

Article

Effects of Intensive, Short-Term Study on Language Growth : A Case Study

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<Abstract>

In the first semester of 2014, we began a project to test the effectiveness of short-term, regular, intensive study on students' skill levels and performance. In this project, a group of volunteer students were given 20-minute activities to complete every day for a period of 15 weeks. After the project was completed, we compared students' TOEIC scores, reading speed, and vocabulary levels. We found that students who participated fully in the project achieved a measurable improvement compared to those that did not.

Keywords: intensive learning, TOEIC scores, spaced learning

Introduction

When students first enter the language department of any university, they bring with them two fundamentally limiting factors that stand to hinder their chances of developing better communicative fluency in the target language. The first factor is their six years of formal junior and senior high school education, during which every facet of their learning has been directed and overseen by their teachers. They have been told what to study and for how long, and they have been supervised carefully to ensure their prescribed course of study has been completed. While this ensures they complete their studies to an acceptable level, it also has had the debilitating effect of limiting their ability to self-monitor their own learning, as they have become reliant on their teachers to make those decisions for them.

The second factor is the actual system itself, which relies almost entirely on exams to not

only evaluate the students, but also, determine both the character and the content of their courses of study. Instead of creating courses with fluency as the main goal, curriculum content is set more towards passing exams. This system produces students who have a more than adequate knowledge of the target language, but who are unable to actually use it in the way it was intended—to communicate with others. Just as importantly, it ill equips them to take the next steps in developing any realistic sense of learner autonomy, and this has the flow on effect of stunting their potential language proficiency.

For those of us teaching communicative English at the tertiary level, one of our first tasks is to reverse these trends and get students started on a greater sense of self-investment and self-reliance in their language learning. This is not easy, not the least because students have become set in their ways after those six years of formal junior and senior high school education.

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However, one of the most effective means of retraining them is to get them accustomed to a “little, but often” style of self-learning.

Little, but often

When students first start their university studies—and this is particularly so in a language department—they generally bring with them both a strong sense of motivation and a real desire to learn. They are excited about entering a new system of education, and they have often reactivated goals they might previously have given up on—particularly those associated with English proficiency. What happens all too often is that they start off with a real burst of enthusiasm, but this soon dies as the realities of the tasks they are facing become apparent, along with a realization that they are on their own and responsible for monitoring their own learning. Learning a language is, they find, not just a matter of attending classes, and even increased contact with native speakers only has a nominal effect on sustained progress.

Instead of a “big bang” form of learning, where students rush headlong at the body of knowledge they intend to master, we instead try to encourage our students to set achievable goals. These goals work best with learning tasks that are ongoing, but short-term, and that have clear and attainable final goals. Setting a goal of “I will try to master this finite set of knowledge or this skill by focusing on it intensively for 30 days” is far more effective than setting a goal that is vague and, ultimately, unattainable, such as the ever popular “I will be able to watch English movies without needing subtitles”.

The limited-term concept of a 30-day self-challenge has become something of an American pop-culture icon, with reality shows and other media using this length of time to “challenge something new.” Matt Cutts put out a call to people in his 2011 TED Talks presentation “*Try something new for 30 days*”, in which he puts forth that “30 days is just about the right amount of

time to add a new habit or subtract a habit from your life.”

Studies on memory and learning are numerous, and these functions of the brain have been a major focus of research for decades. We are learning more and more about how it functions and the many ways it affects all our abilities. In relation to learning, memory is an important tool. It is at the molecular level that memories are developed. Fields (2005) describes that it is how the cells are stimulated that determines whether there are short- or long-term memories being created. For long term memories to be formed there must be repeated stimuli. These stimuli, however, cannot be repeated one after the other, but must be spaced. Fields found that this spacing must provide a sufficient period of inactivity. As Vlach and Sandhofer (2012) found, “One possibility is that spaced learning provides opportunities for forgetting between learning presentations. Relevant features are likely to be present on subsequent learning presentations, reactivated in memory, and thus be forgotten to a lesser degree than irrelevant features.” In reviewing research on the effectiveness of spacing effects on learning, Thalheimer (2006) highlighted numerous findings that showed spacing learning over time produces significant learning benefits. Some of his findings, cited below, are immediately relevant to the programme that we introduced:

- Well-designed forms of repetitive learning are very effective in supporting learning.
- Spaced repetitions of target material are generally more effective for long-term learning than non-spaced repetitions.
- Similarly, spacing is particularly beneficial if long-term retention is the goal. Spacing helps reduce the amount that material is forgotten.

In reference to language study, in particular, Thalheimer refers to research by Bahrick, Bahrick, Bahrick, and Bahrick (1993) who found

that foreign-language vocabulary retention improved with longer spacing. Their research demonstrated that the number of repetitions needed for retention could be reduced with the longer spacing. The same level of retention could be attained with half the repetitions and four times the spacing. In their research, they found that 13 repetitions over 56 days had the same effect as 26 repetitions over 14 days. In other words, trying to remember vocabulary too quickly would actually require more work.

It should be noted that the results noted in this research are based on retention over a five-year period. For our project, this would suggest that it is important to not only have the students adopt a spaced-learning approach, but also to continue beyond the length of the project.

The project

Overview

The main aim of this project has been to prove to our students that a different approach to studying, built around regular short-term study with clear and attainable goals, would be an effective way for them to improve their language ability. A secondary goal is that we hope proven success in this project would inspire other students to adapt their study strategies to a similar system, hopefully leading to similar gains in English ability.

Limited in time and scope as it was—just 15 weeks with a pool of 21 volunteers—our aim was not to provide defensible and empirical evidence of progress, but to illustrate a positive trend that our students could identify with and incorporate into their learning. With that in mind, we planned the activities, recruited a group of volunteers, and put them to work. Following is an overview of the programme.

Recruitment

For this project, we wanted volunteers who would be able to commit time and enthusiasm to these tasks. For this reason, we decided to

approach our second-year students, reasoning that they would have experience and confidence in working with us, would still be strongly motivated about learning rather than focusing on their future employment, and would have concrete English-related goals, such as preparing to study abroad.

In early April 2014, we put out a call for volunteers for the project, and at our first orientation meeting, 21 students (out of 44 in that year group) turned up. All of them expressed an interest in taking part, so we provided them with:

- A journal to keep a record of the work they completed (see Appendix 1)
- Access to the Moodle course, where they could find their study materials (see Appendix 2)
- A membership to *WordEngine* (described later in this paper)
- Access to a project LINE group, as this would be our main way of contacting the students during the project.

We also had them complete a questionnaire about their current English status (see Appendix 3), and followed that up with informal interviews. During the interviews, we questioned them about their reasons for joining the project and their long-term English study goals, plus gave them guidance on how to get the most from the different materials.

As the project continued, the 21 members fell into three distinct groups:

- Those students who never really got going ($n=6$)
- Those students who started strong, but slowly lagged behind ($n=5$)
- Those students who completed a majority of the work and continued working right through to the end ($n=10$)

This had been anticipated, and was, in fact, what we had hoped for as the first two groups worked as a control for the third group, who had carried on studying to the end.

The volunteer group

As stated before, the 21 volunteers were second-year students in the English Department of this university. Before beginning the project, we carefully explained the purpose of the project, and made it clear that any gains would be dependent on how much they committed themselves to the study activities. We also explained that we would be using the data developed during the course of the project for research purposes, but that all personal information would be kept confidential.

In terms of measurable pre-project data, we collected the following information:

- *TOEIC* : All students had taken either TOEIC or TOEIC IP within 3 months of the project. Five students had taken the regular TOEIC test, with an average score of 486.3 (range 375 to 630). All students had taken TOEIC IP, with an average score of 477 (range 355 to 740)
- *Eiken STEP Test* : Five of the students had achieved Level Pre-2, and 15 of the students had achieved Level 2. One student had never sat the test.
- *Reading speed* : All of the students had their reading speeds checked using timed standardized readings within their Extensive Reading classes. At the start of the programme, they were reading at an average speed of 149.2 wpm (words per minute) with a range from 85 to 185 wpm.
- *Vocabulary* : As part of the *Word Engine* programme, each student completed a V-Admin test which checked for known vocabulary. The average known words level was 3563.48 words (range 1758 to 7055 words). It should be noted that this is not a standardized test, but simply served to set a starting point for students to begin the programme. However, it was useful as an indicator of their general vocabulary level.

The programme

The programme required the students to commit to around 20 minutes of study per day for a 15-week period. This took them from the third week of the first semester right through to the end of the test period in mid August 2014.

Each week, the material for that week would be posted on our Moodle e-learning management system (Appendix 2). Students could do that week's study activities in any order they wished. They could also extend any activity and work on it longer than the 20-30 minute time span indicated if they so chose. However, with the exception of *Word Engine*, this was not actively encouraged, as we did not want initial enthusiasm to be dampened by restrictive workloads.

Within each week's workload, we aimed for a balance of skills, with activities targeted at improving listening accuracy, reading comprehension and speed, vocabulary acquisition, and active understanding of all the material provided. Most activities also provided a follow up writing section, partly to check understanding, but also to develop critical thinking skills, particularly with some of the deeper topics in the material.

Students were encouraged to select a time of the day when they could work without interruption or distraction. Focus was an important element of the programme, and it was clearly pointed out that one of the reasons for the short 20-minute study window we had recommended was that this was a time period within which they could focus without the need for rest.

The activities

As previously stated, we tried to pick a range of activities which would provide a chance for the students to work on a wide range of skills, rather than simply focusing on just one or two areas. There were a handful of primary activities we selected for them, and the rest of the programme was rounded out with a variety of ESL-related activities that we thought

would cover any skill areas that the primary activities didn't deal with. Above all, we wanted to introduce the students to a broad range of resources that they would be able to use for future self-study. Among the major activities we offered the students were:

Word Engine

Word Engine <<http://www.wordengine.jp>> is an online vocabulary-learning service that is particularly helpful for students studying towards external examinations (such as TOEIC) that rely heavily on reading proficiency. It makes use of a system of spaced repetition to promote long-term retention of vocabulary. Unknown vocabulary is introduced initially, and then reintroduced at increasingly longer spaced intervals. As vocabulary is learned, it is slowly removed from the stack and new vocabulary is introduced. This is a proven system that, if used regularly, not only greatly increases student vocabulary, but also helps that learning persist.

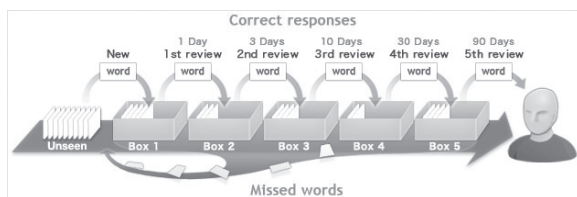


Figure 1. Graphic representation of Word Engine's system (source : <<http://www.wordengine.jp>>)

For this project, students were required to use the system for at least two 20-minute sessions each week. They were encouraged to use it longer and more frequently if time permitted—particularly in the closing weeks—but this was not a requirement. Each student had a target of 200 correct responses a week, and each Monday morning we would receive a report by email of how all the students were doing. Having this information allowed us to create an informal competition to motivate all students to try harder.

The other advantage of this system is that it was totally portable, as students could

download a free smartphone app and study anywhere they wanted—particularly useful for students wanting something to do on their long commutes home. The actual activity was in an almost game format, so was not only educational, but also fun as well. This proved to one of the more popular activities.

TED Talks

TED Talks are a set of online videos <<https://www.ted.com>> created under the slogan, “*Ideas Worth Spreading*.” Each video is around 10 to 20 minutes long, and contains a presenter talking about a single idea or concept, often in a very motivational or eye-opening way. Released to the public for free viewing in 2006, as of April 2014 there were over 1,700 videos available, and more are being added all the time.

What makes them of immense use for language students is that, in addition to being compelling in their own right, so many of them have been translated into a lot of the world's major languages. Students can choose to watch the video with subtitles in their language of choice, or watch an interactive script while the video plays—the highlighted area moving as the video progresses.

For our project, the students were given a different TED Talks video to watch each week—either selected by us, or from student recommendations—and then they had to upload their answers to a series of comprehension and opinion-style questions to the Moodle site. These talks could be watched on any computer, or could be accessed with the free *TED Talks* smartphone app.

In order to increase student comprehension of the content, we recommended that they...

- watch the video once with no subtitles, then
- watch the video again, with subtitles in English, and finally
- watch the video a third time, with subtitles in Japanese

These talks proved to be another of the

more popular activities, and some of the students then went on to watch more on their own. We also began a companion *TED Talks Evenings* at school, with watch-and-discuss sessions being held twice a month.

News stories

Using news-related websites, we chose stories that we felt the students could identify with and enjoy reading, and that were at a level they could read with some confidence. Usually we would use one news story a week. The students read the stories, checked their understanding of the vocabulary, and then answered a series of questions on the Moodle site. In addition to the usual comprehension questions, we would ask students to make example sentences with selected vocabulary from the reading.

Our most common sources of news were:

- *Rocket News* <<http://en.rocketnews24.com>>
- *Japan News* <<http://the-japan-news.com>>
- *Japan Today* <<http://www.japantoday.com>>
- *Japan Times* <<http://www.japantimes.co.jp>>

CHJeru activities

CHJeru is an online e-learning system our college has contracted to. All of our students have access to the system, and we require them to complete a set amount of study a month as part of their communication class grades. In our department, students must complete at least 500 miles a month, which adds up to about four or five hours of study. Naturally, they are encouraged to do more if they wish, and the more motivated students do go ahead and do so.

Within this system, we are able to set up a *Selected Training* system, where we can choose particular areas of study we want the students to focus on. There are activities that assist with all the skills, including grammar, reading, listening, vocabulary, and external test preparation.

Each week we set up one of these *Selected Training* programmes as an activity for one day, trying to cover a variety of skill areas. Students generally spent around 25 minutes on the activities, and we could monitor their progress, both in terms of correct responses and time spent.

Listening activities

We also wanted the students to do focused listening activities using resources available online. Generally the students would do a 15-20 minute listening, then answer some questions, either on the website, or in our Moodle course. These listening segments were all recorded by native English speakers, and we tried to vary the countries of origin so that students could experience a variety of accents.

The listening activities we included were sourced from:

- BBC Learning English <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learning/english/>>
- Randall's ESL Listening Café <<http://www.esl-lab.com>>
- RocketNews <<http://en.rocketnews24.com>>
- Various ESL podcasts

Other

We rounded out the rest of the programme with a variety of ESL-related activities that we thought would be useful to the students and that focused on skill areas the other activities might not have covered. We also wanted to introduce the students to a great range of resources that they would be able to use for their future self-study, should they choose to do so.

Ongoing supervision

Students have busy lives, especially during the semester, and 15 weeks is a significant commitment of time by them, so we needed to monitor the students in the project carefully to make sure they were achieving the goals each week. As noted before, almost a third

of the students never really got started. For most of them, when we interviewed them, we found that they hadn't fully realized what a big commitment of time it was going to be for them, and by the time everyone else had got up to speed, they were already well behind. The next group, who got off to a good start but began to falter around the halfway mark, cited a variety of reasons for giving up, but most commonly found that other commitments to schoolwork, clubs, and part-time jobs precluded them from continuing.

For all students still involved with the project, we kept contact with them two or three times a week on LINE, giving them updates on new study materials, progress reports on targets reached, and generally encouraging them to continue. Outside of this, we held two interview sessions during the project, sitting down with each student and going over their progress to date. We found these one-to-one sessions the most effective way of keeping motivation high. There was also regular interaction with the students during study or on campus, as most of them attended our classes.

Final assessment

Once the programme was completed, we needed to perform final assessments. Most of the original group of students agreed to participate in this evaluation session. During the second week of August, the students performed the following:

- *TOEIC Test* : Although we were unable to have the students perform a formal TOEIC test, we purchased a set of practice tests from Oxford University Press as part of their "*Tactics for TOEIC® listening and reading test*" series. These are reasonably well standardized, and a key is provided for assessing the students' TOEIC levels in both the listening and reading sections. All the students did these tests in a supervised

situation.

- *Vocabulary* : We used *Word Engine's* V-Admin test once again as an indicator of vocabulary gain. As noted earlier, this test is not standardized and we used it only for general reference in combination with the "Words learned" feature of the *Word Engine* system.
- *Reading speed* : Within their Extensive Reading classes, a final assessment of reading speed was completed using the same standardized reading tests (Quinn, Nation, & Millett, 2007) as at the beginning of the course.

In conjunction with this, a full review was completed of all the work the students had done during the project to properly inventory their achievements. This also served as a comparison to help us evaluate whether a positive correlation between work completed and assessment gain was evident or not.

The results

After all the data was correlated and analysed, we found the following trends. For the purposes of this study, the results have been classed in three groups:

Group A (10 students): Those students who had completed most of the activities and who were still actively participating at the end of the project.

Group B (5 students): Those students who had completed roughly half the activities but weren't active at the end of the project.

Group C (6 students): Those students who never got started, or who had already given up by the midpoint of the project.

Overall task completion

This shows the average percentage of how much of the activity work assigned was completed by each group. This includes all the activities on the Moodle website, the Selected Training in the *CHleru* system, and the weekly

goals attained in *Word Engine*.

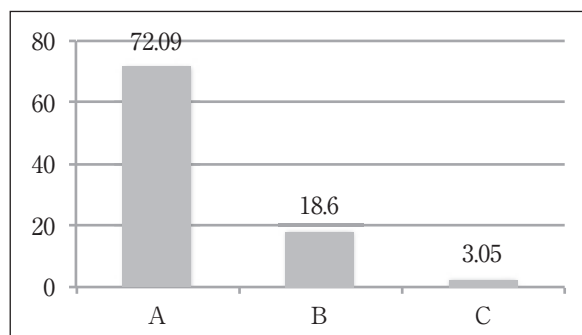


Figure 2. Percentage of activities completed per group

TOEIC

TOEIC results

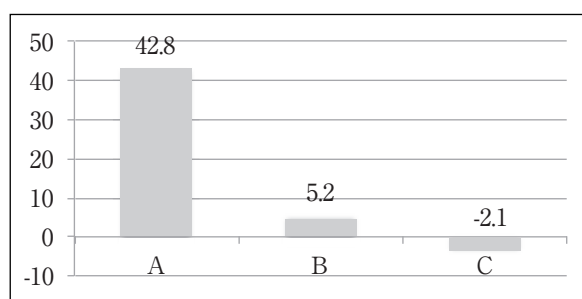


Figure 3. Average changes in TOEIC scores

As can be seen, the students who continued with the programme were able to make measurable gains in their TOEIC scores. The largest improvement was an increase of 90 points, although one student experienced a drop of 12 points. After interviewing this student at the end of the programme, it appears that although she had completed the tasks in a quantifiable manner, she was not actually applying herself to learning the content. This brought it home that simply providing material is not enough. Students also need instruction in study skills to make the most of their learning time.

Reading speeds

Reading speeds were calculated by having the students complete a number of prepared, standardized reading passages and calculating the words-per-minute achieved. These tests were performed at both the beginning and the

end of each semester. It should be noted that gains were experienced across the board as the students were also studying Extensive Reading at the same time as they were participating in this project. However, there was a slight gain by the Group A students over the other two groups. More importantly, as the TOEIC tests showed, there was a measurable increase in reading comprehension by the students who participated in the project right through.

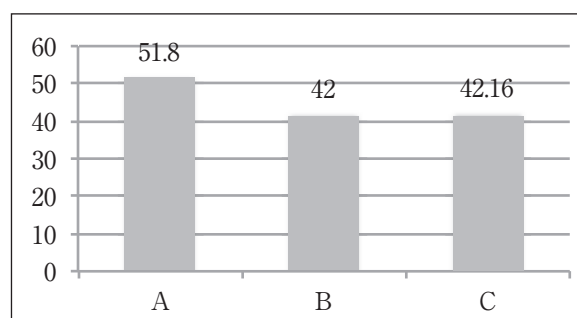


Figure 4. Average increases in words-per-minute reading speed

Vocabulary gain

During the project, one of the major activities was *Word Engine*, which focused on increasing students' vocabulary levels. As previously explained, the service uses spaced repetition to help students to both learn and retain new vocabulary. As you can see in Table 1, the amount of vocabulary gained was in almost direct proportion to the time spent and the number of times the "200 correct responses per week" goal was attained.

Table 1. Vocabulary gain using Word Engine

	Goal attained	Correct responses	Time (minutes)	Vocabulary gain
Group A	11.89	3,404.33	519.89	511.56
Group B	4.00	1,345.20	216.40	268.40
Group C	1.14	584.43	92.57	149.86

A number of students in Group A subsequently commented that the vocabulary they had learned actually helped them significantly in the formal TOEIC reading section, and their comprehension of the test

passages also improved.

Conclusion

Using such a small focus group ($n= 21$) always creates the risk that results will be skewed, and there were enough anomalies in the data we got to show that these concerns were well-founded. Our control groups (the students who never got started or who dropped out during the project) were always going to be weak for this purpose as so many other factors were possible that would influence their results. Every group contained English Department students, and they were not just using our project in which to study, but were all having their regular classes during this time, the progress from which could influence the results. In addition, many students were doing their own independent and self-regulated study to supplement their schoolwork. Therefore, non-participation in the project did not preclude improvements in English ability being brought about through other factors.

However, the purpose of this project was not to prove in concrete statistical terms that regular sustained study would perfectly correlate with improved English ability. What we merely sought to prove was a trend—that doing systematic short-term study containing elements of spaced learning would create an opportunity to improve their skills and knowledge. Put in those terms, the project succeeded.

As can be seen from the pre- and post-test results, the students who persisted with the project did experience measurable gains in TOEIC scores as opposed to those in the other groups who made little or no gain, or, in some cases, actually regressed. There were slight gains in reading speed as well, and significant increases in vocabulary levels.

Other gains were observable, if not measurable. The students who pushed themselves to complete the activities showed

increased motivation and application in all their studies—a trait that a number of teachers outside the programme commented on. There was increased confidence in using English, and a greater readiness to communicate.

A cynical view would be that this is an “of course” scenario—if anyone were to study hard, they would improve. And that view has to be considered. However, the focus of this study was not just on increased study opportunities, but on the viability of a regular, short-term, focused, and supervised course of study built around spaced learning techniques that would hold student interest for short spells on a daily basis. This type of study does not need to impose on their daily life to any great extent, but does offer measurable gains in ability and proficiency in the target area of study.

If we were to run such a programme again, we would:

- Give greater detail to the students at the initial orientation so that the dropout rate could be reduced
- Offer a wider range of activities each week so that the students could choose which ones they wanted to attempt
- Have more counseling sessions to give greater guidance to students about study styles, in order to avoid the frustrations of a number of students who studied hard but didn't make the gains they expected.

All in all, however, we proved what we set out to find, and will take these lessons into our classrooms in order to motivate our students to make the most of their time, and provide a path by which they can set their own goals in an autonomous and sustainable fashion.

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Appendix 1. Student Journal

Each day when activities were completed, the students were required to complete a brief journal entry to show their progress. At the end of each week, they had to write a comment of that week's activities. Here is a sample page from the journal showing what students were required to write.

Weekly Journal
Each day, write how long you studied for, what you studied, and a note about your feeling for that day.

Week 2 | From 4 July to 4 Aug (2014) | Total time studied: _____ mins

Day	Start	Finish	Minutes	Content	Notes
Mon	17:30	20:00	20	word engine vocab study	lots of words today am + well
Tue	18:00	18:45	45	listened to "milkwater" podcast	this was interesting
Wed	20:00	20:45	45	reading passage from English Texts	very difficult - lots of new words
Thu	18:00	18:45	45	grammar learning practice	i don't think i'm doing very well
Fri	18:00	18:45	45	word engine vocab study	i can see my words is growing, need more!
Sat	18:00	18:45	45	read reading of general reader (first in reader book)	managed to read 1/3 pages
Sun	18:00	18:45	45	light study with notebook - discussion about my "Study plan"	really enjoyed this. Learned new phrases

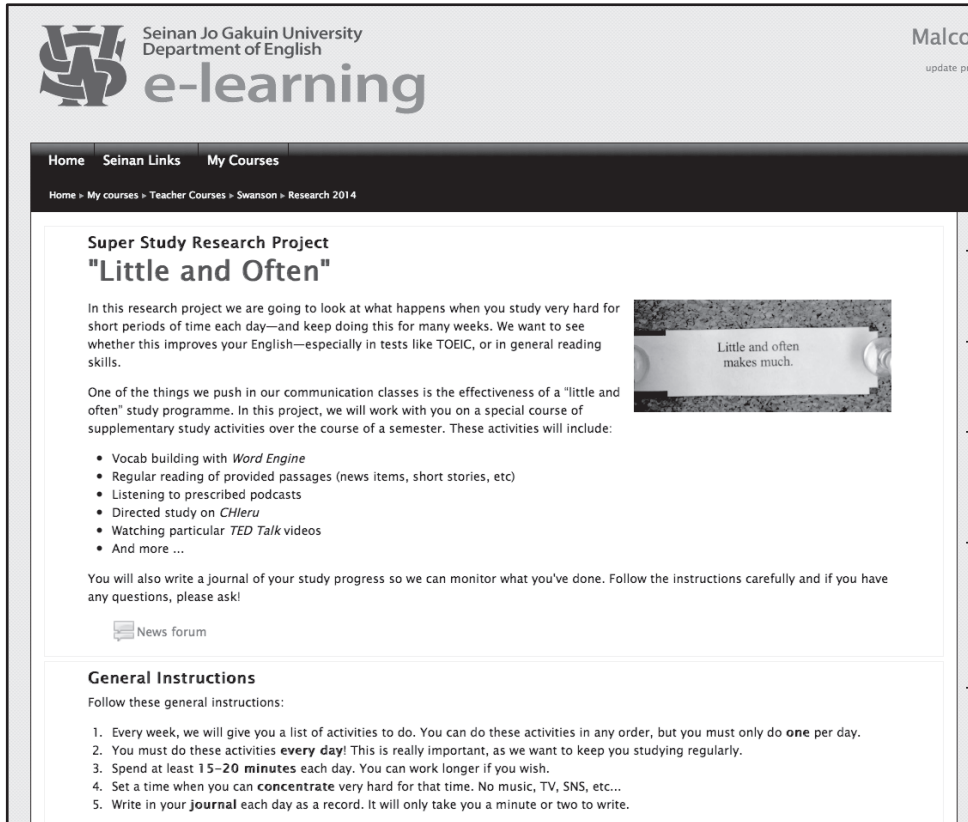
Comment on this week's study:
Some of the lessons were really hard. I can see my reading is getting a bit better. I need to study word engine to help me build my vocabulary. Listening and speaking is going well.
Again for next week is to get my time better so can concentrate more.

Week _____ | From _____/_____/_____/2014 | Total time studied: _____ mins

Day	Start	Finish	Minutes	Content	Notes
Mon					
Tue					
Wed					
Thu					
Fri					
Sat					
Sun					

Comment on this week's study:

Appendix 2. The online Moodle course



The screenshot shows the Moodle course interface for 'Super Study Research Project' at Seinan Jo Gakuin University. The header includes the university logo and 'e-learning' text. The navigation bar has links for Home, Seinan Links, and My Courses. The breadcrumb trail reads: Home > My courses > Teacher Courses > Swanson > Research 2014.


Super Study Research Project "Little and Often"

In this research project we are going to look at what happens when you study very hard for short periods of time each day—and keep doing this for many weeks. We want to see whether this improves your English—especially in tests like TOEIC, or in general reading skills.

One of the things we push in our communication classes is the effectiveness of a "little and often" study programme. In this project, we will work with you on a special course of supplementary study activities over the course of a semester. These activities will include:

- Vocab building with *Word Engine*
- Regular reading of provided passages (news items, short stories, etc)
- Listening to prescribed podcasts
- Directed study on *CHleru*
- Watching particular *TED Talk* videos
- And more ...

You will also write a journal of your study progress so we can monitor what you've done. Follow the instructions carefully and if you have any questions, please ask!

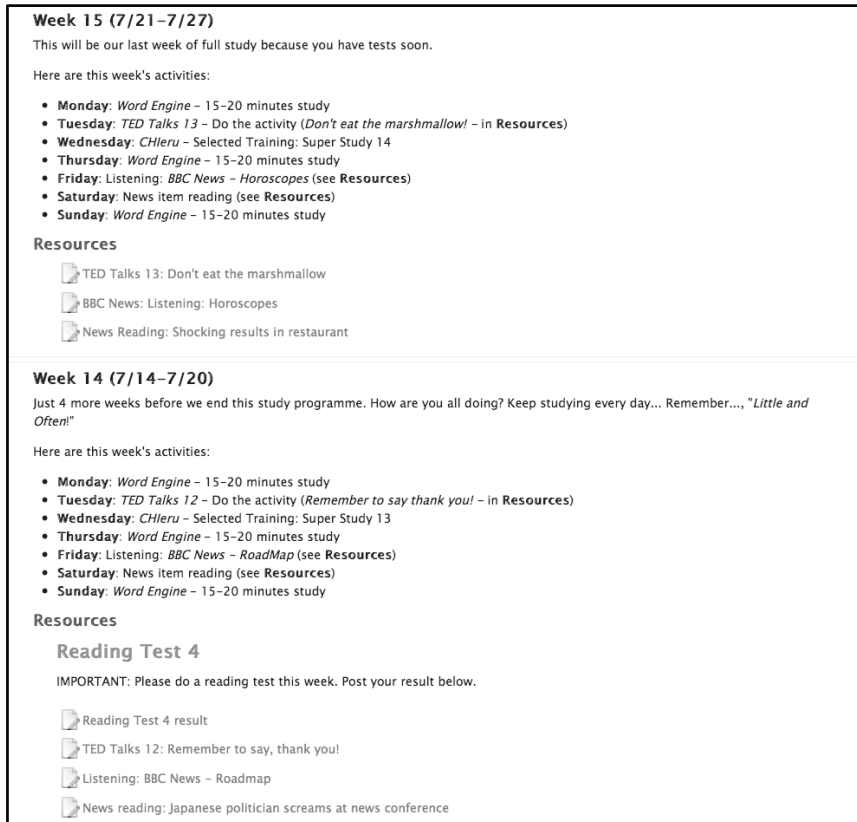
 News forum

General Instructions

Follow these general instructions:

1. Every week, we will give you a list of activities to do. You can do these activities in any order, but you must only do **one** per day.
2. You must do these activities **every day!** This is really important, as we want to keep you studying regularly.
3. Spend at least **15–20 minutes** each day. You can work longer if you wish.
4. Set a time when you can **concentrate** very hard for that time. No music, TV, SNS, etc...
5. Write in your **journal** each day as a record. It will only take you a minute or two to write.

2.1 : Main page of our Moodle course for this project



The screenshot displays two weekly activity pages from the Moodle course. Each page lists daily activities and resources for a specific week.




Week 15 (7/21–7/27)

This will be our last week of full study because you have tests soon.

Here are this week's activities:

- **Monday:** *Word Engine* – 15–20 minutes study
- **Tuesday:** *TED Talks 13* – Do the activity (*Don't eat the marshmallow!* – in **Resources**)
- **Wednesday:** *CHleru* – Selected Training: Super Study 14
- **Thursday:** *Word Engine* – 15–20 minutes study
- **Friday:** Listening: *BBC News – Horoscopes* (see **Resources**)
- **Saturday:** News item reading (see **Resources**)
- **Sunday:** *Word Engine* – 15–20 minutes study

Resources

-  TED Talks 13: Don't eat the marshmallow
-  BBC News: Listening: Horoscopes
-  News Reading: Shocking results in restaurant

Week 14 (7/14–7/20)

Just 4 more weeks before we end this study programme. How are you all doing? Keep studying every day... Remember..., "Little and Often!"





Here are this week's activities:

- **Monday:** *Word Engine* – 15–20 minutes study
- **Tuesday:** *TED Talks 12* – Do the activity (*Remember to say thank you!* – in **Resources**)
- **Wednesday:** *CHleru* – Selected Training: Super Study 13
- **Thursday:** *Word Engine* – 15–20 minutes study
- **Friday:** Listening: *BBC News – RoadMap* (see **Resources**)
- **Saturday:** News item reading (see **Resources**)
- **Sunday:** *Word Engine* – 15–20 minutes study

Resources

Reading Test 4

IMPORTANT: Please do a reading test this week. Post your result below.

-  Reading Test 4 result
-  TED Talks 12: Remember to say, thank you!
-  Listening: BBC News – Roadmap
-  News reading: Japanese politician screams at news conference

2.2 : Examples of weekly activity pages

TED Talks 11: What's wrong with our food system

View

So far you've listened to talks put on by adults. However, this week's TED Talks is by an 11-year old boy. He has a great message...

Birke Baehr: What's wrong with our food system?

Activities

1. What does CAFOS mean? Do you think it happens in Japan?
2. Why did people think Joel Salatin was a lunatic (crazy)?
3. Which cereal did his cousin choose? Why?
4. What should you do next time you're at a grocery store?

Start or edit my journal entry

You have not started this journal yet

2.3 : Example of activity questions

Appendix 3. Pre-project questionnaire

Tell us about yourself...

- What's your name?
- Other study: *Are you doing any other English study at the moment ?*
- Other tests: *What other tests have you done ?*
- TOEIC: *What was your score? When did you do it ?*
- TOEIC IP: *What was your score? When did you do it ?*
- TOEFL: *What was your score? When did you do it ?*
- Eiken: *What is your highest level ?*
- Other English tests: *Have you done any other English tests ?*

Your strengths and weaknesses: *What do you think are your strong or weak points in English? (Grade yourself "1" for very weak to "5" for very strong)*

- Casual listening
- Listening in class or tests

- Casual conversation
- Speaking in class, presentations
- Pronunciation
- Reading fiction books or stories
- Reading news articles, textbooks, etc.
- Reading speed
- Reading comprehension
- Vocabulary
- Spelling
- Grammar

Study focus: *Choose 2 or 3. What do you want to focus on most this semester ?*

- Speaking
- Listening
- Grammar
- Vocabulary
- Reading speed
- Reading comprehension
- Other

Other comment: *Is there anything else you want to tell us ?*

短期集中型学習が言語能力向上に与える効果について — 1つのケーススタディ —

マルコム・ロス・スワンソン*
アンドリュー・ジョセフ・ジッツマン**

＜要 旨＞

一定の短期集中型学習が学生の能力や成績に与える効果について、2014年前期に検証プロジェクトを実施した。このプロジェクトでは、学生は15週間、毎日20分間で完成する課題を与えられた。プロジェクト終了後、学生のTOEICスコア、読解速度、語彙レベルの比較を行った。その結果、このプロジェクトに無欠席で参加した学生には、そうでない学生に比べると明らかな進歩が確認された。

キーワード：集中型学習、TOEICスコア、反復集中学習

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