

Action Research on Self-efficacy in a new Language Programme

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Abstract

This Action Research (AR) paper describes the aims, content, processes and underlying beliefs of the establishment of a new language programme, and how it is being evaluated through the AR process. It focuses on important aspects of students' self-efficacy beliefs in English – what self-efficacy really is, how it is measured, how students' beliefs have changed, how these relate to students' actual English abilities, and what factors and practices best help students develop their self-efficacy at specific English tasks.

Keywords: action research, self-efficacy, motivation, programme evaluation, Can-Do Statements.

Introduction

Developing a new language programme or making changes to an existing one is a great opportunity to instil new ideas, to change focus, to resolve problems, to establish new practices, and to improve student learning. At the same time, it is important to confirm that these new ideas and practices are based on solid principles and research, that they are relevant and appropriate to the context, and to ensure that they are actually functioning to achieve the goals of the programme.

The purpose of this paper is to describe the evaluation of the renewed English Programme established and organised by the Center for English Education and Research (CEER) at Keisen University. First we describe the Action Research (AR) cycle and how it is applied. We then define self-efficacy, differentiating it from other

self-related concepts, and assert its importance for language learning. Next we describe the design and details of the English Programme and delineate how they relate to self-efficacy. Finally, we detail the research questions and process. In order to gain both broad, general information on how most students were performing as well as more specific, in-depth information about individual students, we collected and analysed both quantitative and qualitative data.

Action Research

Action research provides educators with a basic framework for examining teaching and learning events and its results which transpire in the classroom. The purpose is to gain a better understanding of both teaching and learning processes by identifying a particular problem and taking action in order to improve classroom practice.

The precise procedure for action research varies according to the nature of the investigation. For teacher-initiated classroom research, Richards and Lockhart (1996) suggests an AR cycle concentrated into four main stages: Planning, Action, Observation, and Reflection.

- I. Planning: At the initial stage, a set of questions are developed to examine particular areas of concern. Also within the planning stage, procedure for gathering and analyzing data is determined.
- II. Action: The next stage is to devise an action plan to bring about changes in classroom practices.
- III. Observation: Observe the action plan in progress and report findings.
- IV. Reflection: Analyze the effects of the changes and determine the significances of the changes made.

Sagor (2000) develops Richards and Lockhart's planning stage further by suggesting some important steps:

- I. Selecting a focus.
- II. Clarifying theories.
- III. Identifying research questions.

Application of AR for evaluation of CEER's programme

In this section, we will describe how the above process was applied by CEER in the on-going evaluation of the programme.

- I. Planning: For the programme-wide research, several types of questions at the planning stage were addressed during the development and establishment of the new programme in 2012 and 2013. They included the following:
 1. How effective was the course/curriculum, and what improvements can be made for the future?
 2. Were students/teachers able to accomplish the course goals?
 3. What provisions were made so that students/teachers could accomplish these goals?
- II. Action: The new programme was implemented with new syllabi, and materials and practices were decided by CEER. These were explained at the End-of-Semester (EOS) and Beginner-of-Semester (BOS) meetings for teachers.
- III. Observation: Programme-wide observation took the form of collecting data from a variety of sources and techniques. Qualitative data was obtained from student interviews, ongoing comments and feedback from teachers during semester and at BOS and EOS meeting, and an administrative perspective. Quantitative data on students' self-efficacy, as measured by Can-Do Statements, was obtained from their placement test and level check scores.
- IV. Reflection: Analysis of the data is summarized here. Observation and results of 2013 data have been reported to CEER and the academic affairs committee.

The three additional steps of selecting a focus, clarifying theories, and identifying research questions are explained here.

- I. Selecting a focus – The focus of self-efficacy was chosen as one of the main aims of the program is to develop students' self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is seen as a key to increasing students' motivation and engagement. This is not a simple task as self-efficacy is often confused with other self-related concepts and how to help develop it is not straightforward.

- II. Clarifying theories – Self-efficacy theory and how it is applied in the English program is described in the next section.
- III. Identifying research questions – Some questions that were identified are: What is the level of students’ self-efficacy? Are there departmental differences? How does students’ self-efficacy relate to their actual scores on placement and level check tests? How does students’ overall self-efficacy change over a semester and over their first year? What can we do to help individual students’ self-efficacy?

Self-efficacy

Self-efficacy and self-related concepts abound in the literature in the fields of education and psychology. In general, a positive sense of self or self-concept, self-confidence, high or relatively high self-esteem, and good self-efficacy are all widely considered to be important, even if only for their own sakes. Many self-theorists and practitioners – counselors, teachers, coaches – believe that they have a causal effect on achievement in many areas, such as sports, work and academic situations. However, the research is unclear and inconclusive, if we consider all of these terms.

These concepts have progressively been incorporated into the Second Language Acquisition (SLA) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) literature, but with the accompanying confusion of terms being used loosely. Therefore, an initial clarification of terms is necessary, specifically of the three terms: self-concept, self-esteem and self-efficacy. This will be followed by a short summary of some research results to support our focus on self-efficacy.

The following definitions are from important literature in the field:

Self-concept: “a person’s self-perceptions formed through experience with and interpretations of his or her environment” (Marsh & Hattie, 1996, p. 58), and “a self-descriptive judgment that includes an evaluation of competence and the feelings of self-worth” (Pajares & Schunk, 2005, p. 104).

Self-esteem: “the global component of self-concept” (Marsh & Craven, 2005, p. 32).

Self-efficacy: “beliefs in one’s capabilities to organize and execute the courses of

action required to manage prospective situations” (Bandura, 1997, p. 2), and “a judgment of capability to perform a task or engage in an activity” (Pajares & Schunk, 2005, p. 103-104).

Hattie and Yates (2014, p. 216) succinctly summarize these differences and how they relate to each other. They see these as three levels of self-confidence: the global level being self-esteem, the domain level being dimensions of self-concept (what Hattie and Yates call “perceived competencies”), and the task-related level being self-efficacy.

Recent research results on these levels point to self-efficacy as being the most appropriate level to focus interventions aimed at improving achievement (Hattie & Yates, 2014). Focusing on developing global self-esteem, once the major focus of considerable research and practice, is now considered to be a waste of time, at best, and perhaps even detrimental (Baumeister, Campbell, Krueger, & Vohs, 2003). Focusing on domain-specific self-concept, such as academic self-concept or EFL self-concept, is also supported by recent research (e.g. Marsh, Craven & McInerney, 2003; 2005), which maintains a reciprocal effects view – that both self-concept and achievement have causal effects on each other.

CEER aims, especially in the first year, to develop students’ confidence in and motivation towards study of English. Self-efficacy is seen as a critical factor in motivational attitudes and behaviour, thus the focus on developing students’ self-efficacy in English. First year students’ English classes and placement test were thus developed with this aim in mind.

Design of the Eigo Programme and how it relates to self-efficacy

The English Programme consists of core compulsory English classes catering for students in all departments of Keisen University. The first semester is considered to be key for helping students adapt to university and to all their new experiences – new friends, new community, newly gained freedom, a new identity. First year students are definitely at the stage that Arnett calls “emerging adulthood” (Arnett, 2000), and they

are in the process of deciding who they want to become or negotiating their identities. How English fits into their sense of self is very dependent on their current sense of competence with English and their self-efficacy at specific English tasks, that is, their self-belief that if they tried hard they can achieve specific goals in English.

Eigo I is the only class that all students in all departments take in first semester, and so is seen as the core of the programme. It thus aims to develop students' self-efficacy at specific English tasks at the start of their university study, so that students can become more self-motivated and more capable of focussing their further study on specific, relevant goals and tasks. The features of Eigo I are described below. Eigo II is taken by English Communication (EC) department in the spring semester, concurrent with Eigo I, and in the fall semester by all other students. The main common feature of Eigo II, e-learning, is described below.

Placement test

All incoming students take this test in early April, before classes start. It is not a diagnostic test, but is devised to be able to quickly, cheaply, and accurately place students in three levels – Challenge, Regular and Support. It includes:

- 1) Four Cloze passages (actually not strictly a cloze test, but a fill-in-the-blanks test, but it's basically the same). They are considered to be valid and reliable tests for measuring students' reading comprehension, and *productive* grammar and vocabulary.
- 2) Can-Do Statements adapted from the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) (Council of Europe, 2014). These items are all positively worded and focus on specific tasks at varying levels in the four skill areas.
- 3) a written sample on three topics.

(An oral interview is also undertaken for EC Department students.)

Eigo I

This is a first semester class that all first year students take. Core aspects of the course are:

- I. The textbook and main content of the course – the English Programme Student Handbook. It was completely rewritten for the new program for 2013. Two important principles guided the rewriting: that all, or the vast majority, of

activities and content was:

- i. within the capability of all students, and
- ii. were directly connected to the Can-Do Statements of the Placement test.

Many changes were made from the 2013 version to the 2014 version based on extensive written and verbal feedback from teachers and students throughout the semester and at the EOS in January 2013.

- II. Portfolios – (both Eigo I and II) The main aim of the portfolios is for students to feel a sense of achievement at the end of the semester. This concrete product of their effort and learning is very valuable for students to remember what they have learnt, to positively evaluate their competencies at specific tasks and how they have developed these competencies, and to develop self-efficacy for further learning.
- III. Eigo I Orientation session – All first year students attend this session together, at the beginning of the semester, then get together once again at the end of the semester for the speech contest. CEER regards this as an essential step towards helping the students realise that they are studying English as part of a structured program common to all, and not just completing single, separate classes. This belonging to a programme or community helps to build their self-efficacy by helping them to believe that if others can do it, so can I.
- IV. Speech Contest – The main aim is to give all students the experience of talking about something meaningful to them for an extended period. Since it was included in the Eigo I syllabus, and the preliminary round introduced, the quality and quantity of speeches in November have risen dramatically. The idea behind the first round system was to ensure that all contestants in the final round would have demonstrated their ability to deliver a speech in front of a large audience, as well as to give them the opportunity to learn from the first round experience and draw on it to improve their performance. All first year students get together again at the end of the semester for this speech contest, and it serves to reinforce students' realisation that they are part of a programme.
- V. Extensive Reading – CEER promotes the use of extensive reading as a support to regular language teaching in the Eigo program. Students are introduced to the graded readers collection from the Keisen library, and the MReader ER

management system (<http://mreader.org>) during the course of their Eigo I class, and are required to read and log three readers in the first semester. This introduction is then followed up by a proper extensive reading program in the fall semester in Eigo II (Eigo III for EC classes). The MReader system is designed to allow teachers and students to verify that the graded readers have been read and understood. This is achieved via a simple quiz for each book. When a student passes a quiz, the number of words for the book is added to their “total words read.” Teachers can freely set goals for each class level, and add texts read in class as additional words read. Extensive reading combines with Newton e-Learning in developing students’ self-study skills and independent learning.

Eigo II

- I. E-Learning: Main aims – for students to experience e-learning, to further develop their self-study skills, to understand and prepare for the TOEIC test. CEER is committed to helping students improve their TOEIC score as this is closely linked to success in job-hunting. TOEIC practice is done via the use of the Newton e-Learning package (http://www.niche.co.jp/TOEIC_CLUB.htm). All first year students use the package as part of their compulsory Eigo II class (EC in the spring, all other departments in the fall.) Eigo II teachers all take their classes to computer rooms at the start of the term, to make sure all students can find, log in to and get started on Newton e-Learning. Teachers are then free to set specific goals for their classes, and are encouraged to support and motivate the students to use the package regularly.
- II. Portfolios – As for Eigo I the main aim of the portfolios is for students to feel a sense of achievement at the end of the semester. The type of portfolio and how it is used and evaluate depends on the individual class teacher.

Research Questions

Specific research questions addressed in this AR cycle were:

- I. What is the level of students’ self-efficacy?
- II. How does students’ self-efficacy relate to their actual scores on placement and

level check tests?

III. How does students' overall self-efficacy change over a semester and over their first year?

IV. What can we do to help individual students' self-efficacy?

Methodology

Qualitative data

Interviews

The purpose of the interview was to give students the opportunity to reflect on their learning experiences in the first year of English studies and for teachers to gather feedback to carry out the procedures for action research. The participants for this part of the study were all students from the EC department. A total of five students were interviewed: at the time of the interview, the three sophomores had completed spring semester of second year courses while the two freshmen had completed the first year spring semester courses. Interviews were conducted in English in the teacher's office with the freshmen together; the sophomores were interviewed individually.

The interview questions were an attempt to encourage students' to elicit observations of their learning progress, the effectiveness of tools utilized to aid their progress and their assessment of their English now. The following questions were addressed:

1. In what areas of English study did you experience improvement?
2. Why or how did you make improvements?
3. What were your impressions of the E-learning components?
4. What is your perception of English now?
5. How would you rate your confidence level now?

Results

It is clear that second year students were able to express their views in much more detail in English than the first year students. They provided more examples, completed their thoughts more logically and offered more explanation oftentimes without the prompting of the interviewer. The freshmen on the other hand, still had not experienced

the full complement of English courses; as a result, their view of English and the experiences associated with English learning were somewhat limited in comparison to their more experienced counterparts. Still the freshmen provided valuable feedback since they approached English from a distinctive perspective free of previous constraints or expectations. (Please refer to Appendix A for specific comments.)

Analysis

1. All participants experienced improvement in English in varying degrees. The freshmen could only use their first semester as evidence for their assessment while the sophomores could view both their previous year's successes and also their first semester of their sophomore year as further support as well. In other words, the second year participants had more concrete events to compare and gauge their improvement. In addition, they have had more time to process their learning experiences and thus may have nurtured a broader perspective of their English studies.
2. This question provided the respondents with a chance to reflect and verify their perceived improvements in English. While the freshmen took notice of certain activities in class and conversation school that aided them in their improvement, the sophomores attributed their improvements to both in class and out of class events. Taking TOEIC tests periodically and participating in a short-term study abroad program served notice to students that they were making significant improvements in English. It is apparent that more results-oriented indicators like TOEIC and overseas programs tend to also motivate learners as improvements can be personally verified in a relatively short period of time.
3. With regard to the usage of E-learning tools such as MReader and Newton, as partial requirement for completing the English course, the participants' viewpoints were mixed.

When asked about their use of graded readers, one of the freshmen read only one book while her classmate read two books but felt that they were not interesting. There are many reasons for students' general lack of involvement for reading graded readers but one of them offered her rationale; the reading books were both difficult and boring. Her comment can be interpreted in different ways: the level of

the chosen text did not match the student's level of difficulty and whether or not the content of the text was suitable for the reader. Finally, what reading skills were applied for reading such texts?

For the sophomore students, they read between five to ten books for the semester indicating perhaps a stronger desire to do their reading assignments. Their reading more books may suggest that the books were appropriate for their reading level though two of three students also attempted higher level books thereafter. In addition, the students maintained a level of interest that encouraged them to read more books. Only one of the five respondents mentioned that she utilized the computerized reading test but felt stress having to answer questions within the time limit.

Students' assessment of the Newton software varied widely. The computer tool seemed to be useful for freshmen students but they did not understand its operation. In other words, they were uncertain how the program could be made useful for them. The sophomores utilized Newton once, twice or three times a week with one student actually witnessing progress in her grammar writing. Her two colleagues, on the other hand, did not recommend Newton because it was not fun, saw little or no improvement, preferred paper rather than computer exercises and in addition, the lack of engagement in Newton homework by their classmates may have negatively impacted them to take the same attitude.

4. The respondents' comments suggest that they possess a positive outlook regarding English and their progress. All five respondents believe they must make more progress in certain areas of their English study and have addressed those particular areas such as improving their grammar, listening, reading, vocabulary, TOEIC, communication ability. As the sophomores have completed additional English courses they maintain a more concrete and focused outlook in terms of the areas of language learning they want to see progress, that is to read more books, raise their TOEIC score, converse with fluent English speakers and so on.

5. All of the respondents expressed confidence in English. Their learning outcomes in class and personal studies raised their awareness for what they could and could not achieve and this understanding at a personal level helped students to clarify their goals to get to the next level of English proficiency. (Perhaps reflected in Can

Do statements.)

Administrative perspective

The administrative staff is seen as crucial to the success or otherwise of a language programme. They not only administer the classes, making sure they run smoothly, they are in the front line of contact with students. The importance of their commitment to the program and to helping both students and teachers is usually ignored or underestimated. The following are comments from one administrative staff member:

Working as an administrative staff for CEER, I have realized there are many things we can do to make a new English program efficient and better. I would like to discuss a main important point from administrative side to support a new English program.

To be a bridge between students and teachers – Even though we have a placement test for freshmen to decide the level of English I class, there were some students who felt the level was not right. In Keisen, we realised there were more students who felt the level was too high and wanted to go to a lower level rather than wanting to go up. In such cases, I always ask students to talk to their teachers and discuss about why they feel the class level is too high and explain why they feel they were not in the right level class. Sometimes, students felt it was too challenging to talk to a teacher. In that case, firstly, I would tell the teacher that there was a student who was struggling with the level of the class. This would be a good opportunity to raise awareness between teachers and students; usually it is very difficult to notice a student having a problem unless she states so clearly to her teacher.

However, even though some students wanted to go to a lower level, there were no students who actually changed to a lower class. It was just that the students underestimated their capacities; all they needed was a little push and encouragement from their teachers. I assume students can easily underestimate their capacity because of stumbling at little things, such as not being able to state their opinions correctly in English, feeling uncomfortable in the class conducted only in English, and so on. It seems it is very easy to damage their self-esteem, and it is our job to keep motivating our students and make them challenge themselves.

Quantitative data for 2013 – 2014

All incoming students took the placement test in April 2013 (Spring – Sp) and were required to take the level check outside of class in July (Summer – Su) and then again in December 2013 (Winter – W). Two hundred and three students took the test all three times.

Results

Quantitative analysis were conducted using Microsoft Excel for Mac 2011, version 14.4.3, for descriptive statistics and t tests.

I. Overall Keisen 1st year students (n=203)

Overall, as can be seen in Table 1, there was a small increase in average cloze scores from Sp to Su to W. There was also an increase in Self-evaluation (Can-Do Statements) from Sp to Su to W. The most notable increase was in Self-evaluation scores from Sp to Su from 19.4 to 22.5.

T-tests were conducted to assess whether changes were statistically significant or not. As can be seen from Tables 2 and 3, results showed that the differences between cloze scores from spring to summer (P value = 0.0004) and between spring to winter (P value = 0.0001) were statistically significant. Similarly, differences in Can-Do Statement answers between spring and summer (P value = 0.000) and between spring and winter (P value = 0.000) were also significant.

Table 1. Average scores on cloze and can-do statements for spring, summer and winter

	Spring			Summer			Winter		
	Cloze	Can-Do	Total	Cloze	Can-Do	Total	Cloze	Can-Do	Total
Avg.	18.3	19.4	37.7	19.4	22.5	41.8	19.8	22.7	42.5
Max	40.5	45.2	78.4	42	46.4	84.2	43	47.6	85.4
Min	1.0	0	12	2.0	0	9.8	1.0	0	10

Table 2. Cloze scores

	Spring	Summer	Winter	Sp / Su Diff	Sp / W Diff	Su / W Diff
Avg.	18.3	19.4	19.8	1.1* P = 0.0004	1.5* P = 0.0001	0.4 P = 0.11

Table 3. Can-Do Statements

	Spring	Summer	Winter	Sp / Su Diff	Sp / W Diff	Su / W Diff
Avg.	19.4	22.5	22.7	3.1*	3.3*	0.2
				P = 0.000	P = 0.000	P = 0.25

Analysis and discussion

These results are promising and support CEER's aims and our belief that the new program is helping to develop students' self-efficacy in specific tasks in English in tandem with their actual competence or achievement in English. However, there are at least two major limitations to this data and analysis.

First, the number of students who took the test all three times is less than ideal. Keisen students seem to need a push or encouragement, or more structure in terms of setting the place and time for them to do the level checks. In July 2014, we started requesting teachers to have students complete this during class, in computer labs. A larger number of students completing all three tests would make the data much more reliable and representative of the Keisen student body.

Second, the increases in both self-efficacy (Can-Do Statements) and competence (Cloze), though significant, were smaller than expected or desired. The interview part of this AR gives us some student perspectives on which we can reflect and take further action by making changes. Teachers' comments and feedback are also important for CEER reflection and action.

Overall Discussion

Combining the above qualitative and quantitative results and perspectives, we can raise some important considerations. These are explained below.

Although classes in English have provided many opportunities for students to apply integrated skills in their class work, and learning tools such as Newton and MReader complemented their language study, both learners and educators should take great care in helping one another understand the benefits for utilizing such tools. Richards and Lockhart (1996) noted that "differences between learners' and teachers' beliefs can lead to students undervaluing an activity assigned by the teacher" (p. 54).

Particularly, with regard to self-access use, learners should be able to see how the performance of a task is intended to help them (Sturtridge, 1997). For example, if learners are not certain of the reason for taking periodical TOEIC tests or the rationale for employing Newton for independent study, they will likely see them as a waste of time and quickly lose focus and ultimately, their interest and motivation.

Once learners are more cognizant of noting their progress in the form of verifiable indicators such as TOEIC scores, computerized feedback of vocabulary, reading comprehension tests, reading speed monitoring, these will help them to see what they are doing well (or not so well) and what improvements need to be made. Rogers, Ludington, and Graham (1997) assert that learners feel a sense of success “from regular evidence of progress” (p. 6) of a challenging learning activity. Quantitative feedback is an essential indicator to their learning process and therefore, enhances the likelihood of student motivation.

Another focal point for raising learner interest is to provide more options so that they can study English more effectively. With regard to developing reading skills, students learn to read by reading and therefore, they must enjoy reading the content. Hopefully, when students enjoy reading they will read more books. CEER should consider expanding collections of graded readers that are appealing, short, and varied in content.

CEER should also look into the possibility of optional website learning activities which serve student needs and interest level such as viewing English video sites, listening to authentic conversations, watching current news. With additional choice of reading materials such as English readers, students have the opportunity to take advantage of engaging in a variety of genres which peak their interest and assist them in finding similar themes which interest them.

Conclusion

The AR cycle and its important stages and steps was used as the framework for describing the new English language programme at Keisen University, its rationale and establishment, and its ongoing evaluation. Observations and data from important

participants in the programme – students, teachers, and administrators – were analysed to assess the success of the programme at achieving its stated aims. Ideally, this AR cycle should be repeated with further observations and data to continually evaluate whether the programme is achieving optimal results during students time in the programme and preparing them for their continued study of English outside of the programme.

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Appendix A

July 25	Freshman A	Freshman B
Improvement in what areas? Why did you make improvement?	(I improved) little but more than before. Listening to native English speakers Speaking with foreigners Writing journals on homepage- responded to journals, listening to music, reading SNS. Reading and writing- not much improvement. I don't know grammar.	(I improved) very much for example, Listening/speaking (watch movies with English subtitles), writing, Eigo II homework. Also I go to a conversation school.
E-learning? Other ways to learn English?	E-learning is useful but I don't understand. I did two times. Vocabulary Practice is easy if first letter is given. Moodle Reader- didn't do very much. (I read) one book.	E-learning is useful but sometimes I didn't understand E-learning I did once a month. Moodle reader-long story is difficult and boring, not my favorite books, read two books midlevel, a little difficult.
How do you feel about studying English now? How do you feel about your English skills now? Do you feel more confident now?	I study grammar, speaking and listening (I feel) more confident now I listen to English now.	I want to read more books and study grammar More confident now. I watch Gossip Girl, I go to conversation school

	Sophomore A	Sophomore B	Sophomore C
Improvement in what areas? Why did you make improvement?	I felt improvement because my TOEIC score increased from 220 summer 1 st year to 440 winter 1 st year to 460 summer 2 nd year Everything improved from last year, listening/speaking/grammar/vocabulary /reading/writing.	Presentation, listening improvement Eigo III, teacher spoke in English, I tried to understand CD, lots of presentation practice No improvement in reading, writing, speaking grammar, vocabulary. Lost a little motivation to study English because I can't see improvement. HW was difficult.	Improved in everything. At first, I couldn't understand what the teacher was saying. After asked classmates for understanding. After UBC, I stopped asking my classmates. Listening/writing improved a lot. Reading speaking not so much. I couldn't express myself in English. After UBC listening, reading writing improved Speaking not so much. I didn't speak with host family but talked to teachers.
E-learning? Other ways to learn English?	Newton-good, wrote sentence and studied Newton at home three times a week for 15 weeks Grammar improved because I wrote more grammar correct sentences. My writing improved.	Newton- no improvement did twice a week, gave me motivation because it showed my level and teacher encouraged me did Newton for the grade, had to do it independently I don't recommend Newton, not fun, useful but not fun	Newton- not much improvement, studied once a week but not everyday I didn't like Newton, lots of instructions, didn't want to read, didn't like to use computer for study, like paper to study, don't recommend Newton, most of classmates didn't do Newton HW regularly.
First year English	I wanted to improve my English skills so I studied English, did homework. Watched movies, read books, memorize vocabulary, visited teacher's office, group discussion, presentation. I wanted to study English, I like English	I feel like my English improved because I can communicate in English	I learned more interesting things in university (than in high school).
How do you feel about studying English now?	Still weak, I need to improve my grammar, can tell by my output (listening/speaking) J/E grammar different. Listening (still too fast, don't understand vocabulary.	I like English now. Class has native speakers HW is difficult. TOEIC 1 st year winter 375 2 nd year spring 465	I enjoy studying English, feel happy when I know new vocab, when I can communicate in English with NS, many opportunities to communicate in English now. Class topics in second year are interesting, more confident now because I'm learning new vocab. All English skills have improved.
How do you feel about your English skills now? Do you feel more confident now?	Yes after taking 2 nd year courses such as Jissen/seminar/grammar/TOEIC	I'm more confident in presentation, listening. No confidence in writing, speaking.	Had confidence first semester but lost confidence because peers' English level was higher.