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Impact Study

To what extent does *Get Set, Go! Oxford English* prepare children for English language learning in primary school?

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This study was planned and implemented using the Oxford Impact Framework. The Framework is a systematic approach to evaluating the impact of Oxford University Press products and services, developed through a unique collaboration with the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) and supported by the Oxford University Department of Education.



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1. Executive summary

1.1. Introduction

Published in 2013 in Hong Kong, *Get Set, Go! Oxford English* (GSG) is a three-level series specially designed for young children learning English in kindergarten. Each level is divided into two books targeting two terms in an academic year. In language training centres using GSG, the courses are designed for children who are 3—5 years old and would like to improve their English after school. According to the introduction of this title, GSG is designed to help children establish a solid foundation for a smooth transition to primary English. In this impact study, research was conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of GSG in increasing students' readiness for English language learning in primary school.

1.2. Aims and objectives

Impact objective chosen from the Oxford Impact Framework: Increased readiness to move to the next level of study.

Beneficiary group: learners

The overarching research question: **To what extent does *Get Set, Go! Oxford English* prepare children for English language learning in primary school?**

This was explored using the following themes:

- Whether teachers believe that the language objectives of GSG are appropriate for getting children ready for English language learning in primary schools
- Whether teachers believe that GSG is helpful to increase children's vocabulary and phonics awareness
- Whether teachers believe that GSG has an impact on children's listening and speaking skills for primary school
- Whether teachers perceive that the unit features have a positive impact on the abilities for primary school
- Whether teachers perceive that GSG is helpful to improve children's classroom behaviour and learning motivation in English class
- Whether teachers believe that GSG provides support and guidance to help children follow rules and instructions
- Whether teachers believe that GSG has an impact on children's ability to work and play with others

1.3. Methodology

To study the impact of using GSG, a Perceptions of impact study (descriptive evidence) was chosen as the evaluation option. This allowed us to gain rich and in-depth evidence of how teachers perceived the impact of GSG on students' readiness for English language learning in primary schools.

The participants were recruited through different channels and had to fit with the sampling criteria: have over 6 months' experience of using GSG and be familiar with the English curriculum in public school. Some of the participants were recruited from Oxford Path Centres, which are business partners with OUP. These teachers were recommended and recruited by OUP staff. Other participants were recruited using WeChat. A few filtration questions were asked before the interview to make sure they fit with the sampling criteria.

A series of in-depth qualitative interviews (30—45 mins) were carried out with 12 teachers to evaluate the impact of using this series.

1.4. Key evaluation findings

This impact study found that all the teachers we interviewed perceived *Get Set, Go! Oxford English* to have had a positive impact overall on preparing children for English language learning in primary school.

- It was perceived that GSG has an overall positive impact on preparing children for English language learning in primary school.
- It was perceived that the phonics content in GSG is helpful for students to get ready for English language learning in primary school.
- Out of the four abilities that are considered crucial for students' readiness of English language learning in primary schools, teachers differed in their views on the most important one. They agreed that they are all important.
- In terms of improving language proficiency, it was perceived that GSG has a positive impact on improving students' language abilities in general.
- GSG's teaching methodologies, such as using songs and chants, and Total Physical Response (TPR), were perceived to have a positive impact on students' ability to memorise new words.
- The section 'Time for a Story' was perceived to have a positive impact on helping students practice language usage and output, which involved the basic language skills required in primary school.
- Regarding classroom rules and instructions, it was generally perceived to be helpful in improving students' ability of following classroom instructions. However, a few teachers also mentioned that the content is limited and is highly dependent on teaching preference and personal style.

- GSG was perceived to have a positive impact on students' collaboration ability, but some teachers would like more classroom activities as support.
- In terms of improving learning motivation, it was generally perceived that the content of GSG is attractive and able to interest learners. But it was also mentioned that students' learning motivation is closely related with the difficulty level of the course book and the teaching style, so that it was hard to decide.
- Among all the features of the book, there are three things that were perceived to have a positive impact on attracting students' attention and improving their learning motivation: Time for a Story, Time to Write, and Achoo.
- It was perceived that puppets and Achoo play the most important role in improving students' classroom engagement.

2. Introduction and background

2.1. Background and context

To balance teaching English language, increasing learner motivation and forming the ability for learners to follow classroom instructions and communication, *Get Set, Go! Oxford English* has been widely used by many private schools and training centres. It has a stable position in the market of pre-primary English language learning in Mainland China. Published in 2013 in Hong Kong, GSG is a three-level series specially designed for young children learning English in kindergarten. Each level is divided into two books targeting two terms in an academic year. The series adopts the comprehension approach, Total Physical Response (TPR), which has been proven effective in the teaching and learning of foreign languages. Through interactive storytelling, various language games and action songs, children are able to learn English in an enjoyable and rewording way, develop communicative and collaborative abilities, and improve motivation of learning so that they can establish a solid foundation for a smooth transition to English language learning in primary schools. Tips and supporting materials of classroom management are included in the Teacher's Guide so that teachers can provide instructions and guidance for children in the class. Generally, among all the components of GSG, the most frequently used are Talking Pupil's Book, Talking Activity Book, Talking Big Book, Talking Letter Cards, Talking Flash Cards, Talking Song Posters, Talking Word Posters, Teacher's Guides, Sing and Move Audio CDs, Oxford Reading Pen. In this study, these key components are all included and teachers talked about their thoughts of the components overall. However, what teachers choose to use in their classrooms may depend on the actual needs and situations of different learning centres.

In language training centres using GSG, the courses are designed for children who are 3–5 years old and would like to improve their English after school hours. They may have a basic language background and their available time for after-school language training is usually about 3–4 hours per week. Therefore, most of the training centres would choose to cut Books 1 and 2 and re-organise the content so that students are able to complete the course of a level in three months. At the end of each unit, a learning record is provided to track students' learning outcomes and there is an overall learning record at the end of the book.

In China, the transition from kindergarten to primary school is an important issue for children because kindergarten and primary school use different teaching and classroom management methods. With limited educational resources, it is crucial for children to be prepared academically and mentally for primary school. Parents and teachers seek materials that can offer maximum support to the children's transition to primary school. School readiness has also been internationally recognised as the foundation of equal education. Children's readiness for primary school is linked to improved academic performance in primary and even secondary school. According to UNICEF (2012),

readiness for primary school 'is determined by a range of behaviours and abilities, such as literacy, numeracy, ability to follow directions, working well with other children and engaging in learning activities.'¹

GSG is designed to help children establish a solid foundation for a smooth transition to primary English. Therefore, in this impact study, research was conducted to evaluate the perceived effectiveness of GSG to increase students' readiness for English language learning in primary school.

2.2. Impact study objective

Impact objective: Increased readiness to move to the next level of study.

Overarching research question: To what extent does *Get Set, Go! Oxford English* prepare children for English language learning in primary school?

Readiness for English language learning at primary level is determined by assessing different abilities: English language ability, the ability to follow directions, ability to cooperate and the ability to engage in learning activities. Therefore, the following themes were chosen to explore the research question:

- Whether teachers believe that the language objectives of GSG are appropriate for getting children ready for English language learning at primary school
- Whether teachers believe that GSG is helpful to increase children's vocabulary and phonics awareness
- Whether teachers believe that GSG has an impact on children's listening and speaking skills for primary school
- Whether teachers perceive that the unit features have a positive impact on the abilities for primary school
- Whether teachers perceive that GSG is helpful to improve children's classroom behaviour and learning motivation in English class
- Whether teachers believe that GSG provides support and guidance to help children to follow rules and instructions
- Whether teachers believe that GSG has an impact on children's ability to work and play with others

¹ UNICEF (2012). School readiness and transitions. *Child Friendly Schools Manual*. New York. UNICEF, Division of Communication. p. 4

3. Methodology and evaluation study design

3.1. Evaluation method

To study the impact of using GSG, a Perceptions of impact study (descriptive evidence) was chosen as the evaluation option. This allowed us to gain rich and in-depth evidence from teachers on the perceived impact of GSG. This impact study investigated: to what extent does *Get Set, Go! Oxford English* prepare children for English language learning in primary school? Detailed themes and aspects were explored under this overarching research question.

A series of in-depth qualitative telephone interviews were carried out with teachers from 6th December 2019 to 20th January 2020. Each interview was based on a scripted interview discussion guide, which was agreed prior to fieldwork beginning (see appendix 1). Each telephone interview lasted 20 to 45 minutes, depending on the teachers' engagement levels and willingness to share thoughts.

Two questions were added before the interview to get oral confirmation from the teachers that they fit with the sample criteria requirements. All the in-depth interview questions strictly followed the interview guide to make sure the teachers could answer the questions based on the same understanding of the questions.

3.2. Sample

The sample group aimed to include 15 teachers. These teachers needed to have teaching experience of using GSG for at least 6 months and a good understanding of the English curriculum in public primary schools, so that they would be able to evaluate whether their students were ready for English language learning in primary schools.

Most of the teachers were expected to come from Oxford Path Centres. However, in order to get a more representative sample, the aim was to reach out and interview teachers from different learning centres in different cities. Therefore, two interview recruiting posts were sent to customers through WeChat between 19th December 2019 and 6th January 2020 (see figures 1 and 2) to attract a wider pool of people.

After two months recruiting, a total of 12 teachers fit the criteria and were willing to participate in the interviews. Four of them were from two Oxford Path Centres in Nanjing. In the end, another 10 teachers applied for the interview. It was highlighted in the recruitment posts that the applicants should have at least six months' experience of using GSG and they should be familiar with English curriculum in primary schools. In order to confirm that the participants were aware of and met the requirements, two questions were asked before the interview to get oral confirmation from the teachers. It turns out that two of them didn't meet the criteria. Therefore, 12 interviews were conducted and analysed to understand the impact GSG on increasing students'

readiness of English language learning in primary school. These teachers were offered an *Oxford Picture Dictionary* or *Project Pack* as an incentive to participate.



Fig. 1 WeChat post screenshot 1



Fig. 2 WeChat post screenshot 1

A summary of the teachers' names, locations and school names can be found in Table 1.

No.	Name	Location	School Name
1	Tily	Nanjing, Jiangning	Oxford Path
2	Jade	Nanjing, Jiangning	Oxford Path
3	Ottilia	Nanjing, Jiangning	Oxford Path
4	Ivan	Nanjing	Oxford Path
5	Rainbow	Henan, Zhengzhou	Discover Education
6	Jie	Henan, Zhengzhou	Cheese English
7	Qiuqi	Guangdong, Shenzhen	Miss Li English Education
8	Hailey	Xinjiang, Urumchi	Shaqu Youth & Children's Centre in Xinjiang Urumuchi
9	Yingbo	Guangdong, Shenzhen	Qimiao Yingyu
10	Jiayi	Shanghai	American Eagle Institute
11	Flora	Shanghai	Douzui Yingyu
12	James	Guangdong, Guangzhou	Mingcuiyuan Experimental Kindergarten in Guangzhou (Panyu)

Table 1 summary of participants

3.3. Limitations of the study

There are a few limitations of this study. First, Oxford Path is one of OUP Mainland China business partners and the teachers from Nanjing were recruited by OUP staff, so they may tend to provide more positive feedback. Also, the participants were aware that the interviews were conducted by OUP staff and this may have influenced their responses. Second, the number of participants is limited. This report is based on the perceptions of

12 teachers in schools and language training centres from five provinces in China. Although these five provinces are located in different parts of China, the results cannot be generalised or used at a national context.

4. Key evaluation findings

4.1. Overall impact of *Get Set, Go! Oxford English*

All 12 teachers interviewed reported that they are satisfied with *Get Set, Go! Oxford English* and its learning outcomes. It was perceived by all participants that GSG has a positive impact on preparing children for English language learning in primary school.

“Generally, it definitely has a positive impact on children’s English language learning, especially for beginners.” (Rainbow, Discover Education)

“I think the impact is relatively positive. It could help children acquire English language knowledge in advance and improve their basic language skills.” (Yingbo, Qimiao Yingyu)

“Focusing on English letters is helpful for their English learning in the next period. Phonics will be introduced in primary level.” (Tilly, Oxford Path)

“In our learning centre, we have some trainings about English language objectives and teaching styles in day schools so that we could better reflect on our own teaching. I think GSG is in line with the learning objectives with the lower grades in primary. After completing GSG courses, it would be easier at English classes in day schools.” (Ivan, Oxford Path)

“In Shanghai, most children start to learn English from an early age. The first two books of GSG are too simple for them so we usually start from Book 3. After completing a program (which means Book 3 and Book 4), most children would feel simple and relax at primary classes.” (Jiayi, American Eagle Institute)

“Regarding to preparing children for English learning in primary schools, it is surely helpful. But I would say there are a lot of influence factors.” (James, Mingcuiyuan Experimental Kindergarten in Guangzhou)

“In kindergarten, children are provided with attractive learning materials and we teach them through playing games and completing interactive projects together. They usually have short attention spans and they have no idea of the process of learning. Therefore, it would be a difficult time for the children to adapt themselves to the new school situation. The content of GSG covers many different aspects, including social values. I think the impact of GSG is positive.” (Hailey, Shaqu Youth & Children's Centre in Xinjiang Urumuchi)

“Our students start to learn English from a relatively higher grades at day school but most parents still hope their children could start earlier so that they could get a good grades at school. This title is suitable for our teaching style with positive learning outcomes.” (Jie, Cheese English)

When they were asked to provide examples to support their statements that GSG has a positive impact on children’s language learning, most teachers mentioned that they are satisfied with the content arrangement of phonics. It was perceived that the phonics

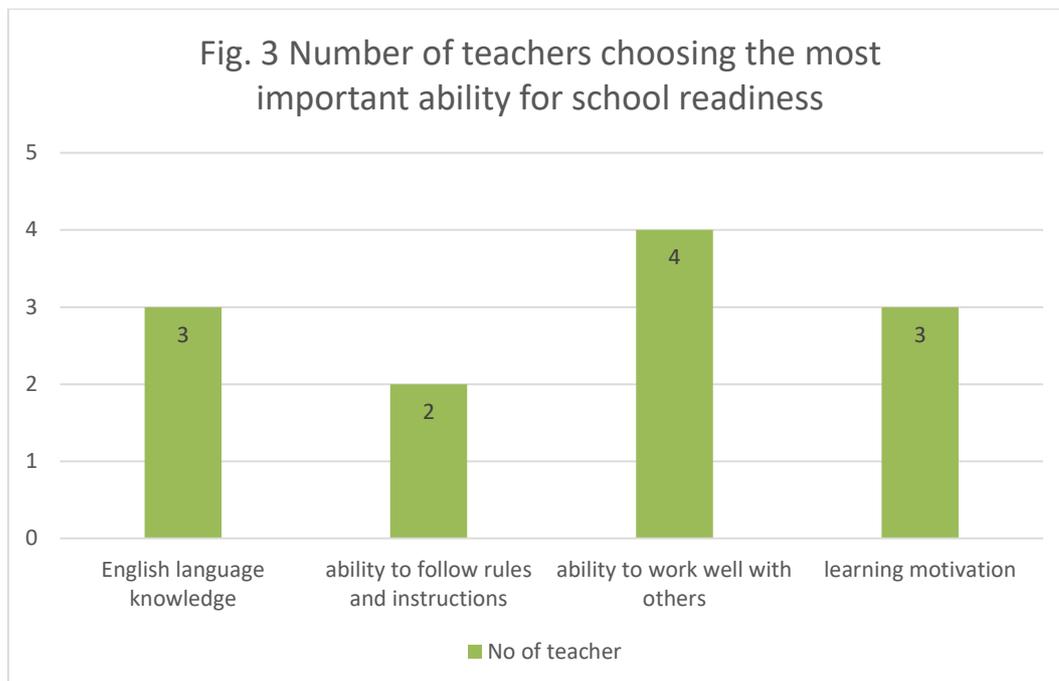
content in GSG is helpful for students to get ready for English language learning in primary school. It was mentioned that phonics is the first thing that students need to learn in English class. After learning with GSG, students are familiar with what will be taught in primary English in advance.

“Level 1 contains two books of teaching letters, phonics and some basic words. The stories and songs about letters are very interesting.” (Ottilia, Oxford Path)

“In Level 1, children are able to build a basic awareness of sounds and letters, which is beneficial for children’s learning in primary schools. The words introduced in Level 1 are common words in daily life, which is a great design for entry level students.” (Jade, Oxford Path)

“It will be a difficult point for students to memorise new words in primary level. Learning phonics in advance is helpful for them to get through it.” (Hailey, Shaqu Youth & Children's Centre in Xinjiang Urumuchi)

Among all the four abilities that are considered crucial for students’ readiness of English language learning in primary schools, teachers had different views on which they considered to be the most important. The table below (Fig. 3) shows the teachers’ choices for the most important ability.



There are four teachers holding the opinion that the ability to work well with others is the most important one for children’s readiness for primary school.

“The top 1 I would say is the ability to work well with others. There will be more and more group works in primary school, not only in English class but also other in subjects. The ability to work well with others and learn from each other are essential for students

getting higher grades and inspiring students to find the interests in learning.” (Qiuqi, Miss Li English Education)

“The most important is the ability to work well with others. The least important one is following rules and instructions. According to my teaching experience, students who would like to work with others are more open to different things and good at learning from other people.” (Hailey, Shaqu Youth & Children's Centre in Xinjiang Urumuchi)

Three teachers think that English language knowledge is the most important of the four, and another three teachers chose learning motivation. It was felt by some that without excellent English exam grades, it would be very difficult to enter into a good primary school. However, another teacher mentioned that learner motivation is the most important to achieve those higher grades.

“As an English teacher, I'll choose English language knowledge as the most important ability for the children, followed by the ability to work well with others. Rules and instructions are the least important.” (Rainbow, Discover Education)

“Learning motivation is essential for their study in higher grades. Teachers and parents could only be the external motivation and provide guidance for learning.” (James, Mingcuiyuan Experimental Kindergarten in Guangzhou)

There are also two teachers choosing the ability to follow rules and instructions.

“The ability to follow rules and instructions is the most important because children need the sense of safety. Then it will be team work to stimulate learning motivation. The last one is English language ability.” (Flora, Douzui Yingyu)

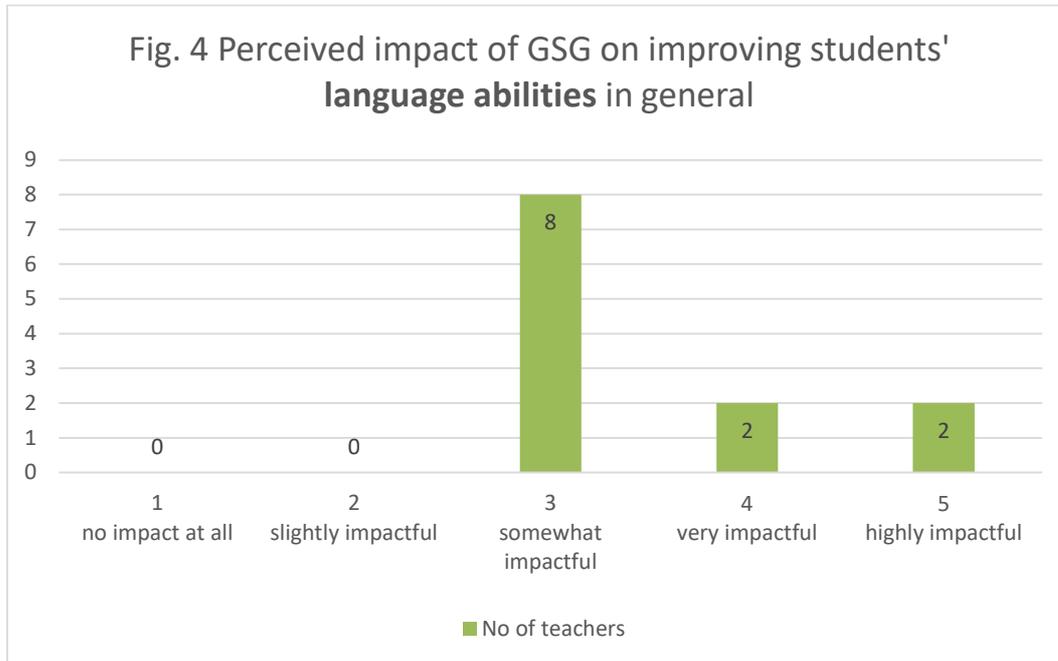
From this it is not possible to choose which ability is perceived as the most important, as the teachers have different views on this. All are considered important, but depending on the teachers answers they will have different priorities in their teaching.

4.2. Impact of GSG on language learning

In terms of language learning, three aspects were explored in the interviews: the overall language ability, vocabulary and phonics awareness, listening and speaking skills. The abilities of vocabulary and phonics, and listening and speaking are the key learning objectives in GSG, which are also among the key abilities for children entering primary schools. Additionally, which is the most impactful section in a unit was also investigated.

Perceived impact of GSG on improving students' language abilities in general

For improving **language proficiency level**, it was perceived that GSG has a positive impact on improving students' language abilities in general. Teachers were asked to rate the impact of GSG on children's English language ability for English language learning in primary school on a scale of 1 (being no impact at all) to 5 (highly impactful). The results can be found from the Fig. 4.



The average score is 3.5.

"I would say Score 5. I can see children's improvements after using GSG and it can help students to systematically learning English from the entry level." (Jie, Cheese English)

Most teachers gave a score of 3, somewhat impactful, because they think GSG is effective in improving language proficiency level, but they pointed to some problems in the syllabus design. They said that the language objectives in Book 3 and Book 4 are too easy and the stories are even simpler than Book 2.

"3. The inadequacies of it are that, in Level 3 and Level 4, the stories and sentences are too simple, even easier than the stories in Level 1. The changes of sentence patterns are not enough." (Ivan, Oxford Path)

"Score 3. Some of the words are not common for Chinese children and I think it should increase the number of words in total. I would also suggest it can show the sentences of the stories in the book. For the stories in lower levels, the content is rich but too much narrative. Actually, what we need is dialogues because we could invite students to role play." (Jiayi, American Eagle Institute)

Perceived impact of GSG on improving students' basic awareness of phonics and letters

When asked about GSG improving students' basic **awareness of phonics and letters** and helping students memorise vocabulary in preparation for primary schools, all the teachers agreed, some strongly agreeing, with these statements. No matter in phonics awareness or vocabulary memorizing, most of the teachers mentioned that songs and TPR play a positive role in learning sounds and vocabulary.

“Agree. Using TPR is helpful for learning the sounds of every letters.” (Otilia, Oxford Path)

“Strongly agree. Every unit has a review section and students can use the language in their daily life. The phonics is also reinforced in each unit. Sentences are commonly used. For example, in Unit 8 Level 4, it input concepts and review the concepts in another unit afterwards.” (Tilly, Oxford Path)

“Agree. For example, in Level 1, there are many songs and chants. The melodies are familiar for children so that the songs are easy to learn. Another example, songs to introduce letter ‘O’, it also helps students to learn the word ‘squeeze’.” (Qiuqi, Miss Li English Education)

At the same time, there are some teachers reporting that it depends on teacher’s role in the learning process.

“Agree, but how students memorise the new words depending on teacher’s teaching methods.” (Jie, Cheese English)

Perceived impact of GSG on speaking and listening skills

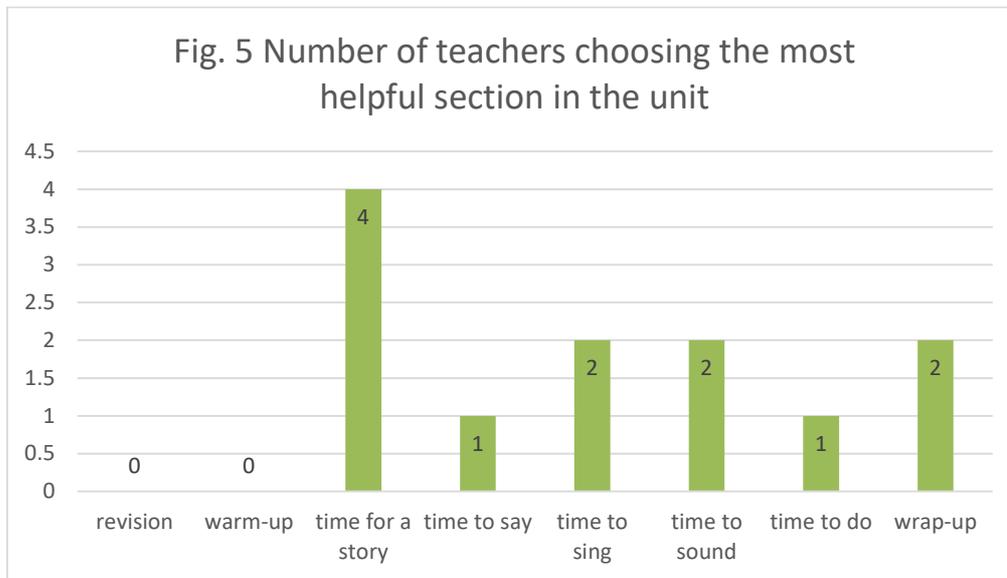
Teachers were asked whether they agree that GSG improves students’ communication skills and fluency in preparation for primary school. Most of the teachers chose “Agree”. They think GSG could effectively teach sentence patterns and provide a story for students to understand and use the sentences in a context. The function of the story in each unit were then reinforced by the teachers’ choice of impactful feature as it provides a lot of speaking practice.

“Agree. The sentences and words are very practical and commonly used in daily life.” (Tilly, Oxford Path)

“Agree. It helps students to organise sentences. Also there are lots of activities designed in ‘Time for a Story’ so that students could practice the languages and improve their speaking and listening skills.” (Ivan, Oxford Path)

Perceived impact of the features of GSG on improving student’s language ability

According to the introduction of GSG Teacher’s Guide, there are three lessons in a unit, including eight kinds of sections in total: Revision, Warm-up, Time for a Story, Time to Say, Time to Sing, Time to Sound, Time to Do and Wrap-up. During the interview, Teachers were then asked to choose the section that is the most helpful for improving children’s language ability. The section ‘**Time for a Story**’ was perceived to be the most useful in helping students practice language usage and output, which involved the basic language skills required in primary school. ‘Time for a Story’ is the main part of Lesson 1 and can work as the revision part of Lesson 2. It provides the context for the unit and language input. It involves the key sentence patterns, new words and interactive games. Teachers can design various classroom activities by taking advantage of this section. The detailed results can be found in Fig. 5 as below.



As you can see, the results were mixed, but the teachers choosing Time for a Story as the most helpful section account for the largest part of the total number. They explained that Time for a Story could effectively improve language levels through practice and language output. These are also the basic language skills for entering into primary school.

“Time for a Story. Other activities like speaking and singing are all involved into this section. A series of activities, including pre-reading, during reading and post-reading, are especially good for language acquisition and output.” (Ivan, Oxford Path)

“Time for a Story. In lower levels, we would ask children to read the story, understand the plot and practice key sentence patterns. At last, we would do role play as group activity.” (Yingbo, Qimiao Yingyu)

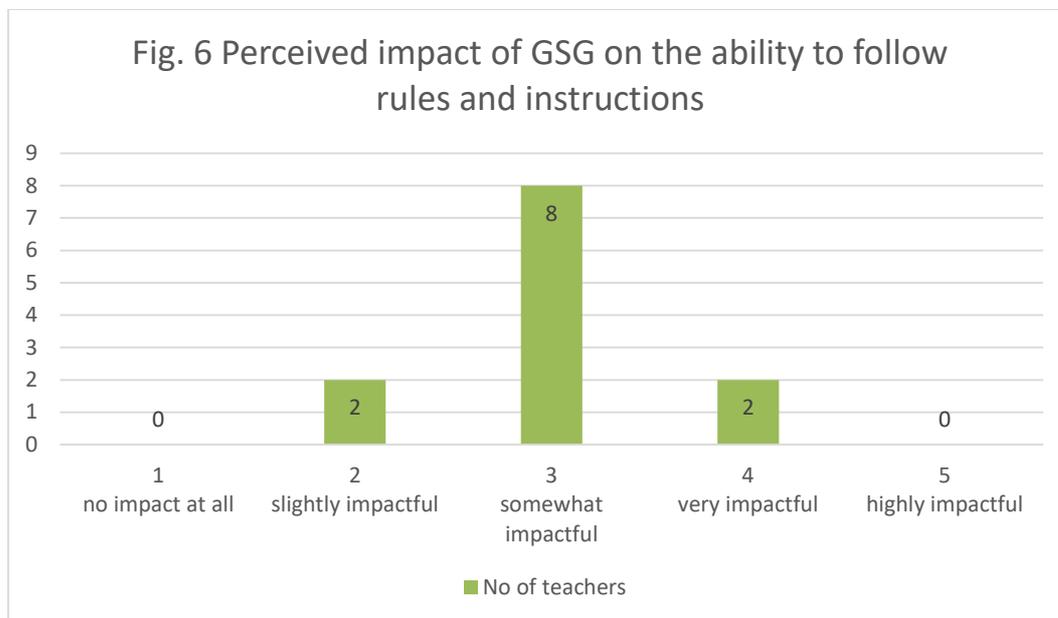
As it can be seen from the Figure above, Wrap Up, Time to Sound and Time to Sing each got two votes.

“Wrap up. I personally like the last reviewing part. Maybe different teachers have different arrangements for the reviewing section but we all would definitely wrap up what students just learnt and encourage language output. During this process, it is a good opportunity to check their comprehension and prepare for the next step.” (James, Mingcuiyuan Experimental Kindergarten in Guangzhou)

“Of course, I guess there must be some teachers choosing Time to Sing and Time to Sound. These two parts considered to be the most helpful parts in the first level. When kids grow older, they will not be a big fan of singing. And phonics is not the key objective at that stage. Therefore, Sing and Sound are not that important.” (James, Mingcuiyuan Experimental Kindergarten in Guangzhou)

4.3. Impact of GSG on the ability to follow rules and instructions

Regarding classroom rules and instructions, it was generally perceived that GSG has a limited impact on improving students' ability to follow classroom instructions. Considering most of English kindergarten courses do not contain this kind of content, the teachers said that the songs, sentences and unit topics about classroom management is useful for novice teachers. However, a few teachers mentioned that the content on this topic is limited and that it is highly dependent on teaching preference and personal style. The detailed results can be found in Fig. 6 and the quotes below.



“Yes there are some content introducing the classroom rules and instructions. For example, in Unit 2 Book 5, the topic is about ‘Stand Up Please’. But I think it is too late to talk about it. It should be introduced in Book 1 or 2.” (Jiayi, American Eagle Institute)

“There are lots of classroom languages in Teacher’s Guide to help teachers manage the classroom. In the real teaching practice, actually, it is very complicated and even some emergencies.” (Hailey, Shaqu Youth & Children’s Centre in Xinjiang Urumuchi)

“I think it depends on teachers how to manage the classroom.” (Jade, Oxford Path)

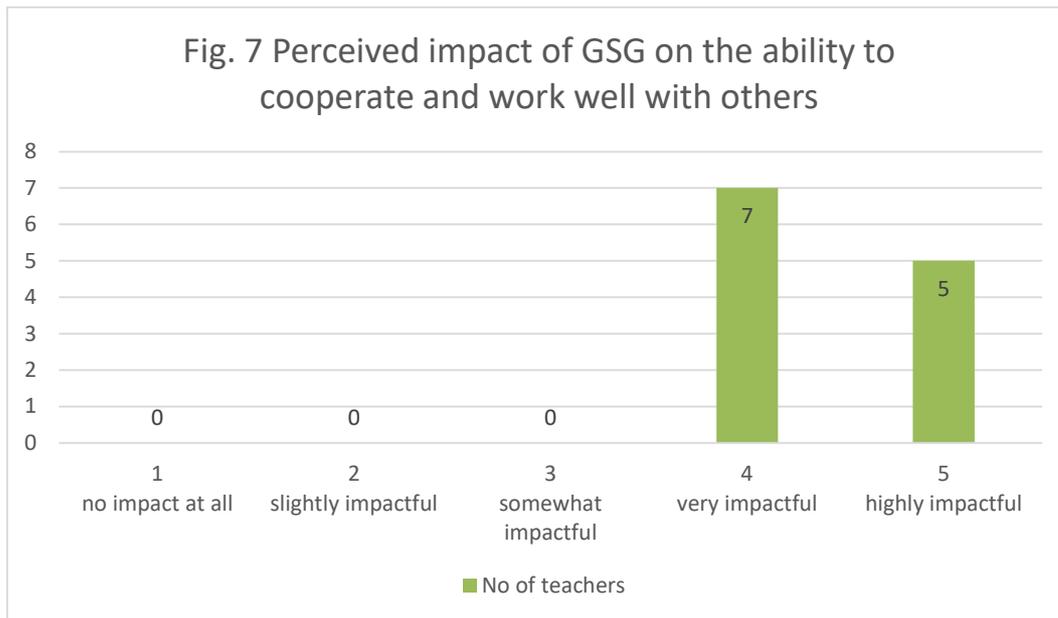
“I think it depends on teacher’s teaching style.” (Ivan, Oxford Path)

“There are some related content in the Student Book and Teacher’s Guide. The language used in classroom management is the key point. But the content provided in GSG is very limited and it depends on teacher how to use it.” (Qiuqi, Miss Li English Education)

4.4. Impact of GSG on the ability to cooperate and work well with others

GSG was perceived to have a positive impact on students' collaboration ability but teachers need more classroom activities as support. Teachers were asked to rate the

impact of GSG on children’s ability to work well with others in preparation for English language learning in primary school. All the teachers gave a score of 4 (very impactful) or 5 (highly impactful). However, they also mentioned that GSG could provide more support on group activities. Detailed results can be found in Fig. 7 and the quotes below.



“5, highly impactful. There are some group activities in the book.” (Rainbow, Discover Education)

“4. There are lots of stories in the book, involving social values and emotions. For example, the story of letter ‘P’, it inspired children’s awareness of sharing and collaborating.” (Jiayi, American Eagle Institute)

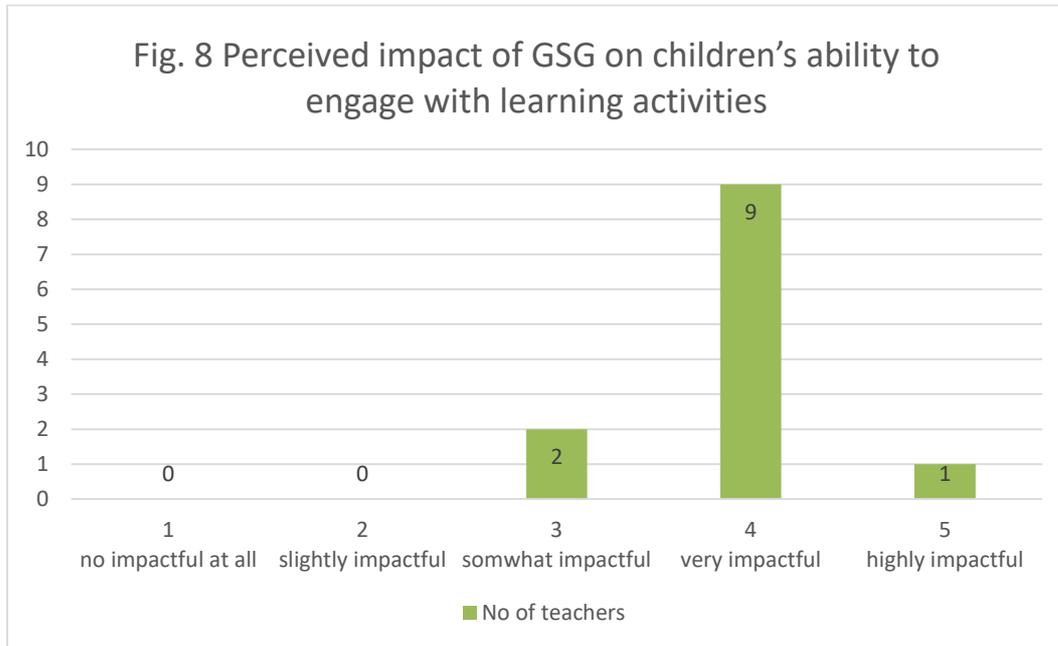
“4. I like the collaboration activities in GSG, such as new words games and stories. Stories are very important because role playing is helpful for children’s team work spirit.” (Flora, Douzui Yingyu)

“4. The group activities provided in the book can be used as reference but we teachers also have to design some more activities and learn from each other. AB and reading pen are helpful.” (Otilia, Oxford Path)

4.5. Impact of GSG on learning motivation

Perceived impact of GSG on children’s ability to engage with learning activities

Teachers were asked to rate the impact of GSG on children’s ability to engage with learning activities, the graph below shows the results.



Nine teachers chose a score of 4, 'very impactful', two chose 'somewhat impactful' and 1 'highly impactful'.

When teachers were asked to talk in more detail about the impact on learner engagement and whether they agreed or disagreed with some statements exploring this theme, it was generally perceived that the content of GSG is attractive and able to inspire the interests of learning.

"Generally, I think the content of GSG is attractive for children. They love Book 5 and Book 6 very much. Book 3 and 4 are just okay for them. There are some content about vehicles in Book 5 and Book 6 so that most of boys love these units." (Jiayi, American Eagle Institute)

"When starting a new unit, stories and puppets are really helpful for drawing children's attention." (Tilly, Oxford Path)

"Agree. Children do have the eager desire to know about the content." (Jade, Oxford Path)

But some teachers disagreed. Some mentioned that student's learning motivation is more closely related with the difficulty level of course book and teacher's teaching style so that it was hard to decide.

"I'm totally agree that GSG helps to improve children's learning motivation. But I have to say it also has something to do with the difficulty level of the book and teacher's teaching style." (Jie, Cheese English)

“Disagree. Some of the unit topics are too general to answer. It would be hard to know how to answer the questions. For example, the questions like ‘Do you like...’ is easy to understand and answer. The topic of ‘School’ is not really interesting for children. How to motivate children to learn English depends on teacher’s capacity.” (Jiayi, American Eagle Institute)

“Disagree. It depends on what activities teachers design for the class.” (Qiuqi, Miss Li English Education)

Perceived impact of the features of GSG on improving learner engagement

Among all the features of the book, there are three things that were perceived to have a positive impact on attracting student’s attention and improving their learning motivation: Time for a Story, Time to Write, and Achoo.

In addition, it was perceived that puppets play an important role in improving students’ classroom engagement.

“I think TPR and Puppets could help students to understand the content better. Puppets are used a lot when telling stories or explaining sentences. Children love to see teachers playing with Puppets. The characters in GSG are used from Book 1 to Book 6 so that children are very familiar with them. When children enter into higher level and have improved language skills, the characters that they know well are helpful for their language study.” (Tilly, Oxford Path)

“My students like videos and Time to Write sections because they love to write and draw. Kids in 3 to 4 years old already started to learn how to use pens. Time to Write section fits with their features and interests.” (Ivan, Oxford Path)

“In the KG course design, animations and illustrations are the very basic requirements, such as gimmicks, Miss Candy and Achoo are all useful to draw students’ attentions. I would recommend to design some customs to be used in role play games in the classroom, which I think will surely improve children’s engagement.” (Jiayi, American Eagle Institute)

“I like Reading Pen, which is useful for entry level learners. Regarding to characters design, my students really love Achoo. They also love to learn new words through TPR.” (James, Mingcuiyuan Experimental Kindergarten in Guangzhou)

4.6. Suggested improvements on GSG

When teachers were asked what kind of improvements could be made to GSG, their opinions can be concluded into three aspects. First of all, they think the scope and sequence of Book 3 and Book 4 need to be re-designed. Some of the teachers mentioned that the sentences in Book 3 and 4 are simpler than lower levels. Second,

some of the topics should be changed to be more meaningful for children outside of Hong Kong. Two teachers said that there is some content specifically designed for Hong Kong students. For example, the topic of GSG 5 Unit 10 is 'I love Hong Kong'. There are too many location names in Hong Kong, which may distract students' attentions from practicing sentences and grammars. Third, considering most of the students in Mainland China are traditional users and prefer to focus on improving all four language skills at the same time, teachers suggested that it would be helpful if the full transcripts of the audio recordings were available for the students to read as they listen. Currently these are not available in GSG.

5. Recommendations

This impact study can be used to show that it was perceived by teachers that *Get Set, Go! Oxford English* has a positive impact on preparing children for English language learning in primary school. Specifically, it had a positive impact on children's language abilities, learning motivation and collaboration skills. It was also perceived by many teachers that TPR is effective in teaching new words and stories. Further research on this topic may be useful.

Regarding children's ability of following rules and instructions in the classroom, it was perceived that supporting content provided in the book is useful, but very limited. The participants talked about some suggested improvements during the interviews. These may be valuable to consider if a new edition is developed.

6. Conclusions

This impact study found that all teachers perceived that *Get Set, Go! Oxford English* has had a positive impact on preparing children for English language learning in primary school.

- It was perceived that GSG has an overall positive impact on preparing children for English language learning in primary school.
- It was perceived that phonics content in GSG is helpful for students to get ready for English language learning in primary school.
- Out of the four abilities that are considered crucial for students' readiness of English language learning in primary schools, teachers differed in their views on the most important one. They agreed that they are all important.
- In terms of improving language proficiency level, it was perceived that GSG has a positive impact on improving students' language abilities in general.
- GSG's teaching methodologies were perceived to have a positive impact on student's ability to memorise new words, such as using songs and chants and TPR.
- The section of 'Time for a Story' was perceived to have a positive impact on helping students practice language usage and output, which involved the basic language skills required in primary school.
- Regarding classroom rules and instructions, it was generally perceived to be helpful in improving students' ability of following classroom instructions. However, a few teachers also mentioned that the content is limited and is highly dependent on teaching preference and personal style.
- GSG was perceived to have a positive impact on students' collaboration ability but teachers need more classroom activities as support.
- In terms of improving learning motivation, it was generally perceived that the content of GSG is attractive and able to interest learners. But it was also mentioned that student's learning motivation is closely related with the difficulty level of course book and teacher's teaching style so that it was hard to decide.
- Among all the features of the book, there are three things that were perceived to have a positive impact on attracting student's attention and improving their learning motivation: Time for a Story, Time to Write, and Achoo.
- It was perceived that puppets and Achoo play the most important role in improving students' classroom engagement.

7. Appendix A: Impact Study Interview Guide

Impact Study Interview Guide: Get Set, Go! Oxford English

Research objectives

- Impact Objective: Increased readiness to move to the next level of study
- Overarching Research Question: To what extent does *Get Set, Go! Oxford English* prepare children for English language learning in primary school?

It is assumed that each interview will last for 30 -45 minutes.

School:		
Name of teacher:		
Email address:		
Position:		
Year group taught:		
Name of interviewer:	Date/time called:	
<p>Introduction to the Interview Process – 2 mins</p> <p>Thank you for agreeing to complete this interview with us. Your feedback is extremely important and will be valuable in helping Oxford University Press to understand the extent to which the use of <i>Get Set, Go! Oxford English</i> has a positive impact on preparing children for English language learning in primary school. We are very keen to understand the impact that GSG has had and this is why we are carrying out this independent piece of research. It is really important for us to hear your honest reflections.</p> <p>Before we start, I'd like to remind you that the interview should last 30 - 40 minutes. During the interview notes will be made, and the phone call will also be recorded to ensure we have captured everything in our notes. However, we treat your confidentiality very seriously and the recording will be deleted as soon as it has been used for this purpose.</p>		

Your contact details will not be used for sales or marketing purposes. We may however like to use some of your comments in our internal evaluation report or for sales and marketing purposes.

Do I have your permission to continue?

Do you have any questions before we begin?

The context – 2 mins

1. Just to start please can you confirm your job title in the school?
2. How long have you been using GSG?
3. Which level of GSG have you taught?
4. Which components have you used?

Thank you.

Perceived impact of GSG

I'd like to start by discussing what you feel the impact of GSG has been on preparing children for main abilities for English language learning in primary school.

<p>1. What impact would you say the GSG has had on preparing children for English language learning in primary school overall?</p>	<p>Prompt: Is this a positive or negative impact? What prompts you to say this?</p>	
<p>2. There are mainly four abilities that are crucial for the readiness of English language learning in primary schools: English language knowledge, ability to follow rules and instructions, ability to work well with others</p>	<p>Prompt: Which one is the most important and which one is the least important?</p>	

<p>and learning motivation. Could you please give a rank of the four abilities?</p>						
<p>About children’s English language knowledge</p>						
<p>I am going to read some statements about children’s performance after using GSG or some of the features of GSG. Please can you let me know to what extent to which you Agree or Disagree with them</p>						
<p>3. On a scale of 1 (being no impact at all) to 5 (highly impactful), how would you rate the impact of GSG on children’s English language ability for English language learning in primary school?</p>	<p>Prompt: Can you explain why you have rated it this way?</p>					
	<p>Strongly Agree</p>	<p>Agree</p>	<p>Disagree</p>	<p>Strongly Disagree</p>	<p>Prompt</p>	
<p>4. GSG improves students’ basic awareness of phonics and letters in preparation for primary school</p>					<p>Can you explain why you have rated it this way?</p>	
<p>5. GSG improves students’ communication skills and fluency in preparation for primary school</p>					<p>Can you explain why you have rated it this way?</p>	
<p>6. GSG is effective in helping student memorize and revise vocabulary or phrases more efficiently in preparation for primary school</p>					<p>Can you explain why you have rated it this way?</p>	
<p>7. Among the 8 sections (Revision of the previous unit, warm-up, time for a story,</p>	<p>Prompt: How has it</p>					

<p>time to say, time to sing, time to sound, time to do, wrap-up) of each unit, which one(s) do you think is/are the most helpful for improving children's language ability?</p>	<p>had an impact? Can you give me an example?</p>				
<p>About children's ability to follow rules and instructions</p>					
<p>8. On a scale of 1 (being no impact at all) to 5 (highly impactful), how would you rate the impact of GSG on children's ability to follow rules and instructions in preparation for English language learning in primary school?</p>	<p>Prompt: Can you explain why you have rated it this way?</p>				
<p>9. Which part/feature(s) you think is/are helpful for improving children's ability to follow rules and instructions (up to 2 choices)?</p>	<p>Prompt: Can you explain why or give an example?</p>				
<p>About children's ability to work well with others</p>					
<p>10. On a scale of 1 (being no impact at all) to 5 (highly impactful), how would you rate the impact of GSG on children's ability to work well with other in preparation for English language learning in primary school?</p>	<p>Prompt: Can you explain why you have rated it this way?</p>				
<p>11. Do you think GSG provide enough group activities for</p>	<p>Prompt: Why? Can you give me an example of your</p>				

helping children improving the ability of working well with others?	favourite classroom activity?				
About children's learning motivation					
I am going to read some statements about children's performance after using GSG and whether it has helped to prepare them for learning English in primary school. Please can you let me know to what extent to which you Agree or Disagree with them					
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Prompt
12. GSG increases students' confidence in spontaneously using learned language, for example raising his/her hand to answer questions in English.					Can you explain why you have rated it this way?
13. Students have the willingness of answering questions and show no fear for making mistakes.					
14. Students are interested in new class materials and interacting with teachers or classmates					Can you explain why you feel this?
15. On a scale of 1 (being no impact at all) to 5 (highly impactful), how would you rate the impact of GSG on children's ability to engage in learning activities in preparation for English language learning in primary school?	Prompt: Can you explain why you have rated it this way?				
16. What features of GSG do you think are	Prompt: TPR, Speaking and listening practice, Colorful look and feel, Interactive gimmicks,				

helpful for improving children’s classroom engagement in preparation for primary school?	Character puppets, Assessment packs, Phonics and letter awareness practice	
About GSG		
17. What improvement do you think could be made to GSG	Prompt: Which part failed to meet your expectations? Could you explain why?	
Conclusion		
Thank you for your time, do you have anything else you’d like to say about the about what we have spoken about today?		
Thank you for your time again, you have been very informative.		
Close		
Thank you again for your time today. If you have any questions or concerns about the nature of this project, please do not hesitate to contact me either via email or telephone		