



IMPACT EVALUATION STUDY REPORT

Follow-up Assessment of the Impact of the After School Programs

Background

Stepping Stones launched the After School Program (ASP) in the Fall Semester of 2012. Through the ASP, volunteers serve as English tutors to small groups of 2-3 migrant students in community centers throughout Shanghai. As tutors, the volunteers help their assigned students complete their English homework, prepare for their English tests, and practice their English skills in general.

At the end of the Fall 2012 Semester, Stepping Stones conducted an Impact Evaluation Study where the interest and confidence of the students in English were compared before joining the ASP and after participating in the ASP for one semester.

When ASP was first launched in Fall 2012, it took place in 4 community centers, which are as follows: Sumin Village Community Center (Minhang District), Xujing Culture and Sports Center (Qingpu District), New Citizen Life Center – Hong Kou (Hong Kou District), and Xupu Activity Center (Minhang District). The ASP continued in all 4 community centers during the Spring 2013 Semester, allowing Stepping Stones to once again compare the interest and confidence of the students prior to being part of ASP and after joining the ASP, this time around after two semesters' worth of participation instead of one.

Method, Scope and Limitations

To be able to assess the impact of the ASP intervention after the course of two semesters on the interest of students in English and the level of their confidence using the language, a questionnaire similar to what the students were asked to answer at the start of the ASP in Fall 2012 were administered to the students at the end of the Spring 2013 Semester. The comparative questionnaires covered the following points:

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. Confidence in the following areas:
 - a. Talking in English during English class at their school
 - b. Understanding what their 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

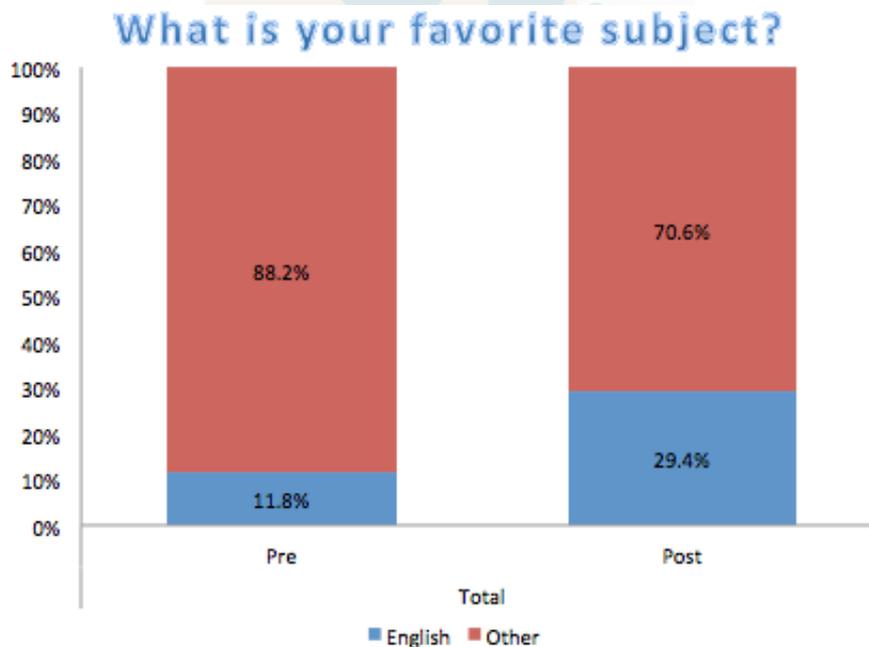
To generate the findings of this report, only the responses of the students that were present to answer the questionnaire at the start of the Fall 2012 Semester and at the end of the Spring 2013 Semester were compared. The percentages of the students with positive responses to each of the questions were computed prior to and after the program, determining whether the percentages increased or decreased over the course of two semesters of involvement in the ASP.

The results of the first survey (at the end of the first semester) and the second survey (at the end of the first year) cannot be easily compared, since the students whose answers were compared for the first Impact Evaluation Study on ASP are not necessarily the same students whose answers are compared in this follow-up assessment. The reason is the students who were present to answer the questionnaire at the end of Fall 2012 may not be the same students that were present to answer the questionnaire at the end of Spring 2013. The total number of respondents for this report is 17 or 27% of the original 64 students that were surveyed at the start of the Fall 2012 Semester.

Highlights – Favorable Responses

1. A 149.2% increase was observed in the percentage of students that identified English as their favorite subject, after two semesters of participating in the ASP (Table 1).

Table 1



2. The percentage of students who are confident in their English language abilities in the following areas increased: improving their English grade, which increased by 99.8% from 41.2% to 82.3% (Table 2); talking to a foreigner in English, posting a 50% increase from 11.8% to 17.7% (Table 3); and completing their English homework correctly, which went up from 70.6% to 76.4% (Table 4).

Table 2

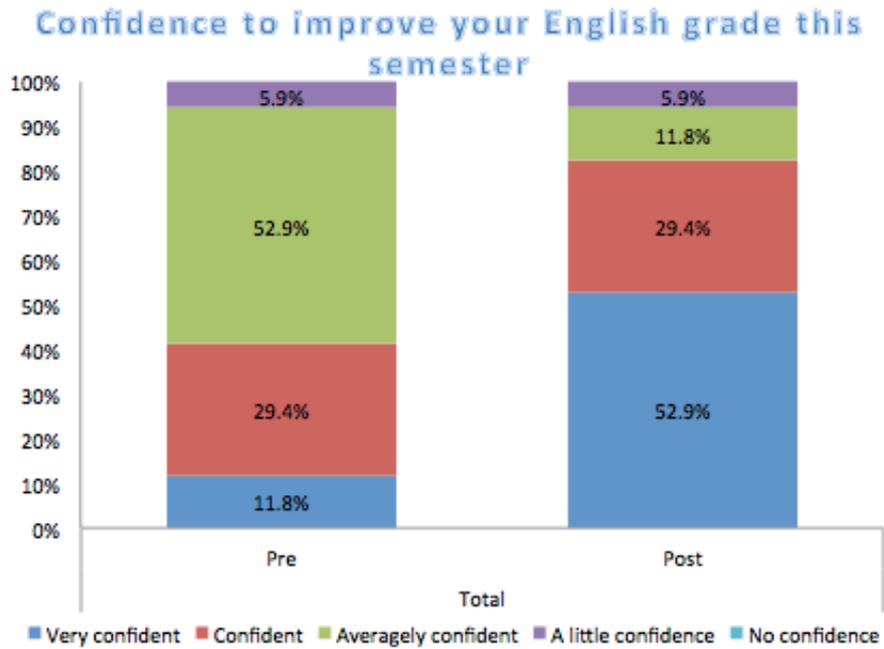


Table 3

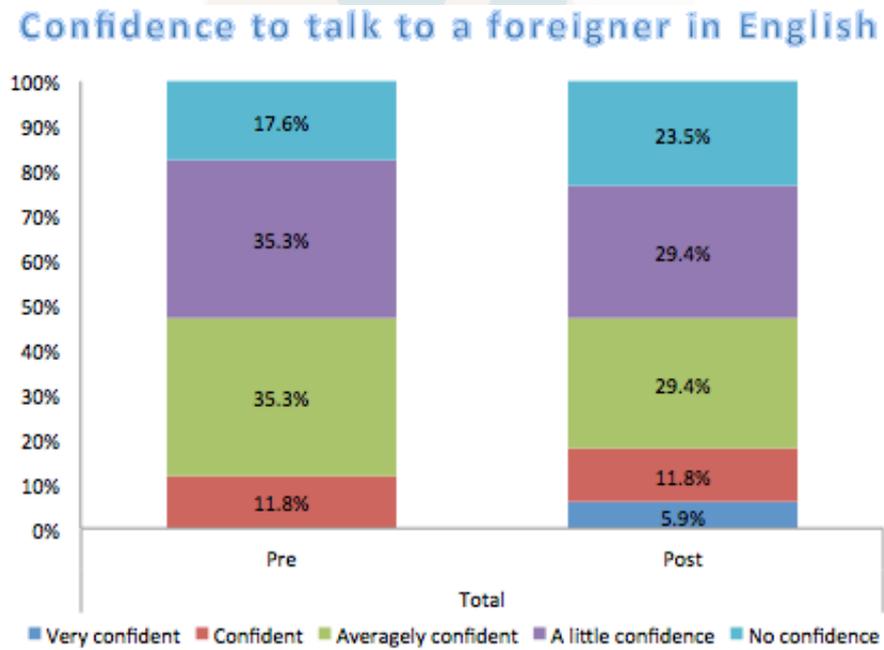
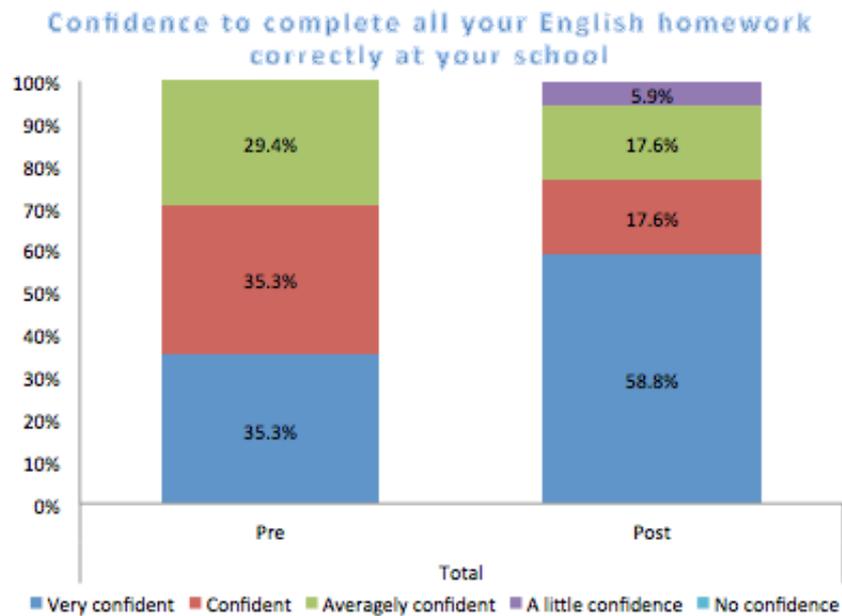
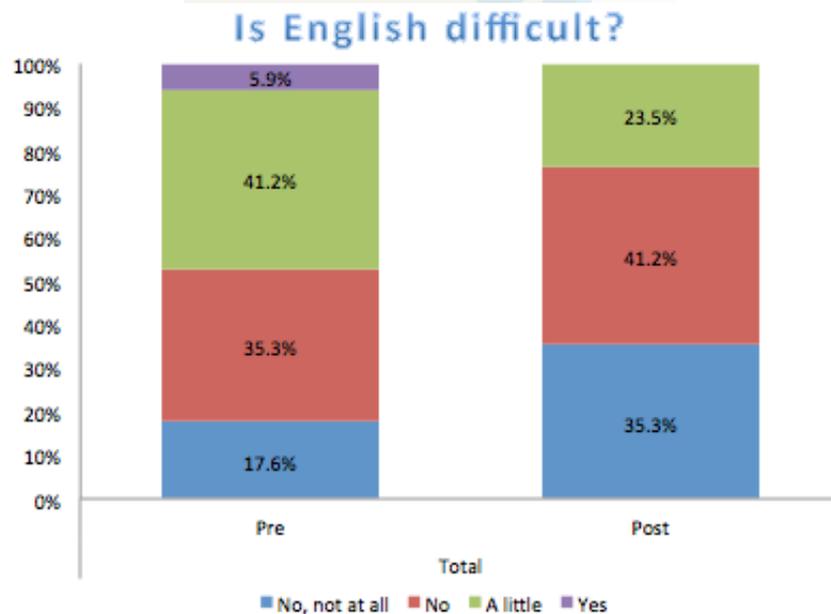


Table 4



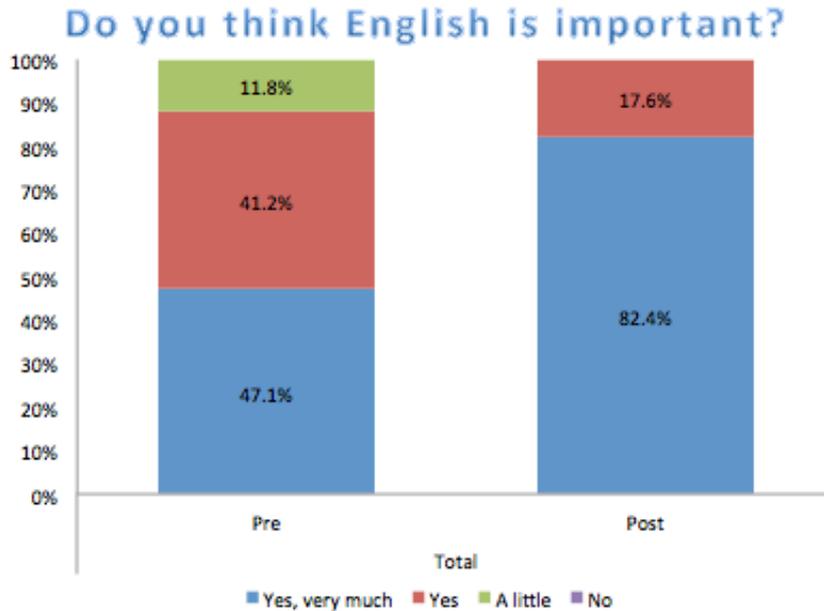
3. The percentage of students that find English difficult decreased from 47.1% at the start to 23.5% after two semesters, registering a 50.1% decreased (Table 5).

Table 5



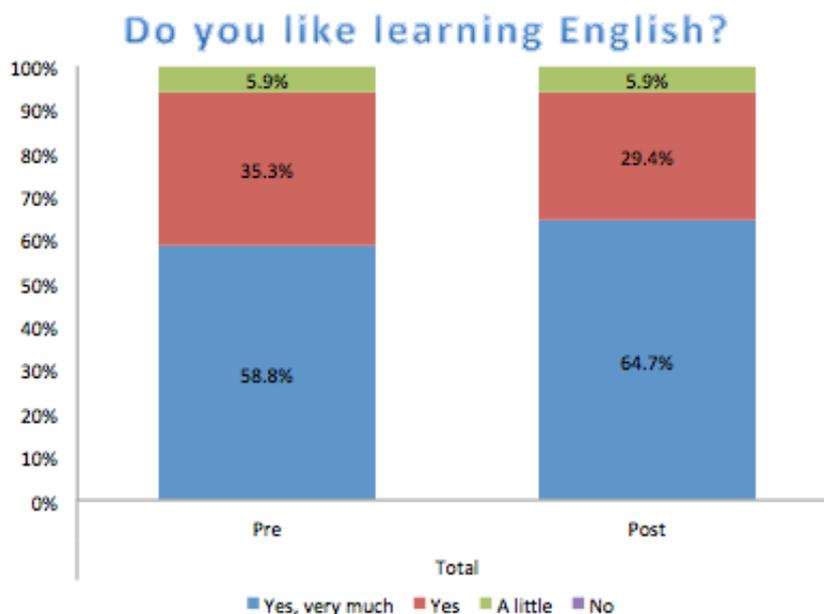
4. The percentage of students that consider English important was already at a high 88.3% at the start. This increased even more by 13.3% to 100% of the students (Table 6).

Table 6



5. The percentage of students who like learning English remained at a high level of 94.1% (Table 7). At the same time, none of the students identified English as their least favorite subject both in the beginning and in the end of the comparison period.

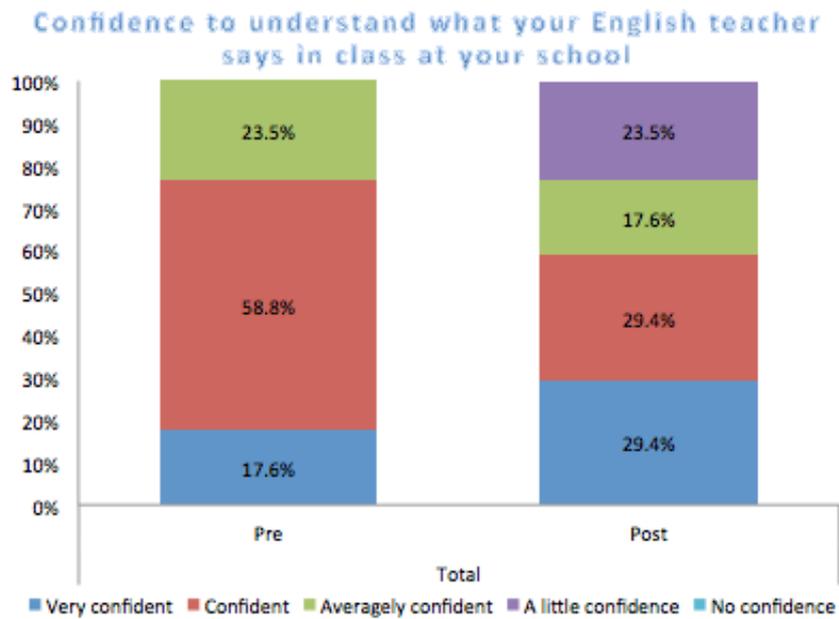
Table 7



Highlights – Points of Improvement

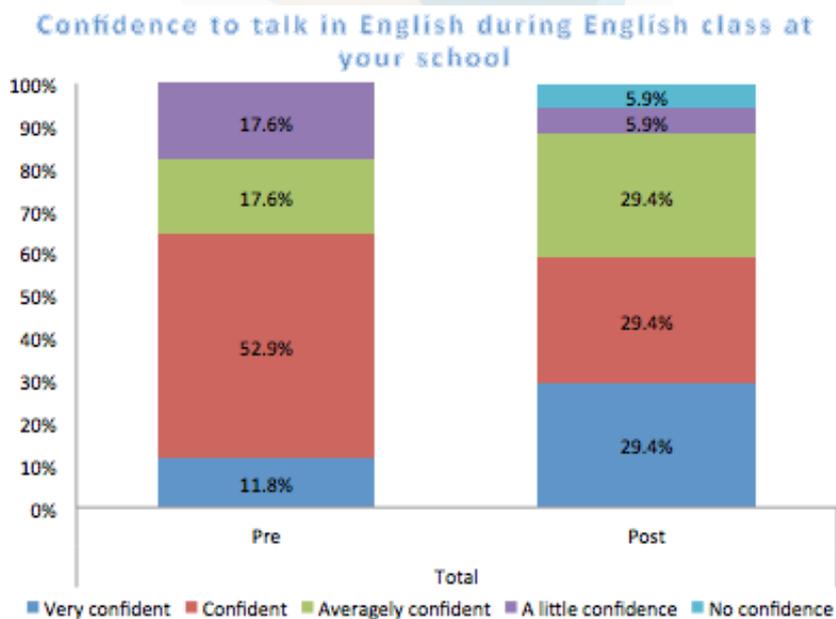
1. The percentage of students who are confident to understand what their English teacher says at their school decreased, from 76.4% to 58.8% (Table 8).

Table 8



2. The same is true for the percentage of students confident to talk in English during English class, which went down from 64.7% to 58.8% (Table 9).

Table 9



Implications for Further Study

Three sets of data have already been obtained from the ASP students: prior to the start of the ASPs in the beginning of the Fall 2012 Semester, after 1 semester of involvement in the ASPs at the end of the Fall 2012 Semester, and after 2 semesters of involvement in the ASPs at the end of the Spring 2013 Semester. The responses of the students who were present during all three times the questionnaires were administered can thus be compared. Doing such a comparison can determine whether there is any trend with regard to the interest and confidence of the students in English throughout their involvement in the ASPs. Additionally, such a comparison can lend insight on whether the impact the ASPs are making is consistent or not.

Furthermore, since some of the ASP students attend migrant schools that partner with Stepping Stones, English grades can be obtained from these schools. It is thus possible to supplement the evaluation of the impact of the ASPs with a comparison of the English grades of the students that are attending the ASPs vis-à-vis the English grades of their classmates who are not attending ASPs.

