



IMPACT EVALUATION STUDY REPORT
Follow-up Assessment of the Class Teaching Program
In a Migrant Primary School in Minhang

Background

Stepping Stones has been running a class teaching program in a particular Migrant Primary School in Minhang District (the School) since the Spring 2011 Semester, covering grades 3 to 5. During the Spring 2011 Semester, only select classes in each of the mentioned grades were assigned volunteers. Starting the Fall 2011 Semester until the Spring 2013 Semester, volunteers had been assigned to teach all classes in grades 3 to 5.

Throughout the conduct of the class teaching program at the School, Stepping Stones has administered questionnaires to the students at different points in time to monitor the program's impact. Prior to the start of the teaching program in the Spring 2011 Semester, the survey administered established the students' baseline interest and confidence in English. The comparable survey administered at the end of the Spring 2011 Semester enabled Stepping Stones to check whether the responses of the students improved vis-à-vis the baseline. At the same time, the English grades of the students with volunteers and without volunteers were compared. These comparisons comprised the first Impact Evaluation Study Report involving the School.

At the end of both the Spring 2012 and Spring 2013 Semesters, similar questionnaires were again administered to the students from grades 3 to 5. By the end of Spring 2012, grade 3 and 4 students surveyed in Spring 2011 were then grade 4 and grade 5 students respectively, while by the end of Spring 2013, the grade 3 students surveyed in Spring 2011 were then grade 5 students. The second Impact Evaluation Study Report concerning the School focused on the comparison of the responses of the same students between Spring 2011 and Spring 2012.

Method, Scope and Limitations

This report focuses on the comparison of the responses of the same students between Spring 2011 and Spring 2013, specifically the responses of the grade 3 students in Spring 2011 who were still attending the School as grade 5 students in Spring 2013. These students have either had 4 or 5 semesters' worth of English classes with Stepping Stones volunteers, depending on whether or not they were part of the classes in the Spring 2011 Term that were assigned volunteers.

On the one hand, the comparable questions from the questionnaires administered prior to the start of the program at the School and at the end of Spring 2013 are as follows:

1. English as a favorite subject
2. English as a least favorite subject
3. How much students like learning English
4. English difficulty
5. English importance
6. Confidence in the following areas:
 - a. Completing their English homework correctly
 - b. Improving their grade in English

On the other hand, the following questions were excluded from the comparisons because of differences in how they were phrased:

Spring 2011 Questionnaire	Spring 2013 Questionnaire
Confidence to talk in English in front of your classmates	Confidence to talk in English during English class
Confidence to greet a foreigner in English	Confidence to talk to a foreigner in English

In the Spring 2013 iteration of the questionnaire, additional questions were added based on learning that were gathered in conducting the surveys. Since these questions were only introduced in Spring 2013, a comparison is not possible. The questions that were added, mostly serving the purpose of being control questions, pertain to:

1. How much students like going to school
2. The importance of good grades
3. Chinese difficulty
4. Mathematics difficulty
5. Confidence to get good grades in school

Additionally, the following questions were asked in the beginning of Spring 2011 but were dropped from the questionnaire that was administered in Spring 2013:

1. How much students find English interesting
2. How much students like speaking English
3. Whether the students made progress in English last term
4. Confidence to understand what the students' English teacher says in class

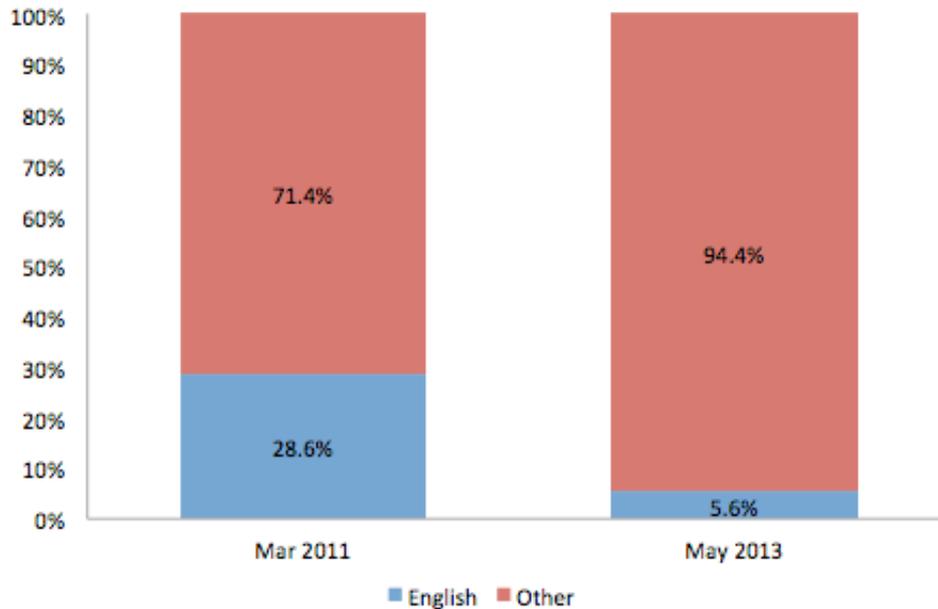
The total number of respondents for this report is 71. On the one hand, this number constitutes 44% of the 162 grade 3 students that were surveyed at the start of Spring 2011. On the other hand, 71 is 59% of the 121 grade 5 students surveyed at the end of Spring 2013.

Highlights

1. Prior to the start of the teaching program at the School, 28.6% of the students consider English as their least favorite subject. By Spring 2013, the percentage drops by 80.4% to only 5.6% of the students (Table 1). On the other hand, the percentage of students that consider English as their favorite subject remained at 22.5%.

Table 1

What is your least favorite subject?



2. The percentage of students confident to complete their English homework correctly and improve their English grade both increased: from 53.6% to 67.6% (56.6% increase) for confidence to complete their English homework (Table 2) and from 43.6% to 48.6% (11.5% increase) for confidence to improve their English grade (Table 3).

Table 2

Confidence to complete all your English homework correctly

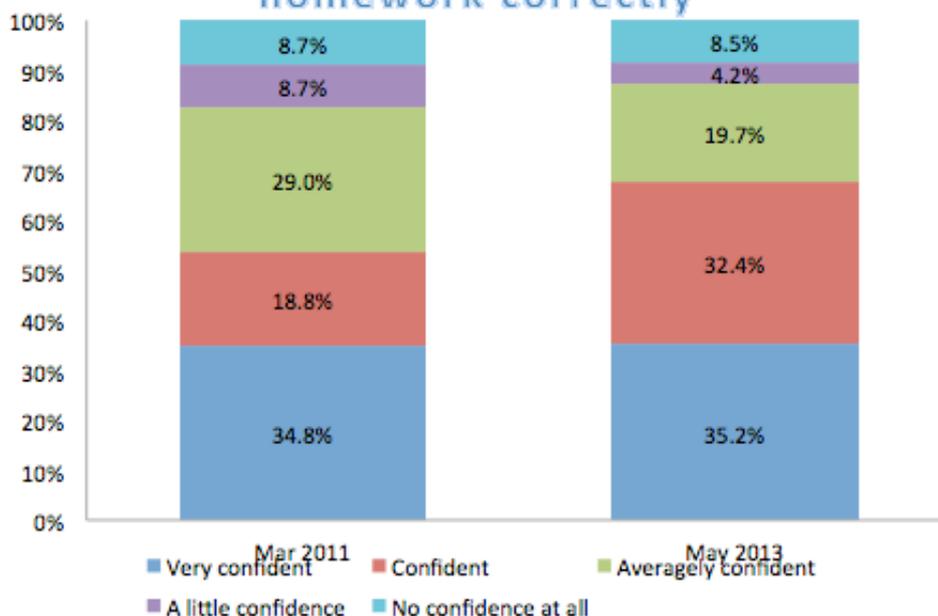
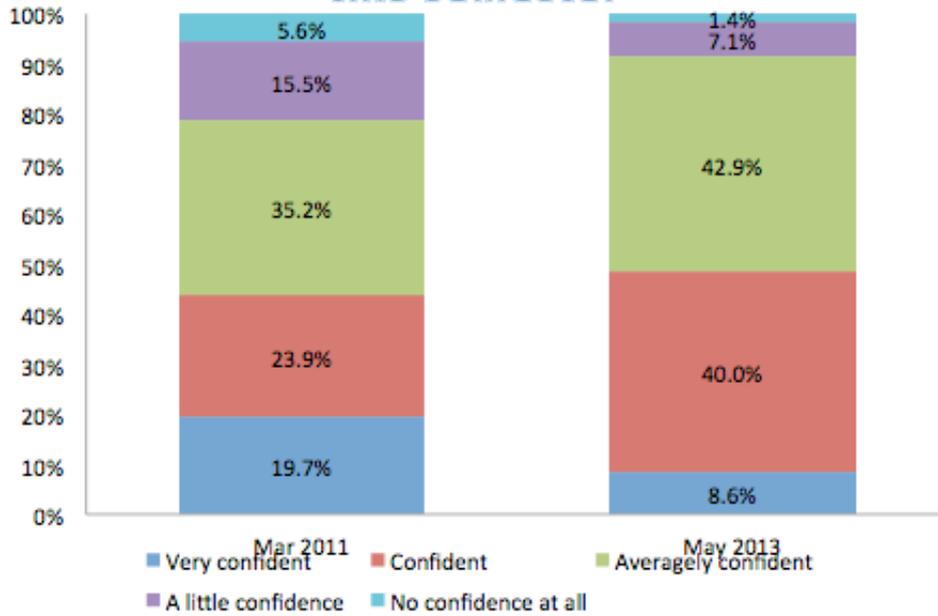


Table 3

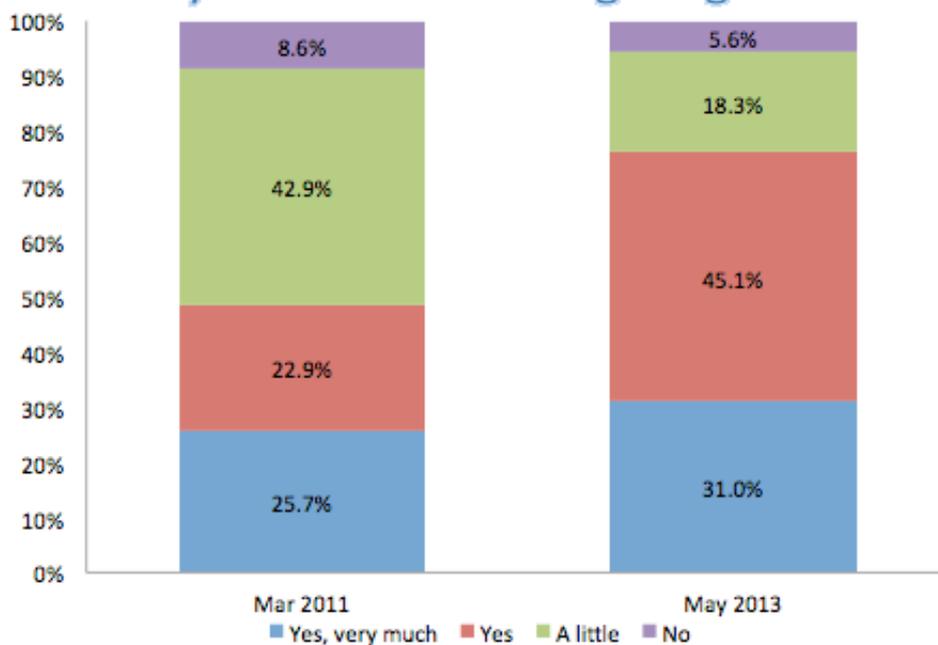
Confidence to improve your English grade this semester



3. 76.1% of the students like learning English at the end of the Spring 2013 Semester, which is 56.6% higher than 48.6% of students who like learning English at the start (Table 4).

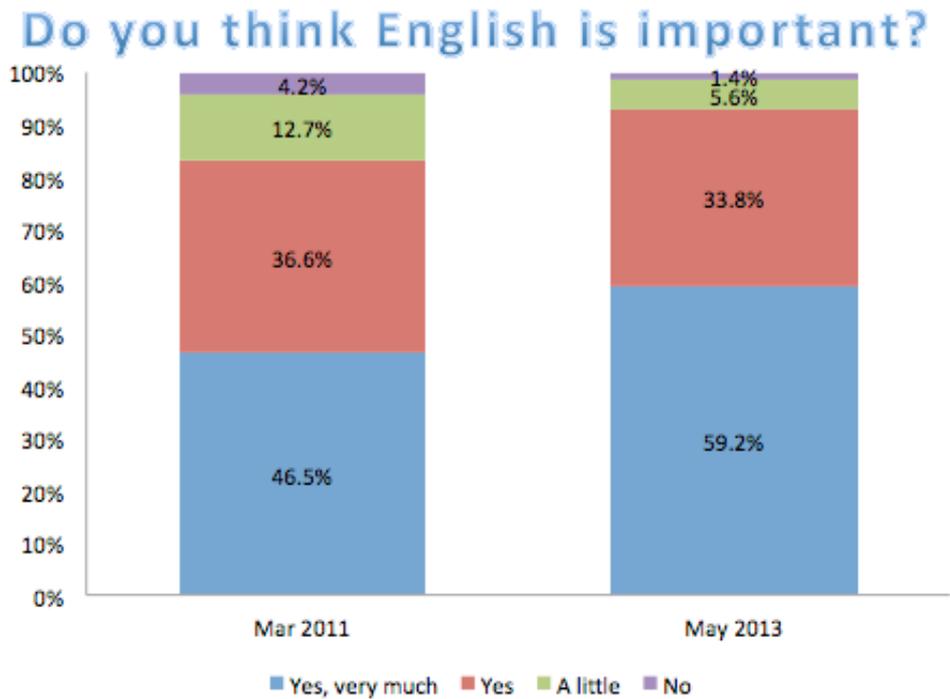
Table 4

Do you like learning English?



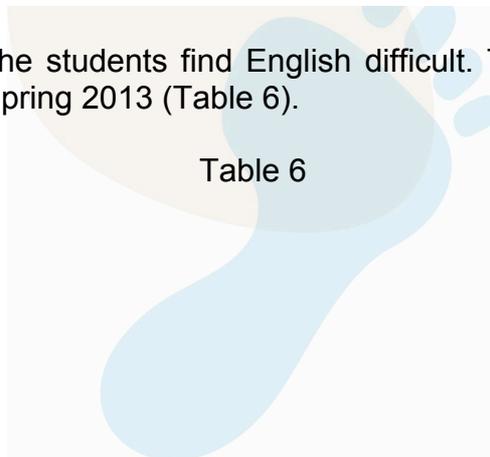
4. The percentage of students that consider English important rose from 83.1% to 93% (Table 5).

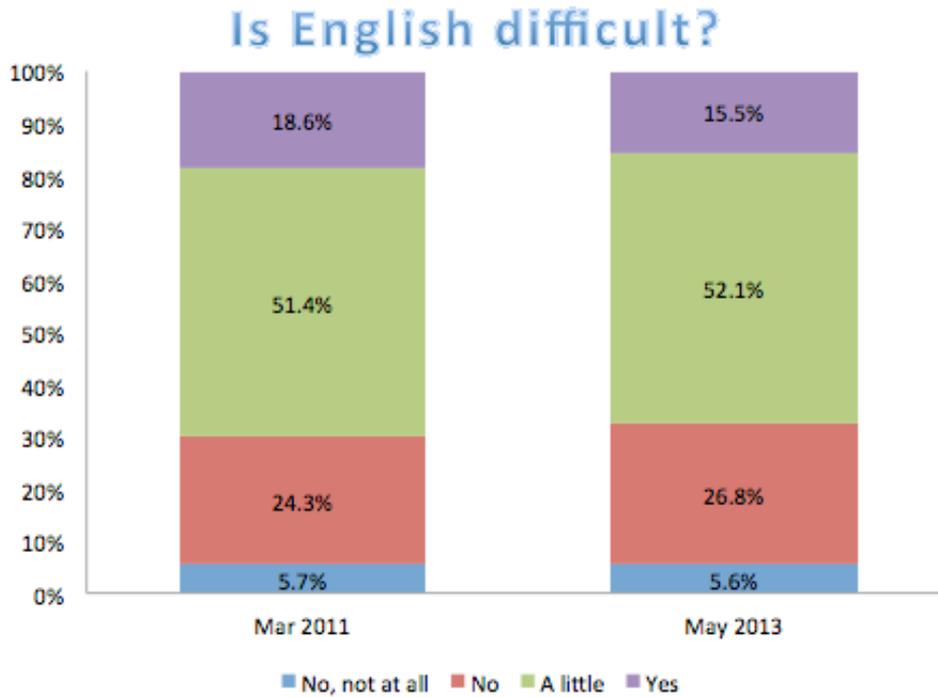
Table 5



5. At the start, 70% of the students find English difficult. The percentage decreases to 67.6% by the end of Spring 2013 (Table 6).

Table 6





Implications for Further Study

While the results are encouraging since positive responses increased across the board for all questions (except the question about English being the favorite subject, which remained the same), such gains cannot necessarily be credited to Stepping Stones since other factors beyond the control of Stepping Stones may be at play. Be that as may, the principal of the School continues to acknowledge the positive impact that Stepping Stones is making on the English learning of their students.

The data collected at this School presents an interesting opportunity to compare the responses of the same students to questions pertaining to their interest and confidence in English, as they move from one grade level to the next over the period of 2 years. Data can be analyzed to determine whether any trend is present. This is especially true for the grade 3 classes that were surveyed at the start of Spring 2011, where their succeeding responses at the end of Spring 2011, at the end of Spring 2012, and at the end of Spring 2013 can be plotted against their baseline responses.

As with the other impact evaluation studies done, the quantitative data presented here that tackle the program's impact in general terms can be made richer and more personalized with qualitative data. Stepping Stones has embarked on collecting more qualitative data with the intention of reporting such data alongside its statistical reports.