



IMPACT EVALUATION STUDY REPORT

Stepping Stones' Pilot After School Program in Fall 2012

Background

In Fall 2012, Stepping Stones launched a new intervention in a bid to further advance its mission of contributing to the education of underprivileged children in Shanghai. Dubbed the After School Program (ASP), the intervention sends English tutors weekly to community centers throughout Shanghai, where migrant students, in small groups of 2-3 students, are assisted in completing their English homework and preparing for their English examinations.

ASP was piloted in 4 community centers during the term and the basic details of each of these community centers are as follows:

SITE	LOCATION	STARTING DATE	ENDING DATE
Sumin Village Community Center	Minhang District	October 20, 2012	January 12, 2013
Xujing Culture and Sports Center	Qingpu District	October 20, 2012	January 12, 2013
New Citizen Life Center – Hong Kou	Hong Kou District	November 23, 2012	January 11, 2013
Xupu Activity Center	Minhang District	December 8, 2012	January 19, 2013

Method, Scope and Limitations

To be able to assess whether the pilot ASP intervention has any impact on the interest of students in English and the level of their confidence using the language, similar questionnaires were administered to the students prior to the start and at the end of the ASP intervention. The questionnaire covered the students' perceptions about the following:

1. English as a favorite subject
2. English as a least favorite subject
3. Going to school
4. Learning English
5. English difficulty
6. English importance
7. The extra tuition provided by volunteers
8. Confidence in the following areas:
 - a. Talking in English during English class at their school
 - b. Understanding what your English teacher says in class at their school
 - c. Completing their English homework
 - d. Talking to a foreigner in English
 - e. Improving their grade for English

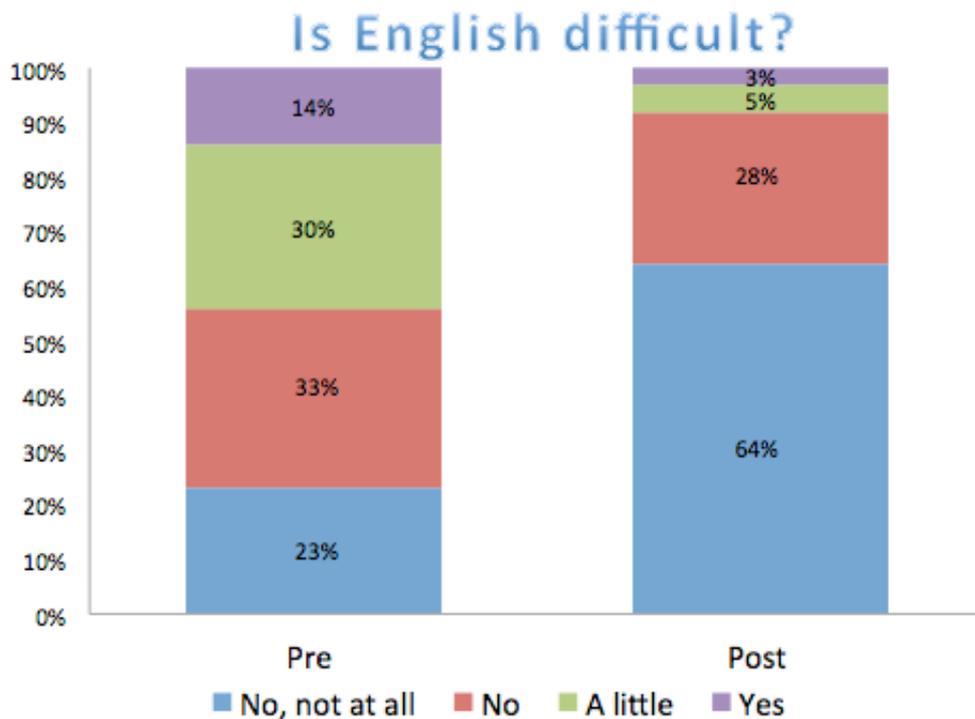
The responses of the students to the same questions, before the intervention and after, were compared to generate the findings. Only the responses from students from each community center that were there to answer both the questionnaire at the start and at the end were considered valid. As such, the total number of valid respondents and the breakdown per community center is as follows:

SITE	NUMBER OF VALID RESPONDENTS
Sumin Village Community Center	2
Xujing Culture and Sports Center	10
New Citizen Life Center – Hong Kou	7
Xupu Activity Center	21
TOTAL	40

Highlights – Favorable Responses

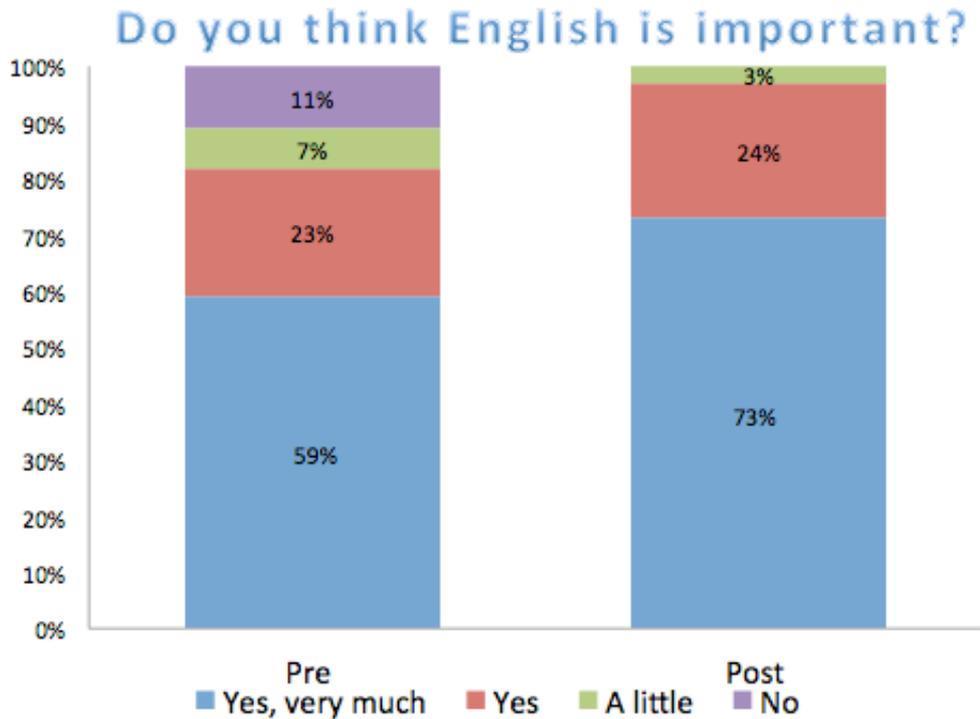
1. The item that registered the most dramatic change is the question about whether the students find English difficult. Prior to the intervention, 44% of the students said that they find English difficult. The percentage of students finding English difficult went down by 81.8% to only 8% (Table 1), after the intervention.

Table 1

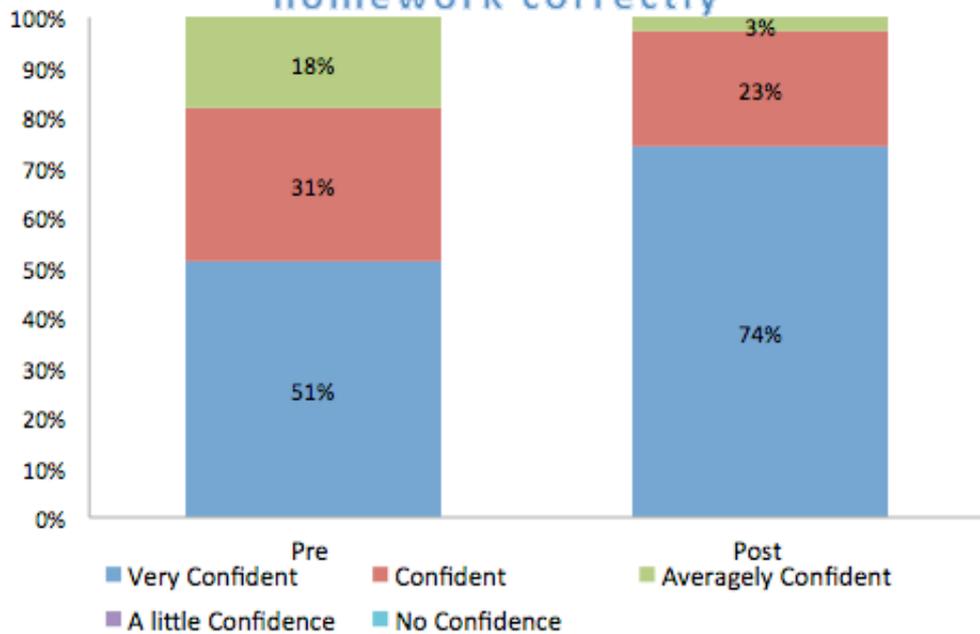


2. Even prior to the ASP intervention, the percentage of students that perceive English to be important and that state they have confidence completing their English homework are already at a high level of 82%. After the intervention, the already positive responses to both questions increased by 18.3% more, bringing up the percentage to 97% of the students (Tables 2 and 3).

Table 2



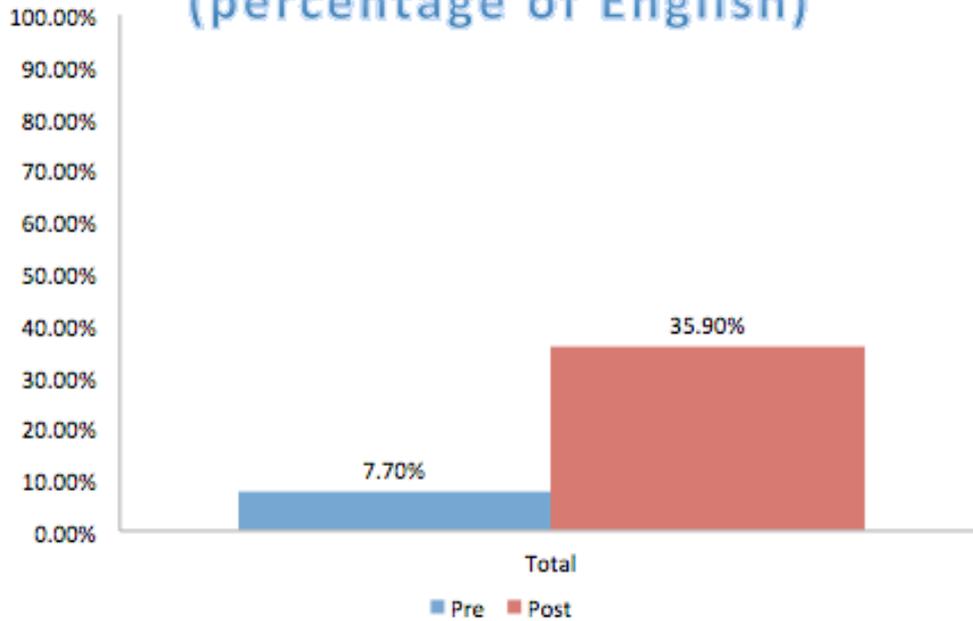
The confidence to complete all your English homework correctly



3. The percentage of students considering English as their favorite subject rose from 7.7% to 35.9% (Table 4), posting a remarkable 366.2% increase.

Table 4

What is your favorite subject? (percentage of English)



4. In general, the students' confidence in their facility with the English language increased. 66% of the students stated they have confidence improving their English grade prior to the intervention, which rose to 87% after the intervention (Table 5). Confidence to understand what their English teacher says in class rose from 64% to 69% (Table 6). In terms of the percentage of students who had confidence to talk to a foreigner in English, it was 26% at the beginning and 36% at the end (Table 7).

Table 5

The confidence to improve your English grade this semester

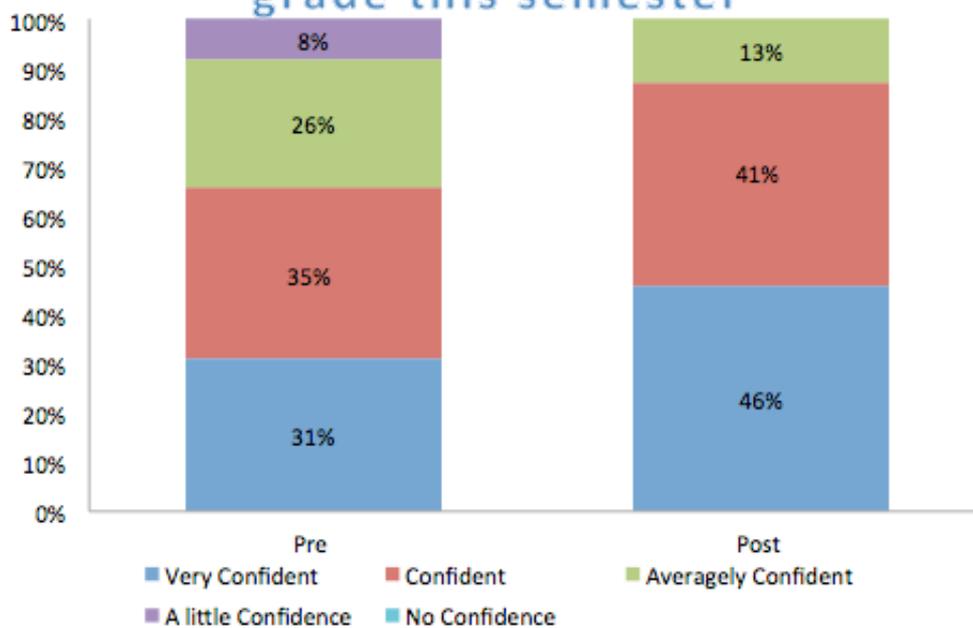


Table 6

The confidence to understand what your English teacher says in class

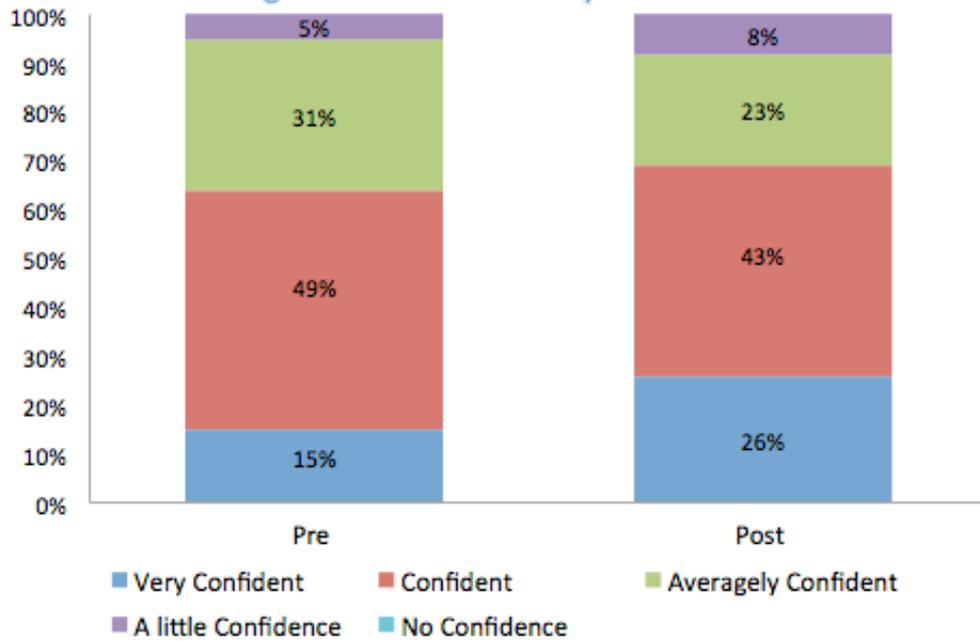
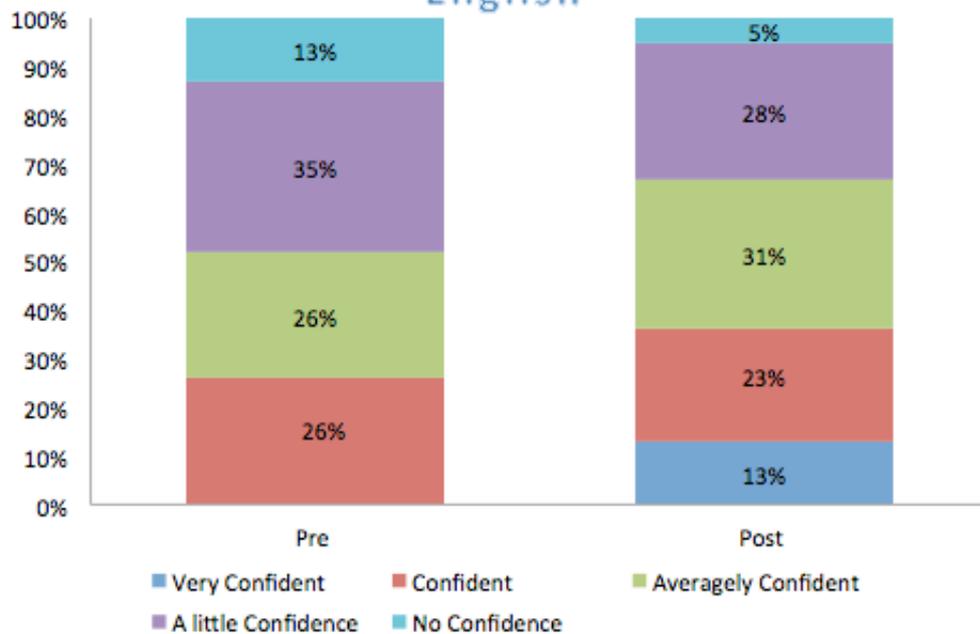


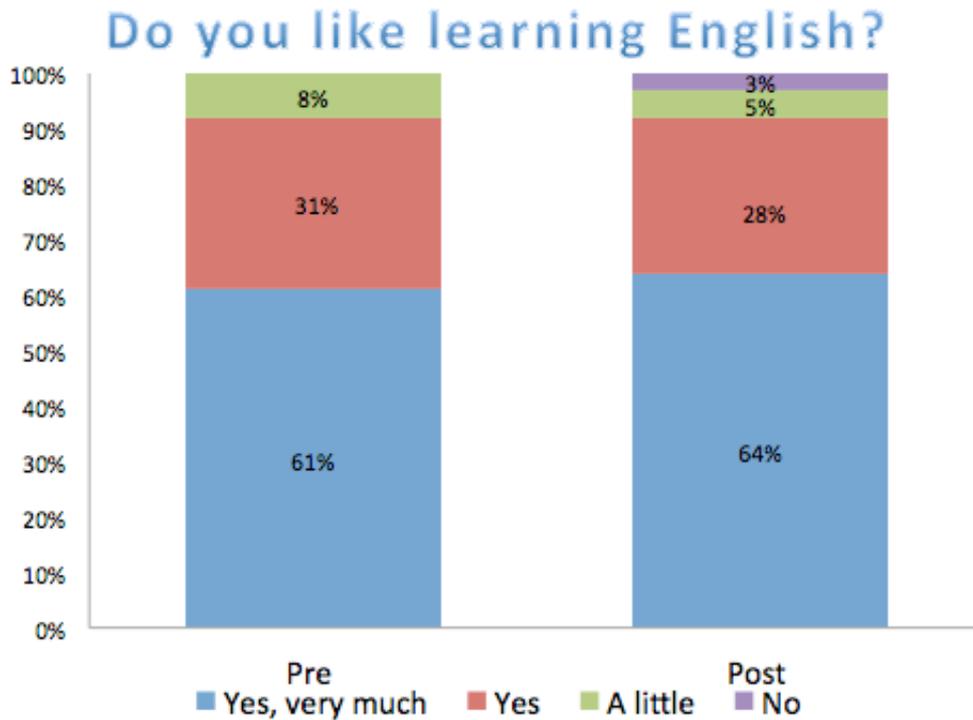
Table 7

The confidence to talk to a foreigner in English



5. The percentage of students who like learning English remained at a high level of 92% (Table 8).

Table 8

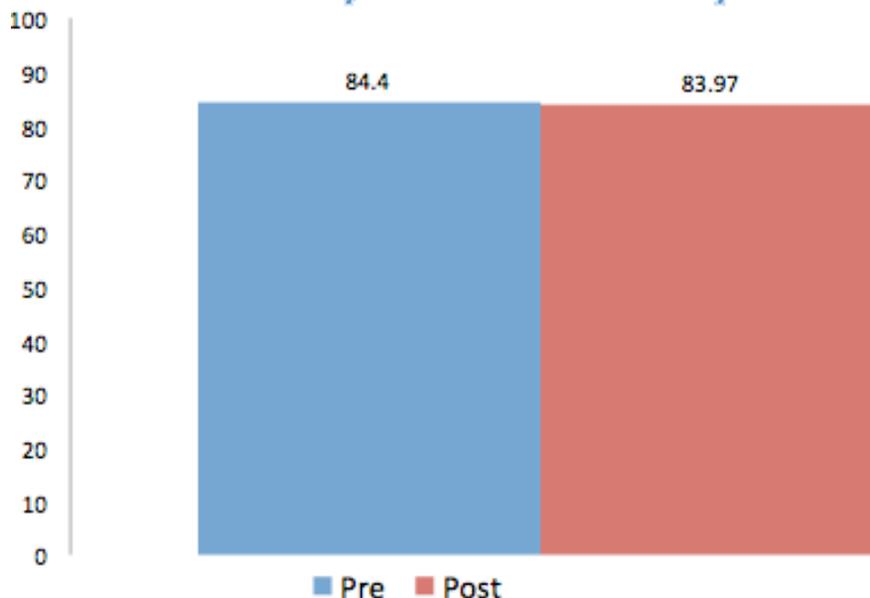


Highlights – Points of Improvement

1. The average of the self-reported English grades of the students prior to the intervention was 84.4%. However, the average of the self-reported English grades that the students received for their mid-term examinations during the term they joined the ASP decreased by 0.5% to 83.97%.

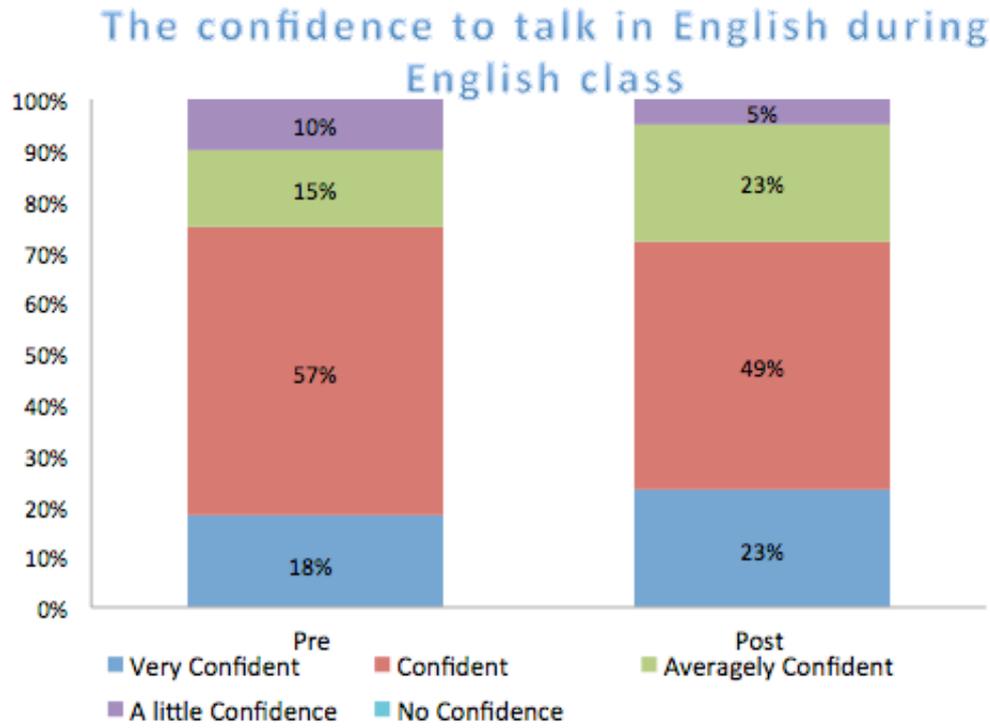
Table 9

What grade did you get in English at the end of your last school year?



2. The percentage of students who are confident talking in English during class went down from 75% to 72%.

Table 10



Implications for Further Study

While the lack of increase in the average of the English grades of the students is certainly a cause for concern, it serves bearing in mind that the students' grades being compared are taken from their performance at different grade levels. Since the data was collected at the beginning of the fall term, it was the English grades of the students when they were still in the previous grade level that were obtained. Hence, the students' mid-term English grades at their current grade level are actually being compared to their English grades from their previous grade level, where the difficulty of English study is arguably not the same.

Stepping Stones is very much looking forward to obtaining the grades of the same students at the end of the spring 2013 term, so that the grades of the students from the fall and spring semesters of the same academic year will be the ones compared.