



Department of Education Policy  
and Leadership

*An Exploration of Difficulties  
Experienced by Native English  
Teachers in Hong Kong*

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for the degree of

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### Declaration

I, Chiu Yuet Ming, declare that this research report represents my own work under the supervision of Dr. Taehee Choi, and that it has not been submitted previously for examination to any tertiary institution.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Student Name

Date

# An Exploration of Difficulties Experienced by Native English Teachers in Hong Kong

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## Abstract

The study aims at exploring the difficulties experienced by the Primary Native English Teachers (NET) in Hong Kong. Four NETs were interviewed by a semi-structured interview. The results of interview revealed that NET encountered difficulties in terms of personal, interpersonal and systemic level. The study indicated that NETs experiencing difficulties in sociocultural adjustment whereas adjusted quite well in psychological adjustment. Second, it noted that general human needs, such as social interaction and work-life balance are expected. Besides, the study also reveals that there is a mismatch between their expectation and reality of NET's life.

It is surprised to know that NET did not feel supported by the EDB. The inadequate training and advice influences NETs job satisfaction. The study is significant to all stakeholders related to the NET scheme which can give insightful ideas in terms of the weaknesses and also the improvement of the scheme.

# Chapter1

## Introduction

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### 1.1 Contextual Background

The Policy of Native-speaking English Teachers (NET) Scheme was implemented in 1998/1999 school year in Secondary school in Hong Kong in order to provide an authentic English learning environment to students and enhance their English proficiency. In 2002/2003, it was extended to primary schools. Many researches and surveys have reconfirmed the advantages of the NET scheme, for example, the NET scheme can arouse students' interests of learning English and also improve their English proficiency (Hong Kong Legislative Council, 2002). Besides, NET scheme can also offer some insights of teaching activities to local teachers which can enhance different pedagogic exchanges.

However, high attrition rate of the NETs was discovered by the Hong Kong Legislative Council. In 2005, 49 per cent of primary did not renew their contracts. The attrition rate has been slightly improved these years, but still it has raised a lot of awareness to the NETs about the reasons of resign behind. According to the exit interviews conducted by the EDB, most NETs said that they resigned because of some professional and personal reasons other than

being unsatisfied with co-workers and schools arrangement (Hong Kong Legislative Council, 2005a: 6).

Nonetheless, some scholars had different opinions on the reasons of the high attrition rate (Chan, 2015, Chu, 2009). They believe that the high attrition rate is due to the failure of cross-cultural adjustment to the local school environment i.e. collaboration with Local English Teachers (LETs), inadequate understanding of the local curriculum, difficulties to “fit in” the school cultures etc. On the other hand, the Hong Kong Legislative council report (2005) indicated the primary reason for NETs to renew the contracts is job satisfaction. It is difficult to retain the NETs and at the same time, it is hard to recruit new NETs because of the high cost of living in Hong Kong (Baker, 1983)

High attrition rate of NETs may somehow imply the challenges and difficulties NETs encounter in their everyday teaching. The challenges and difficulties are accumulated and hence it might lower NETs job satisfaction. Teachers who have low job satisfaction will probably influence their work performance.

## **1.2 Significance of the Study**

This study focuses on primary NETs instead of both primary and secondary. Although under the NET scheme, both primary and secondary NET scheme share very similar welfare and objectives. However, there are differences in some aspects, such as the curriculum, school environment, target, qualification and background of the NETs. Therefore, only primary NETs will be the participant of the research to maintain the fairness and objectivity of the study.

This study is significant for several reasons. First, the study of NET scheme is under-researched in Hong Kong. Only A few scholars such as Griffin et al.(2008) and the Education Bureau studied NET scheme. But the focus is evaluating the effectiveness of the NET scheme instead of Native English Teachers themselves. Since NETs seemingly takes crucial and indispensable roles in the Scheme which can influence the effectiveness of the entire scheme. It is very important to understand how NETs adjust their life to work and live in Hong Kong, which is believed that related to their work performance and job satisfaction at school largely.

Second, although there are a lot of studies about the expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment, most of them focused on the expatriates in western countries instead of Westerners in Asian countries especially in teaching professions. By conducting a research about NETs in Hong Kong can be valuable to the EDB for the improvement of NET scheme and also providing

better employment arrangement for NETs to prepare for the new work environment.

Furthermore, it can also provide more insights to different corporates about pre-employment training for overseas employees.

### **1.3 Purpose of the Study**

This study focuses on the Cross-cultural adjustment among Native English Teachers in local primary school. By understanding how they adjust life at work and in Hong Kong, it can help understand the difficulties they encounter to adjust cross-cultural differences. Also, the supports received from the EDB and the host school for NETs about Cross-cultural adjustment will be studied. By studying the difficulties of Cross-cultural adjustment and related supports from the EDB and host school for the NETs can help provide some suggestions and improvement in order to assist NETs themselves to have better Cross-cultural adjustment.

There are three main objectives in this study:

- To explore the difficulties, particularly in Cross-cultural adjustment experienced by the Primary School NETs
- To explore how NETs think about the support that provided by the EDB
- To provide concrete suggestions for the NET Scheme

# Chapter 2

## Literature Review

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### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews related literatures about this study. High attrition rate of NET has been previously mentioned. According to the Hong Kong Legislative Council (2005), two major reasons that influence the decision of NETs to renew their contracts are the attractiveness of NET package and job satisfaction. NET package refers to the benefits, financial matters and career prospect of the jobs. Job satisfaction is related to the recognition from the host school, collaboration with local teachers and sense of belonging to the school or to Hong Kong (Hollingworth and Matthews, 1988).

It is arguable that NETs package should be taken into consideration for NETs to renew their contracts because NETs package is relatively abstract and personal. The views on benefits, financial matters and career prospect may vary among different people. Conversely, cross-cultural adjustment has clearer scale to measure. Therefore, in this study, cross-cultural adjustment is our focus.

### 2.2 Cross-cultural Adjustment

### 2.2.1 Cross-cultural adjustment

According to Black (1991), Cross-cultural adjustment is one of the most common indicators to evaluate expatriates' success. Cross-cultural adjustment is conceptualized as the psychological comfort an expatriate has to the new host culture (Chan, 2015). It is a process of adjustment to work and live in the new host culture (Oberg, 1960, Mendenhall and Oddou, 1986, Gregersen and Black, 1990, Black, 1989). According to Searle and Ward (1990), Froese & Peltokorpi (2013), cross-cultural adjustment can be categorized into psychological adjustment and sociocultural adjustment. First, psychological adjustment refers to the emotion of satisfaction and well-being to the new cultural environment. Sociocultural adjustment refers to the ability to "fit in" and negotiate with the new host culture in order to develop intercultural competency (Ward and Kennedy, 1996, Cross, 1995).

Parker and McEvoy (1993) indicated that the degree of cross-cultural adjustment of an expatriates can reflect his work performance and satisfaction (Torbiorn, 1982). According to Chan's research (2015), she indicated that NETs from higher job satisfaction group have better cross-cultural adjustment and less stress than those from lower job satisfaction group. This implies that cross-cultural adjustment is very crucial in being satisfied with the job of being NETs and this also reflect the common sources of difficulties NETs encounter may due to the unfavorable conditions of cross-cultural adjustment.

### 2.2.2 Framework of International Adjustment (Black et al., 1991)

Black, Mendenhall and Oddou suggested a theoretical framework on Cross-cultural adjustment in 1991. This is one of the most commonly used framework of cross-cultural adjustment in recent years (Chan, 2015). According to Chan (2015), the framework integrated the theoretical and empirical work of international and domestic adjustment which provide a more clear picture of expatriate adjustment instead of literature only. It also provides how individual and organizational factors influence the degree of adjustment. The framework indicated the multidimensional nature of cross-cultural adjustment.

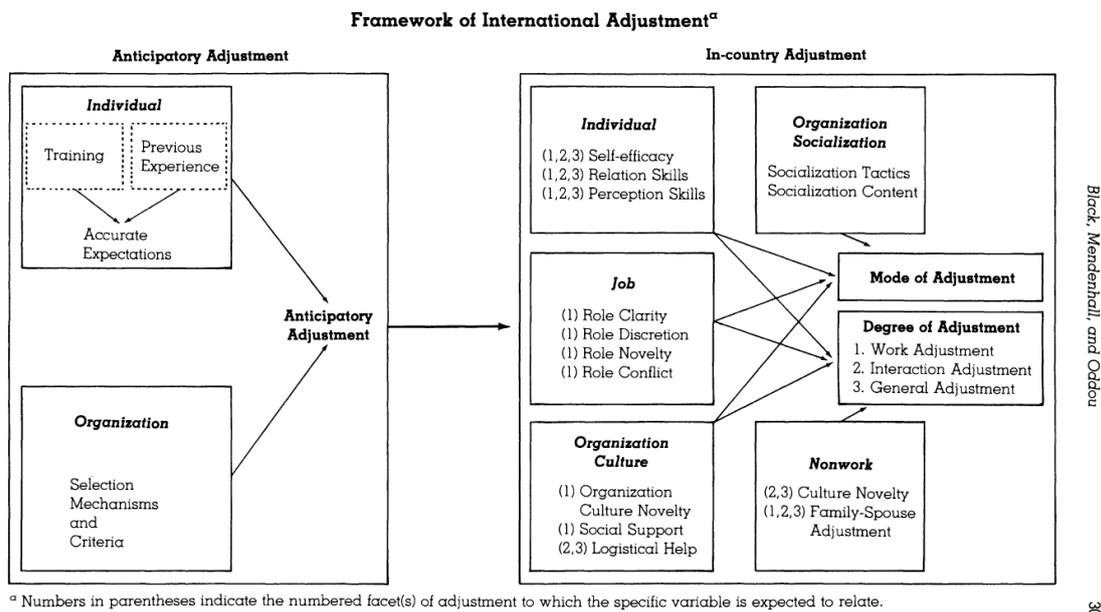


Fig. 1 Framework of International Adjustment (Black et al., 1991, P.303)

## **2.3 The difficulties that came from cultural differences**

### **2.3.1 Conflicts with co-workers**

Although Hong Kong is an international city in Asia, there is still some culture clash to expatriates to work in a new cultural environment. NETs experience a lot of differences in school. First, NETs and LETs have very different attitude and conceptions towards English teaching. Man (2002) did a research to compare the difference of teaching conceptions. She found out that LETs putting more focus on the transmission of knowledge and language skills, for example grammar teaching, whereas NETs tend to put more effort into class activities and readings. Some LETs depicted NETs for having too many teaching activities in class, however, the target grammatical area has not been consolidated. Also, some LETs also depicted the poor class management skills of NETs make classroom out of control. The massive difference in teaching conception between NETs and LETs can initiate conflicts among co-workers. According to the legislative council (2005), the legislator indicated that one fifth of the respondents said that NETs did not help them in teaching English. Also, 10 per cent of respondents said that they cannot collaborate with NETs.

Chan (2012) indicated that there is significant tension between NETs and LETs in terms of financial and policy conflicts. Financial conflict means the difference of benefits such as salary, holidays. Policy conflict refers to the imbalance of workload. The tension would enhance the

conflicts between NETs and LETs in school and finally cause difficulties for NETs in adapting to the school environment.

### **2.3.2 Conflicts with school arrangement: Role ambiguity**

Griffin et al. (2007) indicated that NETs found ambiguity with their own roles. First, the leadership roles of NETs are not recognized. Some NETs said that they have little influence on curriculum planning and sometimes, the meetings are conducted in Cantonese which made them very embarrassed and frustrated. They does not feel included in the leadership role in schools. However, Griffin et al. (2007) has clearly indicated the importance of including NETs into curriculum planning in order to facilitate teaching. Furthermore, NETs experience role ambiguity because they are always assigned with Oral lesson (Chan, 2015). NETs indicated that they cannot teach general lessons which they feel that their skills and knowledge cannot be used well.

### **2.3.3 Conflicts with Chinese work cultures**

NETs have difficulties to understand the Chinese work cultures. Confucian takes a very crucial part in the belief of Chinese cultures. Chinese emphasizes on trust and protecting “face”. Ranking and seniority are very obvious in the hierarchy of power in Hong Kong which may be very different from the western countries (Schwartz, 1999).

Also, according to the research by Chan (2015), some NETs indicated the work culture in Hong Kong school is too “hard working”. Local teachers tend to spend many hours at school by arriving very early and signing out very late. The culture contributing to the concepts of “the more the time you spend in school, the higher the efficiency” . .

## Chapter 3

# Methodology

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### 3.1 Overview of the interview

In this study, four primary NETs are interviewed from the period of late December in 2016- February 2017 and each participant is interviewed for approximately 90 minutes. All participants refused for being recorded due to the sensitivity of the research but written interview records have been made and shown as (appx .2-5 ).

### 3.2 Research method

Qualitative method is used in this study. Qualitative method is usually characterized as humanistic, contextualized and descriptive etc. Qualitative studies help formulate hypothesis gradually and make it as a result. Also, it help discover theories and finally describe the result from an emic perspective. All these features contribute to this study.

### **3.3 Semi-structured interview**

In this study, the use of semi-structured interview aims at collecting the personal thoughts and sharing from NETs on six areas: (1) Personal information, (2) Work nature, (3) Overall experience, (4) Difficulties, (5) Personality and (6) Support from the host school/ the EDB. According to Opdenakker (2006), Semi-structured interview allows the interviewers to prepare some interview questions in advance. Interviewers can ask interviewees the planned interview questions first and they can ask follow up questions according to the answer interviewees give which does not required them to ask the planned questions throughout the process. Semi-structured interview gives flexibility and freedom to interviewees to express their ideas. The interview questions and answers are more spontaneous and open-ended without restriction. These features give opportunities to both interviewers and interviewees a more in-depth discussion on the issue which can finally bring about a more comprehensive picture to the entire study.

### **3.4 Research Participants**

To maintain the objectivity of the research, participants which are named as Participant A/B/C/D are chosen from four different countries i.e. England, Ireland, Australia and Bangladesh, different age group i.e. from mid-twenties to mid-fifties and different work experience i.e. from 2 years to 5 years.

# Chapter 4

## Analysis of the interview

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This chapter is the concrete evidence of the interview schedule (appx.1). The interview schedule divided into six parts: (1) Personal information, (2) Work nature, (3) Overall experience, (4) Difficulties, (5) Personality and (6) Support from the host school/ the EDB.

### 4.1 Difficulties – At Personal level

#### 4.1.1 A lack of Work-life balance

All participants do not have well balance between work and life. The average work hour of the NETs is 8.75 hour (Q.2.2), ranging from 8-10 hour respectively and some of them agree that the work hour is too long and some workload are too much but not necessary (Q.4.3). In terms of difficulties (Q.4.2) and also work-life balance (Q.5.3), all of them mentioned social life as one of their difficulties. They stated that they are “Social life quiet”, “No local friends”, “No entertainment” and “No social life” respectively which make their work-life balance worse as they do not have social circles. The ways that all participants have used to balance work and life is to leave school immediately and avoid school work at home. Only participant C mentioned a more positive approach to balance work and life, i.e. to think positive and get good enough of sleep.

#### **4.1.2 No Job Satisfaction**

Most of the participants said that they do not have job satisfaction due to unrecognized role and resistance from the school. Participant A and B shared similar thoughts of not being recognized by the school and students because school did not offer them leadership and authoritative role e.g. to discipline students. Also, students did not treat their PLP lesson as serious as to the general English lesson taught by local English teachers (Q.4.2). Participant A (Q.2.1) & C (Q.3.2 &4.5) shared similar thoughts that school is demotivating because they as a NET is not used in a wise way and they are asked to check grammars for local teachers and also ask inauthentic questions in the oral exams. Participant C said that job is not satisfied because she has no say on the curriculum and assessment. In terms of the resistance from school, participant A mentioned (Q.4.2) he encountered difficulties of getting appraisal from the principal which affected him to look for new jobs. Participant C mentioned (Q.2) that she had to fight for number of holidays and she also experienced once that school informed her holidays only two week before.

## **4.2 Difficulties – At Interpersonal level**

### **4.2.1 A lack of Professional Discussion with colleagues**

All participants said that there is a lack of professional communication with their colleagues. Participants B, C and D think that they have good relationship with other teachers, however, still they found that their communication with other teachers is just on the surface and no professional discussion on how to improve teaching or modify the curriculum during the co-planning meeting(Q.4.4). Participant A who does not have good relationship with colleagues also shares very similar thoughts as NETs who have good relationship among co-workers.

#### **4.2.2 Difficulties of Meeting Local/ Expatriates Friends**

All participants encounter difficulties of meeting local or expatriate friends in Hong Kong. All participants said that they would love to treat their colleagues as friends, for example, to hang out with them after work but all of them have no opportunity to do so and their discussion with co-workers are only at school level. Participant D also mentioned he encountered difficulties of meeting expatriates as they keep moving in and out which is hard to maintain friendship.

#### **4.2.3 Difficulties of Getting Used to Chinese Work Values**

Three out of four participants found Chinese work values are difficult to adapt (Q4.4). Participant A, B and D said that they found Chinese work values very bossy with hierarchy and

seniority. Besides, both participants C and D mentioned that they do not agree with the cultures at their schools that is “the latest the time you signed out, the more the efforts you pay”. From the comparison of home and host cultures (Q.4.6), Participants A mentioned that he is expected to just work and “shut up” and nobody cares about your feeling. Participant C also said that Chinese work cultures do not care about other roles you are taking e.g. as a mother, which clash the values from their home countries.

### **4.3 Difficulties – At Systematic level**

#### **4.3.1 No Professional development**

There is a lack of professional development for NETs. All participants (Q.3.2) mentioned that they would recommend their friends to work as NET because of the attractive salary. However, some participants mentioned that the NET scheme is not for people who aspire to have career prospects and professional development. All of them mentioned they have no say on the curriculum which demotivates them to improve teaching. Participant A and C also emphasized the lack of career prospects and professional development which upsets and dispirited them. Participant D also shared thoughts of this but he said it is acceptable just because he is about the age of retirement.

#### **4.3.2 Inadequate support from the EDB**

All participants mentioned that the supports from EDB are inadequate. All participants mentioned they receive no supports from the EDB. Three out of four participants attended workshops offered by the EDB and they said the workshops are neither useful nor informative. Some of them mentioned that the only support from the EDB is the meeting with Advisory Teaching (AT). However, participant C and D mentioned that ATs are not supportive and they do not survey what support you need. Also, the meeting time is only twenty or thirty minutes per year which make their conversations “only touch the surface”. Participant C also mentioned AT did not care about their personal and teaching life at all and she needed to fight for the rights with school on her own.

#### **4.3.3 School does not follow the employment contract from the EDB**

Some participants encountered difficulties of unfair treatment of holidays and workload. All NETs under the NET scheme are employed by the EDB and their contracts are offered by the EDB. However, participant C mentioned that her school did not follow the conditions of the EDB contracts e.g. number of holidays and workload. She mentioned the holidays she used to have were less than the one listed on her contracts. Three out of four participants mentioned they were doing extra workload which is not supposed to be done by them that mentioned on the contracts, such as marking and checking grammars of exam paper for General English.

# Chapter 5

## Discussion of the Results

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This chapter is the further discussion of the findings. How the difficulties imply to the needs and psychological supports of NETs.

### 5.1 NETs encounter difficulties at workplace instead of in the Hong Kong community

#### 5.1.1 Well Adjustment in Psychological Adjustment

According to Searle and ward (1990), Cross-cultural adjustment is divided into two categories: psychological and sociocultural adjustment. Psychological adjustment refers to the subjective well-being to the new cultural environment (Chan, 2015). Most of them adjust quite well in psychological adjustment which means they adapt to the Hong Kong community well. It is observable from the interview Q. 3.3 about how much they rate themselves about fitting into the cultures of Hong Kong. Though they rate themselves quite differently, from the lowest 1 to highest 5, three of them said they know and enjoy Hong Kong local cultures a lot, for example, they are confident to go to local Hong Kong restaurant “Cha Chaan Teng 茶餐廳”, shop at the local wet markets or take the minibus which most likely require them to speak Cantonese and interact with local people. Participant A who rated himself at the highest mark said that he

knew everything about Hong Kong and Participant C and D said that they were confident to go everywhere in Hong Kong.

### **5.1.2 Difficulties of Sociocultural Adjustment**

Hence, most of them thought that they do not have any difficulties in Cross-cultural adjustment due to the well adjustment in terms of psychological adjustment. My research participants have lived in Hong Kong for a relatively long time, ranging from the least 3.5 years to at most 8.5 years. It is explainable that why they are more confident in terms of psychological adjustment. However, they do not realize that the difficulties they encounter at workplace are categorized to the sociocultural adjustment which means the ability to “fit in” and negotiate with new cultures (Chan, 2015) and C Ward et al (1998) pointed out that sociocultural adjustment also related to social difficulties. This can further illustrate the situation of expatriates who stay for relatively a longer period of time and how their situation of cross-cultural adjustment, or to be specific, in the area of sociocultural adjustment.

### **5.1.3 Lack of awareness of Cross-cultural Adjustment**

It is surprising to discover that interviewees did not realize the situation of encountering difficulties of Cross-cultural adjustment, specifically in the area of sociocultural adjustment. According to the International Adjustment Framework suggested by Black et al in 1991, Work factors include facets of job, organizational cultures and organization socialization whereas the

rest of the facets are individual and non-work factors which give a persuasive evidence that work factors take a large portions of the degree of Cross-cultural adjustment. It is a worrying situation that the NETs did not realize the difficulties of Cross-cultural adjustment.

## **5.2 General human needs are expected – Social Interaction and Work-life Balance**

### **5.2.1 Lack of social circle**

It is surprising to know that Social Interaction is mostly expected from all participants than job related conditions. All NETs said that they have difficulties of having a stable social circle to hang out with. They mentioned that social life is very crucial in work-life balance, however, they do have difficulties to meet local or expatriates as friends and to have better everyday communication with colleagues. Interestingly, though many of them mentioned job related conditions such as better prospect or workload is important to them, they do take social interaction such as better relationship with colleagues into deeper consideration.

### **5.2.2 Social interaction is crucial to illuminate stress**

According to Soylu (2007) and Chan (2015), NETs as a self-initiated expatriate which means people who decided to work overseas by themselves instead of by the company may experience more stress because of the separation from interpersonal contacts with friends, families and communities. This can explain the phenomenon of NETs experiencing stressed

because of the lack of interpersonal contacts in Hong Kong and away from their home. Therefore, most of them told me that the way of getting work-life balance is looking for holidays which they have chances to be back to their home countries. The situation is worth paying attention because Forster (1997) and Tung (1981) indicated that the failure of cross-cultural adjustment is due to stress. This confirmed that social interaction is a very important factor of illuminating stress which affects the degree of cross-cultural adjustment.

### **5.3 Mismatch between their expectation and the reality of NET's life**

#### **5.3.1 Cultural clash with the unreasonable work values**

Some NETs reflect that Hong Kong work values are very strange and not reasonable to them. According to the Hong Kong Legislative Council, 2007a, para.12, it indicated that NETs experienced cultural clash in work values between their home and Hong Kong. For example, supervising lessons, extra duties and workload, expectation of work outside school hours. All of them have been mentioned by the NETs. They pointed out that Hong Kong work values does not allow mistakes and opinions which makes all teachers even more stressed. Another example of unreasonable work values to NETs is the Long Work hour cultures, the results from this research match the findings from Fraser (2008), they found that Hong Kong cultures are “the longer you are at the workplace the harder you work”. NETs found it is not reasonable because long work hour does not equivalent to efficiency.

### **5.3.2 Cultures of Seniority and Hierarchy**

All participants found that Hong Kong work cultures are all about seniority and hierarchy. Hong Kong is a Chinese society and work-related Confucian values are deeply rooted in Chinese society. Collectivism, hard-working, endurance and protecting “face” are emphasized in Chinese society (Chan, 2015). This clashed the western work values and therefore NETs found these cultures unfair and upset them.

### **5.3.3 Inconsistency between Contracts and Reality**

NETs reflect that school did not follow the conditions and guidelines of the employment contracts. All participants mentioned they were given extra workload from the general English curriculum which supposed to be done by the local English teachers. One participant even mentioned that her school did not give her suggested number of holidays and assigned her with workload that exceeded the suggested hours by the EDB which largely affect her teaching qualities.

### **5.3.4 Role Ambiguity**

Participants indicated that their roles at schools are ambiguous and not recognized. They said that school did not give them leadership or disciplinary role. Therefore, students did not

treat their class as serious as the general English lesson. At the same time, local teachers thought NETs do not know how to deal with classroom management. According to Chan (2015), role ambiguity was significantly related to organizational stress and organization stress is one of the predictor of job satisfaction. Where job satisfaction is one of the major reasons that influence NETs to stay under the NET scheme (Hong Kong Legislative Council, 2005).

# Chapter 6

## Suggestions to the EDB

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### 6.1 Job related suggestions

#### 6.1.1 Provide Comprehensive Professional Development

The EDB should offer NETs more insightful workshops and trainings to enhance their professional development. Most participants said that they would love to improve teaching. However, they found the workshops offered by the EDB are rather superficial and useless which cannot engage their active participation. The EDB should offer more diversified nature of workshop, e.g. about ideas of literacy teaching, TESL, classroom management skills etc. Most importantly, to survey NETs more frequently about what kinds of workshops or training they are expected to have in order to provide a better chance for professional development.

#### 6.1.2 Get good use of the role of Advisory Teachers (AT)

AT should offer more frequent and in-depth discussion with NETs. Each NET is assigned with an AT who was the former NET. This is a great arrangement to offer each NET a mentor to seek for professional advice and sharing. However, some NETs said that the 20 minutes meeting time per year is very short and they said that they expect AT providing more personally

sharing. The EDB should revise the arrangement of meeting with AT. To improve the situation, the EDB can offer 3 times of meeting with AT per year and also encourage AT to talk to NETs not only about their work but also their cultural adjustment. At the same time, AT should be one of the effective channels to survey NET's opinions on curriculum and work conditions.

### **6.1.3 Offer Better Career Prospects**

The EDB should provide better career prospect to NETs. All Nets said that they are not satisfied with the jobs due to the lack of career prospect of NET scheme. The EDB should revise and provide a clear career path for NETs which is crucial to improve the high attrition rate. One suggestion is to open more opportunities for NETs to join the Advisory Teaching Team (ATT) of NET Section, e.g. the position of advisory teachers, consultants of curriculum planning team. This can provide NETs an opportunity to take other leadership roles once they want to switch to other positions. More numbers of AT can also make AT more concentrated to their mentees.

### **6.1.4 Provide Clear Guidelines to Host Schools**

The EDB should offer host school a clear guideline about the job conditions. It is surprised to know that some NETs have encountered resistance from school, such as getting appraisal and attending frequent NET meetings. Some NET also mentioned that the unfair treatment from school e.g. offered less holidays and irrelevant workload from general English lesson. NETs

under the NET scheme are directly employed by the EDB, therefore, the EDB should take the initiatives to offer clear guidelines and frequent investigation to know NETs' work conditions.

## **6.2 Cultural adjustment related suggestions**

### **6.2.1 Encourage cultural and academic exchanges between LETs and NETs**

The EDB can take the active role to enhance the academic and cultural exchanges between local English teachers (LETs) and NETs. According to the study by Chan (2015), she found out that more rapid collaboration between NETs and LETs can be beneficial to solve the problem of role ambiguity and role conflicts. The EDB should enhance the collaboration and exchanges between NETs and LETs during lesson, non-lesson time and even holidays. To organize academic exchanges and leisure activities such as barbecue, tea party or excursion during the weekend would be beneficial to enhance the communication between NETs and LETs.

### **6.2.2 Understand Chinese Work values**

Chan (2015) indicated that NETs have difficulties in understanding the host school's culture and policy. The EDB should offer some training and workshops about understanding Chinese work values, specific school routines and also living in Hong Kong as an expatriate would be very useful for NET's cultural adjustment.

# Chapter 7

## Conclusion

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To conclude, the research gives a comprehensive and in-depth pictures of difficulties in terms of personal, interpersonal and systemic level encounter by Native English Teachers. Undoubtedly, NETs are the major parts contributing to the effectiveness of the NET scheme. However, it is observable that NETs work under stress due to the failure of cross-cultural adjustment, particularly in sociocultural adjustment, such as social difficulties, cultural clash with work value and misunderstanding with colleagues. However, NETs did not realize that their difficulties at workplace are due to Cross-cultural adjustment.

Besides, the research confirmed that the EDB should revise the NET scheme in order to improve the weaknesses and challenges brought from the ambiguous and unstructured NET scheme, for example, to provide better career prospect, professional development and better welfare, in the long run, to improve the high attrition rate of NETs.

Due to the limited scale of the research, I cannot follow the cases for a longer period of time to enhance the objectivity and to offer more comprehensive results. However, the research is still insightful especially for the improvement of NET scheme because NET

scheme in Hong Kong is under-researched or the study of cross-cultural adjustment only focused on a short time, for example, C Ward et al (1998) studied a group of students from entry to 12 months. My research is valuable as my participants have lived in Hong Kong for 3.5 years to 8 years.

All in all, I believe in the power of Education and I am sincere to look forward to the improvement of NET scheme. Only by doing so, can teachers and future generation of students be beneficial with a better English learning environment.

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## Appendix 1 Interview Schedule

### **Interview question**

#### 1. Personal information

- 1.1 Which country are you from?
- 1.2 Do you have overseas living experience before?
- 1.3 How long have you been in Hong Kong as a NET?
- 1.4 Why did you decide to work in Hong Kong as a NET?
- 1.5 How many schools have you worked in HK?

#### 2. Work Nature

- 2.1 What is your daily work routine? Can you describe a typical day? What are your typical tasks?
- 2.2 How many working hours do you have in average?

- 2.3 How many students/ classes do you have?
- 2.4 How much time do you spend after class preparing your teaching materials?
- 2.5 How many staff meetings/ co-planning meeting do you have every week?

### 3. Overall experience

- 3.1 Can you use a word to describe your NET life in HK? Why?
- 3.2 Would you recommend your friend to come to Hong Kong as a NET? Why/Why not?
- 3.3 How much do you think you fit in the local community and culture? Please rate it from 1-5 (1=least, 5=most) Why did you rate as such?

### 4 Difficulties

Have you ever encountered any difficulties?

- 4.1 If not, what helped you to adjust well as a NET in HK?
- 4.2 If yes, what are the major difficulties you have encountered in your job?
- 4.3 What do you think of the workload?
- 4.4 How is your relationship with your local colleagues?
- 4.5 What do you think about the roles you are playing in your school?
- 4.6 What do you think the expectations and culture here? Are they different from those of your home country?

### 5. Personality

- 5.1 How would you describe your personalities? (flexible/outgoing...)
- 5.2 When you encounter the difficulties, how do you cope with them?
- 5.3 How do you balance your work and life?

### 6. Support from the EDB and the school

- 6.1 What kind of support are available from the EDB for you to adjust as a NET teacher? And the school?  
From any other organisations?
- 6.2 Have you ever attended any workshops about cultural adjustment? Who organised them?  
Do they work?
- 6.3 Do you think that the EDB offer good enough support to you in living and working in HK?  
How about support from the school?
- 6.4 What further support do you hope to have?

7. Any other comments?

Thank you very much for your help.

#### Appendix 2 Written Record (Participant A)

1.2 Do you have overseas living experience before?

1 year in Australia (worked as a surfing coach)

1 year in Iraq & Cyprus as an army

1.3 How long have you been in Hong Kong as a NET?

4 years since 2012 Oct (officially under the EDB NET scheme)

1 year part-time Net in the first year

4.5 years teaching in an adult learning centre (because at the time I didn't have the double degree in (BA&BEd)/ TEFL so I was not qualified to work as NET, I spent 3 years to study a degree in HK)

1.4 Why did you decide to work in Hong Kong as a NET?

My friend recommend the scheme to me!

1.5 How many schools have you worked in HK?

4 schools

1 Adult learning centre

2 government aided primary school (now)

1 secondary school

## 2. Work Nature

2.1 What is your daily work routine? Can you describe a typical day? What are your typical tasks?

Typical task:

I am school at 7:45, then I start planning, chat with teachers (catch up with schedule), prepare the materials and set up the classroom

Do marking in class e.g. high frequency words (formative assessment at the end of every unit)

Revise/rewrite materials (books, lesson plans), make ppt/ board

Make iclass/ flipped classroom (6/ year)

English Fun day

E.g. Check grammar from the exam paper for the general English (Something supposed not to be done by me)

2.2 How many working hours do you have in average?

Full 8 hours

2.3 How many students/ classes do you have?

14 classes (p1, 2 and p.6)

2.4 How much time do you spend after class preparing your teaching materials?

30 mins

2.5 How many staff meetings/ co-planning meeting do you have every week?

3 co-plan

1/ month (activities meeting)

## 3. Overall experience

3.1 Can you use a word to describe your NET life in HK? Why?

Solidary, depressing, serious,

A lot of complaints (no recognition!) No suggestion

Not welcoming as it used to be

Sometimes not respectful (some colleagues called me 'gwai Lo' 鬼佬)

3.2 Would you recommend your friend to come to Hong Kong as a NET? Why/Why not?

Yes but please investigate school very carefully! Because we have quite good salary but u will have no job satisfaction and recognition from your school.

3.3 How much do you think you fit in the local community and culture? Please rate it from 1-5 (1=least, 5=most) Why did you rate as such?

5 because I have been here for 11 years already. I know the HK culture well and I can follow rules. I know a lot about Hong Kong (where to eat, shop...)

4 Difficulties

Have you ever encountered any difficulties?

Yes, I have good daily life but I feel bored to live in Hong Kong because I don't have social life here.

4.1 If not, what helped you to adjust well as a NET in HK?

4.2 If yes, what are the major difficulties you have encountered in your job?

Resistance of renewing from old contracts/ the principal didn't give me appraisal (so I cannot change to other school)

Cannot improve teaching (nobody gives you comments and advice)

I cannot discipline student and Ss just see my class as FUN time (not serious)

Nobody follows plans and not supportive

4.3 What do you think of the workload?

Way too much but some are useless.

4.4 How is your relationship with your local colleagues?

No meaning of co-planning

Poor communication, they only listen and didn't give advice and 'no real communication'

My colleagues are moody and miserable.

They don't want to improve or update any teaching plans/ ideas

4.5 What do you think about the roles you are playing in your school?

Administrator / supporter

4.6 What do you think the expectations and culture here? Are they different from those of your home country?

HK	UK
Shut up and work (Don't ask question)	Wanna know your opinion
Do your own stuff (nobody cares about you)	Care about your feeling (e.g. are you happy or not) increase productivity

5. Personality

5.1 How would you describe your personalities? (flexible/outgoing...)

Outgoing, friendly, hard working, creative

5.2 When you encounter the difficulties, how do you cope with them?

I tolerate because there is no way out! (I cannot move to other school because NET scheme give better salary. I need money for my father because of his illness. So I stay, otherwise I will go to the International school)

5.3 How do you balance your work and life?

Look forward to holidays

Leave work immediately after school

Separate life and work

Avoid doing school stuff at home

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6. Support from the EDB and the school

6.1 What kind of support are available from the EDB for you to adjust as a NET teacher? And the school?

EDB	School
Workshops (useless) my school force me to go	Nothing
Net gathering (1/month)	They just criticise

From any other organisations?

6.2 Have you ever attended any workshops about cultural adjustment? Who organised them?

Do they work?

No

6.3 Do you think that the EDB offer good enough support to you in living and working in HK?

How about support from the school?

EDB is ok. But school never gives me any support

6.4 What further support do you hope to have?

From School,

More TA

No administration work

Hope they can listen my opinion.

EDB

More Literacy teaching

7. Any other comments?

It is just about tolerate and very heavy burden

Thank you very much for your help.

Appendix 3 Written record (participant B)

**Interview question**

**1. Personal information**

**1.1 Which country are you from?**

Bangladesh (next to India)

**1.2 Do you have overseas living experience before?**

1 yr in Doha for an internship

4 yrs Uni study in HK at Poly U (Account and finance)

**1.3 How long have you been in Hong Kong as a NET?**

4 yrs part-time NET

1.5 year full time here

**1.4 Why did you decide to work in Hong Kong as a NET?**

Work in Business sector before but find it so stressful (get fired easily if you make tiny

mistakes)

Studied Uni in Hong Kong (find jobs here)

Cannot speak Cantonese so cannot find good jobs in HK, NET is relatively very good job for non-Chinese speakers

### **1.5 How many schools have you worked in HK?**

3 school ---Part time

PLKTKPMPS ---Full time (1.5 yrs)

## **2. Work Nature**

### **2.1 What is your daily work routine? Can you describe a typical day? What are your typical tasks?**

Take classes (P.4-p.5 SBRW) (P.1, P.3 PLP)

Marking all the exercises

I am the coordinator of P.4 & 5. I needa make decision on the choices of books, make lesson plans & teaching materials for the whole form P.4-5, Fun day games on the final school day (15 games)

Making decoration boards (2 for each class)

No admin stuff

“Fun room” every Thursday

### **2.2 How many working hours do you have in average?**

8-4 (8 hrs)

### **2.3 How many students/ classes do you have?**

22 classes/ week

P.4-5 (all) School based reading & writing (SBRW)

P.1 (one class) P.3 (all) PLPR

### **2.4 How much time do you spend after class preparing your teaching materials?**

Usually make materials during the exam (dont need to teach/in charge of the exam)

24 hrs/ reader (since P.4 curriculum is new so it takes 4 days to finish preparing 4 readers)

Board decoration P.4 (2x5) P.5 (2x5) ---20 days (Usually the Ss should help decorate the board but it does not work so I made myself)

### **2.5 How many staff meetings/ co-planning meeting do you have every week?**

P.4-5 Co-plan (Person in charge, coordinator of SBRW)

P.1-3 join the meetings

## **3. Overall experience**

### **3.1 4.3 Can you use a word to describe your NET life in HK? Why?**

Hectic but enjoyable

Teaching is busy but if you like doing stuff like coloring, cutting papers, crafts. You will enjoy the job.

**3.2 Would you recommend your friend to come to Hong Kong as a NET? Why/Why not?**

Yes, teaching is very hectic but less stressful than the job I used to work for. I work at a bank before and its more stressful. They didn't accept any mistake. Also, teaching is a good job in Hong Kong

**3.3 How much do you think you fit in the local community and culture? Please rate it from 1-5 (1=least, 5=most) Why did you rate as such?**

1

Did not speak the language

Greet the local teacher usually they do not give response to you.

School Culture: very bossy, senior

I don't have any local friends.

**4 Difficulties**

**Have you ever encountered any difficulties?**

Language (can't speak Cantonese)

Finding jobs in HK

(- don't speak Chinese so switch to the job of teaching)

(I am not from the US or Europe, some school may say I don't have NET appearance)

Teaching: Ss think that PLP, SBRW are less important (Not serious/sincere enough), NET are less authoritative

Food

Rent

**4.1 If not, what helped you to adjust well as a NET in HK?**

Application for NET jobs (I don't look NET in appearance)

Food

House Rent

**4.2 If yes, what are the major difficulties you have encountered in your job?**

I do not have proper authority over students. In addition, I only see each class once week for 25 min only. It is not enough to built strong relationship with students.

**4.3 What do you think of the workload?**

I would say the workload the appropriate.

**4.4 How is your relationship with your local colleagues?**

Very good with Local English Teachers

Take their advice

**4.5 What do you think about the roles you are playing in your school?**

No admin

All about teaching

**4.6 What do you think the expectations and culture here? Are they different from those of your home country?**

I didn't work in my country. I am not sure about the working culture in my country.

**5. Personality**

**5.1 How would you describe your personalities? (flexible/outgoing...)**

I am very outgoing and patient person. Only thing I can't stand is disrespectful attitude from anyone.

**5.2 When you encounter the difficulties, how do you cope with them?**

Honestly, as a minority, I don't have many options in this area. I usually try to consult with my superiors to solve any issues. If that doesn't work, I have no option but to ignore it.

**5.3 How do you balance your work and life?**

As a primary school teacher, I would say that's not very difficult. Usually teachers can get off from work around 5:00 Pm and there's plenty of time to juggle family life with.

**6. Support from the EDB and the school**

**6.1 What kind of support are available from the EDB for you to adjust as a NET teacher? And the school?**

There are some supports from schools. School arranges workshop and training for teachers but I seldom go.

**From any other organisations?**

**6.2 Have you ever attended any workshops about cultural adjustment? Who organised them? Do they work?**

Haven't attended any.

**6.3 Do you think that the EDB offer good enough support to you in living and working in HK? How about support from the school?**

For EDB teachers, I think EDB provide enough support for the teachers.

**6.4 What further support do you hope to have?**

I would really like to see some support from Government or EDB to those who want to pursue their study in Education specifically.

**7. Any other comments?**

**Thank you very much for your help.**

Appendix 4 Written record (participant C)

**1. Personal information**

**1.1 Which country are you from?**

Ireland

**1.2 Do you have overseas living experience before?**

France (1 year) When I was 21 at the University.

I was paid by the French Government to teach English in 3 primary schools and 1 secondary school.

Since then, I was back to Ireland and taught for 12 years before moving to HK.

**1.3 How long have you been in Hong Kong as a NET?**

5 years

#### **1.4 Why did you decide to work in Hong Kong as a NET?**

I didn't really plan to work in HK. I wanted to work in Australia but then I knew they required English teachers to have 4 year degree which is different from the Irish one. Also, the Education system in Australia varies among different states. Therefore, I couldn't work there. At that time, I have an Irish friend who went to HK and worked as NET. She recommended me this Scheme so I am here. In overall, I was in HK by default.

#### **1.5 How many schools have you worked in HK?**

I worked in a tutoring centre before working at the primary school I am working now.

### **2. Work Nature**

#### **2.1 What is your daily work routine? Can you describe a typical day? What are your typical tasks?**

I worked from 0800-1640 (sometimes till 1830)

I checked all the books, teaching materials and worksheet before the lessons. Usually I have 4-5 lesson a day.

some extra curricular activities (This year I worked on a TV programme), sometimes drama, choral speaking practice.

Marking some homework.

Portfolio for the PLP. /PLPW

#### **2.2 How many working hours do you have in average?**

9 hours/ day

#### **2.3 How many students/ classes do you have?**

P.5x4

P.6x1

P.4x5 (entire form)

Around 300 students

#### **2.4 How much time do you spend after class preparing your teaching materials?**

1.5 hrs/day (all materials are prepared the year before, I have finished most of the materials but it still takes time to revise the materials before the lessons)

#### **2.5 How many staff meetings/ co-planning meeting do you have every week?**

3/ months (each last for around 15 mins)

### **3. Overall experience**

#### **3.1 Can you use a word to describe your NET life in HK? Why?**

Hectic,

school are unrecognized

### **3.2 Would you recommend your friend to come to Hong Kong as a NET? Why/Why not?**

Yes, because of the salary, cultural experience.

But there is no career prospect, no future professional development, no say to make difference and change on everything like curriculum, no job satisfaction. Very demotivating.

### **3.3 How much do you think you fit in the local community and culture? Please rate it from 1-5 (1=least, 5=most) Why did you rate as such?**

3. I think I fit in the local culture quite well. I greet people in the street (saying a few Chinese words I know) Also, I have breakfast at the local restaurant every day which is something not very common in Ireland. I also go to the local wet market, take minibuses which is something I need to use Cantonese to talk to the shopkeeper and driver. However, I don't think I have much entertainment as I used to be in Ireland (e.g. golf, hiking) so I rate myself as 3. Not much entertainment in Hong Kong because of the busy schedule and also some entertainment is hard to access like golf as it is very expensive. In overall, I feel good and comfortable to be here as I know where to go to and quite familiar with HK lifestyle.

## **4 Difficulties**

### **Have you ever encountered any difficulties?**

#### **4.1 If not, what helped you to adjust well as a NET in HK?**

#### **4.2 If yes, what are the major difficulties you have encountered in your job?**

Yes, I found paper work is so strict here. I remember when I first came here, I have some problem with my name because my middle name is missing in one of the NET document. Finally, it took me a lot of time and procedures to declare my names.

I also found the NET scheme is not fair to each of the NET. As we as a NET, we have a very diverse work environment e.g. number of classes, holidays and workload. There is a suggested work hours but still school may just take it as reference. So if every NET is paid the same which actually not very fair. I think this is also the reason that explains why losing a lot of NET every year.

Another difficult I have is about holidays. I need to fight for holidays and also work hours because the holidays I used to have was less than the suggested holidays in my NET contracts and also I have too many classes last year that I really couldn't work my best.

#### **4.3 What do you think of the workload?**

I have 20 classes/week. I think workload is manageable as it is reduced after some negotiation so I can put more focus on each class and also the English ECA I run.

#### **4.4 How is your relationship with your local colleagues?**

The English teachers are very good and lovely. I enjoy working with my colleagues. The only thing I wanna say is we don't have too much exchange and discussion on planning lessons and materials. We have co-planning meetings but most of the time teachers just say 'ok/ yes/ good' and they just care about how to change the content of worksheet for their class. There is a lack of real discussion I think.

#### **4.5 What do you think about the roles you are playing in your school?**

I think I was used in the wrong way/ not in a beneficial way! For example, I as a NET should have been used to help students English speaking and create an English speaking environment to them by some creative projects which involved a lot of students. However, in reality, I was told to have English oral exam with students and asking questions which is not very authentic. I have tried to reflect to the panel and also other teachers but it seems like I have no say in the curriculum which is quite upset and demotivating.

Also, I feel like the school is over-expected to NET. For example, teaching the entire reading in only one class. They have too much unrealistic expectation. They think we are miracle teacher.

#### **4.6 What do you think the expectations and culture here? Are they different from those of your home country?**

### **5. Personality**

#### **5.1 How would you describe your personalities? (flexible/outgoing...)**

Flexible, diligent, upbeat

#### **5.2 When you encounter the difficulties, how do you cope with them?**

Get it sorted!

Say what I think!

Calm and professional!

Smile!

#### **5.3 How do you balance your work and life?**

I don't. I don't have any entertainment after work. But I have a motto "Things will get better..." and I make sure I have 8 hour sleep every night.

### **6. Support from the EDB and the school**

#### **6.1 What kind of support are available from the EDB for you to adjust as a NET teacher? And the school?**

Every NET has an Advisory teacher from the EDB and they are ex NET but work at EDB now . I will meet him once a year for around 20 mins about curriculum and teaching. I don't think they are very supportive because they don't care about your life. The discussion is just about the

surface.

**From any other organisations?**

**6.2 Have you ever attended any workshops about cultural adjustment? Who organised them? Do they work?**

Never, I attended workshops about PLP but I don't think they are very useful and informative.

**6.3 Do you think that the EDB offer good enough support to you in living and working in HK? How about support from the school?**

EDB

No, they don't care. We need a fight for things from school by our own self. (Fight for holidays/workload)

School

I feel like school doesn't really care about your life e.g. as a mum. Job is everything. I am just a robot. Another example is I just know my holidays two weeks before the holiday which is quite difficult for me to plan to fly back to my home countries.

**6.4 What further support do you hope to have?**

I hope to have a person who can talk to from the EDB about our work condition.

I feel like I have no support (the EDB NET division said it's not their job about work conditions)

I hope our AT advisory teacher can offer some practical and useful advice.

**7. Any other comments?**

**Thank you very much for your help.**

Appendix 5 Written record (participant D)

Interview questions

1. Personal information

1.1 Which country are you from?

Australia, Perth

1.2 Do you have overseas living experience before?

Have been to Asia for holidays for many times (2 months in Thailand)

1.3 How long have you been in Hong Kong as a NET?

3.5 years

1.4 Why did you decide to work in Hong Kong as a NET?

I used to work at a secondary school in Australia as administrative staff. I also had TEFL experience (taught Japanese students). My friend who is also a teacher recommended me

the NET scheme. At the time, I got a 3 months paid leave so I gave it a try. I gave it try because I think it is a good chance to get cultural exchange and Hong Kong is a good place for travelling to nearby cities. It is also a chance for me to change of lifestyle. Also, this job provides me good pay!

1.5 How many schools have you worked in HK?

2 primary school

## 2. Work Nature

2.1 What is your daily work routine? Can you describe a typical day? What are your typical tasks?

I wake up at 6 in the morning and I am school at 7:30. Then I can talk and greet to other teachers. I also check the materials and resources to see if they are ready before I go to class. Usually I have 4-5 classes every day.

My typical task: I greet student at the gate every day.

Besides regular teaching, I run English club twice a week, we have activities like puppet show, songs, word puzzle and cooking.

I also have co-plan (PLPLW) meeting twice a week, 1-p1, 1-p2.

2.2 How many working hours do you have in average?

From 7:30-1640 (9hrs)

Mon-Thur 24 lessons (35 mmins)

Fri (day for planning) I need to work extra one hour.

Also, I need to work for 6 saturday a year (3 full day, 3 half)

2 church services a year

2.3 How many students/ classes do you have?

PLP classes: p.1 x 4 (34ss/class) , p.2x4 (28ssX2, 38ssX2)

2.4 How much time do you spend after class preparing your teaching materials?

30 mins

2.5 How many staff meetings/ co-planning meeting do you have every week?

2 co plan in alternate week

No staff meeting

(1 staff meeting conducted in English every year)

3. Overall experience

3.1 Can you use a word to describe your NET life in HK? Why?

School work -Enjoyable (but still a bit boring because it is not very challenging. As a NET we cannot change the curriculum. But staff and teachers are very great and supportive at my school.)

Social life- quiet ( I don't have any social life in Hong kong. I just work and work. I am not very active in social life)

3.2 Would you recommend your friend to come to Hong Kong as a NET? Why/Why not?

Yes- to those look for financial secured job.

No- if you are career oriented because you can not change anything, no career prospect)

3.3 How much do you think you fit in the local community and culture? Please rate it from 1-5 (1=least, 5=most) Why did you rate as such?

2, because I have no local friends and didn't chance to hang out with friends. Though I meet colleagues from school but still our friendship is not deep enough. I feel welcome at school but I found isolated (like being an outsider) One example to show is one time when In say Hello to my colleagues and she just walked by. Later, I found out that it just because everyone is too busy. Hong Kong life style is so busy.

Anyway, I am confident to visit the local shops in the wet market.

4 Difficulties

Have you ever encountered any difficulties?

Not much in terms of cultural shock. But I have difficulties to get used to the environment.

For example, MTR/ street are too crowded on Sunday. Air pollution is quite serious and I

always got sick in the first year.

4.1 If not, what helped you to adjust well as a NET in HK?

Language (because I speak Thai).

Spending time with NET friends, and they told me everything from how to pay a bill, where to shop/ go.

Time (make you more familiar with the society. )

4.2 If yes, what are the major difficulties you have encountered in your job?

But sometimes, I feel lost when surrounded by cantonese. Also getting apart from family and friends in Australia makes me quite homesick.

4.3 What do you think of the workload?

Easy job duties and it is not heavy but very long work hours.

4.4 How is your relationship with your local colleagues?

Very good and positive. My colleagues are very supportive and respectful. They look after me and also ask for advice from me. But we never hang out (we only on school function).

But because of the tight schedule we don't have much professional discussion in co-plan due to the structured programme.

4.5 What do you think about the roles you are playing in your school?

A way to let teacher to teach with fun. Exposing local teaching into variety and kids enjoy a lot!

4.6 What do you think the expectations and culture here? Are they different from those of your home country?

Hong Kong

Australia

Teaching culture

Emphasize on drilling and too exam oriented(exam week, pre-exam, post exam week)

Problem solving skills, real teaching, cater for learner diversity, less exam, tailor-made the curriculum for each student (no textbook driven). More holistic and mix all subjects together

(one teacher teaching almost all the subjects)

Work culture

Clock in/clock out the school

Too much accountability e.g. check exam paper, recheck...

Not trusted

Scared of making mistakes

Hierarchy

Flexible

(no clock in/ out time)

Back home after work

5. Personality

5.1 How would you describe your personalities? (flexible/outgoing...)

Fairly reserved, quiet, flexible, friendly, not outgoing, a sense of humour

5.2 When you encounter the difficulties, how do you cope with them?

I think it through and try to solve the problems. I trust my colleagues and love to talk to them. I believe communication can help. Nonetheless, If I really can't solve the problem, I will talk to my NET friends (share sadness/ worries). Anyway, I am now very relaxing and chill because it is gonna be my last teaching year before my retirement.

5.3 How do you balance your work and life?

It is hard to balance life because I have very long work hour, hard to meet expat friends (they keep come and go, not stable), also I live in Taipo. I am not so great socially.

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6. Support from the EDB and the school

6.1 What kind of support are available from the EDB for you to adjust as a NET teacher? And the school?

From EDB: I have an advisory teacher (AT) from EDB. I meet him 3 times a year and we

just meet 10 mins each time which is just touching the surface. It is about professional development but it doesn't help much. Also, EDB also provides some workshops but they are not so good (people just share something not very practical, just read the ppt out). They didn't survey what you need or care about you!

School: I have a SET (a teacher who translate the meeting for me )

From any other organisations?

6.2 Have you ever attended any workshops about cultural adjustment? Who organised them?

Do they work?

EDB NET session

2 induction about words in Cantonese, tax, medicine.

6.3 Do you think that the EDB offer good enough support to you in living and working in HK? How about support from the school?

No I don't think EDB give good enough support. I am lucky to have some NET friends to give me advice.

6.4 What further support do you hope to have?

At the moment, I don't need anything because I will retire soon. I am thankful that my school is pretty good.

7. Any other comments?

For young teacher, I think the EDB should provide more support to them on class management/ basic curriculum planning for teachers.

Thank you very much for your help.

