

Promoting New Literacies in Hong Kong Schools

Project Report

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Introduction

The development of successful literacy skills is central to educational policy in many societies, and Hong Kong is no exception. However, what counts as ‘literacy’ continues to be contested in education (Collins & Blot, 2003). This debate is even more apparent in the 21st century as globalization, mass communication and digital technologies influence the types of literacies that are emerging and the spread of English as an International Language. As a result, achieving high standards of literacy in English as a Second or Foreign Language (ESL/EFL) has also become a goal for education systems around the world. The changing nature of literacy and the role of English as an international language are reflected in the two overall aims of the Hong Kong English Language curriculum (Curriculum Development Council, 2002):

- To provide every learner of a second language with further opportunities for extending their knowledge and experience of the cultures of other people as well as opportunities for personal and intellectual development, further studies, pleasure and work in the English medium.
- To enable every learner to prepare for the changing socio-economic demands resulting from advances in information technology; these demands include the interpretation, use and production of materials for pleasure, study and work in the English medium.

The development of successful literacy skills is central to meeting both of these goals. Indeed, literacy – the ability to work meaningfully and purposefully with texts – is central to educational policy in most international contexts, including Hong Kong, where recent initiatives in the English Language curriculum have included the Extensive Reading Scheme (ERS), Reading Workshops, and the Primary Literacy Programme – Reading and Writing (PLPR/W). These initiatives aim to achieve the goals of the most recent education reform policy, *Learning for Life Reform Proposal*, published in 2000 by the Education Commission of Hong Kong, which represents the “third wave” of educational reform in Hong Kong and emphasizes the importance of preparing for the challenges of the new millennium (Cheng, 2005). Both Reading to Learn and Information Technology are two of the Four Key Tasks in this reform proposal.

As mentioned, literacy has changed dramatically in recent decades, both as a result of the increasing acceptance of socio-cultural perspectives within studies of language (Ball & Warshauer Freedman, 2004; Lankshear, 1997; Lee & Smagorinsky, 2000) and the increasing proliferation and prominence of digitally mediated, multimodal forms of texts and literacy practices (Alvermann, 2002; Jewitt & Kress, 2003; Kress, 2003; Lankshear & Knobel, 2006). Reading, writing and other language-related practices that come under the umbrella of literacy are embedded, or situated, within specific social practices and, like social practices, evolve as a result of technological, economic and cultural developments. The terms *new literacies* and *multiliteracies* are now applied to an ever increasing variety of texts and practices in socially, culturally and linguistically diverse contexts (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000; Lankshear & Knobel, 2006). As the title of a recent book on literacy education in schools reminds us, *Literacy moves on* (Evans, 2005).

The most significant way that literacy has ‘moved on’ is in the rapid transformation of existing literacy and social practices, and the emergence of new ones involving the production, reception and exchange of electronically generated and distributed texts via the Internet, computers, DVDs, mobile phones, and so on. One of the most salient features of new literacies, and one that presents a fundamental challenge to English language educators, is the way in which textual norms are constantly being challenged and redesigned. For example, contemporary and popular culture texts are frequently created through the practice of “remix” (Lessig, 2004) – combining elements from existing texts to create new texts and new meanings. Indeed, as Lankshear and Knobel (2006) describe, “there is *no* text paradigm. Text types are subject to wholesale experimentation, hybridisation, and rule breaking (p. 52).” As new forms of texts emerge, new ways of ‘reading’ and interpreting texts also develop, along with new textual practices. A single text may be intended for various social groups as users and may often involve non-linear, interactive and multiple ‘reading’ pathways (Lawless & Schrader, 2008). Widespread distribution and participation made available through the Internet have also challenged accepted views of ownership, authorship, and hierarchical relationships between authors and readers.

Lankshear and Knobel (2006) describe these old and new literacy practices in terms of “mindsets”. New literacies practices embody mindsets that privilege “participation over publishing, distributed expertise over centralised expertise, collective intelligence over individual possessive intelligence, collaboration over individuated authorship, dispersion over

scarcity, sharing over ownership, experimentation over ‘normalisation’, innovation and evolution over stability and fixity... and so on” (p. 60). Examples of new literacies practices and texts that embody this mindset include *Wikipedia*, the collaboratively generated, ‘free’ online encyclopedia, and *Delicious*, a social bookmarking site that allows users to tag and share websites across common interests. Experimentation and creative rule-breaking are seen in video ‘mash ups’, in which remixes of clips of songs and films are shared and responded to on *YouTube*, and online fan fiction, where writers borrow characters, settings, and plots from their favourite commercially published novels, comic strips or movies, and create new stories or scenes and share them via the Internet.

Examining the social phenomena of media convergence “where old and new media collide, where grassroots and corporate media intersect, where the power of the media consumer interact in unpredictable ways,” Jenkins (2006b, p. 2) calls the new social relationships and practices that have emerged around new media “participatory culture” to emphasise the collaboration and distributed expertise made possible on a massive scale through the Internet and digital technology. Forms of participatory culture in this environment include online affiliations such as *Facebook*, multimodal digital expressions through digital stories, collaborative problem-solving such as that seen in *Wikipedia* or on discussion boards, and the ways that people influence and drive the circulation of media through for example, blogging and podcasting (Jenkins, 2006a).

While many young people are extensive and proficient users of contemporary information and communication technologies, these technologies and their associated multimodal textual practices have unfortunately not been fully exploited in schools and classrooms. This has not only resulted in reduced opportunities for rich learning experiences but also an increasing tendency for many students to perceive education as a process that is foreign to them, lacking in relevance and ultimately alienating (Lankshear & Knobel, 2006). There is, therefore, a need to have an explicit educational focus on these technologies and their associated multimodal text forms and literacy practices. It is also essential to bear in mind, however, that many educators’ are of the opinion that the proliferation of modern technologies, and the ease with which they can be accessed and used, actually compromises the development of those traditional literacy skills that are highly valued by the education system and fostered through its methods of assessment and evaluation. Thus, what is required is a paradigm shift in our broad understanding of what literacy entails and how best all relevant forms of literacies can

be adapted and exploited in the context of our schools and the very worthy aims of the Hong Kong English language curriculum.

Another way in which literacy has ‘moved on’ is in the increasing recognition of the role of multimedia texts and popular culture in the classroom, where children’s fascination with electronic media and popular culture can be a source of opportunity, rather than a distraction (Black, 2008; Buckingham & Willet, 2006; Dyson, 2003; Merchant, 2009, and others); indeed, educators can capitalise on texts that have already captured children’s imaginations outside the classroom by incorporating them into the curriculum, thus promoting relevance and engagement, and following the educational precept to ‘start where children are at’.

Texts drawn from mass media and popular culture have two particular qualities that provide the possibility for intense experience within a meaningful framework (Misson, 1998) and make them invaluable classroom teaching resources: pleasure, which encourages students to invest themselves in tasks related to the text; and predictability, which provides a form of scaffolding that is particularly valuable for second language learners. Such texts offer a means to supplement and extend existing educational resources, so as to heighten curricular relevance and nurture student motivation. They are also a key element in the development of literacy skills for negotiating and acting in the modern world.

A third way in which notions of literacy in education have changed is in the recognition of the need to go beyond ‘functional’ approaches that treat literacy as an autonomous set of decontextualised, code-breaking skills (Street, 1984, 1995). Critical approaches to texts – spoken, written, visual and verbal – derive from critical social theory and its interest in matters of ethnicity, gender, class and identity. In particular, critical social theory recognizes that literacy entails situated social practices and events and views texts as inextricably linked to questions of power and identity. It recognizes that within situated social practices, language mediates not only the activities concerned, but also socially constructed discourses, ideologies and knowledge systems, social relations and socially situated identities (Barton, Hamilton, & Ivanic, 2000). Thus, critical literacy is not an ‘add-on’ to traditional approaches, which are limited to a focus on literacy’s necessary yet insufficient encoding and decoding skills, it entails a recognition of the ways language is mutually constitutive of the social world, or the co-construction ‘the word’ and ‘the world’ (Freire & Macedo, 1987). This includes an awareness of the ways in which curriculum constructs certain opportunities and options for

students at the same time as it closes down others (Lin, 2001). The notion of socially situated and constructed literacy practices is captured by Vasquez in describing her approach to negotiating critical literacy curriculum with young children:

A critical literacy curriculum needs to be lived. It arises from the social and political conditions that unfold in communities in which we live. As such it cannot be traditionally taught. In other words, as teachers we need to incorporate a critical perspective into our everyday lives in order to find ways to help children understand the social and political issues around them. (Vasquez, 2004, p. 1)

At the same time, critical literacy should not simply be viewed as an alternative to traditional or ‘functional’ models of literacy. A useful approach that moves beyond such dichotomies is Freebody & Luke’s (1990) Four Resources Model, which argues for the necessary status of four components of successful literacy practice. These components include: *code breaking*, that is, decoding language, image, sound and other multimodal textual elements; *text participation*, namely, understanding and comprehending a text; *functional text use*, namely, the ability to use a text in a social situation or context; and *text analysis*, the ability to understand how a text represents a particular version of the social world, how particular viewpoints are privileged over others, and how a text can construct identities of its users or readers. In terms of literacy practices, these four aspects correspond to decoding practices, semantic practices, pragmatic practices and critical practices (Luke & Freebody, 1997). It is argued that students need all four literacy resources to successfully and responsibly navigate literacy in an information-saturated, text-dominant world.

Combining these four literacy practices with the components of new literacies practices outlined above, a matrix is formulated (see Table 1) of traditional and new literacy practices that offers a framework for extending literacy work with teachers and students in Hong Kong English language classrooms. It should be emphasized that the new literacies practices represent an extended notion of what successful literacy practices are about – and hence also what they require of students – in the 21st century.

While many young people in Hong Kong are extensive and proficient users and producers of new literacies, and are active and enthusiastic consumers of multimodal, digitally mediated popular culture texts in their out-of-school lives, these new multimodal texts and textual practices have not been fully exploited in many English language classrooms, where print-

based literacy continues to underpin much teaching, learning and assessment. The literacy teaching and learning models and curriculum materials used by Hong Kong primary and secondary schools and teachers in response to recent literacy initiatives in the English curriculum largely adopt a skills-based, cognitive approach to reading and writing, and a traditional paper-based, print-based view of texts that dominates English language teaching methodology and early reading instruction and emphasises decoding and comprehension. When digital literacies and texts are referenced, for example, when popular Hong Kong English language textbooks show blog postings, emails and websites, the texts generally remain flat on the page inside the textbook, and mainly serve to contextualise the targeted language structures and vocabulary. Technology in the form of *PowerPoint* presentations, e-books, and phonics and vocabulary learning software do not capture the ‘mindsets’ of the new literacies discussed above, and are what Lankshear and Knobel (2006) call ‘old wine in new bottles’ – technology used to ‘dress up’ traditional literacies.

Table 1: Matrix of traditional and new literacies practices

Perspectives	Traditional Literacy	New Literacies (subsumes, but goes beyond, traditional practices)
Mode of Representation	Usually print-based and linear	Usually multimodal; hypertextual; with intertextual references expected
Readers’ Role	Text-meaning recipients, focusing on code-breaking and comprehension	Four literacy practices including: code-breaking, comprehension, text use and analysis/critique
Location of Meanings	Meanings perceived to be residing in the texts	Emphasises unfolding situated meanings co-constructed by writers and readers as sociocultural agents
Evaluation-orientation	Closed-ended / convergent responses (e.g., code-oriented comprehension)	Open-ended / divergent responses (e.g., uncovering textual ideologies) and creative construction of new texts and meanings

The appearance of blogs and emails on the pages of Hong Kong textbooks does little to address what appears to be a growing gap between students’ media-saturated, lifeworld literacies and the school-based literacy emphasised by the English language curriculum and high-stakes assessment methods. These skills-based, functional approaches to teaching English may in fact serve to alienate English language teachers from their students, and limit teachers’ development of educationally and socially responsive teaching approaches,

strategies and resources. They also do not address the need for preparing students to critically engage with the proliferation of new texts and textual practices, and to use and create texts in socially responsible and socially responsive ways (Anstey & Bull, 2006).

While linguistic skills and knowledge are necessary, they are insufficient when taking into account the rapidly changing communication landscape of the 21st century, the multimodal, dynamic nature of texts, particularly digitally mediated texts, and the ways in which texts and textual practices are situated within specific social practices and inextricably linked to social relations and social identity (Barton, et al., 2000; J. P. Gee, 2008; Kress, 2003; Street, 1995). Thus, to achieve the aims of the Hong Kong curriculum outlined above, there is a strong need for an expanded, sociocultural approach to literacy teaching and learning in Hong Kong schools that takes account of the emergence of new literacies in the 21st century, and that embraces the notion of literacy as a social practice intimately tied to the construction of learners' identities. In this context, it is timely that Hong Kong has placed an increasing emphasis on literacy development in the primary English curriculum in recent years (Curriculum Development Council, 2004); however, given the significant shifts in conceptualisations of literacy over the past decade, as outlined above, professional development and research in the teaching and learning of new literacies is particularly pressing.

Recent educational reforms have begun to address the need for developing digital literacies across school subjects, and have recognised the potential of information and communication technologies (ICTs) to enhance the learning of English. In 2008, a group of English language curriculum experts and researchers in the Faculty of Education at the University of Hong Kong began a two-year, capacity-building project with English language teachers in upper primary (Primary 4–6) classes in seven primary schools, and in lower secondary (Secondary 1–3) classes in five secondary schools aimed at building their confidence in, and skills and knowledge of, new literacies-infused English language learning and teaching. At the same time the project aimed to research, develop and disseminate teaching resources and case studies of new literacies-infused English language learning and teaching.

The following chapters in this monograph provide an in-depth look at the project implementation and findings. Chapter 1 describes the project design and methodology, detailing areas such as the identification of participating schools, the stages of the project, the

project deliverables and ethics procedures. In order to know about students' literacy practices in and out of school, the upper primary (Primary 4–6) and lower secondary (Secondary 1–3) students in the participating schools were invited to take part in a questionnaire. Chapter 2 describes the aims and design of the questionnaire, its implementation, and the key findings and conclusions. Chapters 3 and 4 describe and reflect upon the new literacies-infused curricular units conducted by the teachers and students in the twelve participating secondary and primary schools. Chapter 5 discusses the findings and comparisons across schools on the readiness of Hong Kong schools for new literacies, new literacies pedagogies and curriculum development, and student learning and teachers' professional development. The issues, tensions, constraints and challenges in implementing new literacies in the English classrooms is also discussed. Finally, Chapter 6 provides some conclusions regarding the implementation of new literacies in the English curriculum in Hong Kong schools, and offers a number of recommendations for future developments in this area.

Chapter 1 The Project

This chapter describes the aims, objectives and design of the Project, the composition of the research team, and the recruitment and selection of the twelve participating local schools and their teachers and classes. It also outlines the key stages of the project, including the various professional development activities organised for the participating school teams and for the local educational community, and the production and distribution of the Project's DVD. It concludes by outlining and explaining the data collection and data analyses procedures.

1.1 The Project team

The four university researchers who implemented the project were all experienced language teacher educators, who had many years of working with pre-service and in-service teachers on the implementation of theory-derived practice in the English language classroom. They also had collective experience and expertise in research into critical literacy theory and practice, new (multimodal) literacy studies, school-based professional development, and curriculum development and design. The project also employed a support team with a project manager, an IT officer and two research assistants, who provided administrative, technical and research support and assisted with data collection and data analysis.

1.2 Project aims and design

The main goal of the project was to enhance teaching and learning in the school subject, English Language, through the incorporation and integration of new literacies into the existing English language curriculum. The project adopted a strong professional development or capacity building focus, aiming to develop teachers' knowledge and skills in integrating new literacies into their everyday teaching.

The project aimed to support and enhance the existing English Language curriculum in schools, and build upon each teachers' current understanding of English Language teaching and learning. In addition, it aimed to reach the wider community of English language teachers in Hong Kong through sharing and dissemination, by encouraging and enabling participating schools to develop new literacies-infused curricular units and effective teaching materials that

could be shared with other teachers through a DVD, show-casing effective new literacies-enhanced teaching and learning. Finally, the project aimed to provide insights that might assist in the future development of new literacies in the English curriculum by examining the processes used by teachers to integrate new literacies in their teaching, and the factors influencing these processes, in order to identify the support needed for teachers and schools to further develop this area. The specific project objectives are shown in Figure 2.

Because of the need for the active participation of the teachers and students, who jointly construct the learning context for new literacy practices, a collaborative teacher inquiry approach was adopted (Wells, 2001). This included strong elements of collaborative action research, with self-reflective cycles in which teachers identified issues or problems, planned a change, implemented the change and observed and reflected on the processes and change, and then replanned, and so forth (Burns, 1999; Carr & Kemmis, 1986). Collaborative teacher inquiry and action research was regarded as particularly relevant to educational research involving new literacies because of its problem-solving emphasis and its focus on critical reflection and the development of deeper understandings of teaching and learning over a period of time.

The project first put into practice this collaborative model with a series of teacher workshops led by the project researcher that provided theoretical concepts and practices relating to new literacies in the school curriculum. This was followed by a period of school-based action, in which various new literacies-integrated teaching and learning activities and procedures were co-planned by project teachers and the research team, and which eventually resulted in the development of new literacies-infused curriculum units that utilised multimodal, multimedia and popular cultural texts and digital tools. The participating teachers then trialled and evaluated their curriculum units, and students, teachers and researchers reflected on the learning and teaching. Through this process, it was hoped that teachers would diversify their teaching, learning and assessment strategies and gain professional development, and that students would enhance their confidence and capacities for learning how to learn and improve their literacy skills.

Figure 1: Project objectives

- To identify and describe the existing literacy knowledge and skills of a range of upper primary and junior secondary English language teachers' and students'. For example, their responses to recent literacy initiatives, and other factors that influence and shape their capacity to undertake effective 'new literacy' teaching practices in their classrooms.
- To develop, trial and evaluate a range of content and context-appropriate new literacies activities and teaching strategies that are linked to the English language curriculum outcomes.
- To identify and describe the range and type of teacher- and school-level support needed for the effective development of new literacies practices in upper primary and junior secondary English in Hong Kong.
- To improve students' and teachers' skills in engaging with a range of texts in line with the above discussion of new literacies practices.
- To foster collaboration and sharing of best practices in teaching new literacies between teachers in the upper-primary and lower secondary sectors.
- To document and disseminate via a DVD-ROM and project website, innovative and effective new literacies education practices linked to high quality English language teaching and learning in order to support improved performance in English language across the Hong Kong education system.

1.2.1 Ethical procedures

Since the project involved collecting data from principals, school teachers and students through various means such as lesson observations, sampling of student work and teaching materials, interviews and questionnaire administration, the Project obtained ethical approval to implement the project from the Human Research Ethics Committee for Non-Clinical Faculties of the University of Hong Kong. Written consent was obtained from participating school principals and all participating teachers, and consent was also sought from the parents of all participating students. The consent forms briefed principals, teachers and parents about the project background, the stages of the project, their potential roles and tasks in the project, and their right to voluntary participation and withdrawal. During the data collection process, the team worked with schools to ensure that data was not collected from students whose

parents had not given consent for them to take part in the project.

Table 2: Participating schools, teachers and classes

Schools¹	Primary/Secondary	Classes	No. of teachers
School 01	Primary	P5 (3 classes)	3 teachers
School 02	Primary	P5 (5 classes) P6 (5 classes)	10 teachers with 1 NET ²
School 03	Primary	P4 (2 classes)	2 teachers with 1 NET
School 04	Primary	P6 (4 classes)	4 teachers
School 05	Primary	P4 (4 classes)	4 teachers
School 06	Primary	P4 (2 classes)	2 teachers
School 07	Secondary	F1, F3 (1 class each)	2 teachers
School 08	Secondary	F1 (3 classes)	2 teachers and 1 NET
School 09	Secondary	F1, F2, F3 (1 class each)	3 teachers
School 11	Secondary	F3 (1 class)	1 NET
School 13	Secondary	F1, F3 (1 class each)	2 teachers
School 14	Primary	P4, P5, P6 (1 class each)	2 teachers
Total			
12 schools	7 Primary schools 5 Secondary schools	39 classes	40 teachers

1.3 Selection of schools, teachers and classes

The twelve project schools were identified through an open process of invitation to all Hong Kong schools. They were selected to provide a representative mix of local schools from different geographical areas of Hong Kong, as well as a balance of primary and secondary schools. One primary school (04) and one secondary school (07) were named by the Hong Kong government as ‘Centres of Excellence’ for their use of Information Technology (IT) in education.

¹ Regarding the numbering of the schools, Schools 10 and 12 withdrew from the project in the first few months of the project and were replaced by Schools 13 and 14.

² ‘NET’ refers to Native English Teacher, employed under the Hong Kong government’s Native English Teacher Scheme. In many local schools, the NET teacher co-teaches with the English teacher, as in School 02 and 03. In Schools 08 and 13, the NET teacher taught his/her own class.

The number of participating schools was purposely limited to twelve so that every participant could be involved in the discussion and classroom-based inquiry. Eventually five secondary schools and seven primary schools joined the project. All participating schools were local Hong Kong schools using Chinese as the medium of instruction. Teams of upper primary (Primary 4–6) and lower secondary (Form 1–3) English teachers from each school, and their classes of students, participated in the Project. Table 1 shows the schools and participating teachers and classes.

1.4 Stages of the project

The project was comprised of four main stages throughout the three year period.

Stage 1 Baseline data collection

Stage 1 of the project involved the collection and analysis of baseline data to identify existing English language teaching practices in the participating schools. This was done through observing English lessons, collecting materials and student work, and interviewing students and teachers about their teaching/learning practices and literacy teaching experiences. In addition, a questionnaire was conducted with upper primary (Primary 4–6) and lower secondary (Form 1–3) students in the project schools. The questionnaire sought information on students' out-of-school digital literacy practices and their popular cultural interests (see Chapter 2 for details of the questionnaire).

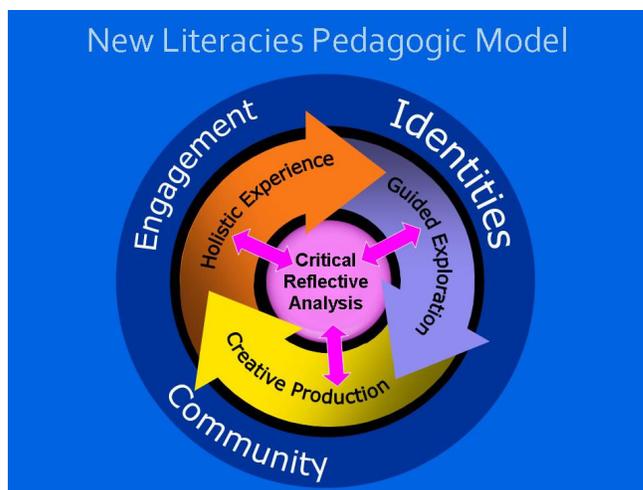
Stage 2 Professional development

The second stage of the project comprised a series of three whole-day professional development workshops, which were held at the university and taught by the project researchers, guest speakers from local schools and an IT in Education expert in the university faculty. The objectives of these workshops were: to introduce teachers to new literacies theories and principles; to provide hands-on experience of some new literacies resources and Web 2.0 tools and explore how they might be used to enhance the English language curriculum; and to discuss ways of assessing students' multimodal digital texts and online interaction. The workshops also aimed to develop teachers' understanding of action research and curriculum inquiry and to assist them in exploring processes for investigating areas of teaching and learning as they trialled new literacies materials, tools, and teaching sequences

in their classrooms.

During the workshops, teachers were introduced to a pedagogic model for engaging with new literacies in the English Language curriculum (see Figure 3). The model suggested that a new literacies task could be explored through cycles of ‘holistic experience’, ‘guided exploration’, and ‘creative production’ of a new literacies text or task, with frequent forays into ‘critical reflective analyses’ involving the study of the text’s multimodal features and their meanings, the social roles and messages in the text, and the social context and distribution of the text.

Figure 2: New literacies pedagogic model for English Language teaching and learning



The pedagogic model, based on sociocultural theories of language learning, was also underpinned by principles of engaging students actively, drawing on students’ identities, and involving students in a community of practice.

Stage 3 Planning, implementation and reflection

Stage 3 was considered the ‘core’ stage of the project as it involved each school in a cycle of planning, teaching and evaluating a new literacies-infused unit of work. Project researchers worked with project teachers at the planning stage, attending planning meetings at schools and giving advice and support. The teachers and their classes then carried out their new literacies unit of work. Units of work involving new literacies were generally embedded within a textbook unit, and involved a core task in which a text was produced using one or more ‘new literacies tools’. All lessons were observed by the researchers, who also later reflected with the teachers and students on the impact of the unit on students’ learning.

Stage 4 Dissemination

The final stage of the project focused on dissemination. To this end, a whole-day conference was held at HKU in which the project schools gave presentations and workshops on their school-based new literacies teaching and shared their students' work. The project researchers also gave presentations on initial findings, and international experts in new literacies were invited to deliver plenary presentations. The aim was to consolidate learning, share effective new literacies teaching and assessment practices, and to disseminate findings from the school projects and the project team among the Hong Kong education community.

The project team also produced a DVD entitled *Promoting New Literacies in Hong Kong Schools* to present each school's new literacies-infused unit of work, successful classroom practices, students' digital and multimodal products, and students' and teachers' reflections on what they had learned in the project. The DVD contained video clips of lessons, video and audio clips of student and teacher interviews, lesson materials, unit plans, and a wide range of new literacies texts created by students. The completed DVD was distributed to all Hong Kong schools and publicised in a public launching seminar held at the university.

1.5 Data collection and analysis

Baseline data was collected in Stage 1 of the project in the form of teacher interviews, student group interviews, lesson observations and document collection. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the participating teachers about their existing English language teaching practices, their attitudes and beliefs about English language literacy teaching and learning, and their experiences and views on the use of digital technology and popular culture in the classroom. The interviews were audio recorded.

With the help of the project research assistant, student group interviews were conducted with six randomly selected students in each class (with slight adjustments made to achieve a mix of male and female students and ability levels as determined by the teacher's records). The student group interviews were conducted in Cantonese, the first language of the students. The interviews were semi-structured with the intention of adopting a "focus group" atmosphere as far as possible (i.e., students freely conversed with each other on a particular topic and the interviewer acted as a facilitator). Students were asked about their experiences in learning

English, their online practices, and their popular cultural interests.

Data was also collected during Stage 3, when teachers planned, implemented and reflected upon their new literacies-infused units of work. In this stage, planning meetings were audio recorded and documents from the planning meetings, such as syllabus documents and textbook chapters, were collected. During the implementation, lessons were video recorded and, when possible, observed by a researcher who took observational notes. Brief post-lesson interviews were also conducted after each lesson in the unit when possible. These short interviews and discussions were audio recorded. All lesson documents such as lesson plans, worksheets, and *PowerPoint* presentations were collected. Students' digital texts were also collected (in some schools in both their draft and final forms). The project research team had administrative access to all classroom blogs, wikis and comic strips, so that students' online interactions and texts could be observed and recorded.

Each project teacher and the student groups were interviewed at the end of Stage 3 to elicit teachers' and students' evaluations of their new literacies-infused teaching and learning experiences. These interviews were video and audio recorded. Post-project interviews were conducted with the same student groups as in the Stage 1 Baseline data collection, and other students were invited to be interviewed in groups if their new literacies texts showed an interesting feature, or if their participation in class seemed noteworthy to the project team.

The teacher interviews were semi-structured and elicited teachers' reflections on what the students' had learned or gained from the new literacies unit of work; how using new literacies had impacted upon students' engagement, interaction and language development/learning; the problems or issues that had arisen; and what the teacher learned from carrying out the unit and the advice he or she would give to other teachers who might want to use new literacies in their classrooms.

All data was catalogued. All interviews were transcribed, and selected segments of lessons were also transcribed for close analysis. Teacher and student interviews conducted in Cantonese were translated to English in the process of transcription. The research team reviewed, identified and described similarities and differences in a range of aspects of new literacies teaching practices, including the design of classroom learning tasks, and the incorporation of 'new literacies' elements, such as the use of popular culture and media texts,

online sharing and interaction, involving students' identities, and critical reflective analyses of multimodal texts. The researchers also analysed the attitudes of students to different tasks and activities and their attitudes to the requirements of the curriculum. The ways in which teachers addressed curriculum requirements while using new literacies was also examined, as was teachers' understanding of ICTs. The aim was to develop highly contextualised cases of the process of new literacies-infused learning and teaching in the English language curriculum and the factors that influence it. The researchers also aimed to gain a deeper understanding of how teachers can be better guided and supported in effective literacies-infused teaching and learning.

Chapter 2 The Student Questionnaire

This chapter reports on the student questionnaire study that was conducted during the first year of the project. The chapter explains the aims of the questionnaire and describes its design and implementation. The key findings are then presented and discussed.

2.1 Aims

A questionnaire targeting all upper primary and lower secondary students in the participating schools was designed to identify their existing literacy practices outside school along with their popular cultural interests and practices. In addition, the questionnaire aimed to elicit students' views on the use of digital technology, computers, and popular culture in the English language curriculum. The questionnaire also attempted to find out the language(s) students used to engage in different literacy activities. All Primary 4–6 and Form 1–3 students in the twelve project schools, including those in classes not participating in the new literacies project, were invited to complete the questionnaire. Informed consent was sought and obtained from the parents of all students who took part in the questionnaire.

The information acquired on students' existing out-of-school literacy practices was used by project researchers and teaching teams in planning new literacies-infused curricular units that built on students' prior knowledge and experience (Alvermann, 2002). Students' views on the use of digital technologies and popular culture in the classroom gave the project team insights into their readiness for new literacies in the curriculum. Students' personal information, and information related to their literacy practices, also gave the project team important insights into students' access to computers and the Internet outside school, and how much of their engagement online was in the medium of English.

2.2 Questionnaire design

The English version of the questionnaire can be found in Appendix 1, and the Chinese version can be found in Appendix 2.

2.2.1 Part A

The questions in this section were designed to elicit students' demographic information, in particular, the language(s) they used in their home and school lives. While we expected that the majority would use Cantonese at home, we recognised that Hong Kong society is multilingual and multicultural and that many Hong Kong families use multiple dialects and languages. Therefore, in Item 6, we also elicited from students the other languages or dialects they used with different family members. To find out the extent to which students were exposed to English and used English formally in school instruction, Items 7 and 8 elicited the medium of instruction in English lessons and other school subjects, respectively. Item 9 aimed to find out whether students had been exposed to English through living abroad in English dominant countries.

2.2.2 Part B

This section of the questionnaire aimed to identify students' literacy activities and practices outside school, with a focus on digital literacies/new literacies. Item 10 elicited information about students' access to computers. Although we assumed that students' out-of-school lives would reflect the technological sophistication of Hong Kong society in general, we were aware of the 'digital divide' in terms of economic wealth – a factor that had also been mentioned by some of the project teachers.

The response options provided in item 10b reflected a range of text practices that we presumed Hong Kong students might engage in outside school, and acknowledged the central role that school homework plays in Hong Kong education. Some of the items were traditional literacy activities, while others, such as blogging or social networking, reflected new literacies. Although 10c may appear simplistic, we felt that students' perceptions of which activity they engaged in most would give us an indication of the kinds of literacy practices central to students' out-of-school lives. Item 10d focused on the people students communicated with online, as one of the central characteristics of new literacies practices is the ways in which they enable social interaction and relationships.

Item 11 focused on mobile phone technology and some of the new literacies that are emerging as mobile phone technology advances to enable new forms of social interaction, entertainment, and information access. 11b elicited the social relationships that were enabled through mobile technology.

While item 10 focused on literacy activities on the computer, item 12 focused on students' engagement in a wider range of literacy activities, including reading books and magazines, and watching TV. This item asked students to consider the literacy activities they had engaged in during the previous month. It also sought to elicit to what extent these activities were done in English, in Chinese (Cantonese, a Chinese dialect, is the first language/L1 for the majority of students) or in another language. We expected that their English language engagement in some literacy activities would support the learning of English in school. At the same time we wondered whether and to what extent students were using English as a result of their new literacies practices and/or popular cultural interests/practices.

2.2.3 Part C

Part C aimed to elicit students' popular cultural interests over a range of media and the reasons for their choices. It was hoped that the data from this section would help to inform curriculum content and planning for new literacies-infused teaching and learning. The items in this section are qualitative, inviting students to specifically identify their favourite popular culture texts or celebrities and give reasons for their choices. The popular cultural domains referred to were films, celebrities, characters, TV programmes, songs, games, and websites. However, young people do not only passively consume their favourite popular culture texts, they also participate in fan practices (Thomas, 2007) such as purchasing merchandise, writing and sharing fan fiction or joining online fan groups or discussion boards. Items 21 and 22 were designed to elicit any such practices among the students in the project.

2.2.4 Part D

While Parts B and C aimed to inform curriculum and lesson planning by identifying students' new literacies practices and popular cultural interests, this section explicitly elicited students' views on the advantages and disadvantages of using digital technology and popular culture in English language lessons. Items 24 and 26 provided an opportunity for students to offer specific suggestions as to the ways in which digital technology and popular culture could be included in English language lessons.

2.3 Respondents and questionnaire administration

A paper version of the questionnaire was first developed and piloted with a Primary 4 class in a school that was not participating in the project. A revised online version of the questionnaire was then developed using the program *QuestionPro*, and the URL for the online questionnaire was hyperlinked to the project website (which was password protected). Project teachers were informed of their class codes and instructed how to give students passwords and guide them to complete the questionnaire online at school or at home. All class codes had four digits. The first two digits was the code assigned to each of the project schools. (Due to administrative reasons, Schools 10 and 12 withdrew from the project, and two new schools, 11 and 13, subsequently joined the project.) The last two digits identified the class level and the class, for example, Class 4A = 41, Class 4B = 42, so that Class 1C in School 08 was assigned code 0813. The codes enabled the project team to monitor the progress of the questionnaire administration and were also a useful mechanism for screening responses with invalid class codes.

The average time required for completing the questionnaire was 20 minutes. Although both an English version and a Chinese version were offered to respondents, all respondents completed the Chinese version.

The project's initial aims were for 4,805 students in 131 classes in the 12 project schools to complete the questionnaire. This included all upper primary and lower secondary classes in the participating schools, in addition to the participating classes. However, due to administrative reasons in particular schools, the total number of students consenting to participate was 2,575. Of these, the number of students who successfully completed the questionnaire was 1,722, resulting in an overall response rate of 67%.

The number of respondents and the version of the questionnaire administered in each school are presented in Table 1. Two schools administered the paper version of the questionnaire; the remaining ten administered the online version.

Upon reception of the completed online questionnaires, the data was scanned to inspect the quality of the responses. Several criteria were applied to remove submissions that were of unacceptable quality:

- Incorrect identifiers (such as class code, etc)
- Duplicate submissions (identified by the extent of similarity of responses such as age, gender, residential district, parents' occupations, and other information)
- Irrelevant responses (e.g., nonsense, foul language and irrational answers)
- Submissions with no attempt at the questions in the four parts.

Online responses that corresponded with any of the above criteria were considered invalid and removed from the analysis. The final online questionnaire dataset included 1,425 complete and valid questionnaires. Added to this were 297 paper questionnaires making 1,722 questionnaires in the final data set.

Table 3: Number of respondents in each school and questionnaire version used

School	School level	No. of respondents	% of total respondents	Version of Questionnaire
School 01	Primary	230	13.4	Online
School 02	Primary	147	8.5	Online
School 03	Primary	48	2.8	Online
School 04	Primary	82	4.8	Online
School 05	Primary	197	11.4	Online
School 06	Primary	350	20.3	Online
School 07	Secondary	72	4.2	Online
School 08	Secondary	168	9.8	Online
School 09	Secondary	119	6.9	Online
School 11	Secondary	116	6.7	Paper
School 13	Secondary	181	10.5	Paper
School 14	Primary	12	0.7	Online
Total		1,722	100.0	

2.4 Questionnaire Findings

This section presents the findings of the questionnaire in sequence from Part A to Part D. Descriptive statistics including frequency count, proportion, mean and standard deviation,

median and inter-quartile range were applied to facilitate the illustration of the findings. Detailed tabulations are presented in the report appendices for reference. Three question types were devised in the questionnaire: single response questions, multiple response questions and open-ended questions. Question types other than single response are noted on the tabulations. In addition to the descriptive statistics, the data were also analysed by comparing and contrasting various groupings that might elicit noteworthy findings. These groupings include students' demographic information (gender and education level: primary or secondary), family background (socioeconomic status of students' family: lower, middle or higher), and school factor (participating in 'Centre of Excellence' programme³: yes or no). In order to analyse the results more effectively, the statistical chi-square test and proportion test were employed to help detect significant differences among the groupings on some questions. The test results are incorporated into the tables in the appendices.

2.4.1 Demographic information

The questions in Part A aimed to collect demographic information about the students, in particular, the language(s) they used in their home and school lives. Some key findings are highlighted below.

Of the 1,722 students in the final data set, 61.9% were primary school students and 38.1% were secondary. Among the 1,066 primary school students, the median age was 11.0 with an inter-quartile range of 1.0; 48.4% were boys and 51.6% were girls. Of the 656 secondary students, the median age was 14.0 with an inter-quartile range of 2.0; 50.2% were boys and 49.8% were girls. The gender distributions did not show any statistically significant difference between the two groups according to the Pearson chi-square test. 14.3% of all respondents were living in Hong Kong Island, 31.1% were living in Kowloon and 54.6% were living in the New Territories. In addition, 41.9% were living in public housing, 26.0% were living in privately owned homes and 11.2% were living in rented homes. The details are presented in Tables 1–5 in Appendix 3A.

Of the respondents in the final data set, 23.2% had lived in countries or regions other than

³ Schools participating in the EDB 'Centre of Excellence' programme are required to render professional support on the application of information technology (IT) in learning and teaching and promoting IT culture to other schools.

Hong Kong. Among them, 11.3% had lived in Shenzhen with an average duration of around 5.0 years; 39.0% in other regions of Guangdong province (except Shenzhen) with an average duration of 7.9 years; 25.2% in other provinces in mainland China (except Guangdong) with an average duration of 5.0 years; and 6.0% had lived in other countries with an average duration of 2.9 years. More information can be found in Tables 8a–8b3 in Appendix 3A.

Several questions were devised to elicit information about the language students used at home and at school. Of 1,722 respondents, 97.8% used Cantonese to communicate with their family members⁴, 25.7% used Putonghua and 16.1% used English. More secondary students used English to communicate with their family members than primary students (19.5% for secondary, 14.0% for primary). In addition, 85.7% of primary students and 85.8% of secondary students used English in English lessons in school. 11.8% of primary students and 21.8% of secondary students used English in the lessons of other school subjects. The details of students' language use are presented in Tables 9–11e in Appendix 3A.

As it was presumed that some primary students might not be able to classify their parents' occupations accurately, the questions designed to elicit information about parents' occupations allowed students to give open-ended responses. The research team then analysed these responses and classified them according to the occupation classification⁵ provided by The Census and Statistics Department (C&SD). Since a number of students reported that their parents were housewives or not currently working, three new categories – 'homemaker', 'unemployed' and 'retired' – were added to the classification set.

Of 1,722 students in the final data set, 56.2% of primary students and 65.5% of secondary students provided information regarding their mother's occupation. Of these, 25.4% were homemakers, 14.8% were 'Service workers/Shop sales workers', 4.5% were 'Professionals/Associate Professionals' and 4.6% were unemployed. Regarding their father's occupation, 52.6% of primary students and 64.0% of secondary students provided information with 11.8% reported as being 'Craft related workers', 10.6% 'Service workers/Shop sales workers', 6.4% 'Professionals/Associate Professionals', and 3.8% and 0.5% reported as unemployed and retired respectively. The details of the occupations of

⁴ Here the term 'family members' includes parents, grandparents, siblings and other relatives (not domestic helpers).

⁵ The details of the classification can be found in the 'Quarterly Report on General Household Survey' of C&SD.

students' parents are presented in Tables 6 and 7 in Appendix 3A.

In order to investigate the literacy activities of students from different socioeconomic status (SES), the SES level of the students' family was estimated based on demographic information such as residential district⁶, mothers' occupation and fathers' occupation. With these estimates, the entire sample was then segmented into three levels of SES (low, middle, high). The low SES level consisted of 72 respondents (about 4.2% of the final data set), whereas the middle and high levels respectively consisted of 661 and 177 students (about 38.4% and 10.3% of the entire sample). The remaining students (47.1%) did not provide sufficient information for the SES level estimation. This segmentation was used to elicit meaningful findings through group comparison.

2.4.2 Literacy activities and practices outside school

The questions in Part B aimed to identify students' literacy activities and practices outside school, with a focus on digital literacies/new literacies. Key findings on computer and mobile phone use, literacy activities and practices, and language exposure are presented in the following three sub-sections.

2.4.2.1 Computer use outside school

In the final data set, 85.9% of secondary students used a computer outside school compared with only 74.8% of primary students. Among the 12 project schools, two had been selected by the EDB as 'Centres of Excellence (COE)' – School 04 (primary) and School 08 (secondary). Of the 250 students in the two COE schools, 89.2% used a computer outside school. This percentage is notably higher than in the ten non-COE schools, where only 77.3% of the students used a computer outside school.

In addition, of those students who reported using a computer outside school, 98.1% used a computer at home, 8.3% used one at the home of a relative or friend, 6.2% used one at the library and 4.9% used one at a shop or Internet café. Regarding the reasons for computer use outside school, 73.4% of the entire sample used the computer for doing homework, 68.4% for

⁶ The residential district of the students' family served as a base for estimating student's family household income. The report "Population and Household Statistics Analysed by District Council District 2009" issued by C&SD provided an estimate of the median monthly household income of each district in Hong Kong in 2009.

playing computer games and 52.7% for searching for information via websites such as *Google* or *Yahoo*. 32.1% of students revealed that playing computer games was the major reason for using computers outside school, while 26.1% and 13.8% respectively claimed that instant messaging and doing homework were the major reasons. A substantially larger proportion of secondary students used the computer for instant messaging than primary students (25.1% for secondary, 5.7% for primary), whereas more primary students used the computer for doing homework (33.3% for primary, 15.9% for secondary) and playing computer games (36.7% for primary, 25.7% for secondary).

By contrasting and comparing the numerical results between various groupings, it was revealed that a larger proportion of boys used the computer for playing computer games than girls (80.0% for boys, 57.5% for girls), whereas more girls used it for instant messaging (58.1% for girls, 41.0% for boys), blogging (32.9% for girls, 12.1% for boys) and visiting social networking sites such as *Facebook* and *Myspace* (37.0% for girls, 23.4% for boys). In the two COE schools, more students used the computer for doing homework than in the non-COE secondary schools (82.5% for COE, 71.6% for non-COE).

Regarding students' use of the Internet to communicate with other people, 79.4% stated that they communicated with their friends, 72.7% with their classmates, and 27.2% with their family members. It is also notable that 35.5% of secondary students and 19.6% of primary students also communicated with 'net friends' (i.e., friends met via the Internet).

The details of the numerical distributions related to the findings on computer use outside of school are presented in Tables 1–5 in Appendix 3B.

2.4.2.4 *Mobile phone use*

Of the 1,722 students in the final data set, 66.5% of primary students and 87.5% of secondary students reported possessing a mobile phone. 96.7% of these students used their mobile phones for making and receiving calls, 65.1% used them for listening to music and 60.1% used them for taking photos. More secondary students than primary students used their mobile phones for taking photos (66.8% for secondary, 54.6% for primary), instant messaging (21.6% for secondary, 12.0% for primary), sending and receiving SMS (59.2% for secondary, 32.3% for primary) and listening to music (73.3% for secondary, 58.4% for primary).

Regarding mobile phone communication, 83.0% of students used their phones to communicate with their family members, 80.4% with friends and 76.1% with classmates. The primary students mainly used their phones to communicate with family members (86.0% for primary, 79.2% for secondary), whereas more secondary students used their phones to communicate with friends (90.9% for secondary, 71.9% for primary) and classmates (84.4% for secondary, 69.4% for primary).

The details of the numerical distributions related to the findings on mobile phone use are presented in Tables 6–8 in Appendix 3B.

2.4.2.5 *Literacy activities and practices and language exposure*

With regard to students' literacy activities/practices and language use/exposure, the questionnaire investigated three aspects: reading activities, viewing activities and Internet activities. Among the four reading activities (reading books, newspapers, comic books and magazines), reading books was the most popular, with 94.0% of students reading books in the month prior to the survey, 90.6% reading newspapers and 83.7% reading magazines. Notably, relatively more primary students than secondary students had read comic books (87.1% for primary, 78.8% for secondary).

With respect to viewing activities, 94.6% of students in the entire sample had watched TV programmes and 88.7% had watched films. Regarding Internet activities, 88.6% of students had played TV, video or computer games, while 88.2% had searched for information or viewed websites. 85.7% of students also reported checking email and 81.6% reported downloading, organising or listening to music. It is also notable that some online activities were less attractive to students, such as online shopping (50.8%) and sharing photos (54.4%).

With regard to language exposure, most students generally engaged in Chinese language literacy activities. Just over one-third of students in the entire sample engaged in some literacy activities in English. These literacy activities included reading books (40.4%), watching TV programmes (43.3%), watching films (48.5%), making and uploading or watching videos online (35.1%), downloading or listening to music (44.5%) and playing TV, video or computer games (34.9%).

By contrasting the results reported by the primary and secondary students, it was found that, in general, more secondary students than primary students engaged in literacy activities in English. This difference was noticeable across several literacy activities, including reading newspapers (31.5% for secondary, 19.6% for primary), watching TV programmes (48.9% for secondary, 39.9% for primary), watching films (60.2% for secondary, 41.1% for primary), making, uploading or watching videos online (41.9% for secondary, 30.9% for primary), downloading, organising or listening to music (56.6% for secondary, 36.1% for primary), instant messaging (28.5% for secondary, 23.0% for primary) and social networking online (33.0% for secondary, 23.4% for primary).

Furthermore, the results also showed differences between genders. Generally, relatively more girls engaged in literacy activities in English. In particular, reading books (46.2% for girls, 34.1% for boys), reading newspapers (26.6% for girls, 21.5% for boys), watching TV programmes (46.7% for girls, 39.9% for boys), downloading, organising or listening to music (47.8% for girls, 40.7% for boys) and instant messaging (28.2% for girls, 21.8% for boys).

By comparing the responses regarding literacy activities and practices among the three SES levels, it was found that students from families of high socioeconomic status generally engaged more often in literacy activities in English than students from families of middle and low SES levels. In particular, two literacy activities showed a remarkable difference, namely, reading books (53.8% for high, 41.1% for middle, 33.8% for low) and watching TV programmes (55.6% for high, 42.6% for middle, 38.6% for low).

The responses regarding literacy activities and language exposure were also compared between the COE and non-COE schools. These findings revealed that relatively more students from COE schools engaged in the following literacy activities in English: reading books (47.3% for COE, 39.2% for non-COE), reading newspapers (42.8% for COE, 20.9% for non-COE), watching films (54.5% for COE, 47.4% for non-COE) and making, uploading or watching videos online (41.0% for COE, 34.1% for non-COE).

The details of the numerical tabulations of the above findings on literacy activities are presented in Tables 9–13c in Appendix 3B.

2.4.3 Popular cultural interests

The questions in Part C aimed to elicit students' popular cultural interests in a range of media and the reasons for their choices. As the responses collected were mainly open-ended, they were scrutinised and classified into meaningful categories for concise presentation. The findings are outlined below.

Of the 1,722 students in the final data set, 23.8% claimed that their favourite films were foreign feature films, 14.5% liked cartoons or animation and 4.5% liked comedies. 26.4% of students reported that they liked these films because they enjoyed the way the film made them feel (e.g., It was exciting, amusing, romantic, etc), while 17.5% simply stated that their favourite film was "good", and 4.4% liked the film because of the characters.

With regard to students' favourite celebrity, 27.5% of students in the final data set expressed admiration for performing artists from Hong Kong, 9.2% liked performing artists from mainland China or Taiwan and 4.2% liked athletes from mainland China or Taiwan. The students reported several major reasons for admiring their favourite celebrity: 24.4% admired the celebrity's talent (e.g., sings well), 11.0% liked the celebrity's appearance and 5.8% liked the celebrity's songs or films.

Regarding students' favourite cartoon film, TV or game characters, 27.9% of students reported liking Japanese cartoon characters, 9.5% specifically liked Sanrio cartoon characters and 8.9% liked Disney cartoon characters. 25.0% claimed that they liked these characters because they were "cute", 6.7% because the characters were "amusing and interesting", and 4.8% liked the characters because they were "beautiful" or "handsome".

Of the students in the final data set, 14.1% said that their favourite TV programmes were Hong Kong serials, 12.7% liked cartoons and 6.1% liked Hong Kong variety shows. 15.2% of students said that they liked their favourite TV programme because it was "good", 11.9% because it was "amusing and interesting", and 3.5% liked the TV programme because of its theme(s).

Regarding students' favourite songs, 21.6% liked Cantonese pop songs, 9.6% liked Mandarin pop songs and 7.9% liked English pop songs. 30.1% of students gave no specific reason for

liking their favourite song other than because it was “good” or because they liked it. Only 3.5% reported that they liked their favourite song because the lyrics were meaningful and 1.9% because the melody was nice.

Students’ responses regarding their favourite TV, video or computer games were very varied. Some named a specific game while others named a game category, game platform or the brand name of a game manufacturer. Of the respondents in the final data set, 5.8% liked massive multiplayer online role-playing games (MMORPG), 5.1% liked simple games played for leisure and 4.8% like action/shooting games. The students reported liking their favourite game because it was “good” (23.6%), “exciting” (4.1%), “amusing and interesting” (3.2%) or because they liked a particular feature of the game, such as the theme or characters (3.1%).

Regarding their favourite websites, 18.7% of students in the final data set said that their favourite website was a search engine such as *Yahoo* or *Google*, 7.3% liked a video website such as *YouTube* and 5.2% liked an online game website. In addition, 4.7% and 4.5% of students respectively liked online social networking sites such as *Facebook* and blog websites such as *Xanga* and *Qoozer*.

When asked to name their other favourite things, 2.3% of the students reported that they liked dolls, 1.9% liked food and 1.2% liked books. A list of students’ other favourite things is presented in Table 8a in Appendix 3C. Regarding their reasons for liking these other things, 5.3% said because they were “good and interesting”, 1.9% said they were “attractive” and 1.0% simply said they liked these things without providing any specific reasons.

When asked about their fan practices, 30.5% of students in the final data set said that they visited websites related to the things they liked, 27.9% bought toys and other merchandise, 22.9% joined online discussion groups and 11.1% wrote stories about them and posted them online.

The numerical tabulations of this data by education level and gender are presented in Tables 1–10 in Appendix 3C.

2.4.4 Students’ views on using digital technology and popular culture in English language lessons

The questions in Part D elicited students' views on using digital technology and popular culture in English language lessons. First, students were asked whether they thought it was a good idea to use popular cultural interests, computers and the Internet in English learning or not. They were then asked to state what they perceived to be the advantages and disadvantages of their use in English language learning and to give suggestions on how popular cultural interests, computers and the Internet could be used in the classroom.

Of the students in the final data set, 64.4% supported using popular cultural interests in English lessons and 35.6% did not. More secondary students showed a positive tendency than primary students (73.0% for secondary, 59.1% for primary). There was also a statistical difference between genders, with 67.8% of girls supporting the idea and 60.7% of boys.

Regarding students' perceptions of the advantages of using popular culture in English learning, of those students who showed a positive tendency, 84.1% thought that it would make the lesson interesting, 72.7% thought that it would enable them to participate in lessons more actively and 61.9% that popular culture would make the lesson more interactive. More than 50% of students thought that the use of popular culture would facilitate English learning outside the classroom (53.2%) and help them learn from each other (51.8%). Of those students who showed a negative tendency, 59.5% worried that their teachers might not know what they liked, 39.7% commented that using popular culture in lessons would not help them with exams and 28.1% thought that it would waste lesson time. 21.9% also worried that using popular culture in lessons would make students misbehave.

When asked to suggest ways in which their popular cultural interests could be used in English learning, 16.4% of all students in the final data set suggested using them to introduce songs, stories, films, artists/idols etc, and 4.8% of students suggested using them to exchange experiences through more interaction, more fun and telling jokes. Another 4.8% students suggested using popular cultural interests and IT for activities and performances, for example, playing games, performing drama/role-plays, designing web games, etc. More details about students' views on the use of popular cultural interests are presented in Tables 1–4 in Appendix 3D.

Regarding the use of computers and the Internet in English learning, 79.4% of the entire

sample felt it was a good idea and only 20.6% did not. Of the students who expressed positive views, 83.3% were secondary students and 76.9% were primary. There was some difference of opinion among the students from COE and non-COE schools, with 87.3% of students from COE schools indicating a positive view of the use of computers and the Internet in English learning as opposed to 78.0% of students from non-COE schools.

Regarding students' perceptions of the advantages and disadvantages of using computers and the Internet in English learning, 82.2% of those students who expressed positive opinions thought that it would make the lesson more interesting, 70.5% thought that it would enable them to participate more actively, and 64.3% thought that it would make English lessons more interactive. About half of all students thought that the use of computers and the Internet would help them learn from each other (52.5%) and facilitate English learning outside the classroom (49.4%). Of those students who expressed negative opinions, 52.4% worried that their teachers might not know what they liked, and 35.2% and 30.8% respectively thought that the use of computers and the Internet would not help them with exams and would waste lesson time. 18.7% also worried that using computers and the Internet would make students misbehave.

When asked to suggest ways in which computers and the Internet could be used in English learning, 11.4% of students in the final data set suggested more use of IT (computers, websites, blogging, etc), 5.6% suggested that computers and the Internet could be used to introduce songs, stories, films, artists/idols, etc, and 5.2% suggested using IT for activities and performance such as playing games, performing drama/role-plays, designing web games, etc. More details about students' views on the use of computers and the Internet in English learning are presented in Tables 5–8 in Appendix 3D.

2.5 Discussion and conclusion

The questionnaire study revealed that the majority of students used computers and digital literacies in their daily lives regardless of their area of residence, and that the main reasons for using computers outside school were for doing homework, playing computer games, networking with peers and communicating with classmates and friends. A high proportion of students also possessed their own mobile phones, which they not only used for making calls,

but also for listening to music, taking photos and instant messaging.

The most popular literacy activities and practices among students included reading newspapers, reading magazines, watching TV programmes and films, playing TV, video or computer games and searching for information via websites. The majority of students engaged in these activities in Chinese, with a smaller proportion also engaging in some of these activities in English. More than one third of students read English books, watched English TV programmes and films, engaged in English-language Internet activities, such as making, uploading or watching online videos, downloading, organising or listening to music, and playing TV, video or computer games. A comparison of the results of different groupings of students showed that relatively more secondary students, more girls, more students from families of higher SES levels, and more students from COE schools engaged in literacy activities in English.

Regarding students' popular cultural interests, the survey findings showed them to be relatively consistent across education levels and gender. Students' favourite popular cultural interests were mostly Asian (originating mostly in Hong Kong, Japan, mainland China and Taiwan) and included Asian performing artists, Japanese cartoon characters, local TV serials, Cantonese and Mandarin pop songs, etc. Students also reported spending time on the computer downloading, organising and listening to songs, watching online videos, playing computer and online games. Other cultural interests mentioned included dolls, sports, pets/animals and food. Most students did not or were not able to provide specific reasons for liking the things they showed interest in.

It should be noted that most of the students' popular cultural interests were closely related to the trends of the moment and were therefore likely to change rapidly over time. For this reason the findings generated from this survey provide a reference only. To keep findings up to date and relevant, it is advised that mini qualitative research (such as focus groups or interviews) be carried out within schools and classes from time to time, to enable teachers to keep a close track of the changing trends of students' cultural interests.

In general, the majority of students expressed positive views about using popular culture and digital technology in English learning, particularly the girls and the students from COE schools. These students thought that popular cultural interests and digital technology could

enrich their language learning by making lessons more interesting and interactive, as well as facilitate their English learning outside the classroom and help them learn from each other. However, some students expressed reservations about integrating new literacies into the curriculum. These students worried that their teachers might not know what they were actually interested in, and felt that using popular cultural interests in lessons would not help with their exam performance and might thus waste time. Some also suggested that the use of digital technology and popular culture might encourage some students to misbehave. These findings suggest that new literacies should be incorporated carefully to ensure that the curriculum goals are well supported and that students' interests are not co-opted in the process.

When asked to suggest ways in which popular cultural interests and digital technology could be used in English learning, many students indicated the introduction of songs, stories, films, artists/idols, etc, as well as activities such as playing games, performing drama/role-plays and designing web games. In addition, some students also suggested that lessons involving students' popular cultural interests could be used to exchange experiences and therefore be more interactive and enjoyable. Some students also suggested that regular classroom learning materials could be diversified through the use of websites and blogs. These findings suggest that students were not only open to new learning experiences in the classroom, but also had concrete ideas for new literacies-infused learning materials and activities.

Chapter 3 Secondary School Projects

Teams of English teachers and their classes from five Hong Kong secondary schools took part in the New Literacies Project. The project target lower secondary classes, or Secondary 1 – 3. In this chapter, each project in the five schools is described and reviewed. For each school, the participating teachers and classes are identified and the school's readiness for new literacies is examined. The new literacies-infused curricular unit is then explained and classroom implementation is described and assessed in terms of student and teacher learning. Findings from student and teacher interviews, post-unit student surveys and from analyses of students' work are presented. At the end of each school case, suggestions for improvement and advice for further development of new literacies in the English language curriculum is offered.

School 07 and School 11 enhanced their existing reading programme through the use of an online comic strip making programme, *ToonDoo*. School 08 engaged students in exploring their community and presenting their reflections on their community life through a digital photo story. In School 13, new literacies were used to enhance the study of the novel by Roald Dahl, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*. Students used the Internet to research the topic of chocolate and find out more about the author. They organised their findings on an online mindmapping programme and created multimodal reports. Another teacher helped her class improve their presentation skills through the creation of digital stories about films. School 09 sought to understand how new literacies might improve the learning of their dyslexic students. Students created digital photo stories on various topics, using mindmapping and digital audio recording to learn about and improve their presentation skills.

3.1 School 07

Established in 1970, School 07 is a government-aided Catholic co-educational secondary school in northern Kowloon. The school has implemented a whole-school language policy to enhance language learning that includes a morning reading session and an extensive reading scheme. A funded English enhancement scheme, involving redesigning the school-based English language curriculum, has been implemented to improve the effectiveness of English language learning and teaching. As part of this scheme, and with the aim of integrating English more fully into the students' everyday lives, the English teachers have also incorporated 'reading circles' into the English language curriculum.

3.1.1 The teaching team and classes

A total of 120 students from three Form 1 classes participated in the new literacies project. Each class had 40 students. The new literacies project was implemented by three English teachers, Teacher A, Teacher B and Teacher C. The project was coordinated by Teacher D, the English Language Key Learning Area Department Head.

3.1.2 Comic strips unit planning

According to the English teachers, the literacy programme used in the junior levels of School 07 is similar to literacy programmes in other secondary schools in Hong Kong. One component of the literacy programme requires students to read graded readers and complete book reports about the readers. The aim of this practice is to familiarise students with the main features of a story: plot, setting, characters, problems, causes, effects and conclusion.

Another component of the literacy programme is the use of reading circles, in which students are divided into groups and given a story to read together. Each student has an assigned role within the group: discussion leader, word master, passage person or summariser. Each student thus has a specific role to play within group interaction as they explore the story. According to the teachers, the reading circle literacy practice had successfully fostered a culture of collaborative reading and learning in the school.

A key focus of the new literacies project was to further enhance students' reading skills. It

was decided that the core task of the action research unit would be for pairs of students within each reading circle to create a multimedia comic strip based on the book they were reading at that time, namely, *Mr Harris and the Night Train* from Bookworms Club Bronze, a graded reader series specifically designed for learners of English as a Second or Foreign Language (EFL/ESL) to use in reading circles. To create their comic strips, students would use the *ToonDoo* website, where they could also view and comment on each other's work online.

The teachers chose the new literacies tool, *ToonDoo* for several reasons: 1) the site offered a wide range of creative production possibilities in the form of default characters, expressions, actions and backgrounds; 2) the site and the tools were attractive and would thus be motivating for learners; and 3) the comic strip program could be used by students of different ability levels.

The aims of the *ToonDoo* unit of work were as follows:

- To create conditions for more active and authentic engagement with English
- To help lower students' affective filter in the English classroom
- To use a more interactive approach to reading and writing to help students engage with the graded reader story in a variety of ways and respond to the story creatively

The specific learning objectives of the unit aimed to enable students to describe different parts of the story, to use the multimodal elements of *ToonDoo* to express their favourite part of the story, and to review and comment constructively on their classmates' comic strips.

3.1.3 Implementation

The project unit comprised three key stages: introducing the task and *ToonDoo*, creating the comic strip online, and commenting on each other's work.

Stage 1: Introducing the task and ToonDoo

Before the new literacies unit, students read the story *Mr Harris and the Night Train* in their reading circle groups. As a post-reading pair-work activity, students were asked to work with a partner and use *ToonDoo* to create a comic strip describing their favourite scene from the story.

First, the teachers set some guiding questions about the story plot to help students review the story and generate ideas for their comics. The students were then given an instruction guide and a hands-on demonstration of some of the key features of *ToonDoo*, such as how to select appropriate figures and backgrounds, and how to change the facial expressions and postures of the characters they selected.

Next, teachers showed students the sample comic strip that they had made before the lesson to illustrate their own favourite scene from the story. They also highlighted three essential aspects of creating a good comic strip, namely, that the pictures should be attractive and help the readers to understand the message of the comic, that the dialogue in the speech bubbles should be easy to understand and creative, and that all written text should be correctly spelt and use appropriate vocabulary and forms. Teacher B also explained to students that short forms such as “I’m” and “I’d”, and conversational expressions such as “Oh!”, “Gosh!” and “Wow!” were appropriate in comic strip texts.

Stage 2: Creating a comic strip online

The students found it easy working with *ToonDoo* and were quickly able to make good quality, attractive comic strips. They also found the process of writing the dialogue into the speech bubbles engaging. Teacher B observed that creating comic strips was a good way for students to practise their English reading and writing skills, as students needed to have read and understood the story thoroughly in order to produce an interesting comic strip with a good plot.

Stage 3: Commenting on each other’s work

After students had completed their comic strips, their work was displayed online for their classmates to view. Students were asked to give comments on each other’s work, looking specifically at their classmates’ use of language and imagery, and using the assessment criteria given to them by the teacher. To help them with this task, teachers provided some sample comments for reference. Students could use the sentences provided in the sample comments but were also asked to give at least one comment using their own words and ideas.

To find out which of the students' comic strips was the most popular in the class, teachers also showed them how to use the *ToonDoo* 'Cheer this' function to vote for their favourite comic strip.

3.1.4 Student work

Students' comic strips were on task and were considered to have achieved the unit objectives. Many students depicted one particular scene from the story in which one character stabs another with a knife. Some students chose a scene depicting two characters arguing over a diamond necklace. Many students' comics showed skill and understanding of the various textual features of comic strips. They used the same background in each frame to show continuity, put some characters in the foreground and some in the background to show visual depth, and used facial expressions, and other gestures to show emotion, agitation and aggression. They were also skilled at creating lively dialogue between the characters in the speech bubbles and their use of language was appropriate and with good levels of accuracy.

In terms of visual grammar (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2006), some comics showed the students' skill at using vectors to guide the viewers' eye to the key action, non-parallel lines to show physical action and movement, and demand images, in which the character looks directly at the viewer to draw the viewer into the interaction. Overall, a number of comics illustrated a high level of skill in this multimodal text type.

The students shared their completed comic strips online and many of them wrote comments on each other's work. The comments were mostly brief and supportive, for example, "This is funny and exciting!" and "I can understand!!! And also funny!" However, some comments contained useful feedback for the comic strip author, for example, "But you can put some interest [sic] backgrounds! ^^" and "You can make it more interesting by using different facial experssion [sic]".

3.1.5 Student feedback

Upon completion of the *ToonDoo* task, the teachers conducted a survey asking the students to reflect on their learning experience. Overall, the comments were quite positive, but not as positive as had been expected, with 65% of students stating that they enjoyed creating comic

strips, 56% that they felt the activity had improved their writing and reading skills, and 54% that they enjoyed reading their classmates' comic strips and giving comments online.

The qualitative comments were more positive than the statistical percentages and included remarks such as, "It can help me learn more action verbs", "I think making comic strip is a fun way to learn English!" and "I like it! I think it was interesting. In my primary school, I couldn't use computers in the English lessons. I want to make more comic strips."

Post-project group interviews were also conducted with students. One student said that she enjoyed using *ToonDoo* at home because then she had more time to choose the best images for her comic strip. Another student preferred working at school because he could get guidance from the teacher that could help minimise mistakes:

- I: *Is there any difference in your experience of using this technology – making comics with ToonDoo – at school and outside of school, at home, for example?*
- S1: *At school, it's... you know, at school there's limited time. We need to rush and so we work more roughly. But if you're at home, you have plenty of time to think about what's good or not. You have time to compare things. You can choose one thing because it's better than another. It's not the same at school. There it's just, "Okay, let's finish it by the end of this lesson." The work isn't done so nicely.*
- S2: *Actually I prefer working at school because if we have any questions we can ask the teacher straightaway. And this way we can make sure that there are no mistakes.*

Students appreciated those comments they received on their work that offered suggestions for improvement. They felt that these comments were useful in helping them learn and also indicated that people had paid attention to their work.

Students also showed a heightened awareness of the visual mode in comic strip texts developing criteria for evaluation as they reviewed each other's work:

- S1: *Umm... I can only tell the difference between the ones made by boys and the ones made by girls. The boys' work was much rougher. They just had, for example, a black background, two guys, and some dialogue. But the girls*

added other stuff. Like, if it was evening, the girls would make that clear by drawing some stars outside the window, something like that.

I: *What kind of comments did you usually give?*

S2: *I... I think that girls normally work more carefully. So, in their comics, if the story was about ghosts or murder, then the characters would hold a knife or something. But with the boys, they might not pay attention to things like that. So I looked at the comics from this angle, the details, to give marks.*

Overall, students reported that extending the study of their graded reader through comic strip making on *ToonDoo* had been a positive learning experience.

3.1.6 Teacher reflection

Teachers generally felt that the main aim of incorporating new literacies into their literacy curriculum – namely, to increase motivation and to extend language development outside of the classroom – had been achieved, as this comment illustrates:

This year, our school implemented ToonDoo as a new literacies activity in F1. And all the F1 teachers think that by using ToonDoo, we can motivate students to learn English. And we hope that after learning these kinds of new literacies skills, or doing these kinds of activities, they can also do something at home and give comments to each other, give feedback to each other online, so that they can learn outside of the classroom. Also, I found that some of the students, I think three to five students, produced more than fifteen comic strips themselves. This is very encouraging because it is very difficult to motivate Hong Kong students to learn English. This is something that we like. (Teacher B)

Teacher C reported that the students were very active in their learning as evidenced by their frequent questions about their comics:

[...] when I was working with this learning tool, I found my students always asked questions about what they were working on. So, I found the result was quite good to them. (Teacher C)

Teacher A said that using *ToonDoo* had helped extend the teaching strategies used in the classroom and compared the *ToonDoo* task to similar paper-based tasks:

And this activity is also quite new for me, as a teacher who has taught in this school for about nine years... because we have never come across an activity that requires students to produce something on the computer. What we did was... we did something similar, like asking students to produce some comic strips, but it was usually on paper.
(Teacher A)

The teachers also reported that they were planning to extend their use of new literacies and to try out the digital presentation tool *Photo Story*:

We've decided to do the same thing in the junior form. Not only in S1 in the coming year, but in S1, S2 and S3. We've also found that using new literacies as a teaching tool is quite useful. That's why we've also decided to use Photo Story, which is another program in this project, in S6 in the coming year. So that students can learn more, write more, read more, and give comments to each other. (Teacher B)

Overall, the teachers appeared to have benefitted professionally from participation in the new literacies project. They felt that their students were more active in their learning, that using the *ToonDoo* program had enhanced students' generic skills in terms of creativity, collaboration and communication, and that the unit had ultimately motivated students to read more.

3.1.7 Conclusions and recommendations

The new literacies project was successfully implemented in School 07 as an extension and enhancement of the school's existing literacy curriculum, which was centred around 'reading circles'. The use of *ToonDoo* to create and share comic strips based on the story they were studying in their reading circles proved to be motivating and enjoyable for students and provided a professional development opportunity for teachers. The teachers' aims of motivating their students and increasing their engagement in English language learning were achieved.

The comic strips that students produced illustrated their skills in terms of creating multimodal compositions and employing visual strategies to express action, emotion and interaction among the characters. The language used in the comic strips also illustrated students' skills in creating dialogue that worked effectively with the visual images.

Although the students' online comments on each other's comic strips were generally brief and largely supportive, there were a few critical comments that showed an understanding of the criteria for an effective comic strip and a willingness to engage in peer assessment.

Despite the fact that many of the students interviewed at the end of the project spoke very positively about their experience, the survey indicated that only just over half of the students agreed that the task had helped them improve their writing and reading skills. One possible explanation for the relatively low positive response is that students may not have perceived comic strip creation as being a legitimate form of classroom 'reading and writing' practice, particularly in comparison with traditional, paper-based, print-dominant reading and writing. Teachers should therefore consider the aims of comic strip making tasks carefully in order to ensure that they foster students' critical reflection on language use (and visual literacy) and are sufficiently linguistically challenging. While enjoyment and motivation are extremely important factors, such tasks must also meet the heavy demands of the Hong Kong English language curriculum. With regard to comic strip making tasks, one way to achieve this is to develop explicit ways of talking about visual images in comics, in other words, to develop a class metalanguage for analysing multimodal texts, and to deepen students' ability to analyse the language of comic strip dialogues.

Although only just over half of all participating students agreed that commenting and sharing was useful, this may be due to the fact that students' were still learning how to interact on discussion boards in English. In order to gain from the online commenting process, students may need more linguistic support and more experience of interacting in online forums. Students may also need further experience and guidance in peer assessment, as the online commenting process is ideally one in which students give constructive feedback on each other's work. Enhancing students' skills in commenting and critiquing will also increase the linguistic challenges of such tasks.

3.2 School 08

School 08 is a subsidised, co-ed, Christian school located in a northern district of Hong Kong. Chinese is the medium of instruction, except for English related subjects. The school has joined the ‘Whole School Approach to Integrated Education’ programme, a major initiative run by the EDB that aims to give additional support to students with special educational needs. Some of the school’s teachers have also undertaken gifted education or special education training.

3.2.1 Overview of the projects with Form 1 and Form 3 classes

Teacher A introduced digital narrative presentations, and used *Photo Story* as the tool for the Form 1 students to present their views on their home district. Instead of conventional report writing, students worked in groups of four or five to present their views on the advantages and disadvantages of living in the district. They did this through the creation of multimodal digital narratives combining visual images, written captions, and spoken narration, along with background music or songs. The students were fully engaged in the project, conducting research about the district, taking photos to capture what the district meant to them, and sharing their personal perspectives in class. Through the production of multimodal digital narratives, students had the opportunity to express their creativity and develop critical insights into the use of music and songs, captions, narration and photos, and the ways in which these various media can be combined to convey particular messages.

Teacher B asked the Form 3 class to work in groups to create their own ending for a story about an outdoor-survival training programme ‘Adventure in New Zealand’. As part of this activity, they also created comic strips using the online comic strip-creation program *ToonDoo*.

The following description and analysis pertains only to the Form 1 digital presentation project conducted by Teacher A.

3.2.2 Form 1 Photo Story unit planning

The project teachers identified several problems within the junior form teaching and learning

practices that were causing weaknesses in students' writing. Firstly, students seldom read in English and therefore lacked the language input needed to become aware of the features of different written text types and conventions. Students also lacked opportunities to write, both in and out of class. Finally, students appeared to be unmotivated to write in English. The project teacher hoped that new literacies could revitalise the writing curriculum and encourage students to actively think and organise their ideas, and thus enhance their ability to write. The broader educational goal was to change the students' learning habits and encourage them to collaborate with each other, relate their learning activities to real life experiences, and connect their learning with the people around them.

The production of multimodal digital narrative presentations using *Photo Story* allowed students to have a variety of hands-on activities in and out of the classroom. The aim was to stimulate students' interest in learning. As over 90% of the students lived in the district, the district name was chosen as the title and topic of the activity, so that classroom learning could be connected with their everyday life experiences.

3.2.3 Implementation

The digital narrative presentation unit lasted approximately two weeks. There were a total of five stages of implementation for this activity.

Stage 1: Introduction

Teacher A first explained the aims of the activity to the students, namely, to write collaboratively with others in English through the creation of a digital narrative. Students were then introduced to the three main components of a written text (introduction, body, and conclusion or ending), as well as four categories or topics that could be used to talk about life in the district: 'living', 'transportation', 'food and catering' and 'clothing'.

Using the topic 'food and catering' to illustrate the potential focus of describing a place, Teacher A showed students how they could develop their evaluation skills by thinking about both positive and negative aspects. Finally, students were introduced to the features of a digital narrative and the style or 'register' appropriate for this genre.

Stage 2: Planning the photo stories

After the introductory lesson, the students were divided into groups of four or five to develop a mindmap on the advantages and disadvantages of living in the district, the type of facilities there, and their feelings about their neighbourhood. After Teacher A had provided feedback on the mindmaps, students used them to prepare a script for the narration of their photo story. Students also met up after school to take photos to illustrate the items on their mindmaps.

Stage 3. Creating the photo stories

To create their digital narrative presentations, the students uploaded the photos they had taken to the *Photo Story* program, typed relevant captions, inserted music tracks for the background, and finally, composed, read and recorded the narrative script. Teacher A provided support to the students by helping them to refine their scripts and correcting their pronunciation.

Stage 4: Presentation of students' photo stories

As the final stage of the activity, students presented their photo stories in class. They prepared additional scripts for their oral presentations in order to provide their audience with more detailed information. Some students elaborated on their presentations spontaneously.

Stage 5: Feedback on students' work

After each presentation, there was a feedback session in two parts. In the first part, Teacher A elicited feedback from students about the presentation they had seen. This process aimed to build collaborative knowledge by encouraging students to offer comments and suggestions on their classmates' work. In the second part, the teacher provided additional feedback to help students learn from the strengths and weaknesses of all presentations, and to help them identify aspects for future improvement.

3.2.4 Students' digital presentations

Teacher A was satisfied with students' digital presentations, and felt that they had achieved the task aims and objectives. Although some students were able to create full photo stories with all elements – photos, captions, music and narration – others failed to include the narration or other elements. Some students chose to focus on one particular aspect of their district, such as transportation, while others used all four of the categories suggested by the teacher. (see 3.2.3 Stage 1, above).

3.2.5 Student feedback

An in-depth student group interview was conducted after the digital presentation task to explore the students' views on their experiences of using new technologies, how they felt their learning had been enhanced, and how it could have been further enhanced.

For most students, this was the first time that they had created a digital presentation in English. Some were satisfied with what they had achieved, while others thought that there were things they could improve on.

Most students found that they needed to make a lot of group decisions during the creation process, for example, which topics to cover, which pictures to use, how to apply visual effects to the pictures, and how to make transitions, etc. Voting was a popular way of making these decisions, as students needed to think through the choices carefully before casting their vote.

Most students felt that the most interesting part of the activity was taking the photos they needed. They found this activity enjoyable because it was a new way for them to explore their neighbourhood and a fun thing to do with their classmates.

Many students found that creating the photo story on the computer was the most challenging part of the activity. The main challenges they encountered were deciding where and how to add various special effects, deciding how to combine the various elements – photos, music tracks, captions, narration and special effects – and maintaining an appropriate pace of narration and photo sequencing to enable the audience to understand the presentation.

Many students felt that the photo story presentation activity helped to develop their generic skills, in particular their information technology skills and their collaboration skills, which they employed as they worked together as a group to allocate jobs, discuss problems and choices, and find a way to come to a consensus.

Students also reported that taking and using their own photos for their photo story presentations had helped to stimulate their creativity and imagination, and that the images worked as visual memory aids that made it easier for them to generate and organise their ideas.

Students also learned how to select images that best illustrated the points they wanted to make in their narration, thereby developing their judgment and critical-thinking skills. Finding solutions to the various challenges that arose during the creation process, such as how to cooperate successfully with group mates and how to come to agreement about the selection of materials and the arrangement of the story flow, taught them valuable problem-solving skills.

In terms of English language development, students agreed that the collaborative nature of the activity gave them more confidence to speak in English, and that their group mates encouraged them to speak up and overcome their fear of not being able to pronounce words correctly. They also felt that the activity helped them to increase their vocabulary.

3.2.6 *Teacher reflection*

In the post-project teacher interview, Teacher A agreed that infusing new literacies activities into classroom teaching was helpful for stimulating students' learning and motivation. In this interview extract, Teacher A reflects that students were more engaged when technology-related activities were integrated into classroom teaching and that this kind of activity gave students more opportunities to exercise greater choice and creativity:

This is a very authentic and communicative task. It allows them to choose their own topic, allows them to choose which area they want to focus on. They have a real audience, [...] their classmates. So, the task design creates more room for them to think. So, that's very important in boosting their motivation. During the presentation, they can show a lot of pictures that they took, and [...] write different captions for each photo. So there is a real purpose in writing.

(Post-project teacher interview)

Teacher A noted that the photo story creation process was successful in stimulating students' thinking and eliciting ideas, and felt that encouraging students to venture outside the classroom and conduct on-site observations of things related to their topics had helped them develop a more in-depth and comprehensive understanding that encompassed all of their senses:

But now they can also go out to where they live, to [the district], and they can use all

their senses. They can see, they can smell, they can hear. They can describe much more than sitting in the classroom, just thinking and then writing. They'll realise there's so much in the world that they can write about.

(Post-project teacher interview)

Teacher A confirmed that the scaffolded tasks of drafting captions and short narrations for their visual narratives were not only effective in eliciting students' ideas but also helped to enhance students' language proficiency.

Teacher A agreed that the implementation of the activity had had a positive influence on both the students' learning and the teacher's own professional development. The experience had not only changed the methods of teaching used in the classroom but the success of the activity had provided new insights into the types of teaching styles that could arouse and engage students' interest and thus be effective for students' language learning. Teacher A also reflected on how teaching the new literacies unit helped clarify the nature of language and the relationship between form and meaning, as well as between accuracy and fluency:

When I used to teach writing, I would start from the grammar item. I'd introduce [the] tense they [would] be learning, and then I would introduce the writing task, using the grammar item that they [had] learnt. Sort of like a bottom-up approach. But now it's more a top-down approach. I [...] introduce the task, then I'll ask students to think [about] what tense they have to use, and what language structure or sentence patterns they have to use. And they have to initiate [their learning], and they have to find out themselves. They focus more on the use of the language, but not just the form and function of the language. Some people may ask [whether] I focus more on fluency rather than accuracy. I think accuracy will come when they really have to use the language. Because if they want to deliver the message, they'll be motivated, self-motivated to know what language they want to use. And they have to use it correctly to deliver their message, and to convey their message. So, this top-down approach helps me a lot, I think.

(Post-project teacher interview)

3.2.7 Conclusions and recommendations

The teachers in School 08 successfully incorporated new literacies into their English

language curriculum. Overall the impact of new literacies on teaching and learning was positive. The main impact was on students' motivation to author and share a text. The task design of the photo story activity involved students in exploring their community, and gathering their own evidence and content for their texts. It thus maximised student input and student choice, which made the task more personally relevant to students. The task was also designed to create a product that could be shared and viewed by other classmates. The sharing stage gave students a purpose for creating their photo stories and a genuine audience.

In terms of pedagogy, the excursion around the district, the four suggested topics, and the mindmapping activity all served as pre-writing activities that provided support for students in the creation of their photo stories. As Teacher A reflected above, the task goals and aims drove the use of particular language forms and vocabulary, which was fully in line with task-based teaching principles (Willis & Willis, 2007) and process writing approaches.

The project incorporated multimodal and experiential elements that transformed the learning process. This was also noted by the students, who compared their traditional classroom experiences with the photo story task. While these experiential activities take time to plan and implement, the pay off in terms of student and teacher engagement seems particularly high, and should continue to be explored.

It is suggested that for future new literacies infused projects, the sharing stage of the unit could be enhanced through various online platforms such as blogs. Access to these free platforms can be restricted to students in the school or opened up to sharing across schools. Students are likely to find the discussion boards on blogs to be engaging and motivating.

It is suggested that students be given more time to explore multimodality in their texts, including classroom time to explicitly talk about multimodal elements and their meanings. Teachers could explore some of the literature on visual approaches to teaching writing for example, Bearne and Wolsencroft (2007).

Finally, students should be given feedback on the drafts of their digital presentations and be given ample time to revise and improve them before 'publishing' or sharing. Ideally, students should make use of all features of the *Photo Story* program. Out of class time could be provided, for example by allowing students access to the computer labs during breaks or after

school, so that they can work on their digital stories independently.

3.3 School 11

School 11 is a government-aided, co-educational primary school located in the eastern part of Hong Kong. The school was founded in 1999 and aims to provide a holistic education to their student body. There are 30 classes in the school from S1 to S7. School 11 has a 6-storey campus and a number of IT teaching/learning facilities, such as a Distance Learning Centre and Multimedia Learning Centre. One F3 class and their NET teacher engaged in the production of comic strips using the online program *ToonDoo* to retell the story of a class reader.

3.3.1 The teaching team and classes

Although three Form 3 teachers initially volunteered to take part in the project, two later withdrew due to personal reasons. Teacher A, the English teacher of 3A for the year 2008–2009, stayed with the project and carried out the action research as planned.

3.3.2 Baseline data analysis: readiness for new literacies

The team received five videoed lessons from the three English teachers who initially volunteered to join the project. These lessons covered the topics ‘superstition’, ‘crime’ and ‘youth idols’ and focused on various skills, such as jigsaw reading, formulating questions, reading for specific information, and oral presentations on personal idols. As evidenced in the videos, there was no use of digital technology or computers in the lessons. The texts that the students produced and consumed were in print mode, although popular cultural topics were used in one of the lessons as prompts for students’ presentations. There were also few attempts to engage students in critical thinking, for example by discussing the ideologies critically embedded in the students’ presentations, and/or critiquing the general phenomenon that appearance seemed to be the predominant factor in students’ choice of idols.

In the first project interview, the teachers reported that they seldom used computers in their lessons because of the time involved in setting up the machines and preparing the digital teaching materials. They also reflected that it was difficult to engage students in critical discussions due to their generally low level of English. All three teachers, however, expressed a keen interest in knowing more about new literacies and the ways in which new literacies

could be promoted in their lessons.

3.3.3 The action research project – the new literacies-infused unit

3.3.3.1 Aims

The action research project conducted by Teacher A, a native English speaker from Australia, aimed to engage students in producing comic strips (cartoons and captions) to jointly retell a story that they had read. To do this, students had to summarise or present the essence of an allocated section of the story by creating sequenced cartoon pictures with appropriate captions, speech bubbles and narration. The activity was devised by the teacher as an alternative form to traditional book reports. It was also an attempt to inspire students to move away from putting together their reports simply by copying sections of the story outline from the book cover or from commentaries available on the Internet. The teacher further wanted to find out whether engaging students in presenting book reports in a visual format would enhance their interest in reading books.

3.3.3.2 Teaching sequence and tasks

The action research was conducted in the second semester of the school year. Teacher A first briefly introduced the story text to the students and familiarised them with the free cartoon-creation software *ToonDoo*, which had been introduced to the Project teachers in the initial New Literacies Workshops conducted by the Project Team. The class was then divided into small groups of three or four and each group was assigned a chapter to read and summarise. After they had read their chapters, students worked in the Multimedia Learning Centre (MMLC) to produce a maximum of nine short comic strips on the key events in the text. The students had to choose representative scenes from the chapter for each strip, and create speech bubbles and narration to connect them. From the selection of images available in the software (e.g., human figures, objects, etc.), students selected those that were most appropriate for presenting the content of the chapter and the characters. They then modified the images (e.g., changing the mouth shapes of the human figures, changing the background, etc.) to match the parts of the story they were retelling. After producing their comic strips, each group took turns in the subsequent two lessons to present their comic strips to the class together with an oral explanation of the events in their chapter.

3.3.3.3 Student work and products

The students engaged in two types of language output: (i) a set of comic strips based on their assigned chapter; and (ii) a group oral presentation to accompany their comic strips and help convey the key events and characters to their classmates.

3.3.3.4 Assessment/Evaluation

The students' comic strips and oral presentations were assessed by Teacher A according to three criteria: Content (i.e., whether or not the key points of the chapter were covered); Language (i.e., the accuracy and appropriateness of the dialogue and narration accompanying the strips); and Presentation Skills (i.e., the clarity of their spoken English, their body language, their eye contact with the audience, and whether and how they were able to engage the audience).

A short, post-activity questionnaire survey with items co-constructed by the research team and Teacher A was administered to the class to solicit students' views on this new literacies activity. To collect their views on the learning experience in a more open-ended manner, semi-structured interviews with 12 students selected to represent various levels of English proficiency were conducted in groups of three. The student interviews were conducted in Cantonese.

3.3.4 Findings

3.3.4.1 Findings from the student group interviews

In general, the students felt that the activity encouraged them to examine the reader in greater depth than was normally required for producing traditional books reports. One group of students reflected that in order to portray the main characters appropriately in their comic strips, they had to read the chapter very carefully to get a good understanding of their appearance and personality. The need to select the most representative scenes for condensing the content of a whole chapter into a short series of cartoon strips also meant that students needed a good understanding of the key events. The process of writing speech bubbles and narration for each section of cartoon strip also necessitated repeated reading of larger chunks of the story in order to accurately represent the content in a concise way. Apart from reading their assigned chapter, students also reported having to read the preceding and following chapters to get a better understanding of the whole story. The students also felt that presenting

printed information in visual way was a new and interesting experience for them.

Preparing and giving an oral presentation with visual aids was also a new experience for most students. Many felt that the comic strips made the presentation task more interesting and helped enhance the audience's understanding of both the presentation and the story.

Students felt that the experience of working in groups to produce the comic strips and prepare for the presentation helped them learn how to work cooperatively with their classmates. They also learnt how to use different types of software (e.g., *ToonDoo* and *PowerPoint*). According to Teacher A, the students all adapted well to the 'new' requirements and seemed able to solve most technical problems easily by themselves.

Two-thirds of the students interviewed reflected that they preferred this activity to writing traditional book reports because it was novel and more interesting. The others found making comic strips "troublesome and time-consuming". A couple of students also said that as some groups did not present their chapters very clearly, they were unable follow the story line and had to read the whole book themselves in order to prepare properly for the exam. Some felt that producing comic strips wasted a lot of time and was not worthwhile as this skill was not useful for the exams.

3.3.4.2 Findings from the Post-Activity Questionnaire

In order to evaluate how well the students had received the activity, Teacher A designed a questionnaire and asked all 41 students in F3A to complete it. The questionnaire was designed to investigate the students' views on five aspects of the activity. The results are presented below with significant findings.

Interest in and ability to make comic strips

- 68% of the students found the online comic strip creation software *ToonDoo* easy to use.
- Although 53% of the students agreed or strongly agreed that they enjoyed making comic strips, and 56% enjoyed conveying ideas visually, only 41% preferred making comic strips to writing traditional book reports.

Impact on reading and writing skills

- 44% of the students agreed or strongly agreed that the comic strip making activity had given them a better understanding of the story text.
- 42% thought the activity had improved their English reading skills.
- Only 17% thought that the activity had improved their English writing skills.

These results show that the majority of the respondents did not feel that the comic strip activity had significantly improved their reading and writing skills. The low positive response regarding the improvement of English writing skills may be due to the fact that the type of writing that students practised in the comic creation activity was quite different from that required for traditional book reports.

Impact on speaking skills and interest in making oral presentations

- 37% of the students agreed or strongly agreed that they enjoyed presenting their comic strips to the whole class.
- 39% thought that making comic strip presentations had improved their English speaking skills.

These results suggest that the majority of the students did not particularly enjoy the oral presentation task. One possible reason may be their lack of previous experience with similar types of presentations.

Impact on listening skills and interest in watching presentations

- 59% of the students agreed that they enjoyed watching their classmates' comic strip presentations.
- 42% thought that watching/listening to their classmates' presentations had given them a better understanding of the content of the reader.
- Only 29% of the students agreed that their English listening skills had been improved by the activity. However, as the questionnaire was administered before students' listening skills were assessed in the examination, this feedback reflects the students' perceptions only.

Attitude towards group work

- While 66% of the students said that they enjoyed working in groups, only 27% agreed that the group interaction had improved their generic skills.

3.3.4.3 Problems and challenges

Teacher A reported a number of technical problems during the Action Research. For example, although students with more advanced IT skills were able to produce effective presentations by importing their comic strips into a *PowerPoint* presentation, the ability of many students to present their comic strips smoothly was affected by unforeseen transition problems caused by the cartoon software. Many students were also unable to prepare work at home due to compatibility problems between the computer systems in school and at home. Technical problems were also experienced during some lessons. In two classroom-based lessons, for example, students' progress was adversely affected by a missing keyboard. Obtaining adequate technical support was found to be one of the biggest challenges.

In terms of students' language output, Teacher A identified the importance of timely teacher feedback. For example, some groups made small errors on their comic strips and presentations that could have been avoided if students had been required to submit their drafts for teacher feedback.

3.3.5 Conclusions and recommendations

Despite the problems and challenges mentioned above, Teacher A supported the need to promote new literacies, particularly digital literacies, in schools in order to reflect students' everyday life experiences outside school and establish connections between their literacies experiences in and out of school. Teacher A strongly believed that it was important to enable students to see a relationship between what they do in their everyday lives outside school and what teachers teach in class.

Based on the student feedback and the teacher's reflection, the comic strip production activity could be improved in the following ways:

- More teacher input and guidance could be provided on the content and key messages of the reader before students begin the comic creation process.
- Greater flexibility could be given to groups with regard to the number of comic strips they could use to present their chapters.

- The activity could be conducted as an inter-class competition to increase students' motivation to read the whole book and to collaborate with their peers to produce high quality comic strips with a consistent style and choice of images.
- More teacher input and guidance could be provided on how to write speech bubbles and on the features and functions of this specific text type.
- More teacher and peer feedback could be provided on the clarity and accuracy of the comic strips during the production process in order to improve the end products and enhance learning.

In view of the increasingly important role of multimedia in meaning-making and communication of ideas, it was suggested by Teacher A that more visual or multimodal resources, for example films or plays, etc, should be deployed in helping students to tackle a reading text presented in the traditional print mode. Providing students with a connection between the original text and other visual or multimodal resources would make the reading task less challenging and more interesting to students who are learning English as a second language.

3.4 School 13

School 13 is a government-aided, Chinese-medium secondary school located in a very busy district in Kowloon. The school was founded in 1929 and was originally a girls' school. Currently, the school has around 1,000 students from diverse backgrounds, including recent immigrants from mainland China. To cater for the students' varied needs, the school adopted split-class teaching for F1 to 3 and small class teaching for F4. The English teachers used digital storytelling to incorporate new literacies into two curriculum units.

3.4.1 The teaching team and classes

Three teachers volunteered to participate in the project. Teachers A and B taught F1 students, while Teacher C taught F3 students.

3.4.2 Baseline data analysis: readiness for new literacies

To understand the teachers' and students' readiness for new literacies, a group meeting was first arranged with the three participating teachers and the school's English panel chair. At the meeting, after the initial introductions, the teachers shared their teaching experiences and perceptions of students' abilities and performance in English. It was felt that students at this school generally lacked motivation to study and use English, were textbook-dependent and had a limited ability to critically engage with texts. It was also felt that the school needed more resources, including functional IT facilities. The teachers appeared to be enthusiastic about the project, and one of them, Teacher C, had already started a unit that involved the use of digital storytelling. The same teacher had previously engaged students in other new literacies-infused activities, such as writing captions for photos. Like Teacher C, Teacher A felt that developing students' creativity and critical thinking should be a major teaching goal, and had already attempted to move beyond textbooks and incorporate readers that would be of interest to the students. The initial meeting showed that the teachers were ready for and interested in implementing new literacies-infused teaching units in their practice.

Lesson observations provided another valuable source of baseline data. Each teacher was observed for the period of one lesson, and post-lesson individual interviews were conducted

to reflect on lesson objectives and the learning-teaching process.

Teacher A's objectives were to introduce the reader *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* and prepare the students for their future work on a project about chocolate. After the title and the author of the book were introduced, the lesson focused on three major aspects of the story: the character Charlie, chocolate as a product, and factories. For each aspect, the teacher started by drawing a picture and writing a word on the board that the class then collectively developed into a mindmap. Although the teacher spoke most of the time, the students contributed by answering the teacher's questions in simple English phrases and by drawing and writing various elements of the mindmaps on the board. The classroom was not equipped with computers and the use of digital technology was limited. Nevertheless, numerous visual elements (e.g., mindmaps, pictures, drawings, a mirror that looked like a chocolate bar, a portrait of the author) and music were used to enhance the students' engagement. Overall, although the students were involved only in limited language production, they appeared to be fully engaged and interested in the topic. The teacher's use of multimodal resources and personal narratives contributed to the students' engagement.

Teacher B's lesson focused on the use of the simple future tense and, as the teacher explained to the team, was typical for a regular English lesson in the school. Two major techniques were used: drilling – to model and practise grammatical patterns and new vocabulary – and translation. The lesson involved several verb tense exercises that required students to fill in a blank or choose a correct answer. For each exercise, the students were first given some time to complete the exercise on their own before the teacher elicited the correct answers and wrote them on the board. Although few students volunteered their answers, they seemed to be engaged in the process. This was repeated with three exercises, some of which were taken directly from the workbook that accompanied the textbook, while others had been modified by the teacher to suit the students' proficiency level. Very little English was used throughout the lesson, and most of this was spoken by the teacher. Two students were asked to write their answers in complete sentences in English on the board. Overall, this appeared to be a grammar lesson conducted in a traditional structuralist manner.

The major objective of Teacher C's lesson was to help students identify and understand the features of effective presentations involving digital stories. To accomplish this aim, the teacher prepared a digital story about the film *Forrest Gump* and asked the students to listen

and identify the different elements of the presentation. During the presentation, the teacher modelled and drew the students' attention to the following features: introducing the topic; developing ideas within the presentation and concluding the talk; interacting with the audience through questioning techniques; engaging the audience with personal narratives; engaging the audience with body language, gestures and eye contact; and dealing with technical problems. The presentation utilised multiple semiotic modes in addition to the verbal explanations and physical gestures of the presenter, for example, still pictures, video segments, sound effects, various font sizes and colours. Popular cultural elements were introduced throughout the discussion of the film as the teacher paused to draw the students' attention to particular relevant aspects of American culture. The lesson culminated in a brief summary of the features discussed and modelled during the lesson. The students visibly enjoyed the presentation and answered the teachers' questions in simple English.

Based on the data collected, it was concluded that the school was ready for the implementation of new literacies-infused activities. It was felt that Teachers A and C, in particular, were both enthusiastic about the project and had had some experience of using multimodal resources in teaching.

3.4.3 The action research project – the new literacies-infused unit

3.4.3.1 Aims

The aims of the new literacies-infused unit taught by Teachers A and B were: (i) to develop their creativity and critical thinking abilities; and (ii) to help them relate a fictional story to their own lives. It was expected that throughout the process students would be involved in researching various related topics on the Internet, organising the collected information on electronic mindmaps, responding to and critically evaluating the story and its characters, and interacting with each other.

The aims of the literacies-infused unit taught by Teacher C were: (i) to take students through the process of preparing a digital presentation; (ii) to expose them to the major elements of effective presentations; (iii) to scaffold their public presentation skills; and (iv) to enhance their interest in language learning. Students worked in groups to select their favourite film or book and prepare a digital story about it.

3.4.3.2 *Teaching sequence and tasks*

In the unit developed by Teacher A and Teacher B, students were first briefly introduced to the reader and then taken to the computer lab to conduct *The Chocolate Cyber Hunt*. In teams, the students researched a particular brand of chocolate online and collected information about the history of the brand, the process of chocolate production and its nutritional values. The next stage of the unit involved story prediction. Using only the story title *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, the students were asked to predict what the story might be about and to relate it to their own lives. Students were then asked to use the Internet to research the life of Roald Dahl, the author of the story, and to create a multimodal report involving the use of text and visuals. After reading the story, students were asked to choose a character they liked and create a character sketch using information from the story and their own interpretation of this character. It took about a month for the whole unit to be implemented.

The new literacies-infused unit developed by Teacher C was taught throughout the teaching year, alongside other units. First, to introduce the notion of effective presentations, the teacher showed clips from various recorded presentations and explained their organisational moves. Then students were given a chance to try and express themselves verbally on a topic of their choice. For many, this was the first time that they had spoken English in front of an audience. The next stage involved students being taken through the process of responding to texts through written narratives. In groups, they were asked to select a story they had read and were familiar with and respond to it in writing. Students' written responses were evaluated by both their peers and the teacher. As the aim of the unit was for students to present a digital story about a film of their choice as the final task, the teacher prepared a sample presentation and modelled both the features of an effective presentation and effective presentation skills. Students were asked to note down the structure of the teacher's sample presentation and other aspects such as the use of intonation, stress, and body language. Over a period of several weeks, and under the careful guidance of the teacher, students prepared and practised their own presentations, focusing on the following skills: critically evaluating information; organising and presenting information; presenting their own opinions; and intonation, pronunciation and body language. After the practice sessions, students presented their digital stories in groups to the rest of the class and received evaluations from both their classmates and the teacher.

3.4.3.3 *Student work and products*

Using the free software *bubbl.us* (<http://bubbl.us>), students in the classes of Teacher A and Teacher B created multiple digital mindmaps. These mindmaps were used to organise and summarise information about the brand of chocolate students' had researched, the author of the story, and the students' favourite story character.

In Teacher C's class, the students' major output was digital stories created and presented using *Microsoft PowerPoint*. Intermediary drafts created stage-wise throughout the unit and commented on by the teacher led to the final product.

3.4.3.4 Assessment/Evaluation

The mindmaps created by students in the classes of Teacher A and Teacher B were evaluated orally by the teachers. Peer feedback was also elicited. The main criteria used to evaluate the mindmaps were content, language and visual aspects. At the end of the unit, Teacher B's students were interviewed to assess the effectiveness of the unit in increasing students' interest in learning and using English. It was found that students generally favoured the use of computers in their English lessons and felt that mindmapping helped them to prepare for more extensive types of writing. Students reflected that digital mindmapping helped them organise their ideas more easily and also simplified the process of writing longer texts. They also felt that conducting Internet research was an easier and more interesting way of learning new vocabulary. Although the students' feedback was mostly positive, some students were unsatisfied with the learning process and pointed out that access to computers, printers and the Internet was often problematic at the school. Some also felt that their English language abilities were too low to benefit from this type of learning.

In Teacher C's class, the student presentations were also evaluated by both peers and the teacher. The main assessment criteria included critical thinking, the quality and organisation of the information presented, the use of visual aids, interaction with the audience, and pronunciation. Throughout the project, the teacher interviewed the students about their experiences and found that they appreciated the chance to be taken through the whole process of preparing a presentation and presenting to a real audience. They felt that they had benefited from the numerous practice sessions organised by the teacher and felt that their pronunciation, presentation and writing skills had improved. The more formal interviews organised by the research team at the end of the unit revealed the same sentiments. In addition, these interviews revealed that students enjoyed listening to each other's

presentations, comparing pronunciation patterns, and using *PowerPoint* and video editing software. Although students found that cooperating with group mates was challenging at times, they felt that the process helped them develop useful social skills and taught them how to explain their ideas to each other clearly in English. Overall, the feedback from the students in this class was overwhelmingly positive.

3.4.4 Findings

3.4.4.1 Strengths, successes, student learning, teacher learning

The teachers' dedication to the project was perhaps the major contributing factor to the overall success of the project. This dedication was especially noticeable in the case of Teacher A, who developed a new approach to engaging students in creative responses to stories and in conducting independent online research. It was also very noticeable in the case of Teacher C, who not only developed a new approach to scaffolding presentation skills, but also spent a lot of time outside the class developing students' understanding of what makes a good presentation and taking them through the process of drafting, presenting, and evaluating digital stories. The novelty of both approaches was clearly appreciated by students who reported increased motivation and interest in learning and using English.

The post-project teacher interviews revealed that the project gave teachers an increased understanding and appreciation of new literacies and the effects of new literacies-infused teaching. The teachers also reported that the project had helped them develop time management and IT skills, primarily because they needed to be very familiar with the software they were presenting in order to help students use it on their own. In addition, Teacher C reported that she learned how to interact with adolescents from a variety of social and cultural backgrounds.

3.4.4.2 Problems and challenges

The biggest challenge faced by the teachers in this school was the lack of easy access to computers and quality of the computer and multimedia labs. As classrooms were not equipped with computers, teachers had to schedule the new literacies lessons in the computer lab, which was often difficult to do. Moreover, during lesson observations, it was found that some computers were very slow and some did not work at all. To deal with the problem of slow and unreliable computer access, the teachers regularly needed to prepare pen and paper

backup plans, and during at least one lesson observation, a teacher had to abandon the idea of using computers altogether and rely solely on the backup plan.

Another problem that teachers faced was students' limited access to computers outside of school. Assigning homework that involved the use of IT was felt to be a challenge because many students, due to their socioeconomic backgrounds, did not have access to computers at home. To deal with this problem, Teacher C developed a new approach to assigning computer-based homework, grouping students so that at least one student in each group had access to a computer. This allowed the whole team to work on the homework together.

In addition to computer access, another challenge was the outbreak of H1N1 in Hong Kong in the spring of 2009, which led to the temporary closure of local schools and delays in the progress of the project. Teacher A, for example, was unable to engage students in a radio drama upon their completion of the reader, as had been initially planned.

Teacher A, who was relatively inexperienced at teaching English, also reported finding it challenging at times to organise the teaching schedule and materials. Teacher B mentioned that the students' relatively low level of English sometimes hindered their engagement with the new literacies-infused activities.

3.4.5 Conclusions and recommendations

Despite the problems and challenges reported above, all three teachers appeared to be enthusiastic about the project and discussed the possibility of using similar activities in their future teaching. The teachers felt that new literacies-infused activities had great potential for stimulating students' engagement, motivation and interest in English, and that these types of activities minimised students' inhibitions and encouraged them to create and share a wider range of digital texts. Teacher A reflected on the need to help students develop their creativity and ability to relate fantasies to real life. Teacher C, in addition, championed the need to develop students' critical thinking abilities and prepare them for real-world social interactions, which these days are often mediated through digital technologies.

For future projects of a similar nature, the teachers suggested that more planning and teacher development should be factored into the preparatory stage. The sustainability of projects like

this, however, depends not only on the efforts of the teachers involved but also on the ability of school administrations to provide the necessary resources, including technical support and IT facilities.

3.5 School 09

School 09 is a government-aided, co-educational secondary school founded in 1998. Originally a skills-based school, it became a grammar school in 2003 and now serves mainstream students and students with different learning needs. The teachers follow a school-based curriculum to cater for the varied needs of their students and frequently engage in professional development activities. Six teachers and 79 students from F1 to 3 participated in the New Literacies Project. The teachers engaged students in creating digital stories about themselves using the *Photo Story* program.

3.5.1 The teaching team and classes

Three teachers volunteered to join this project. Teacher A taught F1 students, Teacher B taught F2 and Teacher C taught F3.

3.5.2 Baseline data analysis: readiness for new literacies

An initial group discussion revealed a very special situation in this school. A former skills-based school, School 09 is now a regular Band 3 Chinese-medium school, where a large proportion of students have learning difficulties such as dyslexia. The teachers and the panel chair felt that the main difficulties were caused by the students' limited ability to engage in learning activities, their lack of motivation and limited English practice. A lesson by each teacher was observed and recorded, and individual post-lesson interviews were conducted to give a better understanding of the factors impacting on the observed lesson, as well as the teacher's intentions and experiences.

Teacher A's lesson was conducted in a traditional drill-and-practice format. It started with the teacher asking students questions about their morning and the weather. The key question pattern, "How long does it take X to get from Y to Z?" was then introduced. The teacher used multimodal computer printouts combining text and images and asked questions about the various situations depicted. The students were responsive to the teacher's questions and volunteered to provide answers. After the initial drilling exercise, the students were asked to work in pairs and ask each other questions using the key question pattern introduced in the first part of the lesson. They also had to record their questions and answers on the handouts

provided. Their discussions were then role-played in front of the whole class, with the teacher providing feedback on the students' performance. Finally, the students played a quick game involving the use of the same key question pattern. The overall atmosphere in the class was positive and the students seemed to enjoy the lesson.

Teacher B's lesson centred around the presentation of multiple video excerpts from published materials accompanying the textbook being used in the class. The materials were Hong Kong-based, and the actors in the videos appeared to be students from international schools in Hong Kong. The topic of the lesson was 'international food' and the video excerpts included two students ordering food in a restaurant, a discussion between the same students about their favourite food, and an individual food-related presentation by another student. Each video was played multiple times: continuously the first time, and with multiple pauses during the consecutive playbacks. During the pauses, the teacher asked various questions to check the students' comprehension and to draw their attention to unfamiliar food-related vocabulary items. While playing the video the final time, the teacher also attempted to draw the students' attention to the various elements of effective presentations. The students appeared to watch the videos with some interest and responded to the teacher's questions with single English words or Cantonese phrases.

In Teacher C's lesson, students were introduced to miming – the art of silently portraying a character or enacting a scene or situation using body language and gestures only. The students were first shown pictures from their textbook of characters from popular movies, such as *The Lord of the Rings* and *Harry Potter*, and asked to guess which movies they appeared in. They were then asked to choose a movie and two characters from it, to select a scene and, and to mime or enact it in front of the class. Although the focus was on miming, the students were allowed to use one sentence each for enacting and had to rely on their body language to convey the full meaning of the selected scene. The rest of the class had to guess what the scene was about and which movie the characters were from. The students seemed to be interested in the activity, though the language used was limited to one- or two-word expressions. The students also appeared to be shy and not always willing to speak in English. During the lesson, the teacher occasionally referred to *PowerPoint* slides that summarised the key terms used in the class (e.g., mime, terms referring to types of movies, etc) and to a regular textbook unit that incorporated elements of popular culture.

From the initial data collected from the class observations and preliminary discussions with the teachers, the team felt that the school was open to implementing new literacies-based activities. Although the classroom data had revealed that multimodal texts were already being used in some teaching and learning activities, attention needed to be focused on engaging students in creating, discussing, and sharing new literacies texts.

3.5.3 The action research project – the new literacies-infused unit

3.5.3.1 Aims

Because of the nature of the school and its student population, the teachers involved in the project had a very specific aim, namely, to understand how new literacies-infused teaching could help their dyslexic students to improve their English learning. In addition to this, they were interested in evaluating the effects of new literacies-infused units on students' motivation to learn and use English. Finally, they also aimed to understand the role of group work in new literacies-based activities and its effect on students' learning.

For this project, the teachers decided to research the feasibility of using digital storytelling for teaching English. The freely available software *Microsoft Photo Story* was used for this purpose. Teacher A additionally planned to introduce MP4 players as a means of practising pronunciation, while Teacher C experimented with digital poster-making using the *Glogster* website.

3.5.3.2 Teaching sequence and tasks

The three classes involved in the project created and shared digital stories on various topics. Teacher A's students were asked to describe a recent trip they had participated in using a selection of photos, text narratives and music. First, they used mindmapping to generate and organise their ideas about the trip. This resulted in students writing short phrases to describe their experiences. These phrases were transformed into complete sentences both orally and in writing. Students then worked on combining the sentences into a story, practised reading the stories aloud, and received feedback from their teacher on both the grammar of their stories and their pronunciation. This preliminary stage was followed by students completing storyboards in preparation for future work in a computer lab. Creating the storyboards involved selecting interesting photos for the story and writing captions. Story scripts were then created and recorded using MP4 players. With the teacher's feedback, students recorded

and played back their own speech multiple times. In the computer lab, the students learned how to use *Microsoft Photo Story* and transformed their paper-based drafts into digital stories. Online voting using software from *my3q.com* was then implemented to select the best story.

Teacher B's teaching unit centred on issues of environmental protection. Students were asked to collect information about a local environmental pollution problem through online research and site visits. They were encouraged to take pictures to describe the problem and convey its seriousness. The students were taken through the same major stages as the students in Teacher A's class: they started with brainstorming to collect and organise ideas, prepared photos to be used in the story, wrote captions, and then compiled their photo stories in the computer lab. The amount of practice given, however, was considerably less than in Teacher A's class, and Teacher B felt that some students lacked motivation and did not enjoy writing their stories.

The students in Teacher C's class first engaged in a unit to produce digital stories and then in a unit to produce e-posters. For the digital story unit, students worked individually and in groups to create a story about friendship and their best friends. The unit started with activities that took students through the practice of describing people, their astrological signs and their personalities in English. The notions of digital storytelling, photo selection, caption writing and script writing were then introduced, after which, students wrote individual self-introductions and proofread their texts based on feedback from the teacher and their peers. Digital stories were then created in the computer lab. The stories were presented in class and the audience was engaged in evaluating each other's stories.

The e-poster unit focused on environmental pollution. Students were again taken through the carefully structured process of researching a problem, collecting multimodal information (including videos, pictures and written texts), creating drafts and presenting a final product through the medium of digital posters.

3.5.3.3 Student work and products

The students in all three classes created digital stories in groups. The students in Teacher A's and Teacher C's classes produced multiple drafts that led to the final product. They also had the opportunity to provide peer feedback on the drafts and the final stories. Both the drafts and the comments allowed the teacher and the team to conclude that most students' work had

been improved by the process, both in terms of content and language.

The students in Teacher A's class also created multiple-voice recordings of their scripts. For many, if not all students, this was a novel practice and although they first appeared shy about hearing their own voices on the MP4, they seemed to enjoy the process and their pronunciation improved noticeably. The students in Teacher C's class were also given the chance to learn about the medium of digital posters and to create their own group posters. This allowed them to present their research in a highly multimodal manner, using video, sound, written and spoken texts, and still images.

3.5.3.4 Assessment and Evaluation

To assess students' work and progress, the teachers provided continuous feedback throughout the teaching-learning process. Peer feedback was also used as a means of engaging students and providing them with a chance to comment on each other's work.

To evaluate the overall impact of the project on students' learning, a questionnaire was designed by the teachers and distributed to all participating students. The questionnaire aimed at soliciting students' views on the in-class activities, as well as their work outside the class. It was felt that out of class work was important for new literacies-infused units and for the completion of research and digital stories. The findings show that most students enjoyed the classroom activities and found them motivating but were more ambivalent about the work they needed to do outside of the classroom.

Focus group interviews conducted with the students at the end of the project additionally revealed mixed feelings about the use of digital storytelling in English lessons. Some students commented that they enjoyed creating something different, practising pronunciation, getting feedback from the teacher, learning new words, sharing stories, and working with group mates in general. Others, however, pointed out the inconvenience of using English-language software, the tight control of their work by the teacher, the difficulty of dividing responsibilities within the group, and a general lack of interest.

The teachers' observations were more positive and suggested that their students' interest in and motivation for learning English had increased, despite the fact that teamwork had presented some challenges and much planning had been needed to ensure the smooth

implementation of activities. The teachers also reported that their dyslexic students benefited most from an approach that combined multiple modes of representation and meaning making. They felt that since writing and reading extended texts is normally difficult for students with dyslexia, infusing videos, sound, and pictures into their work made it not only more manageable but also more interesting.

3.5.4 Findings

3.5.4.1 Strengths, successes, student learning, teacher learning

Based on the data collected, it can be concluded that the project enabled students to experience new ways of learning English and communicating their ideas in a second language through the medium of digital stories. Overall, the teachers were satisfied with the students' progress in such areas as pronunciation, the production of various text types ranging from phrases to extensive coherent stories, independent learning, and teamwork. They felt that working in teams had helped their students develop a sense of responsibility, and that they had also developed a sense of social consciousness through their research on environmental problems. It was generally felt that students with learning difficulties, especially those with dyslexia, benefited most from new literacies-infused activities as these gave them a chance to express themselves not only through the medium of written and spoken texts, but also through songs, music, videos and pictures.

It can also be concluded that the teachers themselves benefited from the project in terms of professional development. All three teachers commented on the usefulness of learning how to incorporate new technologies into their teaching. Teacher A was happy and surprised to realise that the students had a great potential for learning English and commented on the fact that the project provided a deeper understanding of what action research is about and how to conduct it better in future. Teacher C reflected that the project had illustrated that the repertoire of assessment practices could also include student feedback, had proved that students need to be taught how to use digital information responsibly and safely, and had extended the range of texts that students and teachers could explore, create and share in English lessons.

3.5.4.2 Problems and challenges

Although the implementation of the project was generally smooth and the teachers were

generally positive about its progress and outcomes, they did report a few challenges, one of which was organising and mediating teamwork among the students. It was observed that some students expressed a lack of interest in working with their peers or a lack of responsibility for their assigned work. Teacher C dealt with this problem by assigning different roles to the students throughout the project and by explaining the importance of working in teams and with random people in everyday life outside school. Some students in Teacher C's class were also shy and reluctant to use pictures of themselves in their stories on friendship. To solve this difficult situation, the teacher suggested that students use other visual elements to represent themselves, such as images of animals or cartoon characters.

One of the teachers felt that the communication between the teachers and the research team was not always effective, and suggested that information be shared among all the project members in a more open and timely manner. The teacher felt that delays in responses and feedback had meant that there was not always enough time to design the unit and prepare the teaching materials properly.

Another major challenge was ensuring student ownership of their work. Some of the students felt that their work was excessively constrained by the teacher's control and that the resulting stories were therefore not completely their own work. This is a serious issue that will need to be considered in future projects like this, and since one major aim of introducing new literacies in the classroom is to stimulate students' creativity, this issue cannot be overlooked when implementing new literacies-infused activities in general.

3.5.5 Conclusions and recommendations

Although the teachers and students raised concerns about some elements of the project, there is no doubt overall that the project led to some observable gains in students' use of English. These gains were most noticeable in terms of pronunciation, increased confidence when speaking in public, teamwork, and writing. The project also allowed students to experiment with new means of conveying stories and to work collaboratively with each other. It can be concluded that students were successfully exposed to and created a range of multimodal new literacies texts. In addition, they were given a valuable opportunity to engage in the new literacies practices of media searching, mixing and remixing and sharing their stories digitally.

Based on the teachers' feedback and the team's observations, the following recommendations can be made. First of all, teachers need to consider the balance of teacher control and student ownership of texts. For students to truly appreciate the nature of new media communication, more ownership needs to be given to them, especially in such areas as topic selection, information search and final product development. Secondly, students need to be made aware of how to use digital information and multimodal resources responsibly. Teachers need to consider and discuss with their students issues of plagiarism, the ethical use of information, and the reliability of available information. Finally, as such projects and activities benefit from the incorporation of group work into teaching-learning practices, students need to be shown how to work with each other responsibly and effectively.

Chapter 4 Primary School Projects

Seven Hong Kong primary schools took part in the New Literacies Project. Teams of upper primary (Primary 4-6) English language teachers and their students planned, implemented and assessed a new literacies-infused curriculum unit. In this chapter, each project in the seven schools is described and reviewed. For each school, the participating teachers and classes are identified and the school's readiness for new literacies is examined. The new literacies-infused curricular unit is then explained and classroom implementation is described and assessed in terms of student and teacher learning. Findings from student and teacher interviews, post-unit student surveys and from analyses of students' work are presented. At the end of each school case, suggestions for improvement and advice for further development of new literacies in the English language curriculum is offered.

The projects in schools 01, 03, 04, 05 and 14 involved students in creating multimodal presentations using the digital story making programme, *Photo Story*. In many of these schools, students' digital stories were shared and commented on via class blogs. School 06 used a blog as a personal diary for students to introduce themselves, and share something about their lives. School 05 exploited students' popular cultural interests in comic strip characters and engaged them in writing short fan fiction narratives. School 02 carried out two projects, one in which students created comic strips about good public behaviour on an online comic strip website called, *ToonDoo*. They also used class wikis to write and share book reviews throughout the school year. In addition to creating digital stories, students in School 14 used the Internet to research an endangered animal species and write a multimodal report, and used mobile phones and digital cameras to capture aspects of their school life which were used in digital presentations on 'Memories of school'.

4.1 School 06

School 06 is a government-aided, co-educational primary school located in the eastern part of Hong Kong. Founded in 1962, it was originally located in the southern part of Kowloon. The school moved to its current location in 2003 and developed a 7-storey campus. The participating teachers chose blogging as their new literacies activity in order to enhance their students' English language learning, to help them develop the habit of using the Internet for communication and to arouse their interest in reading and writing.

4.1.1 The teaching team and classes

Two English teachers volunteered to participate in the project. Teachers A and B each taught a Primary 4 class.

4.1.2 Baseline data analysis: current literacy teaching and learning and readiness for new literacies

To help the research team understand the teachers' and students' readiness for new literacies, four videoed lessons from the two participating teachers were submitted as a source of baseline data. As the teachers explained in their individual baseline interviews, the lessons showed how typical reading and writing lessons were usually conducted with the students. Both teachers conducted the lessons in more or less similar ways, using similar teaching materials. For example, both teachers taught a unit related to food. In the first lesson, the students were guided to read a text on different types of pasta in Italy. In the second lesson, the teachers used the same set of big picture cards to conduct a matching activity.

From what we could observe from the videoed lessons, both teachers focused on checking comprehension of a reading text from a textbook. Teacher A said that students were expected to be able to answer comprehension questions in complete sentences, and to use key words to make appropriate sentences. Enabling the students to acquire vocabulary items seemed to be a key lesson objective for both teachers. Both teachers admitted in their respective baseline interview that the videoed lessons represented a 'traditional' way of teaching reading and writing. Although they said that they knew very little about new literacies, both had experience of using i-books or e-books in teaching. According to Teacher A, the e-books they

used were produced by the textbook publisher and accompanied with *PowerPoint* slides. Teacher A also reported that using the e-books to project the target section of the textbook on a screen helped to effectively focus students' attention and increase their interest in the text. Teacher B reported that although the students had not been taught how to use e-dictionaries in class, some of them used e-dictionaries at home to prepare for their learning – a good practice that Teacher B felt should be encouraged.

Both teachers expressed keen interest in knowing more about new literacies and the ways in which new literacies elements could be infused into their lessons. Teacher A initially expressed some concerns about having insufficient IT knowledge but fully acknowledged the need for teachers to keep abreast of their students' out-of-school literacy practices in order to understand their needs and interests.

4.1.3 The action research project – the new literacies-infused unit

4.1.3.1 Aims

The aims of the new literacies-infused units taught by Teacher A and Teacher B were to arouse students' interest in reading and writing and to encourage students to use blogs to exchange information with their classmates.

4.1.3.2 Teaching sequence and tasks

Both project classes experienced similar teaching and learning activities during the action research. First, during IT lessons, teachers from the IT Department explained the different functions of blogs and helped students set up their own blog pages. As the project teachers felt that blogs, as a text type, are similar in nature to diaries, they developed teaching materials on the language, content and organisation features of diaries and taught these to their students. Students were encouraged to use their blogs to write about topics that were of interest to them, and the main focus topics in the project unit were 'Introducing myself', 'Introducing my pet' and 'A trip in Hong Kong'. For their first blog entries, students posted self-introductions. They were also taught how to use the computer to draw simple cartoons and tell a story with captions, and how to upload their cartoon stories onto the blog for peer viewing and comments.

4.1.3.3 Student work and products

Most students posted at least three blog entries, and some took the initiative to post a fourth or fifth entry. Encouraged by the teachers, the students also responded to the blogs created by their peers. Most responded with single sentence comments, but a few more competent students gave longer responses. Sometimes the blogger also responded to the peer comments.

Both teachers set up their own blogs and posted entries about their everyday life and interests. They also responded frequently to students' own blog entries. Some students asked the teachers questions and one even taught Teacher A how to use a particular blog function.

From the students' blog entries, the project team could observe that some students were increasingly able to write longer texts. Rather than simply providing formulaic comments such as "Your drawing is very beautiful and cute.", many students gave more creative feedback, for example, commenting on the grammar, "Use past tense.", asking questions, "Your dog is girl or boy?", "Who feed her? When do you feed her?", or sharing personal feelings and making suggestions, "What Sai Kung restaurant did you go? I also like eating seafood very much. How did you feel about your trip? Who are Kelly and Andy? Can you post a photo of them on this blog?"

4.1.3.4 Assessment/Evaluation

A post-project questionnaire, designed to evaluate how well students had received the project unit, was distributed to a total of 60 students in 4D and 4E. The questionnaire investigated students' views on four main aspects of the activity:

- Their ability to use the blogging tools
- The impact of the activity on their skills and interest in writing
- The impact of the activity on their skills and interest in reading
- Their interest and skill in commenting on each other's blogs

Significant findings from the students' responses are presented below.

Students' ability to use the blogging tools

- 61% of the surveyed students found the blogging tools easy to handle.
- Although only 30% of the students agreed or strongly agreed that they enjoyed the blogging activity, 69% preferred blogging to traditional writing exercises.

These results indicate that the majority of the students welcomed a variety of writing activities.

Impact of the activity on students' skills and interest in writing

- 53% of the surveyed students enjoyed their writing being read by others.
- 40% of the students thought blogging had improved their writing skills.
- Only 35% of the students had a greater interest in writing after the blogging activity.

These results show that even though students' skills and interest in writing had not been significantly enhanced by the blogging activity, their interest in having a wider audience for their work is worthy of teachers' attention.

Impact of the activity on students' skills and interest in reading

- 50% of the surveyed students indicated that they enjoyed communicating with peers through blogging.
- 47% agreed or strongly agreed that blogging could help them to learn more about their classmates.
- 45% felt that their English reading skills had improved after the blogging activity.

These results suggest that the students preferred reading blogs to writing them, and that the role of blogging in the construction of interpersonal relationships should not be overlooked.

Students' interest and skill in responding to each other's blogs

- Only 34% of the surveyed students indicated that they had written feedback of more than one sentence, although 46% said that they had written in complete sentences.
- Only 37% of students agreed or strongly agreed that they enjoyed giving comments on their classmates' blogs.

These results were somewhat disappointing but generally consistent with the results reported above, namely, that the students did not seem to enjoy writing in English.

4.1.4 Findings

4.1.4.1 Strengths, successes, student learning, teacher learning

The project unit enabled students to experience online social communication with their classmates through the medium of written English. This was a novel experience for almost all students involved. In the post-activity interviews, the teachers reflected that they were pleased to see that students did not only post their own written texts on the blogs, but also read and commented on each other's blogs. From the teachers' observations, some students had made good attempts to expand their responses from single words to complete sentences, indicating progress in language learning and an increased interest in active participation in the blogging activity. The students' interest in having their work read and responded to positively was confirmed both in the project evaluation survey and the student interviews. These results signal a need for teachers to provide more opportunities for students to share their creative writing output, as well as other output such as drawings and photo selections. Even though the evaluation results show little positive evidence of a significant increase in students' interest in writing, the anticipation that their work could be shared and responded to positively might constitute an intrinsic motivation for students to plan and refine their writing more carefully.

The team also felt that the active participation of both teachers in the blogging activity may have motivated some students to take a more active role in the activity. The two project teachers not only posted entries about their everyday life on their blogs, but also regularly read and responded to the blogs produced by their students. There was also evidence of interesting out-of-class interaction between teachers and students, with one student teaching Teacher A how to use a particular blog function. By asking genuine questions about the content and events reported in some student blogs, the teachers also indirectly conveyed to students the importance of vocabulary and grammar in meaning making. Such evidence provides a strong indication that the blogging activity has made reading and writing in English more relevant to the students' everyday lives.

In the post-activity interview, Teacher A reflected that participating in the project and conducting the blogging activity had highlighted alternative ways of teaching English, and that these ways seemed to be more enjoyable for the students than the traditional textbook-based approach.

4.1.4.2 Problems and challenges

Both teachers felt that the successful implementation of the new literacies activity had been negatively affected by a general lack of time, and that incorporating the blogging activity into the already tight regular curriculum had been a challenge. The fact that some students did not have access to computers at home meant that most of the online activities had to be conducted in the computer lab. However, as the computer lab was often fully booked this had also had a knock-on effect on the teaching schedule.

The teachers also felt that the lack of sufficient time had impacted their ability to provide ample individual guidance to weaker students. This had resulted in work that was full of language inaccuracies, and a lack of seriousness on the part of some students in their peer comments, which were either simply copied from other students or repeated regardless of appropriacy.

In the post-activity interviews, some students said that they disliked the activity and found it “troublesome” because they had to use the computer to type and were unable to easily correct the errors that they found in their writing after posting. Some students also felt unhappy about receiving negative feedback on their writing even though they generally welcomed feedback from peers.

4.1.5 Conclusions and recommendations

Although the project may not have resulted in immediate measurable gains in students’ English proficiency, it created a valuable opportunity to promote online written communication in English among the students and between the students and teachers. Such experience is definitely desirable for students’ subsequent development into effective digital literacies users.

The sustainability of such initiatives, however, depends very much on the support of the school in terms of staffing and resources. According to the two project teachers, the provision of temporary staffing to relieve them from some of their regular teaching and administrative duties was one of the key factors enabling them to regularly read and respond to over 30 students’ weekly blog entries. Technical support from the IT Department was also felt to be crucial.

The teachers also felt that the existing curriculum should provide space for such new literacies activities to be carried out as regular curriculum components. In general, the teachers and the researchers believe that new literacies might be best promoted in a school-based approach, with the relevant new literacies skills becoming concrete learning outcomes.

On a practical level, the teachers also suggested using student resources to relieve the teachers' workload. For example, students could be put into learning support groups so that they could comment on each other's drafts. This practice might help reduce the number of careless grammatical errors in some students' work and make them more alert to the meaning of their writing.

4.2 School 05

School 05 is a Christian-sponsored, government-aided school located in a busy commercial district in the eastern part of Hong Kong Island. The school was founded in 1919 and has 24 classes from P1 to P6. The school premises have undergone a number of recent renovations and upgrades, in particular the art room and the computer lab, which is very spacious and well equipped. Every classroom is equipped with a computer and projector. A team of English teachers and their P4 classes carried out two units of work incorporating new literacies. The first unit involved students writing fan fiction stories and sharing them online, the second unit involved students creating and sharing digital photo stories.

4.2.1 The teaching team and classes

Four P4 English teachers and their classes participated in the project. Each class had on average 35 students aged 9–10. Students were streamed according to their language proficiency and academic performance in English. The vast majority of participating students lived in the same district and used Cantonese as their first language. According to the teachers, the students came from lower income and working class families. Class 4A was taught by Teacher A, who had over 10 years experience and also taught religious studies in the school. Class 4B was taught by Teacher B, the English Panel Chair with 11 years teaching experience. Class 4C was taught by Teacher C, an ICT teacher and English teacher with eight years teaching experience. Class 4D was taught by Teacher D, who was also a physical education teacher and had 13 years teaching experience. These teachers were led by a Curriculum Development Officer, who oversaw and guided the teachers' participation in the project. Among the participating classes, there was only one student whose parents did not consent to their child's participation in the project.

4.2.2 Baseline data analysis: current literacy teaching and learning and readiness for new literacies

The P4 English curriculum was based on a local English textbook *Primary Longman Express*, which is widely used in Hong Kong, and on the 2004 P1–6 English Language Curriculum Guide. After observing several lessons of a textbook unit taught by the participating teachers,

it was noted that all four teachers made efforts to relate the linguistic content to a social context, a topic and a text. The teachers also engaged students in whole class discussions and made good use of questioning strategies to involve students actively. In terms of literacy teaching and learning, all four teachers were very aware of the need to teach reading and writing through text types and to present these text types as socially purposeful and meaningful. This is an important concept for teachers to follow when integrating new digital texts into their syllabus. The teachers nevertheless felt that English was a challenging subject for their students, who struggled to speak and write in English. In the classroom, Cantonese was sometimes used to facilitate understanding, but most lessons were conducted solely in English, with teachers providing ample support for vocabulary and language structures related to the topic. In terms of developing students' literacy in English, the Panel Chair expressed the need for more reading materials for KS2, and for those reading materials to be appropriately levelled to students' reading ability.

In the baseline data interviews, the teachers were generally positive about developing new teaching strategies and learning new ideas, even though their general concept of digitally mediated texts was limited. Teacher C, who was also a computer teacher, also noted the challenges of digital literacy for the students:

“For the P4 kids, I think they would like to go online. But perhaps they don't have the skills to read and type so it's quite hard for them to write an email. Perhaps they don't have the language to write in English.” (Teacher C)

However, he felt that the students benefitted from IT tasks and activities:

“I've found that the kids are more motivated. They try to communicate more with their peers. Since sometimes, perhaps, they might not know how and where can they search for information, they will ask their classmates.” (Teacher C)

Despite the fact that the teachers had little conception of the impact of new technologies on texts and communication, they were keen to participate in the project because they wanted to learn new ideas that would enhance their students' English language learning.

4.2.3 The action research project – the new literacies-infused units

Two project units were carried out in School 05. The first unit involved students in the new

literacies practice of fan fiction writing, in which authors create new stories based on their favourite media characters, stories and settings. The second project involved the creation and sharing of a digital photo story presentation about a popular tourist site.

4.2.3.1 *The Fan Fiction unit*

In the regular co-planning meetings, the teachers and project researchers discussed ways of integrating new literacies tasks and interactions into their existing scheme of work. *Primary Longman Express 4B*, Unit 1 ‘Cartoons we watched’ was chosen because it drew on students’ popular culture and media interests. It also provided a natural topic for exploring the new literacies practice of fan fiction writing. The focus of the textbook unit was the vocabulary, grammar and functional language used to describe and review popular cartoon films. This language could be practised and recycled both when students wrote their fan fiction stories and when they read and reviewed each others’ work.

An eight-lesson unit was designed with the aim of improving students’ writing skills through the following activities:

- Watching animated films and discussing opinions
- Summarising a cartoon by filling in a mindmap
- Creating fan fiction stories through shared and individual writing
- Sharing their stories online and giving comments in the discussion forum

It also aimed to arouse students’ interest in learning English through:

- Watching their favourite cartoons
- Creating a fan fiction story based on a cartoon of their own choice

4.2.3.2 *Teaching sequence and tasks*

There were two overall stages to this unit. The first stage focused on identifying, describing and reviewing students’ favourite cartoons. To prepare for this, the teachers conducted a survey of favourite cartoons and selected a few on which to base the lesson activities. The research team also provided the project teachers with data from the student questionnaire that related to students’ popular cultural interests. Although each teacher carried out the unit in different ways according to their own teaching styles and students’ needs, the overall teaching

sequence across the four teachers' lessons was consistent. In Lessons 1 and 2, students first watched a short *Tom and Jerry* cartoon. Afterwards the teachers guided them to reconstruct the various elements of the cartoon, such as the characters, their actions and their feelings. The teachers then elicited students' comments and opinions on the cartoon and provided them with appropriate vocabulary and functional expressions, and worksheets for further support. In lessons 3 and 4, the students watched trailers from five animated films: *Kung Fu Panda* (DreamWorks Animations), *Shrek 2* (DreamWorks Animations), *Madagascar 2* (DreamWorks Animations), *Ponyo on the Cliff by the Sea* (Studio Ghibli), and *Bolt 3D* (Walt Disney Animation). Students were put into groups and each group chose one of the trailers to outline and review on a mindmap. Both oral and written comments on the cartoons were elicited from the students.

The second stage of this unit focused on fan fiction writing. First, teachers presented their own fan fiction writing based on *Tom and Jerry* (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer). This was the favourite cartoon of Teacher A and thus lent some authenticity to the text. The teachers' stories provided students with exposure to the text type, its purpose and social function. Next, teachers conducted a shared writing task in which they jointly constructed a new fan fiction story based on the students' input and teacher guidance and feedback. The purpose of this shared writing task was to model and support the writing process in preparation for students' individual fan fiction writing. At the end of lessons 5 and 6, students planned and drafted their own fan fiction stories on a worksheet. The worksheets were collected and marked by the teachers, who provided feedback and also edited the students' drafts. The final two lessons of the unit were conducted in the computer lab. Here students typed up their drafted and edited stories and posted them on a discussion board on the school's intranet. They were then shown how to access and read each other's work and were taught a few ways of responding to their classmates' stories.

4.2.3.3 *Student work and products*

All students wrote one fan fiction story and adopted many of the characteristics of online fan fiction. Many of the students based their own stories on *Tom and Jerry*. Some students wrote stories based on characters from the trailers of the five animated films watched in class, while others based their writing on other characters they were familiar with and presumably liked, such as the Japanese characters, Melody and Kuromi, and Gundam. Many students included other characters not associated with any cartoon (e.g., a tiger, a woman named Rita, etc). A

few students simply recreated a scene from the *Tom and Jerry* cartoon viewed in class, suggesting that they had not grasped the concept of fan fiction. A few students also struggled to write in English.

It is also worth remarking on the ways in which the planning worksheet guided the students' writing. At the top of the worksheet, students were asked to plan their fan fiction and write the name of the cartoon they were basing their stories on and the characters in their story. Below this were three boxes in which students could draw scenes from their stories. Below the picture boxes was a space for students to write their storylines. However, the instructions above this writing space stated, "Write a fan fiction based on 'Tom and Jerry' in about 40 words." While the majority of students based their stories on *Tom and Jerry*, many students disregarded this instruction and wrote stories based on other characters, which was also encouraged by all of the teachers. Many students also wrote more than the stated 40 words, and the majority of their stories showed awareness and control of narrative discourse such as past tenses, time adverbials, action verbs and resolutions.

4.2.3.4 *Student and teacher reflections*

In the post-unit student interviews, it was found that students clearly related to the concept of fandom and the personal engagement with fan fiction, as this excerpt shows:

I: *Which cartoon characters did you use for the task?*

S1/2/3: *Tom and Jerry!*

I: *Did everyone use Tom and Jerry?*

S4: *Doraemon.*

S5: *Garfield.*

I: *How about you?*

S6: *I chose Tweety.*

I: *How did you make this choice? Did you choose the character that you knew best? Was it your favourite? Or was it assigned by the teacher?*

S1: *We chose it ourselves.*

S2: *Our favourite one.*

I: *Did you know the English names of your favourite characters, or were there some English names that you didn't know?*

S3: *No!*

I: *Why's that?*

S4: *How can we be fans if we don't know their names?*

SS: [Laughter]

Students' remarks regarding sharing their stories online and commenting on each other's work showed a desire for authentic communication, the sense of ownership that comes with authorship, and an understanding of the value of peer collaboration:

I: *What are the good things about this activity?*

S2: *We wrote the comments ourselves without being corrected by the teacher.*

I: [...] *What was good about getting comments from the others?*

S3: *We could compare our work.*

[...]

S4: *Yes. The others might know some new words that we don't know yet.*

I: *Do you know what makes a good comment? [...]*

S5: *One that expresses our true feelings and lets people know if we like what the author writes.*

Another student also commented on the disadvantages of teacher corrections on learning and authorship:

S4: *Our teacher helped us to correct our [fan fiction stories] and corrected the whole passage.*

I: *Do you think it's good for your teacher to correct everything for you?*

S5: *No.*

I: *Why not?*

S5: *Because it wasn't our own writing. And there were some important things that we didn't understand.*

The teachers also reflected on their first cycle of new literacies-infused teaching and learning in post-unit interviews. In general, the teachers believed that the students were interested in the task of writing a fan fiction story, and that their stories displayed evidence of creativity and personal engagement, despite the inaccuracies in grammar, which were of concern to them. The teachers also felt that the students took an active part in examining the fan fiction stories of their peers, and that some were able to give meaningful and substantial comments. However, they noted that many students mimicked each other when giving feedback, and that many of their comments were not very constructive or supportive, suggesting a need for

further exposure, awareness and language support for peer review and assessment. However, as this was the first time that the students had been asked to comment on each other's work, the teachers believed that it was a positive beginning.

Teacher D, in particular, felt quite positive about the learning outcomes of this unit, especially for a few of the frequently low performing students in the class:

MA: [...] *They actually contributed to what they were doing, and they learnt a lot of things. For example, they had to try to generate their ideas in English... this can improve their writing... arouse their interest and [improve] their writing level.*

In fact, all teachers expressed concern for the lower ability students, who had great difficulties in creating a story because of their limited vocabulary. This had been an ongoing concern in the planning and implementation of this unit, as Teacher D noted:

MA: [...] *The students can benefit a lot from this programme. But we had to put a lot of effort into it. And we had to think about a lot of things because we were afraid that they wouldn't be able to do some of the tasks. And we weren't confident about the outcome.*

In the second cycle of new literacies-infused teaching and learning, therefore, the teachers planned to address students' different learning needs by staging the unit very carefully, dividing it up into smaller tasks, and adopting a new text type: a multimodal digital story involving images, sound and written and spoken language.

4.2.4 Creating digital photo stories about favourite places

The second new literacies-infused unit was based on *Primary Longman Express 4B*, Unit 3, 'Touring around Hong Kong'. The focus of the unit was interesting places to visit in Hong Kong and things to do and see in those places. The main task of the unit was to create an itinerary of tourist sites for a friend visiting Hong Kong. To create a more personalised and engaging core task that practised and extended the language and skills objectives of the unit but also involved new literacies, the P4 teachers designed a task in which students worked in groups to first select one of their favourite places to visit in Hong Kong or another country and then create a multimodal digital presentation using the *Photo Story* software.

The main learning objectives for this unit were:

- To enable students to create a photo story about their favourite place to visit in an authentic, meaningful and interesting way.
- To enable students to understand, employ and discuss multimodal elements in their own digital presentations, as well as those of their peers.
- To engage students in learning through a multisensory approach.

Building on their experiences in the fan fiction unit, the teachers also aimed to address students' different learning needs and levels of English language proficiency. They felt that the multimodal nature of the photo story/digital presentation text type would allow all students to work at their own level.

4.2.4.1 Teaching sequence and tasks

In contrast to the fan fiction unit, which primarily took place in the classroom, all lessons in this unit were conducted in the computer lab. Again, while each of the four teachers taught the unit differently and dealt with different circumstances during the implementation, they all used the general teaching sequence that had been devised in their co-planning meetings. In the first lesson, students were shown a finished photo story, and each subsequent lesson focused on one feature of the photo story text type. The unit concluded with students sharing their work and commenting on each other's photo stories.

In Lesson 1, the teachers introduced their own or each other's photo stories about their favourite place to visit. The aim of this was to provide students with a model of the text type they were to create later on. The teachers used this lesson to introduce the different features of a digital presentation – the images, the spoken narration, the captions, and the picture transitions – and to motivate pupils to create their own. In one class, the teacher encouraged students to evaluate the sample photo story, thereby also demonstrating the peer sharing and commenting to come in the last stage of the project. After viewing the sample, students were put into groups and asked to select the topics for their own photo stories. Many groups predictably chose Disneyland and Ocean Park and popular travel destinations for many Hong Kong families such as Japan, Australia, and China.

In the subsequent six lessons, students were introduced to each feature of the photo story. First they learnt how to select and sequence photos; then how to write and format captions and add picture transitions; and finally how to draft and record the narration. The teachers' sample photo stories were used to demonstrate each feature on screen. The teachers also modelled the creation process by discussing with students their reasons for selecting particular photographs and formatting captions in a particular way, etc. After each demonstration, students worked independently on their photo stories in their groups, while the teacher and IT support technician circulated to monitor and provide assistance.

Before the eighth and final lesson, a blog was created for each class. With the help of the project IT Officer and Research Assistants, students' photo story presentations were posted on the blogs and a password for each student was created. During the final lesson, the students displayed great excitement as they viewed each other's presentations and gave animated verbal comments. Using a survey embedded into the blog, students also voted for the most effective photo story in the class.

4.2.4.2 *Students' presentations and online responses*

Overall, many of the students' digital presentations showed good audience awareness, had a clear and focused message, and displayed a good awareness of the relationship between the multimodal elements of the text. The stronger photo stories also showed purposeful and structured organisation of the contents. For example, one group showed Disneyland from morning until night. Other groups added introductory and closing statements in their narration. Students used captions and narration in different ways to express what they wanted to say and made an effort to read accurately, clearly, and with expression. Most groups divided up the narration between group members, reading some lines together chorally.

In the less effective photo stories, students' images were blurred, captions were read aloud as narration, and there was no clear beginning, middle or end. One particular element of most students' work that needed more attention was the use of music. This element was in part less successful because students were only able to select from the *Photo Story* software's limited (and somewhat unappealing) music choices, and in part because students had also received limited instruction on the meanings a choice of music might convey and how the music could be mapped onto the sequence of images. Also, despite the teachers' careful staging and support, and the amount of time spent in the computer room, a number of groups did not

complete their photo stories, and several final stories did not contain any spoken narration or music.

Judging from the lively in-class reactions to the blogs, students were thrilled to see their work published. Many students also actively viewed and commented on their classmates' drafts, showing a growing ability to identify the features of a photo story using appropriate vocabulary and to engage in peer assessment. However, as in the fan fiction unit, there was evidence that some students were making superficial comments, mimicking the responses of others and giving playful or nonsensical comments.

4.2.4.3 *Student and teacher reflections*

The students who were interviewed after the unit generally felt positive about their learning. They clearly enjoyed working with the various features of the *Photo Story* software and had a clear sense of achievement. At the same time, they recognised that they still had more to learn:

S4: *I think that, because this was our first time [to do this], we didn't know how to do things so well. If we could do it a few more times, we'd do a really good job with the feedback from the others.*

S3: *If we post our work online, and get negative feedback, we have the chance to improve it.*

Students generally felt that the unit had helped to develop their English. These students remarked on the fact that recording their narrations helped them assess their own work, as well as their overall gains in vocabulary learning:

S1: *With a recording we can replay it and hear what's wrong.*

[...]

S2: *We can't usually ask the teacher for so much help. But in this activity, if there was something we didn't know we could just ask. In these lessons, we didn't only learn words from the textbook, we also learnt other words.*

The online sharing through class blogs fostered some sense of audience and community, and motivated one student to read and respond outside of class:

S3: *Oh, I want to know. I want to know if I can still look at it [the website].*

I: *You want to check it out again? Do you want to look at what you did or what your classmates did?*

- S3: *What my classmates did.*
- I: *Why?*
- S3: *Because I didn't look at many of them, only two.*
- S1: *Can other people look at our site?*
- I: *No.*
- S3: *I looked at mine and the one by [...]’s group.*
- I: *Why did you pick that one?*
- S3: *I'd heard that it was funny.*

The teachers strongly indicated that the students were highly motivated and engaged in this unit, primarily because it drew directly on their own interests and provided a welcome change from the textbook:

What was different from using the textbook was that they were more motivated, less bored. The key thing was that we used the children's own culture [...] The stories in the textbooks don't really represent their interests. They worked especially hard on the texts for their photo stories. When they are motivated they have a much better attitude towards learning. (Teacher A)

They were free to choose what they wanted to talk about, so they were working on something they liked instead of working on a compulsory topic. I guess they enjoyed that quite a lot. (Teacher B)

They are not interested in the English lesson if we just follow the textbook. Most probably, the content is not related to their daily life. They were interested to share the cartoons they watched in the first cycle. They also actively participated in the lesson in the second cycle because they love to use the computer. (Teacher D)

Another positive learning outcome mentioned by the teachers in the post-project interviews was the development of students' peer assessment and group collaboration skills. However, overall teachers felt the need for more technical support, and suggested collaboration with the IT teachers for further new literacies-infused teaching and learning.

4.2.5 Conclusions and recommendations

The two curriculum units that were implemented in the participating P4 classes of School 05 demonstrated a sound understanding of the importance of modelling and exposure to new literacies texts, and the importance of sharing within a community of learners. Both units included careful support with regards to the linguistic, visual and audio elements of the focus text type. Most importantly, the core tasks in each unit drew on students' own interests, which, as reported by both teachers and students, made learning more meaningful and purposeful. During the implementation of the two units, the teachers and students began to tap into the multiple benefits of online sharing and commenting, including the provision of an authentic audience, the sense of authorship, and the development of students' metalinguistic and metacognitive awareness through peer assessment.

The teachers in School 05 not only increased their skills in using the *Photo Story* program and blogs, but also expanded their understanding of text types to include multimodal elements. In the fan fiction unit, teachers also tried out the new strategy of shared writing with very positive results.

The P4 classes were given the opportunity to engage personally with English, and to explore new text types and online environments. Many of the students were already frequent users of new literacies and the project enabled them, to some extent, to bridge their out-of-school literacies with those used in the English language classroom. The vast majority of students showed high levels of motivation for creating photo stories and fan fiction stories of a good standard. The great excitement they demonstrated when sharing their work online gives some indication of students' authentic engagement with the tasks.

At the same time, the implementation of these two units posed a number of challenges. In terms of unit planning, it was noted that for both units the new literacies tasks were extension tasks within the existing unit of work and that the textbook tasks maintained their central place. This was not surprising given the role the textbook plays in the organisation of the scheme of work within the school.

The P4 teachers and their classes both experienced the challenges of engaging with new literacies texts and tasks that moved well beyond the carefully selected vocabulary, grammar structures and functional language introduced in the textbook. This proved to be challenging not only for a few weaker learners who struggled with each task, but also for the teachers,

who puzzled over how best to support all learners. In addition, although the teachers engaged with various concepts of multimodality, features such as images, music and movement were often presented to the students as enjoyable and entertaining elaborations, rather than as meaningful intrinsic elements of the particular text type.

To conclude, the following are the key recommendations by the Project researchers for the School 05 teaching team:

- Teachers should incorporate more new literacies tasks and texts into the curriculum and make these core unit tasks. While this will mean moving away from the textbook, the textbook can still be used for guidance and support.
- Teachers should learn more about multimodality and refine their understanding of how contemporary texts use still and moving images and sound effectively. This will give teachers the skills and understanding to create better quality example texts to use in the classroom, and allow for a deeper discussion of multimodality with students.
- Teachers should allow time for students to engage in structured experimentation with the software and online environments during a new literacies-infused unit. This could be facilitated by co-teaching with the ICT teachers.
- Teachers should continue to plan tasks that are driven by students' identities, interests and desires. While this will create more diverse linguistic demands, the pay off in terms of increased student engagement and motivation would make this worthwhile.
- Teachers may wish to consider using online resources, such as free blogs and wikis that allow for specific membership, to enable their students to share and communicate with classes outside of the school. This would increase the students' sense of authorship and ownership of their work that was established in the two project units.

4.3 School 04

School 04 is a government subsidised primary school that was established in 1985. The school is located in a residential estate in a growing district in the northwest New Territories. The school was selected as one of the Centres of Excellence in IT in Education by the Hong Kong government's Education Bureau in 2001. It has a well equipped multimedia library and computer laboratory, and interactive whiteboards are installed in many of the classrooms. Although the school computer resources are similar to other schools (i.e., one computer and projector in each classroom and a computer lab), the school also had a set of laptops for classroom use. A team of Primary 6 English teachers and their classes implemented new literacies in their English language curriculum through a unit of work in which students' created digital presentations about 'The Person I Admire Most'. They used the free digital story creation program *Photo Story* and shared their presentations with their classmates via a blog.

4.3.1 The teaching team and classes

The project was conducted with all four Primary 6 English classes. There were approximately 30 students in each class, with an average age of 11. The classes were streamed according to English ability and academic performance. Teacher A, the English Panel Chair, had 12 years teaching experience and had recently obtained a Master's degree in English studies. Teacher B had 35 years teaching experience and was also a Visual Arts teacher. Teacher C had 35 years teaching experience, was the Vice Principal of the school and taught English, Maths and PE. Teacher D was also a Visual Arts teacher with 19 years teaching experience. The four P6 teachers were supported by a part time NET, Teacher E, who was employed specifically to assist the teachers involved in the New Literacies project.

4.3.2 Readiness for new literacies

The school used local English language textbooks as the basis of their English language curriculum. They also used the Hong Kong government's literacy programme, *Primary Literacy Programme- Reading/Writing* (PLPR/W) for the early primary years (P1-3) and a school-based drama and reading workshop programme for upper primary students (P4-6),

with an interesting range of graded readers.

Lesson observations during the baseline data collection stage indicated that teachers were very skilled in student-centred teaching approaches. Students were actively involved in lessons and teachers effectively used questioning skills, pair and group work activities, and visual aids to ensure that students used English throughout the lesson. Students were also frequently asked to give their own opinions and share their personal experiences. The teaching sequences observed generally reflected socioculturally informed language teaching methods, which provided students with experiences of texts and discourse and then developed language awareness from those experiences. All of these teaching approaches and strategies were seen to be positive to the development of new literacies in the curriculum.

The student questionnaire revealed that 90% of upper primary students surveyed in this school had access to a computer at home, and that they used the computer for a range of academic and leisure activities. The student interviews revealed that students engaged in a range of literacy activities involving popular culture and ICTs. All four teachers were keen to learn more, but only one teacher had direct experience of using new literacies in classroom teaching. Teacher A, the English Panel Chair, reported having previously used blogging with to foster literacy practices in the students' everyday lives, and to use language meaningfully and personally:

There are grammar mistakes but it's a very nice chance to share ideas. And then they put what they think and the best thing I found was that I can respond immediately to their work and they can see [my response]. Not just themselves, all of the others can see my response to their journals. So that, I think, is the best thing, the response thing... I want them to use it in their daily life. Because they are doing daily blogs, I just want them to use the language they have to communicate with me. This is the main rationale behind this activity.

While Teacher A was reluctant to incorporate video or computer games into the curriculum, the lessons sometimes incorporated characters from students' popular cultural interests:

We try not to involve [...] computer games or video games. We think it is not good [for] them. But sometimes we'll put in some cartoon characters or popular figures into our tasks.

Overall, the teaching team and classes were well placed to integrate new literacies into the English language curriculum, particularly as they had good access to computers and the Internet, teachers were open minded towards technology and new ideas, and their communicative, student-centred approach in the classroom supported new literacies pedagogic principles.

4.3.3 *The new literacies-infused unit: creating photo stories on ‘A person I admire most’*

The P6 English teachers first trialled two of the new literacies tools, *Photo Story* and the comic strip making program *ToonDoo* with their students. This gave teachers and students some experience with the technological aspects of the tools, and allowed them to explore the affordances of these tools for English language learning.

They then planned a unit of work that integrated new literacies into their syllabus and textbook, *Step Up 6B*, Chapter 4, ‘People we admire’ (Education Publishing House Ltd, Hong Kong, 2007). The textbook unit involved reading and listening to texts about famous people and exploring text organisation and language in a biography. The teachers created a core task that engaged students in creating and sharing a digital presentation on the person they admired most. Students used *Photo Story* to create multimodal digital texts about their chosen person incorporating images, captions, narration, transitions and music. Their digital presentations were shared online on a class blog. The unit was carried out over five to seven class periods.

4.3.3.1 *Aims of the new literacies-infused unit, ‘The person I admire most’*

The teachers identified the following aims for their new literacies-infused unit of work, which they hoped would enable students to:

- Search and scan for specific information for a project on introducing a famous person
- Choose appropriate photos, music and language to compose a digital photo presentation using the *Photo Story* software
- Express their opinions about famous people
- Be open and responsive to the ideas of others; appreciate, encourage and support the ideas and efforts of others
- Develop attitudes of kindness and desire for the betterment of human kind

Three language objectives were also embedded into the unit:

- use 'ed' adjectives to describe feelings that someone has/had about something
- use relative pronouns to link ideas or add information to a noun or noun phrase
- use interrogative pronouns and adverbs to find out specific information about a person

4.3.3.2 Teaching sequence and tasks

The five to seven lesson unit had four distinct stages. In the first stage the main photo story task was introduced. Teachers and students discussed photos of various famous people and revised the language structures and vocabulary needed to describe them, focusing particularly on adjectival past participles (with 'ed' endings) and relative clauses. Students noted down several famous people they would like to create photo stories about.

In the computer lab, students finalised their choice of famous person and gathered information and images in preparation for creating their own photo story presentations. In Teacher B's lesson, a collaborative mindmap program, *MeadMap*, was used as a planning tool and to facilitate sharing among students who had selected the same famous person. The collaborative mindmapping program allowed for several users to contribute to the same mindmap. The program also had a chat function, which some students used to carry on their sharing and collaboration outside the classroom.

In the second stage, students viewed and discussed an example of a photo story. Teachers had created their own photo stories of a person they admired and shared them with the class. Teacher A presented a photo story about Princess Diana, and explained the reason behind the choice of person and the messages the photo story aimed to convey, in particular with the use of a recording of Elton John's, *Candle in the Wind: Princess Diana tribute*. Teacher A explained the pedagogic rationale:

I demonstrated with mine and I elaborated a little bit more how I feel about Diana. So that it gets them to think about how to do the caption and narration... I tried to make it more personal. So it focused more on sharing rather than just doing the photo [story] presentation.

Students were thus exposed to a personally meaningful text and were made aware of the teacher's feelings about Princess Diana, and the multimodal decisions made in order to convey particular aspects of Princess Diana's life and character.

In the third stage of the unit, students worked on their photo stories in the computer lab, arranging images, adding captions, narration and music. Although students worked individually on their presentations, there was evidence of sharing, peer support and feedback during the process. Students in Teacher B's class used their mindmaps to draft their digital presentations. When technical problems occurred with the collaborative mindmapping program (which did not appear to support simultaneous users in a school lab) and delayed students' progress, Teacher B realized how invested students were in the task:

I saw that they are very interested. And even when they quarrelled, they were not quarrelling about their problems. They were just shouting "Don't delete my stuff!" It was a technical problem. They were very serious.

Finally, in the last stage of the project, students reviewed each other's photo stories and gave constructive feedback on how they could be improved. Students' digital presentations were then uploaded to blogs and shared, and further feedback was given.

4.3.3.3 Students' photo stories and sharing across classes via blogs

Students in all four classes chose a wide range of famous people to present in their photo stories, reflecting the influence of the local media and current events, learning in other school subjects, and students' popular cultural interests. Their choices included, J.K. Rowling, Bruce Lee, Florence Nightingale, Barack Obama, Stephen Hawking, Mother Theresa, Guo Jing Jing, Liu Xiang and even Ludwig Van Beethoven.

Students' photo stories were generally very attractive and varied, and demonstrated students' genuine engagement in the task and interest in their chosen person. All photo stories included photos, images and captions, plus animated transitions between photos. Many also included recorded narration and a few included music. Despite easy access to time in the computer lab, time constraints caused by technical problems prevented some students from being able to incorporate music and narration into their texts. In addition, several of the photo stories included recorded narration that was very similar to, or the same as, the captions. However, Teacher A and Teacher C did advise students to make the narration different from their

captions, and at least one student recorded her narration without a prepared script. These experiences suggest that clear information about the form and function of captions needs to be included in the unit, and that more support could be given to help students cope with the demands of creating narration text (e.g., with *Photo Story*'s narration writing feature).

Many students accessed the blogs, viewed each other's photo stories and wrote comments. Students could give feedback by selecting a pre-set comment, or by writing an individual remark underneath the photo story. The students' comments were brief and mostly evaluative, and included praise, indications as to areas that needed improvement, and specific suggestions for improvement. Students commented on the clarity of images and transitions (e.g., "Do not zoom it"), and on the captions, narration and music (e.g., "The music is too slow!").

4.3.3.4 *Assessment of student learning and reflection on the unit*

The researchers felt that the photo story task was clearly in line with the pedagogic principles of new literacies, particularly as the students' work reflected their personal interests, cultural identities and social values. The creation of the digital photo story helped to improve students' confidence in speaking, and heightened their awareness of how to use multimodal resources effectively in communication.

Students also reflected on their learning process. They felt that this unit was student-centred, allowed them to be creative, and gave them greater responsibility for their work. Teacher A's students remarked that they enjoyed the new literacies unit more than their regular textbook-based lessons:

This [unit] is more fun. It's not like just teaching from the textbook, when students can't create anything and just have to answer the teacher's questions. In this one, students can create what they want.

It seems less boring. Because usually the teachers do all the speaking and writing, and there are no images, no sounds, or music to help you be more creative.

Teacher B noted that one particular student, who was usually very quiet in class, showed increased participation in English during this unit:

It's because... in the usual lessons... it's usually raising up your hands to ask

questions, and there is only one student speaking English. But for this activity [...] more students [can] speak more English.

One student in Teacher D's class also reported that recording the narration for her photo story had helped her improve her speaking skills:

Yes, I think [recording the narration] helps because it needs courage to speak up. Also, it tests your skills in searching for the right words amongst many... I needed to check them and ask the teachers. So, I've learnt many things here.

Reflecting on the learning outcomes of this unit, the P6 teachers felt that overall, the unit was worthwhile and enjoyable for both teachers and students. Students learned to use the Internet as a resource for language learning, and so developed learner independence. Comments from both students and teachers showed that students' motivation to speak and write in English was high. Sharing their work online helped to develop students' skills in self and peer assessment, and developed their multimodal awareness. Teacher B also commented on the collaboration and communication skills that students had developed as a result of online viewing and commenting:

After they have read some other people's works, they will have some comments because they have done it [as well], so they would know what's wrong with the others. Maybe they can get some good points from the others... This means they will have [greater] respect for other people's work, and they will learn how to respect others, and they learn how to learn from the others.

4.3.4 Conclusions

The research team considered the project very successful in terms of student engagement and motivation, and in terms of facilitating the use of English for meaningful expression. The four teachers gained valuable experience in using *Photo Story* as a new literacies tool, which helped to continue the important role the school played in the district as a Centre of Excellence in ICT. Teacher A, the English Panel chair, also believed that the team had developed professionally by gaining a better understanding of and skills in using digital technology in the English curriculum:

Actually as you can see, I am working with very experienced teachers in P6, so they are not [...] used to [using] technology to teach. They have their own skills. They are

very strong in teaching and learning strategies, so they [don't need to] rely on technology. But I'm quite surprised that all of them are very open to using new things like that [...] it changed a little bit their practices in their own teaching. [...] Actually the panel found that "Wow! It's quite impressive." So that, maybe there that's a start, actually, the development of using those strategies in our school. So that's good. That's great.

The photo story creation task reflected a number of important new literacies principles. Firstly it involved students' own identities, that is, their personal interests and cultural background. Secondly it involved multimodal expression through the use of images, written and verbal text and music. It also involved information management skills as students searched for selected relevant information for their presentations. The mindmapping program used by Teacher B in the second stage of the unit fostered a sense of community among the learners and improved their collaboration skills. A shared community was further developed by posting the students' photo stories on the blog and having them comment on each other's work.

During the third stage of the unit, when students were creating their photo stories in the computer lab, it was observed that students often discussed their decisions with their classmates and asked them for advice, and that they assisted each other with various technical aspects, such as recording the narration. Being able to create their own photo stories was important for fostering students' sense of authorship and ownership of their work, but the relative unstructured time that they spent in the computer lab also facilitated student communication and collaboration.

The unit was well integrated into the existing textbook unit and the photo story task allowed for the extension of the topic and the recycling of targeted language items. In this unit the targeted language items were reviewed in the first stage, through images about famous people, and only later was an example of a photo story shown. In some ways, this pedagogical sequence served to decontextualise the language structures. For example, in order to teach past participles as adjectives, the sentences *Li Lai Shan was honoured to join the Olympic Torch relay*, and *Mother Teresa was depressed*, were presented. However, although these were potentially useful sentences that students could adapt for their own photo stories, students encountered them as single sentences rather than as part of a larger digital story

about 'The person I admire most'.

Although there were a number of initial technical problems that caused frustration for those students whose insertions were seemingly deleted, Teacher B's use of the collaborative mindmapping program to enhance the new literacies unit was commendable. Teacher B recalled that one student became very angry when the technical issues first arose but then learnt to be patient and began to use the chat room function in order to continue working and collaborating with the other students. Across all four classrooms, students seemed to need more time in the computer lab to complete their photo stories and refine them than was initially planned.

Students spent most of their time and attention on researching, gathering and distilling information about their chosen person, and on selecting and organising their images. In this way, they gained a deeper understanding of images as modes of meaning making. As noted above, many students created captions and recorded narration. However, despite the fact that the teachers had encouraged students not to read aloud their captions, and had explained that captions were different from narration, students did not appear to have a strong understanding of the different form and function of these two textual features.

The learning benefits of online sharing were expressed by Teacher A in the baseline data collection stage. In their new literacies unit, students gained some experience of online sharing through reading and posting comments on the blogs. This stage of the unit was relatively brief, given the additional time needed for constructing the photo stories. As a result, not all students participated in giving comments on line and some of the online discussions remained somewhat superficial.

4.3.5 Suggestions and recommendations

The project researchers have the following recommendations to the teaching team in School 04 for future new literacies-infused English language teaching and learning.

Teachers should continue to integrate new literacies tools and tasks into curricular topics that students find personally engaging, and allow for students' free expression to continue to foster a sense of authorship and ownership of their work. The time that students spent

learning and exploring the new literacies tool was very valuable and this should be continued, as should opportunities for students to help each other, collaborate and share ideas as they compose their texts or work with a new literacies tool for the first time. This is important even when the task is an individual one, as in this case.

Teachers should consider giving students meaningful exposure to one or more example texts in the first stages of a new literacies infused unit. This would be more in line with sociocultural approaches to language learning and would resonate with new literacies pedagogic principles of authenticity and engagement. For example, rather than teaching and revising grammatical structures as separate items, students should be exposed to one or more photo stories on famous people, discuss and respond to them personally, and then notice and identify the various lexical and grammatical choices used to express different ideas in the text. This would allow the language to be fully contextualised, and would position grammar and lexis as useful resources in the expression of meaning in particular texts.

Teachers can also more explicitly explore multimodal aspects of a text after students have been meaningfully exposed to it. For a digital photo story, students may explore the visual choices, the language of captions, and the intonation and style of narration. This would also help to develop in students a metalanguage for talking about images, movement, and sound. In fact, such a multimodal analysis includes the analysis of the use of grammar and lexis discussed above.

More computer time should be planned for to allow students to finish creating their digital texts, particularly if students are creating the kinds of digital texts that explore their own interests. In such instances, students' sense of ownership is greater than with the more impersonal tasks sometimes found in published textbooks and students will often want to spend more time creating their text because their sense of personal investment in the task is high.

Again, more time should be planned in order to allow online interactions to develop, for students to learn appropriate ways of commenting and responding to comments, and to increase participation on the blog forums, so that all students can benefit from receiving and giving comments.

4.4 School 03

School 03 is a subsidised, Christian-sponsored primary school located in a busy commercial area in the eastern part of Hong Kong Island. It was founded in 1959, is co-educational and has morning and afternoon sessions. The Native English Teacher (NET), local teachers and English language teaching assistants (ELTA) regularly collaborate and co-plan for English language lessons. The school has a small playground in the shadows of a concrete slope, and a covered, outdoor gymnasium. Each classroom is equipped with a single computer and projector, and there are two small computer labs on the premises. The New Literacies Project was implemented in two Primary 4 classes, one in the morning (AM) school and the other in the afternoon (PM) session. A team of English teachers used process drama and a theme-based approach to develop a new literacies-infused unit in which students created presentations using the digital story creation programme *Photo Story*. Students also shared their photo story presentations and commented on each other's work on a blog.

4.4.1 The teaching team and classes

Two P4 classes took part in the project, one class in the AM session and one class in the PM session. There were 30 students in each class. Both classes were taught by the NET (Teacher A) and a co-teacher (Teacher B for the AM class and Teacher C for the PM class). Each class was also supported by an English Language Teaching Assistant (ELTA). The English Panel Chair took an active role in planning the new literacies infused unit.

4.4.2 Baseline data analysis: current literacy teaching and learning and readiness for new literacies

The English panel conducted a literacy programme for upper primary students (P4–6) that involved the use of graded readers, theme-based teaching and small-group guided reading, as well as a take home reading programme. The students had access to a range of interesting and authentic reading materials. All teachers and the ELTA showed skill and sensitivity in their literacy teaching.

In initial interviews, all of the participating teachers expressed interest in incorporating new literacies into the syllabus. Teacher A had already had some experience of using a class wiki

to display students' work and had noted students' interest in online interaction. The English Panel Chair expressed concern about students' access to computers and the Internet outside of class and wanted to ensure that all students could achieve the aims of the unit without needing access to the Internet or computers between lessons.

In student group interviews, some students reported their interest in popular culture, including films and books in English. Many students described online activities in line with new literacies practices, for example, socialising and pursuing hobbies online, watching videos on *YouTube*, and using web browsers. In their responses to the project questionnaire items regarding their out of school digital literacy practices, approximately two-thirds of the participating students reported having access to and using a computer outside of school, and the majority reported using the computer for information searching, communication (e.g., email) and leisure activities (e.g., computer games, watching videos on *YouTube*).

Overall, given the strong literacy teaching practices, the use of interesting and authentic reading materials in the literacy programme, and teachers' and students' interest in new literacies, the schools readiness to adopt new literacies in the English language curriculum was considered very strong.

4.4.3 The action research project – the new literacies-infused unit

The new literacies unit was incorporated into a larger literacy unit on the theme of 'The Rainforest', in which students read a graded reader about tree frogs and engaged in various literacy activities including learning how to write a book report, singing songs and reciting chants about rainforest animals. For the new literacies unit, the teachers adopted a process-drama methodology to enact a town hall debate among rainforest animals. Process drama is a teaching strategy in which the students and teacher take on roles in order to explore a topic or situation. In this unit, Mr Panda – played by Teacher A for both classes – decides that he is tired of eating bamboo and would like to try eating something else, namely other animals in the rainforest. The rainforest animals, played by the students and the other teachers, have to defend themselves and persuade Mr Panda not to eat them. To do this, they used the program *Photo Story* to create digital presentations combining photos, narration, written texts and music, and presented them at a Rainforest Town Hall Debate. Students' digital stories were also posted on a blog for sharing between classes. Students worked in groups of four to six

and each group took on the role of one animal. The animals were: jaguars, butterflies, bees, snakes and bats. The ELTA and the co-teachers (Teachers B and C) acted as tree frogs.

4.4.3.1 Aims

The new literacies-infused unit aimed to give students an opportunity to express meaning multimodally through the production of a digital story that combined spoken and written words, images, and music. The students were expected to recycle science concepts related to biodiversity and the food chain in their presentations in order to argue against Mr Panda selecting them as the animal to be eaten. In this way, the unit also recycled and extended vocabulary related to rainforest animals and habitats, and developed students' knowledge and ability in the use of argumentative discourse.

4.4.3.2 Teaching sequence and tasks

The unit of work was conducted in six double lessons, including one full lesson in the computer lab for the PM class and one and a half lessons in the computer lab for the AM class. There were seven stages to this unit, each of which is described below.

Stage 1: Introducing Mr Panda, his problem, and the Rainforest Town Hall debate

To begin the unit, the Tree Frog teachers addressed the class as if they were groups of different rainforest animals and explained that Mr Panda was about to return to the rainforest. Teacher A, acting as Mr Panda, then entered the classroom and greeted the other 'animals'. He explained to the class that he was tired of eating bamboo and would like to try eating another animal, perhaps some bees, butterflies, jaguars or other animal groups in the class. The Tree Frogs then explained to the class that they would have to present their arguments as to why the Panda should not eat them in a Town Hall meeting, and showed their photo story as an example. This set the scene for the rest of the unit and established the goal of the main task. Teacher A then led the students in brainstorming vocabulary about the rainforest and eliciting ways to express concepts related to biodiversity and the food chain. At the end of this stage, the teachers asked the students to search for and email to them some photos related to their assigned animal that they could use in their digital photo stories.

Stage 2: Brainstorming arguments: Why Mr Panda shouldn't eat us

In this stage, the students worked together in their animal groups to brainstorm reasons why the Panda should not eat them. They noted their ideas on a worksheet and teachers circulated

around the classroom talking about the students' ideas and helping them to express them and note them down.

Stage 3: Writing arguments to be used in the photo story

Next, teachers helped students refine and extend their arguments for use in their digital presentations. The teachers showed an example assertion to the whole class, and elicited three supporting ideas. Later, students worked in their animal groups and teachers helped each group work on their own particular points. It was noted that the focus in this stage was how to express a complex idea precisely and convincingly, rather than the use of a particular grammatical structure or pattern. However, structures expressing causal relations were useful such as "because", and the first conditional, "If you eat us, you will get sick." Some groups used these and similar structures themselves, while others were guided by the teachers who helped them refine their points with these and other ways of expressing similar functions.

Stage 4: Selecting photos and practising narration

In this stage, each animal group was given 10 minutes to select photos on the single class computer. While one group was using the computer, the other groups continued to work on their arguments or practised reading aloud the script for their narration. The teachers monitored the groups and gave them assistance or feedback on their work as necessary.

Stage 5: Working on the photo story presentations

This lesson was conducted in the computer lab and students continued to work on their photo story presentations in their assigned animal groups. Each group sequenced their photos and recorded the narration they had drafted in the previous lesson. If time permitted, groups added simple captions and picture transition effects to their presentations. A selection of music chosen by the teacher was also offered to students to add to their photo story presentations, and the meanings of the various types of music offered were discussed.

Stage 6: Presenting at the Town Hall debate

The final lesson was conducted in the classroom. First, the Tree Frogs called to order the Town Hall meeting, and Mr Panda arrived to listen to and view all the animal presentations. Each presentation was played and students were asked to give comments. In the PM class, students were also invited to engage in further debate with each other. Finally, a vote was taken as to which group of animals Mr Panda should eat and the results were tallied on the

board.

Stage 7: Sharing photo stories and commenting on a blog

Towards the end of the six-lesson unit, blogs were set up for each class and the students' photo stories were posted online. The blogs had a 'jungle' theme and were very attractive. Students were encouraged to view the presentations made by the other class and to give comments either by selecting a pre-set comment such as, 'funny', 'interesting' or 'cool', or by writing a short response beneath the photo story. The blog also contained a survey where students could vote for the animal group they thought Mr Panda should eat. The votes were tallied and displayed on the blog.

4.4.3.3 Student work and products

The students' photo story presentations were well organised and well presented. All presentations had a range of different photos related to their animal character or depicting some aspect of the argument presented in the narration. All presentations contained narration, picture transitions and music. The presentations began by introducing the animals and giving some information about where they lived and what they ate. This was followed by a number of reasons why the Panda should not eat that particular animal, each with a different accompanying photo or image. Several presentations had a closing statement and some also contained captions, although this aspect of the photo story was not taught explicitly to students.

The animal group presentations showed a range of arguments, both verbally and visually, as to why the Panda should not eat them. For example, the parrots argued, '*If the Panda eats us, there will be less colourful animals,*' and showed an image of colourful parrots. The bees argued, '*We help pollinate the flowers. If you kill us there will [be] less flowers and fruits.*' For this section of narration, the group selected an image of an apple made from different cut fruits.

The Jaguar group in the PM class used religious arguments, and added some humour to their text. They said, '*If the Panda eats us, we will [become] angels and we will punish you.*' This was accompanied by an image of a Christian cross and angel wings.

Many students made an effort to read aloud clearly with good pronunciation and intonation,

showing that they were motivated both by the recording feature of the *Photo Story* software and the knowledge that their presentation would be shared with others on the blog and in class at the Town Hall debate.

Many students wrote comments to each other on the blog, offering praise, identifying strengths in each other's presentations, and giving constructive criticism.

4.4.3.4 *Assessment of teaching and learning*

In the post-project interviews, teachers reflected on the successes of the unit. Overall the teachers were pleased with the outcomes and felt that students had gained good experience in using English to express complex ideas, had enjoyed the unit and were motivated to create good quality photo stories. Teacher A, who taught both classes, felt that the unit provided students with a chance to use English authentically:

I think it's one of the most authentic situations for them to use English that I have done or seen in the last three years in this school. That's good.

Teacher B felt that she had gained in terms of professional development from participating in the project:

As new teachers, or even teachers of many, many teaching experiences, I think trying out new things is a good thing. I mean, as it facilitates teaching and learning. It benefits... our own professional development, or students' learning. So, this is a new trial for our school, and I think it's a very good experience. So, I would say trying out new things is good for our teaching.

Teacher A acknowledged that students' ICT skills were already good, but that they needed more time to refine their presentations and benefit from collaborative work:

I don't think they need much support in terms of how to work the buttons. They needed the time to practise... Every time they record their voice in the computer, everyone will have to pass the mic around, and listen again, which is excellent because it means that they are assessing how they have done so far.

Both Teacher A and Teacher B felt that students needed more support in terms of language use and further development of the concepts they made use of from biology and the natural sciences. Teacher B felt that their science concepts could be developed through more focused

Internet use:

I think we should actually go to a website together with them, to find out some animals. For example, if they are going to look for information about bees, go to a website to look ... actually teach them how to look for information from the web.

Despite acknowledging that students were proficient at using the *Photo Story* program and had been able to teach themselves how to use certain features, Teacher A was still somewhat skeptical about running a similar unit in the future for the following reasons:

Because of the time involved and the material that we needed... the computer, time, computer access, working microphones, working everything and having the technical know how, to know how to work the program, to upload the videos and all that kind of stuff. And then obviously, next time, HKU is not going to be there to help get the little passes for the kids, and the accounts. There's so much involved...

Teacher B also reflected in detail on the social dynamics of peer commenting online. While it seemed to be a valuable new experience for the students, it raised an issue related to the nature of online interaction:

But, like, I remember in one lesson, Teacher A showed the comments the AM class gave to the PM class. In that lesson, they were very interested in that. That means, the conclusion is that they like knowing the comments that they received... I mean, they are quite self-centred, in other words. They're like, "This is about me." They like things that are about themselves, but they do not like to give comments to the others.

The students who were interviewed after the unit expressed a number of positive gains. For example, this student from the AM class remarked:

I think we've learnt a lot of different things. For example, we've learnt about how to protect the environment, this is one thing. And collecting information, we've got to know some websites. And we've also learnt more vocabulary. Also, we've learnt how to work with our group mates, as a team. We've learnt teamwork.

The students showed a sense of ownership of their photo stories, and reported that they learned about the importance of image selection and music choice. They also commented on the experience of receiving and giving comments to each other on the blog. And, like the student above, many others remarked that the project had developed their collaboration skills

and ability to work as a team:

Everyone is good at doing something, for example, I am good at looking for information, so I'll go to look for information. Some are more interested in animals, so we'd ask them to look for information about animals.

In the recorded lessons students can be seen helping each other with their reading and pronunciation, and encouraging each other to do better.

What's most important is teamwork. The most important thing is teamwork. For example, like the police, if they need to catch a thief, they need to coordinate the work. If they don't coordinate, how can they catch the thief? ... We helped each other even when we pronounced the words wrong, or did something wrong. We helped each other. We encouraged each other.

4.4.4 Conclusions

The researchers found School 03's project to be exemplary in incorporating new literacies into a curriculum unit to enhance literacy learning and teaching. The students developed in terms of their collaboration and communication skills and their awareness of multimodality. They were highly self-motivated, enjoyed the task, readily took on board feedback and were seen to be extremely responsive in the lessons.

The student responses were greatly supported and enhanced by the teachers' use of student-centred participatory teaching methods such as process drama. The lessons were also characterised by a strong task-based, theme-based approach, and the teachers' general approach of giving students some freedom to decide what they want to express and how best to express it. As noted above, this unit was not driven by pre-set vocabulary items and grammatical structures, but by the communicative demands of the task, namely to express arguments and give reasons to convince an audience. This approach is demanding for both students and teachers and is therefore highly commendable.

In the post-project interviews, the teachers remarked that the unit could have focused more on language structures. The researchers agree, but would like to suggest that the focus should be on the language structures that arise from the task itself, and not vice versa. The unit gave students many opportunities for independent group work, which allowed them to use their

linguistic resources, with the support of the teacher, to express quite complex meanings and arguments. This also fostered students' communication and collaboration skills, something many students remarked upon in the post-unit interviews. The researchers agree with the teachers that helping students learn the skills needed to successfully use the Internet to enhance their knowledge of the topic would be extremely useful to students. It would also greatly enhance the task by helping students find more interesting science-based arguments to include in their presentations.

It was clear that students had prior experience and knowledge of multimodality that they drew upon to create their photo stories. The teachers mentioned that further exploration of multimodality and the meanings of various types of images and music could be undertaken, as well as further exploration of the ways in which images and music can interact meaningfully with text (for example, the symbolic, metaphorical and humorous uses of image and music, as mentioned by Teacher A and some students). The researchers also feel that students could be allowed more choice in the selection of music and given more information about the form and function of captions when creating future digital presentations with Photo Story.

Peer sharing and online interaction was shown to give students more motivation to improve their photo stories. Students also reported reflecting upon the quality of the comments they received. However, Teacher B remarked that students needed to be encouraged to participate more actively and motivated to give comments as well as receive them.

Finally, although access to the computer lab was limited, the teachers expertly addressed this problem with group rotation on the class computer. This was successful because the teachers allowed a great deal of independent group work and did not insist on teaching in a lockstep manner. The amount of out of class work was kept to a minimum, with students asked only to collect photos in the early stages of the unit. The Panel felt that this was important in order to ensure that all students had equal access to the task and that no one group was particularly privileged by having access to the Internet outside of school. Despite students' familiarity with ICTs, it appeared that they needed a large amount of teacher support to carry out the unit work, and that this would not be easy to sustain in the future.

4.4.5 Recommendations

The following recommendations are suggested for using new literacies and/or the *Photo Story* program in the English language curriculum in future.

Teachers should continue to adopt a strong, student-centred, task-based and theme-based approach when using new literacies. This ensures that students are motivated to use English, and that vocabulary and topics are usefully recycled. A student-centred approach also aligns strongly with new literacies principles of self-expression, personal engagement, and interaction within a community.

Teachers could consider giving students more time to experience new literacies texts before they plan and construct their own digital texts. This would allow students and teachers to explore the linguistic, visual and other multimodal demands of a new literacies text or task and develop some metalanguage for talking about and analysing these elements.

Ample access to the computer lab, simple microphones and other technological support needs to be allowed for. The school could consider cross-curricular work with the ICT teachers to make the best use of the available time in the computer lab.

Students could be given more opportunities to share and respond to each other's work online, both to increase their use of English and exploit the sense of authentic authorship that an online environment gives, as well as to encourage the students' subsequent self-driven desire to speak and write well. Teachers could also give students more exposure to the functions, forms and practices involved in online commenting to support students' participation in such environments.

4.5 School 01

School 01 was founded in 1990. It is a government-aided, Catholic sponsored primary school located in the eastern part of Hong Kong. The 6-storey campus has various facilities to support students' learning, including a computer lab, a library, and a visual arts room. Information Technology is frequently integrated into the curriculum and used in classroom teaching. The school chose to use *Photo Story* as a new literacies tool to improve students' writing and speaking skills.

4.5.1 The teaching team and classes

In School 01, three P5 English teachers, Teacher A, Teacher B, and Teacher C, carried out their action research project in the second term of the academic year 2008–2009. According to the teachers, and the observations of the research team, the students' English standards and general academic ability were strongest in 5C, followed by 5B and 5A. The students in 5C were attentive and some were able to respond to Teacher C's questions in full sentences in English. Some students in 5A and 5B were also attentive, but not many of them were able to respond in sentences. Most tended to respond with simple one-word utterances after much prompting from their teachers.

4.5.2 Baseline data analysis: current literacy teaching and learning and readiness for new literacies

Each of the three teachers submitted two videoed lessons of their own selection as the baseline data: one lesson with a focus on reading and one with a focus on writing. In Teacher C's videos the students engaged in reading a food pyramid in the reading lesson and worked in pairs to design a healthy menu in the writing lesson. The videos of Teacher A and Teacher B showed work mainly on the topic of e-learning. In the writing lesson, both teachers used similar materials and had students draft a presentation on the findings of a survey on their classmates' computer use practices. In the reading lesson, Teacher B engaged students in reading a text on computer use that appeared to have come from a textbook. Teacher A used a text containing an e-ticket that was specially designed for the class.

All three teachers generally focused on checking students' comprehension of the factual

information contained in the different reading materials. No questions that would promote students' critical thinking⁷ were asked. For example, Teacher A and Teacher B could have discussed with students the impact of their computer use practices on their own studies. Teacher C could have explored different concepts of healthy diets and asked questions such as, 'If you were a vegetarian, what feedback would you give to the designer of this food pyramid?' Also, apart from using computers to project the reading texts, none of the teachers highlighted or made use of other functions or aspects of digital texts.

In the pre-project interview, the teachers acknowledged that most students in their school were not motivated to learn English. They reported that many students believed that learning English was unnecessary as their employment prospects would be limited to manual work requiring no English skills. Their low motivation was reflected in a lack of interest in learning. The teachers' teaching approach, therefore, tended to be teacher-dominated and transmission-based in order to avoid the discipline problems that might arise in lessons that were too 'interactive'. Among the three teachers, only Teacher C expressed satisfaction with the students' performance.

The teachers admitted that they had insufficient knowledge of what new literacies entailed. However, they were very eager to participate in the project and learn more, and all three attended each of the three workshop sessions organised by the research team.

4.5.3 The action research project – the new literacies-infused unit

4.5.3.1 Aims

Like many students in schools located in lower-income districts, students in School 01 were not very interested in reading and writing English. Inspired by the example of a photo story produced by a 10-year-old girl presented at one of the project workshops, the three teachers decided to motivate their students by engaging them in producing photo stories on personally relevant topics. The teachers believed that photo stories would provide a good opportunity for their students to practise writing, speaking, reading and listening in English. Students would also practise the digital skills of uploading photos and creating special effects with fonts,

⁷ One of the teachers identified a 'synthesis' question (i.e., one for which the answer could not be identified directly from the text) as a question promoting critical thinking. This may indicate a lack of thorough understanding of what constitutes critical thinking.

colour, slide transitions, background and captions. The teachers were confident that their students would be interested in and capable of producing digital photo stories of their own.

The teachers aimed to use photo stories to help students develop the following skills:

- Present a coherent digital story about their everyday life with relevant photos, written descriptions or photo captions
- Add spoken narrations to their photo stories using correct pronunciation and appropriate intonation
- Enhance their presentations with a variety of resources, such as background music, font style, size and colour, slide transition effects, etc

4.5.3.2 Teaching sequence and tasks

The teachers started their action research in February 2009. Having decided to infuse the digital story element into the regular curriculum unit on festivals, they engaged students in creating photo stories on their favourite festival. The implementation comprised four stages. Stage 1 involved task preparation and input. Students were introduced to the *Photo Story* software and shown two sample photo stories created by the teachers. One of the photo stories was an introduction to the school produced collaboratively by the three project teachers during the introductory workshops, the other was on the topic of Christmas. Vocabulary items related to the names and traditional practices of key Chinese and western festivals celebrated in Hong Kong were then introduced through *PowerPoint* presentations and quizzes.

In Stage 2 the students created their photo stories. Most chose Chinese New Year as their topic. The students were taught how to download suitable photos from the Internet or from a photo archive prepared by the teachers. They were also encouraged to take photos of their own to add personal interest to the task. After students had selected their photos, the teachers taught them how to write captions for each image. Computer lab lessons were arranged so that students could also learn how to import background music and voice narration into their photo stories.

In Stage 3, students took turns to present their completed photo stories to the class. With guidance from the teachers they provided constructive feedback on each other's work.

Feedback was also provided by the teachers.

In Stage 4, the evaluation stage, teachers engaged students in responding to an evaluative questionnaire in order to collect feedback regarding their experiences during the activity.

It should be noted that the teachers had also originally planned to engage all students in creating a second photo story on topics of their own choice, however, an outbreak of the H1N1 flu led to the closure of all primary schools in Hong Kong, and only a few students were able to complete a second photo story.

4.5.3.3 Student work and products

Each student produced a photo story on a favourite festival. Some chose to write about Christmas but most chose Chinese New Year. Most students selected photos that showed the food they ate, the places they went to, and the activities they did during the festival. Many used photos they had taken themselves and wrote simple captions to describe each one. Due to technical problems that arose during implementation, most students were unable to insert narration or music onto their photo stories.

After creating their photo stories, students presented their work to the whole class. To help the students with their presentations, Teacher C provided the class with the following presentation outline as a guide:

“Good morning, my name is _____. I am going to present my photo story. The topic of my photo story is _____. I will play the video. After that, I will explain in detail.

[present and explain each slide] I chose this topic because _____ is my favourite festival. I have chosen _____ photos. I think these photos are _____. I got these photos because _____. I think I have many space to improve [sic]. For example, I can _____. I think the most difficult part is _____. Then, I think the easiest part is _____. Thank you very much.”

To encourage students to pay attention to each other’s presentations, Teacher C also designed a peer evaluation form for them to use to provide feedback on their classmates’ performance. The evaluation form guided students to rate four aspects of their peers’ performance: Pictures/Photos, Captions, Narration, and Background Music. They could also use it to

provide extra or personalised written feedback.

4.5.4 Student feedback

Student feedback was collected in two ways:

- Through an evaluative questionnaire (Appendix 4): a total of 107 students from 5A, 5B and 5C responded to the questionnaire in April 2009.
- Through sampled group interviews: six to nine students from each of the project classes were invited to take part in a group interview with the researchers.

The questionnaire and interviews aimed to collect feedback from students with regard to:

- their general feelings about the photo story activity
- their mastery of technical aspects
- their learning gains
- the difficulties they encountered and their suggestions for improvements

4.5.4.1 Questionnaire Findings

Questions 1 to 3 in the questionnaire explored students' general feelings about the photo story activity. In general, many students enjoyed the photo story creation task and enjoyed creating a photo story about festivals. They showed an even stronger preference, however, for creating photo stories on topics of their own choice, and in the open-ended section of the questionnaire, many students were eager to suggest topics that they would like to explore. The topics suggested by students can be categorised into four themes: school life, personal life, fun and entertainment, and knowledge expansion (please refer to Appendix 4 for details). The responses suggest that students could be given a higher degree of autonomy in choosing the topics for their stories – a practice that might give students more space for creativity and expression of subjectivity and thereby also promote a stronger sense of commitment to the activity. The suggested topics are also useful resources for teachers to use to develop teaching materials and plan for future tasks.

Questions 4 and 5 examined to what extent students enjoyed sharing their photo stories with their classmates and whether they enjoyed viewing each other's work. The results show that

almost half of the respondents (44%) enjoyed sharing their photo stories with their classmates, while a slightly higher percentage (52%) found reading each other's stories enjoyable. These results may have three possible interpretations: (i) some students did not find their own work satisfactory enough to be viewed by the others; (ii) some students enjoyed being a literacy consumer rather than a producer; (iii) some students were eager to learn from others.

Questions 6 to 11 examined whether students had mastered the technical aspects of creating photo stories. The majority of the respondents (61%) reported that they could master the technical aspects of the *Photo Story* software including inserting images, writing captions, and choosing appropriate fonts and transitions. However, 43% of the students experienced some difficulty in recording the narration for their photo story. According to the teachers, this problem was caused by poor-quality microphones, a technical issue that could easily be solved by purchasing new equipment.

Questions 12 and 13 explored students' language learning gains with regard to improved writing and speaking skills. 46% and 45% of the students agreed and strongly agreed that the activity had improved their English writing and speaking skills respectively. Breakdowns of the percentages from individual classes revealed that students in the lower-performing classes, such as 5A and 5B, showed stronger disagreement with these two statements. This suggests that students with lower English proficiency may need more support in completing such a task.

Some students also provided written feedback in the open-ended section of the questionnaire. Apart from reporting on the various problems they had encountered, some also explained why they enjoyed creating photo stories. The feedback below was originally written in Chinese and translated into English by the research team:

- *I would like to have more time for the creation process.*
- *It's difficult to find music on the Internet; it's better if the teachers can provide some.*
- *The end products are too big to store on the school's server.*
- *I want to continue making photo stories at home but I don't have the software installed.*
- *It is difficult to edit the images.*
- *In general, my English has improved.*

- *I like creating photo stories because I can practise writing and speaking [English] in the same task.*
- *I have learnt to write stories in a lively way.*
- *It was so much fun when I heard my own voice on the computer.*

4.5.4.2 *Findings from Group Interviews*

Six to nine students from each of the project classes were selected by their teachers to take part in a small group interview after the completion of the action research. The selection included an equal number of boys, girls and students of various levels of English proficiency. Each interview lasted about 45 minutes.

4.5.4.2.1 *General attitude towards the Photo Story activity*

In general, students were positive about the photo story activity. They reported finding it interesting for the following main reasons:

Creating photo stories is a novel way to learn English

Some students said that creating photo stories was more fun than doing traditional composition assignments in which the subject matter was usually outlined by the teacher. Many felt that when they engaged in writing traditional compositions they were often simply trying to write enough words to fulfil the teacher's requirements, and that creating photo stories had given them a lot more room for creativity. One student said that making photo stories was like playing games. Another said, "I can really make up my own story. I can record my voice and pretend that I'm something else. It's so much fun."

Photo stories can be personalised

Some students expressed the view that they were willing to put more effort into making photo stories than into writing traditional compositions because they could personalise their photo stories with photos of their own choice. They could also design background images and choose to present on their favourite themes. One student said that being in control of the whole process had made the activity more meaningful to her. For these reasons, most of the students interviewed reflected that they liked their own photo stories more than those created by their classmates.

Photo stories can build a bridge between classroom activities and students' everyday life

A couple of the students interviewed said that they planned to create photo stories at home on events related to their personal lives. For example, one student said that she was planning to make a photo story about her younger brother, chronicling his life from the day he was born. Another student reported that the photo story activity had created an opportunity to communicate with people via the Internet: besides seeking help with vocabulary items, the student had also sent the photo story he had made to his Internet friends and asked for their feedback.

4.5.4.2.2 Difficulties encountered and suggested solutions

The main difficulties encountered by students while making their photo stories were language-related. Although students knew what they wanted to say or write, their limited English vocabulary prevented them from expressing their ideas effectively. Fortunately, many of the students were able to capitalise on the resources available on the Internet, for example by accessing online dictionaries to look up particular vocabulary items.

Some students also mentioned encountering difficulties due to technical problems, particularly with regard to the search for background music. One student, who said that he had spent a long time searching for a suitable piece of Chinese New Year music, suggested that the teachers could provide a data bank of different music clips for them to use.

4.5.4.2.3 Learning gains

Some of the students interviewed reported that writing captions for the photo stories had helped them improve their ability to express themselves in English. Some felt that their English pronunciation had improved as a result of rehearsing and recording the narration. A few also reported learning new vocabulary items related to Chinese New Year, for example, 'spring couplets', 'peach blossom', and 'mandarin trees'. One student also mentioned that working in groups in the multimedia learning centre had given them increased opportunities to interact with their classmates in English.

4.5.5 *Teacher reflections and assessment*

4.5.5.1 Strengths, successes, student learning, teacher learning

A post-project interview was conducted to explore the three project teachers' evaluation of the achievements of the project in terms of student learning. The teachers found that most students were able to use the software successfully to create their own photo stories. They were able to import photos, arrange collections of photos on the story pages, vary the slide transition modes and, after the technical issues were resolved, also add background music. Most of them were also able to write appropriate captions.

Generally speaking, the teachers felt that most of the students found it interesting and motivating to work on the computer, and that they particularly enjoyed the autonomy they were given in choosing photos and music to enliven their stories. Some of the photo stories provided clear evidence of what students had learnt during the lessons (see Learning Gains above). The activity successfully motivated most of the students in the project classes by allowing them to complete an English task in a fun and interesting way.

The teachers also felt that presenting their photo stories to the whole class had given students a valuable opportunity to practise speaking in front of an audience. To encourage students to pay attention to their classmates during the class presentations, Teacher C also designed a peer evaluation form for students to fill out while they listened to each other. The peer evaluation engaged students in providing feedback on the essential elements of a photo story, for example, the content, the clarity of the captions, the relevance of the photos, and the sequence of the photos, etc. According to Teacher C, most of the students made a good attempt at providing useful and critical feedback. Below are a few illustrative examples:

- *"I think his photos are good because there are his face in the photos. Then, the captions is not very clear."*
- *"Your photo story is perfect (Except the background music)"*
- *"Can make the word big. Can have background music, good."*

4.5.5.2 Problems and challenges

Although most of the students were able to master the technical aspects of the activity quite satisfactorily, many of them displayed various types of weaknesses in their language use. The following were the major weaknesses identified by the teachers:

- Grammatical problems: Many of the photo stories contained spelling and grammatical errors, indicating that most students did not thoroughly check the spellings and tenses of their caption texts.
- Content problems: Many students wrote picture descriptions rather than telling a story with their picture captions. Some weaker students did not know what to write and simply used single words such as “Wow!” and “Happy!” for their captions. Many students found it challenging to express themselves effectively in English.
- Identical captions and narration: In their first photo stories, almost all students, including the stronger ones, were unable to distinguish the different functions of the narration and the picture captions and produced captions and narration that were almost identical.
- Pronunciation problems: Many students were unable to deliver the narration fluently or with correct pronunciation, indicating that they did not rehearse or practise the narration at home.

4.5.6 Conclusions and recommendations

Despite the problems and challenges encountered, the three teachers unanimously reported that they found the project very worthwhile. They indicated that they had learnt useful and interesting IT skills that they believed would facilitate their future teaching and help make learning English interesting for their students.

To deal with some of the language problems revealed in the students’ photo stories, the three teachers came up with a series of solutions. For example, noticing that the students were producing identical captions and narration, Teacher C provided explicit input on the different functions and nature of both text types. As a result, when some of her more able students created a second photo story, they made clear attempts to enhance their narration by creating expanded versions of the captions and describing the selected photos in more detail. Being aware of the different functions of these text types had enabled the students to produce better quality photo stories and obtain a greater sense of achievement.

Teacher B suggested adopting a process writing approach to help students produce, proofread, and edit their draft captions and narration. She also suggested that students could be

encouraged to practise reading aloud their narration in pairs to ensure that their pronunciation was clear and appropriate.

Generally, all three teachers agreed that both teacher and peer feedback could be utilised to motivate students to do better.

Overall, despite the fact that most of the students were from lower socio-economic levels and had very little family support in learning English, the teachers and students in this school successfully demonstrated that with proper teacher guidance and input, students are able to produce creative work requiring critical thinking and express their ideas in English.

4.6 School 02

School 02 is a large, government-aided, Catholic sponsored primary school founded in 2002. It is located in a northwest district of Kowloon, close to a new shopping mall and new high-rise apartment blocks. According to the project teachers, the vast majority of their students live in the same or nearby districts and use Cantonese as their home language. The school has a large, modern, carpet-lined computer lab, in which some of the lessons for the New Literacies Project were conducted. The school implemented two new literacies-infused projects in their English curriculum: the Primary 5 students created online comic strips, and the Primary 6 students wrote and shared book reports on a class wiki.

4.6.1 The teaching team and classes

The new literacies project was carried out in all five P5 classes and in two of the five P6 classes. Each P5 class contained 35 to 36 students, whose average age was ten. The five P5 teachers had a range of teaching experience from less than one year, post teaching qualification, to more than 10 years. They were led by Teacher 1, a Vice English Panel Chair and ICT teacher, who participated in the new literacies project from the start and trialled the use of digital stories in her own class during the first year of the project.

Five P6 classes participated in the new literacies project. There were 36 to 38 students in each class and the average age of the students was eleven. The teachers of three classes did not wish to be interviewed or video recorded, but their students' work was reviewed and some of their lessons were attended by a Project researcher. Two P6 teachers agreed to participate fully. Teacher A was an English teacher and Curriculum Development Coordinator with more than 20 years teaching experience, who was the overall leader of the new literacies project in this school. Teacher B was an experienced Vice English Panel Chair. Both teachers were supported by a NET who had three years teaching experience in Hong Kong primary schools and had recently completed her teaching qualification. The NET had been assigned responsibility for the literacy programme in the school and co-taught with both Teacher A and Teacher B.

4.6.2 Baseline data analysis: current literacy teaching and learning, and readiness for new literacies

The school's English language curriculum was generally based on the English Language Curriculum Guide and structured according to the English language textbook, *Primary Longman Express*. The literacy curriculum included other texts such as graded readers. The teachers also used materials created by the teaching team in their lessons. *PowerPoint* was commonly used by the teachers as a teaching aid.

Classroom observations during the baseline data collection stage revealed that the English teachers generally adopted interactive and student-centred teaching methods. Teachers largely made efforts to involve students actively through questioning strategies, group and pair work, small projects and tasks, and generally encouraged students to offer opinions and ideas during the lesson. Grammar and vocabulary taught were clearly linked to themes, texts and tasks. These student-centred pedagogical orientations to teaching were considered important in facilitating the integration of new literacies tasks and interactions into the curriculum.

Teachers expressed a great deal of interest in new literacies. Teacher 1, for example, felt that new literacies had the potential to address different learners' needs:

... Even the less able students are good at using the computer. Because I teach P6 computer, too. Even [if] they fail in English; they get full marks in their computer examination. That's right, [it's] very interesting. And they can catch up so quickly. They are experts and they teach me sometimes. (Teacher 1, baseline interview)

Teacher A felt that new literacies had the potential to both enhance students' language abilities and to engage and motivate them:

Because we think that it is practical and interesting. And language related. That is the element we thought [was] valuable. Because sometimes we learn a lot of IT, but we can't use it, or it's dull. The kids don't want to use it. Even though we force them to use it, but actually they are not enjoying it. We enjoy [it] and [we're] sure the kids will enjoy [it too]... (Teacher A, baseline interview)

Student interviews at the baseline data stage suggested that they participated in a range of new literacies practices outside of school, such as instant messaging, blogging, using Internet search engines and creating digital artwork. They were also aware of the linguistic features of text messaging, and the need to use different writing conventions for different purposes and

audiences. Students also reported that they felt they could practise using English in online interactions. The research team believed that students' existing experiences with new literacies would facilitate the implementation of new literacies in the curriculum.

4.6.3 P5 Comic Strips on Behaving in Public

The P5 teachers incorporated new literacies into their unit plan for the textbook *Primary Longman Express 5A* unit entitled 'Behave Well'. Students would create a three-frame comic strip using the free online program, *ToonDoo*. Their comics would depict good or bad behaviour in public places. The *ToonDoo* unit was part of the larger textbook unit and was carried out once the larger unit had been completed.

The *ToonDoo* program allows users to create one-, two- or three-frame comic strips using an enormous range of backgrounds, characters, and objects. The characters' facial expressions and gestures can be manipulated and objects can be sized and there are a number of different styles of speech bubbles and font types to choose from. Users can save their comic strips and publish them "to the world" that is, publicly on the *ToonDoo* site, or they can share them with selected "friends". Each comic strip can be rated by viewers, who can also leave comments. The number of views each comic strip has received is displayed.

To address the technological demands of using *ToonDoo*, it was decided that one of the lessons would be conducted within the ICT curriculum so that the computer teachers could teach students how to use *ToonDoo*. Although it was hoped that the project teachers would also gain technological competence and confidence in some Web 2.0 literacies, the use of one lesson in the ICT curriculum appeared to be a practical way to gain access to the computer lab, relieve time pressure on the English language syllabus, and develop cross-curricular links. It also gave the English teachers extra confidence for conducting an English lesson in the computer lab.

4.6.3.1 Aims

The P5 teachers articulated the main language learning aims of the unit as follows:

- to describe manners and behaviour using different adverbs
- to express obligations and prohibitions using modals and imperatives
- to give and respond to written comments on the comic strips

It was also expected that the unit would also address the following literacy aims:

- to develop students’ creativity and critical thinking
- to develop students’ understanding of and ability to create multimodal texts
- to encourage sharing among schoolmates on the Internet

4.6.3.2 *Teaching sequence and tasks*

The overall lesson sequence of the *ToonDoo* unit can be seen in Table 4. The unit covered seven class periods in total. In the first lesson, Teacher 1 began by talking about comics and cartoons and eliciting students’ favourites. She then introduced the online comic strip-making task to students, and briefly introduced the *ToonDoo* programme. Using her own comic strip about good behaviour, which was made with *ToonDoo* and deliberately constructed with obvious weaknesses, she elicited ways of improving the comic. The example showed USA President Barack Obama and his wife being disturbed by someone’s mobile phone ringing in a movie theatre, and students were given the chance to make changes to a printed version of her comic together in groups. Finally, students were given a blank comic strip of three frames to plan their own comic strip on good behaviour.

Table 4: *ToonDoo* unit sequence and main lesson activities.

Lesson 1	Lesson 2	Lesson 3	Lesson 4
English lesson in the classroom	Computer lesson in the computer lab	English lesson in the computer lab	English lesson in the classroom
Teacher introduces comics, and <i>ToonDoo</i> programme. Students evaluate the teacher’s comic strip and suggest improvements. Students draft their own comic strip.	Students learn about the <i>ToonDoo</i> program and website. Students create their own comic strip.	Students create their own comic strip on ‘good behaviour’	Students revise the features of a good comic. Students share their comics with the class.

Lesson 2 took place in the computer lab, and was part of the computer curriculum. In this lesson the students learnt how to navigate the *ToonDoo* website, to log on to their individual account (set up by the project team), set up a two or three-frame comic strip, select and adjust characters, create speech bubbles, type in text, insert backgrounds, etc. After this they also

created a comic of their choice. The lesson was conducted in Cantonese, according to the language policy in the school.

Lesson 3 also took place in the computer lab, but was an English lesson that was part of the English curriculum and conducted in the medium of English. In this lesson, the teacher reminded students of the task, the topic of ‘behaving in public’, and the target grammatical structures and vocabulary students were to incorporate into their comics. The teacher also encouraged students to use some of the *ToonDoo* features mentioned in previous lessons. Students were then given the written comic drafts they had produced in Lesson 1 and were asked to recreate their comics within the *ToonDoo* program.

The final lesson took place in the classroom. The teacher first reviewed some of the features of a comic strip text (e.g., the frames, speech bubbles, background, etc) and elicited features of a good comic – for example, it should not have too many words, it should have clear and interesting images, the storyline should be clear and concise, etc. The students were then asked to share their comic strips. The teacher opened up the *ToonDoo* program and searched for a particular student’s name to view his/her comics. Students were invited to assess their peers’ work.

4.6.3.3 *Students’ comic strips*

Each student created two or more comics, one or more of which were about ‘good behaviour in public’, as per the unit task instructions. The other comics created were of various types. Some had storylines and images that drew on comic strip genres dealing with aliens, superheroes or animal characters. A few appeared to resemble greeting cards or posters. Because of the exploratory nature of the computer (ICT) lesson, there were also a number of unfinished or incoherent comics.

The comic strips that adhered to the task requirements showed good use of the target language structures: modals, imperatives, and adverbs. They also made use of typical locations and situations where ‘misbehaviour’ might occur. The majority of these comics contained the basic features of a comic strip and made use of speech bubbles, characters and backgrounds. A few students added a summary introduction to their comic strip. The backgrounds were consistent across the three frames and adjustments to the characters and backgrounds were in line with the students’ intended plot. In many of these comics, the

students also used the characters' gaze appropriately, for example, to make eye contact with the reader or with another character or object in the scene.

Several comic strips in each class showed creativity in their approach to the task. For example, one comic strip showed a dog owner telling a pet dog not to bark so loudly. Another showed a girl scolding her boyfriend for dropping a banana peel on the beach and threatening to break up with him. Teacher 2 described one such comic:

It was about an elephant and a tiger fighting in a zoo. There was also a lion who saw this. It got angry, so it came over and told them, 'If you fight again, I will eat you both!' It was a bit like beating violence with violence, but I could see why the kids loved it. I liked this cartoon because the kid showed that she understood the difference between composition and cartoon strip [...] One of my aims was to teach students the importance of humour in the cartoon genre. This kid was able to illustrate that. She didn't create a caretaker keeping things in order, or a decent animal telling the others not to fight. Instead, she used a humorous way to stop the fighting between the elephant and the tiger. So I think that she could express herself well in English as well as create an interesting cartoon. (Teacher 2, post project interview)

As many of the comics were created during the ICT lesson, there were a number that were not about 'good behaviour'. One student created a comic strip about two astronauts travelling to the moon: their contact on Earth asks one of the men if he has any food and when the man replies that he is hungry, the other astronaut then offers his partner a moon cake. This comic was considered especially successful as it used word play and cultural references to create a humorous comic strip.

Another student created a series of comic strips called, 'Greedy Cat', which he published "to the world" on the *ToonDoo* site. His comic strip resembled Garfield, a popular comic strip about a man and his cat. In this student's work, the man tries to keep his cat from eating his fish, but the cat outwits his owner every time. During the *ToonDoo* unit, the Greedy Cat book received more than two thousand views, and more than sixty "thumbs up" ratings, becoming one of the 'top ten most viewed' comics on the *ToonDoo* site for about one week.

4.6.3.4 *Assessment of student learning and reflection on the unit*

The teachers were very positive about the learning outcomes of the *ToonDoo* unit. Teacher 1

remarked that the chance to publish online and have a genuine audience for their work generated high levels of motivation. This is reflective of Web 2.0 environments where value comes from attention:

... With the additional help of 'favour' and 'cheer' [buttons] they wanted so much to publish their work and to have it looked at by other people. This is the first time they got so involved. They never have this experience of publishing their work for others in any English or computer lessons. This is great. (Teacher 1, post lesson interview)

However, she was also mindful of the linguistic objectives of the unit and of the English language curriculum. While the comic strip engaged students in multimodal text creation in which images and words expressed meaning together, the number of words, the grammatical accuracy and the presence of the target language structures in students' comics was still a concern:

Most of them are very creative, ok. Although they are not very good in the grammar. Some grammatical mistakes... that's right. Most of them are creative.

Just that it was a lucky draw we had in the lesson, and those lucky ones were with very few words... I know that some did have more words, very long text, 'You shouldn't... bla-bla-bla...' Some of them did use the modals right. That's what we wanted. (Teacher 1, post lesson interview)

Teacher 4 remarked that the task motivated students to notice various features of a text and to comment on them, thus developing assessment skills and awareness of text types. She recounts a student who critiqued her example comic:

T4: *I found that some students, they really looked at my work! They commented on something that I did not do well. For example, they told me, 'Wow, [Teacher 4], in your pictures, there should be some flowers, because a boy is saying, "Don't pick the flowers!"' And, they cannot see any flowers, so they really can remember, something special.*

I: *How did you feel about that? That the students had some...*

T4: *That's good! That's good! Because even I did not notice it. They can show me. They can tell me. That's very good of them, because they really paid attention to my work. So I think, I like this style, this style of learning, because it's not just something taught by the teachers. They can use their daily experience. They can*

tell you something that you, even you, did not think of. So I think that's quite interesting. (Teacher 4, post project interview)

Teacher 3 reported that the task highlighted the ways in which the choice and accuracy of language impacts the ability of a text to convey precise meanings and led one student to develop her self-assessment capacities:

I had expected them to give short comments, like 'So boring'. But I hadn't expected them to give any elaborations. It surprised me when we reviewed the girl's cartoon. The maker herself burst out laughing when I read out her cartoon. She wrote something contradictory – someone 'should' do something instead of 'shouldn't' do something. Like, 'You should talk loudly!' She chuckled when we read the cartoon. She had feedback for herself. (Teacher 3, post project interview)

The student interviews revealed that students had developed their understanding of multimodality and the features of this particular text type. For example, one student remarked:

And also, the reason why you shouldn't write a long text is that, the word 'cartoon' implies something related to drawing. If you put a long text into the picture... that would make... perhaps it's just... a book with illustrations.

Another student also explained how exposure to English on the *ToonDoo* site was beneficial to his learning:

That means sometimes... you didn't know how to speak the language as a native speaker, you only knew... you only knew the particular meaning of a word, not the use. For example, sometimes like... [speaks in English] 'to his surprise', you know the meaning of 'to', of 'his', and also of 'surprise'. But you wouldn't know its meaning as a whole, in that sense. I think that this software, this... ToonDoo, helped me to understand the language of a native speaker.

Another student's remarks showed that he had developed a sense of audience and purpose in his text creation:

That means, there shouldn't be... I learnt not to make things up foolishly. It's better to have some content, to deliver some kind of message.

Overall, students found the *ToonDoo* task to be enjoyable, creative and engaging. They were

able to identify the benefits of the collaborative environment for learning English, and were clearly motivated by the authentic authorship that the *ToonDoo* site provided.

To improve the unit, the teachers felt that collaborating with the computer teachers and using one computer lesson was useful for preparing students and teachers for the technical aspects of *ToonDoo*. They also agreed that the use of a planning worksheet prior to the creation of the comic in the computer lab posed a number of problems they hadn't anticipated. Some of their students drafted ideas that could not be recreated on the *ToonDoo* site (e.g. the Hong Kong MTR), which meant that they had to replan their comics in the computer lab. The teachers also agreed that the 'mistakes' incorporated in their sample cartoons needed to be more explicit in order to clearly highlight the key features of a comic strip and more readily lead to discussions about issues such as the ways in which images and words interact to express meaning.

4.6.4 P6 Wiki-based book reports

One of the aims of the P6 literacy programme was to promote reading for pleasure and develop students' ability to write book reports. The P6 teachers originally planned for students to read a minimum of three books and write paper-based book reports for each book during the year. However, after considering the language learning potential of online writing and sharing, the teachers decided to use a free classroom wiki *www.pbworks.com* for students to compose and revise their own reviews and read each other's work. The book review unit was integrated into lessons on a graded reader version of *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* by Roald Dahl and a graded reader version of *The Wizard of Oz*, both of which were already planned into the literacy curriculum.

A wiki is a tool that facilitates collaborative text authoring online. Wikis allow for the typing of text and the insertion of graphics, hyperlinks and videos. They also offer a range of backgrounds, colours and fonts for users to select from and can have an infinite number of pages (these look similar to website pages with a menu bar on one side). These features allow for a range of multimodal expression. Members of the wiki can also edit the pages of the website at any time and discuss the page contents on a discussion board attached to each page. The history of editings made by page authors can be viewed at any time and an earlier version of the page can be reverted to if desired.

The P6 teachers exploited the ongoing editing feature of a wiki, the infinite number of wiki pages, and the discussion boards in their new literacies unit.

4.6.4.1 *Aims*

The teachers designed a five-stage unit of work over 11 class periods that aimed to achieve the following:

- Introduce students to the structure and organisation of a book report
- Enable students to write a book review based on the graded reader, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*
- Enable students to create a page on a wiki, compose and edit a book review on the wiki and review classmates' wiki pages
- Develop students' ability to conduct peer assessment and write appropriate comments to each other on the wiki

The teachers hoped that the multimodal interactive nature of the wiki would not only be enjoyable but would also motivate students to read and review more books and learn from each other in the process.

4.6.4.2 *Teaching sequence and tasks*

The P6 teachers began the unit by introducing the wiki where students would develop their own book reviews and share them with their classmates. The teachers showed students a sample book review on the wiki. The review was of the graded reader *The Wizard of Oz*, which students had recently read. The teachers also showed students how to edit the wiki and how to search for and insert video clips from *YouTube*.

In the second stage, the teachers introduced students to the structure and organisation of a book review. They adopted an analytical, task-based approach in which the students examined a book review text for its various features and rhetorical structure. To start, students worked in groups to reassemble a book review about a *Harry Potter* novel that had been cut up into key sections. Using the parts of a hamburger as a visual metaphor, the teachers then elicited the key sections of a book review. To explore the text type further, students extracted the key points from each section of the book review and wrote them on the board. Finally,

students were given another book review to read and analyse using the “hamburger” model.

In the next stage, students read a graded reader of *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* by Roald Dahl. With the teacher’s support, the class constructed notes about the storyline and characters to be used later as the basis for a wiki-based book review.

The next lesson was conducted in the computer lab and taught by Teacher A. First the teacher carefully demonstrated and explained how to log on to the wiki, create a new review page, write and edit the text, and create a link to their book review page on the wiki home page. The students then individually created their own wiki pages for their reviews of *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*. This exploratory stage allowed students to become familiar with the wiki functions and to practise writing a book review with the teacher’s guidance. This was important preparation for the independent writing of book reviews in the coming months. In this lesson, some technical problems arose when a number of students interacted on the wiki at the same time and it was discovered that only one wiki member at a time could edit a page.

In the final stage of the unit, the teachers showed students how to comment on their classmates’ book reviews and post their comments on the wiki discussion boards. The lesson began with a demonstration and ‘shared writing’ of a comment, during which the teacher elicited ideas and language from students as she wrote. After this, students worked independently to read and respond to each other’s reviews. The teacher concluded the lesson by reminding students how to give comments to each other in a supportive and constructive manner.

For the rest of the academic year, the students continued to participate on the class wikis, posting new reviews of books they had read in and out of school, editing their own pages, and reading and commenting on their classmates’ work.

4.6.4.3 *Students’ book reviews and interaction on the wiki*

During the academic year, students in all P6 classes wrote their book reviews on the class wiki. According to the task instructions, the students completed three book reviews during the year. The majority of the book reviews were about class readers studied as part of the English curriculum.

Students used the book review structure taught in class to organise their writing. They also appeared to enjoy and exploit the visual features available to authors on the wiki, making their pages colourful and attractively organised, and including images and occasionally also related *YouTube* links.

The participation on the discussion forums for each page was generally good, with some students in each class more actively posting comments than others. Most of the students' comments were brief, and offered feedback to the writer. Many of the comments were simply supportive, while others gave suggestions for improvement. On occasion, the comments were unnecessarily harsh, or were not clear.

Students exploited the feature of the wiki that allows for ongoing and frequent editing. It was noted that students edited their pages relatively frequently, often after school hours and even during public holidays. A few students made minor editings into the summer months, after they had graduated from primary school. One student edited the page in September, at the start of the new school year. While the editings were very small and minor, students' actions suggested that this feature of the wiki motivated at least some students to continue reviewing and revising their text.

Overall, the quality of their work and the frequency of their visits to the wikis throughout the year suggested that students were highly engaged in the task: they improved their understanding of book reviews; they exploited colour, font, images and video on their wiki pages; and gained valuable experience in their ability to assess their peers' work.

4.6.4.4 *Assessment*

The P6 students had a number of pertinent insights into their learning during the wiki book review lessons. Many of the interviewed students commented on their sense of engagement in multimodal text creation on the wiki:

S1: *Well, we... when we wrote book reviews in this way, we learnt how to insert videos and images into a website so that people could easily understand what the story was about... I put in my favorite part, so that readers could easily understand my feelings...*

S4: *If there's only words it seems that... people can only understand to certain extent. If there are images, people can know what the characters are like. And*

with videos, we can express our thoughts via the videos instead of just with words, it's more lively and interesting.

S3: *And it's less boring than just words.*

I: *Hmm! By 'less boring' do you mean to read, or to write?*

Ss: *To write AND to read.*

(Post project student group interview)

The students also mentioned the sense of achievement that the task gave them. For example, this student in Teacher A's class remarked on his sense of ownership of the task:

S2: *Because, we could experience that by ourselves, there was a great sense of achievement.*

I: *What did you experience?*

S2: *Because I did everything – I typed, and I found the images – I did everything myself, so that was very meaningful!*

(Post project student group interview)

They also reported that having lots of readers and feedback from their peers motivated them to revise their work:

S4: *I am still visiting the site, and quite often. Because I really hope that my book review can be revised over and over again, so that it can be really good. Also, I can remind my classmates of their mistakes.*

S1: *Also... I wrote a lot [of comments] actually, because I wanted to know if my classmates would revise their book reviews. I also wanted to read the latest versions, and see if there were any new words that I hadn't learnt yet, and if so I would learn them.[...]*

S2: *[Laugh] And also, when I go there, I'm hoping to see whether I have more supporters! People who continue to support my book review!*

[Students laugh]

S4: *To see if I can get an even greater satisfaction.*

I: *So, that's actually very important, is it?*

S4: *Yes, it is. It's really important.*

(Post project student group interview)

Students in Teacher B's class also reported that the wiki task helped to improve their English.

One student recalled learning more authentic language from the wiki site itself:

S4: *And, it was my first time, not exactly the first actually... It was all English, on the PBworks website, there was no Chinese, you had to... like 'create page', you had to understand that in order to work it out. So... like, you could learn some useful everyday language there. These things are never in the textbook. Like, the textbook never tells you what 'create' means. But then, when it's used here, you understand.*

(Post project student group interview)

Teacher A identified a number of positive learning outcomes for both teachers and students in the wiki book review unit:

- Teachers acquired a new understanding of the potential of a wiki to enhance language learning
- Teachers developed knowledge and skills in using a wiki in the classroom
- Students' digital literacies were drawn upon and purposefully used in the classroom
- Students' interest and curiosity in writing on the wiki was sparked
- Students developed an understanding of and skills in peer assessment
- Students' independence was fostered and developed as they continued to contribute to the wiki outside of school and the English classroom during the academic year.

Teacher A and B both felt that students would continue to need teacher support with the language demands of online tasks, and need further guidance on giving constructive comments, even though they were already capable of effectively incorporating the visual elements of multimodal texts.

4.6.5 Conclusions and recommendations

The P5 and P6 teachers incorporated new literacies effectively into the English language curriculum, enhancing the existing task through multimodal expression, online interaction and sharing among peers and a wider online community. They thus realised and extended the language and literacy aims of the tasks. In the *ToonDoo* task, P5 students were able to practise the use of the target language structures and functions. In the wiki task, students' gained a better understanding of and ability to master the textual features of a book report.

The P5 and P6 teachers also learned new digital and ICT skills in the process of planning and implementing their units.

During the *ToonDoo* task, it was found that some students did not make use of the target grammatical and lexical items, or make use of many English words in their texts. This is not necessarily a negative outcome when considering the sophisticated use of words and images, storyline, humour and other elements that many students were able to display in their comics. In comic strips, the multimodal elements of words, images, layout and colour need to be considered as equal meaning-making resources. If teachers would like to increase the use of textual language used in a comic strip, they could consider exploiting comic strip introductory description, which is prompted, along with the comic strip title, when a user first saves their comic strip. The description enables the author to insert a short summary or précis of the story, as some students did, or provide some scene-setting information to readers. At the same time, teachers could help students develop ways of describing and evaluating images and layout and other multimodal elements, so that multimodal text creation can be a language-rich experience, even when the text itself is dominated by images.

Teachers could also make use of the user-friendly nature of new literacies tools such as wikis and *ToonDoo* and allow students more freedom to be creative and teach themselves new features during online composing. Teacher A remarked that students were not afraid of exploring an online tool, clicking on various hyperlinks and spontaneously following instructions as they appear. Teacher 1's computer lesson, which allowed for free exploration of *ToonDoo* enhanced students' desire to be creative to the extent that many created comics strips that were 'off task' but that were effective comic strips nevertheless. In addition, the usefulness of asking students to engage in paper-based planning for online text creation tasks should be carefully considered. In the comic-strip creation task, some of the students' found that their drafts were rendered superfluous because their initial ideas could not be recreated with the available *ToonDoo* tools. Other students found that the task involved simply transferring ideas from paper to a digital format. Given a wiki's inherent editing capacities, pre-planning on paper may not be necessary or helpful. As one student in Teacher B's class commented, the most important thing he had learned about using a wiki was, "To 'save'!" Finally, during the book review task each student was the sole author of his or her wikipage. However, as wikis are collaborative text-authoring tools, several students could be asked to work together to write and edit a wiki page, and discuss language, style, layout and

multimodal elements in the discussion forum attached to each page.

One striking feature of School 02's new literacies units, was the students' positive responses to sharing their work online, which they felt gave them a sense of authentic authorship and global participation, particularly when "publishing to the world" on the *ToonDoo* site. They also found the attention and feedback they received through peer comments on *ToonDoo* and wiki truly exciting and motivating. In general, students took their work more seriously, felt a desire to revise their work, and learned from viewing each other's work and giving comments. Students and teachers both noted, however, that comments needed to be fair, genuine and constructive. Students considered overly positive comments given to a text of average quality were considered 'fake'. Harsh comments were also considered inappropriate. Clearly, students need more experience of online peer review and need the language needed to express their views. Ways of increasing their awareness of appropriate and sensitive online commenting also needs to be further explored.

Another positive element of online participation mentioned by both P5 and P6 students was the access and exposure to authentic English. Students found this very motivating, and in their reflections showed high levels of metalinguistic awareness of the differences in authentic English, online English and the less authentic textbook English. This suggests that teachers themselves might exploit new literacies tools and environments for English language learning, by taking note of some of the new vocabulary and language students need to understand and use in order to carry out a new literacies task.

4.7 School 14

School 14 is a government-aided, Buddhist-sponsored primary school that was founded in 1959. It is located in the district of Wan Chai, with many other schools nearby. Chinese is the medium of instruction except for English lessons. The school has adopted the Education Bureau's 'Whole School Approach' to support students with special learning needs. There are supplementary English classes for students from Mainland China and those requiring extra help. The New Literacies Project was conducted in the schools' KS2 classes and aimed to explore effective ways of arousing students' interest in learning English.

4.7.1 *The teaching team and classes*

Three classes took part in the New Literacies Project, a Primary 4, a Primary 5 and a Primary 6 class. Teacher A taught the P4 class, and Teacher B taught both the P5 and P6 classes. Teacher B was also the English Panel Chair. There were 23 students in the P4 class, 34 students in the P5 class and 32 students in the P6 class.

4.7.2 *Baseline data analysis: current literacy teaching and learning and readiness for new literacies*

According to Teacher B, the English Panel Chair, approximately 80% of the students had access to computers in and outside of school, either in their homes or through public libraries. Many students participated in various forms of new literacies in their personal lives, for instance blogging. Despite the fact that all students had access to an 'English room' with Internet facilities during and after school, Teacher B admitted that those students without computers at home had difficulties carrying out technology-based tasks.

Teacher A regularly used computer-based games and quizzes to enhance the classroom teaching, and Teacher B used the Internet to enliven the lessons and engage students in the topics:

We use technology mainly with the Internet. We surf the Net for more games, some interesting videos and cartoons to attract students' attention sometimes, especially the five minutes at the beginning of the class. And sometimes when we come across a topic like environmental protection, or something about families, some very

interesting topics, then, we usually ask the students to surf the Internet before the lessons. Surf for some information [about] the topics. And we use e-books along with... we have e-stories. We usually take students to this room to read stories.

(Teacher 2, baseline interview)

Overall, the teachers and students were experienced in using computers and various IT tools for learning, in and out of the English classroom. The participating classes were considered to be well prepared for new literacies-infused language teaching and learning.

4.7.3 Primary 4 ‘A Day Trip in Hong Kong’

‘A Day Trip in Hong Kong’ was the topic of the P4 project, taught by Teacher A. The aim was to arouse students’ interest in planning a day trip, using the language skills they had learnt. The class was introduced to *Photo Story*, a program that enables the creation of multimodal presentations with narration, captions, images and music. Students produced digital presentations of an itinerary for a one-day trip in Hong Kong.

4.7.3.1 Teaching sequence and tasks

The unit of work was linked to the theme and language focus of Chapter 4, ‘A Visit to Hong Kong’ in *Longman Welcome to English 4B*. One of the core tasks of the unit was for students to plan an itinerary for visiting interesting places in Hong Kong. In the process they had to talk about future events and activities, learn the names of places to visit, and express ideas and preferences. The new literacies lessons involved the following stages:

1. The teacher introduced the task, namely, to create a digital presentation of an itinerary for a visit to Hong Kong, and then taught some useful sentence patterns.
2. The teacher introduced the *Photo Story* program, demonstrated its functions and showed students a sample presentation.
3. The teacher demonstrated how to search for and select relevant photos on the Internet.
4. In groups, students selected photos and began to compose their presentations using the *Photo Story* program.
5. Students added captions to their photos and recorded the narration.
6. Students previewed and polished their presentations.

4.7.3.2 *Student's presentations*

Students' *Photo Story* presentations demonstrated understanding of the vocabulary required to describe places in Hong Kong, as well as ways of describing future plans. Their final products included photos, transitions between photos, captions and recorded narration but no music. Overall, the task objectives were achieved by the majority of students.

4.7.3.3 *Assessment of student learning*

According to Teacher A and the Project researchers, students clearly enjoyed working in their groups. The fact that they found the activity enjoyable provided intrinsic motivation for them to learn and improve their English language skills in collaboration with their peers:

Interviewer: *What have you learnt from this unit?*

Student A: *We have to cooperate for tasks like this. We've been taught lots of English words, and how to surf the Internet for images.*

There was also evidence that students had developed skills as multimodal designers, and that they had made thoughtful decisions about image choice, transition and narration during the creation process:

Student B: *I liked the activity because we had to search for images, record the narration and type the captions. This can make us more interested in English. Also, it helps us get familiar with the keyboard. This makes us more interested in using the computer. When we record the narration, we can learn how to read the words. If we don't know, we can ask our classmates, or the teacher. Also, when we preview the photo story, we can check whether the images match the captions. And for the picture transitions, we can decide whether a 'fade out' or and an 'explosive' transition would look the best.*

It was observed that working with *Photo Story* helped students practise their speaking and listening skills and enhanced their language awareness. The process of recording the narration in particular, developed students' self-assessment skills. Some students recorded their narration several times until they were satisfied with their performance, giving feedback to each other in the process. Being able to make multiple attempts at oral production work helped boost students' confidence, enabling them to take risks in their learning and reducing their fear of making mistakes:

Student A: *Being able to see your own product was really satisfying. If we made a*

mistake in the recording, when we listened to it, we just wanted to laugh. When one girl made a mistake, we kept on recording and then said “You said it wrong!” We didn’t say something straightaway. We didn’t want to interrupt her.

Peer support also offered a form of language scaffolding. This was clearly illustrated when students helped each other by suggesting how unfamiliar vocabulary should be pronounced.

4.7.3.4 Teacher reflection

Teacher A found that the new literacies activity encouraged students to be more active and cooperative in their learning. Students were also able to work autonomously, searching the Internet for photos of their favourite places in Hong Kong, composing their own captions and recording their narrations. In addition, as they collaboratively created a multimodal photo story, the less able students received contextualised language support from their more able peers, who in turn gained the experience of assisting their classmates.

Teacher A: I think cooperative skills are very important. In the past, they learnt English just sitting in their seats and they didn’t like discussions. Even if I asked them... “Get into pairs for a group discussion...”, they did not want to do that. But through this program, they needed to record their voice and they needed to surf the Net to find some pictures. They needed to do their group work and then they had to come out to present their work. So, they needed to do a lot of things by themselves. That’s very good because the higher-ability students can help the lower-ability students to speak up. They will teach them. And then the lower-ability students can record their voice.

(Post-unit teacher interview)

Overall, Teacher A felt that students had gained some independence in addition to developing collaboration and communication skills.

4.7.4 Primary 5 ‘Help Save the Endangered Animals’

For the P5 class, Teacher B set up a blog to engage students in the topic ‘Help Save the Endangered Animals’. The blog was used as a platform for the class to exchange ideas and

views on various endangered animals and to think about ways to protect them. As a group task, students researched online, using resources such as *YouTube* and *Wikipedia*, to find information about an endangered animal species. They used this information to compose a group report on their chosen endangered animal. In the process, they learnt about animals and the environment and about the organisational, grammatical and visual features of an information report. In this new literacies infused unit, Teacher B explored how online resources can promote students' autonomy and how blogs can stimulate their interest in learning English.

4.7.4.1 Teaching sequence and tasks

The new literacies-infused lessons for this class were based on the theme and language focus of Chapter 6, 'Help Save the Animals' in *Longman Welcome to English 5B*. Teacher B set up a blog using *EdBlog*, a resource provided by the Hong Kong Education Bureau's teacher and school website, *Education City*, so that students could post messages and responses on topics about endangered species. Students were also introduced to some useful websites and shown videos from *YouTube* to contextualise the unit. For the unit task, students were asked to produce an information report about an endangered species modeled on the sample planning and report posted in Teacher B's blog. Working together in small groups, students searched the Internet and looked at information sites such as *Wikipedia*, to find photos and facts about their chosen species to enrich their report writing.

The sequence of activities and tasks in this new literacies-infused unit was as follows:

1. The teacher explained the topic and objectives of the project to the students.
2. The teacher's blog was introduced and some useful websites on endangered species were viewed and discussed. Students were invited to respond to the teacher's blog by leaving comments.
3. The language and sentence patterns required for report writing were taught.
4. Students were shown a *YouTube* video about a baby tiger. Their responses to the video and the issues of endangered animals were elicited and posted on the blog. To encourage students to participate in class more actively, the teacher asked students to give responses on the issue of keeping baby orang-utans as pets.
5. Students looked for facts about their chosen animal species on the Internet

6. Students searched for and selected images to add to their report. Support for report writing features was provided on the blog.
7. Students collaboratively wrote the information report in groups and co-edited their work with the teacher.

4.7.4.2 Student work

Student groups chose different endangered animals to research, such as sea turtles and the Chinese White Dolphin. Students' reports contained many of the features of an information report including facts about the animals, their habitat and why they are endangered. One group used a question and answer in their report to interact with the reader. Students' paid some attention to font size and the layout of their reports, and all reports contained photos. One report on the endangered fish, So-mei, included an image of Napoleon Bonaparte to illustrate the English name of the fish, Napoleon wrasse, and show the similarities between Napoleon's hat and the shape of the fish's head. Overall, students' reports achieved the learning outcomes of the task, and some reports demonstrated effective use of visual strategies for meaning making.

4.7.4.3 Student learning and reflection

After the project was completed, the research team interviewed selected P5 students to find out their views on their learning experiences during the new literacies-infused activities. Students reported that the information they found on the Internet supported and extended what they had learnt in the textbook. They also commented on the benefits of collaborative group work:

Student A: *We can be more active in class. In the past, we just sat in the classroom, listening to our teachers, reading books... Now, we can look for information on the Internet and give a presentation. We can have group discussions. We might not fully understand what we've just learnt about in the textbook. This type of activity can help us understand.*

Interviewer: *Do you prefer writing information texts by yourself or as a group?*

Students: *As a group.*

Interviewer: *Can you tell me why?*

Student A: *As a group, we can cooperate to produce better work. Each of us has different ideas and it's good to put them together.*

There was also evidence of reflection on language use, particularly in terms of vocabulary. In the following interview extract, students explained how using the Internet helped them to deepen their understanding of new vocabulary, and how they discussed the choice of vocabulary used in their reports. The extract also shows that students had developed some capacity in language analysis and possessed good discussion skills:

Student A: *In this unit, we learnt lots of English vocabulary items to talk about endangered animals. Most of the words were new to us. The ones we didn't know we looked up in the dictionary or checked on the Internet. So we've learnt these words now.*

Interviewer: *Apart from arguing about photo selection, did your group mates argue about vocabulary use and sentences structure?*

Student A: *We argued about the use of vocabulary as there can be more than one meaning for some words. We discussed and argued again and again, and eventually we wrote this piece of work.*

Overall, the students found that the information report task on endangered animals was enhanced through the use of the Internet and the teacher's blog. They benefitted from group work and took more responsibility for their own learning.

4.7.4.4 Teacher reflection

Teacher B commented on the benefits of blogging and the effectiveness of composing multimodal information texts based on students' online research, reflecting that these approaches aroused students' interest in learning and particularly benefitted those students who did not enjoy traditional learning approaches. Teacher B also reported learning interesting facts about the endangered animals from the students.

Teacher B reflected on the ways in which students had interacted on the teacher blog through their comments. Students seemed motivated to comment on the blog and had attempted to interact naturally despite their limited English skills. Their interaction prompted Teacher B to reflect on how the students could be better supported in online commenting in the future:

I think they are motivated by looking at the blog because it's the first time I showed them my blog. They never knew that I had one. So, they were quite motivated, and

quite interested and excited about my blog. Almost every day I had a few entries. And every lesson, if they had free time, they had to log in to my blog, and give responses, write a few more. I thought they [wouldn't be able to] do it. Some of them could. Some of them couldn't. I can't say that most of them are good at giving responses because if you look at their responses, most of them copied what I [...] told them. Or just simply said, "I agree." "Yes!" or "No!" I mean, it's a lack of variety of sentence patterns. Probably I need to work on that next year, if I do the same thing. I have to give them... more sentence patterns first before they can give responses. You know, their English is not good, generally speaking. So, it's kind of difficult for them to give responses. It's a different story if it's Chinese. I think it's better if I show them some other responses first, before they make their own.

(Post-project teacher interview)

Teacher B also remarked on the fact that the group activity seemed to motivate those students who had had problems paying attention and staying on task in the past. The multimodal information report seemed to motivate these students to work more seriously and more efficiently. They were also proficient in the use of the technology:

There are four students who are really troublesome in lessons all the time, sleeping in class, making funny noises, not doing their homework, you know. And I was really surprised that when four of them came together, when I looked at them and when they worked, they were really like... one leader giving out orders, one looking at pictures, one looking for information, and then one really typing it. They were really effective and that's why they were the first group to finish. And their work... and they understood what I was saying. They could download the file and then upload it again and stick pictures inside. It just surprised me. I didn't think that they would be able to finish it. In the end, they were the first to finish.

(Post-project teacher interview)

Finally, Teacher B reported also having learnt from the students, recounting an example related to the group who researched the endangered fish species, So-mei, in particular, their multimodal analysis and representation of the English name for the fish (Napoleon wrasse):

About Napoleon, because So-mei... I didn't know, not when they told me... They said the reason why the technical name is also [...] Napoleon [wrasse] is because the face

of a So-mei looks like Napoleon wearing a hat. And they actually put a picture of a So-mei and a picture of Napoleon with a hat together, and joined them with an arrow. I think it's really funny. I think they know something. I mean, they know something that I don't and it just amused me. I'm the facilitator, right? It's not like I know everything. It's impossible for me to know everything. Sometimes, students find something that I don't know. Then I have to check it out myself. So, it's not like I am one-way teaching. It's like both ways. I am learning as well. You know, at the same time. It's just different levels.

(Post-project teacher interview)

Overall, Teacher B felt that the use of the Internet and multimodal resources greatly enhanced the report writing task, students' language learning, and more generally, students' confidence and motivation.

4.7.5 Primary 6 'Memories of School Life'

For the Primary 6 students, who were soon to graduate from the school, a unit of work on 'Memories of School Life' was designed incorporating new literacies. Making use of mobile technologies, such as digital cameras and mobile phones, students recorded things that were meaningful for them around the school. They then used *Photo Story* to put everything together as a digital book with visual and audio elements. The students' photo stories were shown during the tea reception at their graduation ceremony, where parents, guests, teachers and all other P6 students were able to view their productions.

Through this project, Teacher B aimed to explore the effectiveness of using multimodal forms of text to arouse students' interest in learning English. Specifically, they wanted to explore whether mobile technologies, such as digital cameras and mobile phones, could maximize students' participation and motivation. The unit followed the language focus and topic of Chapter 6, 'Memories of School Life' in *Longman Welcome to English 6B*.

4.7.5.1 Teaching sequence and tasks

Throughout the project, the teacher provided the students with topic-related language scaffolding and guided them in the planning of their photo stories. Students brought along

their mobile phones and digital cameras to take photos of their favourite classmates, teachers, and places at school, and to record interviews with some of their teachers. The photos and recordings became resources for their work. The key stages of the project are explained below:

Step 1: Introducing the project and providing language input

Teacher B introduced the topic of the unit ‘Memories of School Life’ to the students, and explained that they were going to create a memory book using the *Photo Story* program. Teacher B and the students discussed what type of information should be put in their presentations and what kinds of photos they should take to capture their memories in the best way. Students worked in groups and each individual had a clear job allocation for the task. To provide language input for the photo stories, students were introduced to the use of adjectives and their superlative forms that could be used to describe their classmates or their feelings about studying at the school.

Step 2: Taking photos around the school

Students were given time to go around the school and take photos of and with their teachers and classmates using digital cameras or mobile phones. They were also encouraged to take photos of their favourite places on campus, in order to meaningfully capture their memories of their final year at school.

Step 3: Recording teacher interviews with digital cameras

Teacher B first taught the students how to prepare relevant interview questions and then had the students practise writing questions in their groups. After this, Teacher B staged a demonstration of an effective interview with a group of students and got students to practise interviewing each other in pairs as a warm up activity before they conducted interviews of their own.

One group of students interviewed Teacher C, an English and PE teacher, and another group conducted an interview with the school NET. Students appeared to enjoy recording their interviews with teachers and both groups attempted find out what their favourite teachers thought of them.

Step 4: Producing the photo stories

In their groups, students selected the photos they wanted to use in their presentations and worked collaboratively to create suitable captions. They then reviewed the layout and impact of their products – a process they enjoyed. The reviewing process also helped develop their critical and aesthetic awareness in relation to aspects such as the colour of the fonts and the transitions between images. After that, students selected appropriate music or songs to provide the background for their production.

Once students' photo story presentations were completed, Teacher B reviewed each group's product and co-edited the work with the students.

Step 5: Presenting photo stories at the graduation

The *Photo Story* presentations produced by the P6 students were shown during the tea reception at the graduation ceremony in July 2009 for guests, parents, teachers and schoolmates to view and enjoy.

4.7.5.2 Student Work

Students' photo stories were highly personal and expressive and contained a range of self-gathered photos of their friends, teachers and key locations in the school.

Students realised their photo stories in different ways. Some groups took up the suggested language focus of superlative adjectives and used these to describe their friends, while others used their own language resources to express their ideas. Some students used the narration function to record their voices, reading aloud their captions, while others used only captions,

The choice of music greatly impacted upon the personal and reflective character of the students' photo stories. It was evident that students put thought into this process, choosing particular popular songs because the lyrics expressed positive emotions and meanings related to their graduation (e.g., they were on topics such as saying goodbye, following your dreams, and so on). The fact that some students chose songs with English lyrics and listened to these lyrics carefully, demonstrated students' engagement with the task as well as their active participation in global popular culture.

4.7.5.3 Student reflections on learning

In the post-project interviews with students from Teacher B's P6 class, students said that they

enjoyed being given the chance to go around the school and take photos and interview teachers for their photo stories. They also found that the photo story creation process gave them more opportunities to interact with their classmates and learn English from each other than traditional activities:

Student A: *We've never done an activity like this before. In English lessons, we just listened to the teacher. Now we've used computer in the lessons as well.*

Student B: *We have more opportunities to communicate with our classmates if there are more activities like this. We discussed how to use English. We helped and learnt from each other. For example, when we had to type some words in the photo story, we reminded one another if we forgot the right words.*

Interviewer: *You're going to secondary school in September. Would you like to have these kinds of activities at secondary school?*

Students: *Yes!*

Student A: *I've learnt how to use Photo Story. I may use it again for other projects in the future.*

Student B: *I seldom get to take photos around the school. Now I have the chance to do it. So we can keep the photo story as a reminder, even after the end of the project.*

(P6 student interview)

One group of students recounted their experience of conducting a teacher interview – the initial challenges of speaking and taking notes in English and how they used a camera to record the interview. The students in this extract also demonstrated self-awareness as users of English and an awareness of self-assessment strategies.

Student C: *Yeah, we used the camera to record the interview.*

Interviewer: *Have you watched the recording after that?*

Students: *Yes!*

Reporter: *Do you think it was helpful to use the camera to learn and listen to English? What are some of the benefits?*

Student A: *We usually just listen and don't really speak English in English lessons.*

Interviewer: *Did you ever have the chance to hear yourself speaking in English before?*

Students: *Seldom.*

Interviewer: *So, it was a new experience. What did you think about it?*

Student D: *It was very funny to hear myself speaking English. I never heard myself speaking English before.*

Interviewer: *How about the others?*

Student A: *I realised that I can actually talk in English.*

Student C: *I realised that sometimes what I said in English wasn't exactly what I intended to say. I found this out when I listened to the recording. For example, I made some grammatical mistakes that I would have corrected.*

Student B: *Sometimes when you hear yourself, you realise that you don't speak very fluently, or you don't even understand what you're talking about. We should try to speak more English in the future.*

Student A: *After we recorded the interviews, there was no time to finish the photo story because schools were suspended for two weeks because of the outbreak of H1N1 flu. We got all the photos, but couldn't put them in. I mean, the teacher interviews.*

Interviewer: *What would you have done if school hadn't been suspended?*

Student A: *We would have put the recordings of the interviews with [Teacher D] and [Teacher C] into the photo story.*

(P6 student interview)

The activities in this unit gave students a chance to employ English for a real purpose, which in turn made them more confident in using English. Students also developed collaborative skills through working in groups and thought the experience was helpful in preparing them for the teamwork required in secondary school:

Student A: *When we were making our photo story, we all had different opinions. But in the end, we were still able to create one together.*

Interviewer: *How different were your opinions? How did you compromise in a group of five?*

Student B: *All of us have different views on the use of English grammar and spellings.*

Student C: *We think this learning approach is more interactive and it encourages cooperation within the group. Also, it can help us adapt to teamwork at secondary school.*

Interviewer: *How do you think the Photo Story activity has helped you learn English?*

Student C: *It helped us learn some English vocabulary that we don't usually use in*

daily life. It also gave us more opportunities to speak English. And we got the chance to display our work and do an interview. This has improved our ability to express ourselves.

(P6 student interview)

The above interview extracts demonstrate students' strong awareness of their own learning processes, strategies and preferences, both in terms of language learning and in terms of developing the generic skills of collaboration, communication and self-assessment. The extracts also demonstrate students' strong personal investment into the task and their final product.

4.7.5.4 Teacher reflections

Teacher B thought that the photo story activity was highly engaging and greatly enhanced language learning. It was an enjoyable and effective way for students to record their memories of their primary school life and helped students increase their sense of belonging at their school. The experience of displaying their work for their schoolmates, teachers, parents and guests on their graduation day was also felt to be a valuable and memorable one for the students:

'Memories of School Life' is a perfect topic for my P6 students. During the process, I enjoyed looking at them learning things from it. Especially the part when they went to take pictures with their teachers, with their classmates and other things. And I really think that they've increased their sense of belongingness to the school. So generally, I think it's really great!

Teacher B found that teaching and learning with new literacies was not only enjoyable for the students, who became more motivated, took a more active role, and demonstrated creativity in their learning, but also for the teacher:

Teacher: *It makes my teaching better; I think.*

Interviewer: *In what ways?*

Teacher: *In a creative way. It's not like I follow the books and do everything... Do the homework, you know. Homework is just like an exercise book. You know, it's really boring. But now that I've joined this project, and made my students join the project... we joined together. And I found that they're much happier to do homework using new literacy. I'm happy to*

teach them this way. And my students are happy to do the assignments. I don't have to ask them to come to me. They come to me and ask me, when can they use the computers? When can they use Photo Story? When will I go there and help them? You know. They would ask me. They really take on an active role. But for other traditional assignments, they don't do that. I think this is the biggest success.

Finally, Teacher B suggested that, being multimodal, new literacies could usefully be infused into teaching and learning across the curriculum, particularly with topics closely related to everyday life, and that this could make learning more authentic and hence more interesting and engaging for students.

4.7.6 Conclusions and recommendations

The review of the three new-literacies infused projects above highlighted many positive learning outcomes for both students and teachers. Students were highly engaged in using digital and mobile technology in their English lessons, and made excellent use of various multimodal resources, including linguistic, visual and musical, to express meanings. The P6 project 'Memories of School' was particularly personal and authentic, a fact that was reflected strongly in students' photo story presentations, and in their desire to improve their work.

Students also gained a great deal from collaborating with others. They appeared to take more responsibility for their learning, particularly in the way they used Internet resources to solve linguistic or content-oriented challenges. They also found themselves discussing language choices in depth with their peers, which helped develop their language awareness and understanding of the relationship between form and meaning.

It was reported that the new literacies units particularly engaged those students who were weaker in terms of their academic performance or in terms of their motivation to learn. Teacher B in particular reported that, in both the P5 and P6 project, students who generally had difficulty staying on task and being motivated in traditional lessons, became highly focused and motivated in the new literacies infused units.

One aspect of the new literacies projects that seemed to be particularly motivating for students was the process of sharing and ‘publishing’ their work (e.g., at the Graduation Tea Reception, or by posting comments on the teacher’s Endangered Species blog). The process of sharing created an interested audience for their work and involved students in authentic communication in English.

Another significant outcome of the new literacies unit was the teachers’ professional enrichment and satisfaction in seeing students become more engaged in learning and more motivated to learn. Teacher B, in particular, demonstrated a strong understanding of the role and importance of new literacies, multimodality and new technologies across the curriculum.

The following recommendations are made by the project researchers:

- Given the evidence that new literacies-infused learning and teaching engages more students in the learning process, in particular, those students previously identified as being academically less able and/or lacking in motivation, there is a strong reason to continue incorporating new literacies into the English language curriculum. It is suggested that teachers carry out small-scale action research projects that particularly target low performing or marginalised students.
- Although the students at this school engaged with the various multimodal resources effectively and intuitively, it is suggested that teachers could more explicitly teach the particular multimodal features of the texts that students are to produce. For example, with regard to captions and narration, students need to understand both the linguistic features of effective captions and the differences between narration and captions in terms of function and structure. For the recorded narrations, students could be guided to focus more on fluency and intonation of their oral performance in order to make their presentations more effective. The recording function of *Photo Story* could also be further exploited to help students improve their pronunciation.
- Students’ choice of music in the P6 ‘Memories of School’ project, and their explanations regarding these choices, showed that students’ decisions related to the multimodal aspects of their work were meaningful and personal. This could be explored more explicitly in the classroom. This project also revealed that students’

interest in English language popular music was a potential area that teachers could exploit to increase students' engagement with English.

- Although the territory-wide school closures that occurred during the project meant that students did not have time to insert the interviews they had recorded with their teachers into their photo stories, it was clear that they strongly wished to do so. In future projects of a similar nature and theme, teachers could encourage students to use the free video-editing software *Movie Maker* to edit and present their short films.
- It is also recommended that teachers enable their students to share or 'publish' the work produced in all new literacies infused projects or units. The process of public sharing – on a blog, a discussion forum, or at an authentic school event such as the Graduation Tea Reception – gives students the chance to engage purposefully and authentically with the English language.

Chapter 5 Cross Case Analysis and Discussion

This chapter provides a cross case analysis and discussion of the findings from the participating schools' new literacies projects, as described in Chapters 3 and 4. The new literacies-infused units in all twelve schools were reviewed to explore commonalities and differences in four key areas. Firstly, schools' readiness for new literacies is discussed, in particular, teachers' existing pedagogies which were conducive to new literacies, computer access and ICT support available in the school, and students' experience and interest in new literacies. The second area relates to curriculum planning and pedagogy and the ways that schools incorporated new literacies into their existing curriculum. This includes the teaching strategies they used, the technical support required, and how teachers engaged with multimodality, sharing, and creativity. The third area focuses on students' responses to new literacies in the classroom, particularly students' level of motivation and sense of ownership in new literacies tasks, what existing cultural, communicational and technology related experiences and knowledge they brought to the classroom, and whether new literacies helped to improve their English language proficiency. Next, teachers' professional development is discussed, what they gained from participating in the project and the challenges they faced, and the factors which impacted upon schools' continuation of new literacies in the subsequent months after the implementation of their curriculum units.

5.1 Readiness for new literacies

In Stage One of the project, researchers interviewed participating teachers and students and observed English language lessons in each school to understand their "readiness" for new literacies, in other words, the existing practices and pedagogies which would facilitate the integration of new literacies into the curriculum.

In terms of pedagogy, it was found that student-centred approaches to teaching and learning English would be most conducive to new literacies principles of authentic communication, creativity and the involvement of students' identities in the lesson. The majority of the twelve schools adopted principles of communicative and task-based approaches to language teaching, as promoted in the English language curriculum. In these approaches, language is encountered in real world contexts and used for meaningful communication and to achieve meaningful goals. The majority of schools based their English language curriculum on the

published textbook which was organized around themes and topics and attempted to promote meaningful language use, which most teachers exploited.

It was observed in the majority of project schools that students were encouraged to communicate with each other in pair and group work activities and tasks formed the basis of lessons. Some participating teachers had particularly communication-rich environments (e.g. School 09, School 02) in which students contributed actively to the lessons, and teachers frequently asked students for their ideas, experiences and opinions. Other schools adopted more ‘traditional’ teacher centred approaches (e.g. School 11, School 01), with less active student participation and little critical thinking on the part of the students.

Teachers’ experience with and attitudes towards technology were also considered an important factor in a school’s ‘readiness’ for new literacies. All of the participating teachers had experience using basic technology in the classroom, such as Power Point presentations, and the electronic materials accompanying textbooks (e.g. School 06). A number of teachers had already used new literacies tools to enhance teaching and learning, for example, Teacher A in School 03 had used a class wiki to publish and share his students’ work. Many teachers regularly used multimedia (e.g. films, youtube videos, music), popular culture and other multimodal resources in their teaching (School 04, 09, 13). In Schools 02 and 05, one of the participating teachers was also a computer teacher, and a teacher in School 07 was already a “digital native” (Prensky, 2001). Nevertheless, several teachers expressed concern whether their own knowledge and skill with technology would be sufficient to take part in the project. However all teachers expressed a great interest in developing their technological skills and understandings of new literacies. Teachers agreed that new literacies had the potential to motivate and engage their students in English language learning. In School 02 and School 09 teachers felt that new literacies might also engage many of their weaker learners or learners with special educational needs.

Students’ experiences with new literacies and information communication technologies were seen to contribute to a school’s readiness for new literacies. The project researchers assumed that students’ knowledge, skill and enjoyment of digital literacies would facilitate new literacies-infused teaching. In the initial student-group interviews, it was found that the vast majority of students were active and regular users of digital technology and computers in their out-of-school lives. This was supported by the results of the questionnaire in which

approximately 80% of students' surveyed in the participating schools used a computer outside of school. Students also reported in the interviews that they used the Internet and online communication tools, such as email and blogs, to do homework, to communicate with friends or to pursue their hobbies and popular cultural interests. Further details of students' computer use, literacy practices and popular cultural interests are reported in Chapter 2, Student Questionnaire.

Access to computers for teaching purposes was obviously fundamental to participating in the project. All participating schools had a computer lab, and each classroom was equipped with a single computer and projector. Schools who had been designated Centres of Excellence in IT (Schools 04 and 07) also had interactive whiteboards and sets of laptops, tables or netbooks. Schools which gave students some free access to computers (e.g. School 14, and the two Centres of Excellence, Schools 04 and 07) were conducive to new literacies mindsets of participation, sharing and personal engagement in learning.

5.2 New literacies pedagogies and curriculum development

Incorporating new literacies into the English curriculum was a challenge that the participating teachers took up in various ways, drawing upon what they had learned in the project's professional development workshops to integrate new literacies into their existing curriculum and teaching practices. In most schools, the teachers worked with the project researchers to develop tasks and teaching sequences for one curriculum unit, and sought assistance from the project technical staff for support in using new literacies tools. The units of work and their implementation in the twelve participating schools were reviewed and compared to explore to what extent participating teachers took up key features of new literacies, namely, digital technology, multimodality, involvement of students' identities, online publishing and sharing, and critical engagement with texts.

5.2.1 Curricular themes, tasks, and digital tools

All of the units of work created by the project schools generally adopted task-based teaching principles as promoted in the Hong Kong Education Bureau's English Language curriculum guides for primary and secondary schools (Curriculum Development Council, 2002, 2004). That is, units were based on topics and themes purportedly related to students' lives and one

or more core tasks in which students engaged with a created meaningful texts. In terms of digital technologies, all schools incorporated one or more digital tools into their theme- or topic-based units of work (see Table 5).

Table 5: New literacies tools and curricular themes/topics

Schools	Classes	Theme/Topic	New literacies texts, tools and practices
School 01	P5	Festivals	<i>Photo Story</i>
School 02	P5	Behaving in Public	Comic strips - <i>ToonDoo</i>
	P6	Book reports	<i>PB Works</i> – wiki
School 03	P4	The Rainforest	<i>Photo Story</i> , blog
School 04	P6	The Person I Admire Most	<i>Photo Story</i> , Internet, digital mindmapping, blog
School 05	P4	Films and cartoons	Fan fiction
	P4	My Favourite Place to Visit	<i>Photo Story</i> , blog
School 06	P4	Various topics e.g. myself, my pet	Blog, <i>ToonDoo</i>
School 07	F1	My home: Tung Chung	<i>Photo Story</i>
	F3	Adventure in New Zealand	<i>ToonDoo</i>
School 08	F1	Reading Circle: <i>Mr Harris and the Night Train</i>	<i>ToonDoo</i>
School 09	F1	A school outing	<i>Photo Story</i>
	F2	Environmental pollution	<i>Photo Story</i>
	F3	Friendship	<i>Photo Story</i>
		Environmental pollution	e-posters
School 11	F3	Reader: <i>Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde</i>	<i>ToonDoo</i>
School 13	F1	Chocolate	Internet, digital mindmapping
	F3	Film reviews	<i>Photo Story</i>
School 14	P4	A day trip in Hong Kong	<i>Photo Story</i>
	P5	Save the endangered animals	blog, e-posters, Internet
	P6	Memories of school life	Mobile phones, digital cameras, <i>Photo Story</i>

In total, there were twenty different units of work across the twelve project schools, involving a range of digital tools and new literacies practices to express meanings and carry out tasks related to the theme or topic of the unit. All schools used digital tools which they had learned about and had a chance to explore during the project’s professional development workshops. A few schools incorporated other digital tools which had not been introduced in the project workshops, namely, mobile phones (School 14) and e-posters (School 14 and School 09).

The most popular digital tool was *Photo Story*, used in eleven of the twenty units of work

conducted in the twelve schools. It was seen by teachers to be a user friendly tool which did not place overly high demands on students' language use, and which had the capacity to create short, highly appealing multimodal videos containing photos, captions, narration and music. The multimodal nature of Photo Story texts was also seen to provide ample scaffolding for students' language use. The online comic strip making programme, *ToonDoo* was also very popular amongst the project schools (5 units of work) because of its ease of use, appeal to students, and the scaffolding for students' language use provided by the visual mode and the linguistic conventions of the comic strip text type. Blogs were often used to share students' digital stories and facilitate commenting and critiquing by students. In general, the decision to use the digital tools introduced to them during the project workshops may reflect teachers' relative inexperience with incorporating new literacies into classroom teaching, but it also suggests that user friendliness, appeal, and restricted or supported language use were regarded by teachers as pedagogically supportive factors in new literacies-infused teaching.

Some primary schools opted to use digital tools for traditional language and literacy activities, such as writing book reports (School 06) and diary entries (School 15). Many schools used digital tools to implement the textbook task. Three schools used digital mind-mapping as a way to organize information in preparation for writing. While these practices were, on the one hand, what Lankshear and Knobel call "old wine in new bottles" (2006), the use of the digital tool and its associated social and communicative practices opened up new opportunities for language use and language learning that had not always been anticipated by teachers or students. This will be discussed further in 5.2.3.

Only three schools (School 04, School 13 and School 14) used the Internet for searching for information, which was then used to create another digital text. The general lack of use of new technologies for information searching in the project schools was most likely because the project workshops emphasized the more creative, multimodal text producing and sharing practices of new literacies, rather than information management skills.

5.2.2 Computer access, technical support and instruction

All project schools made use of both the computer lab and the regular classroom in the implementation of the unit. School 03 also made use of the single classroom computer and allowed each group in turn to use the computer for ten minutes to compose their digital text.

In some schools, however, gaining access to the computer lab was quite challenging (e.g. School 03, School 13) and involved negotiating and swapping lessons with other subject teachers using the lab. A few schools lacked equipment such as microphones or had non-functioning equipment.

A few schools worked collaboratively with the computer teachers and incorporated one or more computer lessons into their unit of work. In some schools (e.g. School 02, School 05) one of the project teachers was also a computer teacher. This collaboration with computer teachers provided technical support to the project English teachers, alleviating some of their worries about implementing technology-enhanced teaching (see 5.4 for a further discussion of teachers' skill and identities around new technology).

Many schools engaged the support of the project technical officer and research assistants. The project staff helped with such tasks as setting up software programmes, checking that microphones were working, and assigning log-in names and passwords to students. They were also frequently available for ongoing technical support during lessons.

Despite the fact that most students had computer access outside of school, the teachers in School 03 and School 13 were very conscious of the fact that some students did not have access to computers at home. In order to ensure equal access to participation in the new literacies unit, they did not include computer or Internet based homework tasks in their curriculum units.

In terms of teaching approaches adopted in the computer lab, most schools began with teacher demonstration of the programmes, followed by independent work by students. Some schools attempted to teach individual functions of the digital technology in a step-by-step fashion, for example, to teach students how to create a Photo Story, one lesson was conducted for uploading and organizing photos, one lesson for adding captions and a final lesson for composing and recording the narration. This lock-step approach did not always work smoothly as Web 2.0 applications are designed to be learned without formal instruction, fostering individual exploration and problem solving (Jenkins, 2006a). In many cases students were able to work out for themselves the other functions of the programme before it had been officially "taught" by the teacher. Computer lessons which were more loosely organized so that students could purposefully 'multitask' - tuning into the teacher's

demonstration and seeking technical help and advice from friends to learn to use the programme according to one's needs (Jenkins 2006) - seemed to be more conducive to learning new literacies tools and more supportive of students' text composing processes.

Overall, technology access and support and how these were taken up by teachers impacted upon the implementation of new literacies-infused teaching and learning. Teachers successfully dealt with the resource configurations in each school, which consisted of a computer lab and a single classroom computer, although these were not without challenges. Having access to technical expertise and assistance was a key factor in successful implementation of new literacies for the vast majority of teachers. Lessons in the computer lab which allowed for freer exploration of the software seemed to be more appropriate for new literacies-infused learning.

5.2.2 Language teaching pedagogy and new literacies

The units of work planned and implemented by the project schools were generally informed by task-based language teaching principles and practices (Cameron, 2001; Curriculum Development Council, 2002; Willis & Willis, 2007). Students learned and used vocabulary and grammar to express ideas and personal meanings in these texts, which were considered the products of students' learning. In addition, teachers addressed two core features of new literacies: multimodality and sharing.

5.2.2.1 Task design and instructional sequences

As mentioned, the curriculum units were planned around a core task in which the students created a text using a digital tool. In most cases, there was a clear text type, a target audience and a social purpose embedded in the task (Cameron, 2001). For example, the digital stories created by P6 students in School 14 to share memories of school were shown to parents at a graduation reception. Audience, text type and social purpose were evident even when the text was imaginary as in School 03, when students took on roles of animals in the rainforest and argued for their survival in a town hall meeting. Some tasks however did not always have a wider audience or authentic social purpose beyond the classroom. Instead, students' digital texts were designed to share ideas on a particular topic to other students, for example,

creating photo stories about festivals (School 01) and creating digital stories about pollution (School 09).

In terms of sequencing instruction to support digital text creation, many schools had been influenced by process writing approaches involving stages of planning, drafting and editing in the writing process. Most of the units included an introductory stage in which the digital text was modeled and students gained some exposure to the text. Explicit teaching of targeted grammar and vocabulary was also a key stage in the unit, sometimes coming before the example or model was shown - and in many schools even before the 'new literacies' unit began - and sometimes in the process of exposing students to the model text. A few teachers used poorly created texts in order to elicit the multimodal features of the text type and develop students' ability to assess their own and others' texts. Students were then given chances to plan the content of their text which was then followed by a composing stage, usually in the computer lab. During the computer lab composing sessions, students were given feedback by peers and teachers, they had chances to share their texts with other classmates, or they worked on their digital texts in groups. All of the units ended with the sharing of their texts, but only some of the units involved online sharing.

Several schools did not give the new literacies task a central place in the larger unit, often adding the new literacies-based task at the end of the larger unit of work, and sometimes after the textbook tasks or more traditional literacy tasks had been covered. This suggests that teachers may have believed that new literacies was not able to achieve the existing curricular objectives.

5.2.2.2 *Multimodality and role of grammar and lexis*

Many teachers faced the challenge of addressing the textbook's grammatical and lexical objectives, whilst having to also support visual and audio aspects of their multimodal text. This was particularly true for those units of work based on *Photo Story*, which involved many multimodal elements such as choice of images, font size and colour, transitions and animations, and music in addition to language used in captions and in the oral narration. Comic strip making also had both linguistic and visual demands in terms of writing speech bubbles, the use of consistent backgrounds, and choice of facial expressions and gestures to convey action and emotion.

Most project teachers dealt with grammatical and lexical demands in traditional ways, allocating specific lessons and stages to teaching specific vocabulary and language structures within the set theme or topic. In general there were clear attempts to contextualize the vocabulary and grammar within the topic of the unit and the discourse of the digital text. However, vocabulary and grammar were often treated as ‘targeted’ items to be studied by students leading to traditional grammar practice activities such as decontextualised sentence creation and sentence completion i.e. “fill-in-the-gaps”. Sometimes teachers overemphasized the use of the targeted grammatical structures, which restricted students’ choices for expression and prioritized form over meaning. For example, the use of modals, imperatives and adverbs were targeted in the comic strip making task about ‘good behaviour’ in School 02. In this school, however, the teachers realized the target vocabulary and structures were not always necessary or the best alternative for expressing certain meanings. In School 04 the past participles used as adverbs (e.g. *excited*, *depressed*) was only one of many language structures and functions useful in a digital story on ‘A person I admire most’. An overemphasis on this language point made some digital stories less effective. School 02 (wiki), School 03 (digital stories) and School 07 (digital stories), by contrast, emphasized the communicative purpose of the task and text, and allowed students some freedom to use language structures which best expressed the meanings they intended. This posed challenges to teachers, who were not always ready to provide support and guidance on the language structures individual students needed for their particular text. However, this practice clearly upheld the task-based teaching principle of meaningful language use, and the importance of the connection between form and communicative function (Curriculum Development Council, 2002).

In terms of multimodality, many teachers explicitly taught students ways of discussing the multimodal elements of their new literacies texts. For example, when introducing comic strips, teachers taught students to refer to ‘frames’, speech and thinking bubbles, size of images, emotions conveyed by images, and use of backgrounds. For photo stories, teachers assisted students to talk about their photo choices, and the size, colour and location of captions. In School 03 and School 05 meanings and styles created by choice of music were also explicitly discussed with students. In the more traditional reading and writing tasks such as writing book reports on a wiki (School 02), and blogging about oneself (School 06), students were encouraged to incorporate visual elements into their texts through inserting

images or videos, and presenting their texts in an attractive manner through the use of different fonts, sizes and colour. Overall, the explicit attention to multimodality served to enhance the English language learning, which tends to prioritize language over other modes of meaning making and expression.

5.2.2.3 *Online sharing and publishing*

One of the core literacy practices associated with new digital technologies is sharing. Widespread distribution of texts is now possible with the Internet, and as a result of a potentially global audience, the nature of authorship has dramatically changed (Lankshear & Knobel, 2006). Now any ‘ordinary’ person can potentially be an ‘author’ and can attract a readership in online spaces. In the English language classroom, online sharing and publishing can offer students opportunities for genuine communication and authentic language use. Although Hong Kong teachers, including those in this project, make efforts to increase the authenticity of tasks for English language learners, they still continue to set tasks for students which are hypothetical and imaginary, or whose only audience is the teacher and, on occasion, other classmates.

All of the project schools involved students in sharing their work to the class, but only some of the schools allowed students to share on the Internet to a wider audience. Those projects which involved not only creating a digital text - for example, a photo story, a comic strip, a poster - but involved publishing online to be read by other students, other classes or other users on the Internet were seen to be exploiting the potential of new literacies to motivate and engage students as real authors. One notable example is School 02, whose P5 students created and published comic strips on the *ToonDoo* website. One student in this school created a comic strip series which became one of ‘the top 10 most viewed’ comic strips on the website during the implementation of the unit. Students’ enthusiasm for sharing, publishing, and receiving attention in the form of comments, was noted in several schools.

At the same time, teachers had to address the linguistic and interactional demands of sharing online, such as giving comments and assessing each others’ work in a supportive way. Given that many real discussion boards often contain comments which are purely evaluative (and often emotional, or sometimes rude or inappropriate), teachers had the task of helping students to assess each others’ work and express their views and assessments in an

appropriate manner online. Sometimes students' comments were simply playful or repetitive, and sometimes they criticized their peers' work in a harsh manner. As the sharing stage logically came at the end of the unit, students frequently did not have enough time to experience, learn and practice the language and skills needed for effective sharing and commenting (for example, School 04, School 05).

5.2.2.4 *Critical literacy*

Critical literacy is seen as key to an educational agenda which embraces new literacies and was one of the aims of the project. Given our text-saturated, information-saturated world, young people need to be responsible consumers and producers of texts (Anstey & Bull, 2006; Freebody & Luke, 1990; New London Group, 1996). They need to understand the ways that texts are socially, cultural, historically and politically situated, and thus how texts construct particular versions of the social world. To be literate in the 21st century, young people need to be critically aware, active participants who are able to 'design their social futures' (New London Group, 1996). Critical literacy entails the awareness and skills needed to adopt resistant reading positions with texts which may seem very ordinary and non-controversial. In addition, critical pedagogy can involve students in deliberate social action by creating and using texts with social or political intent (Larson & Marsh, 2005; Vasquez, 2004).

The project workshops included one session on critical literacy. However, no school explicitly incorporated critical literacy into their units of work. The majority of projects, instead, attempted to involve students' identities and cultural resources in their new literacies tasks, and aimed to raise awareness of the social nature of texts. One possible exception was School 13, whose panel chair had recently participated in professional development project using Freebody and Luke's *Four Resources Model* (1990) in developing literacy skills, which includes developing students' in critical textual analysis. The school used the Four Resources Model to guide their teaching of new literacies. However, while their 'Chocolate cyber hunt' unit included critical thinking in selecting and interpreting information online, it did not include critical social analyses of the texts they encountered or created. It could be argued that many of the project teachers were new to understanding literacy as a social practice, and it is possible therefore that teaching critical literacy was perceived to be too elusive by teachers.

5.3 Student learning

Across the twelve schools, teachers and students reported positive learning outcomes in terms of student motivation, personal engagement in learning, and the development of many of the nine ‘generic skills’ in the primary and secondary school curriculum (Curriculum Development Council, 2002). Students also reported gains in learning English, particularly in terms attitudes towards English, using English meaningfully, and the understanding of English language texts. Teachers also reported that new literacies engaged students who were academically low achieving, and lower levels of language proficiency or had special educational needs.

5.3.1 Motivation, engagement and ownership

The majority of students and teachers reported high levels of motivation during the new literacies curriculum units. Students found that working with multimodal digital texts or online interaction and sharing to be interesting and enjoyable, and they invested themselves into creating an interesting and engaging text. The students’ familiarity with digital literacies together with the novelty of engaging in such literacies in school and in the classroom seemed to be the key factors in the high levels of motivation. In many of the units, the task set by the teachers directly drew upon students’ identities, their interests and lifeworlds. Examples include School 04’s project on “the person I admire most”, School 05’s fan fiction writing, School 09’s project on “friendship” and School 14’s digital stories on “memories of school life”. The sense of ownership on the part of the students was so strong that some students felt that the restrictions set by the teacher⁸ on their use of language undermined their sense of ownership over their work (School 09 and School 05), or felt disappointed that they were not able to complete their texts. In the majority of schools the tasks were generally pitched appropriately to students’ level of English, and were ‘open-ended’ (Ur, 1996) so that they could be realized successfully by all students with their available language resources. Students who found the linguistic demands to be too high (School 06) expressed lack of interest and motivation in the task.

⁸ In order to scaffold the task for students, teachers often restricted the choice of grammar and lexis students could use in their texts. In addition, teachers often assisted students in constructing difficult sentences and correcting their mistakes.

Another indicator of high levels of motivation and engagement was seen in students' activity outside of class. For example, many students in School 02 continued to edit their wiki pages after school, on weekends, during the holidays and even during the summer after the academic year had finished. Some P5 students in School 05 continued to compose comic strips outside of class, and one teacher in School 14 reported that many students visited and posted comments on the Endangered Species blog frequently after class. The teacher who used the online mind-mapping programme in School 04 also reported students' enthusiastic out-of-class collaborative mind-mapping and use of the discussion boards.

As suggested in 5.2.2.3, sharing and communicating online and to a genuine audience potentially gave students powerful experiences of authentic authorship and the new literacies social practice of 'getting attention' in online environments. Students in many schools expressed that knowing that their work was being viewed and responded to was highly motivating. This was achieved clearly in School 02 through the creation and publishing of comic strips on the *ToonDoo* site, and in the blogs and wikis used in others schools to share their work. School 14 also gave students a genuine audience through showing students' photo stories of school memories at a P6 graduation reception for parents. However, receiving negative comments and receiving insincere or 'empty' comments from peers were experienced as demotivating by many students.

5.3.2 Developing generic skills

The Hong Kong curriculum identifies nine 'generic skills' which enable students to acquire, construct and apply knowledge to solve problems. These generic skills are to be developed in primary and secondary school across all subjects, and are embedded into classroom pedagogies. The generic skills are in line with a task-based and communicative teaching methodologies promoted in English language curriculum policy documents, and are strongly aligned with new literacies practices and pedagogic principles. Teachers and students in the twelve schools consistently reported that new literacies facilitated students' development in several of the nine generic skills.

Firstly, it developed students' information technology skills, particularly their ability to present ideas and information via digital tools in online environments. While many students were already familiar and comfortable using Web 2.0 tools and interacting in such

environments, the vast majority of students learned new IT skills through the use of photo story, *ToonDoo*, online mindmapping, and blogging. Many of the primary students also developed keyboard skills, basic software use and information management skills.

Secondly, the majority of schools reported that students had developed the generic skill of creativity, particularly in combining visual and verbal resources to create new and interesting texts. Creating new meanings through multiple semiotic resources is one of the core practices of new literacies. In schools where students were given chances to use digital text making tools in an exploratory fashion, students' creativity was further developed as they drew on many different cultural and linguistic resources and not only the targeted language of the unit.

Students also developed their collaboration and communication skills. As they worked together to create a new literacies text, or as they shared and discussed their texts online, they developed abilities in providing support to each other, in interacting with each other in effective and collegial ways, and in assessing each other's work. This does not suggest however that all students collaborated harmoniously. In fact, as mentioned above, students experienced times when the collaboration was demotivating or ineffective, for example when they received insincere, empty or overly negative comments. Nevertheless, these experiences, while unpleasant, served to deepen students' understanding of effective collaboration and communication as they reflected upon what made their peers' comments ineffective. As students worked to decide on the appropriate and most effective language, image, voice quality, music, and colour to create their multimodal digital texts, together with the expectation of online sharing to a wider audience, their awareness of the communicative impact of their choices was greatly heightened. Many of student interviews and classroom observations suggest that students often discussed word and other multimodal choices at length in the composing process (for example, School 03 and School 07).

Finally, many students and teachers reported gains in self management skills. Many students reported a strong sense of achievement and accomplishment in creating and sharing their new literacies texts, which gave them greater confidence in using English meaningfully and authentically. Several teachers also reported that new literacies particularly gave confidence to students who had lower levels of language proficiency and/or academic performance.

5.3.3 Understanding multimodality and digital texts

To a large extent, students' understanding and awareness of texts as multimodal had been greatly enhanced in the majority of projects. Students' awareness of the multimodal, textual features of digital presentations, comic strips, blog entries and other multimodal text types had been enhanced. This was observed during students' composing processes in class, by examining students' work, and was further highlighted by students during post project interviews, many of whom were able to discuss their choices of image, language and music in their texts and critique their effectiveness. It was also evident from viewing students' texts that they had tacit and experiential knowledge of multimodality and the social nature of digital texts, which were drawn upon in the process of formal teaching and learning in the classroom. This indicated that new literacies teaching and learning may have served to bridge students' in-school and out-of-school worlds in meaningful ways.

Some students' work, however, used visual elements such as colour, font and images for decorative purposes rather than as key meaning making resources (for example, School 02, wiki-based book reports). Nevertheless, students clearly felt a degree of ownership over their design choices, an attitude deemed central to new literacies-infused pedagogies (see 5.3.1 above). Overall, teachers' and students' conceptual understanding and use of metalanguage for discussing multimodal elements of texts was still developing and thus multimodality remained largely at the intuitive level.

As mentioned above, project schools did not actively teach critical literacy, or how texts use language and other meaning making modes to construct particular versions of the social world and social relations which are open to challenge and social critique. Despite this, the attention to multimodal text creation and design and a strong sense of audience in many of the projects enabled some students to be critically engaged in their text making. One notable example were several comic strips made by P5 students in School 2, who challenged the adult-child relationships inherent in the textbook task on good behaviour in public, and critiqued authoritarian teacher roles and coercive teacher stances towards students, thus using their comic strips as social critique, similar to political cartoons in newspapers and magazines.

5.3.4 Improving English

In the post project student interviews, many students reported having improved their English

during the new literacies infused curricular units. Many students referred specifically to increasing their vocabulary in the process of creating and sharing their new literacies texts and in collaborative text writing. Some students mentioned the advantages of learning authentic English in online environments.

Many teachers and students noted that there were numerous grammatical mistakes and errors in their final texts (for example Schools 01, 02, 03, 06). Some teachers were concerned that students had not fully used the targeted grammatical structures. Many students expressed that they had wanted to improve their texts and edit them, however, there was no time for another stage of editing and drafting. Students in School 11 expressed doubts that creating comic strips had improved their writing skills, although they enjoyed the activity. As mentioned in Chapter 3, section 3.3, the students' skepticism may be due to their experience of more traditional, print-based reading and writing valued and promoted in school.

It was apparent to the project researchers that new literacies were sometimes in tension with traditional approaches to language teaching in which the learning of fixed sets of lexical and grammatical structures dominated. While the researchers maintained that new literacies supported the student-centred, task-based approach to language teaching and learning promoted in the Hong Kong curriculum guide for English Language, linguistic accuracy and the learning of discrete sentences and vocabulary were still core concerns of both students and teachers and were thus central to their understandings of what it meant to "improve" English language proficiency. Nevertheless, many project teachers acknowledged that the chance to use English meaningfully and personally in interesting ways improved students' communicative and pragmatic competence.

5.4 Teachers' professional development

The project was very well received by the participating teachers. The vast majority of project teachers enjoyed and benefitted from the project workshops. Many of them reported that they were excited by the learning potential of the free, Web 2.0 digital tools which were introduced in the workshops. The project workshops and the subsequent implementation of new literacies infused units of work expanded teachers' repertoire and experience in using digital tools in the English curriculum and in general, made teachers more open to using new literacies in the future.

Firstly, the majority of teachers developed their skills in computer and technology use. The vast majority of teachers learned to use a new programme, such as *Photo Story*, *ToonDoo*, a wiki or a blog. Many teachers also gained experience in conducting lessons in the computer lab and learned how to monitor students' online interaction and provide support and feedback. A number of teachers however expressed some frustration in using technology and still lacked confidence in their technical skills to be able to continue confidently with new literacies infused teaching. Some teachers (particularly those in School 06) felt concerned about the amount of time needed to read and respond to their class' weekly blog postings. Other teachers felt that the technical support needed and the limited access to the computer lab made implementing new literacies somewhat problematic. One teacher in School 04 however remained very positive about using digital tools even when the use of the mind-mapping programme failed to function in the classroom. Because her students' overcame these problems by continuing the mind-mapping task outside of school and using the discussion boards for interaction and collaboration, she was able to see how the software enabled collaboration and language learning.

Several teachers (for example in Schools 02, 04, 08, 09, 14) felt that the gains they observed in student learning and motivation were not only surprising but also beyond their initial expectations. Many teachers expressed how new literacies engaged lower performing students, students who had been less motivated in English lessons and students with special educational needs such as dyslexia. Many of these teachers were thus motivated to use new literacies in their curriculum in the future. One teacher in School 08 also expressed a deepened understanding of task-based teaching and learning, that is, how students' desired meanings should drive language use and language choices, and not the other way around.⁹

Teachers developed a basic metalanguage for multimodality and online interaction. This was viewed by the project researchers as a positive starting point for further work in new literacies- infused language teaching and for assessment of students' multimodal texts and online interaction. However core issues in assessing new literacies were not explicitly addressed in most of the project schools. Burke and Hammett (2009) argue that when

⁹ In other words, when the language structure and vocabulary items are identified first, and various topics and social situations are then found to support them. This can often lead to inauthentic language or highly contrived topics and contexts.

embracing new literacies in the curriculum and the classroom, assessment practices need to be reconceptualised to include multimodality, creativity, collaboration and dispersion, and other mindsets and social practices. Teachers in the project tended to adhere to traditional text-based and print based criteria for assessing students' work, and were not fully prepared for explicitly and deliberately (but formatively) assessing creativity or criticality in students' work, the quality of online interaction and peer feedback, the complexities of image, colour, and musical choices in digital design. Certainly, these areas of assessment emerged for teachers as they carried out their units of work and observed students' work and response.

5.5 Further development of new literacies-infused teaching

One year after the project schools had completed their new literacies units of work, a short survey and a follow up interview were conducted to find out if the project schools had continued to carry on with new literacies in the future. Nine of the twelve project schools responded. Four primary schools (02, 04, 05, and 14) reported that they had continued to implement new literacies in the English curriculum. These schools reported that they had refined the units they had taught during the project and had taught them again. The remaining five schools had not used new literacies after they had completed the project. They gave many different reasons such as lack of time for planning and preparation, lack of access to the computer labs, and that key teachers had left the school and new teachers had not sufficient training to carry out new literacies. Most of these schools also cited other aspects of the syllabus which had greater priority over new literacies. It is interesting to note that of the five schools who did not carry on with new literacies, four were secondary schools and one was a primary school. The pressure on the syllabus was considered particularly strong for secondary schools, who had to prepare students for high stakes examinations. The four schools who did carry on with new literacies were all primary schools, two of these schools had computer teachers in their team, and one school had been named a Center of Excellence for IT. It is likely then that the combination of technical support and lower pressure from high stakes, traditional print-based exams were factors in the four schools continuing to implement new literacies-infused teaching.

5.6 Conclusions

In conclusion, the project researchers, teachers and students identified many gains in English language learning during the new literacies project. The most significant learning was in terms of generic skills, motivation and attitudes to learning English, and a strong sense of authentic authorship. There were also some gains in learning vocabulary and grammar. New literacies had engaged weaker learners and those with special educational needs. Both students and teachers not only developed IT skills, but they also engaged with new textual forms which were more closely in line with everyday, digitally-mediated communication. Teachers developed their teaching repertoires in terms of using digital technology, teaching in a more student-centred way involving students identities and interests, and in understanding the importance meaningful language use within tasks and texts. Both students' and teachers' awareness of multimodality and understanding of the socially situated nature of texts was greatly heightened. Some teachers developed collaborative working relations with computer teachers and were able to usefully integrate English language learning with the computer curriculum.

However, there were still many challenges for teachers and students as they grappled with new technological skills, access to computers and the Internet during the school day, teaching multimodality and critical literacy, and with understanding assessment within new literacies mindsets. Teachers and students were also challenged by the role of grammar and vocabulary, as traditionally taught in Hong Kong classrooms and textbooks, within new literacies teaching and learning pedagogy. For many schools, and particularly secondary schools, these challenges persisted after the project had finished and hindered them from continuing to implement new literacies in their English language curriculum.

The successes of this project need to be nurtured and the challenges need to be addressed in the near future if English language teachers are to integrate new literacies into a curriculum aimed at meeting the demands of contemporary society. With this in mind, the final chapter outlines key recommendations from the New Literacies Project to Hong Kong primary and secondary schools and English language teachers for further developing new literacies in the English language curriculum.

Chapter 6 Recommendations

One of the key insights from this project is that integrating new literacies into the English language curriculum by teachers and students is a complex and multifaceted process, involving new concepts such as multimodality, sharing, creative authoring; new technological skills; and new pedagogical orientations and approaches. These are only understood within individual school and curriculum priorities, and from teachers' and students' individual and collective perspectives. Nonetheless, the project findings discussed in Chapter 5 strongly indicate that new literacies can positively impact upon student learning in English language and promote many of the generic skills and values and attitudes promoted in the school curriculum. Below, the good practices in this project that led to such positive learning outcomes are identified:

- **Student-centered, task-based, meaning-driven approaches to English language teaching are highly conducive to new literacies, which are primarily motivated by social relations, i.e. the sharing of information and ideas and the consolidation of peer-networks.** Tasks in which students' identities are centrally involved are more motivating and engaging. Such student-centered tasks help to build bridges between students out-of-school and in-school literacy practices, and align with the creative expression, collaboration and sharing afforded by many new literacies.
- **Texts should be understood as multimodal.** It is important when considering contemporary texts to conceptualize meaning-making in terms of multimodality, which includes grammar and vocabulary and written and spoken language, but also includes images, colour, music and layout and other modalities. Grammar and vocabulary aims should be developed as part of the broader social and communicative purposes of the task, with attention to fluency and accuracy motivated by the communicative intents and desires of the student-author.
- **Online sharing and publishing should be further exploited to give students' authentic and genuine experiences of communicating in English.** Online sharing fosters in students' a sense of ownership of their work. This in turn heightens their awareness of the importance of language accuracy and appropriateness, and develops

their control over and understanding of the meaningful and purposeful use of other multimodal elements. Related to this, online community ‘affinity groups’ (J. Gee, 2005) should be built amongst students and the wider community. The social relations in these groups will help to foster students’ peer and self-assessment skills and develop generic skills of collaboration and communication.

- **New literacies should be integrated and ‘infused’ in regular English language lessons**, and not viewed as an ‘add on’ to the existing textbook and paper-based lessons. This will continue to require significant rethinking and revising of traditional curriculum materials and tasks, to make them more authentic and hence more in line with contemporary literacy practices. It will also require a substantive and ongoing commitment to teacher professional development and learning.
- **Computer lab lessons should involve ample independent work and opportunities for students to get support from each other, the teacher and other support staff as necessary.** Teacher-fronted or lock-step teaching are by and large not conducive to purposeful learning and use of Web 2.0 applications, although demonstration and ongoing support are still necessary. Students should be given ample time for composing and refining their texts, and *full* opportunities share and discuss their texts online.

As discussed in Chapter 5, the project implementation was not without its challenges and tensions. Below are the key areas needing attention if new literacies are to be more readily integrated into English language teaching and learning in the future. Some of these recommendations have broader policy implications while others can be addressed by schools and teachers:

- **Access to computers and the Internet needs to be reconceptualised.** While all schools had classroom computers and a computer lab, there was not always ready access to the computers. The ‘lab + one computer classroom’ resource setting in the majority of schools further limits the computer use to specialized lessons or as a presentation tool monopolized by the teacher. If we acknowledge that everyday literacies are deeply embedded within digital technologies, schools may need to

consider other resource configurations with regards to computers. For example, schools could design learning programs around the use of notebooks or tables and wifi, and regular classrooms be equipped with sufficient numbers of notebooks to enable them to be flexibly used as required by both students and teachers.

- Related to computer access is the **importance of providing technical support and of developing of teachers' digital literacies**. The need for technical support was very high in all of the project schools, suggesting that schools are still developing ways to use digital technology more effectively. Teachers' confidence and skills in digital literacy and technology still need improving. Teachers should be encouraged and supported in the continued development of their personal skills in using Web 2.0 applications, which are designed to be learned by the user without instruction, and continue to explore how their everyday digital literacies might be exploited in the classroom.

- Teachers also need **further professional development in using new literacies effectively in the English language classroom**. While this would be facilitated by the technological resources mentioned above, the project researchers believe that teachers need pedagogical support as well, for example, through further workshops and training, consultancies in individual schools, and through the contribution of leading individuals who are keen to develop new literacies further to share and support their colleagues. Specifically, some areas that need to be developed are:
 - Understandings of **multimodality** and the importance of a metalanguage for discussing its learning potential;
 - **Critical literacy**, and the understanding of the social and political framing and consequences of texts;
 - Developing students' interaction and **communication skills in online** forums; and
 - **Assessment approaches and methods** which address new literacies practices, such as multimodality, sharing and collaboration.

- **Teachers and schools should also consider sharing and collaboration with other schools in Hong Kong and with schools around the world**, to more genuinely engage with the global connectedness that digital technology has enabled, and to provide intercultural exchanges and a wider and authentic audience for students.

Schools, teachers, students and the wider community must be willing to rethink and reinterpret the curriculum and adopt new pedagogies - as the teachers and students in this project have done - if school learning is to engage students' hearts and minds and meaningfully connect to the wider world of the twenty first century. New literacies, with its inherent integration of intellectual, critical, and affective/emotional elements, has the potential to contribute to this rethinking, and thus open up new possibilities for genuinely meaningful education.

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Appendix 1 Student Questionnaire (English Version)

The Hong Kong New Literacies Project Student questionnaire

Class code

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Dear Students,

Thank you for your time to fill in this questionnaire.

We are interested in knowing you and your literacy practices and interests in and out of school.

This questionnaire consists of 26 questions. You will need approximately 20 minutes to complete it, but there is no time limit. Your detailed answer would be very helpful to enrich the research findings.

Hong Kong 'New Literacies' Project Team

Part A: Your Information

1. Age: _____

2. Gender (circle one): Boy Girl

3. Area where you live (e.g. Wong Tai Sin): _____

4. a. Mother's job: _____ b. Father's job: _____

5. Type of housing you live in: (tick one)

public rented staff quarters privately owned I don't know

6. Language(s)/dialect(s) you use to communicate with your family member (please tick the appropriates)

	Cantonese	Putonghua	English	Chaozhou dialect	Hakka	Fukien	Others (please specify, e.g. Japanese)
Grandparents	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____					
Mother	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____					
Father	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____					
Brother(s) / Sister(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____					
Domestic helper	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____					
Other relatives	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____					

7. Language(s) you use in English lessons in school (tick all that apply)

English Cantonese Putonghua Other: _____

8. Language(s) you use in other school subjects (tick all that apply)

English Cantonese Putonghua Other: _____

9. Have you been living in Hong Kong since you were born? Yes No

a. If you have lived in **other countries/ regions...**

**→ If "Yes", please go to Q.10
→ If "No", please go to Q.9a**

Where did you live?	You lived there when you were... (For example: 3 to 5 years old)

Part B: Literacy Activities

10. Do you use a computer outside of school?

Yes No

**→ If "Yes", please go to Q.10a-d
→ If "No", please go to Q.11**

a. Outside school, where do you usually use a computer? (tick all that apply)

at home at the library at a shop or internet café
 at a relative or friend's home other _____

b. What do you use the computer for outside of school? (tick all that apply)

doing homework doing artwork or graphic design
 uploading and watching videos online shopping
 searching for information or websites e.g. *Google* or *Yahoo*
 email making videos or movies
 instant messaging e.g. *MSN* or *ICQ* blogging e.g. *Xanga*
 photosharing playing computer games
 downloading and organizing music *Facebook*, *MySpace* or other social network
 other _____

c. From the above options, which one do you do most? _____

d. Whom do you communicate with on the internet? (tick all that apply)

friends classmates family members teachers
 net friends (friends you have met on the Internet) other _____

11. Do you have a mobile phone?

Yes

No

→ If "Yes", please go to Q.11a-b

→ If "No", please go to Q.12

a. What do you use your mobile phone for? (tick all that apply)

making/receiving voice calls

surfing the internet

taking photos

instant messaging

sending/ receiving SMS

making videos

checking email

playing games

listening to music

other _____

b. Whom do you communicate with by phone? (tick all that apply)

friends

classmates

family members

teachers

net friends (friends you have met on the Internet) other _____

12. Tick all the activities you did outside of school in the last month. (You can choose more than one language for each activity)

	Chinese	English	Other Languages
Reading books	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reading magazines	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reading comic books	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reading the newspaper	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Watching TV programmes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Watching movies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Email	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Making and uploading or watching videos online e.g. <i>YouTube</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Downloading or listening to music	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Playing TV, video or computer games	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Searching for information or websites e.g. <i>Google or Yahoo</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Instant messaging	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Doing artwork, graphic design or multimedia design	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Online shopping	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social networking online e.g. <i>Facebook, MySpace</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Photosharing online e.g. <i>Flickr</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Blogging	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part C: Your popular culture interests (Please provide full details)

(If you don't have a 'favourite', please write down the thing that you like.)

My favourites (please write down the full name)	I like this because...
13. My favourite MOVIE is...	
14. My favourite CELEBRITY (e.g. sportsmen, actor, singer etc.) is...	
15. My favourite CHARACTER (e.g. cartoon character) is...	
16. My favourite TV PROGRAMME is...	
17. My favourite SONG is...	
18. My favourite TV, VIDEO OR COMPUTER GAME is...	
19. My favourite WEBSITE is...	
20. Other FAVOURITE (please specify)	

21. Ways that I enjoy these favourites (tick all that apply)

- buy toys and other merchandise
 join online discussion groups
 visit related websites
 write stories about it and post them online
 other _____

22. Please explain and give details about the things you do involving the favourites you have mentioned in Q21.

Part D: Your Opinion

23. Do you think it is a good idea to use students' popular cultural interests (for example, songs, celebrities, movies, characters) in English lessons?

- Yes No

→ If "Yes", please go to Q.23a, skip Q.23b
→ If "No", please go to Q.23b, skip Q.23a

a. What is(are) the advantage(s) of using popular culture in English learning? (tick all that apply)

- It makes the lesson interesting We can participate actively
 It makes the lesson interactive It helps us learn from each other
 It facilitates English learning outside the classroom
 other _____

b. What is(are) the disadvantage(s) of using popular culture in English learning? (tick all that apply)

- It will not help us with exams It wastes the lesson time
 It may make students misbehave Teachers might not know what we like
 other _____

24. Please suggest ways that your popular cultural interests can be used in English learning

25. Do you think it is a good idea to use computers and the Internet (for example, reading or creating webpages, making digital movies and blogging) in English lessons?

- Yes No

→ If "Yes", please go to Q.25a, skip Q25b
→ If "No", please go to Q.25b, skip Q25a

a. What is (are) the advantage(s) of using computers and the Internet in English learning? (tick all that apply)

- It makes the lesson interesting We can participate actively
 It makes the lesson interactive It helps us learn from each other
 It facilitates English learning outside the classroom
 other _____

b. What is(are) the disadvantage(s) of using computers and the Internet in English learning? (tick all that apply)

- It will not help us with exams It wastes the lesson time
 It may make students misbehave Teachers might not know what we like
 other _____

26. Please suggest ways that computers and the Internet can be used in English learning

- Thank you for completing the questionnaire -

Appendix 2 Student questionnaire (Chinese version)

「探討香港學生新讀寫能力」研究計劃 學生問卷調查

Class code

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親愛的同學們:

多謝你參與是次問卷調查。

我們希望知道更多關於你在校內及校外運用讀寫能力的習慣。

此問卷共有二十六題，作答約需時二十分鐘，但不設時間限制。同學們仔細的回答能協助是次研究順行進行。

香港大學教育學院

「探討香港學生新讀寫能力」研究小組

甲部：你的資料

13. 年齡: _____

14. 性別 (請圈出答案): 男 女

15. 所居住的地區 (例如: 黃大仙): _____

16. a. 母親職業: _____ b. 父親職業: _____

17. 你現時居住的房屋類型: (請選一項)

公共屋邨 出租單位 員工宿舍 自置物業 不知道

18. 你在家裡所使用的語言/方言... (可選多於一項)

	廣東話	普通話	英語	潮州語	客家語	福建語	其他 (請註明, 例如: 日本語)
祖父母/ 外祖父母	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____					
母親	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____					
父親	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____					
兄弟姊妹	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____					
家務助理/ 外籍傭工	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____					
其他親友	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____					

19. 你在學校上英文課時所使用的語言: (可選多於一項)

英語 廣東話 普通話 其他: _____

20. 你在學校上其他課堂時所使用的語言: (可選多於一項)

英語 廣東話 普通話 其他: _____

21. 你由出生到現在都於香港居住嗎? 是 否

→如「是」, 請回答問題 10

→如「否」, 請回答問題 9a

a. 如果你曾經於香港以外的**其他地區** / **國家**居住 ...

你在哪裡居住?	你在那裡居住時的歲數是... (例如: 三歲至五歲)

乙部: 讀寫能力活動

22. 下課後, 你會否使用電腦?

會 否

→如「會」, 請回答問題 10a-d

→如「否」, 請回答問題 11

a. 下課後, 你會時常在哪裡使用電腦? (可選多於一項)

自己家中 圖書館內 商店或網吧內
 親戚或朋友家中 其他 _____

b. 下課後, 你使用電腦來做什麼? (可選多於一項)

做功課 設計美術品或繪圖
 上載或欣賞短片 網上購物
 搜集資料或找尋網頁, 如 “Google” 或 “Yahoo”
 收發電郵 製作短片或電影
 作即時通訊, 如 “MSN” 或 “ICQ” 撰寫網路日誌, 如 “Xanga”
 分享相片 玩電腦遊戲
 下載及整理音樂作品 到訪 “Facebook”、”MySpace”或其他社交網站
 其他 _____

c. 以上哪一項是你最常用的用途? _____

d. 你於網上溝通的對象是?... (可選多於一項)

朋友 同學 家人 老師
 網上認識的朋友 其他 _____

23. 你有沒有手提電話?

有 沒有

→如「有」, 請回答問題 11a-b
→如「沒有」, 請回答問題 12

a. 你使用手提電話來做什麼? (可選多於一項)

- 打電話/ 接聽電話 瀏覽網頁 拍照
 作即時通訊 (instant messaging) 收發文字短訊 (SMS) 製作短片
 收發電郵 玩遊戲 聽音樂
 其他_____

b. 你於電話溝通的對象是... (可選多於一項)

- 朋友 同學 家人 老師
 網上認識的朋友 其他_____

24. 你在過去的一個月內參與了下列哪些活動? (每項活動可選擇多於一種的語言)

	中文	英文	其他語言
閱讀圖書	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
閱讀雜誌	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
閱讀漫畫書籍	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
閱讀報紙	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
觀看電視節目	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
欣賞電影	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
收發電郵	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
於網上製作及分享或欣賞短片, 如 "YouTube"	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
下載或聽音樂	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
玩電視、電子或電腦遊戲	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
搜集資料或找尋網頁, 如 "Google" 或 "Yahoo"	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
作即時通訊(Instant messaging)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
設計美術品或多媒體作品、繪畫插圖	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
網上購物	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
到訪網上社交網站, 如 "Facebook" 或 "MySpace"	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
於網上分享相片, 如 "Flickr"	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
撰寫網路日誌(blogging)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

丙部: 你的流行文化喜好

(如果你對特定流行文化沒有最喜愛的事物,請寫出你對該種流行文化感興趣的例子。)

我的至愛 (請填上該項目的全名, 中英文均可)	我喜愛這些東西的原因是.....? (中英文均可)
13. 我最喜愛的 電影 是:	
14. 我最喜愛的名人是: (如: 運動員、演員、歌星等)	
15. 我最喜愛的 角色 是: (如: 卡通人物)	
16. 我最喜愛的 電視節目 是:	
17. 我最喜愛的 歌曲 是:	
18. 我最喜愛的 電視、電子或電腦遊戲 是:	
19. 我最喜愛的 網站 是:	
20. 其他 (請註明):	

27. 我曾為喜愛以上的東西而...(可選多於一項)

購買相關玩具或其他商品

加入網上討論區

到訪有關網站

撰寫相關故事並上載於網上

其他_____

28. 請說明你在 Q21 的選擇

--

丁部: 你的意見

29. 你會否希望自己喜愛的流行文化(例如: 流行曲, 明星, 電影, 卡通...)被套用於英語教學上?

會 否

→如「會」, 請回答問題 23a,
不用回答 23b

→如「否」, 請回答問題 23b,
不用回答 23a

c. 你認為套用這些流行文化的元素於英語學習的好處是甚麼? (可選多於一項)

- 增加課堂趣味 令學生更投入課堂
 令課堂更互動 促進學生互相學習
 令學習不局限於課堂上
 其他_____

d. 你認為套用這些流行文化的元素於英語學習的壞處是甚麼? (可選多於一項)

- 與考試沒有直接關係 浪費課堂時間
 影響課堂紀律 老師未必知道學生的興趣
 其他_____

30. 你會建議老師怎樣套用流行文化的元素於英語課堂上?

31. 你會否希望老師運用更多資訊科技的元素(例如: 瀏覽或製作網頁、創作數碼短片、撰寫網誌)於英語教學上?

會 否

→如「會」, 請回答問題
25a, 不用回答 25b

→如「否」, 請回答問題
25b, 不用回答 25a

c. 你認為老師運用更多資訊科技的元素於英語教學上的好處是甚麼? (可選多於一項)

- 增加課堂趣味 令學生更投入課堂
 令課堂更互動 促進學生互相學習
 令學習不局限於課堂上
 其他_____

d. 你認為老師運用更多資訊科技的元素於英語教學上的壞處是甚麼? (可選多於一項)

- 與考試沒有直接關係 浪費課堂時間
 影響課堂紀律 老師未必知道學生的興趣
 其他_____

32. 你會建議老師怎樣運用更多資訊科技的元素於英語課堂上?

-問卷完結 謝謝你的參與-

Appendix 3A Your information

Table 1: Class level

	Education level – Primary or Secondary					
	Primary		Secondary		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Primary 4	377	35.4%	0	0.0%	377	21.9%
Primary 5	371	34.8%	0	0.0%	371	21.5%
Primary 6	318	29.8%	0	0.0%	318	18.5%
Form 1	0	0.0%	211	32.2%	211	12.3%
Form 2	0	0.0%	119	18.1%	119	6.9%
Form 3	0	0.0%	326	49.7%	326	18.9%
Total	1,066	100.0%	656	100.0%	1,722	100.0%

Table 2: Distribution of gender (Item A2)¹⁰

	Education level – Primary or Secondary					
	Primary		Secondary		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Boys	516	48.4%	328	50.2%	844	49.1%
Girls	550	51.6%	326	49.8%	876	50.9%
Total	1,066	100.0%	654	100.0%	1,720	100.0%

Note 1: Two respondents did not respond to the question.

Note 2: Pearson chi-square test showed that there was no significant gender difference between primary and secondary respondents ($p = 0.482$)

Table 3: Distribution of age (Item A1)

	Education level – Primary or Secondary					
	Primary		Secondary		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Age 9	163	15.3%	0	0.0%	163	9.5%
Age 10	332	31.1%	0	0.0%	332	19.3%
Age 11	357	33.5%	1	0.2%	358	20.8%
Age 12	160	15.0%	79	12.0%	239	13.9%
Age 13	43	4.0%	135	20.6%	178	10.3%
Age 14	10	0.9%	180	27.4%	190	11.0%
Age 15	1	0.1%	164	25.0%	165	9.6%
Age 16	0	0.0%	74	11.3%	74	4.3%
>Age 16	0	0.0%	23	3.5%	23	1.3%
Total	1,066	100.0%	656	100.0%	1,722	100.0%
Median	11.0		14.0		12.0	
Inter-quartile range	1.0		2.0		4.0	
Mean	10.6		14.1		12.0	
SD	1.1		1.3		2.1	

¹⁰ The number in brackets identifies the corresponding questionnaire item (e.g., A1 is item 1 in part A).

Table 4: Area of residence (district) (Item A3)

	Education level – Primary or Secondary					
	Primary		Secondary		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
HK: Central/Western District	9	0.8%	0	0.0%	9	0.5%
HK: Eastern District	210	19.7%	1	0.2%	211	12.3%
HK: Southern District	12	1.1%	0	0.0%	12	0.7%
HK: Wan Chai	13	1.2%	0	0.0%	13	0.8%
Kln: Kowloon City	4	0.4%	9	1.4%	13	0.8%
Kln: Yau Tsim Mong	6	0.6%	126	19.4%	132	7.7%
Kln: Sham Shui Po	106	10.0%	30	4.6%	136	7.9%
Kln: Wong Tai Sin	34	3.2%	159	24.4%	193	11.2%
Kln: Kwun Tong	35	3.3%	25	3.8%	60	3.5%
NT: Tai Po	3	0.3%	1	0.2%	4	0.2%
NT: Tuen Mun	2	0.2%	75	11.5%	77	4.5%
NT: Yuen Long	4	0.4%	36	5.5%	40	2.3%
NT: Northern	8	0.8%	2	0.3%	10	0.6%
NT: Sai Kung	508	47.7%	105	16.1%	613	35.7%
NT: Sha Tin	82	7.7%	3	0.5%	85	5.0%
NT: Tsuen Wan	7	0.7%	2	0.3%	9	0.5%
NT: Kwai Tsing	20	1.9%	6	0.9%	26	1.5%
NT: Island District	2	0.2%	71	10.9%	73	4.3%
Total	1,065	100.0%	651	100.0%	1,716	100.0%

Note: Six respondents did not respond to the question.

Table 5: Type of housing (Item A5)

	Education level – Primary or Secondary					
	Primary		Secondary		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Public housing	397	37.2%	318	49.5%	715	41.9%
Rented housing	104	9.8%	88	13.7%	192	11.2%
Staff quarters	13	1.2%	5	0.8%	18	1.1%
Privately owned	296	27.8%	148	23.1%	444	26.0%
I don't know	250	23.5%	81	12.6%	331	19.4%
Other	6	0.6%	2	0.3%	8	0.5%
Total	1,066	100.0%	642	100.0%	1,708	100.0%

Note: 14 respondents did not respond to the question.

Table 6: Mother's occupation ¹¹ (Item A4a)

	Education level – Primary or Secondary					
	Primary		Secondary		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Manager / Administrator	24	2.3%	13	2.0%	37	2.1%
Professional / Associate Professional	55	5.2%	22	3.4%	77	4.5%
Clerk	34	3.2%	23	3.5%	57	3.3%
Service worker / Shop sales worker	154	14.4%	100	15.2%	254	14.8%
Craft related worker	5	0.5%	10	1.5%	15	0.9%
Plant and machine operator or assembler	1	0.1%	2	0.3%	3	0.2%
Elementary occupation*	22	2.1%	36	5.5%	58	3.4%
Homemaker	256	24.0%	181	27.6%	437	25.4%
Other occupation	7	0.7%	4	0.6%	11	0.6%
Unemployed	41	3.8%	39	5.9%	80	4.6%
Retired	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Not specified / no response	467	43.8%	226	34.5%	693	40.2%
Total	1,066	100.0%	656	100.0%	1,722	100.0%

* According to the occupation classification provided by The Census and Statistics Department (C&SD), 'Elementary occupations' includes street vendors; domestic helpers and cleaners; messengers; private security guards; watchmen; freight handlers; lift operators; construction labourers; hand packers; agricultural and fishery labourers.

Table 7: Father's occupation (Item A4b)

	Education level – Primary or Secondary					
	Primary		Secondary		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Manager / Administrator	74	6.9%	34	5.2%	108	6.3%
Professional / Associate Professional	78	7.3%	32	4.9%	110	6.4%
Clerk	44	4.1%	16	2.4%	60	3.5%
Service worker / Shop sales worker	98	9.2%	84	12.8%	182	10.6%
Craft related worker	108	10.1%	96	14.6%	204	11.8%
Plant and machine operator or assembler	60	5.6%	48	7.3%	108	6.3%
Elementary occupation*	48	4.5%	60	9.1%	108	6.3%
Other occupation	19	1.8%	8	1.2%	27	1.6%
Unemployed	31	2.9%	35	5.3%	66	3.8%
Retired	1	0.1%	7	1.1%	8	0.5%
Not specified / no response	505	47.4%	236	36.0%	741	43.0%
Total	1,066	100.0%	656	100.0%	1,722	100.0%

* According to the occupation classification provided by The Census and Statistics Department (C&SD), 'Elementary occupations' includes street vendors; domestic helpers and cleaners; messengers; private security guards; watchmen; freight handlers; lift operators; construction labourers; hand packers; agricultural and fishery labourers.

¹¹ The occupation classification applied in Table 5 and 6 is adapted from the one used by The Census and Statistics Department (C&SD). For details of the classification, please refer to the 'Quarterly Report on General Household Survey' of C&SD.

Table 8a: Have lived in Hong Kong since birth (Item A9)

	Education level – Primary or Secondary					
	Primary		Secondary		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Yes	863	81.0%	451	69.9%	1,314	76.8%
No	203	19.0%	194	30.1%	397	23.2%
Total	1,066	100.0%	645	100.0%	1,711	100.0%

Note: 11 respondents did not respond to the question.

Table 8b: Other countries or regions in which students have lived (Item A9a) (multiple responses)

	Education level – Primary or Secondary					
	Primary (n = 203)		Secondary (n = 194)		Total (n = 397)	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Shenzhen	22	10.8%	23	11.9%	45	11.3%
Guangdong Province (except Shenzhen)	49	24.1%	106	54.6%	155	39.0%
Other provinces in mainland China (except Guangdong)	52	25.6%	48	24.7%	100	25.2%
Other countries	16	7.9%	8	4.1%	24	6.0%
Not specified	74	36.5%	19	9.8%	93	23.4%

Table 8b1: Time spent in other countries or regions (Item A9a) – Total respondents (n = 397) (multiple responses)

<i>You lived there when you were...</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>From (Min.)</i>	<i>To (Max.)</i>	<i>Average Duration</i>
Shenzhen	45	11.3%	0 yrs old	13 yrs old	5.0 yrs
Guangdong Province (except Shenzhen)	155	39.0%	0 yrs old	16 yrs old	7.9 yrs
Other provinces in mainland China (except Guangdong)	100	25.2%	0 yrs old	14 yrs old	5.0 yrs
Other countries	24	6.0%	0 yrs old	9 yrs old	2.9 yrs
Not specified	93	23.4%	0 yrs old	11 yrs old	4.3 yrs

Table 8b2: Time spent in other countries or regions (Item A9a) – Primary respondents (n = 203) (multiple responses)

<i>You lived there when you were...</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>From (Min.)</i>	<i>To (Max.)</i>	<i>Average Duration</i>
Shenzhen	22	10.8%	0 yrs old	9 yrs old	3.4 yrs
Guangdong Province (except Shenzhen)	49	24.1%	0 yrs old	13 yrs old	4.4 yrs
Other provinces in mainland China (except Guangdong)	52	25.6%	0 yrs old	11 yrs old	4.1 yrs
Other countries	16	7.9%	0 yrs old	8 yrs old	2.7 yrs
Not specified	74	36.5%	0 yrs old	11 yrs old	4.3 yrs

Table 8b3: Time spent in other countries or regions (Item A9a) - Secondary respondents (n = 194) (multiple responses)

<i>You lived there when you were...</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>From (Min.)</i>	<i>To (Max.)</i>	<i>Average Duration</i>
Shenzhen	23	11.9%	0 yrs old	13 yrs old	6.4 yrs
Guangdong Province (except Shenzhen)	106	54.6%	0 yrs old	16 yrs old	8.2 yrs
Other provinces in mainland China (except Guangdong)	48	24.7%	0 yrs old	14 yrs old	6.0 yrs
Other countries	8	4.1%	0 yrs old	9 yrs old	3.4 yrs
Not specified	19	9.8%	--	--	--

Table 9: Language used in English lessons in school (Item A7) (multiple responses)

	Education level – Primary or Secondary						Proportion test
	Primary (n = 1065)		Secondary (n = 655)		Total (n = 1720)		
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	
English	913	85.7%	562	85.8%	1,475	85.8%	
Chinese	486	45.6%	354	54.0%	840	48.8%	Secondary higher
PTH	45	4.2%	17	2.6%	62	3.6%	
Other	0	0.0%	1	0.2%	1	0.1%	

Note 1: Two respondents did not respond to the question.

Note 2: The other language specified was Japanese.

Note 3: The column 'Proportion test' shows the result of the statistical proportion test. If one group showed a statistically significantly higher proportion at 0.05 level of significance it is indicated here. In cases where there was no statistically significant difference, no group is shown.

Table 10: Language used in other school subjects (Item A8) (multiple responses)

	Education level – Primary or Secondary						Proportion test
	Primary (n = 1066)		Secondary (n = 655)		Total (n = 1721)		
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	
English	126	11.8%	143	21.8%	269	15.6%	Secondary higher
Chinese	1,042	97.7%	637	97.3%	1,679	97.6%	
PTH	376	35.3%	177	27.0%	553	32.1%	Primary higher
Other	2	0.2%	4	0.6%	6	0.3%	

Note 1: One respondent did not respond to the question.

Note 2: Other languages specified included Hakka dialect, Vietnamese and Japanese.

Note 3: The column 'Proportion test' shows the result of the statistical proportion test. If one group showed a statistically significantly higher proportion at 0.05 level of significance it is indicated here. In cases where there was no statistically significant difference, no group is shown.

Table 11a: Language(s)/Dialect(s) used to communicate with family members including domestic helpers (Item A6) (multiple responses)

	Education level – Primary or Secondary						Proportion test
	Primary (n = 1066)		Secondary (n = 656)		Total (n = 1722)		
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	
Cantonese	1028	96.4%	628	95.7%	1656	96.2%	
PTH	285	26.7%	166	25.3%	451	26.2%	
English	271	25.4%	153	23.3%	424	24.6%	
Chaozhou	89	8.3%	71	10.8%	160	9.3%	
Fukien	156	14.6%	40	6.1%	196	11.4%	Primary higher
Hakka	111	10.4%	83	12.7%	194	11.3%	
Other	251	23.5%	123	18.8%	374	21.7%	Primary higher

Note: Other languages/dialects specified by the respondents include Shanghai, Hainan, Shunde, Hunan, Hangzhou, Taishan, Sichuan and Zhejiang dialects, Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese, Indonesian and Philippine languages.

Table 11b: Language(s)/Dialect(s) used to communicate with family members *excluding domestic helpers* (Item A6) (multiple responses)

	Education level – Primary or Secondary						Proportion test
	Primary (n = 1048)		Secondary (n = 645)		Total (n = 1693)		
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	
Cantonese	1028	98.1%	628	97.4%	1656	97.8%	
PTH	272	26.0%	163	25.3%	435	25.7%	
English	147	14.0%	126	19.5%	273	16.1%	Secondary higher
Chaozhou	89	8.5%	71	11.0%	160	9.5%	
Fukien	110	10.5%	82	12.7%	192	11.3%	
Hakka	156	14.9%	40	6.2%	196	11.6%	Primary higher
Other	168	16.0%	94	14.6%	262	15.5%	

Table 11c: Language(s)/Dialect(s) used to communicate with family members (Item A6) – Total respondents (n = 1722) (multiple responses)

Family members	N	Language used to communicate (%)						
		Cantonese	PTH	English	Chaozhou (潮州話)	Hakka (客家話)	Fukien (福建話)	Other
Grandparents	1594	76.1	12.6	1.1	8.0	8.8	10.7	9.7
Mother	1684	93.8	14.4	6.3	3.3	4.6	6.6	6.5
Father	1656	95.2	10.4	5.6	3.8	4.1	6.8	4.1
Brother(s) / Sister(s)	1459	94.3	12.2	10.5	1.4	1.9	3.9	5.2
Domestic helper	763	55.6	5.9	27.9	1.0	1.3	3.0	23.1
Other relatives	1552	91.6	16.1	9.2	4.5	6.2	8.3	8.6

Table 11d: Language(s)/Dialect(s) used to communicate with family members (Item A6) – Primary respondents (n = 1066) (multiple responses)

Family members	N	Language used to communicate (%)						
		Cantonese	PTH	English	Chaozhou (潮州話)	Hakka (客家話)	Fukien (福建話)	Other
Grandparents	999	74.1	12.6	0.7	7.3	8.2	13.7	9.8
Mother	1041	94.1	14.6	6.2	2.9	3.7	8.8	6.0
Father	1026	95.0	10.5	5.8	3.3	3.8	8.9	3.6
Brother(s) / Sister(s)	890	94.3	11.7	8.4	1.2	1.5	5.3	4.9
Domestic helper	539	53.1	6.7	30.8	0.9	1.1	3.9	23.7
Other relatives	983	90.9	15.4	7.3	3.5	5.4	10.6	8.3

Table 11e: Language(s)/Dialect(s) used to communicate with family members (Item A6) – Secondary respondents (n = 656) (multiple responses)

Family members	N	Language used to communicate (%)						
		Cantonese	PTH	English	Chaozhou (潮州話)	Hakka (客家話)	Fukien (福建話)	Other
Grandparents	595	79.5	12.6	1.7	9.1	9.9	5.5	9.4
Mother	643	93.2	14.0	6.4	3.9	6.2	3.0	7.3
Father	630	95.4	10.2	5.4	4.6	4.6	3.3	4.9
Brother(s) / Sister(s)	569	94.4	13.0	13.7	1.8	2.6	1.8	5.6
Domestic helper	224	61.6	4.0	21.0	1.3	1.8	0.9	21.4
Other relatives	569	92.6	17.4	12.5	6.3	7.6	4.4	9.0

Appendix 3B Literacy activities

Table 1a: Computer use outside school (Item B10) – by education level

	Education level – Primary or Secondary					
	Primary		Secondary		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Yes	797	74.8%	561	85.9%	1,358	79.0%
No	269	25.2%	92	14.1%	361	21.0%
Total	1,066	100.0%	653	100.0%	1,719	100.0%

Note 1: Three respondents did not respond to the question.

Note 2: Pearson chi-square test showed that there were statistically significantly more secondary respondents who used a computer outside school ($p = 0.000$)

Table 1b: Computer use outside school (Item B10) – by schools participating in COE

	Schools participating in ‘Centre of Excellence (COE)’			
	Non-COE		COE	
	Count	%	Count	%
Yes	1,135	77.3%	223	89.2%
No	334	22.7%	27	10.8%
Total	1,469	100.0%	250	100.0%

Note 1: Three respondents did not respond to the question.

Note 2: Pearson chi-square test showed that there were statistically significantly more COE respondents who used a computer outside school ($p = 0.000$)

Table 1c: Computer use outside school (Item B10) – by gender (Item A2)

	Gender			
	Boys		Girls	
	Count	%	Count	%
Yes	654	77.8%	702	80.1%
No	187	22.2%	174	19.9%
Total	841	100.0%	876	100.0%

Note 1: Three respondents did not respond to the main question and a further two did not respond to the gender question.

Note 2: Pearson chi-square test showed that there was no statistically significant difference between gender on computer use outside school ($p = 0.228$)

Table 2: Places where computers are used outside school (Item B10a) – by education level (multiple responses)

	Education level – Primary or Secondary						
	Primary (n = 796)		Secondary (n = 561)		Total (n = 1357)		Proportion test ¹²
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	
At home	785	98.6%	546	97.3%	1331	98.1%	
At a relative or friend’s home	60	7.5%	52	9.3%	112	8.3%	
At the library	46	5.8%	38	6.8%	84	6.2%	
At a shop or Internet cafe	26	3.3%	41	7.3%	67	4.9%	Secondary higher
At a community centre	1	0.1%	1	0.2%	2	0.1%	
Other	1	0.1%	1	0.2%	2	0.1%	

Note: One respondent did not respond to the question.

¹² The column ‘Proportion test’ shows the result of the statistical proportion test. If one group showed a statistically significantly higher proportion at 0.05 level of significance it is indicated here. In cases where there was no statistically significant difference, no group is shown.

Table 3a: Reasons for using a computer outside school (Item B10b) – by education level (multiple responses)

	Education level – Primary or Secondary						Proportion test
	Primary (n = 797)		Secondary (n = 561)		Total (n = 1358)		
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	
Doing homework	596	74.8%	401	71.5%	997	73.4%	
Playing computer games	589	73.9%	340	60.6%	929	68.4%	Primary higher
Searching for information via websites (e.g., <i>Google</i> or <i>Yahoo</i>)	398	49.9%	317	56.5%	715	52.7%	Secondary higher
Instant messaging (e.g., <i>MSN</i> or <i>ICQ</i>)	293	36.8%	384	68.4%	677	49.9%	Secondary higher
Checking email	374	46.9%	225	40.1%	599	44.1%	Primary higher
Uploading and watching videos	297	37.3%	284	50.6%	581	42.8%	Secondary higher
Visiting <i>Facebook</i> , <i>Myspace</i> or other social networks	182	22.8%	231	41.2%	413	30.4%	Secondary higher
Downloading and organising music	133	16.7%	236	42.1%	369	27.2%	Secondary higher
Blogging (e.g., <i>Xanga</i>)	134	16.8%	176	31.4%	310	22.8%	Secondary higher
Sharing photos	94	11.8%	131	23.4%	225	16.6%	Secondary higher
Doing artwork or graphic design	116	14.5%	62	11.1%	178	13.1%	
Making videos or films	54	6.8%	39	7.0%	93	6.8%	
Shopping online	29	3.6%	55	9.8%	84	6.2%	Secondary higher
Listening to songs and music#	1	0.1%	8	1.4%	9	0.7%	Secondary higher
Reading comics / novels#	1	0.1%	4	0.7%	5	0.4%	
Writing computer programs#	0	0.0%	1	0.2%	1	0.1%	
Studying computer software#	1	0.1%	0	0.0%	1	0.1%	
Meeting boys#	0	0.0%	1	0.2%	1	0.1%	
Doing online practice (unspecified)#	1	0.1%	0	0.0%	1	0.1%	
Learning sign languages	0	0.0%	1	0.2%	1	0.1%	
Learning Japanese#	1	0.1%	0	0.0%	1	0.1%	

Note: # denotes an individual response added by the respondents.

Table 3b: Reasons for using a computer outside school (Item B10b) – by gender (Item A2) (multiple responses)

	Gender				Proportion test
	Boys (n = 654)		Girls (n = 702)		
	Count	%	Count	%	
Playing computer games	523	80.0%	404	57.5%	Boys higher
Doing homework	464	70.9%	532	75.8%	Girls higher
Searching for information via websites (e.g., <i>Google</i> or <i>Yahoo</i>)	303	46.3%	410	58.4%	Girls higher
Uploading and watching videos	278	42.5%	302	43.0%	
Instant messaging (e.g., <i>MSN</i> or <i>ICQ</i>)	268	41.0%	408	58.1%	Girls higher
Checking email	266	40.7%	333	47.4%	Girls higher
Downloading and organising music	173	26.5%	194	27.6%	
Visiting <i>Facebook</i> , <i>Myspace</i> or other social networks	153	23.4%	260	37.0%	Girls higher
Sharing photos	86	13.1%	139	19.8%	Girls higher
Blogging (e.g., <i>Xanga</i>)	79	12.1%	231	32.9%	Girls higher
Doing artwork or graphic design	69	10.6%	118	15.5%	Girls higher
Making videos or films	54	8.3%	39	5.6%	Boys higher
Shopping online	28	4.3%	56	8.0%	Girls higher
Listening to songs and music#	2	0.3%	7	1.0%	
Reading comics / novels#	2	0.3%	3	0.4%	
Writing computer programs#	1	0.2%	0	0.0%	
Studying computer software#	1	0.2%	0	0.0%	
Meeting boys#	0	0.0%	1	0.1%	
Doing online practice (unspecified)#	0	0.0%	1	0.1%	
Learning sign languages	1	0.2%	0	0.0%	
Learning Japanese#	0	0.0%	1	0.1%	

Note 1: Two respondents did not respond to the “gender” question.

Note 2: # denotes an individual response added by the respondents.

Table 3c: Reasons for using a computer outside school (Item B10b) – by schools participating in COE (multiple responses)

	Schools participating in “Centre of Excellence (COE)”				Proportion test
	Non-COE (n = 1135)		COE (n = 223)		
	Count	%	Count	%	
Doing homework	813	71.6%	184	82.5%	COE higher
Playing computer games	788	69.4%	141	63.2%	
Searching for information via websites (e.g., <i>Google</i> or <i>Yahoo</i>)	591	52.1%	124	55.6%	
Instant messaging (e.g., <i>MSN</i> or <i>ICQ</i>)	561	49.4%	116	52.0%	
Checking email	495	43.6%	104	46.6%	
Uploading and watching videos	481	42.4%	100	44.8%	
Visiting <i>Facebook</i> , <i>Myspace</i> or other social networks	325	28.6%	88	39.5%	COE higher
Downloading and organising music	313	27.6%	56	25.1%	
Blogging (e.g., <i>Xanga</i>)	259	22.8%	51	22.9%	
Sharing photos	188	16.6%	37	16.6%	
Doing artwork or graphic design	147	13.0%	31	13.9%	
Shopping online	65	5.7%	19	8.5%	
Making videos or films	85	7.5%	8	3.6%	Non-COE higher
Reading comics / novels#	1	0.1%	4	1.8%	COE higher
Listening to songs and music#	7	0.6%	2	0.9%	
Writing computer programs#	1	0.1%	0	0.0%	
Studying computer software#	1	0.1%	0	0.0%	
Meeting boys#	1	0.1%	0	0.0%	
Doing online practice (unspecified)#	1	0.1%	0	0.0%	
Learning sign languages	1	0.1%	0	0.0%	
Learning Japanese#	1	0.1%	0	0.0%	

Note: # denotes an individual response added by the respondents.

Table 4: Computer activity most frequently engaged in outside school (Item B10c) – by education level (one indication only)

	Education level – Primary or Secondary						Proportion test
	Primary		Secondary		Total		
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	
Playing computer games	264	36.7%	131	25.7%	395	32.1%	Primary higher
Doing homework	240	33.3%	81	15.9%	321	26.1%	Primary higher
Instant messaging (e.g., <i>MSN</i> or <i>ICQ</i>)	41	5.7%	128	25.1%	169	13.8%	Secondary higher
Uploading and watching videos	40	5.6%	49	9.6%	89	7.2%	Secondary higher
Visiting <i>Facebook</i> , <i>Myspace</i> or other social networks	36	5.0%	28	5.5%	64	5.2%	
Searching for information via websites (e.g., <i>Google</i> or <i>Yahoo</i>)	30	4.2%	33	6.5%	63	5.1%	
Blogging (e.g., <i>Xanga</i>)	17	2.4%	18	3.5%	35	2.8%	
Downloading and organising music	15	2.1%	19	3.7%	34	2.8%	
Checking email	9	1.3%	6	1.2%	15	1.2%	
Doing artwork or graphic design	10	1.4%	2	0.4%	12	1.0%	
Reading comics / novels	4	0.6%	6	1.2%	10	0.8%	
Shopping online	6	0.8%	2	0.4%	8	0.7%	
Sharing photos	4	0.6%	1	0.2%	5	0.4%	
Making videos or films	3	0.4%	1	0.2%	4	0.3%	
Listening to songs and music#	0	0.0%	3	0.6%	3	0.2%	
Doing online practice (unspecified)#	1	0.1%	0	0.0%	1	0.1%	
Writing computer programs#	0	0.0%	1	0.2%	1	0.1%	
Total	720	100.0%	509	100.0%	1,229	100.0%	

Note 1: 129 respondents did not respond to the question.

Note 2: # denotes an individual response added by the respondents.

Table 5: People students communicate with on the Internet (Item B10d) – by education level (multiple responses)

	Education level – Primary or Secondary						Proportion test
	Primary (n = 797)		Secondary (n = 560)		Total (n = 1357)		
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	
Friends	577	72.4%	500	89.3%	1077	79.4%	Secondary higher
Classmates	536	67.3%	451	80.5%	987	72.7%	Secondary higher
Family members	256	32.1%	113	20.2%	369	27.2%	Primary higher
Net friends (friends met on the Internet)	156	19.6%	199	35.5%	355	26.2%	Secondary higher
Teachers	90	11.3%	67	12.0%	157	11.6%	
No one	31	3.9%	3	0.5%	34	2.5%	Primary higher
Total	797	100.0%	560	100.0%	1357	100.0%	

Note: One respondent did not respond to the question.

Table 6: Mobile phone possession (Item B11) – by education level

	Education level – Primary or Secondary					
	Primary		Secondary		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Yes	709	66.5%	574	87.5%	1,283	74.5%
No	357	33.5%	82	12.5%	439	25.5%
Total	1,066	100.0%	656	100.0%	1,722	100.0%

Note: Pearson chi-square test showed that there were statistically significantly more secondary respondents who possessed a mobile phone (p = 0.000)

Table 7: Mobile phone use (Item B11a) – by education level (multiple responses)

	Education level – Primary or Secondary						Proportion test
	Primary (n = 709)		Secondary (n = 573)		Total (n = 1282)		
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	
Making/receiving calls	681	96.1%	559	97.6%	1240	96.7%	
Listening to music	414	58.4%	420	73.3%	834	65.1%	Secondary higher
Taking photos	387	54.6%	383	66.8%	770	60.1%	Secondary higher
Playing games	337	47.5%	263	45.9%	600	46.8%	
Sending/receiving SMS	229	32.3%	339	59.2%	568	44.3%	Secondary higher
Instant messaging	85	12.0%	124	21.6%	209	16.3%	Secondary higher
Checking email	123	17.3%	47	8.2%	170	13.3%	Primary higher
Making videos	75	10.6%	70	12.2%	145	11.3%	
Surfing the Internet	37	5.2%	20	3.5%	57	4.4%	
As a clock/alarm#	1	0.1%	4	0.7%	5	0.4%	
Listening to the radio#	0	0.0%	2	0.3%	2	0.2%	
As an organiser#	1	0.1%	0	0.0%	1	0.1%	
As a dictionary#	0	0.0%	1	0.2%	1	0.1%	
As a directory of friends#	1	0.1%	0	0.0%	1	0.1%	

Note 1: One respondent did not respond to the question.

Note 2: # denotes an individual response added by the respondents.

Table 8: People students communicate with by mobile phone (Item B11b) – by education level (multiple responses)

	Education level – Primary or Secondary						Proportion test
	Primary (n = 709)		Secondary (n = 572)		Total (n = 1281)		
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	
Family members	610	86.0%	453	79.2%	1063	83.0%	Primary higher
Friends	510	71.9%	520	90.9%	1030	80.4%	Secondary higher
Classmates	492	69.4%	483	84.4%	975	76.1%	Secondary higher
Net friends (friends met on the Internet)	54	7.6%	83	14.5%	137	10.7%	Secondary higher
Teachers	57	8.0%	64	11.2%	121	9.4%	
No one	1	0.1%	1	0.2%	2	0.2%	

Note: Two respondents did not respond to the question.

Table 9a: Literacy activities engaged in outside school in the last month (Item B12) – by education level (multiple responses)

Internet activities		Education level – Primary or Secondary						Proportion test
		Primary (n = 1066)		Secondary (n = 656)		Total (n = 1722)		
		Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	
Reading	Reading books	1010	94.7%	608	92.7%	1618	94.0%	
	Reading magazines	887	83.2%	554	84.5%	1441	83.7%	
	Reading comic books	929	87.1%	517	78.8%	1446	84.0%	Primary higher
	Reading newspapers	970	91.0%	590	89.9%	1560	90.6%	
Viewing	Watching TV programmes	1010	94.7%	619	94.4%	1629	94.6%	
	Watching films	939	88.1%	588	89.6%	1527	88.7%	
Internet activities	Checking email	907	85.1%	569	86.7%	1476	85.7%	
	Making and uploading or watching videos online (e.g., on <i>YouTube</i>)	824	77.3%	511	77.9%	1335	77.5%	
	Downloading, organising or listening to music	828	77.7%	578	88.1%	1406	81.6%	Secondary higher
	Playing TV, video or computer games	951	89.2%	575	87.7%	1526	88.6%	
	Searching for information via websites (e.g., <i>Google</i> or <i>Yahoo</i>)	939	88.1%	580	88.4%	1519	88.2%	
	Instant messaging	766	71.9%	522	79.6%	1288	74.8%	Secondary higher
	Doing artwork, graphic design or multimedia design	732	68.7%	393	59.9%	1125	65.3%	Primary higher
	Shopping online	548	51.4%	327	49.8%	875	50.8%	
	Visiting social networking sites online (e.g., <i>Facebook</i> , <i>Myspace</i>)	658	61.7%	452	68.9%	1110	64.5%	Secondary higher
	Sharing photos online (e.g., <i>Flickr</i>)	600	56.3%	337	51.4%	937	54.4%	Primary higher
	Blogging	688	64.5%	425	64.8%	1113	64.6%	

Table 10a: Reading activities and language use (Item B12) – by education level (multiple responses)

Reading activities		Education level – Primary or Secondary						Proportion test
		Primary (n = 1066)		Secondary (n = 656)		Total (n = 1722)		
		Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	
(B12a) Reading books	1. Chinese	1003	99.3%	593	97.5%	1596	98.6%	Primary higher
	2. English	397	39.3%	256	42.1%	653	40.4%	
	3. Other Lang	34	3.4%	21	3.5%	55	3.4%	
	Total	1010	100.0%	608	100.0%	1618	100.0%	
(B12b) Reading magazines	1. Chinese	869	98.0%	533	96.2%	1402	97.3%	Primary higher
	2. English	83	9.4%	56	10.1%	139	9.6%	
	3. Other Lang	22	2.5%	26	4.7%	48	3.3%	Secondary higher
	Total	887	100.0%	554	100.0%	1441	100.0%	
(B12c) Reading comic books	1. Chinese	907	97.6%	500	96.7%	1407	97.3%	
	2. English	111	11.9%	41	7.9%	152	10.5%	Primary higher
	3. Other Lang	31	3.3%	42	8.1%	73	5.0%	Secondary higher
	Total	929	100.0%	517	100.0%	1446	100.0%	
(B12d) Reading newspapers	1. Chinese	953	98.2%	573	97.1%	1526	97.8%	
	2. English	190	19.6%	186	31.5%	376	24.1%	Secondary higher
	3. Other Lang	9	0.9%	12	2.0%	21	1.3%	
	Total	970	100.0%	590	100.0%	1560	100.0%	

Table 10b: Viewing activities and language use (Item B12) – by education level (multiple responses)

Viewing activities		Education level – Primary or Secondary						Proportion test
		Primary (n = 1066)		Secondary (n = 656)		Total (n = 1722)		
		Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	
(B12e) Watching TV programmes	1. Chinese	987	97.7%	593	95.8%	1580	97.0%	Primary higher
	2. English	403	39.9%	303	48.9%	706	43.3%	Secondary higher
	3. Other Lang	97	9.6%	101	16.3%	198	12.2%	Secondary higher
	Total	1010	100.0%	619	100.0%	1629	100.0%	
(B12f) Watching films	1. Chinese	866	92.2%	513	87.2%	1379	90.3%	Primary higher
	2. English	386	41.1%	354	60.2%	740	48.5%	Secondary higher
	3. Other Lang	137	14.6%	124	21.1%	261	17.1%	Secondary higher
	Total	939	100.0%	588	100.0%	1527	100.0%	

Table 10c: Internet activities and language use (Item B12) – by education level (multiple responses)

Internet activities		Education level – Primary or Secondary						Proportion test
		Primary (n = 1066)		Secondary (n = 656)		Total (n = 1722)		
		Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	
(B12g) Checking email	1. Chinese	862	95.0%	552	97.0%	1414	95.8%	
	2. English	251	27.7%	162	28.5%	413	28.0%	
	3. Other Lang	29	3.2%	25	4.4%	54	3.7%	
	Total	907	100.0%	569	100.0%	1476	100.0%	
(B12h) Making, uploading or watching videos online (e.g. <i>YouTube</i>)	1. Chinese	762	92.5%	472	92.4%	1234	92.4%	
	2. English	255	30.9%	214	41.9%	469	35.1%	Secondary higher
	3. Other Lang	112	13.6%	102	20.0%	214	16.0%	Secondary higher
	Total	824	100.0%	511	100.0%	1335	100.0%	
(B12i) Downloading, organising or listening to music	1. Chinese	769	92.9%	530	91.7%	1299	92.4%	
	2. English	299	36.1%	327	56.6%	626	44.5%	Secondary higher
	3. Other Lang	140	16.9%	177	30.6%	317	22.5%	Secondary higher
	Total	828	100.0%	578	100.0%	1406	100.0%	
(B12j) Playing TV, video or computer games	1. Chinese	907	95.4%	541	94.1%	1448	94.9%	
	2. English	321	33.8%	211	36.7%	532	34.9%	
	3. Other Lang	115	12.1%	100	17.4%	215	14.1%	Secondary higher
	Total	951	100.0%	575	100.0%	1526	100.0%	
(B12k) Searching for info via websites (e.g., <i>Google</i> or <i>Yahoo</i>)	1. Chinese	892	95.0%	563	97.1%	1455	95.8%	
	2. English	269	28.6%	172	29.7%	441	29.0%	
	3. Other Lang	39	4.2%	40	6.9%	79	5.2%	Secondary higher
	Total	939	100.0%	580	100.0%	1519	100.0%	
(B12l) Instant messaging	1. Chinese	711	92.8%	498	95.4%	1209	93.9%	
	2. English	176	23.0%	149	28.5%	325	25.2%	Secondary higher
	3. Other Lang	33	4.3%	24	4.6%	57	4.4%	
	Total	766	100.0%	522	100.0%	1288	100.0%	
(B12m) Doing artwork or graphic design or multimedia design	1. Chinese	708	96.7%	369	93.9%	1077	95.7%	Primary higher
	2. English	113	15.4%	66	16.8%	179	15.9%	
	3. Other Lang	34	4.6%	21	5.3%	55	4.9%	
	Total	732	100.0%	393	100.0%	1125	100.0%	
(B12n) Shopping online	1. Chinese	513	93.6%	309	94.5%	822	93.9%	
	2. English	49	8.9%	35	10.7%	84	9.6%	
	3. Other Lang	28	5.1%	17	5.2%	45	5.1%	
	Total	548	100.0%	327	100.0%	875	100.0%	
(B12p) Visiting social networking sites online (e.g., <i>Facebook</i> , <i>Myspace</i>)	1. Chinese	614	93.3%	427	94.5%	1041	93.8%	
	2. English	154	23.4%	149	33.0%	303	27.3%	Secondary higher
	3. Other Lang	26	4.0%	25	5.5%	51	4.6%	
	Total	658	100.0%	452	100.0%	1110	100.0%	
(B12q) Sharing photos online (e.g., <i>Flickr</i>)	1. Chinese	567	94.5%	314	93.2%	881	94.0%	
	2. English	83	13.8%	60	17.8%	143	15.3%	
	3. Other Lang	23	3.8%	16	4.7%	39	4.2%	
	Total	600	100.0%	337	100.0%	937	100.0%	
(B12r) Blogging	1. Chinese	638	92.7%	406	95.5%	1044	93.8%	
	2. English	140	20.3%	102	24.0%	242	21.7%	
	3. Other Lang	34	4.9%	24	5.6%	58	5.2%	
	Total	688	100.0%	425	100.0%	1113	100.0%	

Table 11a: Reading activities and language use (Item B12) – by gender (Item A2) (multiple responses)

		Gender				Proportion test
		Boys (n = 844)		Girls (n = 876)		
		Count	%	Count	%	
(B12a) Reading books	1. Chinese	771	98.5%	823	98.8%	
	2. English	267	34.1%	385	46.2%	Girls higher
	3. Other Lang	21	2.7%	34	4.1%	
	Total	783	100.0%	833	100.0%	
(B12b) Reading magazines	1. Chinese	664	97.5%	737	97.1%	
	2. English	70	10.3%	69	9.1%	
	3. Other Lang	16	2.3%	32	4.2%	Girls higher
	Total	681	100.0%	759	100.0%	
(B12c) Reading comic books	1. Chinese	717	97.7%	689	96.9%	
	2. English	71	9.7%	81	11.4%	
	3. Other Lang	34	4.6%	39	5.5%	
	Total	734	100.0%	711	100.0%	
(B12d) Reading newspapers	1. Chinese	729	97.3%	795	98.3%	
	2. English	161	21.5%	215	26.6%	Girls higher
	3. Other Lang	11	1.5%	10	1.2%	
	Total	749	100.0%	809	100.0%	

Table 11b: Viewing activities and language use (Item B12) – by gender (Item A2) (multiple responses)

		Gender				Proportion test
		Boys (n = 844)		Girls (n = 876)		
		Count	%	Count	%	
(B12e) Watching TV programmes	1. Chinese	768	97.0%	811	97.0%	
	2. English	316	39.9%	390	46.7%	Girls higher
	3. Other Lang	71	9.0%	127	15.2%	Girls higher
	Total	792	100.0%	836	100.0%	
(B12f) Watching films	1. Chinese	665	89.6%	712	90.9%	
	2. English	358	48.2%	380	48.5%	
	3. Other Lang	104	14.0%	156	19.9%	Girls higher
	Total	742	100.0%	783	100.0%	

Table 11c: Internet activities and language use (Item B12) – by gender (Item A2) (multiple responses)

		Gender				Proportion test
		Boys (n = 844)		Girls (n = 876)		
		Count	%	Count	%	
(B12g) Checking email	1. Chinese	676	95.5%	738	96.1%	
	2. English	182	25.7%	231	30.1%	
	3. Other Lang	23	3.2%	31	4.0%	
	Total	708	100.0%	768	100.0%	
(B12h) Making, uploading or watching videos online (e.g., on <i>YouTube</i>)	1. Chinese	607	91.8%	627	93.0%	
	2. English	245	37.1%	224	33.2%	
	3. Other Lang	84	12.7%	130	19.3%	Girls higher
	Total	661	100.0%	674	100.0%	
(B12i) Downloading, organising or listening to music	1. Chinese	610	91.6%	687	93.1%	
	2. English	271	40.7%	353	47.8%	Girls higher
	3. Other Lang	124	18.6%	192	26.0%	Girls higher
	Total	666	100.0%	738	100.0%	
(B12j) Playing TV, video or computer games	1. Chinese	729	95.0%	717	94.7%	
	2. English	276	36.0%	256	33.8%	
	3. Other Lang	106	13.8%	109	14.4%	
	Total	767	100.0%	757	100.0%	
(B12k) Searching for information via websites (e.g., <i>Google</i> or <i>Yahoo</i>)	1. Chinese	698	95.4%	755	96.2%	
	2. English	209	28.6%	232	29.6%	
	3. Other Lang	42	5.7%	37	4.7%	
	Total	732	100.0%	785	100.0%	
(B12l) Instant messaging	1. Chinese	574	93.5%	634	94.2%	
	2. English	134	21.8%	190	28.2%	Girls higher
	3. Other Lang	30	4.9%	27	4.0%	
	Total	614	100.0%	673	100.0%	
(B12m) Doing artwork, graphic design or multimedia design	1. Chinese	505	95.5%	572	96.0%	
	2. English	76	14.4%	103	17.3%	
	3. Other Lang	22	4.2%	33	5.5%	
	Total	529	100.0%	596	100.0%	
(B12n) Shopping online	1. Chinese	395	93.4%	427	94.5%	
	2. English	49	11.6%	35	7.7%	
	3. Other Lang	20	4.7%	25	5.5%	
	Total	423	100.0%	452	100.0%	
(B12p) Visiting social networking sites online (e.g., <i>Facebook</i> , <i>Myspace</i>)	1. Chinese	489	93.9%	552	93.7%	
	2. English	128	24.6%	175	29.7%	
	3. Other Lang	19	3.6%	32	5.4%	
	Total	521	100.0%	589	100.0%	
(B12q) Sharing photos online (e.g., <i>Flickr</i>)	1. Chinese	425	94.4%	456	93.6%	
	2. English	65	14.4%	78	16.0%	
	3. Other Lang	17	3.8%	22	4.5%	
	Total	450	100.0%	487	100.0%	
(B12r) Blogging	1. Chinese	460	94.1%	583	93.6%	
	2. English	82	16.8%	159	25.5%	Girls higher
	3. Other Lang	25	5.1%	33	5.3%	
	Total	489	100.0%	623	100.0%	

Table 12a: Reading activities and language use (Item B12) – by socioeconomic status (multiple responses)

		Socioeconomic status of students' family						Proportion test
		Low (n = 72)		Middle (n = 661)		High (n = 177)		
		Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	
(B12a) Reading books	1. Chinese	69	97.2%	626	99.1%	169	98.8%	High SES higher than other two
	2. English	24	33.8%	260	41.1%	92	53.8%	
	3. Other Lang	3	4.2%	24	3.8%	3	1.8%	
	Total	71	100.0%	632	100.0%	171	100.0%	
(B12b) Reading magazines	1. Chinese	61	95.3%	550	97.3%	145	97.3%	Low SES higher than high SES
	2. English	9	14.1%	53	9.4%	19	12.8%	
	3. Other Lang	4	6.3%	17	3.0%	1	.7%	
	Total	64	100.0%	565	100.0%	149	100.0%	
(B12c) Reading comic books	1. Chinese	64	98.5%	542	97.1%	148	98.0%	
	2. English	6	9.2%	58	10.4%	18	11.9%	
	3. Other Lang	5	7.7%	20	3.6%	8	5.3%	
	Total	65	100.0%	558	100.0%	151	100.0%	
(B12d) Reading newspapers	1. Chinese	66	97.1%	601	97.9%	160	98.2%	
	2. English	14	20.6%	159	25.9%	47	28.8%	
	3. Other Lang	3	4.4%	10	1.6%	1	0.6%	
	Total	68	100.0%	614	100.0%	163	100.0%	

Table 12b: Viewing activities and language use (Item B12) – by socioeconomic status (multiple responses)

		Socioeconomic status of students' family						Proportion test
		Low (n = 72)		Middle (n = 661)		High (n = 177)		
		Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	
(B12e) Watching TV programmes	1. Chinese	68	97.1%	623	97.5%	165	96.5%	High SES higher than other two
	2. English	27	38.6%	272	42.6%	95	55.6%	
	3. Other Lang	6	8.6%	80	12.5%	19	11.1%	
	Total	70	100.0%	639	100.0%	171	100.0%	
(B12f) Watching films	1. Chinese	60	89.6%	534	89.9%	154	93.3%	
	2. English	32	47.8%	304	51.2%	89	53.9%	
	3. Other Lang	11	16.4%	105	17.7%	22	13.3%	
	Total	67	100.0%	594	100.0%	165	100.0%	

Table 12c: Internet activities and language use (Item B12) – by socioeconomic status (multiple responses)

		Socioeconomic status of students' family						Proportion test
		Low (n = 72)		Middle (n = 661)		High (n = 177)		
		Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	
(B12g) Checking email	1. Chinese	64	94.1%	557	96.4%	152	96.2%	
	2. English	17	25.0%	162	28.0%	57	36.1%	
	3. Other Lang	7	10.3%	13	2.2%	4	2.5%	Low SES higher than other two
	Total	68	100.0%	578	100.0%	158	100.0%	
(B12h) Making, uploading or watching videos online (e.g., on YouTube)	1. Chinese	58	92.1%	469	92.0%	136	94.4%	
	2. English	23	36.5%	180	35.3%	59	41.0%	
	3. Other Lang	9	14.3%	87	17.1%	19	13.2%	
	Total	63	100.0%	510	100.0%	144	100.0%	
(B12i) Downloading, organising or listening to music	1. Chinese	60	93.8%	513	92.9%	138	93.2%	
	2. English	26	40.6%	258	46.7%	72	48.6%	
	3. Other Lang	11	17.2%	132	23.9%	28	18.9%	
	Total	64	100.0%	552	100.0%	148	100.0%	
(B12j) Playing TV, video or computer games	1. Chinese	68	98.6%	569	95.2%	150	92.6%	
	2. English	18	26.1%	214	35.8%	68	42.0%	
	3. Other Lang	9	13.0%	85	14.2%	23	14.2%	
	Total	69	100.0%	598	100.0%	162	100.0%	
(B12k) Searching for information via websites (e.g., Google or Yahoo)	1. Chinese	62	95.4%	580	96.5%	156	96.9%	
	2. English	14	21.5%	178	29.6%	51	31.7%	
	3. Other Lang	6	9.2%	30	5.0%	3	1.9%	Low SES higher than other two
	Total	65	100.0%	601	100.0%	161	100.0%	
(B12l) Instant messaging	1. Chinese	58	93.5%	491	95.7%	117	88.0%	Middle SES higher than high SES
	2. English	12	19.4%	133	25.9%	44	33.1%	
	3. Other Lang	4	6.5%	14	2.7%	6	4.5%	
	Total	62	100.0%	513	100.0%	133	100.0%	
(B12m) Doing artwork, graphic design or multimedia design	1. Chinese	54	93.1%	422	97.5%	107	93.0%	
	2. English	11	19.0%	60	13.9%	23	20.0%	
	3. Other Lang	5	8.6%	14	3.2%	7	6.1%	
	Total	58	100.0%	433	100.0%	115	100.0%	
(B12n) Shopping online	1. Chinese	45	91.8%	316	94.0%	83	94.3%	
	2. English	5	10.2%	33	9.8%	13	14.8%	
	3. Other Lang	3	6.1%	14	4.2%	3	3.4%	
	Total	49	100.0%	336	100.0%	88	100.0%	
(B12p) Visiting social networking sites (e.g., Facebook, Myspace)	1. Chinese	51	92.7%	413	94.9%	108	93.1%	
	2. English	12	21.8%	128	29.4%	41	35.3%	
	3. Other Lang	5	9.1%	21	4.8%	3	2.6%	
	Total	55	100.0%	435	100.0%	116	100.0%	
(B12q) Sharing photos online (e.g., Flickr)	1. Chinese	46	92.0%	339	94.4%	93	92.1%	
	2. English	7	14.0%	52	14.5%	26	25.7%	
	3. Other Lang	3	6.0%	17	4.7%	1	1.0%	
	Total	50	100.0%	359	100.0%	101	100.0%	
(B12r) Blogging	1. Chinese	52	91.2%	412	95.4%	107	92.2%	
	2. English	13	22.8%	95	22.0%	32	27.6%	High SES higher than middle SES
	3. Other Lang	3	5.3%	23	5.3%	2	1.7%	
	Total	57	100.0%	432	100.0%	116	100.0%	

Table 13a: Reading activities and language use (Item B12) – by schools participating in COE (multiple responses)

		Schools participating in “Centre of Excellence (COE)”				Proportion test
		Non-COE (n = 1472)		COE (n = 250)		
		Count	%	Count	%	
(B12a) Reading books	1. Chinese	1,361	98.7%	235	98.3%	
	2. English	540	39.2%	113	47.3%	COE higher
	3. Other Lang	51	3.7%	4	1.7%	
	Total	1,379	100.0%	239	100.0%	
(B12b) Reading magazines	1. Chinese	1,198	97.0%	204	99.0%	
	2. English	118	9.6%	21	10.2%	
	3. Other Lang	42	3.4%	6	2.9%	
	Total	1,235	100.0%	206	100.0%	
(B12c) Reading comic books	1. Chinese	1,196	97.2%	211	98.1%	
	2. English	131	10.6%	21	9.8%	
	3. Other Lang	67	5.4%	6	2.8%	
	Total	1,231	100.0%	215	100.0%	
(B12d) Reading newspapers	1. Chinese	1,302	97.8%	224	97.8%	
	2. English	278	20.9%	98	42.8%	COE higher
	3. Other Lang	18	1.4%	3	1.3%	
	Total	1,331	100.0%	229	100.0%	

Table 13b: Viewing activities and language use (Item B12) – by schools participating in COE (multiple responses)

		Schools participating in “Centre of Excellence (COE)”				Proportion test
		Non-COE (n = 1472)		COE (n = 250)		
		Count	%	Count	%	
(B12e) Watching TV programmes	1. Chinese	1,344	96.8%	236	98.3%	
	2. English	593	42.7%	113	47.1%	
	3. Other Lang	169	12.2%	29	12.1%	
	Total	1,389	100.0%	240	100.0%	
(B12f) Watching films	1. Chinese	1,173	89.9%	206	92.8%	
	2. English	619	47.4%	121	54.5%	
	3. Other Lang	225	17.2%	36	16.2%	
	Total	1,305	100.0%	222	100.0%	

Table 13c: Internet activities and language use (Item B12) – by schools participating in COE (multiple responses)

		Schools participating in “Centre of Excellence (COE)”				Proportion test
		Non-COE (n = 1472)		COE (n = 250)		
		Count	%	Count	%	
(B12g) Checking email	1. Chinese	1,203	95.3%	211	98.6%	COE higher
	2. English	357	28.3%	56	26.2%	
	3. Other Lang	48	3.8%	6	2.8%	
	Total	1,262	100.0%	214	100.0%	
(B12h) Making, uploading or watching videos online (e.g., on <i>YouTube</i>)	1. Chinese	1,054	92.3%	180	93.3%	COE higher
	2. English	389	34.1%	80	41.5%	
	3. Other Lang	179	15.7%	35	18.1%	
	Total	1,142	100.0%	193	100.0%	
(B12i) Downloading, organising or listening to music	1. Chinese	1,108	92.1%	191	94.1%	
	2. English	530	44.1%	96	47.3%	
	3. Other Lang	272	22.6%	45	22.2%	
	Total	1,203	100.0%	203	100.0%	
(B12j) Playing TV, video or computer games	1. Chinese	1,233	94.5%	215	97.3%	
	2. English	445	34.1%	87	39.4%	
	3. Other Lang	190	14.6%	25	11.3%	
	Total	1,305	100.0%	221	100.0%	
(B12k) Searching for information via websites (e.g., <i>Google</i> or <i>Yahoo</i>)	1. Chinese	1,238	95.5%	217	97.7%	
	2. English	370	28.5%	71	32.0%	
	3. Other Lang	66	5.1%	13	5.9%	
	Total	1,297	100.0%	222	100.0%	
(B12l) Instant messaging	1. Chinese	1,027	93.6%	182	95.3%	
	2. English	272	24.8%	53	27.7%	
	3. Other Lang	53	4.8%	4	2.1%	
	Total	1,097	100.0%	191	100.0%	
(B12m) Doing artwork, graphic design or multimedia design	1. Chinese	923	95.6%	154	96.3%	
	2. English	153	15.9%	26	16.3%	
	3. Other Lang	51	5.3%	4	2.5%	
	Total	965	100.0%	160	100.0%	
(B12n) Shopping online	1. Chinese	705	93.5%	117	96.7%	
	2. English	73	9.7%	11	9.1%	
	3. Other Lang	43	5.7%	2	1.7%	
	Total	754	100.0%	121	100.0%	
(B12p) Visiting social networking sites online (e.g., <i>Facebook</i> , <i>Myspace</i>)	1. Chinese	874	93.5%	167	95.4%	
	2. English	253	27.1%	50	28.6%	
	3. Other Lang	45	4.8%	6	3.4%	
	Total	935	100.0%	175	100.0%	
(B12q) Sharing photos online (e.g., <i>Flickr</i>)	1. Chinese	755	94.0%	126	94.0%	
	2. English	121	15.1%	22	16.4%	
	3. Other Lang	34	4.2%	5	3.7%	
	Total	803	100.0%	134	100.0%	
(B12r) Blogging	1. Chinese	889	93.5%	155	95.7%	
	2. English	201	21.1%	41	25.3%	
	3. Other Lang	51	5.4%	7	4.3%	
	Total	951	100.0%	162	100.0%	

Appendix 3C Your popular culture interests

Table 1a: Students' favourite films (Item C13) (open-ended)

	Total (n = 1722)		Primary boys (n = 516)		Primary girls (n = 550)		Secondary boys (n = 328)		Secondary girls (n = 326)	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Foreign feature films	410	23.8	77	14.9	138	25.1	71	21.6	123	37.7
Cartoons / Animation	250	14.5	109	21.1	104	18.9	24	7.3	12	3.7
Comedy films	78	4.5	22	4.3	30	5.5	8	2.4	18	5.5
Romantic films	56	3.3	2	0.4	10	1.8	13	4.0	31	9.5
Local and Chinese feature films	46	2.7	16	3.1	9	1.6	13	4.0	8	2.5
Horror films	33	1.9	7	1.4	6	1.1	8	2.4	12	3.7
Action films	29	1.7	8	1.6	6	1.1	13	4.0	2	0.6
TV programmes	24	1.4	2	0.4	16	2.9	1	0.3	5	1.5
Not specified / no response / irrelevant responses	851	49.4	277	53.7	255	46.4	181	55.2	138	42.3

Table 1b: Reasons for selecting film as favourite (Item C13) (open-ended)

	Total (n = 1722)		Primary boys (n = 516)		Primary girls (n = 550)		Secondary boys (n = 328)		Secondary girls (n = 326)	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
I like how it makes me feel (e.g., It is exciting, amusing, romantic, etc)	454	26.4	110	21.3	166	30.2	70	21.3	107	32.8
It is good	301	17.5	101	19.6	78	14.2	63	19.2	59	18.1
I like the characters in it	75	4.4	22	4.3	40	7.3	6	1.8	7	2.1
I like the themes (e.g., Kung Fu 功夫)	55	3.2	15	2.9	10	1.8	9	2.7	21	6.4
The music is good	35	2.0	1	0.2	17	3.1	4	1.2	13	4.0
I like the actors	23	1.3	3	0.6	8	1.5	3	0.9	9	2.8
It has good special effects (e.g., 3D)	22	1.3	5	1.0	8	1.5	5	1.5	4	1.2
I like it	15	0.9	8	1.6	3	0.5	3	0.9	1	0.3
I like the genre (e.g., 愛情片, 科幻)	13	0.8	1	0.2	3	0.5	6	1.8	3	0.9
I like the message in it	13	0.8	4	0.8	1	0.2	1	0.3	7	2.1
It is relaxing	9	0.5	0	0.0	1	0.2	3	0.9	5	1.5
I like the original books	3	0.2	1	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3
It is recommended by others	3	0.2	1	0.2	1	0.2	1	0.3	0	0.0
It is suitable for children	3	0.2	0	0.0	3	0.5	0	0.0	0	0.0
The title is fascinating	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	0	0.0
Not specified / no response / irrelevant responses	753	43.7	251	48.6	235	42.7	161	49.1	106	32.5

Table 2a: Students' favourite celebrities (Item C14) (open-ended)

	Total (n = 1722)		Primary boys (n = 516)		Primary girls (n = 550)		Secondary boys (n = 328)		Secondary girls (n = 326)	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Hong Kong performing artists	473	27.5	114	22.1	200	36.4	76	23.2	83	25.5
Performing artists from China/Taiwan	158	9.2	13	2.5	45	8.2	19	5.8	81	24.8
Athletes from China/Taiwan	73	4.2	21	4.1	23	4.2	17	5.2	12	3.7
American performing artists	40	2.3	6	1.2	9	1.6	9	2.7	16	4.9
Japanese performing artists	26	1.5	3	0.6	5	0.9	3	0.9	15	4.6
American athletes	19	1.1	3	0.6	4	0.7	9	2.7	2	0.6
Athletes from other countries	17	1.0	10	1.9	0	0.0	6	1.8	1	0.3
Chinese historical characters	12	0.7	4	0.8	4	0.7	2	0.6	2	0.6
Korean performing artists	10	0.6	0	0.0	4	0.7	1	0.3	5	1.5
Foreign historical characters	8	0.5	3	0.6	3	0.5	1	0.3	1	0.3
Foreign authors	6	0.3	3	0.6	2	0.4	1	0.3	0	0.0
European performing artists	4	0.2	1	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	0.9
Li Ka-shing	4	0.2	2	0.4	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.3
Hong Kong athletes	3	0.2	2	0.4	1	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0
Cartoon characters	3	0.2	1	0.2	2	0.4	0	0.0	0	0.0
Chinese or local authors	2	0.1	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.3	0	0.0
Mother	2	0.1	0	0.0	1	0.2	1	0.3	0	0.0
Not specified / no response / irrelevant responses	886	51.5	329	63.8	252	45.8	187	57.0	117	35.9

Table 2b: Reasons for admiring favourite celebrity (Item C14) (open-ended)

	Total (n = 1722)		Primary boys (n = 516)		Primary girls (n = 550)		Secondary boys (n = 328)		Secondary girls (n = 326)	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
He/She is talented (e.g., sings well)	420	24.4	77	14.9	155	28.2	61	18.6	126	38.7
He/She looks good	189	11.0	29	5.6	82	14.9	22	6.7	56	17.2
I like his/her songs/films	100	5.8	31	6.0	39	7.1	15	4.6	15	4.6
He/She is good and brilliant	56	3.3	16	3.1	17	3.1	12	3.7	11	3.4
He/She is funny	38	2.2	18	3.5	4	0.7	9	2.7	7	2.1
I am amazed by his/her success/contribution	27	1.6	5	1.0	6	1.1	8	2.4	8	2.5
He/She is hardworking	11	0.6	0	0.0	3	0.5	2	0.6	6	1.8
I am interested in what he/she does	8	0.5	5	1.0	2	0.4	1	0.3	0	0.0
He/She is clever	7	0.4	2	0.4	2	0.4	1	0.3	2	0.6
He/She never gives up	6	0.3	0	0.0	3	0.5	0	0.0	3	0.9
He/She is enthusiastic about his work	2	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	0.6	0	0.0
He/She is conscientious about his work	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	0	0.0
Not specified / no response / irrelevant responses	921	53.5	336	65.1	263	47.8	196	59.8	125	38.3

Table 3a: Students' favourite cartoon, film, TV or game characters (Item C15) (open-ended)

	Total (n = 1722)		Primary boys (n = 516)		Primary girls (n = 550)		Secondary boys (n = 328)		Secondary girls (n = 326)	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Japanese cartoon characters (e.g., 多啦 A 夢、花師奶、火影忍者)	481	27.9	176	34.1	112	20.4	106	32.3	86	26.4
Sanrio cartoon characters (e.g., Hello Kitty, 大口仔)	163	9.5	6	1.2	110	20.0	7	2.1	40	12.3
Disney cartoon characters (e.g., Mickey Mouse, Winnie the Pooh)	154	8.9	15	2.9	81	14.7	9	2.7	49	15.0
American cartoon characters (e.g., Shrek, Snoopy)	27	1.6	8	1.6	7	1.3	5	1.5	7	2.1
US film characters	16	0.9	6	1.2	2	0.4	5	1.5	3	0.9
TV programme characters	14	0.8	0	0.0	3	0.5	5	1.5	6	1.8
Hong Kong cartoon characters (e.g., 老夫子)	13	0.8	4	0.8	6	1.1	1	0.3	2	0.6
European cartoon characters (e.g., Miffy)	7	0.4	2	0.4	3	0.5	0	0.0	2	0.6
Online game characters	6	0.3	5	1.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	0	0.0
Book characters	5	0.3	1	0.2	2	0.4	1	0.3	1	0.3
Cartoons from other countries (e.g., 賤兔、監獄兔)	4	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	1.2
Japanese film characters	2	0.1	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.3
Not specified / no response / irrelevant responses	843	49.0	293	56.8	228	41.5	189	57.6	132	40.5

Table 3b: Reasons for selecting character as favourite (Item C15) (open-ended)

	Total (n = 1722)		Primary boys (n = 516)		Primary girls (n = 550)		Secondary boys (n = 328)		Secondary girls (n = 326)	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
He/She/It is cute	430	25.0	51	9.9	222	40.4	36	11.0	121	37.1
He/She/It is amusing and interesting	115	6.7	51	9.9	28	5.1	22	6.7	14	4.3
He/She/It is beautiful/handsome	83	4.8	22	4.3	40	7.3	10	3.0	11	3.4
He/She/It is cool	51	3.0	15	2.9	6	1.1	20	6.1	10	3.1
He/She/It has amazing special talents	47	2.7	24	4.7	9	1.6	8	2.4	6	1.8
He/She/It is good	39	2.3	16	3.1	8	1.5	11	3.4	4	1.2
He/She/It is clever	23	1.3	7	1.4	8	1.5	4	1.2	4	1.2
He/She/It is brave and honourable	18	1.0	6	1.2	4	0.7	3	0.9	5	1.5
He/She/It is brilliant	17	1.0	5	1.0	3	0.5	5	1.5	4	1.2
He/She/It is persistent in pursuing their dreams	12	0.7	3	0.6	1	0.2	4	1.2	4	1.2
He/She/It is kind	8	0.5	3	0.6	4	0.7	0	0.0	1	0.3
I can learn from him/her/it	8	0.5	1	0.2	1	0.2	3	0.9	3	0.9
I like the actor who plays him/her/it	5	0.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	3	0.9
He/She/It is optimistic	3	0.2	1	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	0.6
He/She/It is hardworking	3	0.2	1	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	0.6
Not specified / no response / irrelevant responses	903	52.4	315	61.0	235	42.7	209	63.7	143	43.9

Table 4a: Students' favourite TV programmes (Item C16) (open-ended)

	Total (n = 1722)		Primary boys (n = 516)		Primary girls (n = 550)		Secondary boys (n = 328)		Secondary girls (n = 326)	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Hong Kong serials (e.g., TVB serial)	242	14.1	59	11.4	93	16.9	39	11.9	51	15.6
Cartoons	219	12.7	100	19.4	76	13.8	28	8.5	15	4.6
Hong Kong variety shows (e.g., 獎門人)	105	6.1	21	4.1	17	3.1	29	8.8	38	11.7
Taiwanese serials	58	3.4	4	0.8	32	5.8	2	0.6	20	6.1
American serials	41	2.4	8	1.6	4	0.7	14	4.3	15	4.6
The news report	26	1.5	8	1.6	10	1.8	5	1.5	3	0.9
Japanese or Korean serials	20	1.2	2	0.4	7	1.3	3	0.9	8	2.5
Children's programmes	20	1.2	6	1.2	7	1.3	4	1.2	3	0.9
Documentary programmes (e.g., 星期日檔案)	15	0.9	4	0.8	2	0.4	5	1.5	4	1.2
American variety shows (e.g., America's Got Talent)	10	0.6	1	0.2	2	0.4	1	0.3	6	1.8
Variety shows from China/Taiwan (e.g., 康熙來了)	8	0.5	0	0.0	2	0.4	0	0.0	6	1.8
Educational TV programmes	4	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	0.9	1	0.3
Serials from other countries	3	0.2	0	0.0	2	0.4	0	0.0	1	0.3
Sports shows	3	0.2	2	0.4	0	0.0	1	0.3	0	0.0
Not specified / no response / irrelevant responses	954	55.4	303	58.7	296	53.8	195	59.5	158	48.5

Table 4b: Reasons for selecting programme as favourite (Item C16) (open-ended)

	Total (n = 1722)		Primary boys (n = 516)		Primary girls (n = 550)		Secondary boys (n = 328)		Secondary girls (n = 326)	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
It is good	262	15.2	88	17.1	88	16.0	38	11.6	48	14.7
It is amusing and interesting	206	11.9	51	9.9	78	14.2	25	7.6	52	15.9
I like the themes	61	3.5	20	3.9	19	3.5	14	4.3	8	2.5
I can learn specific knowledge (e.g., scientific knowledge)	48	2.8	11	2.1	12	2.2	9	2.7	16	4.9
I like the actors	40	2.3	2	0.4	11	2.0	9	2.7	18	5.5
It is exciting	37	2.1	15	2.9	10	1.8	7	2.1	5	1.5
I like the characters in it	28	1.6	7	1.4	15	2.7	1	0.3	5	1.5
It is relaxing and enjoyable	26	1.5	1	0.2	5	0.9	6	1.8	14	4.3
I can learn a lot from it	24	1.4	6	1.2	9	1.6	4	1.2	5	1.5
It has inspiring and meaningful messages in it	22	1.3	4	0.8	5	0.9	4	1.2	9	2.8
It is impressive	15	0.9	1	0.2	7	1.3	0	0.0	7	2.1
It reflects reality	9	0.5	0	0.0	4	0.7	1	0.3	4	1.2
I like the music/songs in it	7	0.4	0	0.0	3	0.5	0	0.0	4	1.2
I can learn about culture	6	0.3	0	0.0	1	0.2	1	0.3	4	1.2
I can learn languages (e.g., English)	6	0.3	2	0.4	1	0.2	1	0.3	2	0.6
I can relate to it	4	0.2	2	0.4	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.3
It is scary	1	0.1	1	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
It is recommended by others	1	0.1	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0
Not specified / no response / irrelevant responses	967	56.2	313	60.7	292	53.1	209	63.7	151	46.3

Table 5a: Students' favourite songs (Item C17) (open-ended)

	Total (n = 1722)		Primary boys (n = 516)		Primary girls (n = 550)		Secondary boys (n = 328)		Secondary girls (n = 326)	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Cantonese pop songs	372	21.6	92	17.8	150	27.3	68	20.7	62	19.0
Mandarin pop songs	166	9.6	23	4.5	50	9.1	26	7.9	67	20.6
English pop songs	136	7.9	20	3.9	36	6.5	38	11.6	42	12.9
Japanese pop songs	30	1.7	5	1.0	2	0.4	8	2.4	15	4.6
Songs/Music from Japanese cartoons/animation	23	1.3	9	1.7	9	1.6	2	0.6	3	0.9
Songs/Music from Cantonese cartoons/animation	18	1.0	10	1.9	4	0.7	2	0.6	2	0.6
Songs/Music from Cantonese dramas/films/TV programmes	12	0.7	3	0.6	2	0.4	4	1.2	3	0.9
Cantonese hip hop songs	8	0.5	5	1.0	0	0.0	3	0.9	0	0.0
Cantonese Christian songs	6	0.3	0	0.0	1	0.2	1	0.3	4	1.2
Korean pop songs	6	0.3	2	0.4	2	0.4	0	0.0	2	0.6
Classical music	5	0.3	2	0.4	0	0.0	1	0.3	2	0.6
Western opera	4	0.2	0	0.0	2	0.4	1	0.3	1	0.3
The national anthem	4	0.2	2	0.4	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.3
Contemporary instrumental music	3	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	2	0.6
The birthday song	2	0.1	0	0.0	1	0.2	1	0.3	0	0.0
Our school song	2	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.3
Chinese opera	1	0.1	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0
Cantonese folk songs	1	0.1	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0
Songs/Music from Mandarin dramas/films/TV programmes	1	0.1	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0
English folk songs	1	0.1	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0
English rock songs	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	0	0.0
African songs	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	0	0.0
Not specified / no response / irrelevant responses	949	55.1	347	67.2	297	54.0	173	52.7	130	39.9

Table 5b: Reasons for selecting songs as favourite (Item C17) (open-ended)

	Total (n = 1722)		Primary boys (n = 516)		Primary girls (n = 550)		Secondary boys (n = 328)		Secondary girls (n = 326)	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
It is good / I like it	519	30.1	123	23.8	183	33.3	97	29.6	116	35.6
The lyrics are meaningful	61	3.5	5	1.0	11	2.0	11	3.4	34	10.4
The melody is nice	33	1.9	4	0.8	13	2.4	4	1.2	12	3.7
I like the singer	26	1.5	2	0.4	11	2.0	4	1.2	9	2.8
It is amusing	19	1.1	3	0.6	9	1.6	4	1.2	3	0.9
It is exciting	18	1.0	2	0.4	6	1.1	5	1.5	5	1.5
The lyrics are beautiful	17	1.0	0	0.0	3	0.5	3	0.9	11	3.4
The tempo is fast	12	0.7	2	0.4	5	0.9	0	0.0	5	1.5
I like the language it is sung in	12	0.7	2	0.4	1	0.2	2	0.6	7	2.1
It is enjoyable and relaxing	10	0.6	0	0.0	3	0.5	3	0.9	4	1.2
It is popular and trendy	10	0.6	4	0.8	1	0.2	0	0.0	5	1.5
It is fun and enjoyable	9	0.5	3	0.6	1	0.2	1	0.3	4	1.2
It is touching	8	0.5	1	0.2	1	0.2	3	0.9	3	0.9
It is symbolic/memorable (e.g., birthday song/national anthem)	7	0.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	5	1.5	2	0.6
I can relate to the lyrics	6	0.3	0	0.0	1	0.2	2	0.6	3	0.9
It is encouraging	6	0.3	0	0.0	1	0.2	2	0.6	3	0.9
Like this type of music	5	0.3	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.3	3	0.9
The tempo is strong	4	0.2	1	0.2	1	0.2	1	0.3	1	0.3
The melody is soft	3	0.2	1	0.2	1	0.2	1	0.3	0	0.0
The melody is rhythmic	3	0.2	1	0.2	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.3
The lyrics have an educational meaning	2	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	0.6	0	0.0
The lyrics are easy to remember	2	0.1	0	0.0	1	0.2	1	0.3	0	0.0
The melody is strong	2	0.1	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.3	0	0.0
It is lovely	2	0.1	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.3
I am proud to be Chinese	2	0.1	2	0.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
I admire the singer's talent	2	0.1	0	0.0	2	0.4	0	0.0	0	0.0
The lyrics rhyme	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3
The lyrics are touching and impressive	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3
The melody is catchy/memorable	1	0.1	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0
The tempo is slow	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3
It is romantic	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3
It is entertaining	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3
It is fascinating	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	0	0.0
It is classical	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3
It is sad	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	0	0.0
It is artistic	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3
Not specified / no response / irrelevant responses	969	56.3	361	70.0	306	55.6	181	55.2	119	36.5

Table 6a: Students' favourite TV, video or computer games (Item C18) (open-ended)

	Total (n = 1722)		Primary boys (n = 516)		Primary girls (n = 550)		Secondary boys (n = 328)		Secondary girls (n = 326)	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Massive Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Games (MMORPG-Online)	100	5.8	43	8.3	15	2.7	29	8.8	12	3.7
Simple games played for leisure (e.g., 休閒小品)	88	5.1	25	4.8	33	6.0	14	4.3	16	4.9
Action/Shooting games	82	4.8	43	8.3	1	0.2	33	10.1	5	1.5
Nintendo DS	77	4.5	25	4.8	36	6.5	3	0.9	13	4.0
Online games	66	3.8	18	3.5	35	6.4	6	1.8	7	2.1
Tactical role-playing games (especially in war)	59	3.4	21	4.1	0	0.0	35	10.7	3	0.9
Music games	56	3.3	8	1.6	12	2.2	10	3.0	26	8.0
Playstation portable	40	2.3	16	3.1	10	1.8	11	3.4	3	0.9
Simulation games	37	2.1	11	2.1	7	1.3	10	3.0	9	2.8
Sports games	23	1.3	7	1.4	3	0.5	13	4.0	0	0.0
Game platform – PC	20	1.2	11	2.1	5	0.9	3	0.9	1	0.3
Action role-playing games	16	0.9	7	1.4	3	0.5	5	1.5	1	0.3
Strategic games	15	0.9	2	0.4	7	1.3	2	0.6	4	1.2
Cooking games	15	0.9	0	0.0	8	1.5	0	0.0	7	2.1
Game platform – online	15	0.9	4	0.8	4	0.7	4	1.2	3	0.9
Vehicle simulations	11	0.6	1	0.2	3	0.5	3	0.9	4	1.2
Game platform – online instant	11	0.6	2	0.4	4	0.7	1	0.3	4	1.2
Wii	10	0.6	1	0.2	3	0.5	0	0.0	6	1.8
Mini games (e.g., Brainpower)	5	0.3	1	0.2	2	0.4	1	0.3	1	0.3
Mini games (Making-up)	4	0.2	0	0.0	3	0.5	0	0.0	1	0.3
Playstation (1, 2, 3)	4	0.2	1	0.2	0	0.0	2	0.6	1	0.3
Xbox (360)	3	0.2	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.3
Cartoon/TV character role-playing	1	0.1	1	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Gameboy	1	0.1	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0
Iphone apps	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3
Not specified / no response / irrelevant responses	1,043	60.6	293	56.8	369	67.1	167	50.9	213	65.3

Table 6b: Reasons for selecting game as favourite (Item C18) (open-ended)

	Total (n = 1722)		Primary boys (n = 516)		Primary girls (n = 550)		Secondary boys (n = 328)		Secondary girls (n = 326)	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
It is good	407	23.6	151	29.3	113	20.5	84	25.6	59	18.1
It is exciting	71	4.1	27	5.2	10	1.8	23	7.0	11	3.4
It is amusing and interesting	55	3.2	15	2.9	18	3.3	7	2.1	15	4.6
I like the features (e.g., theme, characters)	54	3.1	6	1.2	17	3.1	17	5.2	14	4.3
I can meet friends playing it	20	1.2	2	0.4	4	0.7	4	1.2	10	3.1
I can learn from it (e.g., history, languages)	17	1.0	4	0.8	7	1.3	4	1.2	2	0.6
The characters are cute	14	0.8	5	1.0	4	0.7	1	0.3	4	1.2
It trains my mental abilities	10	0.6	2	0.4	4	0.7	2	0.6	2	0.6
I like the variety	9	0.5	3	0.6	3	0.5	1	0.3	2	0.6
It is popular and trendy	8	0.5	1	0.2	2	0.4	2	0.6	3	0.9
The visual effects are beautiful	6	0.3	0	0.0	1	0.2	3	0.9	2	0.6
It gives me a sense of achievement	5	0.3	0	0.0	1	0.2	2	0.6	2	0.6
It is very realistic	5	0.3	1	0.2	1	0.2	2	0.6	1	0.3
It improves my sensitivity/reaction time	5	0.3	0	0.0	3	0.5	1	0.3	1	0.3
It is convenient	5	0.3	3	0.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	0.6
The music is good	4	0.2	2	0.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	0.6
It is easy to play	3	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	2	0.6
Playing it is a good form of exercise	3	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.2	1	0.3	1	0.3
It is good for killing time	3	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	2	0.6
It is challenging	3	0.2	1	0.2	1	0.2	1	0.3	0	0.0
The visual effects are attractive (e.g., 3D)	2	0.1	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.3	0	0.0
It is relaxing	2	0.1	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.3	0	0.0
I like the plot	2	0.1	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.3	0	0.0
The characters are special	1	0.1	1	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
It plays smoothly	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	0	0.0
The visual effects are very realistic	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	0	0.0
It makes me happy	1	0.1	1	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
It trains my vision	1	0.1	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0
It sparks my curiosity	1	0.1	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0
It is a classic game	1	0.1	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0
Not specified / no response / irrelevant responses	1,042	60.5	298	57.6	365	66.4	177	54.0	200	61.3

Table 7a: Students' favourite websites (Item C19) (open-ended)

	Total (n = 1722)		Primary boys (n = 516)		Primary girls (n = 550)		Secondary boys (n = 328)		Secondary girls (n = 326)	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Search engines (e.g., <i>Yahoo, Google</i>)	322	18.7	72	14.0	98	17.8	74	22.6	78	23.9
Video websites (e.g., <i>YouTube</i>)	125	7.3	34	6.6	27	4.9	29	8.8	35	10.7
Online game websites	90	5.2	42	8.1	32	5.8	9	2.7	7	2.1
Social networking websites (e.g., <i>Facebook</i>)	81	4.7	10	1.9	28	5.1	9	2.7	34	10.4
Blog websites (e.g., <i>Xanga, Qooza</i>)	78	4.5	4	0.8	19	3.5	4	1.2	51	15.6
Forums / Discussion groups (e.g., <i>Uwants.com</i>)	43	2.5	3	0.6	9	1.6	15	4.6	16	4.9
Our school website	17	1.0	3	0.6	11	2.0	3	0.9	0	0.0
Websites related to my interests	16	0.9	1	0.2	2	0.4	6	1.8	7	2.1
Celebrity blogs or official websites	12	0.7	1	0.2	2	0.4	2	0.6	7	2.1
Knowledge websites (e.g., <i>Wikipedia, Yahoo! Knowledge</i>)	11	0.6	5	1.0	3	0.5	2	0.6	1	0.3
TV station websites (e.g. <i>tvb.com</i>)	10	0.6	2	0.4	6	1.1	0	0.0	2	0.6
Websites with online novels and texts	9	0.5	2	0.4	1	0.2	1	0.3	5	1.5
Educational websites with online exercises (e.g., <i>Small campus</i>)	7	0.4	2	0.4	5	0.9	0	0.0	0	0.0
Online comics and animation websites	6	0.3	1	0.2	0	0.0	3	0.9	2	0.6
Government department websites (e.g., <i>Hong Kong Observatory</i>)	4	0.2	0	0.0	2	0.4	2	0.6	0	0.0
News websites (e.g., <i>mingpao.com</i>)	3	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	2	0.6
Music and mp3 websites	3	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	2	0.6
Online tool websites (e.g., <i>Yahoo! Dictionary</i>)	3	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	0.6	1	0.3
Travel websites	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	0	0.0
Not specified / no response / irrelevant responses	924	53.7	334	64.7	313	56.9	171	52.1	104	31.9

Table 7b: Reasons for selecting website as favourite (Item C19) (open-ended)

	Total (n = 1722)		Primary boys (n = 516)		Primary girls (n = 550)		Secondary boys (n = 328)		Secondary girls (n = 326)	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
It contains a lot of information	289	16.8	69	13.4	86	15.6	60	18.3	74	22.7
The content is good, interesting and entertaining	175	10.2	55	10.7	60	10.9	28	8.5	32	9.8
It facilitates communication and sharing of information	79	4.6	7	1.4	25	4.5	8	2.4	39	12.0
It is convenient	42	2.4	4	0.8	8	1.5	12	3.7	18	5.5
The content is practical and useful	30	1.7	5	1.0	9	1.6	4	1.2	12	3.7
It satisfies my personal interests	29	1.7	6	1.2	9	1.6	6	1.8	8	2.5
The content is educational	10	0.6	4	0.8	1	0.2	4	1.2	1	0.3
It is popular and trendy	7	0.4	0	0.0	3	0.5	3	0.9	1	0.3
Looking at it has become a habit	7	0.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	0.6	5	1.5
It is good for killing time	3	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	0.9
The content is enjoyable and exciting	2	0.1	2	0.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Not specified / no response / irrelevant responses	1,062	61.7	364	70.5	350	63.6	203	61.9	143	43.9

Table 8a: Students' other favourite things (Item C20) (open-ended)

	Total (n = 1722)		Primary boys (n = 516)		Primary girls (n = 550)		Secondary boys (n = 328)		Secondary girls (n = 326)	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Dolls	41	2.3	13	2.6	20	3.6	2	0.6	6	1.8
Food (e.g., desserts, cakes, snacks)	32	1.9	9	1.7	15	2.7	2	0.6	6	1.8
Books	21	1.2	6	1.2	10	1.8	2	0.6	3	0.9
Pets and animals	16	0.9	3	0.6	11	2.0	1	0.3	1	0.3
Models	9	0.5	4	0.8	0	0.0	5	1.5	0	0.0
Sports: Swimming	6	0.3	2	0.4	2	0.4	1	0.3	1	0.3
Sports: Football	5	0.3	3	0.6	0	0.0	2	0.6	0	0.0
Cartoons	5	0.3	4	0.8	1	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0
Family members	5	0.3	0	0.0	2	0.4	2	0.6	1	0.3
Magazines	4	0.2	0	0.0	2	0.4	1	0.3	1	0.3
Drawing / Painting	4	0.2	0	0.0	2	0.4	1	0.3	1	0.3
Dancing	4	0.2	1	0.2	3	0.5	0	0.0	0	0.0
Comics	3	0.2	0	0.0	2	0.4	0	0.0	1	0.3
Sports: Jogging	3	0.2	0	0.0	3	0.5	0	0.0	0	0.0
Sports: Basketball	2	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	0.6	0	0.0
Sports: Badminton	2	0.1	0	0.0	2	0.4	0	0.0	0	0.0
Public transportation	2	0.1	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.3	0	0.0
Card games	2	0.1	0	0.0	2	0.4	0	0.0	0	0.0
Chess	2	0.1	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.3	0	0.0
Stationery	2	0.1	1	0.2	1	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0
Arts & Crafts	2	0.1	0	0.0	2	0.4	0	0.0	0	0.0
Collectable items	2	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.3
Colours	2	0.1	0	0.0	2	0.4	0	0.0	0	0.0
Animation	2	0.1	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.3
Authors	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3
Sports: Ice-skating	1	0.1	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0
Sports: Skateboarding	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	0	0.0
Sports: Tennis	1	0.1	1	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Sports: Rugby	1	0.1	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0
Sports: Table tennis	1	0.1	1	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Sports: Volleyball	1	0.1	1	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Travelling	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3
Religion	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3
Cars	1	0.1	1	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Fashion	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3
Mahjong	1	0.1	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0
Accessories	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3
Flowers	1	0.1	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0
Mobile phones	1	0.1	1	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Academic studies	1	0.1	1	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
History	1	0.1	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0
Money	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	0	0.0
Nature	1	0.1	1	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Cooking	1	0.1	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0
Photography	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3
Not specified / no response / irrelevant responses	1,523	88.4	465	90.1	461	83.8	301	91.8	296	90.8

Table 8b: Reasons for selecting other things as favourites (Item C20) (open-ended)

	Total (n = 1722)		Primary boys (n = 516)		Primary girls (n = 550)		Secondary boys (n = 328)		Secondary girls (n = 326)	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
They are good and interesting	92	5.3	23	4.5	46	8.4	10	3.0	13	4.0
They are attractive	32	1.9	6	1.2	20	3.6	2	0.6	4	1.2
I like them	18	1.0	2	0.4	6	1.1	2	0.6	8	2.5
They make me relaxed and happy	6	0.3	0	0.0	2	0.4	1	0.3	3	0.9
They are exciting	8	0.5	4	0.8	0	0.0	3	0.9	1	0.3
They train my mental abilities	8	0.5	5	1.0	1	0.2	2	0.6	0	0.0
They are educational	9	0.5	4	0.8	3	0.5	2	0.6	0	0.0
They help enhance communication with others	2	0.1	0	0.0	1	0.2	1	0.3	0	0.0
They are useful	7	0.4	2	0.4	1	0.2	2	0.6	2	0.6
They are good for killing time	1	0.1	1	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
They give me a sense of success	1	0.1	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0
Not specified / no response / irrelevant responses	1,548	89.9	471	91.3	470	85.5	308	93.9	297	91.1

Table 9: Students practices as fans of their favourite things (Item C21) (open-ended)

	Total (n = 1722)		Primary boys (n = 516)		Primary girls (n = 550)		Secondary boys (n = 328)		Secondary girls (n = 326)	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Visit related websites*	526	30.5	94	18.2	125	22.7	137	41.8	169	51.8
Buy toys and other merchandise*	481	27.9	138	26.7	131	23.8	103	31.4	107	32.8
Join online discussion groups*	395	22.9	91	17.6	71	12.9	122	37.2	109	33.4
Write stories about them and post them online*	191	11.1	41	7.9	64	11.6	44	13.4	42	12.9
Seek information on the Internet	46	2.7	3	0.6	9	1.6	11	3.4	23	7.1
Share them with friends	9	0.5	1	0.2	2	0.4	2	0.6	4	1.2
They are amusing	7	0.4	3	0.6	3	0.5	1	0.3	0	0.0
Play with them	6	0.3	3	0.6	2	0.4	1	0.3	0	0.0
Love them	5	0.3	0	0.0	4	0.7	0	0.0	1	0.3
Download them from the Internet	4	0.2	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.3	2	0.6
Learn more about them	3	0.2	0	0.0	2	0.4	0	0.0	1	0.3
Buy related toys impulsively	2	0.1	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.3
Study harder so that my parents will buy them for me	2	0.1	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.3
Cry about them	2	0.1	0	0.0	1	0.2	1	0.3	0	0.0
Use PSP as a platform to enjoy them	2	0.1	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.3	0	0.0
Play with them non-stop	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	0	0.0
Play with them on my mobile phone	1	0.1	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0
Look for information in newspapers	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	0	0.0
Listen to my favourite music	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3
Watch related videos or films	1	0.1	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0
Attend related functions	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3
Not specified / no response / irrelevant responses	723	42.0	259	50.2	283	51.5	100	30.5	81	24.8

* denotes the options that were provided to the respondents in the questionnaire.

Table 10: The ways in which students engage with their favourite characters, TV shows etc (Item C22) (open-ended)

	Total (n = 1722)		Primary boys (n = 516)		Primary girls (n = 550)		Secondary boys (n = 328)		Secondary girls (n = 326)	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Find out more about them	78	4.5	7	1.4	13	2.4	22	6.7	36	11.0
Because I like them	43	2.5	6	1.2	7	1.3	7	2.1	22	6.7
Chat with others about them	14	0.8	2	0.4	4	0.7	6	1.8	2	0.6
I am curious about them	12	0.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	5	1.5	7	2.1
They are good and interesting	10	0.6	3	0.6	1	0.2	5	1.5	1	0.3
They are cute and lovely	5	0.3	1	0.2	1	0.2	1	0.3	2	0.6
They are very expensive	4	0.2	1	0.2	1	0.2	1	0.3	1	0.3
They are trendy	4	0.2	1	0.2	1	0.2	0	0.0	2	0.6
They are good for killing time	4	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	0.9	1	0.3
They are memorable	4	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	0.6	2	0.6
Play with them/watch them	4	0.2	2	0.4	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.3
They are useful tools	3	0.2	1	0.2	1	0.2	1	0.3	0	0.0
I am good at them	3	0.2	3	0.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
They are out-of-print products	3	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	2	0.6
They help me to relax and relieve stress	3	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	2	0.6
Buy them from toy shops	2	0.1	0	0.0	1	0.2	1	0.3	0	0.0
Learn specific knowledge about them	2	0.1	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.3
The content is funny	2	0.1	0	0.0	1	0.2	1	0.3	0	0.0
Look at them	2	0.1	0	0.0	2	0.4	0	0.0	0	0.0
They are attractive	2	0.1	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.3
Look for tactics or information about them on the Internet	2	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	0.6	0	0.0
They are portable	1	0.1	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0
Look for related trial products	1	0.1	1	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Put them in my favourite box	1	0.1	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0
Spend money on them	1	0.1	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0
Discuss them with others on <i>MSN</i>	1	0.1	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0
Hope that my parents will buy them for me	1	0.1	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0
Read stories about them	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	0	0.0
They are popular	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3
Look forward to the publication of other related products	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3
Draw comics of them at home for a whole week	1	0.1	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0
Obtain information about them for discussion	1	0.1	1	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
I like the books about them	1	0.1	1	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
They are free of charge	1	0.1	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0
My parents do not allow me to indulge in them	1	0.1	1	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
I miss my favourite characters or celebrities	1	0.1	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0
They feel genuine (擁有喜好的感覺真實)	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	0	0.0
I enjoy the freedom of speech on the Internet as all viewers are strangers to me	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	0	0.0
Not specified / no response / irrelevant responses	1,499	87.0	485	94.0	506	92.0	266	81.1	241	73.9

Appendix 3D Your opinion

Table 1a: Students' views on using popular cultural interests in English lessons (Item D23) – by education level

	Education level – Primary or Secondary					
	Primary		Secondary		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Yes	630	59.1%	476	73.0%	1,106	64.4%
No	436	40.9%	176	27.0%	612	35.6%
Total	1,066	100.0%	652	100.0%	1,718	100.0%

Note 1: Four respondents did not respond to this question.

Note 2: Pearson chi-square test showed that there were statistically significantly more secondary respondents who supported using popular cultural interests in English lessons ($p = 0.000$)

Table 1b: Students' views on using popular cultural interests in English lessons (Item D23) – by gender (A2)

	Gender			
	Boys		Girls	
	Count	%	Count	%
Yes	512	60.7%	592	67.8%
No	331	39.3%	281	32.2%
Total	843	100.0%	873	100.0%

Note 1: Four respondents did not respond to the main question and a further two did not respond to the gender question.

Note 2: Pearson chi-square test showed that there were statistically significantly more girl respondents who supported using popular cultural interests in English lessons ($p = 0.002$)

Table 2: Advantages of using popular culture in English learning (Item D23a) (multiple responses)

	Total (n = 1106)		Primary boys (n = 283)		Primary girls (n = 347)		Secondary boys (n = 229)		Secondary girls (n = 245)	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
It makes the lesson interesting	930	84.1	225	79.5	291	83.9	194	84.7	218	89.0
We can participate actively	804	72.7	188	66.4	237	68.3	172	75.1	205	83.7
It makes the lesson interactive	685	61.9	158	55.8	205	59.1	153	66.8	168	68.6
It facilitates English learning outside the classroom	588	53.2	122	43.1	171	49.3	126	55.0	168	68.6
It helps us learn from each other	573	51.8	134	47.3	167	48.1	131	57.2	140	57.1
We can learn more knowledge#	5	0.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	5	2.0
It is easier to learn#	2	0.2	2	0.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Not specified / no response	13	1.2	5	1.8	4	1.2	4	1.7	0	0.0

denotes an individual response added by the respondents. This question was only posed to those responding 'Yes' to the question referred to in Table 1.

Table 3: Disadvantages of using popular culture in English learning (Item D23b) (multiple responses)

	Total (n = 612)		Primary boys (n = 233)		Primary girls (n = 203)		Secondary boys (n = 98)		Secondary girls (n = 78)	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Teachers might not know what we like	364	59.5	129	55.4	122	60.1	57	58.2	56	71.8
It will not help us with exams	243	39.7	94	40.3	81	39.9	36	36.7	32	41.0
It wastes lesson time	172	28.1	64	27.5	63	31.0	28	28.6	17	21.8
It may make students misbehave	134	21.9	45	19.3	49	24.1	19	19.4	21	26.9
Not easy to understand (content/ language of pop culture items)#	21	3.4	8	3.4	10	4.9	1	1.0	2	2.6
It will be boring#	2	0.3	0	0.0	2	1.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Not specified / no response	29	4.7	14	6.0	5	2.5	7	7.1	3	3.8

denotes an individual response added by the respondents. This question was only posed to those responding 'No' to the question referred to in Table 1.

Table 4: Ways that students feel popular cultural interests could be used in English learning (Item D24) (open-ended)

	Total (n = 1722)		Primary boys (n = 516)		Primary girls (n = 550)		Secondary boys (n = 328)		Secondary girls (n = 326)	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
By introducing songs, stories, films, artists/idols, etc	282	16.4	38	7.4	49	8.9	76	23.2	118	36.2
By exchanging experiences (e.g., more interaction, more fun, telling jokes)	83	4.8	7	1.4	13	2.4	20	6.1	42	12.9
By playing games, performing drama/ role-plays, designing web games, etc	82	4.8	22	4.3	31	5.6	16	4.9	13	4.0
To vary the medium of instruction (e.g., using Chinese as well as English, use more Chinese, use more English)	48	2.8	19	3.7	14	2.5	10	3.0	5	1.5
To improve relationships (e.g., understand what students think/are interested in)	39	2.3	4	0.8	10	1.8	15	4.6	10	3.1
By using technology (computers, websites, blogging, etc)	19	1.1	0	0.0	2	0.4	7	2.1	9	2.8
By varying the learning contexts (e.g., using the computer lab, ITLC)	14	0.8	6	1.2	1	0.2	3	0.9	4	1.2
By modifying the exercises/activities	4	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	0.9	1	0.3
By hiring a NET teacher for lessons	2	0.1	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.3	0	0.0
Add more innovative ideas in the lessons	2	0.1	0	0.0	2	0.4	0	0.0	0	0.0
To increase communication with foreigners	1	0.1	1	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Not specified / no response / irrelevant responses	1,235	71.7	425	82.4	435	79.1	209	63.7	166	50.9

Table 5a: Students' views on using computers and the Internet in English learning (Item D25) – by education level

	Education level – Primary or Secondary					
	Primary		Secondary		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Yes	797	76.9	538	83.3	1,335	79.4
No	239	23.1	108	16.7	347	20.6
Total	1036	100.0%	646	100.0%	1682	100.0%

Note 1: 40 respondents did not respond to this question.

Note 2: Pearson chi-square test showed that there were statistically significantly more secondary respondents who supported using computers and the Internet in English lessons ($p = 0.002$)

Table 5b: Students' views on using computers and the Internet in English learning (Item D25) – by schools participating in COE

	Centre of Excellence			
	Non-COE		COE	
	Count	%	Count	%
Yes	1,122	78.0	213	87.3
No	316	22.0	31	12.7
Total	1,438	100.0%	244	100.0%

Note 1: 40 respondents did not respond to this question.

Note 2: Pearson chi-square test showed that there were statistically significantly more respondents from COE schools who supported using computers and the Internet in English lessons ($p = 0.004$)

Table 6: Advantages of using computers and the Internet in English learning (Item D25a) (multiple responses)

	Total (n = 1335)		Primary boys (n = 385)		Primary girls (n = 412)		Secondary boys (n = 273)		Secondary girls (n = 263)	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
It makes the lesson interesting	1,098	82.2	308	80.0	347	84.2	231	84.6	210	79.8
We can participate actively	941	70.5	257	66.8	282	68.4	204	74.7	196	74.5
It makes the lesson interactive	858	64.3	223	57.9	248	60.2	196	71.8	190	72.2
It helps us learn from each other	701	52.5	183	47.5	212	51.5	150	54.9	155	58.9
It facilitates English learning outside the classroom	660	49.4	164	42.6	191	46.4	139	50.9	165	62.7
We can learn more knowledge#	2	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.4	1	0.4
Not specified / no response	15	1.1	7	1.8	3	0.7	4	1.5	5	1.9

denotes an individual response added by the respondents. This question was only posed to those responding 'Yes' to the question referred to in Table 5.

Table 7: Disadvantages of using computers and the Internet in English learning (Item D25b) (multiple responses)

	Total (n = 347)		Primary boys (n = 116)		Primary girls (n = 123)		Secondary boys (n = 49)		Secondary girls (n = 59)	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Teachers might not know what we like	182	52.4	61	52.6	69	56.1	19	38.8	33	55.9
It will not help us with exams	122	35.2	38	32.8	48	39.0	16	32.7	20	33.9
It wastes lesson time	107	30.8	30	25.9	40	32.5	19	38.8	18	30.5
It may make students misbehave	65	18.7	22	19.0	24	19.5	10	20.4	9	15.3
It will be boring#	3	0.9	1	0.9	1	0.8	0	0.0	1	1.7
It can damage our eyes#	2	0.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	3.4
Not easy to understand (content/ language of pop culture items)#	1	0.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.7
Teacher might not know how to use the computer/Internet#	1	0.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.7
Not specified / no response	25	7.2	13	11.2	8	6.5	2	4.1	2	3.4

denotes an individual response added by the respondents. This question was only posed to those responding 'No' to the question referred to in Table 5.

Table 8: Students' suggestions for ways of using computers and the Internet in English learning (Item D26) (open-ended)

	Total (n = 1722)		Primary boys (n = 516)		Primary girls (n = 550)		Secondary boys (n = 328)		Secondary girls (n = 326)	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
More use of technology (computers, websites, blogging, etc)	197	11.4	31	6.0	54	9.8	52	15.9	59	18.1
To introduce songs, stories, films, artists/idols, etc	97	5.6	13	2.5	24	4.4	23	7.0	37	11.3
Use IT for activities and performance (e.g., playing games, performing drama/role-plays, designing web games)	90	5.2	23	4.5	27	4.9	14	4.3	26	8.0
To exchange experiences (e.g., more interaction, more fun, telling jokes)	50	2.9	7	1.4	12	2.2	13	4.0	18	5.5
To vary the medium of instruction (e.g., using Chinese as well as English, use more Chinese, use more English)	28	1.6	11	2.1	8	1.5	4	1.2	5	1.5
To vary the learning contexts (e.g., using the computer lab, ITLC)	20	1.2	4	0.8	7	1.3	5	1.5	4	1.2
To improve relationships (e.g., understand what students think/are interested in)	9	0.5	1	0.2	1	0.2	6	1.8	1	0.3
By hiring a NET teacher for lessons	1	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Provide each student with a computer for lessons	1	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	0	0.0
Not specified / no response / irrelevant responses	1,304	75.7	437	84.7	438	79.6	227	69.2	201	61.7

Appendix 4 Questionnaire – School 01

[SCHOOL 01]
The University of Hong Kong –
Promoting ‘New Literacies’ in Hong Kong Schools



Questionnaire on Students’ Literacy Practices and Interests in Photo Story

個人資料：

班別: 5___

性別: ___男/女

1. 家中是否有電腦: ___是/否

若有，家中的電腦能否接駁至互聯網: ___能/不能

2. 家中有沒有相機或具拍照功能的電子儀器: ___有/沒有

若有，家中的相機或具拍照功能的電子儀器能否接駁至電腦: ___能/不能

問卷調查：

請回答下列問題，並圈出代表你意見的數字。

	完全 不同意	不同意	中立	同意	完全 同意
我知道 Photo Story 是用來製作短片的軟件	1	2	3	4	5
我曾利用 Photo Story 製作短片	1	2	3	4	5
我已掌握製作 Photo Story 的技巧	1	2	3	4	5
我能利用 Photo Story 加入相片或圖片	1	2	3	4	5
我能拍攝與主題相關的相片	1	2	3	4	5
我能從互聯網中尋找與主題相關的相片或圖片	1	2	3	4	5
我能利用 Photo Story 加入描述 (Captions)	1	2	3	4	5
我能加入適切的英語描述	1	2	3	4	5
我能利用 Photo Story 加入旁白 (Narrations)	1	2	3	4	5
我能加入適切的英語旁白	1	2	3	4	5
透過錄製旁白，我能加強英語說話表達的技巧	1	2	3	4	5
我能利用 Photo Story 更改文字的特效	1	2	3	4	5
我能利用 Photo Story 改變場景的轉換	1	2	3	4	5
我能利用 Photo Story 製作短片	1	2	3	4	5
我喜歡製作 Photo Story	1	2	3	4	5
我喜歡以節日作為製作短片的主題	1	2	3	4	5
我希望能以個人的喜好選擇製作短片的主題	1	2	3	4	5
我希望能向同學分享我製作的短片	1	2	3	4	5

	完全 不同意	不同意	中立	同意	完全 同意
我喜歡同學分享他們所製作的短片	1	2	3	4	5
透過製作 Photo Story，我的英語書寫能力已有 所提升	1	2	3	4	5
透過製作 Photo Story，我的英語說話能加已有 所提升	1	2	3	4	5
我喜歡以 Photo Story 代替以紙筆創作我的故 事	1	2	3	4	5
我希望日後仍能以 Photo Story 製作故事短片	1	2	3	4	5

請回答以下問題：

1. 若我能選擇一個主題製作短片，我希望以_____作為短片主題，
因為_____。
2. 我對製作 Photo Story 有以下的意見:
