and grammar books. The NET Section has produced some books with stories and situations, but we cannot use it without grammar context. It is difficult for teachers to use the materials if they only provided one part. We cannot match the other parts in using it. So, if they can produce a whole set of materials, we can use it.

I have not seen any grammar books which is teaching different grammatical items in a context in the market. If the NET Section can do what publishers cannot do, I would say this section is worth to continue. It would be a great contribution for us.

Since NETs will share their games and materials in their gathering, it might be possible to collect them and produce a book with activities and worksheets, like theme-based materials e.g., Chinese New Year, festivals, sports day, speech day, etc. Teachers are willing to use these.

(Local English Teachers FG)

Other teachers seemed to mistakenly believe that it was the role of the NET Section to inform the NET about school policies. In this school, one of the factors underlying a relatively degraded NET experience was NET isolation and poor communication between English panel members and NET.

... the NET may not understand or she may not understand why do we have to come back on Saturdays and why are some school functions on Saturdays but mainly because most parents are working parents. They don't have time, like on weekdays afternoon to come the school, so we have to make it like Saturday so maybe they have to, like maybe the NET Section can help to tell the NET that they have to expect this kind of situation may happen.

(Local English Teachers FG)

CF29: Most schools would like to see more NETs assigned to each school, with a range of justifications for the suggestion.

A range of reasons are given for suggesting that schools have more than one NET. However, the reasons given make no reference to the complex and wide-ranging NET roles spelt out in the NET Deployment Guidelines, focussing instead on exposing more students to a native speaker of English.

The most common reason was the need to provide more students with the opportunity of being taught by a NET. Inevitably not all students can benefit from being taught by a single NET, no matter how that NET is deployed:

[The NET can meet our expectations] But, only students from Form 1, 4 and 6 are benefited. Other students may not have a chance to communicate with the NET in classes. For example, the NET teaches Form 1 students English through playing board games and chess, showing movies, telling stories, etc. Students enjoy and feel full of

fun. We want more students to have this experience with the NET, but there is only one NET in school. We cannot arrange.

(Local English Teachers FG)

There are two ways of using a NET in school. One is the NET to talk to as many students as he can. But, each student may only have a limited time to interact with the NET as there are many students. We cannot arrange the NET to teach all classes when there is only one NET. The function is very limited for one person's manpower. This arrangement cannot help students a lot or make any changes. There are not many interactions between the NET and students. So, the effect from the NET is small and will not be long lasting to students. How about to arrange NET teaching three whole classes, same as local teachers? But most of the students will not be benefited. Therefore, it is difficult for schools to make decision with limited resources. The schools will have more flexibility. ... For example, when we have three NETs, one NET will focus on teaching classes and the other two will hold the activities and events. These three NETs will collaborate to develop more projects and then create English environment.

(SP Interview)

Other justifications for asking for more NETs in each school included helping the sole NET feel less stressful, and more capable of meeting expectations placed on them.

It would be nice to have another NET helping. It would give me less stress. I would have someone to communicate and collaborate with. I'm the NET so I should do all this and it's like a whole long list, and it should be done by me, only me. Whereas some schools, I know they hire two NETs, they supply another NET, they share this workload together.

(NET Interview)

It would be nice if there were two NETs in every school. It would be nice. You just have someone to talk to. My colleagues here don't talk, I don't know what's going on, really. And it's not just me, they just don't talk.

(NET Interview)

4. OVERVIEW OF QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE FINDINGS

This section aims to draw together findings of the evaluation from analysis of the online survey results and the case study interviews and observations in order to reach general conclusions about the effectiveness of the ENET Scheme in meeting its overall objectives. After presenting some general overall findings, the section goes on to look at effectiveness as indicated by findings under the six research questions which guided the evaluation, and concludes by summarising the Additional Findings reported at the end of the quantitative and qualitative sections above.

Three key findings (SF1-3) of the evaluation, identified through analysis of online survey responses, suggest that the ENET Scheme is achieving success in meeting its objectives to enrich the English language learning environment in schools, enhance the learning and teaching of English, and strengthen teaching capacity. The great majority of stakeholders agreed that the Scheme contributes to student learning and has improved the English environment at school. Stakeholders agreed that NETs contribute to the school in many ways, with the greatest agreement seen in relation to the statement that NETs engage in activities that enrich the English environment. Based on these achievements, there was a majority perception that the Scheme should be extended by providing schools with more NETs if resources allowed.

Some of the additional findings (see Sections 3.3.4 and 3.7.4) reported above also provide evidence of the success of the Scheme. For example, SF22 showed that most NETs, local English teachers, and School Principals thought that the ENET Scheme should be continued as it is and/or expanded in the future. SF23 found that, overall, a majority of local English teachers, NETs, and School Principals agreed that the ENET Scheme is viewed favourably by local English teachers at the school (Figure 37a), teachers of non-English subjects at schools (Figure 37b) and the general public (Figure 37f). SF25 indicated that nearly 95% of NETs disagreed that ENET Scheme funds might be better spent in other ways, even though nearly half of School Principals (48.05%) and 44% of local English teachers claimed to have alternative ideas of ways in which to use funding allocated to the Scheme. Countering these alternative ideas, however, was the overwhelmingly most frequent response to the question, ‘What would you most like to change about the ENET Scheme?’ – that schools would like more NETs assigned to each school (CF29).

The evaluation was guided by six research questions (RQs), and findings have been presented in Sections 3.3.3 and 3.7.3 above with reference to those questions. Looking at both sets of findings together, we can conclude that the ENET Scheme overall has a positive impact on English language teachers’ pedagogical practices (RQ1), that the Scheme helps to improve student learning of English (RQ2), helps to enhance the English environment of the school (RQ3), helps support curriculum development (RQ4), and promotes professional development and collaboration between NETs and local English teachers (RQ5). Since 2009, some progress has been made towards addressing the recommendations of the University of Melbourne evaluation report, responding to curriculum initiatives and providing additional support for NETs in the schools (RQ6).

These conclusions as to the overall effectiveness of the ENET Scheme suggest that positive achievements are being made and that the Scheme is successful on the whole. At the same time,

the evaluation has highlighted a number of factors affecting success and identified possible ways in which the Scheme might be modified in order to achieve greater success. Interpreting results in relation to the research questions helps to draw out these caveats to the overall success of the Scheme.

Research Question 1 investigated the extent to which the ENET Scheme impacts local English teachers' English language teaching and the ways it does so. The findings suggest that NETs adopt more culturally-focused and language arts-oriented activities in their teaching than local English teachers, and that this has an influence on the approaches local English teachers adopt. SF4 showed that most NETs claimed to use a greater variety of in-class activities including drama, films, songs, games, debates, poetry, short stories, creative writing, and reader's theatre, than local English teachers, while SF5 showed that local English teachers who also adopted such pedagogical approaches had been influenced by their collaboration with the NET in doing so.

Nevertheless, given the overall objective of the Scheme to 'enhance the learning and teaching of English with linguistically and culturally authentic materials and resources', the extent to which NETs and local English teachers claimed to adopt such approaches was lower than expected (see SF4, Figures 17 (a)-(l)). The results suggest that the unique contribution of a NET who has grown up in an English-speaking culture and may be expected to have greater familiarity with culturally and linguistically authentic materials and resources may not be being exploited as much as expected.

The qualitative results throw some additional light on this issue. Although stakeholders agreed that the influence of the NET has a unique impact on the teaching approaches of local English teachers (CF1), and local English teachers valued the different perspectives that the NET had brought to English language teaching, they themselves felt constrained in their ability to adopt similar practices in their own teaching (CF2). The constraints that local English teachers described included cultural and linguistic constraints, but more frequently reported constraints were pressure to complete the syllabus and to prepare students for tests and examinations, constraints which most NETs were free of. The implication of this may be that the syllabus, including the test- and examination-orientation of traditional teaching approaches, does not take sufficient account of 'linguistically and culturally authentic materials and resources'.

Qualitative results also included observations about the impact of NET deployment patterns on the ability of the NET to influence teaching approaches in the Panel as a whole. CF3 and CF4 indicated that the impact of the NET on local English teachers' pedagogical practices was affected by NET deployment patterns (CF3), with greater impact resulting from situations in which NETs were more closely integrated into the work of the panel as a whole than when they were relegated to a role that effectively separates them from the mainstream concerns of the panel (CF4). The implication of this may be that whatever NET deployment pattern the schools find appropriate – and deployment is a school-based decision – it needs to be associated with integration of the NET role into the work of the Panel as a whole. This has implications for co-planning, and even seating arrangements. So, for example if a NET is deployed to teach oral classes, or language arts subjects separate from the mainstream syllabus, there needs to be sufficient coordination between, and mutual understanding of the work of the NET and the work of the local English teachers in teaching the same classes. This can be achieved by formal

co-planning meetings, and is enhanced in situations in which the NET is seated in the main staff room, in proximity to other English Panel members and thus able to exchange views on a daily basis.

Research Question 2 focused on the impact of the Scheme on student learning of English. Online survey and case study results identified perceptions of improvements in student attitude and motivation to engage with English, and increased opportunities for them to use English as a result of being taught by a NET, although it was felt that not all students could benefit significantly from being taught by a NET.

SF7 showed that local English teachers and School Principals acknowledged the contribution of NETs to students' learning of English in areas including enhanced proficiency, as well as motivation, and perceptions of the value of English held by students and parents. This was reinforced by findings from the case studies which showed that stakeholders felt the presence of a NET placed students in a situation where they needed to use English in order to communicate (CF5). NETs were also perceived as being better able to create a classroom atmosphere more conducive to communication by being less constrained by formal elements in the curriculum (CF8). In addition, the content of NET lessons was perceived as effective in exposing students to valued aspects of the language, which might not be covered in the mainstream curriculum such as language-arts-related materials, content drawing on current issues and approaches involving debating skills, and in exposing students to more colloquial English (CF9). Teachers and School Principals, in their survey responses, agreed that effective collaboration between local English teachers and NETs, in particular engagement in co-planning, had an impact of student learning of English (SF9).

Moderating these positive findings were perceptions from some stakeholders in the case study interviews that the NET impact in forcing students to use English was more likely to involve more highly motivated and better able students (CF6 and CF7). Some teachers hesitated to enrol students in the NET Section competitions because of a perception that the linguistic challenges they posed might be too demanding for lower ability students, even though the competitions were seen as effective (SF8 and CF15). When discussing the ability of the NET to effect improvements in student learning, stakeholders in some case study schools commented on NET involvement in the work of the Panel as a whole, from a different perspective. NETs were seen as able to cater to the needs and interests of students more flexibly than local English teachers. But in more than one case study school, local English teachers felt that the NET needed to be acculturated into a more rigorous attitude to the collection and marking of homework, which are traditional mainstays of the local English curriculum (CF10).

Research Question 3 focuses on the extent to which the ENET Scheme enhances the English-speaking environment of the school, and the ways it does so. A number of findings both from the online surveys, and from case study interviews and observations indicate that the Scheme enjoys considerable success in enhancing the English-speaking environment. SF6 showed that local English teachers and School Principals placed particular value on the NET's role in organising and conducting co-curricular activities which, they felt, enriched the English learning environment. SF10 reinforced this perception. In case study interviews, stakeholders confirmed the importance and the value of NET involvement in organising activities outside of lesson time, which, they agreed, help enhance the English-speaking environment in the

school (CF11).

Findings from both online surveys and case study investigations suggested that collaboration between local English teachers and NETs was an important factor in ensuring the success of English activities (SF11, SF12 and CF12), including the NET Section competitions (SF13), even though some local English teachers reported feeling less comfortable organising activities related to more culturally-related areas (CF13), and others felt the competitions were too challenging for their students (CF15). Some local English teachers felt that whole-class NET deployment might reduce the impact on the larger English environment (CF14). However, a whole-class NET in one of the case study schools was perceived as having significant impact through his willingness to be visible and approachable in the school environment (CF14).

Research Question 4 explores the extent to which the ENET Scheme supports curriculum development and implementation in secondary schools, and the ways it does so. Findings from the case study investigation involved two schools which had applied for school-based support services from the NET Section, and were finding the support stimulating and worthwhile, despite some frustrations expressed by teachers in one of the schools regarding the additional workload the support service entailed (CF16). Survey findings, reinforced by findings from case study interviews, suggested that NETs themselves tend not to get involved in activities which stakeholders would describe as ‘curriculum development’, although NETs often develop teaching and learning resources for sharing among panel members teaching the same levels (SF14). This kind of sharing is affected by deployment mode, as the case study investigation showed. NETs can contribute valuable materials for sharing with the team of teachers taking the same class level if they too are teaching full classes. When NETs are teaching oral classes, and are treated as one of the team of teachers teaching the same level, sharing of curriculum materials is also seen in best practice schools. More commonly, oral-only NETs work independently of the mainstream curriculum and there are fewer opportunities for sharing of curriculum materials (CF17).

Research Question 5 investigated the extent to which the ENET Scheme contributes to professional development and collaboration among the teachers, and the ways it does so. It is a two-pronged question, since professional development may not be related to collaboration.

Some findings relevant to this question are reported above under the umbrella of curriculum development (RQ4) and summarised there. Other findings from the online surveys and case studies indicate that professional development in the form of centralised workshops and cluster meetings were found to be helpful (CF20) and that ideas and materials explored in them were practical and could be applied in the school context (SF18). However, there was some misconception about the target audience for these professional development initiatives, with NETs being more likely to attend (SF18) and some local English teachers feeling that meetings and workshops were targeted more at NETs than at local English teachers (CF21). NETs at the school level were rarely involved in offering professional development activities or workshops, with only one instance found in the case study schools (CF22). However, NETs were perceived as being engaged actively in several school-based activities which had the potential of developing local colleagues professionally such as acting as language advisor, suggesting new teaching ideas and recommending materials to colleagues (SF16).

With respect to collaboration, there was a perception that this was important and that structuring collaboration into the work of the NET creates a more harmonious working relationship for all parties (SF9; CF19). SF17 showed that a majority of NETs and local English teachers often discussed academic matters together. When this kind of collaboration was observed as being effective at the school level, it was often associated with feelings of mutual respect between NETs and other English panel members and effective channels of communication (CF19). When these factors were not present, it was often an indicator of a less effective NET experience for all parties.

Research Question 6 is a three-pronged question with progress made on the key recommendations of the 2009 evaluation report, the impact of curricular initiatives since 2009 on the Scheme and the impact of changes in the support provided for NETs being explored.

The 2009 evaluation report made a number of recommendations, some of which would entail major organisational changes in the teaching of English at the school level. The current evaluation found few indications of most of these recommendations having been acted upon. This may be because, even if the recommendations were accepted, they might be expected to require significantly longer than eight years to take effect. Other recommendations regarding the reporting of progress in English Panel meetings and the promotion of collaboration were easier to trace in survey responses (SF26) and easier to observe in the case study schools.

With respect to English Panel Meetings, there was some disagreement as to the balance of administrative and academic or pedagogical content in the meetings, but the evidence from case studies seemed to suggest that they remained largely administrative (CF23). However, while general pedagogical issues affecting the whole school were discussed in the meetings, they were more likely to be discussed in level meetings and lesson planning meetings. The fact that co-planning was a feature of the more successful schools suggests that although the recommended change may not have materialised in the English Panel Meeting themselves, the desired collaborative decision making on academic and pedagogical matters was taking place in more appropriately level-specific forums. Progress reporting, involving both NET and local English teachers, was taking place in English Panel Meetings, as recommended (see Figure 16g), and the majority of English Panel Meetings were conducted in English, although with two exceptions found in the case study schools (CF24).

With respect to the impact of post-2009 curricular initiatives on the Scheme, the greater focus on language arts in English language teaching and in the professional development activities of the NET Section aligned with the focus of many NSS elective modules. There was a perception among stakeholders in the schools, as indicated in online survey responses, that NETs were contributing to the development and teaching of such modules (See Figure 16n and SF21). In the case study investigation, there was little evidence of NETs directly involved in teaching senior secondary examination classes, but many NETs were offering lower secondary teaching and co-curricular activities related to language arts, including drama and creative writing, to the non-language arts area of debating.

With respect to the impact of changes in the support provided for the NETs since 2009, the 3-day induction programme and RNCT support for new NETs are generally well-received, and the SBSS has been seen as valuable, with some reservations discussed above under RQ4

professional development (SF27).

Additional Findings (see Sections 3.3.4 and 3.7.4) though not directly related to the research questions, have provided further support for the effectiveness of the ENET Scheme. A number of suggestions made by stakeholders for overcoming problems they perceived with the operation of the Scheme are also collected in the Additional Findings section to the qualitative section above (see 3.7.4). Many of these appear to be based on misconceptions of various aspects of the Scheme. Some stakeholders in the case study schools, particularly those who had experienced some problematic NETs in the past, discussed the problems of recruiting a suitable NET (CF26) and wanted to have more information about potential NETs at the recruitment stage (CF27) and more choice as to whether to hire a NET or not (CF26) and if they did, to be able to offer probationary terms. Some of these views indicate lack of awareness of recruitment procedures and what is possible within the terms and conditions under which NETs are hired. There was also a perception that the number of suitable potential NETs was shrinking (CF25). Underlying this perception were a number of expectations as to the characteristics of a ‘good’ NET which were revealing (see quotes under CF25 above), as well as some more misconceptions as to the roles and responsibilities of the NET Section (CF28).

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

In light of the analysis of the data, the research team makes the following recommendations. Recommendations are grouped according to the area they address, but not necessarily in order of importance. Note that the supporting findings are listed under each recommendation.

NET Deployment

1. Continue to encourage schools to integrate the NET into the English panel as a whole both socially and professionally. (Supported by SF1, 2, 3, 7, 9, 14, 15, 17, 26, 28 & CF3, 4, 5, 10, 14, 17, 18, 19, 23, 24.)

This could be achieved in a number of ways such as:

- Encouraging the NET to engage with other English Panel members by locating them in the staff room where they can work alongside other English teachers.
- Conducting all communications related to the work of the English panel in English, and including the NET in these communications.
- Engaging the NET in curriculum planning meetings with teachers at the same level and other curriculum planning meetings.
- Deploying the NET to teach aspects of English which are integral to the mainstream curriculum, by identifying links between those areas that NET focuses on, such as oral skills, language arts or other areas, and the mainstream curriculum.
- Deploying the NET to teach at least one full class, so the NET can develop a deeper understanding of the curriculum content and organisation at the level assigned, of the roles and responsibilities of local English teachers in implementing the curriculum at that level, and of the traditional mainstays of secondary education in Hong Kong schools including the setting of homework and provision of feedback on homework.
- Arranging for the NET to be effectively mentored when they first join the school and keeping them informed about relevant curriculum initiatives and the priorities of the English panel.
- Continuing to support NETs by reviewing their deployment regularly to enhance effectiveness and providing them with regular performance feedback and with time for sharing good practices in the English Panel Meetings.
- Facilitating regular reporting to the School Principal by the English Panel Chair to ensure School Principals are more fully aware of the contributions of the NET.

2. Continue to encourage schools to consider the unique experience, qualifications, and interests of the NET when determining deployment. (Supported by SF 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 10, 11 & CF 1, 3, 5, 9, 11, 13.)

This could be achieved in a number of ways such as:

- Taking into consideration the qualifications and experience of the NET before decisions are made regarding appointment and deployment.
- Deploying the NET in a mixed mode including at least one, but no more than two full classes, together with other lessons focussing on areas within the capabilities and expertise and special interests of the NET, such as debate, language arts, drama, etc.

- Considering the unique contributions that the NET can make to enhance the English environment of the school.

School Support

3. Continue to support schools with RNCT members providing and evaluating the induction programme for new teachers recruited into the Scheme, offering professional development workshops in areas of interest, and providing assistance as requested with school-based curriculum development and the improvement of pedagogy. (Supported by SF 8, 13, 18, 27 & CF 2, 6, 7, 13, 15, 16, 20, 21.)

This could be achieved in a number of ways such as:

- Expanding the RNCT to enable them to work more closely with schools as recommended in the 2009 evaluation report.
- Eliciting the views of local English teachers on workshops and competitions and how they might be tailored to the needs of practitioners and students.
- Providing support to NETs in schools with lower ability, less motivated students in tailoring approaches to these less able students.
- Providing professional development workshops on classroom management
- Providing professional development workshops on pedagogical strategies for dealing with students with lower levels of English.
- Exploring means of professional development other than workshop mode by eliciting the views of teachers on an on-going basis regarding the needed types and preferred modes of professional development.

4. Continue to encourage and assist schools to promote a culture of collegiality and collaborative professional development. (Supported by SF 4, 5, 12 & CF 2, 4, 8, 12, 13, 17, 18, 19, 22, 23.)

This could be achieved in a number of ways such as:

- Encouraging NETs and local English teachers who have attended professional development to offer informal professional development presentations.
- Setting aside part of each English Panel Meeting for informed professional discussion and debate on key issues of policy.
- Encouraging schools to explore and develop other avenues to promote professional exchanges and deliberations and cultivate mutual respect and understanding among local English teachers and NETs. These might include engaging in the open classroom principle employed in best practice schools in which NETs and local English teachers observe each other's classes and discuss the impact this has had on their own teaching and understanding of classroom dynamics, students, and language learning rather than offering an evaluation.

- Expanding the RNCT to enable them to bring about collaboration between the NET and other English Panel Members through school-based support and other initiatives.

Public Relations

5. Continue to communicate the ENET Scheme's goals to stakeholders and seek to remove misconceptions about the Scheme's work. (Supported by SF 16, 17, 23, 24, 25, 26 & CF 26, 27, 28)

Misconceptions about the ENET Scheme, including the roles of NETs, as reported in the case studies, mean that more should be done by the EDB to clear up the misunderstandings. The newly developed webpage developed on the Scheme's e-platform, at <http://nets.edb.hkedcity.net/home.php>, can assist in this. Other ways in which this could be done might involve the inclusion of ENET Scheme management at the school level as part of the professional development course for aspiring principals. The NET Section of the EDB might also disseminate information that addresses other misconceptions such as:

- the functions of the NET Section and other units responsible for implementation and monitoring of the Scheme;
- the nature of the professional support provided;
- the rationale underlying the support; and
- the target audience for the NET Section cluster meetings and workshops.

6. Continue to establish communication channels with NET communities and seek out their support to provide insight into NET issues and potential solutions. (Supported by SF 23, 24, 25 & CF 26, 27, 28)

7. Continue to monitor and assess the response of the Education Bureau to the recommendations in this report as well as the effectiveness of the Scheme. (Supported by SF 23, 24, 25)

This could be achieved in a number of ways such as:

- conducting smaller scale formative self-evaluations as needed on specific issues the NET Section is concerned about such as:
 - what role the EDB could play in monitoring the implementation of the recommendations made in this report;
 - how the services currently provided (e.g. professional development programmes, school-based support) could be adjusted to allow the NET Section to play its role in supporting and monitoring the implementation of the Scheme more effectively;

- how the business model and composition of the Regional NET Coordinating Team could be reconfigured in order to allow it to reach out to more schools; and
- how to foster professional collaboration between local English teachers and NETs to explore, develop and disseminate innovative and effective practices.
- providing a means to elicit and collect anonymous feedback from stakeholders on the issues they are concerned about; and
- conducting formal evaluations every six to eight years and annual informal assessments

NET Recruitment

8. Consider how to support NETs and schools in the selection and retention process in ways that provide transparency and flexibility. (Supported by CF 25, 26, 27, 28)

This could be achieved in a number of ways such as:

- Reminding schools that the procedures for the selection and appointment of NETs should be on a par with those for the selection and appointment of other teaching staff.
- Reminding schools that, with the consent of applicants for a NET position, testimonials and character and professional references should be obtained from previous employers before an appointment is offered to the applicant.
- Consideration might be given to reviewing the information provided for schools about the selection of candidates for NET positions to ensure that schools are fully aware of their responsibilities in terms of obtaining sufficient information in the selection and interview process to make a suitable choice of NET to meet the requirements of their school.

SF1: The majority of stakeholders (ranging from 80% to 94% of local English teachers, NETs, and School Principals) agree that the ENET Scheme contributes to student learning, that the Scheme has improved the English environment at school, and that local English teachers and NETs enjoy a good relationship. R1, R2

SF2: The majority of stakeholders (between 79% and 88% of local English teachers, NETs, and School Principals) agree that they would like more NETs if resources allow. R1, R2

SF3: The majority of stakeholders (between 76% and 92% of local English teachers, NETs, and School Principals) agree that NETs contribute to the school in many ways, with the greatest agreement seen in relation to the statement that NETs engage in activities that enrich the English environment (76-92%). R1, R2

1. To what extent and in what ways does the ENET Scheme impact teachers' English language teaching (pedagogical practices)?

SF4: In most cases, NETs stated that they used a greater variety of in-class activities than local English teachers. These included drama, films, songs, games, debates, poetry, short stories, creative writing, and reader's theatre. R4

SF5: A majority of both local English teachers and NETs tended to agree that NET influence and/or their interactive collaboration contributed to the use of various in-class activities such as drama, films, songs, games, debates, poetry, short stories, creative writing, and readers' theatre. R4

SF6: NETs perceived all the duties they performed as important. Local English teachers and School Principals also perceived NET duties in general to be important, placing particular value on organising and conducting CCAs (co-curricular activities) and enriching the English learning environment. R2

CF1: School Principals, English Panel Chairs, and local English teachers felt that the influence of the NET has an impact on the teaching approaches of local English teachers. R2

CF2: Local English teachers valued the different perspective that the NET had brought to English language learning and teaching and the different practices associated with this perspective, but some felt constrained in their ability to adopt similar practices in their own teaching. R3, R4

CF3: The impact of the NET on local English teachers' pedagogical practices is affected by NET deployment patterns. R1, R2

CF4: Impact on the pedagogical practices of local English teachers is more likely to happen when NETs are more closely integrated into the work of the panel than when they are relegated

to a role that effectively separates them from the mainstream concerns of the panel. R1, R4

2. To what extent and in what ways does the ENET Scheme improve student learning of English?

SF7: Both local English teachers and School Principals acknowledged the contribution of NETs to student learning of English. This involved a wide spectrum of improvement in student motivation, proficiency, frequency in using English and also perceptions of the importance of English held by students and parents. R1, R2

SF8: While the majority of NETs (64.87%) viewed the NET Section competitions as effective, a slight majority of local English teachers (55.64%) were sceptical about the effectiveness of the NET Section competitions in the improvement of English learning and teaching. R3

SF9: Teachers and School Principals agreed on the effectiveness of collaboration between local English teachers and NETs. In particular, both NETs and local English teachers valued the effectiveness of curriculum meetings. R1

CF5: Stakeholders felt that the presence of a NET impacts student learning of English at junior secondary level by placing students in a situation where they need to use English in order to communicate. R1, R2

CF6: Stakeholders felt that the NET impact in forcing students to use English was more likely to involve more highly motivated and better able students, and that it depended on the willingness of the NET to approach students. R3

CF7: Stakeholders in one school felt that students who have attained a threshold level in their English are likely to benefit more from NET teaching. They felt that students who have not attained a minimum threshold level, and are not motivated to do so, might pose classroom management problems for NETs. R3

CF8: NETs were often perceived as being less constrained than local English teachers by formal elements in the curriculum in their approaches to English teaching, creating a more relaxed classroom atmosphere which was valued by local English teachers. R4

CF9: In most of the classrooms observed, NETs made use of language arts related materials, content drawing on current issues and approaches involving debating skills, and exposed students to more colloquial English, but the practices varied. R2

CF10 Involving NETs more widely in the work of the English panel would entail some NETs adopting a different attitude to traditional mainstays of the local English curriculum such as the collection and marking of homework. R1

3. To what extent and in what ways does the ENET Scheme enhance the English-speaking environment of the school?

SF10: The majority of teachers and School Principals agree that the NET at their school organises co-curricular activities and engages in activities that enrich the English environment. R2

SF11: Overall, NETs and local English teachers reported that they both help prepare students to take part in activities that enrich the school's English environment. However, with the exception of local and overseas excursions, NETs reported higher engagement than the local English teachers reported for themselves on all the activities. R2

SF12: Both local English teachers and NETs agreed that that the influence of the NET and their mutual collaboration contributed to the use of activities to enrich the English environment at their school. R4

SF13: NETs reported greater participation in preparing students for the NET Section competitions compared to local English teachers. Both NETs and local English teachers reported that they collaborated in the preparation process, with local English teachers reporting more incidents of collaboration. R3

CF11: NET involvement in organising activities outside of lesson time helps enhance the English-speaking environment in the school. R2

CF12: Case study schools which also involved local English teachers in helping the NET to organise activities outside of lesson time maximised opportunities to enhance the English-speaking environment in the school. R4

CF13: Many of the activities organised by NETs include debating and are often language arts-related, exposing students to culturally authentic language and contributing expertise in culturally-related areas local English teachers feel less comfortable operating in. R2, R3, R4

CF14: Some local English teachers felt that full-class NET deployment might reduce the impact on the larger English environment. But full-class NETs who are still willing to be visible and approachable in the school environment can also have a significant impact in enhancing the English-speaking environment in the school. R1

CF15: Stakeholders felt that competitions organised by the NET Section provide an effective means of enhancing the English-speaking environment in the school by providing additional practice opportunities for the students willing and able to get involved. R3

4. To what extent and in what ways does the ENET Scheme support curriculum development and implementation in secondary schools?

SF14: While more than half of local English teachers, NETs, and School Principals are in agreement that NETs do not often or never contribute to school-based curriculum development,

the majority of all three groups state that NETs often develop learning and teaching resources. R1

SF15: A majority of both local English teachers and NETs reported not often attending curriculum planning meetings together, although 35-40% said they did this often. R1

CF16: One case study school had taken advantage of School-based Support Services (SBSS) and found that the process rewarding and the outcome effective. R3

CF17: In case study schools where NETs and local English teachers were both teaching whole classes at the same year level, the NET was able to contribute valuable materials for sharing with the whole team teaching that level. In schools where NETs were teaching oral classes, and were treated as one of a team of teachers teaching the same level, sharing of curriculum materials was also seen. Oral-only NETs who were working independently of the mainstream curriculum had fewer opportunities for sharing of curriculum materials. R1, R4

5. To what extent and in what ways does the ENET Scheme contribute to professional development and collaboration among the teachers?

SF16: Overall, local English teachers, NETs, and School Principals reported that NETs were actively involved in several school-based activities; however, School Principals reported lower frequencies of NET involvement in acting as language advisor, suggesting new teaching ideas and recommending materials to colleagues. R5

SF17: A majority of NETs and local English teachers reported that they often discussed English learning activities, collaboration, school based professional development, or other academic matters together, although School Principals (98.08%) seldom engaged in such discussions with their NET. R1, R5

SF18: NETs were more likely to attend *Regional Cluster Meetings* or other workshops conducted by the NET Section than local English teachers, although both groups said they implemented what they learnt from the meetings they attended. R3

CF18: Structuring collaboration into the work of the NET creates a more harmonious working relationship for all parties. R1, R4

CF19: Effective collaboration was evident in case study schools when there was mutual respect and communication between all parties. R1, R4

CF20: NETs and local English teachers in case study schools had attended professional development workshops and found them helpful. R3

CF21: Some local English teachers had the misconception that Regional Cluster Meetings and workshops were targeted more at NETs than at local English teachers. R3

CF22: There was only one instance of school-based professional development activities conducted by a NET. R4

6. What progress has been made on the key recommendations of the 2009 evaluation report and how have the various curricular initiatives since 2009 and changes in the support provided for NETs impacted the implementation of the Scheme?

CF23: In most case study schools, English Panel Meetings continue to be largely administrative rather than pedagogical, but more pedagogical issues are discussed in level meetings. Best practice schools model a more academic orientation in Panel Meetings. R1, R4

CF24: More than one instance was found of an English Panel Meeting conducted in Chinese, in schools in which email communication relating to English curriculum matters were also in Chinese. R1

Additional Findings

SF19: A majority of NETs agreed that their role had been clearly identified, that they had been effectively deployed and supported in that role, and that their contributions had been acknowledged by the Principal of their school.

SF20: Overall, NETs perceived that they received mentoring and information from their school or colleagues and acted as effective, well-adapted educators. The majority of local English teachers also agreed, but had a higher rate of agreement as to the mentoring and communication NETs received and a lower agreement rate compared to the NETs on the NETs' contribution and sensitivity.

SF21: Both local English teachers and NETs agreed that NETs have contributed to the development and teaching of secondary elective modules, enriched the English environment of the school, and been made aware of the professional support provided by the NET Section.

SF22: A majority of NETs, local English teachers, and School Principals thought that the ENET Scheme should be continued as it is and/or expanded in the future. However, nearly 15% of School Principals thought the Scheme should eventually be phased out, whereas only 1.14% of NETs and 4.16 % of local English teacher reported similar views.

SF23: Overall, a majority of local English teachers, NETs, and School Principals agreed that the ENET Scheme is viewed favourably by local English teachers and teachers of non-English subjects at the school, and by the general public. R5, R6, R7

SF24: All School Principals firmly believed that the school followed the NET Deployment Guidelines and that they fully understood the objectives of the ENET Scheme. In contrast, NETs were more likely to disagree that the school followed the guidelines and local English teachers were slightly more likely to disagree that their schools understood the ENET Scheme objectives. R5, R6, R7

SF25: Nearly 95% of NETs disagreed that ENET Scheme funds might be better spent in other ways. But nearly half of School Principals (48.05%) as well as 44% of local English teachers agreed that ENET Scheme funds may be spent on alternative initiatives. R5, R6, R7

SF26: Compared to NETs, local English teachers were more likely to agree that the English Panel had fostered collaboration between local English teachers and NETs to support English education. Also, they agreed that the English department led the facilitation of communication between NETs and the school. In contrast, the majority of NETs (53.69%) reported that the English department fails to facilitate communication between the NET and parents. R1, R5, R6

SF27: Nearly half of all local English teachers reported that their schools had received school-based support from the NET Section and a majority (62.47%) of these teachers perceived the support they had received to be effective. R3

SF28: Students who had been taught by a NET in their regular English classes perceived themselves as participating more actively in English lessons, being more motivated to speak English, and feeling more comfortable when doing so, than students who had not been taught by a NET. R1

CF25: The number of suitable potential NETs was perceived to be shrinking. Underlying this perception were a number of expectations as to the characteristics of a 'good' NET. R8

CF26: English Panel Chairs and local English teachers in some case study schools had experienced difficulty in recruiting a NET who was suitable for their school. They felt that they did not have the option of deciding whether to employ a NET in school or not. Others wanted the freedom to determine the period of contract, suggesting a probation period and reduction of the length of a NET contract from two to one year. R5, R6, R8

CF27: Some stakeholders expressed misconceptions about the recruitment of NETs, stating the view that schools were not provided with sufficient information about potential NETs, to enable them to make an informed choice of NET at the recruitment stage. R5, R6, R8

CF28: Some stakeholders demonstrated lack of awareness of the objectives of the ENET Scheme and the role of the NET Section. R5, R6, R8

CF29: Most schools would like to see more NETs assigned to each school, with a range of justifications for the suggestion.