

**Japanese Learners of English in a Study Abroad Context:
Outcomes, Language Contact, and Proficiency Gain**

留学環境における日本人の英語学習者
—成果、言語接触、習熟進度—

**A Dissertation Presented to the Division of Education,
the Graduate School of International Christian University
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

国際基督教大学 大学院

ICU

April 10, 2013

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教育学研究科提出博士論文

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my family and my parents. My husband Simon always made time out of his busy life to listen with patience about each step of my journey. In addition, he supported me and our family every day of his life for five years with many sacrifices. My Ph.D. and our house could not have survived without his support. My daughters Reina and Mirei were three years old and one-month old respectively when I started this study. They were my strength and motivation to carry on and see the Ph.D. through to the end as quickly as possible, and for them I stayed focused. Finally, my parents cared for the children whenever needed, and I could not have asked for more loving parents and grandparents. It was because they selflessly provided so much of their time that I was able to complete my Ph.D. studies while working full time.

Abstract (English)

This study examined the outcomes of study abroad, and further investigated why some learners make more language contact and/or proficiency gain during their study abroad than others. The research participants were 25 second-year Japanese university students in a private university in Tokyo, learning English in a 15-week study abroad program in Canada. This study generated three research questions. Research question one sought to find both linguistic and non-linguistic outcomes of a study abroad. Research question two had two parts: investigating variables associated with post-return English proficiency test results, and exploring variables associated with while-abroad language contact. Finally, in research question three, qualitative data were used to find interpretations and explanations into the variables identified by quantitative data, especially focusing on the amount of while-abroad language contact. The variables used in the study include affective factors e.g., motivation, willingness to communicate, language anxiety, self-perceived English skills, and homesickness. In addition, learner profiles, e.g., previous study abroad experience, the number of English courses taken prior to study abroad, the amount of language contact prior to study abroad, and English proficiency, were considered. This research employed mixed methods, and the following sections summarize a number of findings from both the quantitative and qualitative analysis.

Results of Research Question One: Outcomes of Study Abroad

Firstly, regarding the outcomes, significant developments during study abroad were found in all five areas investigated. On their return, learners had: 1) higher English proficiency, 2) higher motivation, 3) higher willingness to communicate, 4) lower language anxiety, and 5) higher self-perceived English skills.

Results of Research Question Two: Attributes Associated with Post-Return English Proficiency and While-Abroad Language Contact

Attributes Associated with Post-Return English Proficiency: The second important set of findings relates to the predictors of post-return English proficiency. Among the variables investigated, three were found to have a significant relationship: 1) the number of English courses taken prior to study abroad, 2) post-return motivation, and 3) post-return willingness to communicate. The first indicator was the number of English courses taken prior to departure, implying that formal instruction before departure can help build a foundation for language gain in a natural acquisition environment. The other indicators were that learners who were highly motivated and/or had higher levels of willingness to communicate post-return scored higher on the post-return English proficiency test, which implies that positive attributes are important in reinforcing positive behavior and action for language learning.

Attributes Associated with While-Abroad Language Contact: The third important set of findings was the association between non-linguistic attributes and while-abroad language contact. The results indicate that three attributes were significant predictors of the amount of language contact undertaken by the students: 1) pre-departure self-perceived English skills, 2) while-abroad homesickness (negatively related), and 3) post-return willingness to communicate.

Results of Research Question Three: Qualitative Inquiry into While-Abroad Language Contact

Qualitative data analysis focused on finding interpretations and explanations in learner perspectives and experiences regarding the variables correlated with while-abroad language

contact that were identified in the quantitative analysis. It was reported above that the amount of language contact was associated with pre-departure self-perceived English skills and post-return willingness to communicate. Qualitative data illustrated how learners with higher pre-departure self-perceived English skills had a positive outlook on their interaction in English, and on the upcoming study abroad experience in general. Moreover, learners with a higher post-return willingness to communicate had developed a variety of tactics to increase the amount of interaction they undertook with native speakers, as well as strategies to overcome communication breakdowns. In addition, more interactions while-abroad led to higher resultative motivation and a higher willingness to communicate post-return. As reported above, willingness to communicate at post-return was also related to post-return proficiency scores, which suggests that willingness to communicate at post-return is one of the most important attributes for a successful study abroad language learner.

On the other hand, while-abroad homesickness was found to have an inverse relationship with while-abroad language contact. In addition, pre-departure language anxiety was significantly related to while-abroad homesickness, meaning that learners with higher language anxiety at pre-departure were more likely to be homesick while-abroad. Learner perspectives confirmed that language anxiety, or apprehension in using the second language, tended to be caused by an embarrassing moment in the past using the second language, or a lack of second language communication skill to participate in communication tasks, or shyness in personality. These learners often refrained from speaking up at their homestays as they were worried about making grammar mistakes and having communication problems. For homesickness, learner experiences indicated that the symptoms of homesickness were magnified by a number of difficulties in the new environment abroad, such as a loss of control over their own comfort, for example, food, family, and leisure. At the same time,

facing unexpected difficulties made learners want to escape into their rooms and comforting thoughts about their life at home back in Japan. The qualitative data provided the explanations for the relationship of higher language anxiety and homesickness, resulting in less while-abroad language contact.

Indeed, rather than the actual English proficiency, it was found that two opposite pre-departure attributes, self-perceived English and language anxiety, divided the learners into two distinct groups: learners with more language contact while-abroad and learners with less language contact while-abroad.

Abstract (Japanese)

本論文は、留学の成果を調査すると共に、参加者の言語接触量や英語の習熟度の差をもたらす諸要因を検証したものである。対象者は、東京都内の私立大学に通う日本人大学生2年生の25名で、英語学習を主目的として、カナダにおける15週間の留学プログラムに参加した者である。以下に挙げる3つの研究課題をたて、検証を行った。研究課題1では、留学の成果を捉えることを目的とし、英語の習熟度と非言語的情意の伸長度を測定した。研究課題2では、帰国後の英語の習熟度を左右する変数、および留学中の言語接触量を左右する変数を検証した。さらに、研究課題3では、質的データを用いて、留学中の言語接触量に関する量的データ分析結果に対し、解釈を加えた。検討した変数には、情意要因の、学習動機、コミュニケーションへの積極性、言語不安、英語への自信、ホームシック度等が含まれる。さらに、学習者個人要因の、過去の留学経験、出発前の英語科目履修数、出発前の言語接触量、英語の習熟度等についても検討した。量的および質的データの分析を含める混合研究法を用いた主な調査結果を、以下に概要する。

研究課題1の結果: 留学の成果

第一の主な研究結果は、調査を行った全ての領域において、留学の成果が表れたことである。学習者は、出発前よりも留学を終えた帰国後の方が、1)より高い英語の習熟度、2)より高い学習動機、3)より高いコミュニケーションへの積極性、4)より低い言語不安、5)より高い英語への自信を有していた。

研究課題2の結果: 帰国後の英語の習熟度および留学中の言語接触量に関わる属性

第二の主な研究結果は、帰国後の英語の習熟度と相関する変数についてである。調査をした変数の中で、以下の変数が、帰国後に測定した英語の習熟度と有意な相関を示し

た。1) 出発前の英語科目履修数、2) 帰国後の学習動機の高さ、3) 帰国後のコミュニケーションへの積極性の3要因である。第一の、出発前の英語科目履修数の結果が示唆するのは、出発前の教室内英語指導が、自然な言語習得環境での習熟を促すための基礎作りに寄与したということである。さらには、第二と第三の、帰国後の学習動機の高さと、帰国後のコミュニケーションへの積極性の高さの結果により、肯定的な情意が、言語学習に必要な肯定的な言動や行動に直接繋がり、習熟度を伸ばしたことが示唆される。

第三の主な研究結果は、留学中の言語接触量と相関する変数に関するものである。調査した変数の中で、以下の3つが、留学中の言語接触量と相関関係を示した。1) 出発前の英語への自信、2) 留学中のホームシック度(負の相関)、3) 帰国後のコミュニケーションへの積極性、である。

研究課題3の結果： 留学中の言語接触量に対する質的データによる解釈

質的データ分析では、特に留学中の言語接触量に関する量的データ分析結果に焦点を当て、解釈と説明を加えた。留学中の言語接触量と相関する変数は、出発前の英語への自信と、帰国後のコミュニケーションへの積極性であることは上述の量的結果の通りである。質的データからは、出発前に英語への自信が高かった学習者は、留学先での英語コミュニケーションに対して肯定的な見通しを持っていたことが明らかになった。また、帰国後のコミュニケーションへの積極性が高かった学習者は、留学中に、コミュニケーション問題に対応するさまざまな戦略を持ち、意欲的にコミュニケーション行動を取っていたことも明らかになった。さらに、留学中に言語接触量が多かったことが、帰国後の学習動機やコミュニケーションへの積極性の向上に繋がったことも示された。上述した通り、帰国後のコミュニケーションへの積極性は、帰国後の英語の習熟度とも有意な相関を示したことから、帰国後のコミュニケーションへの積極性は、留学での成果を上げるために最も重要な情意の一つであると言える。

一方で、留学中のホームシック度と留学中の言語接触量には、(負の)相関があることが示されたことも上述の通りである。加えて、出発前の言語不安と、留学中のホームシック度に有意な相関が見られ、これは、出発前に言語不安度が高かった学習者は、留学中にホームシックになる確率が高いことを示している。出発前に言語不安度が高かった学習者のインタビューや自由回答からは、言語不安、つまり第二言語使用時の心配感は、過去に第二言語を使用した際に感じた恥らい、または、コミュニケーションに参加するために必要な第二言語コミュニケーションスキルの欠落、および内気な性格が原因であることが示された。このような学習者は、誤文を発することを恐れて、ホームステイ先での英語使用を控えることで、コミュニケーション問題を避けていたことも明らかになった。ホームシック度に関しては、海外の新しい環境で体験する数々の困難、例えばなじみの食事、家族、娯楽等の喪失が、ホームシックの症状を肥大させたことが分かった。同時に、予期せぬ困難に遭遇することが、学習者をホームステイ先の自室に閉じこもらせ、日本での生活に思いを馳せる症状の引き金になっていた。質的データにより、言語不安とホームシックの関係、および言語不安とホームシックが英語接触の少なさへと繋がるメカニズムを解明できたと言える。

以上、研究結果からは、実際の英語の習熟度ではなく、出発前の英語への自信や英語不安といった正反対の情意が、留学中の学習者を二分したことが明らかになった。留学中に言語接触量が多く留学で成果を上げることのできた学習者と、一方で、留学中に言語接触の量が少なく留学の成果を上げることのできなかつた学習者である。

List of Acronyms

ACTFL	American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Language
AH	at home (formal second or foreign language learning in classrooms at a home institution in a home country)
CASEC	The Computerized Assessment System of English Communication
CF	corrective feedback
DRI	Dundee Relocation Inventory
ESL	English as a second language
FL	foreign language
HIG	high input generator (learners who are good at initiating and sustaining interaction)
IM	immersion
LIG	low input generator (learners who are more passive and do not seek input directed toward them)
L2	second language
L1	first language
MEXT	Ministry of Education, Culture Sports, Science and Technology
NS	native speaker
OPI	Oral Proficiency Interview
QUAL	qualitative
QUAN	quantitative
SA	study abroad
SLA	second language acquisition

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Research Purpose

The present study attempted to find answers to this question: What non-linguistic variables are related to language gain and language contact during one semester of study abroad (henceforth SA)? For this question, the present study investigated language learning outcomes and their correlating variables during SA, and inquired into correlating variables using learner perspectives. SA research has *product* and *process* foci (Deardorff & Deardorff, 2007) just as in second language acquisition (henceforth SLA) research, and the process-oriented and qualitative approaches are expanding as a way to understand the results of product-oriented studies (Firth & Wagner, 2007). The present study is designed to investigate products, then seeks explanations by exploring the process of language learning through SA within one study.

In the following, the study abroad research in relation to the present study, the research questions, the research frameworks, the significance of the study, and the outline of the present study are elucidated.

1.2 Study Abroad Research in Relation to the Present Study

SA in this study is defined as second or foreign language learners living temporarily in a natural acquisition setting, mainly for the purpose of language learning, cultural interaction, or personal and career development (e.g., Meyer-Lee & Evans, 2007; Immetman & Schneider, 1998). SA learners are those who place themselves in SA settings

after puberty (adolescence) for as short as a few weeks to as long as a year.

1.2.1 Two Directions of Study Abroad Research

There have been two main directions in the area of SA research, and they can be traced back to two of the earliest classic studies, by Carroll (1967) and by Schumann & Schumann (1977). Quantitative SLA research in the SA context began in 1967 with Carroll's investigation of the relationship between foreign language proficiency and SA experience based on 2,784 American participants. In Carroll's study, the findings of statistical significance based on a large number of research samples was the key. Carroll strongly claimed the effectiveness of SA for language learning by this research.

A further notable study was conducted by Schumann & Schumann (1977). The researcher's diary studies involved two researchers themselves providing narrative accounts of their personal experiences as a source. In this diary study, an unsuccessful learner revealed behavior surrounding difficulties in language learning in the SA context for instance, rejection of a type of classroom instruction, social distance being far, and anxiety surrounding transition. There was no mention of language proficiency or acquisition itself. Schumann's study revealed the importance of social psychology to language learning which was not previously known (Kinging, 2009).

Since then, especially after the 1980's, the two directions have been kept mostly separate. The quantitative studies typically consist of pre and post tests, and measure linguistic gains or physiological states (Ginsberg & Miller, 2000; Ward et al., 2001). This quantitative approach tends to overlook the processes and the experience of adaptation to living abroad, since quantitative measures cannot capture many of the complexities of the learner experience (e.g., Pellegrino, 2005). As a result, quantitative data tend to merely

highlight which variables may have been influential for language contact or language gain (Kinginger, 2009; DeKeyser, 2007). For these reasons, some SA investigations use both qualitative and quantitative modes of data collection

The qualitative studies usually report on non-linguistic aspects, especially focusing on the process of overcoming difficulties in the SA context in regard to language and cultural learning (e.g., Jackson, 2010). The focus of qualitative research depends on the researchers' expertise. There are four main fields: 1) intercultural adaptation experiences, 2) homesickness and well-being, 3) personal growth, and 4) second language (henceforth L2) related experiences and self-construction through L2 exchange. To reveal these areas of inquiry, data from interviewing the participants, observing participants in the cultural scenes, and participants' own observations are commonly used (Ferraro, 2001; Rossman & Rallis, 2003; Spradley, 1980).

1.2.2 Proficiency Gains in the Context of SA

1.2.2.1 Study Abroad Context

For L2 learning, there is an assumption that authentic language-use experience afforded by SA may play an essential role in the development of L2 proficiency. As Goodwin and Natch (1988) note, "the variety of linguistic opportunities is unlimited while the 'need to know' is everywhere around" (p. 15). In terms of language use opportunities, Brecht and Robinson (1995) state that "indeed, the contribution of study abroad to significant language gains is commonly believed to derive from the number of opportunities program participants have to engage in first-hand language practice on 'the street,' in restaurants, in shops, in the homes of native speaker friends and acquaintances as

well as a variety of other out-of-class environments in which students find themselves while living in-country” (p. 317).

1.2.2.2 Language Contact

Freed (1990) claimed that it is not the amount of input and interaction that is important during SA. Instead, Freed argued that the level of the input has to be at the right level. In a study of the effects of language contact on the L2 proficiency of 40 undergraduate American students in a 6-week SA program, Freed did not find any connection between the amount of out-of-class contact in general and measurable linguistic progress. In trying to find an explanation for this, Freed found that it is not the amount but rather the type of contact which matters in terms of linguistic gain. Freed reported that lower proficiency learners particularly benefitted from social/oral interaction (i.e., speaking with native speakers). Higher proficiency learners, on the other hand, profited more from a variety of media, which provide extended interaction with written and aural materials (i.e., reading newspapers, watching television). According to input hypothesis (Krashen, 1985), a learner needs to be exposed to comprehensible input at language level $i+1$, a level a little bit beyond the learners’ proficiency to enhance language acquisition. Having interaction such as casual conversation may not always provide $i+1$ for learners at different levels. Appropriate input enhancing language acquisition in SA differs depending on each of the learners.

1.2.3 Non-linguistic Influences on Proficiency Gains

The degree and intensity of language learning is believed to be influenced also by factors such as individual differences and they explain why some learners meet more

learning objectives than do others (Sutton, Miller, & Rubin, 2007). In the following, individual differences and non-linguistic factors in which the present study investigated are reviewed.

1.2.3.1 Motivation

There are two main frameworks for L2 motivation research. The first framework concerns more process-oriented nature of motivation, where the focus goes to the interaction between motivation and the social environment. The integrative motivation (Gardner, 1985) in socio-educational model (Gardner & MacIntyre, 1992) is within this framework. The second framework is more recent one, which places the *self* at the center of motivation such as the L2 motivational self-system (Dörnyei, 2005).

Since the present study is looking into the process of learner integration into a new social environment for a limited period, the integrative motivation model was used as the motivation framework in the present study.

1.2.3.2 Willingness to Communicate

Willingness to communicate was first conceptualized by McCroskey and Baer (1985) for first language (henceforth, L1) use, then later adapted by MacIntyre, Clément, Dörnyei, and Noels. (1998) for L2 use. The willingness to communicate model by MacIntyre et al. (1998) is one of the most well-known motivation and language use models, which takes L2 use as an indicator of learners' willingness to communicate.

In relation to linguistic gains in SA context, Yashima et al. (2004) hypothesized that a SA learners' willingness to communicate was a key determinant in their ability to engage with native speakers (henceforth NSs), and this interaction facilitated the language

acquisition process. Yashima (2009) further reported that this might be due to the SA experience enabling the learners to have more to communicate to the world, which is one of the four parts of the international posture construct (Yashima, 2009).

1.2.3.3 Language Anxiety

According to Gardner and MacIntyre (1993), language anxiety is defined as fear or apprehension occurring when a learner is expected to perform in a second or foreign language.

Classroom language anxiety research suggests the negative influence of language anxiety on language learning. Young (1991), in a review of the literature on L2 anxiety in the classroom, lists the manifestations of anxiety, such as “avoidance of L2 use opportunities, competitiveness with others, ‘freezing up’ during L2 performance, fidgeting, avoiding eye contact, coming to class unprepared, and using short-answer responses” (p. 430). Ely (1986) reports that language anxiety in class correlated negatively with language class sociability and risk taking, which are reported as predictors of classroom participation, and are positively correlated with students’ oral correctness.

In the SA context, there has not been much major research reported on language anxiety in relation to linguistic outcome. However, a study by Allen (2002) suggests that learners in the SA context experience different degrees of language anxiety depending on the context of their interactions. Allen found that anxiety decreased during SA. However, this study reports that for the first two weeks of a six week program, learners’ anxiety levels remained high. In addition, the anxiety level decreased only in controlled short interactions (i.e., service encounters), and the level remained high in more complex interactions, which involve cultural differences.

1.2.3.4 Homesickness

Homesickness is generally understood as the feeling of missing home. In the field of psychology, homesickness is defined as a focus of home-related ruminative activity, which is accompanied by such symptoms as a withdrawal from communication in the local environment (Fisher, 1989).

There are few academically researched publications available investigating *language* and *homesickness* in the SA context. In fact, using the online Education Resources Information Center (ERIC), and searching through all publication types (i.e., journal article, books, dissertations/theses) from 1990 to 2012, there is no match found that includes the three keywords, *language*, *homesickness* and SA in the title and abstract.

Perhaps the significance of homesickness in the SA context to language learning is that with minds occupied with ruminative activity, it is to be expected that learners are not able to use cognition for other highly cognitive activities (Kondo & Yan, 1995). In addition, symptoms such as withdrawal may prevent learners from engaging in positive interaction in the L2, which will result in less gain on English proficiency tests.

1.3 Research Questions

In the present study, three main research questions were generated and each question consists of multiple sub research questions. Thus, there are 14 sub research questions in total. The following sections list these specific research questions.

1.3.1 Research Question One

Research question one concerns both linguistic and non-linguistic outcomes. There are five sub research questions:

- 1) Do learners make gains in English proficiency?
- 2) Do learners' willingness to communicate levels change from pre-departure to post-return?
- 3) Do learners' motivation levels change from pre-departure to post-return?
- 4) Do learners' language anxiety levels change from pre-departure to post-return?
- 5) Do learners' self-perceived English levels change from pre-departure to post-return?

1.3.2 Research Question Two

Research question two concerns associating variables for post-return English proficiency test and while-abroad language contact. There are seven sub research questions.

Concerning pre-departure variables:

- 6) Do learners with better pre-departure language profile, such as more previous SA experience, more pre-departure English course work, and more pre-departure extra English lessons, tend to do better on a post-return English proficiency test?
- 7) Do learners with more pre-departure language contact, such as more pre-departure total language contact, more pre-departure speaking contact, and more pre-departure listening/reading/writing contact, tend to do better on a post-return English proficiency test?
- 8) Do learners with higher pre-departure non-linguistic attributes, such as higher pre-departure willingness to communicate, higher pre-departure motivation, higher pre-departure self-perceived English, and less pre-departure anxiety, tend to do better on a post-return English proficiency test?

Concerning while-abroad variables:

9) Do learners with more while-abroad language contact, such as more while-abroad total language contact, more while-abroad speaking contact, and more while-abroad listening/reading/writing language contact, tend to do better on a post-return English proficiency test?

10) Do learners with a lower while-abroad homesickness tend to do better on a post-return English proficiency test?

Concerning post-return variables:

11) Do learners with higher post-return non-linguistic variables, such as higher post-return willingness to communicate, higher post-return motivation, higher post-return self-perceived English, and less post-return anxiety, tend to do better on a post-return English proficiency test?

Concerning relationships surrounding while-abroad language contact:

12) Do learners with higher pre-departure non-linguistic variables, lower while-abroad homesickness, and higher post-return non-linguistic variables tend to be associated with more while-abroad language contact (i.e., Do learners with higher pre-departure motivation tend to have more language contact when they are abroad)?

1.3.3 Research Question Three

Research question three concerns qualitative (henceforth QUAL) inquiries into the variables identified by research question two. There are two specific questions:

13) What are the learner perspectives and experiences regarding the correlating variables for while-abroad language contact identified by the quantitative (henceforth QUAN) analysis?

14) What interpretations and explanations can be drawn from the learner perspectives and experiences regarding the correlating variables for while-abroad language contact identified by the QUAN analysis?

1.4 Research Framework: Sequential Explanatory Design of Mixed Methods

This study employed a *sequential explanatory design of mixed methods* (Hashemi, 2012). This framework has two phases: the QUAN analysis phase and QUAL analysis phase, and it always begins with a QUAN phase followed by a QUAL phase (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). In the sequential two phases, in order to explain and more deeply understand the results from the QUAN analysis, QUAL data will be collected and analyzed. In this design, QUAN results and the linked QUAL analysis together offer a general understanding of the study content (Rossman & Wilson, 1985; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998; Creswell, 2003).

In the present study, in the QUAN phase, an investigation was carried out for both the linguistic and non-linguistic language learning outcomes. Moreover, the investigation looked into correlating variables for language gain and language contact. In the QUAL phase, the aim was to look closely into correlating variables discovered by the QUAN investigation for more insight and explanation by documenting the experiences and perspectives of learners regarding how these factors influenced them when learners carried out language contact.

1.4.1 Timing, Weighting, Participants for Data Analysis

For the present study, the QUAN and QUAL data were collected at the same three times; at pre-departure, while-abroad, and post-return. Figure 1.1 shows the timing and the

process of the data collection and data analysis of the present study.

Deciding on the weighting of the QUAN and QUAL data is called a priority decision (Morgan, 1998). For a typical sequential explanatory mixed methods design, the primary weighting is on the QUAN approach (Creswell, et al., 2007), and the present study followed this approach.

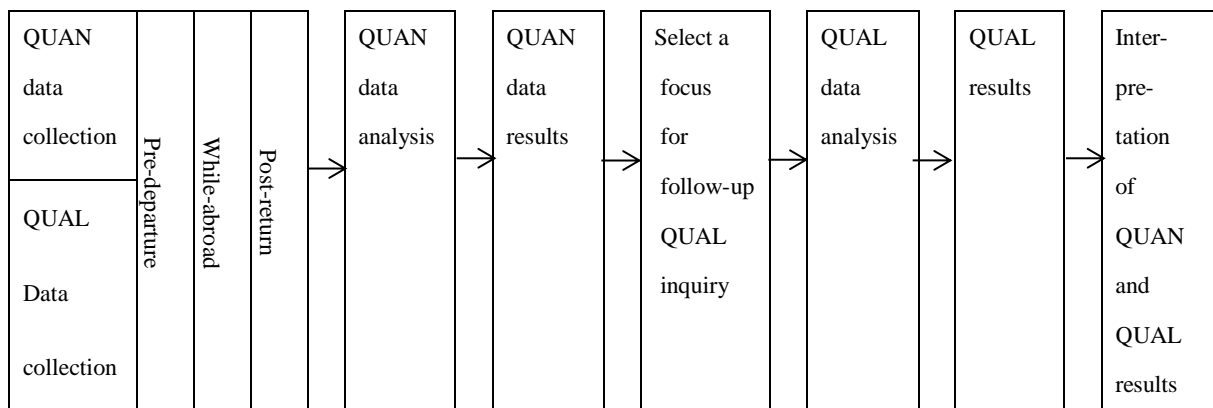


Figure 1.1 Sequential explanatory design of the present study.

For a sequential explanatory design in particular, data should be collected from the same participants (Creswell et al., 2007). This is because the purpose of this type of research is to provide detailed information through QUAL data analysis to explain the QUAN results. For this reason, the present study collected both types of data from the same participants.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The primary focus of the present study is to understand why some learners succeed as language learners abroad, while others do not by investigating variable associations to language contact and proficiency gains. With this aim, the present study is taking up the challenge of *digging deeper* into the qualities of learner experiences abroad while keeping

a focus on learning outcomes. This dual approach to SA research is the significance of the present study. This investigation and inquiry is made possible by 1) the use of pre-departure and post-return English proficiency test results, 2) the use of multiple questionnaires allowing multiple perspectives to merge, 3) the implementation of a mixed methods approach, and 4) an in-depth consideration of the specifics of learners' SA experience.

1.6 Outline of the Present Study

The remaining sections are divided into eight Chapters. Chapter 2 presents SA participants, SA models and types. Chapter 3 reviews SLA in the SA context. Chapter 4 is a literature review on non-linguistic variables. Chapter 5 illustrates method for the present study. Chapter 6 exhibits the results of analyses using the QUAN data. Chapter 7 elucidates explanations of the QUAN data using the QUAL data. Chapter 8 includes discussions relative to research questions and implications for a number of findings. Finally, the conclusion is presented in Chapter 9.

Chapter 2

SA Programs in Universities

2.1 Overview of Chapter 2

Chapter 2 illustrates SA programs and the participants. The present chapter first reviews the number of Japanese SA participants. Next, SA models and types will be reviewed. Finally, administrative tasks such as advance preparation, assessment of participants and programs, and SA program promotion will be discussed.

2.2 The Number of Japanese University SA Participants

Universities in Japan implement and support SA programs. One of the reasons for this is the move towards internationalizing universities as recommended by the Ministry of Education, Culture Sports, Science and Technology (henceforth MEXT) guidelines (2008). Another reason comes from within the universities, in trying to attract students interested in doing SA (MEXT, 2008). Despite these efforts, the number of SA participants is, at the same time, decreasing (MEXT, 2008).

The number of Japanese university students who studied abroad reached its peak in 2004. Since then, the number has been declining. Figure 2.1 shows the number of SA participants from 1993 to 2008 (MEXT, 2010). Table 2.1 shows this downward decline by destination. Of particular note, 558 more (+34.6%) participants went to Canada, and 93 more (+9.7%) participants went to New Zealand in 2008 compared to 2007, indicating a shift away from traditional educational destinations such as the United States and United Kingdom (IIE, 2012).

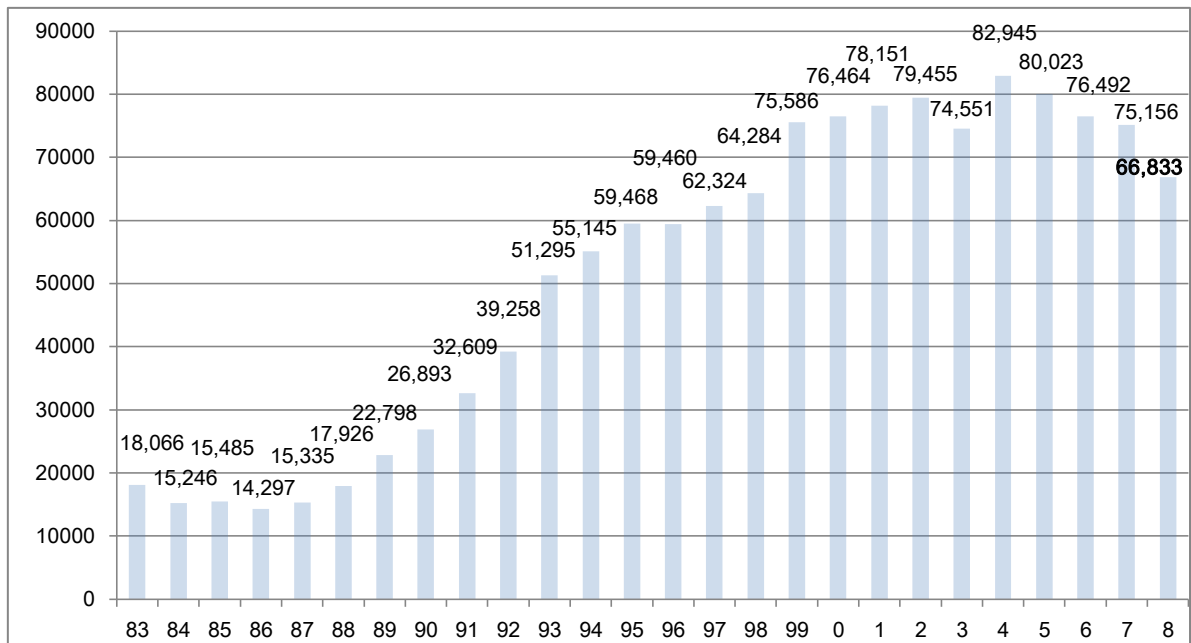


Figure 2.1 Number of Japanese university students in universities abroad from 1983 to 2008. Note. Adapted from *The number of university students doing study abroad*, by Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) Report, 2010.

2.2.1 MEXT Promotion of SA

A recent MEXT initiative directly influencing the number of SA participants is a scholarship for students to do SA for between two weeks and three months (MEXT, 2012). For this scholarship, Japanese universities, junior colleges, colleges of technology and specialized training colleges can apply on behalf of their students. The main aim of this scholarship is for participants to *try out SA* and experience the attraction of SA, which will hopefully be an encouraging experience for them so that later they go for a longer and more serious SA. In the first year of implementation, 2011, the target number of SA participants was 7,000 university students. The scholarship includes an 80,000 yen monthly allowance, as well as a maximum of 80,000 yen towards the airfare per participant. Prior to this scholarship, MEXT provided a scholarship for students who wished to SA for

longer than one year. However, the number of applicants was only about three times the number of places, which was lower than expected. This shows one recent SA trend, longer SA visits are becoming less popular, and more students are attracted to much shorter SA trips (JASSO, 2011).

Table 2.1 *Number of Japanese University SA Participants per Destination 2008*

Rank	Country / Region	Number of		Comparison with	
		Participants		Previous Year	
		(Previous Year)			
1	United States	29,264	(33,974)	-4,710	-13.9%
2	China	16,733	(18,640)	-1,907	-10.2%
3	United Kingdom	4,465	(5,706)	-1,241	-21.7%
4	Australia	2,974	(3,249)	-275	-8.5%
5	Germany	2,234	(2,385)	-151	-6.3%
6	Taiwan	2,182	(2,297)	-115	-5.0%
7	Canada	2,169	(1,611)	+558	+34.6%
8	France	1,908	(2,071)	-163	-7.9%
9	Korea	1,062	(1,235)	-173	-14.0%
10	New Zealand	1,051	(958)	+93	+9.7%
	Other countries	2,791	(3,030)	-239	-7.9%
Total Participants		66,833	(75,156)	-8,323	-11.1%

Note. Adapted from *Press release*, by Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) Report, 2010.

2.3 Three SA Models

This section reviews three SA models: 1) *integrated models*, 2) *study center models*, and 3) *hybrid models*.

2.3.1 Integrated Models

The first model to be reviewed is the integrated models. The integrated models refer to when students integrate into the host country academic system (International Christian University, 2012). Integrated models are also known as reciprocal exchange programs. Integrated programs are operated based on the agreement with the partner universities in the world. Home universities send students to hosting universities and accept their students in return. The students study at the hosting universities while they remain registered at the home universities. Therefore, the participants pay tuition at their home university and receive tuition waiver from the hosting universities. Participants are basically allowed to enjoy the same conditions, for selection of courses, as the regular students of the host universities. Units earned at the host universities can usually be transferred to home universities.

2.3.1.1 Advantages and Disadvantages of Integrated Models

There are some administrative advantages of integrated models (Johnson, Rinehart, & Van Cleve, 2005). Firstly, the cost of launching and running integrated models can be low. Also, since students from both sides remain registered at and pay tuition to their home institutions, there is no loss of tuition revenue at the home institution and no need to pay any money to the host institution. For participating students, a very clear strength of long

integrated exchange program is the degree of integration into the host culture, since students must learn to navigate a new academic system in a foreign country with minimal assistance.

One important issue with integrated models is that it is not for everyone (William & Dumont, 2005). For instance, academic requirements often include a minimum GPA, completion of a certain number of credits, and specific course or language prerequisites. Moreover, these programs will only appeal to students who are already independent, self-confident, and are able to operate in a new academic system in a second language.

There are other issues which might intimidate prospective participants (Johnson et al., 2005). The first is the risk of the student lowering their GPA. Participants do not know how much course work is needed in an unfamiliar academic system at the host institution overseas to obtain a certain grade which will later affect their GPAs. Secondly, in terms of registering for courses, while a wide range of courses may be appealing, not knowing until after arriving at the host institution which courses will be offered in a given term can be intimidating. Moreover, upon return, delays in receiving transcripts from the host institution can affect registration for the following semester at the home institution. Finally, time is an issue. Since each student plans an individualized SA, choosing courses, registering, receiving a transcript, and transferring course credits requires a lot of individual attention and can take a long time for both the students and the administrators.

2.3.2 Study Center Models

Study center models are the other SA model type (Johnson, et al., 2005). Study center models mean having classroom, office and faculty workspace rented at a local educational institution, or from a real estate agency, or commercial property management firm. Longstanding study centers have purchased or built the facilities that house their

programs. In short, operating a study center is like running a miniature university overseas. Study center models are referred to as *island SA* programs since study center programs are often separate from local foreign institutions. However, with a focus on a limited number of courses, study centers differ from branch campuses, which are designed to offer full degree programs from the home university mainly for students of the host country. Other characteristics of study center models are that they are closer to a tourist experience than a study experience. Finally, study center models serve students who may not be able to engage in longer integrated programs, for academic, personal, linguistic, or financial reasons.

2.3.2.1 Advantages and Disadvantages of Study Center Models

There are several advantages of study center models (Johnson, et al., 2005). Firstly, when a home campus develops a program, the home institution can determine the program and set all policies. Moreover, students going to the particular program can attend the same orientations, hand in the same paperwork, and individual advising time can be shorter and less formal. This allows simplified processes for program administration, and allows the handling of large groups of students. In the academic area, since all courses are a part of the home-campus curriculum, there is no question of how credits transfer and no evaluation of unfamiliar transcripts. The program can be tailored to the home-campus academic calendar. All of these factors are helpful in marketing the program to students, who can know exactly what major, or graduation requirements they are fulfilling and how their participation might affect their GPA.

The last aspect of study centers is that study centers work well when they serve one or several closely related departments or curricular areas. Study centers also work well when there is a large group of students with similar academic needs.

There are some disadvantages of study center models (Johnson et al., 2005). Firstly, operating a study center means that the home institution will be responsible for building and grounds maintenance of property abroad. Secondly, the home institution needs to provide all of the academic and student services, including medical services, emergency planning, and human resources. Thirdly, the home institution needs full-time dependable overseas staff working at the study center to make the necessary local arrangements. Finally, study centers depend on home-campus faculty involvement. Departments and individual faculty members who are dedicated to SA programs often teach abroad themselves when they accompany their students.

2.3.3 Hybrid Models

Hybrid models attempt to combine the advantages of both integrated models and study center models; study center models adding opportunities for students to interact with the host culture, and integrated models providing more on-site support services or intensive language courses. Therefore, the key feature of hybrid models is that they are often offered by the home institution in cooperation with a foreign institution, but are not necessarily fully integrated into the foreign institution's regular curriculum (International Christian University, 2011).

The characteristics of these hybrid programs are that students: 1) often have to take ESL (English as a second language) classes, 2) experience cultural and academic circumstances, 3) interact with people who have different cultural backgrounds, and 4)

learn more about themselves and become more self-confident. In other words, *experiencing* being abroad is a part of this type of program. Participants are usually responsible for the program participation fee and pay the home institution.

2.3.3.1 Advantages and Disadvantages of Hybrid Models

Some advantages of hybrid models are described below (Johnson et al, 2005). The first advantage is that participants without university-level language ability can participate. Sometimes, a host institution develops a set of courses for international SA students in a particular discipline or around a particular theme. Other hybrid models include programs geared to international students of different backgrounds and educational needs. In some cases, language courses are offered. In other instances, host institutions provide special language courses, culture courses, along with the option of offering one or two regular university courses at the same time.

Hybrid models at their best maximize advantages and minimize the disadvantages of both study center and integrated models. Therefore, hybrid models will not satisfy home intuitions that want their students to participate in regular overseas university course work and social life. Moreover, the home institution will not be satisfied if they wish to maintain control over what students study and experience overseas.

2.4 Other SA Programs

2.4.1 Short-Term Programs

The definition of short-term SA programs in the higher education field has changed over the last fifty years (Kauffmann, Martin, & Weaver, 1992). At first, a yearlong SA was labeled short-term SA, as earning a degree abroad was labeled as doing SA. Later, a

semester was considered short. Now, short-term SA is less than a term, ranging from one week up to around eight weeks in length. In many cases, but not always, faculty members at home institution direct the programs, and are typically sponsored by the home institution. The short-term programs can be based in one city or one country, or travel to multiple sites or countries.

2.4.1.1 Advantages and Disadvantages of Short-Term Programs

Some of the attractions of short-term programs are described below (Chieffo & Griffiths, 2009). The short duration makes them attractive to students who: 1) do not have time in their academic career for a semester or year abroad, 2) cannot afford the time and money to be gone for long, and 3) are busy with changing of majors, doing double majors, taking teacher certificate programs, or playing in sports clubs. Moreover, with short-term programs, it is also possible for students to participate in more than one program while they are in university, and some students will participate in a short-term program as well as a semester or year abroad program.

There are some issues specific to short-term programs (Spencer, Murray, & Tuma, 2005). Firstly, keeping the academic quality high is difficult. Unlike a longer SA program, short-term programs are sometimes perceived as being academically lightweight. The learning objectives, excursions, and methods of assessment, and teaching abroad should be carefully planned. The second issue is limited intercultural growth. In short-term programs, intercultural processing time is so condensed that students do not reflect on what they are learning, unless they are asked to do so through course assignments or teacher-led debriefing exercises. In short, the cultural learning needs to be deliberate. Maintaining the

appropriate balance between education and excursions is critical, and the critical issue is keeping *study* in short-term SA.

2.4.2 Compulsory Programs

2.4.2.1 Advantages and Disadvantages of Compulsory Programs

Some universities require students to do SA as a requirement for graduation. One important advantage of compulsory programs is that there is no advertising or recruiting for the SA program (Brick, Cieffo, Roberts, & Steinberg, 2005). The number of participants is ensured every time. As for the disadvantages, some students who do not wish to do SA for various reasons will be anxious about going abroad, and may not even consider applying for or entering any college or department with such a requirement in the first place to avoid doing SA.

2.5 The Trend of SA Participants

2.5.1 The Shift Away from Integrated Models

The decline of SA participants since 2004 was discussed previously in Section 2.2. Moreover, the trend of moving away from longer integrated SA to shorter SA programs was noted in Section 2.2.1. The present section explores possible reasons for the shift from longer SA to shorter SA, and the reasons for the decline in general.

Table 2.2 *Reasons for Japanese University Students to Not Choose SA*

Reasons why SA is not possible	Reasons why SA is not attractive
Low English ability of students makes it difficult to reach TOEFL requirements.	Students can access information on the internet about life and places outside Japan.
SA limits the time for job hunting.	Students have already traveled abroad with family or on school excursion trips.
The weak economy in Japan leads to money problems.	Students are concerned about safety (especially in the US, for instance shooting rampages on university campuses).
	Japan is a comfortable environment for young people and many do not want to face the challenge of studying hard abroad, but prefer to stay in Japan.
	Some students are introverted or so-called grass-eating-type or <i>sou-shoku-kei</i> .

Note. Adapted from “Japanese university students not studying abroad any more,” by B. Batten, 2011, *Obirin Today*, 11.

The possible reasons for the shift away from longer to shorter SA have been reported (Batten, 2011). Table 2.2 shows the two types of reasons: 1) reasons why SA is not possible, and 2) reasons why SA is not attractive for university students. For integrated models, one important reason from Table 2.2 is *low English ability of students makes it difficult to reach TOEFL requirements*. One of the important aspects of the integrated exchange programs is the standard of English proficiency. Depending on the university that students wish to go to, they must achieve a TOEFL iBT score of 70 or more. This may be discouraging, or possibly even a barrier that prevents many students from applying to SA programs.

Another challenge for participants is that *SA limits the time for job hunting*, as seen in Table 2.2. Since many of the longer integrated models start from September and the program is usually one year long, third year participants come back during the fourth year. As university students start job hunting during the autumn semester of the third year, coming back in the middle of the fourth year is very late and will inevitably affect the job hunting process. The final reason listed in Table 2.2 is *the weak economy in Japan leads to money problems, which is relevant for many students*.

2.5.1 Disinterest in SA in General

There has been discussion about university students generalized as *sou-shoku-kei* or *uchimuki-shiko*, meaning a tendency to be content within (Carpenter, 2012). Another description of *sou-shoku-kei* is a nonassertive person; someone who desires and is fully content with a passive, stress-free, calm, routine-filled, lifestyle. Such people, stereotypically prefer someone else such as an employer, teacher, parents or spouse to always assume the final responsibility for making important decisions on his or her behalf. The grass-eating-type or *sou-shoku-kei* generation is characterized as a group that is generally disinterested in SA experience (Carpenter, 2012), and is also listed under reasons why SA is not attractive in Table 2.2.

2.6 Administrative Tasks in Organizing and Running SA Programs

This section summarizes some of the tasks involved in running SA programs. The tasks can be divided into five areas: 1) orienting learners in pre-departure orientations, 2) assessing learner outcomes, 3) assessing SA programs, and 4) promoting SA programs.

2.6.1 Advance Preparation - Orienting Learners in Pre-Departure Orientations

Pre-departure orientations for SA participants are reported to be an important process for SA participants (Brack, 1993). Pre-departure sessions are supposed to have a balance between the practical and more substantive topics such as cross-cultural adjustment and skills, and between culture-general and culture-specific issues (Thebodo & Mark, 2005). For practical and culture-general topics, more informative pre-departure orientations can be used and some universities employ informative orientations through online media. Decisions on the design and format of the pre-departure orientation will typically depend on budget, staffing, and time limitations, as well as the institution's educational philosophy.

Developing complete Web-based pre-departure orientation courses is a cutting-edge practice that several institutions have successfully implemented (Thebodo et al., 2005). Moreover, web-based orientations can include compulsory quizzes, homework, and online discussion and student presentations. Many administrators agree, however, that computer-based orientations should not completely replace in-person sessions (Thebodo et al., 2005).

Table 2.3 summarizes the main culture-general items covered during general pre-departure orientations. The practical items often included in the general pre-departure orientations, such as preparation of passport, visa, insurance, as well as traveling tips such as packing and money issues are not listed in Table 2.3. Some universities provide a PDF file to read (University of California, Irvine, 2004), others provide YouTube videos or PowerPoint presentations (State University of New York, 2008). Following the general pre-departure orientations, some universities provide culture-specific, destination-specific and program-specific orientations.

Table 2.3 *Culture-General and Academic Topics at Pre-Departure Orientations*

Cultural Awareness (Culture-General)

Important manners, acceptable behavior, appropriate dress, and gestures.

Crucial no-no in host culture.

Time and punctuality.

The degree of eye contact with strangers.

Non-verbal symbols in the host country.

Major holidays.

Role of religion in daily life.

Historical relationships of host country and home country.

One or two things to know about the host country's past.

Pack regional gifts for new friends and host family.

Cultural Adjustment and Readjustment Blues

Illness/depression/loneliness.

Communication with home, email, phones, and postal system.

Culture shock (Initial adjustment, honeymoon period, mental isolation, and adjustment).

Reentry shock and reintegration.

Daily Life, Health Issues and Local Laws

Leisure time: what do people do in their free time.

Relationships: how to make friends and visit a friend's family.

Housing option, who to live with, and distance to school.

Local transportation and how to get around.

Food and drink: what is common.

Weather and clothing.

Health and health insurance.

Awareness of local laws.

Academic Responsibility

Choosing and enrolling in classes, and understanding grading system.

Knowing the differences: class structure, assignments and exams, relationship between professors and students, libraries, where to find books, other resources, etc.

Accessing computers.

Obtaining credit transfer and grades information.

Knowing attendance policies.

Continued from the previous page.

Note. Adapted from “Study Abroad Program – Pre-Departure Orientation General Information,” by State University of New York, 2008. Adapted from “Country Orientation Topics,” by University of California, Irvine, 2004. Adapted from “Safety Abroad First Education Travel Information,” by SAFETI clearinghouse, 2011.

2.6.2 Assessing Learner Outcomes

2.6.2.1 Assessment Methods

Home universities should be able to assess and grasp learner outcomes as a result of SA. The assessment methods of learning outcomes can generally be categorized into direct methods and indirect methods (Deardorff & Deardorff, 2007). Direct methods provide evidence of what learners learn, while indirect methods provide evidence of the process of learning. Both methods can use qualitative and quantitative data to interpret the learner outcomes. Examples of direct methods are embedded course assignments (papers, research reports, and tests), portfolios, performance (including evidence from videotapes or audiotapes of students engaged in particular tasks) and projects. Examples of indirect methods are surveys, interviews, focus groups, and self-assessment.

2.6.2.2 Expected Areas of Outcomes and the Moderators

By using the assessment methods mentioned above, home institutions can understand learning outcomes. As shown in Table 2.4, the areas of SA outcomes can be broadly categorized into four groups (Meyer-Lee & Evans, 2007; Immetman & Schneider, 1998): 1) language learning, 2) intercultural competence (including cognitive knowledge about the specific host culture and having an international perspective), 3) disciplinary

knowledge, and 4) social and emotional growth (including affective attitudes toward self-identity and attitudes toward others).

Table 2.4 *Study Abroad Expected Areas of Outcomes*

Expected Outcomes			
1.	2.	3.	4.
language learning	intercultural competence	disciplinary knowledge	social and emotional growth

For the purpose of examining SA outcomes, it is pointed out that the following three are moderators or influences which explain why some individuals and programs meet more learning objectives than do others (Sutton, Miller, & Rubin, 2007): a) individual differences, b) program design features, and c) differences in the host culture. This range of moderators suggests that the outcome of SA is complex.

2.6.3 Assessing SA Programs

Another ongoing task of the home institution is to assess and evaluate their SA programs. In order for a SA program to flourish within the university, the administrators and the faculty involved should be able to answer a general question: How good is the program? This section investigates the assessment criteria for SA programs.

Table 2.5 *Assessing SA Programs – The Specific Questions*

Questions	
1.	Does the program help to fulfill the home institution's overall mission and general goals? Does the program do what it promises?
2.	What distinctive academic features or characteristics does the program have?
3.	How does the program's design and pedagogy help it achieve its defined goals?
4.	How does the academic program abroad compare with home institution's on-campus courses, regarding course assignments, reading, test score distribution, etc.?
5.	To what extent does the program complement or supplement (rather than merely duplicate) course work available at the home institution?
6.	What distinct advantages come from offering the program abroad?
7.	What rationale is offered for the program's particular location?
8.	How does the program aid the institution in fulfilling its own academic and cross-cultural education mission?
9.	How does this particular program fit in to the overall study programs offered by the institution (e.g., for a given geographic area, or in regard to language study options or available academic subjects in general)?
10.	How does the program take advantage of the features and resources unique to education abroad, such as the level of integration into the host institution's academic and student life, the length of time spent abroad, and the nature and degree of exposure to the host culture and language?
11.	How available and adequate are the academic resources and support services abroad?
12.	What are the levels of student and faculty interest and commitment in maintaining this program in particular?

Note. Adapted from "Program assessment and evaluation," by S. Zukroff, S. Ferst, J. Hirsch, C. Slawson, and M. Wiedenhoef, 2005, in J. L. Brockington, W. W. Hoffa and P. C. Martin (Eds.), *NAFSA's Guide to Education Abroad: For Advisers and Administrators*, p. 451.

There are four general areas which are valued as important to assess (Zukroff, Ferst, Hirth, Slawson, & Wiedenhoef, 2005). The areas mainly concern assessing the host institution: 1) program objectives; What was this program, especially, what were the objectives? 2) academic objectives; What was the nature of the courses, instructors, and the support, i.e., academic infrastructure supporting the program? 3) interaction with the host culture; How did participants interact with the host culture? 4) support; What support was available for participants? What was the administrative structure of the program? What kind of meals and accommodation were provided?

There are more specific questions that can be added to assess SA programs, which especially concern the value of SA program (Zukroff et al., 2005). Some useful questions for SA programs in universities are retrieved and listed in Table 2.5.

2.6.4 Promoting SA Programs

Since the number of SA participants declined after 2005 as seen in Section 2.2, promoting SA programs to students, faculty, and parents has become more crucial. This section summarizes the literature written on the task of publicizing and promoting SA programs.

The aims of publicity and promotion are to persuade students to participate, and to help them select programs wisely. Promoting SA programs can be done using basic marketing principles (Yarabinec, Cleve, & Walgren, 2005). Hence, the main focus is on variety, repetition, and appropriateness of SA programs.

Firstly, variety and repetition mean using various formats, i.e., a message repeated in a variety of formats is explained as being more effective in getting students' attention compared to using the same brochure each time. For instance, if a student passes a poster,

picks up a brochure at the student orientation, then reads an article about it in the campus newspaper, plus hears a classroom presentation by former participants, this student has a possibility of realizing the value of SA and furthermore, choosing a SA option. Appropriateness is explained as tailoring the message (Yarabinec, et al., 2005). This means identifying the audience. For instance, for integrated models, there are usually more academic requirements to participate such as 3.0 or higher GPA and TOEFL 70 (iBT) or higher. For promoting these integrated models or exchange SA programs, the messages should attract and reach the students with high English proficiency. Whereas shorter SA programs targeting a wider audience with low or no academic requirement should appeal to a wider audience. The task is to tailor the message accordingly.

SA opportunities should be advertised not only for prospective participants, but also faculty and parents (Zemach-Bersin, 2009). The chance to see and experience the world should be included in any college catalog or student services handbooks. Creating attractive fliers and posters to call attention to the SA office and SA programs using good graphics or straightforward language can be useful. These fliers and posters should highlight the excitement of studying overseas. It is important to ensure that the message reaches the faculty and parents who support the participants.

Finally, although some Japanese university students participate in SA programs for language learning purposes, learning takes place in various other areas as well. As considered in Section 2.6.2.2, SA participants develop socially, emotionally, and develop their intercultural competence. These important areas can be greatly developed by experiencing life abroad, and these areas may not develop much otherwise (Meyer-Lee & Evans, 2007). Finally, Japanese university students are not doing SA as much as they used to as noted in Section 2.2. Some reasons including the weak economy and university

students being *sou-shoku-kei* were considered in Section 2.5. It is important for universities in Japan to seek ways to address the issues and drawbacks discussed for each of the SA models and types in Section 2.3, and to keep providing attractive SA programs to motivate prospective participants to go abroad.

Chapter 3

SLA in the SA Context

3.1 Overview of Chapter 3

Chapter 3 discusses SLA in the SA context and introduces related studies. Firstly, the main claims related to the SA learning context are elucidated. Secondly, input, interaction, and output in the SA context are discussed using SLA theories and perspectives. Finally, the outcome research results of SA are reviewed.

3.2 The Contribution of the SA Learning Context to SLA

Some terms used in the present study need to be defined. SA in the present study, as previously defined in Chapter 1, is defined as second or foreign language learners living temporarily in a natural acquisition setting, mainly for the purpose of language learning, cultural interaction, or personal and career development (e.g., Meyer-Lee et al., 2007; Immetman et al., 1998). SA learners are those who place themselves in SA settings after puberty (adolescence) for as short as a few weeks to as long as a year. At home (henceforth AH) is defined as formal second or foreign language learning in classrooms at a home institution in a home country (Freed, 1995). AH learners are those who stay at a home institution in the home country to learn a second or foreign language.

Table 3.1 *The Contexts for SA Language Learning*

Characteristics	Forms of SA Second Language Learning			
	Natural Acquisition	Structure-based Instruction	Teacher - Student	Student - Student
1) Learning one thing at a time	⊖	+	Δ (input is simplified)	Δ (input is simplified, or erroneous)
2) Frequent feedback on errors	⊖	+	Δ	Δ
3) Ample time for learning	⊕	—	—	—
4) High ratio of native speakers to learners	⊕	—	—	—
5) Variety of language and discourse types	+	—	+	+
6) Pressure to speak	+ (Δ) (learners cannot be silent)	+	Δ (little pressure to be accurate)	Δ (little pressure to be accurate)
7) Access to modified input	Δ (one to one=+; multiple=—)	+	+	+

Note. += usually present; —= usually absent; Δ=sometimes present and sometimes not. ⊖= distinctive aspects of the natural acquisition setting. Adapted from *How languages are learned* by P. M. Lightbown and N. Spada, 2006, p. 111.

Although many SA research findings have been reported, accounts on how the SA environment contributes to SLA are limited. SLA research has been mainly conducted in the classroom setting or in the instructional setting. However, in the late 1980s, SLA research expanded to the SA context. Understanding the similarities and differences in the two learning environments helps elucidate how aspects of the SA environment contribute to SLA.

3.2.1 Instructional and Natural Acquisition

The main SA SLA environments are summarized in Table 3.1. The instructional acquisition setting pertains to when the target language is taught to a group of second or foreign language learners and the focus is on the language itself (Lightbown & Spada, 2006). In contrast, the natural acquisition setting refers to when learners are exposed to the target language at work, in social interaction or, if the learner is a child, in a school where most of the other children are native speakers of the target language and instruction is directed toward the NSs. In such a setting, the language is learned through the communication that takes place in naturally occurring social situations. It is wrong to assume, as Klein (1986) explains, that natural acquisition is subconscious and instructional acquisition is conscious. Whether the process of acquisition is the same or different in naturalistic and classroom settings is an open question.

3.2.2 SA as a Hybrid Context

To illustrate how SA learners have access to both instructional and natural acquisition, a row called *Forms of SA Second Language Learning* has been added to Table 3.1. As Kinginger (2009) summarizes, “Study abroad learners are a hybrid variety, with access to

instruction but also with potential increases in their time-on-task and access to the language input and interaction believed to drive the acquisition process” (p. 30). The distinctive aspects of the natural acquisition setting are circled in Table 3.1: 1) (not) learning one thing at a time, 2) (not) getting frequent feedback on errors, 3) having ample time for learning, and 4) a high ratio of native speakers to learners. While-abroad, SA learners are under the influence of these four characteristics, as well as having access to instructional acquisition.

3.2.3 Aspects of SA Contexts

Many studies attempt to describe the benefits of the various SA language learning contexts. Firstly, DeKeyser (1991), one of the first SLA researchers to focus on the SA context, lists five reasons why the SA context is an effective environment for language learning: 1) the number of hours spent in the native-speaking environment, which provides, 2) an enormous amount of comprehensible input, as well as speaking practice, 3) getting a number of things done in the language they are learning, which can, 4) influence their motivation, and 5) being able to interact with multiple native speakers, which is not typically possible in the classroom learning environment. Some of them overlap with the characteristics listed earlier in Table 3.1.

Others mainly point out one other distinctive aspect of the SA learning context, which is the combination of natural acquisition and instructional acquisition. When this learning environment was reviewed previously, it was termed a hybrid environment. Freed (1995) suggests that a hybrid environment provides the best setting for learning a language. Consequently, learners participating in a SA program with well organized, good quality in-class instruction may reap great benefits from their learning environment. On the other

hand, learners participating in a SA program without well organized in-class instruction may have difficulty in developing accuracy.

In this section, a list of ten aspects of SA learning contexts which contribute to SLA that are different from the AH context was generated, as shown in Table 3.2. This list was based on the work of Lightbown and Spada (2006) in Table 3.1 and took into account the ideas presented by researchers such as DeKeyser (1991) and Freed (1995).

Table 3.2 *Ten Aspects of SA Learning Contexts Which Contribute to SLA*

Learners participating in SA;

- a) are not learning one thing at a time;
 - b) are not getting frequent feedback on errors (may develop fluency, but may not develop accuracy);
 - c) have ample time (not always, but generally more time than AH learners);
 - d) are in an environment with a high ratio of NSs;
 - e) spend a lot of time in the native-speaking environment;
 - f) receive an enormous amount of comprehensible input and frequent speaking practice;
 - g) have to get a number of things done in the target language;
 - h) have positive influences on their motivation;
 - i) are able to interact with multiple NSs;
 - j) are engaged in both structure-based and meaning-based environments.
-

3.2.4 Structure-Based and Meaning-Based Instructions

In order to see the distinctive characteristics of the SA context, it is important to understand that learners are engaged in both structure-based and meaning-based environments, as stated in item (j) of Table 3.2. *Structure-based instruction* refers to a classroom setting in which instruction focuses on linguistic forms or grammatical points and tests them one item at a time. This is also known as *focus on forms* (Long, 1991). A *meaning-based environment* refers to a language learning context in which learners learn by communicating meaning through interaction (Lightbown & Spada, 2006).

This idea of learning through meaning-based interaction derives from Krashen's monitor model which consists of five hypotheses (1982). Krashen argues that L2 development is largely the result of unconscious acquisition processes facilitated by a *focus on meaning*. Indeed, Krashen's hypotheses have led inquiry both in SLA and classroom research (Ellis, 1994). Classroom research has confirmed that learners can make progress through exposure to comprehensible input without grammatical instruction. For instance, Long (1991) compared the effects of structure-based instruction and meaning-based instruction, and confirmed that meaning-based instruction resulted in faster learning and higher levels of proficiency. This finding led language educators and researchers to shift their focus from structure-based teaching to meaning-based teaching. Because of this shift in the field of SLA, communicative language teaching, including immersion and content-based instruction has become more widely used.

However, research has also shown that learners may reach a point at which they fail to make further progress in some features of their L2 learning through meaning-based instruction alone (Ellis, 1994). In this case, there is a need to focus on grammar and learners should have access to grammar instruction at points. Therefore, focusing on

structure in the overall framework of meaning-based instruction is now regarded as essential for SLA.

The SA context can provide naturalistic acquisition paired with instructional language learning, providing learners with both meaning-based and structure-based learning opportunities. Spada (1986) notes the importance of instruction and informal out-of-class interaction, reporting that learners who received the most structure-based instruction benefited the most from informal out-of-class interaction. In addition, Freed (1995) reports that informal out-of-class interaction correlates most with progress on traditional tests of grammar and reading comprehension at the beginner level. Meanwhile, Long (1988) explains that formal learning provides a focus for the processing of input, whereas daily output and interaction with NSs provides an interest in focusing on certain structures in formal learning contexts.

3.2.5 Corrective Feedback

One of the characteristics of natural acquisition in the SA language learning context (see Table 3.1) and also one of the ten aspects of the SA language learning context that contributes to SLA (see Table 3.2) is, not getting frequent feedback on errors.

Corrective feedback (henceforth CF) is an indication to a learner that an utterance contains an error (Ellis, 2007). CF can be implicit such as by simply providing the correct language structure, for example, “Yes, she ‘goes’ to school every day” to a learner’s utterance, “She go to school every day”. CF can also be explicit by indicating that an error has been committed and providing the correct language structure, for example, “No, you should say ‘goes’, not ‘go’”. CF may or may not include metalinguistic information, for

instance, “Do not forget to make the verb agree within the subject” (Lightbown & Spada, 2006).

3.2.5.1 Less Corrective Feedback in the SA Context

There are three main reasons why SA learners do not get frequent CF on errors. The first reason concerns features of the tasks that are performed in the SA and classroom contexts. In the SA context, regarding authentic real-world out-of-class interaction, Springer and Collins (2008) point out that L2 learners’ errors tend to get ignored by interlocutors in order to accomplish real-world tasks. They suggest that one of the defining features of real-world tasks is *completion*. Learners feel the need to carry out and complete the task they are engaged in. Therefore, completing the task has priority over the accuracy of interaction. By contrast, in the classroom context, Springer and Collins note that, it is not crucial that classroom tasks are completed. In other words, learners have time to focus on accuracy in class. Springer and Collins view the classroom setting as a language *learning* environment, and the out-of-class setting as a language *using* environment.

The second reason is the role of the interlocutor in the SA and classroom contexts. In the classroom context, learners interact with educators, and the educators’ primary mission is to act as a L2 resource, providing input and grammatical knowledge, and giving useful feedback to learners on the L2 forms they produce (Lafford, 2004). Educators recognize their obligation in providing such feedback. On the other hand, in SA real-world communication, the majority of NSs that learners encounter during their daily lives, for example, servers in restaurants, do not consider themselves as responsible for giving CF. As a result, SA learners interacting with NSs soon realize that most interlocutors react to the message conveyed but do not focus on structures.

Thirdly, CF can confuse L2 learners and for this reason, CF tends to get ignored. Swain (2000) found, by observing peer feedback among learners in class, that during a typical interaction among learners when engaged in a *negotiation of meaning* task: “meaning is focused on, and error is ignored in an attempt to create an effective social interaction” (p. 107). In Swain’s study, learners were asked to give peer feedback to each other while engaged in a negotiation of meaning task in class. Their utterances included CF on each others’ grammar points, as well as language related to carrying out the task. Swain found that learners were confused over whether peer feedback was directed to the task, or to a grammar error. When L2 learners and interlocutors are engaged in a real-world task, a similar tendency may occur. That is, the priority is task completion and interlocutors in a SA setting aim for this, and wish to avoid potentially confusing the L2 learners with CF on errors.

3.2.6 Variations in L2 Speech in the SA Contexts

One of the differences between natural acquisition in SA contexts and instructional acquisition listed earlier in Table 3.1 was 5) variety of language and discourse types. This reflects that learners: f) receive an enormous amount of comprehensible input and frequent speaking practice (see Table 3.2). As mentioned in Chapter 1, Goodwin et al. (1988) explain the variations in L2 use in the SA context as, “the variety of linguistic opportunities is unlimited” (p. 15). Brecht and Robinson (1995) also view the SA context as “the contribution of study abroad to significant language gains is commonly believed to derive from the number of opportunities program participants have to engage in first-hand language practice on ‘the street,’ in restaurants, in shops, in the homes of native speaker

friends and acquaintances as well as a variety of other out-of-class environments” (p. 317), also noted in Chapter 1.

Hymes (1974) proposed a model for the analysis of L1 speech. This includes a number of categories such as setting, participants, ends, act sequence, key, instrumentality, norms, and genre. By taking the first letters, Hymes named this model, the *speaking model* as shown in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3 can be used to compare learners in class and learners out of class. As shown in Table 3.3, one of the distinctive differences between learners in class and learners out of class is, E: Ends purposes, goals, and outcomes. The main goal of the out-of-class interaction is communication and task completion. Learners in class, however, have multiple goals, such as language practice and learning, as well as communication and task completion. Analyzing the interactions using the speaking model suggests that, in-class interaction can be viewed as *process oriented* and it is a language practice and learning process. Out-of-class interaction is more focused and can be viewed as *task-completion oriented*, and it is rich in norms and language use.

The significance here is that learners in the SA context have access to both in-class and out-of-class interactions, and to show it visually, a row called *SA Context* has been added to the top of Table 3.3.

Table 3.3 Analysis of Speech in the SA Contexts Using the Speaking Model

	SA Context	
	In Class	Out of Class
S: Setting: Physical setting of time and place of a speech act, and scene, referring to psychological occasion.	Δ	⊕
P: Participants: Audience can be distinguished as addressees and other hearers.	Δ	⊕
E: Ends: Purposes, goals, and outcomes.	⊕	⊕
	(practice and learning)	(communication and task completion)
A: Act Sequence: Form and order of the event.	Δ	⊕
K: Key Cues: Tone, manner or spirit of the speech act, e.g., mock or serious.	Δ	⊕
I: Instrumentalities: Channels (oral, written, telephone, etc), or forms of speech: register (speech styles).	Δ	⊕
N: Norms: proximics, haptics, gesture, posture, facial expression, eye contact, paralanguage, turn taking, discourse, etc.	Δ	⊕
G: Genre: categories such as poem, tale, proverb, commercial, lecture, letter, etc. If there is no characteristic, then casual speech.	Δ (casual)	Δ (casual)

Note. ⊕= has variation; ⊖=usually absent; Δ= limited in variation; ○= distinctive aspects of the out-of-class interaction. Adapted from the speaking model by Hymes, (1974).

3.3 Input, Interaction, and Output in the SA Context

3.3.1 Input

Various SLA theories differ in the importance that they place upon input. However, SLA theories all regard input as important, regardless of their perspective (Lightbown & Spada, 2006). The role of input in the SA context can be interpreted using the five hypotheses that comprise the *monitor model*. This section reviews the monitor model including the *input hypothesis* and the *affective filter hypothesis*.

3.3.1.1 The Monitor Model Perspectives on SA

Krashen introduced the monitor model using five hypotheses (Krashen, 1982). In the 1970's, language educators were dissatisfied with language teaching methods based on behaviorism. During this period, influenced by Chomsky's theory of L1 acquisition, the monitor model was introduced.

The input hypothesis: The input hypothesis suggests that acquisition occurs when input is comprehensible and that its difficulty is at $i+1$. In this formula, i refers to the level of language already acquired, and $i+1$ refers to the language (i.e., words, grammatical forms, and aspects of pronunciation) just one step beyond that level. According to this hypothesis, extensive listening and reading are an important source of input. For SA learners, interactions with interlocutors are not always at $i+1$. Some learners, particularly high proficiency learners need to access extensive sources of input to efficiently facilitate their L2 development (Freed, 1995).

The affective filter hypothesis: Some learners, despite being exposed to a sufficient quantity of comprehensible input, do not acquire the L2 successfully. Krashen claims (1982) that those people have an affective filter. Affect refers to feelings, motives, needs,

attitudes, and emotional state. If a learner is tense, anxious, or bored, they may introduce an affective filter to block out the input. Yashima (2004) points out that after the affective filter hypothesis was suggested (Krashen, 1982), affects such as motivation, attitudes, and anxiety received greater attention amongst SLA and applied linguistics researchers. For SA research, the affective filter hypothesis is the most relevant among the five hypotheses as it relates to the influence of affects and attitudes on SA performance. As Huebner (1995) notes, “the overseas experience seems to result in a much wider variety of performances and behaviors than does study at home” (p. 191).

Acquisition–learning hypothesis: This hypothesis separates acquisition from learning. According to the hypothesis, *learning* means paying conscious attention to form and rules. *Acquiring* means not paying conscious attention to form and rules but picking up the L2, in the same way that children pick up their L1 by being exposed to samples of the L2. Krashen distinguishes the two, because his underlying belief is that learning cannot aid acquisition. From this perspective, the SA context, which is a natural acquisition context, seems to encourage acquisition by providing learners with samples of the L2 to pick up and acquire.

The monitor hypothesis: This hypothesis posits that both NSs and learners try to correct their *mistakes*. Learners can monitor vocabulary, grammar, phonology, or discourse for errors. According to Krashen, the *acquired system* is responsible for spontaneous language use. The *learned system* acts as an editor or *monitor*. In the SA context, learners are unlikely to often activate this monitoring system when using the L2. This is because monitoring will take place only when the learner: 1) has plenty of time to produce language, 2) is concerned about correct language, and 3) has learned the relevant rules. According to Lafford (2004), SA learners tend to be discouraged from taking the time to

monitor their speech or from stopping to focus on the difference between their own L2 knowledge and that of the L2 system. Lafford gives a reason for this. In real-world communicative interactions, learners try not to waste the interlocutor's time by delaying the flow of the message. Therefore, in the SA context, learners may try to be polite and keep the conversation flowing so as not to inconvenience the interlocutor. This helps to explain why fluency over accuracy is typical in the SA context.

The natural order hypothesis: This hypothesis suggests that as in L1 acquisition, L2 acquisition develops in predictable sequences. Ellis (1994) notes that even learners with different L1 backgrounds and ages followed a remarkably similar path of development when trying to produce structures such as English negatives. Furthermore, the order in which they learn grammatical structures closely follows the order in which children learning English as a L1 acquire them. From this perspective, learners in a SA context do not skip stages in their L2 grammatical learning simply by placing themselves in a natural acquisition setting, but rather follow a regular path or *developmental sequence*; what is learned earlier is learned early by many other L2 learners.

3.3.2 Interaction in the SA Context

When the SLA framework shifted from the behaviorists' perspective to the cognitive perspective, and sentence pattern practice without any context and meaning faded away, the communicative approach became widely used. The communicative approach tries to make the classroom a natural communication and acquisition environment. With the increases in the importance of the communicative approach, classroom interaction has become an important part of classroom activities and SLA research.

The interaction hypothesis places importance on conversational interaction as an essential condition for SLA, (e.g., Hatch, 1978; Long, 1996; Pica, 1994; Gass, 1997). Pica (1994), for instance, points out that input alone is not enough for language acquisition. Instead, negotiation is required which is the modification and restructuring of interaction that occurs when learners and their interlocutors anticipate, perceive, or experience difficulties in communication. Through negotiation, as interlocutors repeat and rephrase for their communication partners, comprehensibility is achieved. Negotiation leads to greater comprehensibility of input.

Long (1983) agreed with Krashen's input hypothesis and further claimed that modified interaction is needed by learners. The summary of this theory is: 1) interactional modification makes input comprehensible, 2) comprehensible input promotes acquisition. Therefore, 3) interactional modification promotes acquisition. Modified interaction does not always involve linguistic simplification. It may also include elaboration, a slower speech rate, gestures, or the provision of additional contextual cues. Some examples of these conversational modifications are: 1) comprehension checks – efforts by the NSs to ensure that the learner has understood, 2) clarification requests – efforts by the learner to get the NSs to clarify something that has not been understood. These requests from the learner lead to further modifications by the NS, and (3) self-repetition or paraphrase – the NS repeats his or her sentence either partly or in its entirety.

Another factor which could influence interaction is the concept of high input generators (henceforth HIGs) and low input generators (henceforth LIGs) (Seliger, 1983). HIGs are learners who are good at initiating and sustaining interaction, or *generating* input from interlocutors. LIGs are learners who are more passive and do not seek input directed toward them. Seliger (1983) confirms that HIGs progressed faster than LIGs. It seems

reasonable to suggest, in the SA context, HIGs may get more input and interaction directed toward them, which may have a positive effect on their language gains.

In the SA context, interaction is viewed as one of the most significant aspects of language gain. As Churchill and DuFon (2006) note, “Both the comparative studies (AH vs. SA) and the literature on individual differences suggest that the quality of interaction with NSs is of prime importance in the acquisition process” (p. 18).

It is also important to note that appropriate input and interaction are not guaranteed, even though they are considered a crucial element of the SA experience. Wilkinson (1998) reported on American learners of French who participated in an eight-week summer SA program. Based on his results, Wilkinson argues that increased out-of-class interaction in the L2 and linguistic gains are not inevitable in the SA setting as the learners in his study had difficulty finding interlocutors to interact with out-of-class. Barron (2006) also reports that in the SA context, learners have problems finding opportunities to interact with interlocutors. In other words, despite their importance to SA language acquisition, appropriate input and interaction are not guaranteed.

3.3.3 Output in the SA Context

It is easy to imagine the amount of opportunities for output in the SA context is significantly higher than in the AH environment. The importance of output is recognized by SLA researchers in several ways. Firstly, it promotes *noticing*. Ellis (1994) explains that noticing a language form must occur for it to be acquired. Kowal and Swains’ (1994) research revealed that when learners notice a *hole* in their linguistic knowledge because they want to express something, but they do not know how to, they checked their

dictionary or grammar book or asked their peers or educators. Therefore, output is very important to noticing.

Secondly, output is an opportunity for hypothesis testing, which is an important language learning process. Corder (1967) argues that the process of language acquisition requires learners to construct hypotheses about the L2 and then test these hypotheses to build their own L2 knowledge base, the *interlanguage*. The result of this hypothesis testing is often mistakes. These mistakes invite feedback, which helps learners revise their interlanguage system. Learners who avoid taking risks in the L2 in order to avoid making mistakes, may not receive adequate language practice or opportunity to test hypotheses and thereby do not progress in their L2 acquisition (Corder, 1967).

In the SA context, however, Lafford (2004) reports that learners do not stop to focus on gaps in their output. Lafford explains that in the SA context, the purpose of the interaction is the accomplishment of a communicative task. Therefore, in the communicative context of a SA interaction with NSs, the urgency learners feel to get their message across may cause them not to focus as much on grammar. On the other hand, AH learners in the same study monitored and corrected their own output in class. In a typical classroom setting, regardless of the pedagogical focus (structure or meaning based), the expectations of the classroom environment encourage learners to focus on grammar and take risks to improve their control over grammatical structures and vocabulary in addition to expressing and communicating their ideas effectively.

3.4 Achievements as a Result of SA

The following sections focus on the effect of the SA context on language learning, and review the major research findings in the SA context. The SA context, according to the

research findings reviewed in the previous sections is likely to improve learners' language and skills in certain areas such as fluency and pragmatics skills, but leads to fewer improvements in accuracy. In other words, learners tend to make more progress in speaking and pragmatics, but less in grammar.

3.4.1 Progress in Speaking

Speaking in the SA context has been investigated in two areas: oral proficiency and fluency. Oral proficiency has been investigated using the Oral Proficiency Interview (henceforth OPI) or similar interviews. The OPI was designed by the American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Languages (henceforth ACTFL) in 1986. There are ten levels and each level is defined mainly in terms of the tasks that test takers are able to accomplish.

Investigations into oral proficiency report the gain made over the course of one semester or more abroad (Isabelli-Garcia, 2003; Segalowitz & Freed, 2004). Simões (1996) reports an improvement in learners' oral proficiency after only a few weeks abroad. However, the gain was not enough for learners to advance to a higher level on the OPI scale.

Fluency is typically measured by comparing pre-post gain using the OPI scale or other formats, and also comparing the learners' speech in certain other ways. The first area is the change in increase in 1) the rate, and 2) the length (Segalowitz & Freed, 2004). The second area is the change in reduction in the number of 1) pauses, 2) fillers, and 3) dysfluencies and struggles (Freed et al., 2004; Isabelli-Garcia, 2003; Simões, 1996; Woodman, 1999). Not all learners improved their fluency in these studies.

Comparative studies of SA and AH groups have delivered mixed results. Bradley (2003) compares learners of German in two groups: SA and AH. The learners in both

groups performed similarly overall in terms of their rate of speech and number of fillers. The SA group, however, out-performed the AH group in terms of the total number of words and non-filler formulas. Bradly (2003) concludes that the SA group gained a variety of fillers for different functions and when this group encountered linguistically challenging situations they were better able to use formulaic language, and thereby appeared to be more competent than they actually were. A study by Segalowitz and Freed (2004) report similar results as the SA group was found to have greater gains in fluency and in oral proficiency compared to the AH group.

On the other hand, Freed et al. (2004) argue that an immersion (henceforth IM) group in an intensive language program at home gain just as much as a SA group in terms of oral fluency and oral proficiency. Freed compares three learning contexts: 1) AH in formal language classrooms, 2) an intensive all French IM summer program at home, and 3) SA in France. The students in the AH context did not progress in either area measured. The SA group made progress only in fluency. The IM group made the most progress, as a result of speaking and writing much more than the other two groups. Freed et al. (2004) conclude that the learning context does not determine language gain, but the intensity of contact within the context does.

These studies on oral fluency point the way to important future inquiries. They suggest the importance of the intensity and quality of language use and how it plays an important role in shaping progress in fluency.

3.4.2 Progress in Phonology

Phonology was the central focus of L2 learning during the audiolingual era (Ellis, 1994). During that time, there were techniques such as teaching single sounds (i.e.,

segmentals) in minimal pair drills, such as ‘ship’ and ‘sheep’. However, when audiolingualism and behaviorism became unpopular among educators, the focus on pronunciation became minimized and sometimes totally discarded. According to the critical period hypothesis, native-like pronunciation is an unrealistic goal for L2 learners, especially for older learners and this also led to educators spending less time on pronunciation and more time on teaching features that learners might learn more easily, specifically grammar. When communicative language teaching was introduced in the late 1970’s, the teaching of pronunciation was given little focus. When it was taught, the emphasis was on rhythm, stress, and intonation (i.e., suprasegmentals), which affect communication.

SA experience has been found to have an effect on L2 pronunciation ability. Piske, MacKay, and Flege (2001) claim length of exposure to the L2 can lead to pronunciation improvement. The researchers also found that adults who continue to make greater use of their L1 may have stronger accents in their L2. In addition, learners’ ethnic affiliation and sense of identity are also related to how they produce the sounds and rhythms of a L2.

3.4.3 Progress in Grammar

For the investigation of grammar acquisition, a variety of methods are used including oral proficiency interview data, written language samples from essays, learners’ performance on grammar worksheets, and grammaticality judgment tasks (Kinginger, 2009). According to the following investigations, comparative studies of SA and AH groups indicate little evidence that the SA context is more advantageous in acquiring grammar.

The studies in grammar acquisition suggest that grammatical development patterns

are complex, and with each research study focusing on different linguistic features, the results are varied. Longcope (2003) reports that learners of English made gains in fluency but not in grammatical accuracy or syntactic complexity during their time abroad. Torres (2003) reports that the SA context did not seem to be more advantageous than the AH context, but the SA group was found to have developed an advantage over the AH group in discourse and pragmatics. Collentine (2004) concludes that the AH group achieved a greater gain in discrete grammatical and lexical features, but the SA group outperformed the AH group in narrative ability. Collentine's (2004) results indicate that grammar acquisition may not develop as much in the SA context but further research is required to shed light on this issue.

3.4.4 Pragmatics

3.4.4.1 Defining Pragmatics

Pragmatics is summarized by Ellis (1994) as “the study of how language is used in communication... Pragmatics is particularly concerned with appropriateness, both with regard to what is said in a particular context and how it is used” (p. 23).

Hymes (1972) developed the concept of communicative competence, when trying to understand L1 acquisition. Hymes paid attention to the ability to use acquired language appropriately. For this reason, Hymes put emphasis on sociolinguistic competence. Pragmatics is part of sociolinguistic competence. As Byram (1997) points out, Hymes's concept was transferred to the aims and objectives of L1, L2, and foreign language (henceforth FL) communication by language educators. Ellis (1994) claims that learners cannot produce native-like discourse without the linguistic means to do so. In other words, learners with limited English proficiency have difficulty in acquiring and using pragmatic

skills. Ellis suggests that this can be a factor in motivating learners to continue their L2 development.

3.4.4.2 Progress in Pragmatics

The most common type of data collection in this area has been the use of questionnaires. Other methods of data collection include, gathering ethnographic data, for example, recording conversations in a naturalistic context, reading learner journals, and using interviews and field notes. Speech acts, however, have been investigated using role plays, and production questionnaires.

Pragmatic development appears to be an area where SA learners have an advantage over AH learners (Churchill & DuFon, 2006). However, as Ellis (1994) pointed out above, learners with limited L2 proficiency will have difficulty developing their pragmatic skills. Pragmatics research has mainly focused on the areas of routines and speech acts. Routines are one type of formulaic speech. They are units that are totally unanalyzed and which are learnt as wholes. Common routines are ‘I don’t know’, ‘Let’s go’, and ‘Do you understand?’ The speech act is an utterance that performs a locutionary and an illocutionary meaning in communication. For example, ‘I like your dress’ is a speech act concerning a proposition about a person’s dress with the illocutionary force of a compliment.

In terms of productive skills, the use of speech acts has been researched the most, for example, requests by Japanese learners of English (Churchill, 2003), apologies by Japanese learners of English (Kondo, 1997a), and advice giving by Japanese learners of English (Matsumura, 2001). Generally, the use of speech acts becomes more native-like over time (Barron, 2003). Research reveals that productive skills in some speech acts are easier to

acquire than others, probably due to their frequency in daily conversation. For example, greeting and leave-taking are easier to acquire than complimenting (Hoffman-Hicks, 2000). Making appropriate requests is easier to acquire than making offers and refusing them (Barron, 2003).

In terms of productive use of routines, Kondo (1997b) points out routines are easier to acquire than speech acts such as offers and refusals. According to Kondo (1997b), L2 learners generally increase their use of routines, and decrease their use of non-L2 like routines. This enhances the native-like quality of their speech production.

In terms of receptive skills and understanding socio-cultural norms, SA learners have been found to develop their skills over time. For example, in a nine-month study, a SA group initially performed worse than a AH group, but by the end of the program the SA group was found to perform better on giving advice language use (Matsumura, 2001). Kondo (1997b) reports that Japanese learners of English took into account the distance between speakers, power relationships and the severity of offenses in judging the appropriateness of apology strategies.

It is important to note that even though learners make progress in their pragmatic development, their pragmatic behavior remains quite non-native like and they do not quite reach the level of native norms. In terms of speech acts, it is reported that the development of learners' speech acts is quite limited, and L2 learners usually do not reach the level of NS norms (Churchill, 2003). Hoffman-Hicks (2000) and Barron (2003) report that learners even move away from the target norm, noting that this resulted from a lack of awareness of the norm and the inability to control the grammatical forms necessary to conform to the norm. Furthermore, another factor comes into play, as DuFon (2000) points out; often the native norms conflicted with learner personality and/or identity.

3.5 Initial Abilities

It has been reported, for example, by Huebner (1995) that in terms of proficiency level, SA is beneficial for learners at a beginner level. Others draw similar conclusions concerning the role of proficiency level. Brecht and Robinson (1995), and Lapkin, Hart, and Swain (1995) similarly find that lower proficiency learners make greater gains than higher proficiency learners. As learners ascend the learning curve, they need to make greater efforts to improve. Therefore, it seems that the benefits of SA are greater for lower proficiency L2 learners than those who are already highly proficiency before departure. However, Regan (1998) cautions that the relationship between proficiency level and gain needs to be investigated further.

Brecht, Davidson, and Ginsberg (1995) report that grammar and reading pre-achievement scores show significant predictive value for speaking proficiency gain, reading proficiency gain, and listening proficiency gain after SA. This may suggest the importance of the grammar instruction in the early years of instruction, which may result in advances in speaking and listening skills at the upper intermediate and advanced levels.

Chapter 4

Non-Linguistic Variables

4.1. Overview of Chapter 4

Chapter 4 explores the non-linguistic variables which influence language contact and learning outcomes. The present chapter begins by comparing L1 and L2 learners in regard to learner characteristics, learning conditions, age, and considers the critical period hypothesis to highlight the importance of reviewing non-linguistic variables. Next, individual learner differences are summarized. Then, some of the learner attributes which are investigated in the present study are put forward; namely, language anxiety, motivation, and willingness to communicate. Finally, this chapter reviews other non-linguistic variables, such as personality, homesickness and cultural issues as they influence students' learning outcomes in the SA context.

4.2 L1 and L2 Learning

L2 learning differs from L1 acquisition in terms of learner characteristics and learning conditions. The following set of ten questions suggested by Lightbown and Spada (2006) in Table 4.1 can be used to compare L1 and L2 learning. When comparing the columns of L1 by a young child and L2 in the classroom in Table 4.1, the differences in the two are evident. In fact, every learner characteristic is different between them. Moreover, in terms of learning conditions, the only similarity is the modified input.

Table 4.1 *Contexts for Language Learning (Focused on Age related Characteristics and Conditions)*

	L1	L2 (Adolescent)	
	Young child	Class-room	SA
Learner Characteristics			
1. Another language - do they already know at least one language?	—	+	+
2. Cognitive maturity - can they do problem solving, deduction, and memory tasks?	—	+	+
3. Metalinguistic awareness – can they define a word, or state a rule like –s for plural?	—	+	+
4. World knowledge – can they guess what an interlocutor is probably saying?	—	+	+
5. Anxiety about speaking – are they anxious about making mistakes or sounding ‘silly’ when speaking?	—	+	+
Learning Conditions			
6. Freedom to be silent – allowed to be silent in the early stages, or expected to speak from the beginning?	+	—	—
7. Ample time – do they have plenty of time available for learning, plenty of contact with the NSs?	⊕	—	△(not always)
8. Corrective feedback – do they receive CF when they make errors in grammar and pronunciation?	⊖	+	⊖
9. Corrective feedback – do they receive CF when they make errors in meaning, word choice or politeness?	—	+	+
10. Modified input – receive modified input adjusting speed, complexity of grammar and/or vocabulary?	⊕	⊕	⊕

Note. +=usually present; –=usually absent; △=sometimes present and sometimes not. Adapted from *How Languages are Learned* by P. M. Lightbown and N. Spada, 2006, p. 31.

In Table 4.1, SA column is added to show SA learners' characteristics and learning conditions. When comparing the columns of L2 in the classroom and L2 during SA, the only differences are 7) ample time, and 8) (not getting) corrective feedback. They show that even though the learning conditions differ slightly, the learner characteristics are the same. This suggests that SA learners are able to make some improvements in fluency due to their spending more time using the language. However, as some researchers have pointed out, SA learners are not able to make as much improvement in accuracy since they receive little corrective feedback (e.g., Lafford, 2004).

The only similarities between L1 learning and SA learning are 7) ample time, and 8) (not getting) corrective feedback, with all the others points being different. This shows that L1 learning and SA learning are quite different in learner characteristics and learning conditions. In addition, this explains why SA learners make less improvement compared to a child's L1 acquisition.

Furthermore, in terms of 5) anxiety, younger learners are willing to try to use the language even if their proficiency is limited. However, many older learners find it stressful when they are unable to express themselves clearly and correctly. For 6) silence, younger learners are usually allowed to be silent until they are ready to speak. However, older learners are often forced to speak, which can also be a source of anxiety. In addition, SA learners may also face higher anxiety since they often encounter out-of-class authentic interactions.

4.2.1 Age Issues in L2 Learning

The critical period hypothesis and age explain many of the biological differences between L1 and L2 learning. The critical period hypothesis asserts that humans are genetically programmed to acquire certain kinds of knowledge and skills at certain times.

This hypothesis explains how L2 learning, which usually takes place after the critical period concludes, results in a variety of learning outcomes.

Chambers and Trudgill (1980), for instance, explain some of the age-related factors in L2 acquisition. They found that learners who begin learning a L2 after the onset of puberty, and possibly earlier, are unlikely to acquire a native-speaker accent. In addition, learners who begin after the age of around 15 are less likely to develop as much grammatical ability as those who begin before. These findings help to explain why SA learners, even in a natural acquisition context do not have the same improvements in language control as younger learners.

Little attention has been given to age and SA. Brecht et al. (1995) collected data from 658 students studying Russian who were taking part in a four-month program in Russia. Their study included data on age, gender, levels of formal education, major, and information on all prior training in the Russian language. The average age of the participants was 21 years old. Although the vast majority of the students were 21 (75% of the participants), the learners' ages ranged between 17 and 33 years old. Owing to their participation in the four-month program, the researchers concluded that the younger students, relative to the older learners, made the greatest gains in their listening compared to their oral proficiency, reading, and grammar. Thus, even amongst SA students, there is an interaction between age and learning at the skills level.

4.2.2 Affective Filter and Non-Linguistic Variables in the SA Context

The learner characteristics and learning conditions in Table 4.1, together with the age disparity between L1 and L2 learners suggests that L2 learners are influenced by affect and individual learner differences. One of the five hypotheses of Krashen's (1982) monitor model is the affective filter hypothesis, as discussed in Section 3.3.1.1 in Chapter 3.

Krashen explains that some L2 learners have an affective filter. This refers to a barrier that prevents learners from acquiring a L2, even though they are exposed to enough input. Affect refers to feelings, motives, needs, attitudes, and emotional state. Learners who are tense, anxious, or bored may have an affective filter which blocks out the input. This hypothesis is important to understanding a wide range of learning outcomes among L2 learners who are in a similar language learning context. The following sections review various non-linguistic variables and the influence they may have on SA language contact and language gain.

4.3 Individual Learner Differences in L2 Learning

Researchers have identified some individual learner variables which influence L2 learning outcomes. Table 4.2 lists examples of such factors. Most of the non-linguistic variables investigated in the present study are listed in Table 4.2. The following sections focus mainly on the variables that are investigated in the present study.

4.3.1 Anxiety

In the field of psychology, anxiety is defined by Spielberger (1972) as an unpleasant emotional state or cognition which is characterized by tension and worry, and by activation of the automatic nervous system. Spielberger (1983) defines two types of anxiety. *Trait anxiety* is part of individual differences or personality, and has a stable level within a person. *State anxiety* is a temporary tension, aroused at a special occasion such as giving a speech or having an important test.

4.3.1.1 L1 Communication Anxiety as a Part of State Anxiety

Sarason, Sarason and Pierce (1991) talk about three cognitive states in which L1 communication anxiety is aroused: 1) when evaluating a situation as highly difficult or threatening, 2) when evaluating a situation, which is difficult because of a lack of skills, and 3) when evaluating a situation leading to an unhappy result or failure.

Table 4.2 *Factors Listed as Influencing Individual Learner Differences in Language Learning*

Skehan (1989)	Ehrman, Leaver, Oxford (2003)	Lightbown and Spada (2006) in summary
1. Language aptitude	1. Learning styles	1. Intelligence
2. Motivation	2. Learning strategies	2. Aptitude
3. Language learning strategies	3. Affective variables	3. Learning style
4. Cognitive and affective factors:	4. Other major areas:	4. Personality:
a) extroversion/introversion	a) learning aptitude	a) extroversion/introversion
b) risk-taking	b) gender	b) learner anxiety
c) intelligence	c) age	c) willingness to communicate
d) field independence	d) culture	5. Motivation and attitudes
e) anxiety	e) other demographic variables	6. Identity and ethnic group affiliation
		7. Learner beliefs
		8. Age of acquisition and the critical period hypothesis

Note. Adapted from *How Languages are Learned*, by P. M. Lightbown and N. Spada, 2006, pp. 57-67, and *The Study of Second Language Acquisition*, by R. Ellis, 1994, p. 472.

One of the negative characteristics of L1 communication anxiety is that it can form a vicious circle, as shown in Figure 4.1. Because cognitive activities are preoccupied with negative images and results, it is difficult to engage in cognitive activities related to doing tasks (Kondo & Yan, 1995). For instance, worrying about a lack of speech skills, making mistakes, and worrying about listener evaluations, will interfere with smooth cognitive activity related to tasks, and as a result, there is a higher risk of failure. Once anxiety is aroused, performance is negatively influenced. As a result, the listeners' feedback is negative. By cognitively being aware of bad performance, as well as the listeners' negative feedback, anxiety becomes higher.

It is reported that people who are shy tend to make low self evaluations of their own L1 communicative competence (Yashima, 2004). MaCrosky and Baer (1985) also show that willingness to communicate in L2 is related to L1 communication apprehension and self-esteem variables.

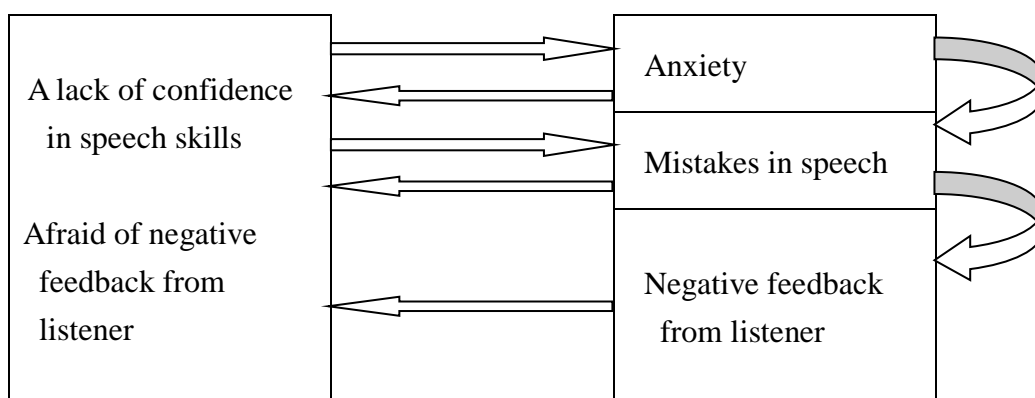


Figure 4.1 Vicious circle of communication anxiety (Kondo & Yan, 1995). Note. Adapted from *Affect and Motivation in Foreign Language Communication*, by T. Yashima, 2004, p. 22.

4.3.1.2 L2 Language Anxiety

According to Gardner and MacIntyre (1993), L2 language anxiety is defined as fear or apprehension occurring when a learner is expected to perform in a L2 or FL. In the present study, this definition of L2 language anxiety is used. The most widely cited explanation for this source of fear or apprehension is the concept of self being at risk, suggested by Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986). They explain that there is no other type of learning in which the concept of self is at risk. Furthermore, they note that when adults with intelligence, social abilities, and confidence cannot express their real self because of inadequate L2 skills, they become silent, worried and panicked.

Bailey (1981) indicates something similar. According to Bailey (1981), L2 learners are faced with the need to protect or enhance their self-esteem. They will accordingly adjust the amount of L2 they use in order to do so: when their self-esteem is highly threatened by L2 use, learners may reduce the amount of L2 they produce in order to protect their self-esteem; when their self-esteem is not threatened by L2 use, learners may feel at ease producing more L2 without fear of damaging their sense of status.

One similarity between communication anxiety and language anxiety is that language anxiety may occur in a similar vicious circle pattern to that of communication anxiety (see Figure 4.1). Bailey (1981) notes that “one cannot identify the causal variable. Does anxiety impair students’ oral fluency, or do they become anxious in oral production tasks because their speech skills are low?” (p. 68).

4.3.1.3 L2 Language Anxiety in Classroom Research

Various researchers have explained why language anxiety in L2 learning is an important issue. According to Young (1999), “you are asking them to reveal themselves in

a way which is very threatening because when they don't know the language very well..., they are unsure of what kind of expression they are giving" (p. 5).

Many studies report language avoidance. Horwits et al. (1986) note "the more anxious student tends to avoid attempting difficult or personal messages in the target language" (p. 126). Young (1991), in a review of the literature on L2 anxiety, lists various manifestations of anxiety, such as "avoidance of L2 use opportunities, competitiveness with others, 'freezing up' during L2 performance, fidgeting, avoiding eye contact, coming to class unprepared, and using short-answer responses" (p. 430).

Table 4.3 *Summary of the Manifestation of Language Anxiety*

Higher Levels of Anxiety	Lower Levels of Anxiety
<u>Reduction in L2 use</u>	Able to learn better
<u>Avoidance of L2 use opportunities</u>	Interacting more socially with target language speakers
Using short-answer responses	More willing to volunteer answers in class
Competitiveness with others	
Freezing up during L2 performance	
Fidgeting	
Avoiding attempts at difficult or personal messages in the target language	
Avoiding eye contact	
Coming to class unprepared	

MacIntyre and Gardner (1991) note that learners with lower levels of anxiety are able to learn better, are more willing to volunteer answers in class, and interact more socially with target language speakers. Ganschow and Sparks (1996) also found that learners with lower levels of anxiety performed better than those with higher levels of anxiety. Therefore, anxiety is manifested most in learners' reduction of their L2 use and their avoidance of L2 use opportunities. Table 4.3 shows a summary of the manifestation of language anxiety. The underlined manifestations seem especially serious in the SA context.

4.3.1.4 L2 Language Anxiety in the SA Context

There are not many studies done on L2 language anxiety in the SA context. A study by Allen (2002) reports that language anxiety decreased during SA. Allen (2002) also suggests that SA learners experience differing degrees of language anxiety depending on the context of their interaction. Allen reports that for the first two weeks of a six-week program, learners' anxiety levels remained high especially during complex interactions which involved cultural differences, whereas their anxiety levels decreased for controlled short interactions, such as service encounters.

Pellegrino (2005) also explains that L2 learners' level of anxiety changes depending on the interlocutors. The first example provided by the researcher is a L2 learner interacting with teens. Pellegrino explains "When the interlocutors are...closer to the age of the learner, some learners express even greater concern for their self-presentation, fearing to look like a fool before teenagers and young adults" (p. 75).

The second example is a L2 learner interacting with small children (Pellegrino, 2005). The researcher notes "While most learners report greater ease when speaking with small children, learners' self-presentation may become even more greatly threatened if they

perceive language difficulties so significant as to affect this hierarchical relationship” (p.75).

Finally, there is an interesting tactic reported by L2 learners to control language anxiety, *childishness*. Pellegrino (2005) reports that childishness prevents greater fear, since people who are childish cannot be expected to know or understand mature topics of conversation. Bailey (1983) also cites the adoption of childishness in the language classroom to control apprehension.

4.3.2 Motivation

As briefly noted in Chapter 1, there are two main frameworks for L2 motivation research. Within a more process-oriented perspective, which places importance on the interaction between motivation and the social environment, there is the integrative motivation (Gardner, 1985) framework, which is part of the socio-educational model (Gardner & MacIntyre, 1992). The second framework focuses on the ideal L2 self as motivation (Dörnyei, 2005). As the present study looks into the process of learner integration into a new social SA environment, the integrative model is used to refer to motivation in the present study.

Integrative motivation (Gardner, 2001) reflects a positive affective disposition toward the L2 community as well as a desire to interact and identify with its members. The concept of integrative motivation has been through some changes and the most recent version (Gardner, 2001) contains the following points: “a) Second language acquisition refers to the development of near-native-like language skills, and this takes time, effort, and persistence; b) Such a level of language development requires identification with the second language community” (p. 2).

Other motivation constructs include instrumental motivation (Gardner & MacIntyre, 1991), which relates to the motivation to learn a L2 for personal gain, such as for job hunting or furthering a career. Resultative motivation (Hermann, 1980; Savignon, 1972; Strong, 1984) is another motivation framework which comes into play when learners succeed or fail in L2 acquisition and feel more or less motivated to learn. In other words, the degree of motivation may increase or decrease as a result of learning.

4.3.2.1 Motivation in the SA Context

In the SA context, research has been conducted on motivation and especially integrative motivation. The motivation research in the SA context can be divided into two streams: 1) pre-departure motivation and its effect on the SA experience (e.g. Campbell, 1996; Isabelli-Garcia, 2006; Allen, 2002; Hoffman-Hicks, 2000; Wilkinson, 1998), and 2) time abroad and its effect on learner motivation (e.g. Simões, 1996; Calvin, 1999). This is also referred to as resultative motivation (Hermann, 1980; Savignon, 1972; Strong, 1984), as previously mentioned.

In terms of pre-departure motivation positively influencing learners' SA experience, Campbell (1996) reports that students who were already highly motivated at the beginning of their SA experience, were able to integrate into the host culture after only a short summer session. Attitude is sometimes included in motivation research. Isabelli-Garcia (2006) points out that highly motivated learners often had positive attitudes towards the target language and community, and developed a wider *social network* referring to informal relationships, which triggered progress in their L2 proficiency. As for previous language learning experience, Allen (2002) reports that more than two years of French study prior to SA resulted in higher integrative motivation, compared with those with less than this amount of French language learning experience.

High integrative motivation before SA experience does not guarantee successful while-abroad interaction. For instance, it has been observed that even though some learners report having high integrative motivation before their SA experience, they showed disappointment at the end of their time abroad that they had not met and developed friendships with many NSs while abroad (Wilkinson, 1998). Hoffman-Hicks (2000) reports that some learners, even after a year aboard, did not develop a positive attitude towards the host community.

As for the time spent abroad and its effect on learner motivation, or resultative motivation, Simões (1996) reports that a mere five-week-abroad experience resulted in higher levels of self confidence and higher motivation in learners. Unmodified input is an important and unique aspect of the SA context, and unmodified input has been reported to have a positive effect on motivation. Calvin (1999) notes that gains in proficiency, fluency and accuracy may be related to a combination of modified input (e.g., foreigner talk) and unmodified input (e.g., interaction with NSs) from individual interlocutors or groups. The study reports that communication with the native community who did not use foreigner talk increased learner confidence and motivation.

4.3.3 Willingness to Communicate

The concept of willingness to communicate was first introduced to help understand L1 communication by McCroskey and Baer (1985). When it was first conceptualized by McCroskey and Baer, it included attributes such as communication apprehension, perceived communication competence, introversion-extraversion, and self-esteem. The two distinct characteristics of L1 willingness to communicate were its' focus on personality and on speaking.

MacIntyre, et al. (1998) conceptualized L2 willingness to communicate. Their L2 willingness to communicate model tries to integrate approaches from psychology, linguistics, and communication to SLA research, and provides an understanding of the linguistic, communicative, and social psychological variables which might have an influence on L2 learners' willingness to communicate.

Their L2 willingness to communicate model is an inclusive one, which consists of six layers, totaling 12 variables (MacIntyre et al., 1998): 1) layer I: communication behavior, 2) layer II: willingness to communicate, 3) layer III: situated antecedents of communication, 4) layer IV: motivational propensities, 5) layer V: the affective and cognitive context, and 6) layer VI: the societal and individual context.

The L2 willingness to communicate model that they conceptualize is independent of L1: "It is highly unlikely that willingness to communicate in the second language (L2) is a simple manifestation of willingness to communicate in the L1." (MacIntyre et al., 1998, p. 546). Charos (1994) reports a negative correlation between L1 and L2 willingness to communicate. However, as noted earlier, some variables within the willingness to communicate construct, such as language anxiety have been reported to have a significant relationship with both the L1 and L2 (McCroskey & Baer, 1985).

4.3.3.1 L2 Willingness to Communicate in the SA Context

Yashima et al. (2004) reports that the learners who scored higher on a L2 willingness to communicate measure before departure spent more time communicating with their host families. A SA learner's willingness to communicate was crucial in their ability to interact with NSs. What is interesting is that willingness to communicate did not have any correlation with language proficiency. However, it correlated with the learners' self-perceived communicative competence in English. Willingness to communicate did not

seem to be affected by the length of stay or previous SA experience, but rather, how learners perceived their ability to communicate in the L2 culture. Yashima (2009) suggests that SA experience increased the number of things the learner wished to communicate to the world, which is one of the four parts of international posture¹.

4.4 Other Non-Linguistic Variables Related to SA Language Learning

There are other non-linguistic variables which influence the degree to which learners use the L2 language. They include personality, homesickness, intercultural adaptation, and cultural communication styles, such as whether they are in a high or low context culture, and self disclosure.

4.4.1 Personality

4.4.1.1 Introversion

Different disciplines use different terms for shyness. For instance, *introversion* is the term used to describe shyness in the field of SLA, and is usually investigated through individual learner differences (Ellis, 1994). Trait anxiety refers to shyness in the field of psychology (Spielberger, 1972), as previously noted in Section 4.3.1. *L1 communication*

¹ International posture developed by Yashima (2009) is an important theoretical construct that takes into account the Japanese context. The International posture measure is a means of explaining how learners who lack meaningful direct contact with speakers of a target language can manage to relate to a L2 community. International posture consists of 4 parts: (1) intergroup approach-avoidance tendency; (2) interest in international vacation or activities; (3) interest in international news; and (4) having things to communicate to the world.

anxiety refers to shyness in communication studies, and it can refer to both trait and/or state anxiety (Sarason, Sarason and Pierce, 1991).

Research findings report Japanese people to be shy. Klopff (1984) compared L1 communication anxiety using the Personal Report of Communication Anxiety (PRCA) inventory. The study compared university students in seven countries; America, Australia, Korea, China, the Philippines, Micronesia, and Japan. Among the students surveyed, when communicating in their L1, Japanese participants had the highest communication anxiety. Moreover, Iwasaki, Eysenck and Eysenck (1977) report that Japanese people are more introverted than British people. According to SLA research, Asian learners, including Japanese learners, engage in less communication in the language classroom (Sato, 1982; Song, 1997). These results show that Japanese people have a tendency to be less proactive and more passive in L1 communication situations with unfamiliar interlocutors. The implication of this shyness in study abroad settings would naturally be difficulties in L2 communication.

4.4.1.2 The Influence of Personality in the SA Context

DeKeyser (1986) demonstrated that personality, which is part of individual differences, may influence the way in which learners seek out-of-class interaction. He also claims that during SA, personality may influence the impact of out-of-class interaction on language learning.

Kondo (1981) summarized the types of people who more easily adapt to a new environment, and the types of people who have more difficult adaptation responses. Table 4.4 is a summary of Kondo's findings. The implication for L2 learning is that, in terms of engaging in language interaction, some of the personality traits will interfere. For example,

independent and patient learners will probably adjust more easily compared to dependent and stubborn people in a home stay environment.

Table 4.4 *Personality Differences and Adaptation (Kondo, 1981)*

Easier to Adapt to a New Environment		More Difficult to Adapt to a New Environment	
Extrovert	Independent	Introvert	Not confident
Proactive	Creative	Passive	Dogmatic
Quick	Patient	Dependent	Stubborn
Flexible		Low self esteem	

4.4.2 Homesickness

4.4.2.1 Defining Homesickness and Models of Homesickness

Homesickness is generally understood to be the feeling of missing home. In the field of psychology, homesickness studies have focused on two elements: “attentional focus on home-related ruminative activity” and “symptoms which accompany the experience” (Fisher, 1989, p. xiii). Symptoms of homesickness include depression, withdrawal, absent-mindedness, anxiety and phobic avoidance accompanied by strong ruminative activity centered on home (Fisher, 1989). The main reason for experiencing homesickness is that moving into a new environment creates stress and this stress creates the need for mental *escapism* to ease the pain, which often means thinking of home (Fisher, 1989). In the present study, homesickness is defined more broadly as uneasy feelings derived from missing family and friends, as well as familiar activities, food, and language at home.

There are four main theoretical bases for homesickness that are used to investigate interview responses in Chapter 7. The first is the loss model proposed by Bowlby (1999). This is explained as being similar to when an infant is deprived of visual contact with its mother. The infant will show signs of anxiety, panic and searching behavior. The loss model supposes the homesick person to be temporarily bereaved, suffering acute anxiety and panic because of loss of direct contact with home and family. The predominant distress symptom is anxiety, and preoccupation with thoughts of home is a characteristic.

The second model is the interruption theory proposed by Mandler (1975). This theory also predicts raised anxiety and preoccupation with thoughts of home but for different reasons. The interruption theory assumes that the interruption of on-going activity (i.e., life in the home country) creates tension, and this tension creates irritation and even anxiety if a substitute activity cannot be found.

The third model is the control theory proposed by Fisher (1986). Fisher explains that “the transition from a familiar to a new environment results in a period of loss of control. A person who is skilled at dealing with the demands of his or her life prior to transition suddenly becomes helpless in a new location” (Fisher, 1986, xiv).

The fourth model is the transition theory proposed by Wapner, Kaplan and Ciottone (1981). This model contends that adapting to a new role results in a period of anxiety. For example, a person who moves from home to college assumes the role of a college student as compared with their role at home as a son, daughter or student.

4.4.2.2 Homesickness in the SA Context

Little has been reported about homesickness in the SA context, as noted in Section 1.2.3.4 in Chapter 1. In fact, when using two search keywords, *homesickness* and *study abroad*, only three publications were found through the online Education Resources

Information Center (ERIC) from 1990 to 2011, of which only two were relevant to the present study. First, Coleman and Chafer (2010) report on a study of UK graduate students in Senegal, West Africa, who were learning French. Their report shows a correlation between initial homesickness and use of internet communications to home. However, this report does not mention if the use of internet communications to home triggers homesickness, or if students with homesickness contact home to possibly lower their level of homesickness. In a study based on qualitative data, Yen and Steven (2004) report on five Taiwanese university students in the US. The interview data revealed some problems they faced, including a language barrier, racial discrimination, and homesickness.

By using two keywords *homesickness* and *language* in combination, 19 academic research publications relating to the SA context were found. Firstly, some of the studies note the relationship to homesickness. Kwon (2009) reports, by randomly choosing 165 international undergraduate students in the US, there are no significant differences in feelings of isolation, homesickness and loneliness between different ethnic groups. However, more female than male international students experienced homesickness. This is useful for administrators and educators to know in dealing with female SA participants. Ayano (2006) reports that Japanese university students in Britain suffered severely from homesickness, and that the homesickness levels remained very high throughout the SA year. Ayano also reports that the physical distance from home and the degree of difference and unfamiliarity in a host town are correlated with the degree of homesickness. This report may indicate that Japanese learners choosing English speaking countries as SA destinations could generally have a higher risk of experiencing homesickness than if they went to an Asian country.

There are more positive views about homesickness. For instance, Ying and Han (2008) studied a total of 155 Taiwanese students in different universities in the US, and

their statistical analysis showed that students on campuses with fewer Taiwanese students formed more friendships with NSs and developed greater English competence by the second semester than those on campuses with more Taiwanese students. Furthermore, homesickness, interaction with NSs, and English competence in the second semester were associated with adjustment in the third semester among students at schools with a relatively low density of Taiwanese students. The significant point here is that homesickness was found to be one of the three variables relating to adjustment later.

Finally, Tavakoli et al. (2009) report on various techniques to overcome while-abroad homesickness and acculturative stress, meaning stress felt adjusting to a new culture. In the study, stress management techniques were taught to 118 international students in the US. One group did group assertiveness training, another group did private expressive writing, and a third group did both. It is reported that group assertiveness training was rated positively by students and led to lower negative affect, whereas expressive writing was less well received and led to higher homesickness and fear, but also to higher positive affect. The combined group was unaffected, the reason given being that the two types of training negated each other.

4.4.3 Intercultural Adaptation

One of the reasons for taking the process of intercultural adaptation into consideration is that it shows that a SA learner in a certain stage of the adaptation process is likely to feel negative or even hostile toward the host culture and its people. The assumption here is that when L2 learners are in such a stage, they are likely to reduce their L2 communication. On the other hand, SA learners in a more upbeat stage are more likely to have positive attitudes and feelings toward the host culture and its people (Luken, 1978), resulting in an increase in interaction.

4.4.3.1 Ethnocentrism

Ethnocentrism is a psychological state which influences how close a person feels toward interlocutors from different cultures. Gudykunst (1991) defines ethnocentrism as the tendency to judge and interpret others' actions by using one's own cultural norms. In other words, Gudykunst points out that everyone is to some extent ethnocentric and the degree can be shown on a continuum.

Luken (1978) listed the behavior of those with a strong degree of ethnocentrism. As examples of strong ethnocentrism, Luken listed the judging other groups negatively, acting without sensitivity for different groups, avoiding contact with the different groups, and showing hostility toward different groups.

Lee (2002) investigated the ethnocentrism of Japanese people in relation to English learning motivation and English proficiency. Japanese people with strong ethnocentrism had low motivation to learn English, and their English proficiency was also low. Moreover, Lee reported that Japanese SA learners with strong ethnocentrism were negative minded toward the host culture, and this negativity lowered the amount of interaction with interlocutors that they undertook.

4.4.3.2 The Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity and SA

Bennett (1993) devised the developmental model of intercultural sensitivity (DMIS), which describes the six developmental stages of intercultural sensitivity and seeks to explain the behavioral shift from ethnocentrism towards ethnorelativism, as shown in Figure 4.2. Ethnorelativism is the phase after ethnocentrism in the process of intercultural adaptation. Conscientious learners move into this phase by becoming aware of other cultures.

Development of Intercultural Sensitivity

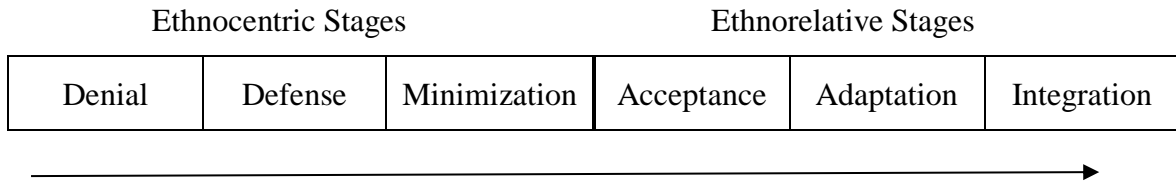


Figure 4.2 The developmental model of intercultural sensitivity (DMIS) (Bennett, 1993).
Note. Adapted from *Developing intercultural sensitivity*, by J. M. Bennett and M. J. Bennett, 1993, in D. Landis, J. M. Bennett and M. J. Bennett (Eds.), *Handbook of Intercultural Training*, p. 153.

The DMIS was created by observing people in intercultural situations (Bennett, 1993). A summary of the DMIS is as follows:

In general, the ethnocentric stages can be seen as ways of avoiding cultural difference, either by denying its existence, by raising defenses against it, or by minimizing its importance. The ethnorelative stages are ways of seeking cultural difference, either by accepting its importance, by adapting one’s perspective to take it into account, or by integrating the whole concept into a definition of identity.”
 (Bennett, 2004, p. 153)

Paige (1993) points out the relevance of the DMIS model to the SA learner experience by hypothesizing “the more ethnocentric the sojourner, the more psychologically intense the experience will be” (p. 5). Paige goes on to explain that learners abroad in the ethnocentric stages of *denial*, *defense* and *minimization* can be expected to have a difficult time adjusting to a new environment. They are likely to view their host cultures as inferior and their own as superior. “These attitudes are likely to

produce a negative response on the part of their host, and the stage will have been set for difficult intercultural encounters” (p. 6). This negative response will affect the amount of L2 contact and the student will be likely to withdraw from interacting positively with people in the new environment.

Although not all learners will develop their intercultural sensitivity to the ethnorelative stages, the students who do reach such stages will show greater interest in other cultures and people. Therefore, they are likely to have more language exchanges.

4.4.4 Cultural Communication Styles

4.4.4.1 High Context Culture to Low Context Culture and Language Contact

Hall (1976) introduced the concepts of high context cultures and low context cultures. In high context cultures a lot of information is contained within the communicative context. Therefore, information is often not verbalized and clarified, but rather can be understood by people just by being exposed to the context of the situation. According to Hall, Japan is an example of a high context culture. In contrast, since there is a tendency to verbalize and act out information in North America, it is an example of a low context culture. These concepts help to explain some of the reasons why learners from high context cultures become tired from the volume of verbal communication in low context cultural environments. Furthermore, learners from high context cultures may also avoid directly dealing with interpersonal issues, such as with their homestay family, and instead endure a difficult situation in a low context cultural environment.

Some researchers claim that the ways that parents raise their children show patterns of behaviors based on what they are in a high or low context culture (Azuma, 1994). For instance, in a high context culture, such as Japan, when children hint of a feeling or desire, their parents guess what the children want, and support them right away. Therefore,

children do not need to verbalize every request they have toward their parents. Thus, people raised in high context cultures are not trained to verbalize everything, even in their L1. This indicates that some Japanese SA learners may have difficulties in adjusting to interactions in a L2 in a low context culture.

4.4.4.2 Self Disclosure and Language Contact

Knowing which topics are regarded as appropriate and friendly is crucial in socializing and building relationships with one's host family and other host students. Barnlund (1979) compared North Americans and Japanese people and introduced an interesting hypothesis about self disclosure, which could explain the possible difficulties arising from a lack of knowledge on suitable topics. Barnlund distinguished between the "private self" and the "public self" and reported that the Japanese public self is found to be much smaller than the North American one, as shown in Figure 4.2. According to Barnlund, when North Americans and Japanese people meet for the first time, North Americans tend to talk about themselves and their thoughts more than Japanese people do. Japanese people tend to be more formal and talk about superficial matters.

Barnlund (1979) also characterized Japanese people's speech style as more formal and more serious compared to North Americans. Therefore, Japanese learners in North America could be misinterpreted to be unfriendly and cold.

The criticisms of such comparative studies are, for instance, that neither North America nor North Americans are culturally homogeneous. That said, it is helpful for educators and SA learners to become aware of how self disclosure tendencies differ depending on culture.

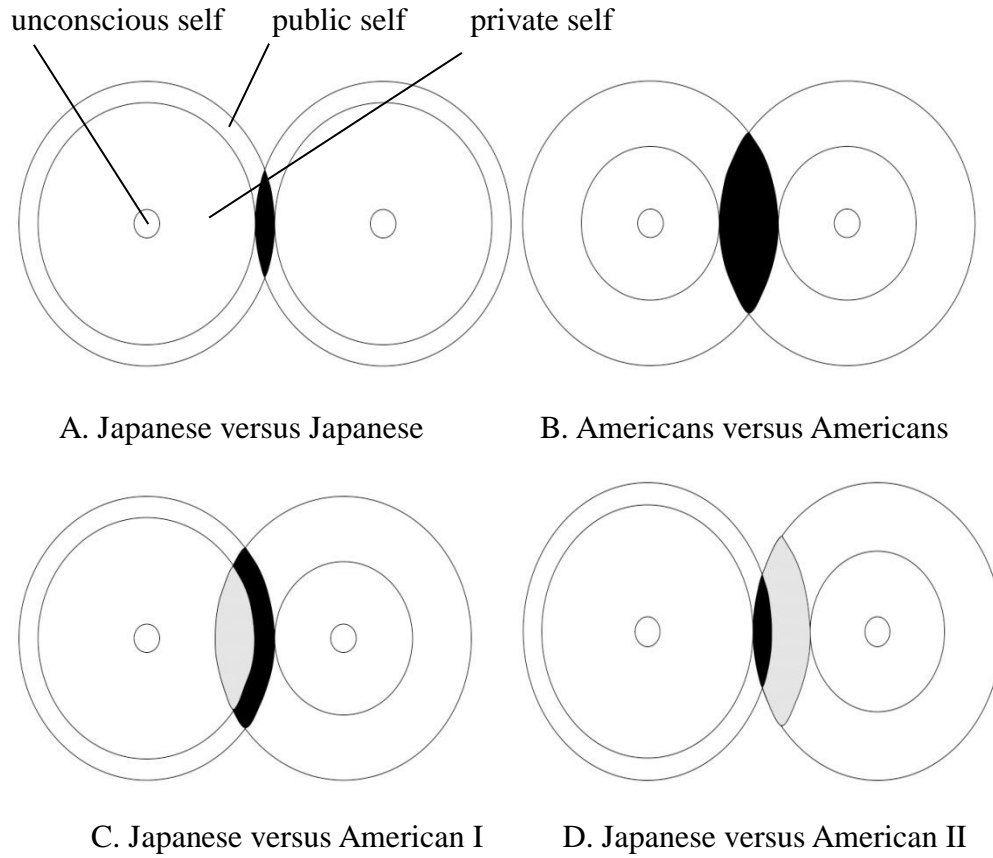


Figure 4.3 Private self and public self. Note. Adapted from *Public and Private Self in Japan and the United States*, by C. Barnlund, 1979, pp. 41-47.

Chapter 5

Method

5.1 Overview of Chapter 5

In Chapter 5, the method of the present research will be elucidated, including participants, the data collection procedure, the measurements used for collecting the QUAN data, the types of QUAL data collected, and the analysis procedure.

Three research questions were generated in the present study, and were presented previously in Chapter 1: 1) research question one concerning both linguistic and non-linguistic outcomes, 2) research question two concerning associating variables for post-return English proficiency test and while-abroad language contact, and 3) research question three concerning QUAL inquiries into the variables identified by research question two. Each of the three main research questions consists of multiple sub research questions. There are 14 sub research questions in total (see pages 7 to 10 in Chapter 1 for the 14 sub research questions).

5.2 Participants

Participants in this study were 25 (24 females and 1 male) Japanese second-year students from a private university in Tokyo, between the ages of 19 to 20. All participants were airline hospitality majors, in the college of business management. They participated in a 15-week SA program at a private university in British Columbia, Canada, as one cohort. An imbalance in the ratio of female and male participants was inevitable since this cohort consisted of a fixed number of 24 females and 1 male student. For this cohort, this

15-week SA was compulsory for their major at their home institution. Many participants aimed to obtain a job in the airline industry. Improving their TOEIC test score through their university English education and through SA abroad experience was a goal for many of them. According to their English placement results at the time of their entry into the university, they were at an intermediate level of English.

As for their English courses taken at the university level prior to departure, in the first year, all participants had six hours of English per week for 30 weeks as required English courses. In their English classrooms, the participants mainly studied four skills; listening, speaking, reading and writing. In their second year, all participants had four and a half hours of English per week for 15 weeks prior to departure. In their English classrooms, the participants studied TOEIC test skills and airline communication as required English courses. The airline communication course was offered only for this particular cohort, to prepare them for their time in the host country.

5.2.1 Pre-Departure Orientations

Prior to departure, all participants participated in four pre-departure orientations. Each orientation was 90 minutes: 1) stress management orientation, 2) culture shock orientation, 3) crisis management orientation, and 4) emergency orientation. These orientations were provided by the home university to prepare all SA students for their upcoming SA experiences. The main focuses were the issues of intercultural adaptation, well-being, and the safety of participants. Having to attend four orientations, the participants may be considered to have been very well prepared and oriented for the upcoming SA experiences. Indeed, the amount and the variety of information given to the participants by the home university may have been more than usual when compared to SA

participants at other home universities. Each orientation was recorded and studied under approval from the organizers and the faculty running them.

5.2.2 SA Program Contents and English Courses at Host University

For 15 weeks in the host country, Canada, participants studied in a hybrid SA program, meaning they took two intensive English language courses; an English language course, and a content-based course which were designed for them. As for the English language course, participants had 15 hours of English per week for 15 weeks. As for the content-based course, participants had 10 hours of English instruction based on tourism for 15 weeks. The amount of English instruction the participants received while abroad may be considered normal when compared to other hybrid SA programs. In addition, participants engaged in activities planned by the international office of the hosting university almost every weekend. These activities included, for instance, horseback riding and a Halloween party, led by faculty from the host university.

5.2.3 Homestay

Each participant stayed with a homestay family for 15 weeks near the host university. Most of them commuted using the public bus system. A few participants lived within walking distance, and a few others were given rides by the host family members. Breakfast and dinner were provided by the homestay family, meaning participants socialized over meals with the homestay family. Some host families frequently took participants on outings and shopping trips. In other words, the degree of the intensity of socialization varied between homestay families.

5.2.4 Research Approval

This data collection procedure was authorized by the private university's research ethics committee where participants were enrolled, and followed the procedures required by the committee. Firstly, the participants were notified about the purposes of the study, the data collection, and the procedure. Secondly, provided they wished to participate, they signed two forms of informed consent: 1) to participate in this research and permit all of the data to be used for academic publications and presentations (see Appendix A) and 2) to permit the interviews to be recorded (see Appendix B). All participants agreed to participate in this present study.

5.3 Data Collection Procedure

The present study was longitudinal, with data collected at three separate times spread over seven months as shown in Tables 5.1, 5.2, and 5.3. Pre-departure data were collected around five weeks before departure. The reason for this was that participants had a one-month summer break prior to departure. Therefore, the only time available for data collection was five weeks before departure. However, participants were attending four pre-departure orientations before the summer, and were enrolled in the airline communication course offered as a SA preparation course before the summer. Indeed, it is safe to note that the participants were in the pre-departure state already before the summer break. While-abroad data were collected around six weeks into the SA period. Post-return data were collected around six weeks after they came back from SA. Post-return data collection had a similar constraint of timing. The participants went into winter break for one month after they returned. Therefore, post-return data were collected after the winter

break. However, participants had a post-return orientation after the winter break, and they were still in the post-return mode at the time of post-return data collection.

Table 5.1 *Pre-Departure Data (five weeks before departure)*

QUAN	English proficiency test
	Pretest version of the language contact profile
	Willingness to communicate questionnaire
	Language anxiety questionnaire
	Motivation questionnaire
	Self-perceived English skills
QUAL	Interview
	Observation of pre-departure orientations (four 90. min. sessions)

Table 5.2 *While-Abroad Data (six weeks after arrival)*

QUAN	Posttest version of the language contact profile
	Homesickness questionnaire
QUAL	Interview
	Open-ended written questions on homestay experiences
	Observation of weekend activities (two full days)

Table 5.3 *Post-Return Data (six weeks after returning)*

QUAN	English proficiency test
	Willingness to communicate questionnaire
	Language anxiety questionnaire
	Motivation questionnaire
	Self-perceived English skills
QUAL	Interview
	Open-ended written questions on overall study abroad experiences

5.4 Measurements Used for QUAN Data

This study attempted to measure both linguistic and non-linguistic aspects of language learning. For this purpose, multiple measurement tools were employed. The following sections summarize the measurement instruments listed in Tables 5.1, 5.2, and 5.3.

5.4.1 Measurement of English Proficiency

To measure English language proficiency, the Computerized Assessment System of English Communication (henceforth CASEC) by the Japan Institute of Educational Measurement (2009) was used. CASEC is a computer adaptive test (CAT) and measures 1) knowledge of vocabulary, 2) knowledge of phrasal expression, 3) listening ability (understanding of main idea), and 4) listening ability (dictation). The test was administered twice; at pre-departure and post-return.

5.4.2 Measurement of Willingness to Communicate

Willingness to communicate model attempts to describe, explain, and predict L2 communication by considering both state and trait variables, for instance, self-confidence, personality, and interpersonal motivation (MacIntyre et al., 1998). In this willingness to communicate model, a goal of L2 and foreign language learning and instruction is considered as better communication between individuals. In this conceptual model, L2 proficiency is considered as a means to achieve the primary communicative goals, but not a primary goal itself. In other words, the model emphasizes how willing learners are to communicate using L2.

To measure willingness to communicate, some of the question items developed by Yashima (2004, 2009) based on the L2 willingness to communicate model (MacIntyre et al., 1998) were used. For the present study, the questionnaire with eight items (see Appendix C) was administered twice; at pre-departure and post-return (see Appendix M for a sample response by a learner at pre-departure. See Appendix O for a sample response by a learner at post-return).

5.4.3 Measurement of Motivation

Gardner (1995), in defining motivation, claims that four elements must be present for a learner to be considered motivated: a goal, desire to achieve the goal, positive attitudes, and effort. They are referred to as affective variables (Gardner, 1995). The questionnaire, therefore, in the present study asked questions related to these affective variables, in addition to questions concerning integrative motivation (Gardner, 1985), meaning the degree of desire to integrate into the host culture. This questionnaire (see Appendix D) was administered twice; at pre-departure and post-return (see Appendix M for a sample response by a learner at pre-departure. See Appendix O for a sample response by a learner at post-return).

5.4.4 Measurement of Language Anxiety

Gardner and MacIntyre (1993a) suggest that motivation affects anxiety, and anxiety affects motivation. MacIntyre and Gardner (2002) also introduce other views. “In some formulations, anxiety is an antecedent to motivation and in others a product of proficiency” (p. 64). Many studies, however, report similar symptoms of language anxiety including language avoidance (e.g., Young, 1999; Horwits et al., 1986).

To measure language anxiety, the present study took into consideration the question items from the foreign language classroom anxiety scale developed by Horwits et al. (1986) and personal report of communication anxiety questionnaire (PRCA) developed by McCroskey (1977), and created a questionnaire consisting of four question items. The questionnaire (see Appendix E) was administered two times; at pre-departure and post-return (see Appendix M for a sample response by a learner at pre-departure. See Appendix O for a sample response by a learner at post-return).

5.4.5 Measurement of Homesickness

To measure homesickness, the Dundee Relocation Inventory (henceforth DRI) (Fisher, 1989) was used. This inventory is one of the most well-known inventories, and has over 100 questions for researchers to choose from and create questionnaires which meet the needs of the researchers. The present study used 20 question items from this inventory including two filler (dummy) items (see Appendix F. This Appendix does not include the two filler items). The questionnaire was administered once at while-abroad (see Appendix N for a sample response by a learner. This Appendix includes the two filler items).

5.4.6 Measurement of Pretest Version and Posttest Version of the Language Contact Profile

To understand participants' language learning history and their language contact at while-abroad, the language contact profile was used. The language contact profile consists of two sets of questionnaires developed by Freed et al. (2004). They are a pretest version of the language contact profile, and a posttest version of the language contact profile. The aims of these questionnaires are to gather research participants' information, regarding

demographics, language learning history, language contact with native speakers, and use of language outside of the classrooms.

For the present study, the pretest version of the language contact profile questionnaire (see Appendix G) was administered at pre-departure (see Appendix M for a sample response by a learner). The posttest version of the language contact profile (see Appendix H) was administered at while-abroad (see Appendix N for a sample response by a learner).

5.5 QUAL Data

The collection of qualitative data included the results of open-ended questions, pre-departure and while-abroad interviews, short-written answers collected multiple times, and ethnographic field notes taken on multiple occasions.

5.5.1 Interview, Written Response, and Observation

At pre-departure and while-abroad, all learners were interviewed for approximately 20 to 30 minutes each. During pre-departure interviews, learners were asked, for example, about what they were going to do in order to improve their L2 skills while-abroad, any worries about life with their homestay family, and about their anticipation of homesickness (see Appendix I for pre-departure interview prompts). During while-abroad interviews, learners were asked, for example, about what they were actually doing to improve their L2 skills, about their life with their host family, and how they were coping with homesickness if they were suffering at all (see Appendix J for while-abroad interview prompts).

At while-abroad and post-return, all learners responded to open-ended short answer written questions about their English use, homestay experience, and the highlight of their

time abroad (see Appendix K for written questions at while-abroad. See Appendix N for a sample student response at while-abroad. See Appendix L for written questions at post-return. See Appendix O for a sample student response at post-return). In addition, learners were observed at multiple occasions, for instance at four pre-departure orientations which took place at the home university, and at while-abroad in Canada during weekend activities.

5.6 Analysis

5.6.1 Methodologies for QUAN Data Analysis

5.6.1.1 Assumptions of Parametric Data

For the QUAN data analysis, SPSS for Windows version 19.0 (1988) was used. Before the main statistical analysis, the data went through a screening process (Dörnyei, 2010) as follows; checking for accuracy, dealing with missing data, reversing scores of negatively worded items, and coding the results to allow the statistical analyses. In addition, to ensure that the data can be analyzed using parametric tests (Tabachnick, 2007), it was ensured that the data was normally distributed and had homogeneity of variance. All of the assumptions were met, and the data were analyzed using parametric tests.

5.6.1.2 Parametric Analysis Used

Specifically for research question one concerning linguistic and non-linguistic outcomes, *t-test* was used. This analysis allows a comparison between two sets of data from the same people, often before and after an intervention (Field, 2009). For the present study, this analysis was used to see a statistically significant difference in, for instance, pre-departure and post-return English proficiency scores.

For research question two concerning correlating variables for post-return English proficiency score and while-abroad language contact, *correlation analysis* was used. Correlation analysis can find associations among variables and statistically significant relationships (Field, 2009). For the present study, for instance, post-return proficiency score was analyzed for correlation with willingness to communicate at while-abroad.

5.6.2 Methodologies for QUAL Data Analysis

QUAL data included short written-answers and interviews. An ethnographic method was used, and field notes were collected from time to time. Interview prompts were semi-controlled type (Saijo, 2007), meaning prompts were carefully chosen prior to interviews, to be sure to draw the necessary information from the participants. At the same time, employing grounded theory approach (Strauss, 1987) partially, meaning the interview prompts were open enough to allow new ideas to emerge in the participants' responses.

One secondary purpose of the present study was using QUAL data to document learner experiences of adjusting to authentic L2 communication in an intercultural context. For this purpose, interview responses were presented to show how learners were overcoming difficulties in a L2 communication context, and to show how learners were striving for meaningful language contact for language proficiency gain.

5.7 Pilot Study

Prior to planning the present study, pilot data collection was carried out. The data was collected at three separate times spread over seven months, from July 2009 to January 2010. Five students volunteered to participate in the pilot data collection. This pilot data collection was authorized by the research ethics committee of the private university in

Tokyo where the participants were enrolled, and followed the procedures required by the committee.

5.7.1 Changes Made for the Present Study Plan

This pilot data collection was useful in planning the data collection for the present study. Some changes from the pilot data collection to the present study were made including changes in the measurements used. For instance, the personality test and stress coping questionnaires were not as useful as expected, and they were not used in the present study. Secondly, since learners spent a variety of time outside of classes engaging in different kinds of language contact activities, it became apparent that recording their language contact experiences was necessary to investigate language contact as a correlating variable for language gain. For this reason, the language contact profile (Freed et al., 2004) was added to the present study. Finally, during while-abroad interviews after five weeks of SA experience, many learners expressed increased confidence in their L2 communication. Owing to this, questionnaires of willingness to communicate, language anxiety, and motivation were changed from being administered only once at pre-departure to being administered two times; at pre-departure and post-return in the present study.

There were also some changes made to the qualitative data collection. For instance, it was apparent how learners with high anxiety levels tended to have multiple issues at their homestay residence. Some interview prompts, therefore, focused on homestay, language anxiety, and language contact experiences in the present study.

Chapter 6

QUAN Results and Analysis: Phase 1

6.1 Overview of Chapter 6

Chapter six presents the results for the analyses conducted to examine the linguistic and non-linguistic outcomes of the SA, and to explore various pre-departure, while-abroad and post-return variables associated with post-return proficiency score and while-abroad language contact. This chapter is divided into the following six sections.

The first section elucidates the process of data screening which took place prior to the main analysis. The second section reports the outcome results of the SA in terms of English proficiency, and non-linguistic variables such as willingness to communicate, language anxiety, motivation, and self-perceived English. The third section examines the learners' post-return proficiency scores in relation to pre-departure variables such as pre-departure language profile, pre-departure language contact, and pre-departure non-linguistic variables. The fourth section examines the learners' post-return proficiency scores in relation to while-abroad variables such as while-abroad language contact and while-abroad homesickness. The fifth section examines learners' post-return proficiency scores in relation to post-return non-linguistic variables. The sixth section examines while-abroad language contact in relation to non-linguistic variables from pre-departure, while-abroad, and post-returns. Chapter 6 concludes with a summary of the findings.

6.2 Data Screening Prior to Analysis

Prior to main data analysis, the data were screened for: missing data, univariate outliers, normal score distribution, and the reliability of measurements.

6.2.1 Missing Data

When missing values were found in the present study, the values were estimated using the *mean substitution* method (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). That is, prior to the main statistical analysis, the missing values were replaced with the mean score of the responses for that item. By estimating and inputting the missing values through this method, the distribution of the data was not changed.

6.2.2 Univariate Outliers

In the present study, the learners' scores were converted into *z-scores* to identify univariate outliers. The z-scores are a way of standardizing a data set by expressing the scores in terms of a distribution with a mean of 0 and standard deviation of 1 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). In the present study, it was considered that cases with z-scores in excess of 1.96 ($p < .05$, two-tailed) were outliers. To reduce the impact of outliers, the outlier values were changed by employing the *next highest score plus one* option. The next highest score plus one option refers to changing the outlier value to one unit above the next highest non-outlier value in the data set (Field, 2009).

6.2.3 Normal Distribution

In the present study, the score distributions were checked by looking at the values of skewness and kurtosis. Specifically, after dividing the skewness and kurtosis values by

their standard errors, if the resulting z-score of absolute values exceeded 1.96, the distribution was considered not to be normal (Field, 2009).

6.2.4 Reliability of Measurements and Descriptive Statistics

In the present study, the reliability of the research instruments was measured using *Cronbach's alpha* as it is the most common means of measuring test reliability. Cronbach alpha values fall between 0 and 1, and a coefficient in excess of .70 is acceptable for educational research (Kline, 1999). Therefore, for the research instruments that were used in the present study, a Cronbach alpha of .70 or more was considered to be satisfactory.

6.3 Outcome Results of Study Abroad

6.3.1 Inspection of English Proficiency

6.3.1.1 Descriptive Statistics for English Proficiency

For English proficiency, CASEC scores (see Appendix O for a sample score report) obtained at pre-departure and post-return were used. Prior to the main analysis, the data were screened, and there was found to be no missing data, nor outliers. Table 6.1 shows the descriptive statistics for CASEC data. The skewness and kurtosis z-scores confirmed that both pre-departure and post-return data were normally distributed as visually shown in Figures 6.1 and 6.2. The reliability of CASEC test scores have been found to be in a .96 to .98 range (Hayashi, Nogami, Maeda & Ikeda, 2004).

Table 6.1 *Descriptive Statistics for CASEC*

	n	mean	SD	min.	max.	skew	kurt
Pre CASEC	25	543.72	87.00	431.00	687.00	.19	-1.44
Post CASEC	25	600.84	67.20	441.00	718.00	-.24	.05

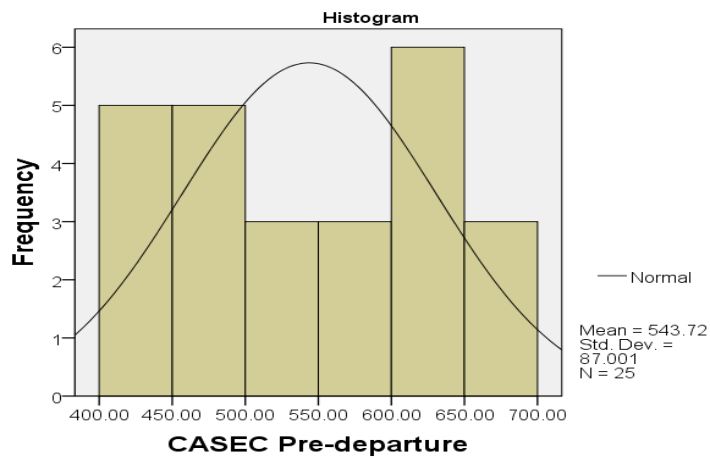


Figure 6.1 Distribution of pre-departure CASEC score.

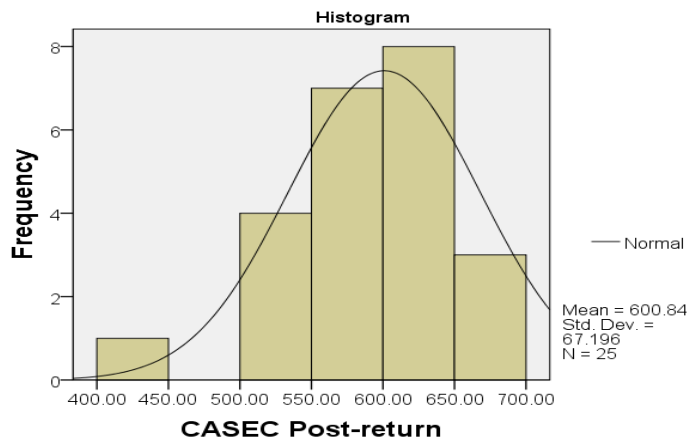


Figure 6.2 Distribution of post-return CASEC scores.

6.3.1.2 English Proficiency Outcomes

To examine the English proficiency outcome results, the scores obtained at pre-departure and post-return were submitted to a *paired samples t-test*. The paired samples t-test result showed that on average, learners had significantly higher scores on the CASEC test after they had studied abroad ($M = 600.84$, $SE = 13.44$) than before ($M = 543.72$, $SE = 17.40$, $t(24) = -4.19$, $p < .001$, $r = .65$). The effect size is described by r . When interpreting the effect size of a coefficient, the greater the effect size, the stronger the relationship. More specifically, a coefficient of around .10 is considered a small effect, around .30 a medium effect, and around .50 a large effect (Cohen, 1988).

Figure 6.3 visually shows that the learners' CASEC scores at post-return had a higher mean than their CASEC score at pre-departure. The result indicated that learners made gains in their English proficiency after studying abroad.

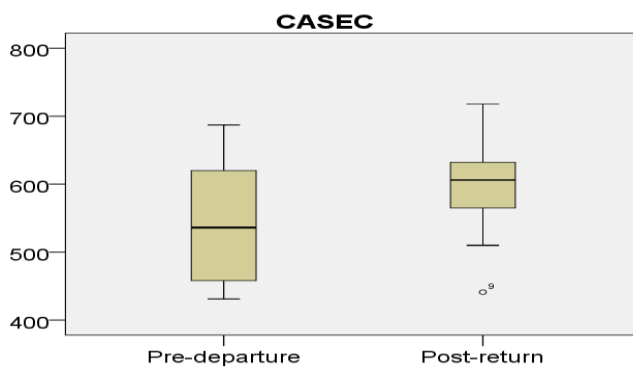


Figure 6.3 Comparison of CASEC.

6.3.2 Inspection of Willingness to Communicate

6.3.2.1 Descriptive Statistics for Willingness to Communicate

The willingness to communicate questionnaire (see Appendix C) scores obtained at pre-departure and post-return were screened prior to the main analysis. There was found to be one missing score from the post-return questionnaire, which was replaced using the method described in Section 6.2.1. There were found to be no outliers. The skewness and kurtosis z-scores confirmed that both the pre-departure and post-return data were normally distributed, and they are visually shown in Figures 6.4 and 6.5. The Cronbach’s alpha reliability for the willingness to communicate questionnaires were satisfactory (pre-departure: $\alpha = .83$, post-return: $\alpha = .81$) as shown in Table 6.2.

Table 6.2 *Descriptive Statistics for Willingness to Communicate*

	n	mean	SD	min.	max.	skew	kurt	alpha
Pre Willingness	25	28.60	6.78	17.00	41.00	.02	-.59	0.83
Post Willingness	25	31.73	5.13	22.00	42.00	.02	-.16	0.81

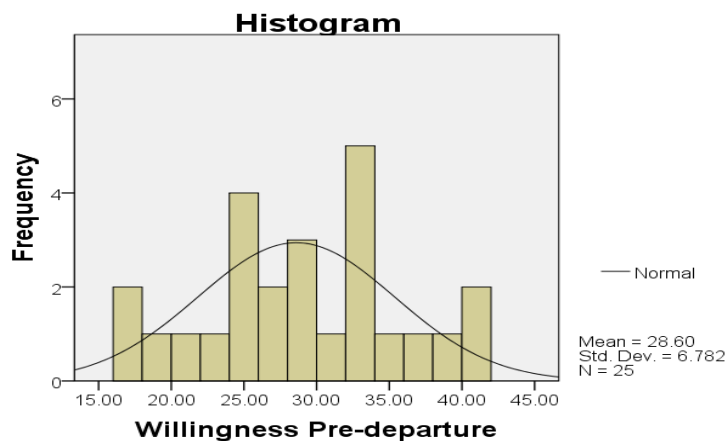


Figure 6.4 Distribution of pre-departure willingness to communicate scores.

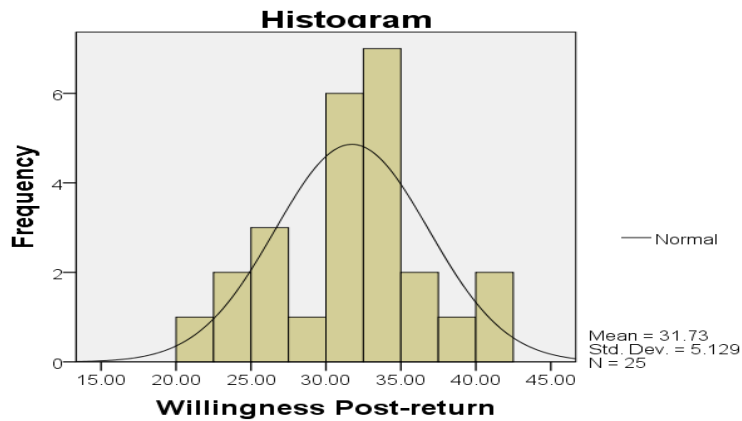


Figure 6.5 Distribution of post-return willingness to communicate scores.

6.3.2.2 Willingness to Communicate Outcomes

To examine the willingness to communicate outcome results, the scores obtained at pre-departure and post-return were submitted to a paired samples t-test. The paired samples t-test result showed that on average, learners had significantly higher willingness to communicate after they had studied abroad ($M = 31.73$, $SE = 1.03$) than before ($M = 28.60$, $SE = 1.36$), $t(24) = -2.253$, $p < .05$, $r = .42$. Figure 6.6 shows that willingness to communicate at post-return had a higher mean than willingness to communicate score at pre-departure. The result indicates that learners developed their willingness to communicate after studying abroad.

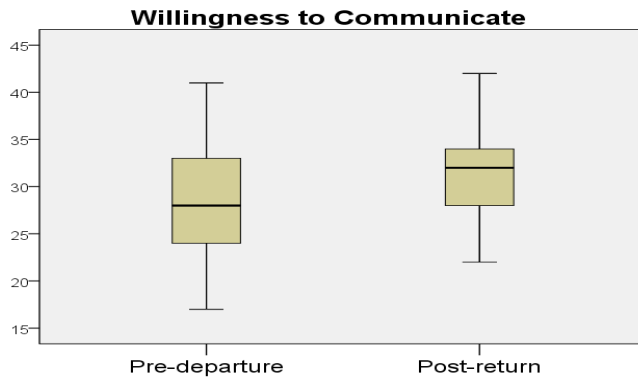


Figure 6.6 Comparison of willingness to communicate.

6.3.3 Inspection of Motivation

6.3.3.1 Descriptive Statistics for Motivation

The motivation questionnaire (see Appendix D) scores obtained at pre-departure and post-return were screened prior to the main analysis. There was found to be no missing data. However, there was found to be one outlier in both sets of data. The outlying values were adjusted using the method described in Section 6.2.2. The skewness and kurtosis results confirmed that both sets of data were normally distributed as can be seen in Figures 6.7 and 6.8. The Cronbach's alpha reliability for the motivation questionnaires were found to be satisfactory (pre-departure: $\alpha = .70$, post-return: $\alpha = .79$) as shown in Table 6.3.

Table 6.3 *Descriptive Statistics for Motivation*

	n	mean	SD	min.	max.	skew.	kurt.	alpha
Pre Motivation	25	25.60	2.58	20.00	29.00	-.48	-.56	0.70
Post Motivation	25	27.00	2.99	21.00	30.00	-.63	-.80	0.79

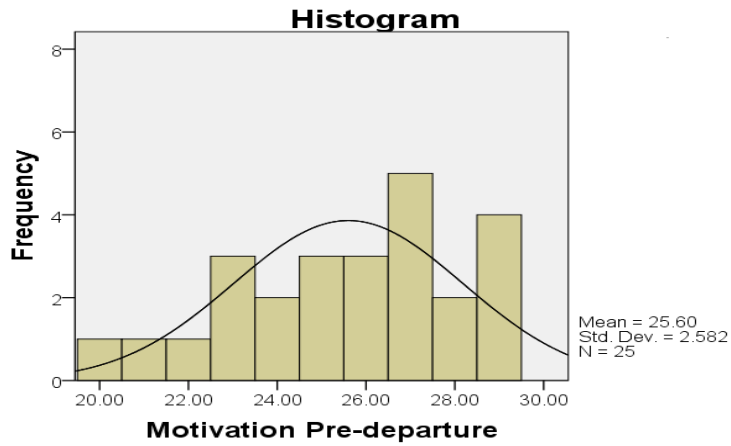


Figure 6.7 Distribution of pre-departure motivation scores.

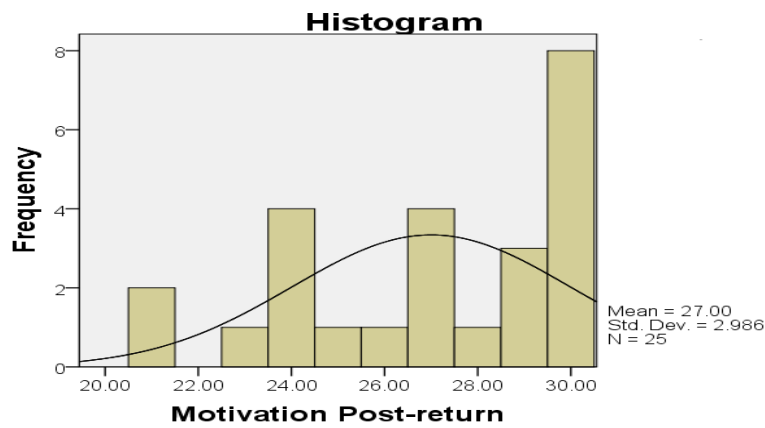


Figure 6.8 Distribution of post-return motivation scores.

6.3.3.2 Motivation Outcomes

To examine the motivation outcome results, the scores obtained at pre-departure and post-return were submitted to a paired samples t-test. The paired samples t-test result showed that on average, learners had significantly higher levels of motivation after they

had studied abroad ($M = 27.00$, $SE = .60$) than before ($M = 25.60$, $SE = .52$), $t(24) = -2.160$, $p < .05$, $r = .40$. Figure 6.9 visually shows that motivation at post-return had a higher mean than motivation score at pre-departure. The result indicates that learners had higher levels of motivation after studying abroad.

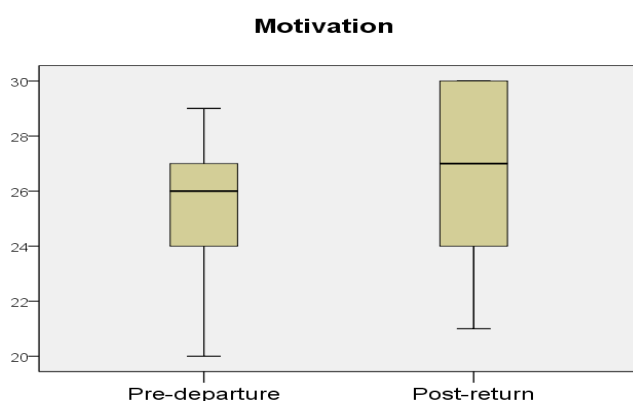


Figure 6.9 Comparison of motivation.

6.3.4 Inspection of Language Anxiety

6.3.4.1 Descriptive Statistics for Language Anxiety

The questionnaire (see Appendix E) scores for language anxiety obtained at pre-departure and post-return were screened before the main analysis. There was found to be no missing data. However, there was found to be one outlier in post-return data, and the outlier value was adjusted using the method described in Section 6.2.2. The skewness and kurtosis results confirmed that both sets of data are normally distributed as shown in Figures 6.10 and 6.11. The Cronbach's alpha reliability for language anxiety questionnaires

were found to be satisfactory (pre-departure: $\alpha = .88$, post-return: $\alpha = .93$) as shown in Table 6.4.

Table 6.4 *Descriptive Statistics for Language Anxiety*

	n	mean	SD	min.	max.	skew	kurt	alpha
Pre Anxiety	25	15.40	5.02	6.00	24.00	.19	-.83	0.88
Post Anxiety	25	12.68	4.62	4.00	21.00	-.03	-.83	0.93

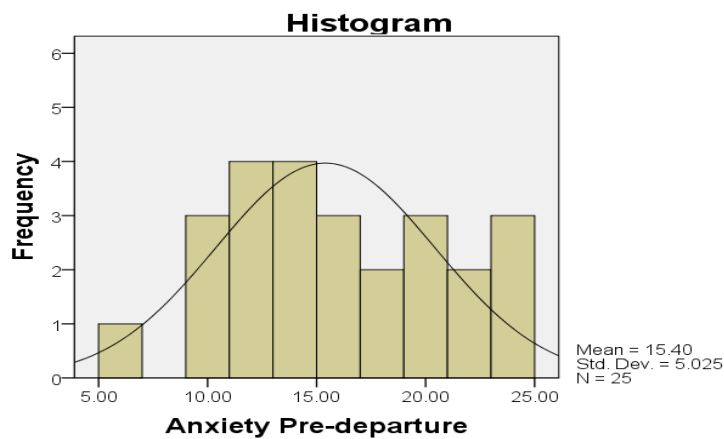


Figure 6.10 Distribution of pre-departure anxiety scores.

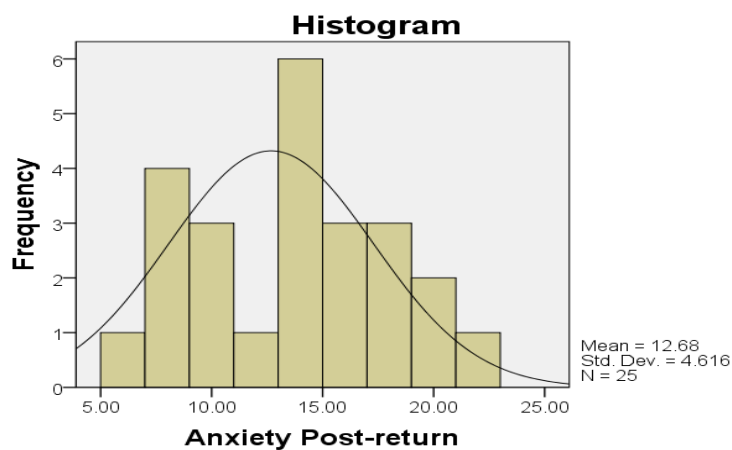


Figure 6.11 Distribution of post-return anxiety scores.

6.3.4.2 Language Anxiety Outcomes

To examine the language anxiety outcome results, the scores obtained at pre-departure and post-return were submitted to a paired samples t-test. The paired samples t-test result showed that on average, learners had significantly lower levels of language anxiety after they had studied abroad ($M = 12.68$, $SE = .92$) than before ($M = 15.40$, $SE = 1.00$), $t(24) = 4.03$, $p < .001$, $r = .64$. Figure 6.12 visually shows that language anxiety at post-return had a lower mean than language anxiety score at pre-departure. The result indicates that learners' language anxiety went down after studying abroad.

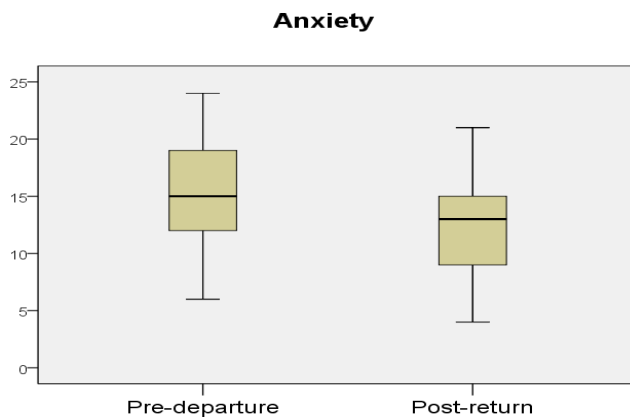


Figure 6.12 Comparison of language anxiety.

6.3.5 Inspection of Self-Perceived English

6.3.5.1 Descriptive Statistics of Self-Perceived English

The questionnaire scores for self-perceived English skills obtained at pre-departure and post-return were screened before the main analysis. There was found to be no missing data. However, there were found to be two outliers in the post-return data, and the influence of outliers was reduced by changing the scores using the method described in

Section 6.2.2. The skewness and kurtosis results confirmed that both sets of data were normally distributed, which are visually shown in Figures 6.13 and 6.14. The Cronbach's alpha reliability for self-perceived English questionnaires were calculated (pre-departure: $\alpha = .55$, post-return: $\alpha = .35$) and displayed in Table 6.5. The reliability of self-perceived English questionnaires was low. However, values below .70 could be expected with psychological constructs because of the diversity of the constructs being measured (Kline, 1999).

Table 6.5 *Descriptive Statistics for Self-Perceived English Skills*

	n	mean	SD	min.	max.	skew	kurt	alpha
Pre Self-English	25	8.48	1.45	6.00	11.00	-.50	-.62	0.55
Post Self-English	25	10.32	1.07	9.00	12.00	.18	-1.16	0.35

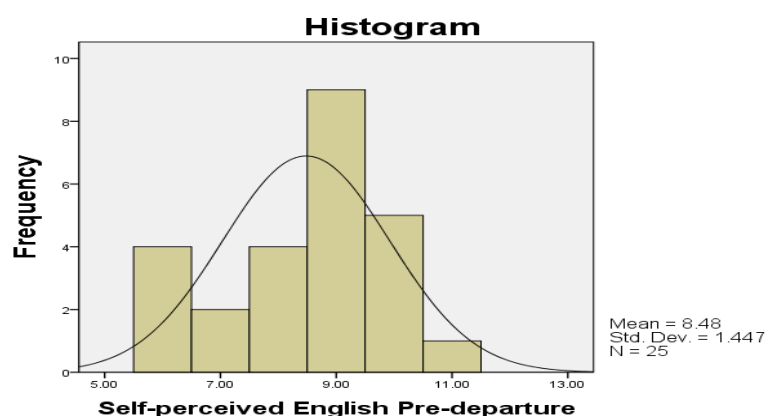


Figure 6.13 Distribution of pre-departure self-perceived English scores.

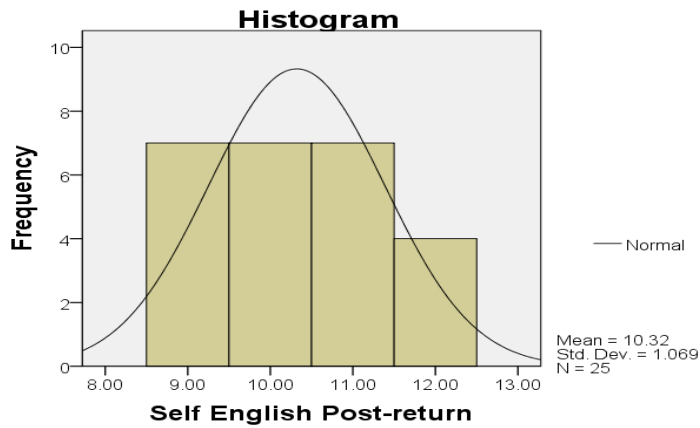


Figure 6.14 Distribution of post-return self-perceived English scores.

6.3.5.2 Self-Perceived English Outcomes

To examine the outcome results for self-perceived English, the scores obtained at pre-departure and post-return were submitted to a paired samples t-test. The paired samples t-test result showed that on average, learners had significantly higher levels of self-perceived English after they had studied abroad ($M = 10.32$, $SE = .215$) than before ($M = 8.48$, $SE = .29$), $t(24) = -7.37$, $p < .001$, $r = .83$. Figure 6.15 shows that self-perceived English at post-return had a higher mean than self-perceived English at pre-departure. The result indicates that learners developed self-perceived English after studying abroad.

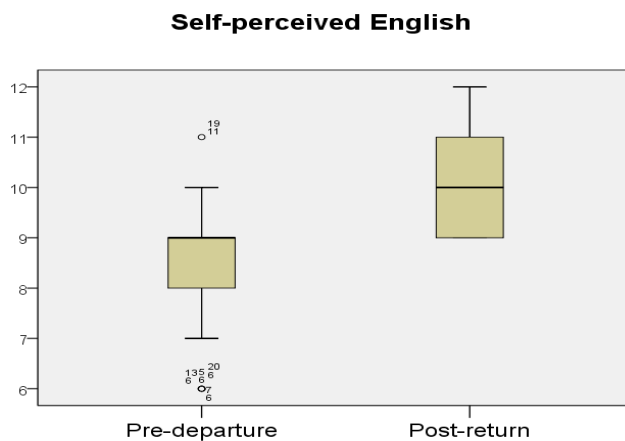


Figure 6.15 Comparison of self-perceived English skills.

6.4 Results for the Pre-Departure Variables Associated with Post-Return Proficiency

6.4.1 Inspection of Pre-Departure Language Profile and Post-Return Proficiency

6.4.1.1 Descriptive Statistics for Pre-Departure Language Profile

The pretest version of the language contact profile questionnaire (Freed et al., 2004) used for the present study consists of multiple questions. For Section 6.4.1, three items in the questionnaire were used: the number of previous SA trips, previous language courses taken, and extra language lessons (see Appendix G). These three pre-departure question responses were screened before the main analysis. There was found to be no missing responses. However, there were found to be one outlier in the previous SA trip data, one outlier in the previous courses data, and three outliers in the extra English lessons data. The outlier values were adjusted using the method described in Section 6.2.2. The descriptive statistics for pre-departure language profile is displayed in Table 6.6. The skewness and kurtosis results confirmed that all three sets of data were normally distributed as visually shown in Figures 6.16, 6.17, and 6.18.

Table 6.6 *Descriptive Statistics for Pre-Departure Language Profile*

	N	mean	SD	min.	max.	skew	kurt
Previous SA	25	.72	.84	.00	2.00	.60	-1.33
Previous English Courses	25	2.88	.60	2.00	4.00	.03	.02
Previous Extra English Lessons	25	1.60	.82	1.00	3.00	.90	-.85

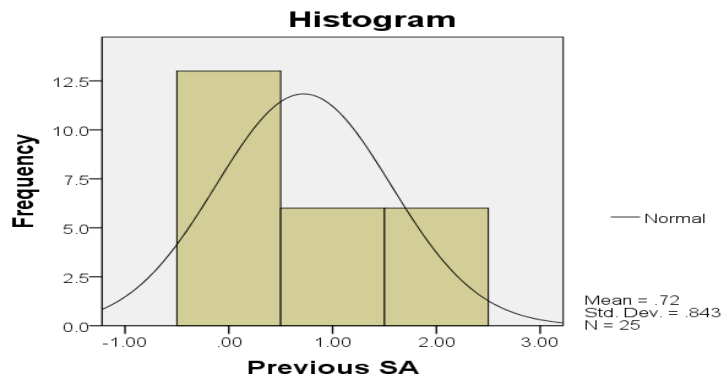


Figure 6.16 Distribution of previous SA.

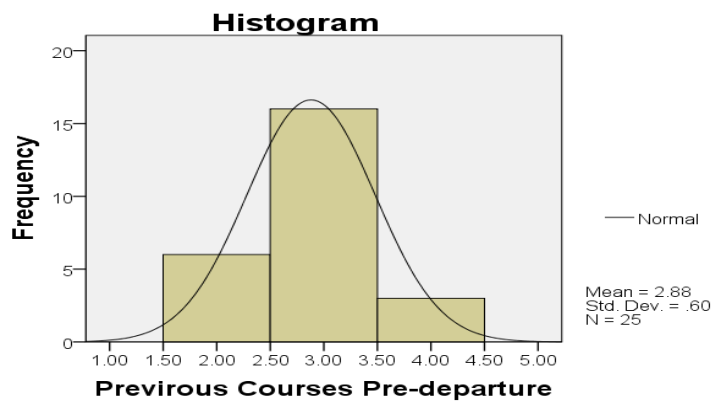


Figure 6.17 Distribution of previous English courses.

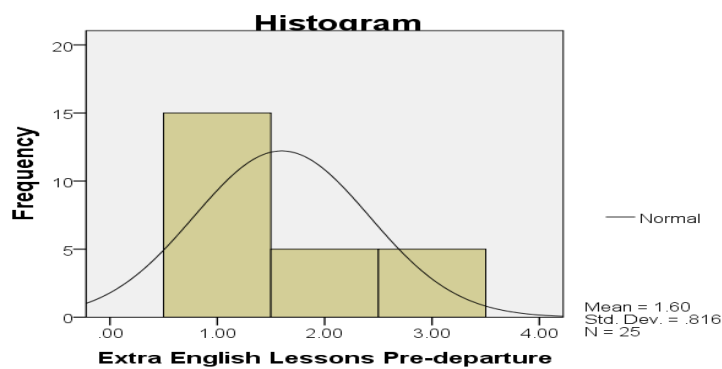


Figure 6.18 Distribution of previous extra English lessons.

6.4.1.2 Relationship Between Pre-Departure Language Profile and Post-Return Proficiency

To examine the associations between the learners' pre-departure language profiles and their post-return CASEC scores, the scores were submitted to The *Pearson product moment correlation coefficients* analysis. The correlation coefficients results showed that there was a significant relationship between previous courses taken prior to the SA and how well the learners scored on the post-return proficiency test, $r = .42, p < .05$. The result indicates that more formal instruction obtained before departure is associated with higher performance on post-return proficiency test taken after studying abroad. However, as displayed in Table 6.7, there were not found to be any other significant relations between the pre-departure variables.

Table 6.7 *Correlation of Pre-Departure Language Profile and Post Proficiency (n=25)*

	Previous SA	Previous Courses	Previous Extra Lessons
Post CASEC	.26	.42*	.13
Previous SA		.01	.01
Previous Courses			.07

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

6.4.2 Inspection of Pre-departure Language Contact and Post-Return Proficiency

6.4.2.1 Descriptive Statistics for Pre-Departure Language Contact

From the pretest version of the language contact profile questionnaire (Freed et al., 2004), the items related to language contact in the year prior to departure were used:

pre-departure total language contact, pre-departure speaking contact, and pre-departure listening/reading/writing contact (see Appendix G). Before the statistical analysis was performed, the three sets of data were screened. There was found to be no missing data. However, there were found to be four outliers in the pre-departure total language contact, also four in the pre-departure listening/reading/writing contact data. The outlier values were adjusted using the method described in Section 6.2.2. The skewness and kurtosis results confirmed that all three sets of data were normally distributed as shown in Figures 6.19, 6.20, and 6.21. The Cronbach's alpha reliability for pre-departure language contact questionnaires were calculated (total language contact: $\alpha = .75$, speaking contact: $\alpha = .51$, listening/reading/writing contact: $\alpha = .80$) and shown in Table 6.8. The reliability of pre-departure speaking contact data was low. However, as previously mentioned in Section 6.3.5.1, values below .70 are not unexpected when measuring psychological constructs because of the diversity of the constructs being measured (Kline, 1999).

Table 6.8 *Descriptive Statistics of Pre-Departure Language Contact*

	n	mean	SD	min.	max.	skew	kurt	alpha
Pre Total Language Contact	25	42.24	7.47	29.00	56.00	.41	-.55	0.75
Pre Speaking Contact	25	16.92	3.79	10.00	24.00	.16	-.52	0.51
Pre L/R/W Contact	25	25.32	4.53	19.00	34.00	.58	-.51	0.80

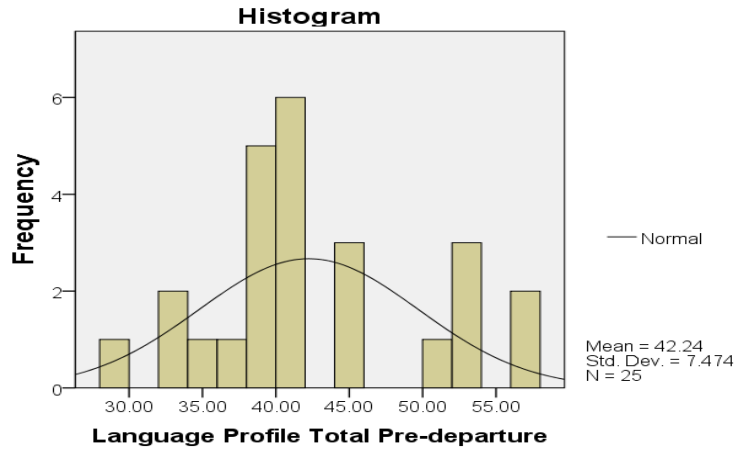


Figure 6.19 Distribution of pre-departure total language contact scores.

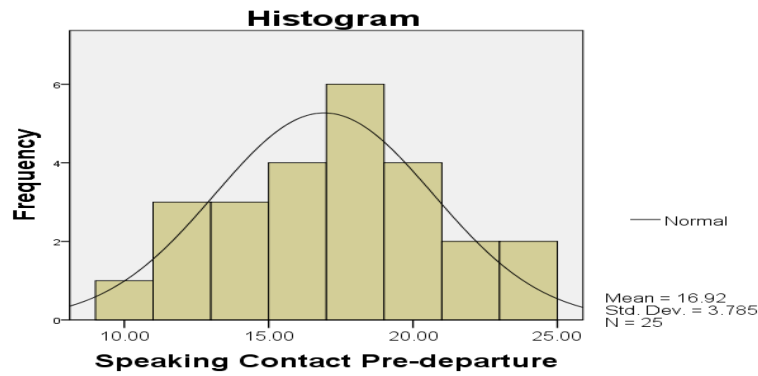


Figure 6.20 Distribution of pre-departure speaking contact scores.

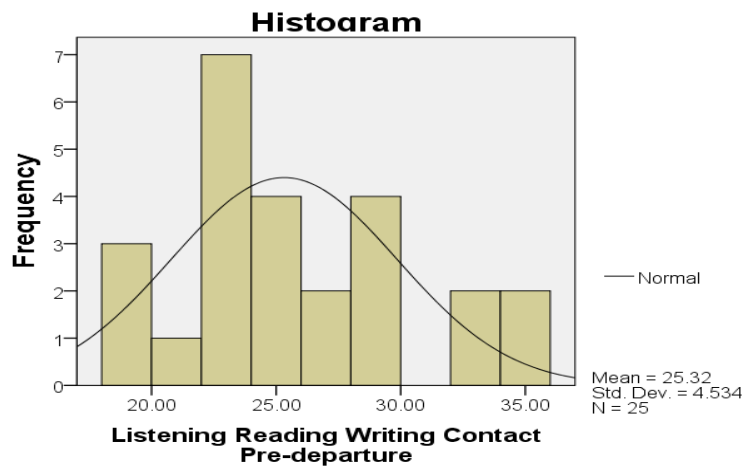


Figure 6.21 Distribution of pre-departure listening/reading/writing contact scores.

6.4.2.2 The Relationship Between Pre-Departure Language Contact and Post-Return Proficiency

To examine the relationship between the learners' pre-departure language contact and their post-return CASEC results, the scores were submitted to Pearson correlation analysis. As shown in Table 6.9, there were not found to be any significant relations between learners' pre-departure language contact and their post-return CASEC scores.

Table 6.9 *Correlation of Post Proficiency and Pre-Departure Language Contact (n=25)*

	Pre Total Language Contact	Pre Speaking Contact	Pre L/R/W Contact
Post CASEC	.28	.28	.23

6.4.3 Inspection of Pre-Departure Non-Linguistic Variables and Post-Return Proficiency

6.4.3.1 Descriptive Statistics for Pre-Departure Non-Linguistic Variables

The pre-departure non-linguistic variables such as pre-departure willingness to communicate, pre-departure motivation, pre-departure language anxiety, and pre-departure self-perceived English were explored previously in Section 6.3, Outcome Results of Study Abroad. The same sets of data were used in the present section. As reported in the descriptive statistics in Section 6.3, there was found to be no missing data. However, there was found to be one outlier in pre-departure motivation data. The outlying value was adjusted using the method described in Section 6.2.2. All four sets of data were normally

distributed, and the Cronbach's alpha reliability for each set of data were calculated and reported in Table 6.10.

Table 6.10 *Descriptive Statistics for Pre-Departure Non-Linguistic Variables*

	n	mean	SD	min.	max.	skew	kurt	alpha
Pre Willingness	25	28.60	6.78	17.00	41.00	.02	-.59	0.83
Pre Motivation	25	25.60	2.58	20.00	29.00	-.48	-.56	0.70
Pre Anxiety	25	15.40	5.02	6.00	24.00	.19	-.83	0.88
Pre Self-English	25	8.48	1.45	6.00	11.00	-.50	-.62	0.55

6.4.3.2 The Relationship Between Pre-Departure Non-Linguistic Variables and Post-Return Proficiency

To examine the relationship between the learners' pre-departure non-linguistic variables and their post-return CASEC scores, the scores were submitted to Pearson correlation analysis. The results are displayed in Table 6.11. The correlation coefficients results showed that there were no significant relationships. The result suggests that learners' non-linguistic affect and attitudes toward language and language learning prior to studying abroad did not influence significantly on how well they scored on post-return proficiency test. However, there was a significant relationship between learners' pre-departure self-perceived English and pre-departure motivation, $r = .49, p < .05$. This may indicate that confident language learners are motivated to learn more.

Table 6.11 *Correlation of Post Proficiency and Pre-Departure Non-Linguistic Variables*

(n=25)

	Pre Willingness	Pre Motivation	Pre Anxiety	Pre Self-English
Post CASEC	.24	.12	-.07	.25
Pre Willingness		.22	-.35	.34
Pre Motivation			-.17	.49*
Pre Anxiety				-.27
Pre Self-English				

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

6.5 Results for the While-Abroad Variables Associated with Post-Return Proficiency

6.5.1 Inspection of While-Abroad Language Contact and Post-Return Proficiency

6.5.1.1 Descriptive Statistics for While-Abroad Language Contact

From the posttest version of the language contact profile questionnaire (Freed et al., 2004), items related to while-abroad language contact were used: while-abroad total language contact, while-abroad speaking contact, and while-abroad listening/reading/writing contact (see Appendix H). Before conducting the analysis, the three sets of data were screened. There was found to be no missing data. However, there were found to be three outliers in the speaking contact data, and six in the listening/reading/writing contact data. The outlier values were adjusted using the method described in Section 6.2.2. The skewness and kurtosis results confirmed that all three sets of data were normally distributed as visually shown in Figures 6.22, 6.23 and 6.24. The

Cronbach's alpha reliability for while-abroad language contact questionnaires were satisfactory (total language contact: $\alpha = .87$, speaking contact: $\alpha = .74$, listening/reading/writing contact: $\alpha = .80$) as shown in Table 6.12.

Table 6.12 *Descriptive Statistics for While-Abroad Language Contact*

	n	mean	SD	min.	max.	skew	kurt	alpha
Abroad Total Language Contact	25	239.56	0.10	117.00	386.00	.17	-1.02	.87
Abroad Speaking Contact	25	109.64	33.55	54.00	166.00	.02	-1.07	.74
Abroad L/R/W Contact	25	124.36	43.04	61.00	181.00	-.03	-1.49	.80

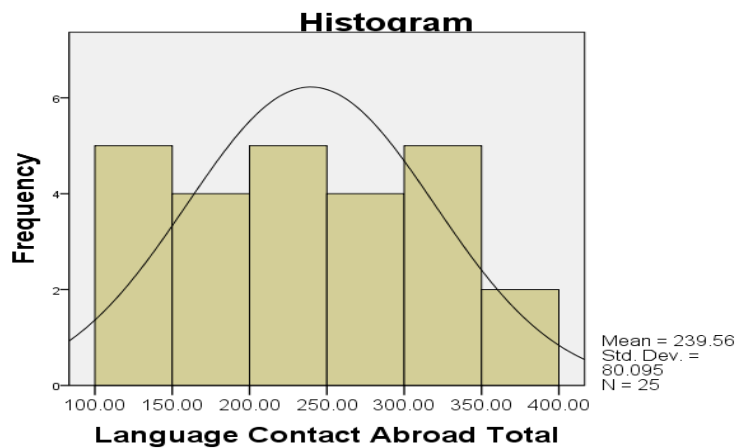


Figure 6.22 Distribution of while-abroad total language contact scores.

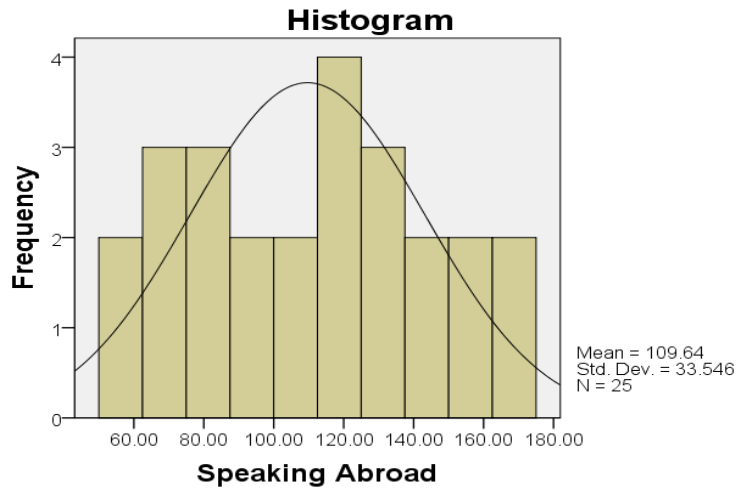


Figure 6.23 Distribution of while-abroad speaking contact scores.

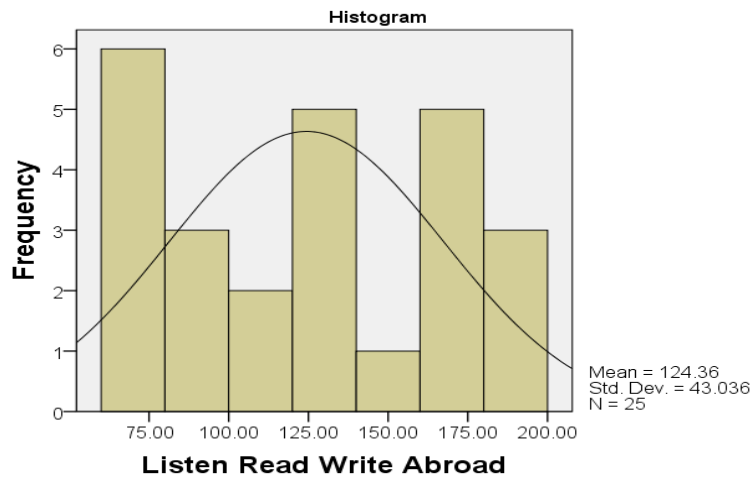


Figure 6.24 Distribution of while-abroad listening/reading/writing contact scores.

6.5.1.2 Relationship Between While-Abroad Language Contact and Post-Return Proficiency

To examine the relationship between the learners' while-abroad language contact and their post-return CASEC results, the scores were submitted to the Pearson correlation coefficients analysis. As shown in Table 6.13, there were not found to be any significant

relations between learners' while-abroad language contact and their post-return CASEC scores. The result indicates that language activities while-abroad vary, and there may not be simple patterns and associations correlating to the post-return test performance.

Table 6.13 *Correlation of Post Proficiency and While-Abroad Language Contact (n=25)*

	Abroad		
	Total Language Contact	Abroad Speaking	Abroad L/R/W
Post CASEC	.10	-.10	.16
Abroad Total Language Contact		.91**	.93**
Abroad Speaking			.76**
Abroad L/R/W			

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

6.5.2 Inspection of While-Abroad Homesickness

6.5.2.1 Descriptive Statistics for While-Abroad Homesickness

Questionnaire items of while-abroad homesickness (Fisher, 1989) (see Appendix F) were used, and the data set was screened prior to analysis. There was found to be one missing response from the questionnaire, which was replaced using the method described in Section 6.2.1. There was found to be one outlier, and the value was adjusted using the method described in Section 6.2.2. The skewness and kurtosis results confirmed that all three sets of data were normally distributed as visually shown in Figures 6.25. The Cronbach's alpha reliability for homesickness questionnaire was found to be satisfactory ($\alpha = .85$) as shown in Table 6.14.

Table 6.14 *Descriptive Statistics for While-Abroad Homesickness*

	n	mean	SD	min.	max.	skew	kurt	alpha
Abroad Homesickness	25	47.95	8.93	32.00	62.00	-.01	-1.10	0.85

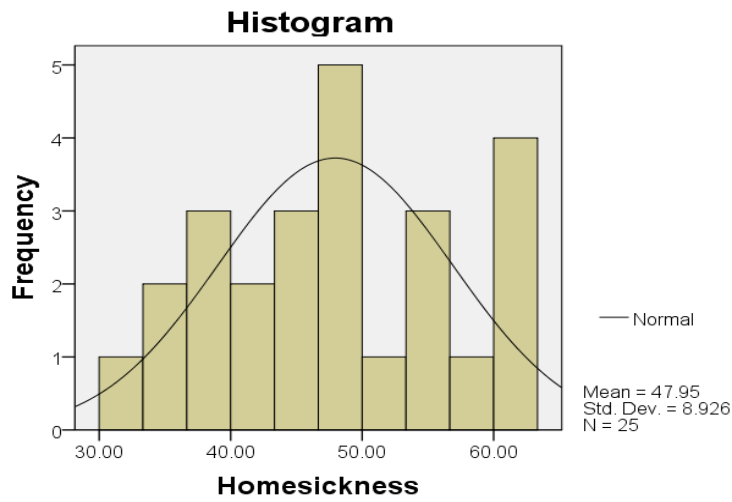


Figure 6.25 Distribution of while-abroad homesickness scores.

6.5.2.2 Relationship Between While-Abroad Homesickness and Post-Return Proficiency

To examine the associations between the learners' while-abroad homesickness and their post-return CASEC scores, the scores were submitted to Person correlation coefficients analysis. As shown in Table 6.15, homesickness was not significantly associated with performance on the post-return proficiency test.

Table 6.15 *Correlation for Post-Return Proficiency and While-Abroad Homesickness*

	Post CASEC	Abroad Homesickness
Post CASEC	1	.40
Abroad Homesickness		1

6.6. Results for the Post-Return Variables Associated with Post-Return Proficiency

6.6.1 Inspection of Post-Return Variables and Post-Return Proficiency

6.6.1.1 Descriptive Statistics for Post-Return Non-Linguistic Variables

The post-return non-linguistic variables such as post-return willingness to communicate, post-return motivation, post-return language anxiety, and post-return self-perceived English were explored previously in Section 6.3, Outcome Results of Study Abroad. The same sets of data were used in the present section. As reported in the descriptive statistics in Section 6.3, there was found to be one missing score from the willingness to communicate questionnaire, which was replaced using the method described in Section 6.2.1. There were found to be one outlier in motivation data, one in language anxiety data, and two in self-perceived English data. The outlying value was adjusted using the method described in Section 6.2.2. All four sets of data were normally distributed, and the Cronbach's alpha reliability for each set of data were calculated and reported in Table 6.16.

Table 6.16 *Descriptive Statistics for Post-Return Non-Linguistic Variables*

	n	mean	SD	min.	max.	skew	kurt	alpha
Post Willingness	25	31.73	5.13	22.00	42.00	.02	-.16	0.81
Post Motivation	25	27.00	2.99	21.00	30.00	-.63	-.80	0.79
Post Anxiety	25	12.68	4.62	4.00	21.00	-.03	-.83	0.93
Post Self-English	25	10.32	1.07	9.00	12.00	.18	-1.16	0.35

6.6.6.2 Relationship Between Post-Return Non-Linguistic Variables and Post-Return Proficiency

To examine the associations between the learners' post-return non-linguistic variables and their post-return CASEC scores, the scores were submitted to Pearson correlation coefficients. The correlation coefficients results are displayed in Table 6.17. The results showed that there was a significant relationship between how well learners scored on the post-return proficiency test and their levels of motivation at post-return, $r = .42$, $p < .05$. Moreover, learners' post-return proficiency scores were significantly associated with how high they perceived their English level, $r = .50$, $p < .05$.

The correlation coefficients results indicate that learners were able to estimate their own language skills more realistically after studying abroad. Secondly, the association of post-return motivation to post-return proficiency suggests the value of motivation to language learning. Furthermore, post-return non-linguistic variables were more significantly correlated with post-return proficiency, compared to pre-departure non-linguistic variables' associations to post-return proficiency, as none of the

pre-departure non-linguistic variables were shown to be correlated with post-return proficiency scores in Section 6.4.3.

Table 6.17 *Correlation of Post-Return Proficiency and Post-Return Non-Linguistic Variables (n=25)*

	Post Willingness	Post Motivation	Post Anxiety	Post Self English
Post CASEC	.30	.42*	-.12	.50*
Post Willingness		.31	-.58**	.43*
Post Motivation			-.18	.52**
Post Anxiety				-.11
Post Self English				

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

6.7 Results for the Non-Linguistic Variables Associated with While-Abroad Language Contact

6.7.1 Descriptive Statistics for the Non-Linguistic Variables from Pre-Departure and Post-Return

In the present section, the non-linguistic variables such as willingness to communicate, motivation, language anxiety and self-perceived English from pre-departure and post-return were used to examine the relationships to while-abroad variables, such as while-abroad language contact and while-abroad homesickness. The non-linguistic variables from pre-departure and post-return were inspected in Section 6.3. As previously

discussed, the data were screened and an overview of the descriptive statistics for these variables has been provided above (see Section 6.3). In summary, there was found to be one missing score from the post-return willingness to communicate questionnaire. There was found to be one outlier in pre-departure motivation data, one outlier in post-return motivation data, one in post-return language anxiety data, and two in post-return self-perceived English data. The missing score was replaced and the outlying values were adjusted using the method described in Section 6.2. All eight sets of data were normally distributed, and the Cronbach's alpha reliability for each set of data were calculated and reported above (see Section 6.3).

In addition, in the present section, all of while-abroad data, such as while-abroad homesickness, while-abroad total language contact, while-abroad speaking contact, and while-abroad listening/reading/writing contact were used. The while-abroad data were explored in Section 6.5. As previously discussed, the data were screened and an overview of the descriptive statistics for these variables has been provided above (see Section 6.5). In summary, there was found to be one missing response from the homesickness questionnaire. There were found to be three outliers in the while-abroad speaking contact data, and six in the while-abroad listening/reading/writing contact data, and one in homesickness data. The missing score was replaced and the outlying values were adjusted using the method described in Section 6.2. The skewness and kurtosis results confirmed that all four sets of data were normally distributed. The Cronbach's alpha reliability for each set of data were satisfactory and reported above (see Section 6.5).

6.7.1.1 The Relationships Between Language Contact, Language Anxiety and Homesickness

To examine the relationship between learners' while-abroad language contact and non-linguistic scores, the data were submitted to Pearson correlation analysis. Table 6.18 shows the results. The results showed that pre-departure language anxiety was significantly related to while-abroad homesickness, $r = .44$, $p < .05$. Moreover, while-abroad homesickness was negatively correlated to all aspects of while-abroad language contact; to while-abroad total language contact, $r = -.46$, $p < .05$, to while-abroad speaking contact, $r = -.50$, $p < .05$, and to while-abroad listening/reading/writing contact, $r = -.47$, $p < .05$. In addition, pre-departure language anxiety was also negatively related to post-return willingness to communicate, $r = -.44$, $p < .05$, and post-return willingness to communicate was significantly correlated to while-abroad speaking contact, $r = .41$, $p < .05$. The results indicate that learners' high pre-departure language anxiety was related to homesickness while-abroad, which has an effect on the amount of language contact while-abroad. Furthermore, perhaps, while-abroad homesickness reduces the scores of post-return willingness to communicate.

6.7.1.2 The Relationship Between Language Contact, Self-Perceived English and Willingness to Communicate

The Pearson correlation coefficients results showed a positive relationship between while-abroad language contact and non-linguistic variables, as shown in Table 6.18. Most importantly, pre-departure self-perceived English level was significantly related to while-abroad total language contact, $r = .43$, $p < .05$, and while-abroad listening/reading/writing contact, $r = .51$, $p < .01$. Moreover, a significant relationship was

also recorded between pre-departure self-perceived English and post-return willingness to communicate, $r = .42, p < .05$, which was, as reported in the previous section, significantly correlated to while-abroad speaking contact, $r = .41, p < .05$.

The correlation results indicate the value of self-perceived English level at pre-departure, leading to more language contact, and to higher willingness to communicate.

Table 6.18 *Correlation of Pre-Departure, While-Abroad, and Post-Return Non-Linguistic Variables (n=25)*

	Pre Willingness	Pre Motivation	Pre Anxiety	Pre Self-English	Abroad Homesickness	Post Willingness	Post Motivation	Post Anxiety	Post Self-English
Abroad	.24	.27	-.35	.43*	-.46*	.37	.01	-.27	.07
Total Language Contact									
Abroad Speaking	.26	.20	-.37	.28	-.50*	.41*	-.04	-.35	.01
Abroad L/R/W	.16	.32	-.33	.51*	-.47*	.37	.14	-.25	.10
Pre Willingness	1	.22	-.35	.34	-.07	.35	-.17	-.47*	.05
Pre Motivation		1	-.17	.49*	-.14	.36	.33	-.29	.20
Pre Anxiety			1	-.27	.44*	-.44*	-.30	.76**	-.01
Pre Self-English				1	-.15	.48*	.29	-.16	.54**
Abroad Homesickness					1	-.39	-.06	.32	.23
Post Willingness						1	.31	-.58**	.43*
Post Motivation							1	-.18	.52**
Post Anxiety								1	-.11
Post Self-English									1

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

6.8 Summary of the findings in Chapter 6

The following is a summary of the findings in the present chapter:

In terms of the outcome results of study abroad, in all five areas of interest, there were significant gains over time:

- (1) There was a significant increase in the learners' post-return CASEC test scores over their pre-departure results.
- (2) There was a significant increase in the learners' post-return willingness to communicate scores over their pre-departure results.
- (3) There was a significant increase in the learners' post-return motivation scores over their pre-departure results.
- (4) There was a significant decrease in the learners' post-return language anxiety scores over their pre-departure results.
- (5) There was a significant increase in the learners' post-return self-perceived English scores over their pre-departure results.

When exploring the relationship between the pre-departure variables and post-return proficiency scores, the results were as follows:

- (6) Among the pre-departure language profile variables, the number of previous English courses taken was significantly correlated with the post-return proficiency scores. Other pre-departure language profile variables, such as previous SA trips and previous extra English lessons were not significantly correlated with post-return proficiency scores.

- (7) Pre-departure language contact was not significantly correlated with post-return proficiency scores. Pre-departure language contact included pre-departure total language contact, pre-departure speaking contact, and pre-departure listening/reading/writing contact.
- (8) Pre-departure non-linguistic variables were not significantly correlated with post-return proficiency scores. Pre-departure non-linguistic variables included pre-departure willingness to communicate, pre-departure motivation, pre-departure anxiety, and pre-departure self-perceived English.

Regarding the relationship between while-abroad variables and post-return proficiency scores:

- (9) While-abroad language contact was not significantly correlated with post-return proficiency scores. While-abroad language contact included while-abroad total language contact, while-abroad speaking contact, and while-abroad listening/reading/writing contact.
- (10) While-abroad homesickness was not significantly correlated with post-return proficiency scores.

In terms of the relationship between post-return variables and post-return proficiency scores, the results from this study showed that:

- (11) Among the post-return non-linguistic variables, the post-return motivation and the post-return self-perceived English were both correlated with post-return proficiency scores. Other non-linguistic variables, such as post-return willingness

to communicate and post-return language anxiety, were not significantly correlated with post-return proficiency scores.

When exploring the relationship between while-abroad language contact and non-linguistic variables from pre-departure, while-abroad, and post-return data, the results from this study showed that:

- (12) Among the pre-departure non-linguistic variables, pre-departure language anxiety was significantly correlated with while-abroad homesickness. Moreover, while-abroad homesickness was negatively correlated with all aspects of while-abroad language contact; while-abroad total language contact, while-abroad speaking contact, and while-abroad listening/reading/writing contact. On the positive side, among the pre-departure non-linguistic variables, pre-departure self-perceived English was significantly related to while-abroad total language contact and while-abroad listening/reading/writing contact. Pre-departure self-perceived English was also significantly correlated with post-return willingness to communicate. In addition, post-return willingness to communicate was also significantly correlated with while-abroad speaking contact.

Chapter 7

QUAL Analysis: Phase 2

7.1 Overview of Chapter 7

Chapter 7 presents the QUAL data analysis conducted based on the results presented in Chapter 6. The purpose of the QUAL data analysis is to better understand the numerically significant results presented in Chapter 6. Specifically, this chapter focuses on finding explanations for the relationship between four non-linguistic variables and while-abroad language contact from learner perspectives and experiences. This chapter is divided into the following four sections.

The first section elucidates the process taken to ensure the credibility of the QUAL data. The second section describes the learner perspectives and experiences related to language anxiety, homesickness and language contact. The third section presents the learner perspectives and experiences related to self-perceived English, willingness to communicate, and language contact. Chapter 7 concludes with a summary of the findings.

7.2 Data Credibility

7.2.1 The Use of Triangulation

Triangulation is the use of multiple data collection methods, to ensure the credibility of QUAL data (Brown, 2001). Triangulation is divided into sub-categories (Denzin, 1978). In this study, data triangulation refers to multiple data collection, time triangulation refers to multiple data-gathering over time, and location triangulation refers to multiple data-gathering occasions in different settings. These various forms of triangulation were included to ensure the trustworthiness of the QUAL data. Seven data set were collected from the same 25 learners: 1) pre-departure interview with all learners, totaling

approximately 10 hours, 2) pre-departure orientation observations, totaling six hours, 3) while-abroad interview with all learners, totaling approximately 12 hours, 4) while-abroad open-ended written question responses, 5) while-abroad weekend activity observations over two days, 6) post-return interview with five selected learners, totaling 1.5 hours, and 7) post-return open-ended written question responses. Thus, the triangulation of data, time, and location are evident in the present study.

7.2.2 Prolonged Engagement and Persistent Observation

The credibility of the QUAL data can be enhanced by *prolonged engagement* and *persistent observation* (Denzin, 1994). Prolonged engagement refers to sufficient time invested, and persistent observation refers to repetition of meetings and observations. Through prolonged and persistent engagement, confidence and trust can be established between the participant and the researcher. Furthermore, the researcher can learn about the cultural context, and has the opportunity to notice any misinformation introduced by the participants or even by the researcher themselves (Davis, 1992). Thus, prolonged engagement and persistent observation was an approach utilized in this study.

7.2.3 Data Transcription and Data Reduction

To ensure the accuracy of the learners' responses, all of the interviews and written responses were transcribed. Since the responses were in Japanese, transcription was done in Japanese. To focus on the most important data, a process of *data reduction* was undertaken. Data reduction is a procedure that a researcher conducts through a framework, such as a conceptual framework and research questions (Brown, 2001). In this study, after reviewing all the transcription data, cases and data were selected based on the QUAN data results in Chapter 6. For instance, in a section on homesickness, the QUAL data came from

learners with high levels of homesickness, and for a section on self-perceived English, the QUAL data came from learners with high levels of self-perceived English. The transcription of the Japanese responses was translated into English by the researcher.

7.3 Inquiry into the Relationships Between Language Contact, Language Anxiety and Homesickness

Table 7.1 *Learners with Language Anxiety and Homesickness*

	Abroad Language Contact Score (Rank/25)			Homesickness Score (Rank/25)	Anxiety Score (Rank/25)	
	Total	Speaking	L/R/W	Abroad	Pre	Post
Learner 16	117 (25)	54 (25)	63 (24)	60 (3)	24 (1)	20 (2)
Learner 20	193 (17)	116 (13)	77 (20)	49 (11)	24 (1)	12 (6)
Learner 7	191 (18)	98 (16)	93 (18)	56 (6)	23 (3)	19 (3)
Learner 23	168 (20)	74 (21)	94 (17)	62 (1)	22 (4)	13 (12)
Learner 10	133 (23)	62 (24)	71 (22)	60 (3)	21 (5)	24 (1)
Learner 14	182 (19)	92 (17)	90 (19)	55 (7)	19 (6)	15 (7)
Learner 4	298 (8)	119 (12)	179 (4)	61 (2)	14 (14)	9 (18)
Learner 6	147 (21)	82 (18)	65 (23)	56 (5)	9 (23)	8 (20)

In this section, pre-departure language anxiety, while-abroad homesickness and while-abroad language contact will be considered as targets of inquiry using QUAL data. The targets of inquiry come from the significant relationships found between pre-departure language anxiety and while-abroad homesickness, and the negative relationships between while-abroad homesickness and all three aspects of while-abroad language contact; total amount of contact, speaking contact, and listening/reading/writing contact. The QUAN results regarding these relationships were reported in Section 6.7 of Chapter 6.

For the inquiry into learner perspectives and experiences, eight learners were selected. The eight learners had very high pre-departure language anxiety, very high while-abroad homesickness, or both. The results for the learners are displayed in Table 7.1.

7.3.1 Language Anxiety

The aim of the first investigation involves finding possible causes and the symptoms of language anxiety in learners within the SA context.

7.3.1.1 Fear of Making Mistakes and Self Being at Risk

The definition of language anxiety as stated earlier in Chapter 4 is, fear or apprehension occurring when a learner is expected to perform in a second or foreign language (Gardner and MacIntyre, 1993). Language anxiety can be seen in the following interview response. The response was reported by Learner 7 during a while-abroad interview. Learner 7 is a female learner whose score for pre-departure language anxiety was the third highest in the cohort of 25 (pre-departure language anxiety: 3/25). Learner 7 also scored high on the pre-departure English proficiency test. She ranked eighth in the cohort (pre-departure English proficiency: 8/25) indicating her relatively strong English proficiency at pre-departure. However, Learner 7 described being afraid of making

mistakes in the L2 in front of her Japanese classmates and friends. The following interview response also illustrated another definition of language anxiety reviewed in Chapter 4, which is self being at risk.

In this class, everyone has a strong personality, and everyone can speak English really well. A friend I'm always with is pretty good at English. So, sometimes, even in Japan too, we try to play a game-like conversation of, "Let's speak English". When I speak, I am often told "That's wrong" in a very strong tone, and I feel afraid [of speaking up]... In the classroom, I cannot volunteer to speak up either. (Learner 7, while-abroad interview response)

This interview response explained a mechanism of avoiding language contact, especially speaking contact.

7.3.1.2 Not Having Enough English Skills

Learner 10 is a female learner, whose pre-departure English proficiency was not very high (pre-departure English proficiency: 23/25), which displayed her limited English proficiency. At the same time, her pre-departure language anxiety was relatively high (pre-departure language anxiety: 5/25), and her post-return language anxiety went up to the highest in the cohort (post-return language anxiety: 1/25) as shown in Table 7.1. Learner 10 explained how her lack of English skills made her withdraw from L2 interactions with her host family. This supports the claim introduced earlier in Chapter 4. (Sarason et al., 1991) that there are three cognitive states which arouse communication anxiety, including not having the skills to do the task.

On weekdays, we eat meals together, so I speak [English]. But, when I feel I want to say something, and think in my head how to say it, and when I'm about to say it, the conversation topic is over, so I can't say [anything about it] anymore. So, I always feel "Oh..." then let it go, because the conversation keeps moving forward with everyone. (Learner 23, while-abroad interview response)

Speed is crucial in real interactions. Not being able to respond quickly enough makes learners withdraw from L2 exchanges. Learner 10 repeatedly talked about how she needs to improve her speaking. She felt pressured to improve her English skills, and communicate with her host family. "Oh, but if I can speak [English], well if I just speak [English], there's no problem, or I won't have any problems. I feel I have to learn to speak" (Learner 10, while-abroad interview response).

Because Learner 10 needs a long time to produce any English sentences, in her homestay context the only interlocutor who was patient enough with her was her host mother. It was clear that low English proficiency plus a lack of confidence interfered with her L2 speaking contact. She also talked about feeling awkward only listening to others. "I listen a lot by saying "yes, yes, yes," and I have many things I want to say, but I can't say them in English, I mean there are many things I can't say in English" (Learner 10, while-abroad interview response).

In response to the question of why she felt nervous about speaking in the L2, Learner 10 replied with the following: "I don't know if my English is correct. Also, I know more than anybody how my English is not good enough. That's why" (Learner 10, while-abroad interview response). It is clear that low English proficiency does not help with language anxiety. However, not all learners with low English proficiency have high language anxiety. Therefore, there is a need to look into language anxiety among different proficiency learners in future studies.

The previously mentioned Learner 7 analyzed herself and explained the reason for having high language anxiety was a lack of grammatical knowledge, despite the fact that she scored eighth in the cohort on the pre-departure proficiency test.

I haven't really studied grammar very hard until now. While students who came into the university by the regular university entrance exam procedure must have studied [grammar] very hard, I haven't. I feel that might be why. I begin to worry about the very basic [grammatical] points. (Learner 7, while-abroad interview response)

7.3.1.3 Shyness

One aspect of language anxiety may overlap with shyness. Shyness, in the present study refers to unwillingness to communicate in the L1. Learners with high L2 language anxiety levels, for example Learner 7 has analyzed herself as shy. Learner 16 is another female learner who evaluated herself as shy, and who had the highest pre-departure anxiety in the cohort (pre-departure language anxiety: 1/25). The present study observed that having L1 communication anxiety, or being shy triggers high L2 language anxiety. Moreover, shyness is a common trait among Japanese compared to many other nationalities (Kloft, 1984). Therefore, Japanese learners may have more difficulties in authentic L2 interactions in SA context compared to other nationalities.

The following interview responses by Learner 16 explain why language anxiety is related to less language contact. She did not have the habit of taking an active role in conversations, in either Japanese or English. At her homestay, she mainly listened to conversations at the dinner table in her homestay and did not speak in the L2 very often. Learner 16 explained her behavior in regard to turn taking as "I never initiate the

conversation myself. Only if I'm asked, will I speak" (Learner 16, while-abroad interview response).

In response to a question about the reasons why she felt nervous and worried about speaking in the L2 and avoided using it, Learner 16 explained her extreme shyness as the prime cause of her language anxiety as follows:

I feel very shy in front of strangers, and I'm a nervous type of person. Even doing a normal presentation in Japanese would make me feel panicky. I would be holding a paper to read, but lose track of where I should be reading. I feel really shy in front of strangers as well. When I meet people for the first time, I feel tense. I think this is why I can't speak well. When I ask friends about the first impression I give, they usually say something like a dark impression. I can't speak and that's why my friends say they don't understand me. (Learner 16, while-abroad interview response)

Learner 16 further explained the reason for this extreme shyness as being a lack of experience talking to new people and strangers.

I think it comes from a lack of experience. I never have to be in a situation like that. I'm always with someone I know so I don't have to force myself to deal with new people. Even if I'm introduced to new people [in Japan], if I'm with my mother, I don't have to talk to strangers. When I talk to my cousins, my sister acts like my translator and she speaks for me so it's good. I usually don't have to go anywhere on my own. I'm the youngest in my family, so I'm a little emotionally dependent. (Learner 16, while-abroad interview response)

7.3.1.4 Coping with Language Anxiety - Language Contact with Caretakers

Interview responses also highlighted some possible ways in which language anxiety can be mitigated. The following sections introduce some strategies that learners used including interacting with *caretakers*, and becoming a child in the family.

Learners are exposed to a variety of interlocutors in the L2. Pellegrino (2005) talks about caretakers as a particular type of interlocutor, and they are often a source of L2 learning experience in the SA context. The interview responses in this section show that learners feel more comfortable interacting with caring interlocutors, such as host mothers. It would be ideal for all learners to have caretakers while abroad. Pellegrino (2005) summarizes the caretaker role as follows:

'Caretakers,' defined as individuals who aid or contribute to the language-learning experience through explicit language instruction, informal language use, feedback, correction, and use of 'foreignese' or language adapted to learners' level for greater accessibility. Caretakers may be native or non-native speakers and may play a wide variety of roles in learners' lives, such as language instructors, resident directors, host-family members, roommates, or friends. They may be trained to be language caretakers (such as language teachers) or untrained, and caretaking activities may be expected based on the type of relationship (e.g., classroom and homestay situations) or unexpected (e.g., strangers). In addition, caretaking activities may be desired and even overtly requested by learners or may be undesired and even embarrassing to learners, depending on the goals and preferences of the learners. Therefore, learners encounter many different types of caretaking relationships with others in their environment and many different styles and approaches to caretaking methods. (Pellegrino, 2005, p. 56)

The previously mentioned Learner 10 lived with a host mother, a host father, and two host sisters, who were 11 and 13 years old. She did not feel comfortable speaking to her host sisters, as she thought they neither understood her nor wanted to wait for her to finish sentences. However, Learner 10 was able to speak to her host parents. She felt especially comfortable talking to the host mother.

Well, my host parents know that I can't speak [English], that's probably why they listen to me carefully and wait for me to say things. The children, I think that they only understand me a little bit, so I can't actively speak to them. (Learner 10, while-abroad interview response)

The previously mentioned shy student, Learner 16, lived with a host mother, a 17 year-old host sister, a 14 year-old host brother, and a Brazilian university student who was also staying with the family. In the following interview response, Learner 16 explains how she felt comfortable during one-to-one conversation with her host mother, but did not feel comfortable enough to join in group conversation.

When I'm with my host mother alone, she waits for my very slow speech. But, when the high school kid, the junior high school kid, and the other Brazilian home stay student are there, the speed of conversations is really fast, because everyone can speak so quickly. I can understand what they are talking about, so sometimes I have things I want to say, but if I join the conversation, I'm afraid of the conversation speed suddenly dropping. So, unless I'm asked, I just listen and kind of giggle. (Learner 16, while-abroad interview response)

Having a caretaker around is very reassuring for the learners while they are abroad, especially for those with high anxiety. However, some learners do not live with caretakers. The previously mentioned Learner 7 did not have a caretaker in her homestay family. She lived with a host mother and a host father and both of them were very busy working. According to Learner 7, every evening after an early dinner, the host parents turned off all the lights in the kitchen and the living room, then retired to their room. Therefore, Learner 7 had almost no speaking contact besides the dinner table conversation at her home stay residence.

7.3.1.5 Coping with Language Anxiety - Being a Child

Another strategy to cope with language anxiety was observed. Pellegrino (2005) notes that the level of anxiety changes depending on the interlocutors, especially the need to maintain social psychological security related to interactions with different age groups. For example, Pellegrino explains “When the interlocutors are...closer to the age of the learner, some learners express even greater concern for their self-presentation, fearing to look like a fool before teenagers and young adults” (p. 75). Pellegrino describes a similar effect for learners interacting with small children.

However, Pellegrino also explains that learners sometimes feel great ease interacting with children and suggests that this ease may come from being allowed to be childish when interacting with children in the L2. *Childishness* is an interesting tactic reported by L2 learners to control language anxiety: it prevents greater fear, since people who are childish cannot be expected to know or understand mature topics of conversations. Childishness is also sometimes adopted in the language classroom to control apprehensions (Bailey, 1983).

This strategy of adopting childishness was seen in Learner 20. It was surprising that her anxiety went down from the highest pre-departure anxiety score of 24 in the cohort

(pre-departure language anxiety: 1/25) to 12 at post-return (post-return language anxiety: 6/25). One possible explanation is that she was not a shy person. Another explanation may be her adjustment into a family with two young children. She lived with a host mother, a host father, an eight-year-old host sister, and a 13-year-old host brother. In fact, Learner 20 became like a younger sister of the eight-year-old girl, which made Learner 7 extremely comfortable in her homestay environment even with her limited English.

There are a couple of important points about Learner 20. First, she was initially assigned a different host family, but soon after arrival she showed dissatisfaction and asked to move to a different host family. With the new host family, she was comfortable, mostly due to the frequent attention received from all the family, which she needed to feel less anxious about her L2 interactions. Another important point is that Learner 20 was not a shy person. Therefore, once she had changed host family, she was able to be herself and frequently communicate in the L2.

We talk during meals and laugh together. They know my English is bad, so I practice pronunciation by saying [a word] many many times. They say “ask”, so I do that... Yes, many times. I’m not good with L and R, so I continuously say “sour, ur, ur, ur”. Like this, many times. (Learner 20, while-abroad interview response)

Learner 20 talked about her weakness in oral skills. She felt that she was poor at pronunciation as well as listening. In her homestay, she tried to practice her pronunciation whenever she could.

I can’t be understood unless I tell them many times about what I want to do. If my host mother can’t understand me, then the eight-year-old child says something like “is it that?”, then I say “oh, that’s right”, then I ask them to repeat the word again

and again, and they say that same word over and over, like “apple, apple, apple, apple”. So, they probably think “she wants to hear the same words [repeated frequently]”. (Learner 20, while-abroad interview response)

Yesterday, I got home, and the eight-year-old child was home, so we jumped rope together, and ran around the house and played. Like that. My host mother is a really nice person, so I’m now having fun. My host father has a sense of humor. The other day, when I asked “what’s for dinner?” He said “you can guess”. “Ah...guess?” I didn’t know at that time what this word meant. So I asked “what?” then he said “deer or cow” or something like that, so I said “huh? animals?” and it was like that, then I realized that the word meant estimate, but I didn’t know the word in Japanese, so I brought the dictionary and asked him to type in the spelling. Like this, I learn English, in the new home. (Learner 20, while-abroad interview response)

According to Learner 20, the host mother and father checked her English grammar. Learner 20 played the role of a child learning a language. “Grammar as well, I say it, then they say it again, so I learn how to use it. Also, when I ask what the meaning is, they really try hard to explain until I understand” (Learner 20, while-abroad interview response).

7.3.2 Homesickness

As reported in Chapter 6, homesickness was negatively correlated with all aspects of while-abroad language contact; total language contact, speaking contact, and listening/reading/writing contact. In this section, the focus turns to learners with high levels of homesickness, and an explanation is sought for why homesickness has a negative relationship with while-abroad language contact. The four homesickness models reviewed in Chapter 4 will be used as frameworks for the inquiry.

7.3.2.1 The Loss Model – Missing Home

As discussed in Chapter 4, the loss model is a leading homesickness model. The loss model supposes the homesick person to be temporarily bereaved, suffering acute anxiety and panic because of the loss of direct contact with home and family. The homesick person is like an infant deprived of visual contact with the mother.

Learner 16, previously mentioned as a learner with the highest pre-departure anxiety in the cohort, fell into this category. During the pre-departure interview, Learner 16 explained that she had a very close relationship with her mother and showed concern about being apart from her for the first time. When asked if she thought she would be homesick during the SA period, she declared that she would definitely be homesick. In order to assess her degree of homesickness, she was asked to rate her predicted level of homesickness on a scale of 0 to 3. The lowest score was 0 which meant she was confident that she would not be homesick, and 3 indicated that she strongly suspected that she would be homesick.

I would give it a 3. Well, every day I am always all over my parents. If there is some free time, and my parents are sitting on the sofa, I just hang and sit on my parents like a koala. So, as much as possible, I stay with my parents, and if there is any free time, I am physically attached to my parents. For this reason, I dislike being at home by myself and I put on a DVD to distract myself when I have to stay home alone. (Learner 16, pre-departure interview response)

As Learner 16 expected, she experienced homesickness during her SA trip. In fact, on the homesickness questionnaire, Learner 16 had the third highest score (homesickness: 3/25).

The need to be in touch with her mother was very strong, and the following response shows the intensity of Learner 16's email activity.

I email almost every day. One time, my mother was on a trip for two nights, three days. During that time, I didn't receive any emails from her. I had forgotten about her trip, so I did not know why she was not replying to me for so long. Later, she emailed me and reminded me she was on a trip. I then remembered about her trip. I felt okay then. Other than that, so far, I have been fine. (Learner 16, while-abroad interview response)

Learner 16's homesickness is the type predicted by the loss model. If a learner is strongly emotionally attached to their parents, homesickness is probably inevitable. Because of the need to be in touch with home, Learner 16's English contact while abroad was very low. In fact, Learner 16 was found to have the lowest exposure in the cohort for two aspects of language contact (while-abroad total amount of language contact: 25/25), (while-abroad speaking contact: 25/25), and the second lowest for listening/reading/writing contact (while-abroad listening/reading/writing contact: 24/25).

7.3.2.2 The Control Theory – Loss of Control of Language Skills and Loss of Control During Unexpected Events

The second homesickness model summarized in Chapter 4 was the control theory (Fisher, 1986). This theory explains that when moving from a familiar to a new environment, people often feel a loss of control, and a period of feeling helpless is experienced in the new location. This serves as a trigger for homesickness. The following paragraphs describe examples of this trigger.

During SA, learners communicate with their host family in the L2, which is a significant challenge. Losing access to communication in the L1 and instead struggling to express themselves with their limited L2 skills, learners often feel at a loss.

Learner 14 is a female learner who had the sixth highest pre-departure language anxiety (pre-departure language anxiety: 6/25), and the seventh highest while-abroad homesickness (homesickness: 7/25). Learner 14 explained at the pre-departure interview how she did not like to ask the interlocutor to repeat words again and again during her previous SA trip.

When someone was saying something, I asked them to speak slowly. But, even when they said things many times, when I still could not understand, then I felt very sorry... I constantly said "What? Can you say it again?" (Learner 14, pre-departure interview response)

Learner 14 further explained during her pre-departure interview how her previous SA trip was depressing since she could not communicate in the L2 with her host family. She explained how this distress made her want to stay in her room, and avoid contact with them in her previous SA trip. She also showed concern about the upcoming SA for the same reason.

When I went last time [to SA], I could not speak [in English] so I felt very depressed. I shut myself inside my room and I did not go out. My host family was very kind and they asked me to come out, and took me to different places... This is my worry for this coming SA. (Learner 14, pre-departure interview response)

During the pre-departure interview, when asked how she would cope with the problem this time around, Learner 14 responded that she would like to leave her room on the upcoming SA trip and communicate with the host family more.

However, Learner 14 also expressed her concern about her homesickness because of L2 communication issues. The following is a pre-departure interview response when asked to give a score from 0 to 3 based on her expectation of homesickness. “I would give it a 2. I will have difficulty communicating, so three months will be long and difficult. I will also simply miss my friends.” (Learner 14, pre-departure interview response)

The experience of Learner 14 shows the relationship between pre-departure language anxiety, while-abroad homesickness, and while-abroad language contact.

People often feel at a loss when something unexpected happens. In the SA context, feelings of a loss of control might increase because: 1) unexpected events may occur that learners have never experienced before; 2) if solving problems is necessary, then doing so with limited L2 skills can be challenging; and 3) the people they usually consult, i.e., parents and friends, may be out of reach. Unexpected happenings can distress learners and they may feel reluctant to have active interaction in their L2. There were many unexpected turns of events reported by learners with high levels of homesickness and this section summarizes some of them.

Learner 4 is a female learner who scored the second highest on the homesickness questionnaire (homesickness: 2/25). She reported an unexpected problem concerning money. She lived with host parents and five other SA students from places such as China and Africa. An African female student asked Learner 4 whether she could charge a phone call to her credit card. Learner 4 explained “This never happens in Japan – borrowing someone else’s credit card to pay money. I think, maybe she feels that I am her family. In that case, I should be thankful for her thinking.” (Learner 4, while-abroad interview)

response) This problem was solved after an intervention by the international office at the host university.

As previously mentioned Learner 10 had high pre-language anxiety (pre-departure language anxiety: 5/25) and scored the third highest on the homesickness questionnaire (homesickness 3/25). Learner 10's unexpected trouble began upon arrival at the host family. Learner 10 found out on the arrival day that her host family was on vacation, so the host's brother and his wife came to stay with Learner 10 for a week. However, the brother and the wife did not look after her. "They did nothing for me. They did not care. I felt they were really very irresponsible." (Learner 10, while-abroad interview response) The host family was contacted by the international office at the host university to request an improvement in the way that they hosted students.

Learner 6, a female learner who scored the fifth highest in the cohort (homesickness: 5/25) reported feeling homesick upon arrival because of an unexpected host family situation and she also suffered from a noisy home environment. She was notified prior to her departure that her host family had a three-year-old child. However, when she arrived, there was a one-year-old as well. Also, she did not expect her host parents to be Filipinos. These unexpected things upon arrival made her feel homesick. Learner 6 explains as follows:

I had read about a three-year-old, but there was no mention of a one-year-old. So when I first met them, I thought "What? There are two?" I was surprised by that. Also, the host parents are Filipinos. They use Canadian English, but they have accents. I am used to the accent now. Also, the children are noisy. They do not march into my room, but they open the door quietly and try to come in... Also, when I am studying or writing a diary entry, I hear screaming. Last night was

difficult, too. It was not a cry, but just screaming out like “GYA!” I felt homesick a bit. When I first thought things were different from what I expected, then my emotions and feelings went down and I could not eat very much. I think it was because my health condition was bad. I thought of my family, well, more about my friends. I was wondering what my university friends were doing. (Learner 6, while-abroad interview response)

During while-abroad interview sessions, Learners 4, 10, and 6 talked in depth about these problems with irritation, which showed their disappointment at their host family. The unexpected family circumstances made learners feel homesick, and at the same time withdraw from language contact with their host family.

7.3.2.3 The Transition Theory – From Family to Guest

The third model of homesickness summarized in Chapter 4 is the transition theory, which explains that adapting to a new role results in a period of anxiety. The transition to the SA context can be challenging. For instance, the transition from L1 speaker to L2 learner with limited language skills involves effort, which overlaps with the loss of control of language skills reviewed above in Section 7.3.2.2. Another example is the transition from a family member in one’s real family to a guest in the host family.

Becoming a member of, or a guest in a host family requires transitional effort. Even though the host family is called *host family* and learners are taken into the homes, the learners are not quite family members in the new home. The following is an interview response by Learner 4, a previously mentioned learner with high levels of homesickness (homesickness: 2/25). She described feelings of not quite becoming a family member at her new host home. She especially had struggles with her host mother, who was hosting six

SA students in her home including Learner 4. Learner 4 was treated as a boarder living at her home, though the student had hoped for a more intimate host mother and host daughter relationship.

I do talk to my host family, but it is not like I am that close. Well, I guess I am a little bit close. But, it almost feels like there is an invisible wall. Maybe I think my friends are feeling similar at their homestay. (Learner 4, while-abroad interview response)

This host family required an intervention from the administrators at the host university later on.

7.3.2.4 The Interruption Theory – Being Deprived of Enjoyment and Favorite Food

Another theory of homesickness reviewed in Chapter 4 is the interruption theory, which postulates that interruption of on-going activity and not being able to find a substitute activity creates irritation. Learners are easily irritated if any of the relaxation, soothing, and fun activities they engage in in their home country cannot be accessed while abroad. This irritation may well be a factor influencing the amount and type of language contact abroad. Some of the learners with high homesickness scores expressed this irritation, as described in the following paragraphs.

The first interview response is from Learner 23, who scored the highest on the homesickness questionnaire (homesickness: 1/25). During the while-abroad interview, Learner 23 showed irritation toward not being able to do the things she used to enjoy at home on her own. The following response exemplifies the interruption theory:

Recently, I have been feeling homesick a bit. I feel homesick when I cannot enjoy my free time as I want. There is no place to have a good time and there are no buses to get around. Sometimes, I feel I really want to go shopping. I just want to be able to go shopping in Tokyo or Yokohama as I usually did. (Learner 23, while-abroad interview response)

Another important source of reassuring comfort, in fact a necessity for some learners, is their favorite food, and an interruption in access to the food they like was found to be highly irritating to some learners. Below is one example found in the interview response of the previously mentioned Learner 6 (homesickness: 5/25). Learner 6 expressed her concerns about the food at her homestay.

Well, I am not a fan of foreign food. Some of my friends eat bread for breakfast in Japan. But, I even have stomachache if I eat something other than rice for breakfast sometimes. I have to eat rice in the morning. But now, I am a little bit used to not having rice in the morning. It is good though that my host is a Filipino family, because we have rice almost every day. Some of my friends' host families do not like Japanese food and they say they do not get any rice at all. I am glad that even though it is Thai rice, at least I get some compared to no rice. (Learner 6, while-abroad interview response)

Learners make language contact, especially speaking contact by presenting the self through authentic L2 communication in the SA context. This is done while making the transitional adjustments to fit into the new and foreign environment, and forming new relationships. Since these activities require attitudinal efforts, negative non-linguistic

variables such as language anxiety and homesickness worked against them. Furthermore, possible causes and triggers of language anxiety and homesickness highlighted in Section 7.3 suggest that having fixed expectations of their life and of themselves abroad led to more distress. Being in distress was a discouragement from making speaking contact.

7.4 Inquiry into the Relationships Between Language Contact, Self-Perceived English, and Willingness to Communicate

Table 7.2 *Learners with Higher Self-Perceived English and Willingness to Communicate*

	Abroad Language Contact Score (Rank/25)			Self-perceived English Score (Rank/25)		Willingness to Communicate Score (Rank/25)	
	Total	Speaking	L/R/W	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
Learner 24	386 (1)	138 (6)	181 (1)	10 (2)	11 (5)	33 (6)	33 (9)
Learner 1	205 (15)	77 (20)	128 (12)	10 (2)	11 (5)	28 (13)	30 (17)
Learner 18	310 (5)	166 (1)	119 (15)	10 (2)	12 (2)	41 (1)	42 (1)
Learner 2	303 (7)	130 (7)	173 (6)	9 (7)	12 (2)	18 (23)	41 (2)
Learner 3	240 (12)	110 (14)	130 (11)	9 (7)	5 (10)	24 (19)	38 (3)

In the present section, the relationships between language contact, self-perceived English, and willingness to communicate will be examined through learner perspectives and experiences. This is in response to the significant relationships found in Section 6.7 in

Chapter 6, between pre-departure self-perceived English and while-abroad language contact, and between while-abroad language contact and post-return willingness to communicate.

In the present section, five learners as shown in Table 7.2 were selected. The learners had high pre-departure self-perceived English or post-return willingness to communicate, or both.

7.4.1 Self-Perceived English

7.4.1.1 Positivity in English Communication

Learners with higher pre-departure self-perceived English showed improvements over time in terms of communication strategies. Learner 24 was a female learner who ranked the second highest for pre-departure self-perceived English scores (pre-departure self-perceived English: 2/25). When asked how communication with her host family was going during while-abroad interview, her response was as follows:

I can definitely talk more than when I first came. At first, when I was asked a question like “How are you?” I could only say something like “Good.” But now, because this question is asked every day, I think of what to say before I reach home. I think of what I should talk about. If I do that, I can talk for longer. Also, I walk the dog with my host family [and speak in English]. (Learner 24, while-abroad interview response)

Learner 1, a female learner, who also scored the second highest for pre-departure self-perceived English (pre-departure self-perceived English: 2/25), expressed the view that in order to improve her English skill during the SA, she would try to talk to her host

family a lot. During the while-abroad interview, when asked if she was communicating with the host family as she planned, her reply was as follows:

Well, at the university, there are many Japanese students, so I end up talking in Japanese. But when I get home, I try to talk to my host family. I spend at least three hours with them, from after dinner to about 10 pm. I try to talk about what happened each day. (Learner 1, while-abroad interview response)

Moreover, during the while-abroad interview, in response to a question about any communication problems at the homestay, Learner 1 responded as follows: “Problems...Of course at first, there was an English communication barrier, and I couldn’t communicate. But, I always asked questions about anything I didn’t understand, and then they started initiating conversations. There aren’t any problems now.” (Learner 1, while-abroad interview response)

7.4.2 Willingness to Communicate

7.4.2.1 Willingness to Communicate and Solve Issues

Learners with high post-return willingness to communicate levels reported that they had a lot of language contact at their homestays. Furthermore, there were not any serious issues at their homestays.

Learner 2 expressed some thoughts on her willingness to communicate during her pre-departure interview. Learner 2 scored the second highest on willingness to communicate at post-return (post-return willingness to communicate: 2/25). Learner 2 looked back on her past SA trip, and explained the way this previous SA trip changed her way of thinking:

When I went [to SA in high school,] I wanted to talk about many things. They were mainly daily events, but I couldn't make the sentences into English and felt, "I hate this feeling of not being able to talk about even the simplest things"... I used to be very worried about my grammar, but at one point, I began to think like, does what I want to say sound like this in English, and think more about the nuance [rather than think about my grammar]. When I began to speak, everyone including my host family, school teachers, and friends tried to listen to me very carefully. Then, I could begin to enjoy speaking. I wasn't feeling that I couldn't [speak] any longer. I changed my way of thinking. So, I think that if I can put an effort into being positive about my speaking, then [the upcoming SA] will probably be good.
(Learner 2, pre-departure interview response)

When learners with a high willingness to communicate encountered minor challenges, they were willing to communicate with the host family and solve their problems, rather than leaving them unsolved or asking someone else to speak up on their behalf. An example of this involved Learner 18.

Learner 18 ranked first on willingness to communicate at post-return (post-return willingness to communicate: 1/25), and scored second on self-perceived English at pre-departure (pre-departure self-perceived English: 2/25). She reported on the problem she had with her host mother; however, she communicated with her host mother and solved the miscommunication.

My homestay family is very nice. There is only a host mother, so there is a chance to talk a lot. She is very powerful, and we get along really well. That's why we say too much to each other. So, sometimes, our jokes go too far, and we feel awkward, then I feel "oh no"! I feel that I'm being scolded when she harshly comments on something... When I think that I'm being scolded, I feel like crying... Then my host mother says she is not angry... I cried one time. Then, she said she didn't mean it that way, and said she was sorry. (Learner 18, while-abroad interview response)

Another student who showed willingness to communicate with their host family was Learner 3. Learner 3 is a female learner, who scored the third highest on the post-return willingness to communicate questionnaire, as shown in Table 7.2 (post-return willingness to communicate: 3/25). During the pre-departure interview, Learner 3 was asked if she was planning to communicate with her host family when she arrived, her response was as follows.

Yes, I am. I was told that the host family can see the improvement in your English skills the most. [In my previous SA trip] my host family said to me something like "your English has improved since you arrived", and I felt even more motivated to do better. I think it's much better to talk to the host family in a really friendly way [than to keep your distance]. (Learner 3, pre-departure interview response)

Learner 3 expressed a tactic she was going to implement when conversing in English during the upcoming SA during her pre-departure interview:

In any case, I thought at that time [in a previous SA trip] you cannot get your message across if you don't say it. If you are dissatisfied, well, not necessarily dissatisfied, but think something is wrong, then it is better to say what's wrong. In my last SA trip, I couldn't. Japanese people tend to think this way, and I couldn't say anything, because I was worried that the family would be in a bad mood. But, I think it's important to say things, so I will try next time. (Learner 3, pre-departure interview response)

During the pre-departure interview, Learner 3 explained that she was not too worried about communicating in English with her host family. In fact, she had many ideas in mind for better communication.

I'm not too worried. Actually, if I try to impress them at first by speaking a lot, then my host family will think that my English is good, and they might start speaking fast. I was told this in high school by my teacher [before going to do a SA in high school]. So, I will speak, but, how shall I say... if I don't understand something, I have to say that I don't understand. I think it is better to say something like "I don't understand that word". I used to pretend that I understood everything. (Learner 3, pre-departure interview response)

7.4.3 Not Experiencing Homesickness

It is worthwhile to note that all five learners in Table 7.2 responded to the question asked about whether or not they were feeling homesick during the while-abroad interview by saying that they were not. This supports the result reported in Chapter 6 that all three

aspects of while-abroad language contact are negatively correlated with while-abroad homesickness.

Kondo (1981) reported on personality and cultural effectiveness, and summarized the types of people who more easily overcome culture shock and the types of people who have more difficult adaptation responses. Kondo listed personality types which are *easier to adapt* as follows; extrovert, proactive, quick, flexible, independent, creative, and patient. As for personality types which are *more difficult to adapt*; introvert, passive, dependent, low self-esteem, not confident, dogmatic, and stubborn. Learners with higher self-perceived English and higher willingness to communicate seem to have the characteristics, which fit more into the easier to adapt type, such as being proactive and flexible.

7.5 Summary of the Findings from Chapter 7

The following is a summary of the findings of the present chapter:

Learner perspectives and experiences regarding language anxiety and language contact, interpretations and explanations drawn from them:

- (1) An underlying fear of language anxiety was observed, which was the fear of making mistakes and self being at risk.
- (2) Learner experiences illustrated that language anxiety may be related to insufficient language skills to do the communication tasks adequately.
- (3) Learner experiences illustrated that language anxiety was seen in shy learners.
- (4) Learner experiences illustrated that caretakers made learners with language anxiety feel easy to speak.
- (5) One strategy for overcoming language anxiety, adapting childishness was observed.

Learner perspectives and experiences regarding homesickness and language contact, and interpretations and explanations drawn from them:

- (1) The loss model of homesickness was observed in learners with high levels of homesickness, and this model helped explain why it is important for students to have contact with home and why homesick students have less language contact while abroad.
- (2) The control theory of homesickness was observed in learners with high levels of homesickness, and this model helped explain some of the reasons for reduced language contact.
- (3) The transition theory of homesickness was observed in learners with high levels of homesickness, and this model helped elucidate some of the reasons for reduced language contact.
- (4) The interruption theory of homesickness was observed in learners with high levels of homesickness. This model explained some of the sources of learner stress, and these sources of stress may be the reasons why homesick learners had significantly less language contact while abroad.

Learner perspectives and experiences regarding self-perceived English, willingness to communicate and language contact:

- (1) Learners with higher levels of self-perceived English had positive attitudes towards communication with their host family.
- (2) Learners with higher levels of willingness to communicate had strategies to solve language-related problems at their homestays.

- (3) Learners with higher levels of self-perceived English and willingness to communicate were conscious about making progress in English communication skills, and reevaluated their self-perceived English skills during SA.
- (4) Learners with higher levels of self-perceived English and willingness to communicate were not observed to be suffering from homesickness.

Chapter 8

Discussion

8.1 Overview of Chapter 8

Chapter 8 discusses the findings from the research questions that were posed in Chapter 1. There were three main research questions. Research question one referred to both linguistic and non-linguistic outcomes of SA. Research question two concerned the relationship between post-return English proficiency test results and while-abroad language contact. Research question three was focused on the variables identified by research question two. Each research question consisted of multiple sub research questions. Thus, there were 14 sub research questions in total. The last half of the present chapter is devoted to the implications of the results of the three main research questions.

8.2 Discussions in References to Research Question 1: Outcomes

The first research question focused on the outcomes of SA. There were five areas in which outcomes were investigated: 1) English proficiency, 2) willingness to communicate, 3) motivation, 4) language anxiety, and 5) self-perceived English. In all five areas, learners showed development overtime, and this is one of the most important findings of this study. The following sections will describe each area in detail.

8.2.1 Sub Research Question 1: English Proficiency

The first sub research question was regarding English proficiency. It was assumed that learners would show development in their English proficiency after the SA. This was based on the claim discussed in Chapter 3 that the SA context seems to be an effective

environment for language learning. Some characteristics of the SA context include: 1) the number of hours spent in the native-speaking environment, which provides; 2) enormous amounts of comprehensible input, as well as a large amount of speaking practice, 3) the requirement to get a number of things done in the language the students are learning, and 4) being able to interact with multiple NSs, which is not possible in the typical language classroom (DeKeyser, 1991; Lightbown & Spada, 2006). Another important aspect of the SA context reviewed in Chapter 3 was the benefit of the structure-based and meaning-based combination in the SA context (Freed, 1995; Long, 1988; Spada, 1986). Spada (1986), for instance, reports that learners who received the most structure-based instruction benefited the most from informal out-of-class interaction.

In this study, as assumed, the results showed that learners' English proficiency scores measured by CASEC at post-return were significantly higher than their CASEC scores at pre-departure. Therefore, a meaningful relationship between SA and language gain was found.

Furthermore, on average, learners made gains in their English proficiency regardless of their pre-departure proficiency. As noted in Chapter 3, some SA researchers have claimed that learners make gains as a result of SA. Moreover, lower English proficiency learners make more gains than higher proficiency learners due to SA regardless of target language, age, and duration of programs (Huebner, 1995; Lapkin et al., 1995). As Regan (1998) emphasizes, however, there is a need to investigate further the relationship between pre-departure proficiency level and proficiency gain as a result of SA. According to the results of the present study, learners on average made gains in proficiency, regardless of their initial proficiency.

8.2.2 Sub Research Question 2: Willingness to Communicate

The second area of outcome results concerned willingness to communicate levels. It was assumed that learners' willingness to communicate levels would be higher after the SA. This assumption was based on the findings reported by Yashima (2009), reviewed in Chapter 4, that the SA experience increases the amount of things learners want to say, or to communicate.

As speculated, the results of this study showed that on average, learners' willingness to communicate levels at post-return were significantly higher than their scores at pre-departure. Therefore, the SA was found to have an effect on the learners' willingness to communicate in English. Leaving the classroom environment and placing themselves in an authentic communication environment seemed to stimulate and promote willingness to communicate.

8.2.3 Sub Research Question 3: Motivation

The third area of outcome results concerned motivation levels. It was presumed that the learners' motivation levels would be higher after the SA. The basis of this claim comes from a study on SA reviewed in Chapter 3. DeKeyser (1991) found that the SA context is an effective environment for language learning and that it has a positive influence on learner motivation. Moreover, Calvin (1999) reports that communication with the native community who do not use foreigner talk (i.e. unmodified input) increased learner confidence and motivation as reviewed in Chapter 3. Furthermore, as noted in Chapter 4, Simões (1996) reports that after only a 5-week SA experience, learners were found to have higher levels of self confidence and motivation.

As predicted, the results of this study showed that on average, learners' motivation levels at post-return were significantly higher than their scores at pre-departure. Therefore, an effect of SA on motivation was found in this study.

8.2.4 Sub Research Question 4: Language Anxiety

The fourth area of outcome results pertains to language anxiety. It was assumed that language anxiety levels would decrease after the SA. The basis of this assumption comes from a report by Allen (2002), which reported that language anxiety decreased during a six-week SA program, especially in controlled short interactions, such as service encounters.

As assumed, language anxiety levels at post-return were significantly lower than their levels at pre-departure. Therefore, an effect of SA on language anxiety was found in this study.

8.2.5 Sub Research Question 5: Self-Perceived English

The final area of outcome results related to self-perceived English. It was speculated that self-perceived English levels would develop after the SA. The foundation of this speculation comes from studies reporting a negative correlation between language anxiety and self-perceived English speaking ability (Szyszka, 2011; MacIntyre, Noels, & Clement, 1997). These studies indicate that if language anxiety is lowered by a SA experience, then self-perceived English speaking skill, and possibly other skills may be higher.

As speculated, on average, learners' self-perceived English levels at post-return were significantly higher than their levels at pre-departure. Therefore, an effect of SA on self-perceived English was found in this study.

8.3 Discussions in Reference to Research Question 2: The Relationship Between Post-Return Proficiency Test Scores and While-Abroad Language Contact

The second research question examined the associations between post-return proficiency scores and a) pre-departure variables, such as pre-departure language profile, pre-departure language contact, and pre-departure non-linguistic variables, b) while-abroad variables, such as while-abroad language contact, and while-abroad homesickness, and c) post-return non-linguistic variables. The second research question included seven sub research questions. A discussion of the association between while-abroad language contact will be presented in later sections.

8.3.1 Sub Research Question 6: Pre-Departure Language Profile to Post-Return Proficiency

Sub research question six focused on whether learners with a better pre-departure language profile tend to do better on a post-return English proficiency test. Three variables were included in the pre-departure language profile: 1) the number of previous SA trips, 2) the number of English courses taken one semester before departure, and 3) the number of extra English lessons the student was taking outside of university before departure.

It was assumed that learners with a better pre-departure language profile would do better on a post-return English proficiency test. The basis of this assumption comes from a study (Brecht et al., 1995) reviewed in Chapter 3, claiming that grammar and reading pre-departure achievement scores had significant predictive value for speaking proficiency, reading proficiency and listening proficiency gains after studying abroad. Specifically, it was reported that grammar and reading knowledge prior to departure correlate positively

with gains in all three skills. It was also stressed that the correlations for gains in speaking proficiency are strong across different levels of language proficiency.

The results showed that the number of English courses taken one semester before departure had a significant relationship with post-return English proficiency. However, the results showed that the number of previous SA trips and the number of extra English lessons the student was taking outside of university were not significantly related to the post-proficiency test performance. The results seem to indicate that formal instruction prior to SA is useful for making proficiency gains during SA. The result also indicates that less formal language learning, indicated by the number of previous SA trips and the number of extra English lessons outside of university (usually referring to conversational lessons), were not associated with proficiency gains during SA.

Furthermore, the amount of classroom instructed learning immediately before departure, indicated by the number of English courses taken one semester before departure, was significantly related to the post-return proficiency test scores. This result can partially support the claim that formal language learning paired with natural language learning during SA is beneficial (Freed, 1995; Long, 1988; Spada, 1986), suggesting learners benefit from the combination of formal language learning prior to departure and informal out-of-class interaction while-abroad.

8.3.2 Sub Research Question 7: Pre-Departure Language Contact to Post-Return Proficiency

Sub research question 7 focused on whether learners with more pre-departure language contact tend to do better on a post-return English proficiency test. Pre-departure

language contact includes pre-departure total language contact, pre-departure speaking contact, and pre-departure reading/listening/writing contact.

It was assumed that learners with more language contact before the SA would do better on a post-return English proficiency test. However, contrary to the assumption, none of the three aspects of pre-departure language contact were significantly related to post-return proficiency scores. Therefore, the effect of pre-departure language contact on post-return proficiency scores was not found in this study. The results may indicate that simply having more language contact prior to departure may not give the necessary foundation for measurable language proficiency gain during SA.

8.3.3 Sub Research Question 8: Pre-Departure Non-Linguistic Variables to Post-Return Proficiency

Sub research question 8 was focused on whether learners with higher pre-departure non-linguistic attributes tend to do better on a post-return English proficiency test. The pre-departure non-linguistic variables that were investigated include pre-departure willingness to communicate, pre-departure motivation, pre-departure self-perceived English, and pre-departure anxiety. It was assumed that learners with better pre-departure non-linguistic attributes would do better on a post-return English proficiency test. The assumption comes from Krashen's affective filter hypothesis (1982), which predicts that learners with a higher affective filter, for instance, those who are tense, anxious, or bored may block out the input. Likewise, it was further supposed that learners who had a low affective filter may be more motivated and have less language anxiety, resulting in their superior processing of language input. Further, this may lead to higher scores on the post-return proficiency test. More specifically, for instance, Isabelli-Garcia (2006) claims

highly motivated learners had positive attitudes towards the target language and community, and developed a wider ‘social network’ referring to informal relationships, which resulted in higher proficiency, as noted in Chapter 4.

However, contrary to the assumption, the results showed none of the pre-departure non-linguistic attributes to be significantly related to the post-return proficiency scores. Therefore, a relationship between the pre-departure non-linguistic attributes and the post-return proficiency scores was not found in this study.

One of the possible reasons for this could be the complexity of the language learning process and the wide variety of variable combinations involved in proficiency gain. Each learner may have had a slightly different set of attributes leading to their proficiency gain. It should be noted that pre-departure non-linguistic variables were significantly correlated to while-abroad language contact, which will be discussed in Section 8.3.7.

8.3.4 Sub Research Question 9: While-Abroad Language Contact to Post-Return Proficiency

Sub research question nine asked whether learners with more while-abroad language contact had a tendency to do better on a post-return English proficiency test. While-abroad language contact included while-abroad total language contact, while-abroad speaking contact, and while-abroad listening/reading/writing contact.

It was assumed that learners with more while-abroad language contact would do better on a post-return English proficiency test. The basis of this assumption comes from a number of research studies reviewed in Chapter 3. For instance, Goodwin and Natch (1988) concluded that authentic language use experience afforded by SA may play an essential role in the development of L2 proficiency. Brecht and Robinson (1995) suggest

that the reason why the SA environment is conducive to language proficiency gains may derive from the number of opportunities participants have to experience language practice out-of-class. More specifically, some studies explore the benefit of the SA environment for language learning, including being able to interact with multiple NSs and receive an enormous amount of comprehensible input as well as a huge amount of speaking practice. (not always, but generally more time than AH learners) (Freed, 1995; Lightbown & Spada, 2006).

Contrary to the assumption, none of the three while-abroad language contact variables were significantly related to post-return proficiency scores. Therefore, a meaningful relationship between while-abroad language contact variables and post-return proficiency scores was not found in this study.

This finding supports the claim by Freed (1990) partially. As is the case for this study, Freed (1990) did not find any connection between the amount of out of class contact in general and measurable linguistic progress during SA. However, Freed also reports (1990) that, for the purpose of linguistic gain, it is not the amount but rather the type of contact which matters. Freed reported that lower proficiency learners benefit more from social/oral interaction (e.g., speaking with native speakers). Higher proficiency learners, on the other hand, profit more from a variety of media, which provide lengthy interaction with extended reading and listening discourse (e.g., newspapers articles, television shows). The present study did not divide learners into groups based on their level. Therefore, this study was not able to confirm the latter results.

8.3.5 Sub Research Question 10: While-Abroad Homesickness to Post-Return Proficiency

Sub research question ten addressed whether learners with lower while-abroad homesickness tend to do better on a post-return English proficiency test. It was speculated that learners with lower while-abroad homesickness would do better on a post-return English proficiency test.

The basis of this assumption comes from the symptoms of homesickness. As noted in Chapter 4, homesickness is a state of focusing attention on home-related ruminative activity (Fisher, 1989). Therefore, it was expected that learners with homesickness may have limited cognition available for other cognitive activities such as language learning. Perhaps, Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Maslow, 1987), which was reviewed in Chapter 4, can also provide an explanation for how homesick learners may not be able to engage in higher cognitive activities. Maslow's hierarchy of needs as shown in Figure 8.1 can visually illustrate how SA learners having demands at lower levels of needs may have difficulties to strive for an upper level of capabilities. For instance, SA learners with homesickness suffering by not having their family close by, not being able to eat the food they want, not being able to get around on their own, and not feeling respected because of insufficient self presentation in L2, are at risk of having demands at lower levels of needs, such as physiological needs, safety needs, needs of love, affection and belongingness. When these needs are satisfied, then learners' needs for self-actualization can get activated, which is learning L2 through interaction in a new environment.

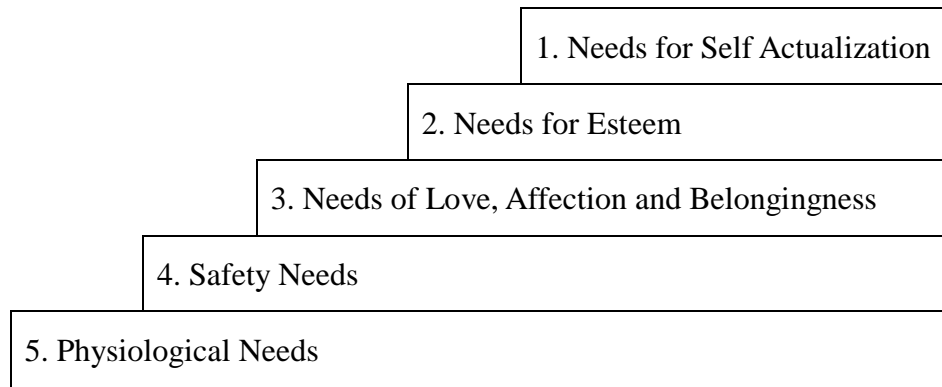


Figure 8.1 Maslow's hierarchy of needs (1987). Note. Adapted from *Motivation and personality*, by A. Maslow, 1987.

Contrary to this assumption, the results showed that homesickness was not significantly associated with post-return proficiency. An effect of while-abroad homesickness on post-return proficiency scores was not found in this study. It is beneficial to learn that homesickness does not directly relate to post-return proficiency, as homesickness may be a common state for learners while-abroad. However, while-abroad homesickness was found to be negatively associated with all three aspects of while-abroad language contact. This will be discussed in Section 8.3.7.1.

8.3.6 Sub Research Question 11: Post-Return Variables to Post-Return Proficiency

Sub research question 11 was focused on whether learners with higher post-return non-linguistic attributes scored higher on a post-return English proficiency test. Post-return variables included post-return willingness to communicate, post-return motivation, post-return self-perceived English, and post-return language anxiety.

It was presumed that learners with higher post-return non-linguistic attributes would do better on a post-return English proficiency test. There are some assumptions about the relationship between post-return proficiency scores and non-linguistic variables such as

motivation. Isabelli-Garcia (2006) found that highly motivated learners had positive attitudes towards the target language and community, and developed a larger 'social network', referring to informal relationships, and that this triggered higher proficiency development.

As assumed, post-return motivation and post-return self-perceived English skills were found to have a relationship to post-return proficiency. The results of this study seem to suggest a similar relationship between motivation and higher achievement to that found by Isabelli-Garcia (2006). The results of the present study also seem to indicate that learners with higher levels of self-perceived English felt confident and had more positive language experiences which led them to achieve higher proficiency scores. Finally, this study shows that being in an authentic SA environment allowed learners to make a more accurate assessment of their English level.

8.3.7 Sub Research Question 12: While-Abroad Language Contact and Non-Linguistic Variables

Sub research question 12 was focused on while-abroad language contact. This sub research question was related to the associations between while-abroad language contact and non-linguistic variables. Non-linguistic variables included 1) pre-departure non-linguistic variables, 2) while-abroad non-linguistic variables, and 3) post-return non-linguistic variables. This research question led to some new findings.

Since while-abroad language contact is an aspect claimed to be effective for language learning (i.e., Spada, 1986; Long, 1988; DeKeyser, 1991; Freed, 1995; Lightbown and Spada; 2006) examining which non-linguistic variables are related to while-abroad language contact during SA is important. It was presumed that learners'

non-linguistic variables would have an effect on the amount of language contact that they engaged in while-abroad. For example, it was predicted that learners with weaker non-linguistic attributes such as high language anxiety would have less language contact abroad. Research done in the classroom context (MacIntyre and Gardner, 1991) suggests symptoms of language anxiety include a reduction in L2 use and an avoidance of L2 use opportunities. By contrast, learners with stronger non-linguistic attributes such as a high willingness to communicate will have more language contact abroad, as claimed by Yashima et al. (2004).

8.3.7.1 Non-Linguistic Variables Relating to Less Language Contact

Some interesting results were found. As assumed, pre-departure language anxiety was significantly correlated with while-abroad homesickness, which was an original finding to SA research. Moreover, while-abroad homesickness was negatively correlated with all aspects of while-abroad language contact; while-abroad language contact total, while-abroad speaking contact, and while-abroad listening/reading/writing contact, which was also an original SA research finding.

8.3.7.2 Non-Linguistic Variables Relating to More Language Contact

By contrast, some non-linguistic variables were found to have significant positive relationships to language contact. First, pre-departure self-perceived English was significantly related to while-abroad total language contact and while-abroad listening/reading/writing contact. Pre-departure self-perceived English was also significantly correlated with post-return willingness to communicate. These two relationships are original findings to the field. Finally, while-abroad language contact was

significantly related to post-return willingness to communicate. This finding partially supports a claim by Yashima et al. (2004), that pre-departure willingness to communicate allowed learners to spend more time communicating with host families.

8.4 Discussions in Reference to Research Question 3: QUAL Inquiries

8.4.1 Sub Research Question 13: Learner Perspectives and Experiences

Sub research question 13 referred to whether learner perspectives were available to confirm the significant correlations for while-abroad language contact that were identified by the QUAN analysis in Chapter 6.

8.4.1.1 Learner Perspectives Relating to Less Language Contact

The first QUAL analysis focus in Chapter 7 concerned the reason for comparatively low while-abroad language contact. Specifically, the focus was on the significant relationship found between pre-departure language anxiety and while-abroad homesickness. Furthermore, the significant relationship found between while-abroad homesickness and less while-abroad language contact was also investigated using learner perspectives.

Learner perspectives confirmed the findings from a number of studies in language anxiety. For instance, some of the causes of language anxiety were confirmed, such as the fear of making mistakes (Gardner and MacIntyre, 1993) and self being at risk (Bailey, 1981; Horwits et al, 1986). Secondly, learner experiences illustrated language anxiety seen in shy learners. Therefore, this study showed that communication anxiety in the L1 was consistent in some learners in the L2, which is a claim by McCroskey and Jung (2004) and Yashima (2004). Thirdly, this study observed that caretakers can make learners with language anxiety feel more at ease, which is reported by Pellegrino (2005). Finally, one

other strategy of overcoming language anxiety, adapting childishness (Bailey, 1983; Pellegrino, 2005) was also observed.

Learner perspectives and experiences presented in Chapter 7 confirmed aspects of a number of homesick models: The loss model of homesickness (Bowlby, 1999), the control theory of homesickness (Fisher, 1986), the transition theory of homesickness (Wapner, Kaplan & Chiottone, 1981), and the interruption theory of homesickness (Mandler, 1975). Indeed, all of these models were found to be pertinent to learners who had high levels of homesickness.

8.4.1.2 Learner Perspectives Relating to More Language Contact

The second area of focus in the QUAL phase in Chapter 7 was the positive associations to while-abroad language contact. Specifically, there was a focus on the significant relationship found between pre-departure self-perceived English and while-abroad total language contact, and while-abroad listening/reading/writing contact. Furthermore, the significant relationship between pre-departure self-perceived English and post-return willingness to communicate was also investigated using learner experiences.

The experiences of learners with high pre-departure self-perceived English and high post-return willingness to communicate shared a number of positive attitudes toward communicating in English. For instance, these learners expressed a strong desire to communicate with host family members, and a determination to maximize the time for English communication practices. A new finding was that learners with higher levels of willingness to communicate had multiple strategies to cope with language-related problems at their homestays, such as be honest and ask for clarification if the meaning is not clear, or try to communicate if something is bothering them. Moreover, they were also shown to be

more conscious about making progress in their English communication skills while-abroad and adjusted their self-perceived English skills to acknowledge development they are making. Another new finding was that learners with higher levels of self-perceived English and willingness to communicate were not observed to be suffering from homesickness.

8.4.2 Sub Research Question 14: Interpretations and Explanations from Learners Perspectives and Experiences

Finally, sub research question 14 focused on finding interpretations and explanations in learner perspectives and experiences regarding the correlating variables for while-abroad language contact that were identified in the QUAN analysis.

Learner perspectives showed how pre-departure language anxiety was related to homesickness. Language anxiety, or apprehension in using the L2, was caused by an embarrassing moment in the past using the L2, or a lack of L2 communication skill to do the communication tasks, or shyness in personality, magnified by a number of difficulties in a new environment abroad, such as a loss of control over comfort such as food, family, and leisure. At the same time, facing unexpected difficulties made them want to escape into their rooms and engage in comforting thoughts about their life at home back in Japan. This resulted in less while-abroad language contact in all three aspects.

The learner perspectives and experiences regarding self-perceived English, willingness to communicate and language contact illustrate the follows: Learners with higher levels of self-perceived English began their homestay with positive attitudes towards communication with their host family. They seemed to have strategies and tactics that showed flexibility in coping with communication difficulties. When they overcame some difficulties at their homestay, they adjusted their self-perceived English level higher,

and felt more positive about their improvement. Therefore, they were more self-motivated. Those learners had such a positive outlook on life abroad that they did not have the need to escape into ruminative thoughts of home.

8.5 Implications for Research Question 1: Outcomes

The following sections will elucidate the implications for each research question.

8.5.1 Understanding SA Outcomes

The first implication comes from the outcome results. What was found was that 15-weeks or one semester of SA was effective for learners to make linguistic gains as well as develop non-linguistic attributes that have an effect on language contact and proficiency gain. In Chapter 2, the four expected areas of SA outcomes were reviewed (Meyer-Lee & Evans, 2007): 1) language learning, 2) intercultural competence, including cognitive knowledge about the specific host culture and having an international perspective, 3) disciplinary knowledge and 4) social and emotional growth, including affective attitudes toward self-identity and attitudes toward others. The results of the present study support the claim that language learning is an area which shows development during a 15-week SA experience along with the other non-linguistic attributes that seem to have an effect on language contact and proficiency gain during SA.

8.5.2 Suggestions for Home Institution: Understanding Learner Outcomes

There are some suggestions for the home institutions. Firstly, it is important to assess learner outcomes and understand what and how much learning is taking place by the SA programs offered. The methods of assessing outcomes by institutions can include indirect

methods such as surveys, and direct methods such as tests (Yarabinec, Cleve & Walgren, 2005) as reviewed in Chapter 2.

To assess language learning outcomes, tests can easily administered at pre-departure and at post-return using online testing. Computer adaptive tests such as CASEC (Japan Institute of Educational Measurement, 2009) and ALC NetAcademy (ALC Education, 2005) can be useful, as test takers only need approximately 30 to 40 minutes to take the test, and the feedback is presented within seconds to the test takers as well as to the administrators in both electric and paper forms (see Appendix O for sample feedback). For non-linguistic attributes, surveys and self-assessments can be employed. It goes without saying that learners should be aware of their own learning outcomes. In addition, presenting the outcome results to stakeholders is beneficial for obtaining understanding and the support for SA programs.

8.5.3 Suggestions for Home Institution: Understanding Program Benefits

It is important for home institutions to periodically assess SA programs and host institutions. As reviewed in Chapter 2, there are four general areas which are important to assess (Zukroff, Ferst, Hirsch, Slawson, & Wiedenhoef, 2005): 1) program objectives, 2) academic objectives, 3) interaction with the host culture, and 4) support. There are more specific questions that can help review existing SA programs (Zukroff, et al., 2005) listed in Chapter 2. The pertinent questions are listed below:

When reviewing and evaluating a SA program, it is suggested to include learner outcomes.

Table 8.1 *Questions to Help Review Existing SA programs*

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1. How does the program aid the institution in fulfilling its own academic and cross-cultural education mission?
 2. How effective is the program design in meeting the stated objectives of the program?
 3. How does the academic program abroad compare with the home institution's on-campus courses, regarding course assignments, reading, test score distribution, etc.?
 4. What rationale is offered for the program's particular location?
 5. How available and adequate are the academic resources and support services abroad?
 6. What are the levels of student and faculty interest and commitment in maintaining this particular kind of program and this program in particular?
-

Note. Adapted from "Program assessment and evaluation," by S. Zukroff, S. Ferst, J. Hirsch, C. Slawson, and M. Wiedenhoef, in J. L. Brockington, W. W. Hoffa, and P. C. Martin (Eds.), *NAFSA's Guide to Education Abroad: For Advisers and Administrators*, 2005, p. 451.

8.5.4 Suggestions for Home Institution: Promoting SA Programs to Attract Students

After evaluating a SA program, the program should be publicized to attract more participants. The aims of publicity and promotion are to persuade more students to participate, and to help learners select a program wisely. The methods, such as variety and repetition (Yarabinec, Cleve, & Walgen, 2005) of SA program promotion are reviewed in Chapter 2.

Japanese university students are not participating in SA programs as much as they used to as noted in Section 2.2 in Chapter 2. Some reasons including the weak economy and university students being *sou-shoku-kei* were also considered in Section 2.5.1 in

Chapter 2. Although some Japanese university students participate in SA programs for language learning purposes, learning takes place in various other areas as well. SA participants develop socially, emotionally, and develop their intercultural competence. These important areas can be greatly developed by experiencing life abroad, and these areas may not develop much otherwise (Meyer-Lee & Evans, 2007). Home universities in Japan need to seek ways to address the issues discussed in Chapter 2 and to continue to provide and advertise attractive SA programs to prospective participants.

8.6 Implications for Research Question 2: Relationships Between Post-Return Proficiency and While-Abroad Language Contact

8.6.1 Negative and Positive Attributes for Proficiency Gain and Language Contact

Overall, the results of this study showed that three variables were significantly associated with post-return proficiency scores: 1) the number of courses taken before departure, 2) post-return motivation and 3) post-return self-perceived English.

Regarding while-abroad language contact, there were negative and positive variables found. The negative variables were: 1) pre-departure language anxiety, and 2) while-abroad homesickness. The positive variables were: 1) pre-departure self-perceived English, and 2) post-return willingness to communicate.

Table 8.2 *Negative Attributes and Associated Negative Effects*

Negative Attributes	Associations and Negative Effects
- <u>Pre-departure language anxiety</u>	- Less while-abroad language contact
- While-abroad homesickness	

Table 8.3 *Positive Attributes and Associated Positive Effects*

Positive Attributes	Associations and Positive Effects
- <u>Pre-departure self-perceived English</u>	- Higher proficiency
- <u>Number of courses taken before SA</u>	- More while-abroad language contact
- Post-return motivation	
- Post-return self-perceived English	
- Post-return willingness to communicate	

The results imply that there are two groups of attributes: Negative attributes which are associated with negative effects on language contact or proficiency gain as shown in Table 8.2, and positive attributes and their positive associations, which are shown in Table 8.3. The underlines indicate that they are pre-departure attributes. The clearest and most important implication here is the need to carry out advance preparation to reduce the effects of the negative attributes.

8.6.2 Advance Preparation for Negative Attribute: Language Anxiety

For language anxiety, from the point of view of the language educators, understanding the manifestation and its effect on L2 language interactions will help

prepare L2 learners better. For instance, the development of learners' social skills prior to departure would be beneficial. Aikawa (2000) points out that a lack of social skills, such as choice of topic and the inability to adjust one's speech by checking one's conversation partners' verbal and non-verbal feedback, causes high communication anxiety. Moreover, people with high communication anxiety tend to speak less and use less eye contact, less facial expressions, and less body language when compared to people with low communication anxiety. They also tend to choose negative conversation topics, such as feeling of sadness or things they are unable to do. Social skills are practical tools used in authentic communication, and these skills should be taught to prepare learners for authentic L2 interaction.

From the point of view of the learners, the SA component of their academic career must be planned carefully, meaning language preparation courses prior to departure should be included in their schedule, as language preparation courses can be expected to give them a formal foundation and practical skills in the use of the language in advance. Also, it is important for learners to realize that the more language courses they take prior to departure, the more chance of getting benefit from the SA experience, meaning more language proficiency gain during the SA.

Finally, informing homestay family members about difficulties that learners may experience in expressing themselves in the L2 can help learners feel more comfortable and productive. With this support, L2 learners abroad may be able to build confidence more quickly and engage themselves more in L2 use.

8.6.3 Advance Preparation for Negative Attribute: Homesickness

For homesickness, there are a number of areas of advance preparation for educators. The first one is to make sure learners have realistic expectations (Brislin et al., 1986; Grove & Torbiorn, 1993; Martin, 1993). It is crucial to have realistic expectations about what will be encountered in the new environment, how the experience of adaptation will be, and most importantly, how effective learners will function in the new setting. Martin (1993) explains that learners who have positive but unrealistic expectations will experience psychological difficulties. They will likely be disappointed with the new SA environment, the experience they are having, and their own performance. Paige (1993) suggests that advance preparation programs should require learners to reflect on their expectations. Discussion questions for this reflection include the following:

What do they expect to gain from the experience? What do they think the host culture will be like? How personally satisfying do they think the host culture will be for them? What do they expect of themselves in the intercultural situation—for example, how culturally sensitive or adaptable do they think they will be? Do they think they will experience culture shock? (Paige, 1993, p. 10)

When discussing these questions, educators must help learners maintain their enthusiasm while at the same time thinking realistically about the upcoming experience.

From the point of view of administrators, since ruminating about thoughts of home is a typical symptom of homesickness, Fisher (1989) suggests physical exercise and keeping busy are important. If the host school has an exercise programs or activities for SA learners

to participate in, especially during the early days of their SA experience, it helps the learners to feel less homesick.

For learners, while-abroad, they should be informed that even though they themselves made the challenging choice to be away from home, it is okay to admit and talk about being homesick (Fisher, 1989). Another suggestion is to help them regard the culture shock and homesickness as a process of personal growth, as suggested by Adler (1987). Culture shock and homesickness is usually associated with undesirable and problematic experiences of SA learners. Adler views these experiences as the core or essence of the learning experience. Especially, Adler claims that these experiences lead to greater self awareness and personal growth. Preparing the learners to consciously become aware of their development in the SA environment, as well as their personal growth, is a meaningful way to approach adjustment from a different angle. As in the wider life-cycle, a person goes to school, changes school, leaves home, goes to work, gets married, and moves away from a home and so on. Homesickness is an existential act that is repeated many times in life.

8.7 Implications of Research Question 3: QUAL Inquiries

8.7.1 Two Opposites Pre-Departure Attributes

The first implication is the emergence of two contrasting pre-departure conditions, as shown previously in Tables 8.2 and 8.3. Among the pre-departure variables, language anxiety and self-perceived English skill were two pre-departure attributes which seem to divide the learners into 1) SA learners with less language contact, and 2) SA learners with more language contact.

Szyska's study (2011) can provide an explanation for the relationships between these two contrasting attributes; pre-departure language anxiety and pre-departure self-perceived English. Firstly, Szyska confirms a negative relationship between learners' language anxiety and the way learners perceive their target language skills. Szyska explains that learners with high language anxiety do not believe in their abilities and underestimate their language skills. Moreover, Szyska points out that these learners may be discouraged from developing foreign language skills and make less effort in developing their language learning. Szyska's study (2011) also indicates that, in contrast, learners with less language anxiety may believe in their abilities and self-evaluate themselves highly. Furthermore, these learners may be encouraged to develop their language skills and make an effort in developing their language learning. The present study also suggests that the foundation of language development is learners' non-linguistic attributes, such as language anxiety and the realistic self-evaluation of their language skills.

8.7.2 Understanding Two Pathways

The second implication from the QUAL analysis is the deeper understanding of two types of learner pathways.

8.7.2.1 A Portrait of Negative SA Language Learners

By reviewing the QUAL analysis in Chapter 7, a portrait of negative learners emerged. The learners with less language contact while-abroad have high language anxiety at pre-departure. They compare themselves with other classmates and self-evaluate themselves poorly even though their English proficiency test scores are much better than some of their classmates. They are self-conscious about their English use, and minimize L2

use which might contain mistakes. They are concerned that mistakes in L2 will make them look silly to others. Some of them may feel shy even in their L1.

While-abroad, these learners continue to have high language anxiety and refrain from speaking up at their homestays. They wonder why they feel so worried about making simple grammar mistakes. Not being able to control communication and language, on top of not being able to access familiar comforts makes them feel down. Triggered by unexpected events, learners long for home. They tend to project their negative feelings to their host family and the new environment. To compromise, they escape to thoughts of familiar comforts; family and friends at home. As a result of homesickness, learners have less language contact, not only in speaking, but also in listening, reading, and writing contact.

They finish their SA and come home with minimum language contact abroad. Post-return, their willingness to communicate levels have not developed as well as many of their peers. Their motivation levels remain lower than other learners in their cohort. At least, they feel satisfied that they have overcome the hardship of doing a homestay for a semester.

By adding the significant relationship found to English proficiency scores, other interpretations can be added. For instance, such learners are unlikely to have taken many English courses before departure, due to possibly having less motivation to learn English. At post-return, unsuccessful learners score low on the post-return English proficiency test, and display low levels of self-perceived English ability.

8.7.3 A Portrait of Positive SA Language Learners

A portrait of more successful learners with more language contact abroad can also be projected. Such learners often have high self-perceived English skills before departure. They feel confident and are free of language anxiety.

While-abroad, they engage in language practices through authentic communication with host family members. They feel difficulties communicating in English at first, but they seem to have tactics and strategies to cope with communication difficulties. After overcoming some communication difficulties, they feel a sense of achievement and improvement in their communication skills. They constantly re-self-evaluate their English skills by incorporating positive experiences. They enjoy communicating and using English, so the amount of language contact they receive is high. They do not feel homesick. Their intention is to learn the language and they engage in this task.

By adding the post-return proficiency association results, learners, upon return have higher English proficiency scores. In addition, their self-perceived English levels, motivation, and willingness to communicate levels are high, as a result of learning that took place while-abroad. Their improved motivation as a result of learning is called resultative motivation (Hermann, 1980; Savignon, 1972; Strong, 1984). As noted in Chapter 4, this form of motivation is evident in positive learners.

8.7.4 Non-Linguistic Attributes as Showing Intention for Behavior and Action

In this study, intentions held by positive learners such as “I plan to speak English a lot with my host family while abroad” seems to determine their behavior. This leads to the final implication from the QUAL analysis, which is the connection between intention and behavior. Behavioral intentions have been studied widely in the fields of psychology and

communication (MacIntyre et al., 1998). Especially, the theory of planned behavior (TPB) conceptualized by Ajzen (1985) predicts that the most immediate cause of behavior is the intention to engage in a behavior and the person's actual control over the actions (Ajzen, 2012). In the willingness to communicate model developed by MacIntyre et al. (1988), it is also believed that behavior is strongly predicted by intention or willingness to act.

In summary, the final interpretation from the QUAL analysis was the discovery of non-linguistic attributes showing learner intention which determine behavior and action for language contact and language learning. Moreover, without positive non-linguistic attributes, positive behavior and action toward language use and learning may be difficult.

Chapter 9

Summary and Conclusion

9.1 Overview of Chapter 9

Chapter 9 presents a summary of the major findings of the present study, which is followed by the strengths and the limitations of the research. This chapter is concluded with some suggestions for future research.

9.2 Summary of the Major Findings

This study examined the outcomes of SA in terms of language proficiency and non-linguistic attributes. Furthermore, the investigation explored variables related to: 1) post-return English proficiency and 2) while-abroad language contact. Finally, this investigation used QUAL data such as learner perspectives to interpret and discuss the QUAN results. The overall aim of this study was to investigate the learning that takes place during SA, and why some learners succeed by making more language contact or/and proficiency gain while others do not. The following sections summarize a number of interesting answers found.

9.2.1 Outcomes of SA

Firstly, regarding SA outcomes, significant developments during SA were found in all five areas investigated. On their return from SA, learners had: 1) higher English proficiency, 2) higher motivation, 3) higher willingness to communicate, 4) lower language anxiety, and 5) higher self-perceived English.

The previous research on SA outcomes has been mixed, as discussed in Chapter 3, 4, and 8. However, the results of this study indicate that 15 weeks or three months is a sufficient length of time for there to be gains in language proficiency, regardless of pre-departure proficiency level. Furthermore, a 15-week SA experience was also found to develop learners' non-linguistic attributes surrounding their language contact and language learning.

9.2.2 Attributes Associated with Post-Return English Proficiency

The second important set of findings relates to the predictors of post-return English proficiency gains. Among the variables investigated, three were found to have a significant relationship: 1) the number of English courses taken prior to SA, 2) post-return motivation, and 3) post-return willingness to communicate. The first indicator was the number of English courses taken prior to departure, implying that formal instruction before departure can help build a foundation for language gain in a natural acquisition environment. The second indicator was that learners who were highly motivated or/and had higher levels of willingness to communicate post-return scored higher on the post-return English proficiency test, which implies that positive attributes are important in reinforcing positive behavior and action for language learning.

9.2.3 Attributes Associated with While-Abroad Language Contact

The third important set of findings was the association between non-linguistic attributes and while-abroad language contact. As Collentine (2011) notes, "One of the most undisputed assumptions about the SA context is that learners receive vast amounts of input and have numerous opportunities for communicative interactions" (p. 226). It is desirable

for learners to maximize the opportunities for language practice while-abroad. The results of this study indicate that three attributes were significant predictors of the amount of language contact undertaken by the students. They were: 1) pre-departure self-perceived English skills, 2) while-abroad homesickness, (negatively related), and 3) post-return willingness to communicate.

As noted above, pre-departure self-perceived English skills and post-return willingness to communicate were both significantly related to while-abroad language contact. QUAL data illustrated how learners with higher pre-departure self-perceived English levels had a positive outlook on their interaction in English and the upcoming SA experience in general. Learners with a higher post-return willingness to communicate showed a variety of tactics to increase the amount of interaction they undertook with native speakers, as well as strategies to overcome communication breakdowns. More interactions while-abroad led to higher resultative motivation and a higher willingness to communicate post-return. As reported previously, willingness to communicate at post-return was also related to post-return proficiency scores, which suggests that in fact, willingness to communicate at post-return is one of the most important attributes for a successful SA language learner.

On the other hand, while-abroad homesickness was found to have an inverse relationship to all three aspects of while-abroad language contact. In addition, pre-departure language anxiety was significantly related to while-abroad homesickness, meaning that learners with higher language anxiety at pre-departure were more likely to be homesick while-abroad.

Indeed, pre-departure attributes, such as self-perceived English and language anxiety divided the learners into two groups: successful learners with more language contact while-abroad and unsuccessful learners with less language contact while-abroad.

9.3 The Limitation of the Present Study

The findings reported in the previous sections have to be interpreted with caution due to the following limitation. The generalizability of the study might be limited by the number of participants, their gender, nationality, and proficiency level. In the case of this study, there were 24 females and one male. In addition, the participants were all second year Japanese university students and were at an intermediate level of English proficiency. The homogeneity of the sample population had its benefits. For instance, since the participants were of a similar age, shared a common L1, and had experienced a comparable secondary education, many important background variables were controlled. Therefore, the results were more easily interpretable, and there was likely to have been a reduction in the amount of unexplained variance. However, the uniformity of the sample also limits the generalizability of the findings. This limitation should be acknowledged and taken into account when interpreting the results of this study.

9.4 The Strength of the Present Study

This study had the following strengths. Firstly, the study took a comprehensive approach to SA research. For instance, Chapter 2 outlined a wide range of topics related to SA, such as SA models and programs, detailed the advantages and drawbacks of each, discussed the administrative tasks necessary to run SA programs at Japanese universities, and analyzed the decrease in the number of SA participants. Furthermore, Chapter 3

discussed the learning context of the SA using SLA theories, illustrated current research state of SA language learning, and summarized the typical outcomes on the four skills. Chapter 4 emphasized the importance of learner attributes in language learning in the SA context. In short, each chapter captured issues relating to SA from multiple angles.

The second strength was that it was interdisciplinary in the sense that the investigation employed multiple measurements from the disciplines of SLA, psychology, and intercultural communication. This use of perspectives from outside of SLA allowed the present investigation to find new information regarding language learning in the SA context.

Finally, the research was based on a mixed methods framework. DeKeyser (2007) points out the importance of carrying out SA research using a mixed methods approach as follows:

We need to get into the student's head rather than conduct black-box research that links student or program characteristics with outcomes. That can only be achieved by combining qualitative methodologies such as participant observation and protocol analysis (including stimulated recall) with quantitative methodologies more typically used in psycholinguistics, educational psychology, and the psychology of individual differences. (DeKeyser, 2007, p. 221)

A mixed methods approach has proven suitable for SA research (e.g., Kinginger, 2009; DeKeyser, 2007), as demonstrated by this study.

9.5 Suggestions for Future Research

Future research should try to address how to ensure that more students go through a positive pathway and have a successful SA experience with a lot of language contact and proficiency gain. To achieve this, the following points should be investigated in future research.

Firstly, this study revealed to some extent that higher levels of pre-departure self-perceived English skills are important for language contact abroad. It is, however, not known where the learners' pre-departure self-perceived English skills or confidence in their communication skills comes from. Therefore, research is needed to examine closely the mechanisms and the causes of positive learner attributes such as high self-perceived English skills.

Secondly, this study partially revealed that language contact while-abroad may have enabled learners to readjust their self-perceived English levels and this resulted in higher resultative motivation, as well as higher willingness to communicate at post-return. As previously discussed, this study found meaningful significant relationships between post-return motivation and willingness to communicate, and post-return proficiency scores. Therefore, there should be more studies investigating the positive intentions and factors that lead to more learning while-abroad.

A third, and possibly most important area of inquiry into SA research concerns the role of while-abroad language contact. This study did not find any significant relationship between any of the three aspects of language contact and language proficiency gain. There have been mixed reports on the relationship between the amount of language contact, or language use, or input and interaction, and proficiency gain (e.g., Carroll, 1967; Freed, 1990). As the roles of input and interaction are assumed to be beneficial to language gain

by many researchers (e.g., Hatch, 1978; Krashen 1982; Long, 1983, 1991, 1996; Spada, 1986; Pica, 1994; Schmidt, 1995), this needs further research. As Collentine (2011) points out, the root of this problem is that “there has been no attempt independently to document in a fully quantified manner the types of input and interaction that learners have abroad” (p. 226). Researchers have examined three major settings in which students are believed to have communicative language contact while abroad (Kinginger, 2008): 1) educational institutions and classrooms, 2) places of residence, such as homestay, 3) service encounters and other informal contact. There should be a more careful description and documentation of what learners are exposed to in these naturalistic settings.

In summary, future SA research should provide a basis for recommending SA program choices to students and for providing pre-departure advance preparation adapted to their attributes, proficiency levels, and goals. The findings of the research suggested above should be able to help provide this information to ensure more learners are successful during SA.

In my final remarks, I should point out that L2 learners from Asian countries such as Japanese, Chinese, and Korean comprise approximately 80 percent of SA students in the world (Altbach & Bassett, 2004). Consequently, SA researchers have suggested the importance of studying Asian learners as they make up the majority of the SA students around world (e.g., Collentine, 2011). Some researchers have addressed this need, and in particular reported on Japanese learner profiles in the SA environment (e.g., Churchill, 2006; Yashima, 2004; Tanaka & Ellis; 2003), and I concur that such research is both essential and long overdue.

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Appendix A

Informed consent form for participating in the study

研究協力への依頼、および研究協力への承諾書

本状は、英語を学ぶ日本人大学生の留学に関する調査へのご協力をお願いするものです。

●研究の趣旨

本研究は、日本人大学生の留学における、英語学習の成果と、異文化能力、ホームシック度、英語使用の積極性等の関係を調査することを目的としています。研究結果は、博士論文にまとめられます。また、研究会等において発表する可能性もあります。研究結果は、特に英語教育や留学研究の分野に貢献できる意義あるものと思われまます。

●研究の対象者と方法

本研究は、本学アビエーションマネジメント学類エアライン・ホスピタリティコース2年生の25名(程度)を対象としています。研究方法は、留学前、留学中、留学後の3回に渡り、インタビュー、質問紙、テスト等への回答に協力して頂くものです。英語能力テストは、ウェブ上でのオンライン受験となります。

●倫理的誓約

- 1) 匿名性を徹底し、本人を特定する情報は一切公開致しません。お名前が公開されることはありませんし、人物が特定される可能性のあるイニシャルなど用いません。
- 2) データは安全かつ厳重に保管致します。また、分析の終了したデータは、厳重な管理のもと、完全に破棄します。
- 3) 協力は任意ですので、自由に拒否して構いません。また、それは当然の権利ですので、拒否することによって、不利益をこうむることは決してありません。研究の途中で協力を撤回することもできます。その場合、その方から得たデータは本研究に使用致しません。

ご不明な点等ございましたら、研究者にご確認ください。以上の研究趣旨や倫理的誓約を読んだ上で研究に協力していただける方は、以下の研究承諾書への記入をお願い致します。なお、本研究は、本学研究倫理委員会の承認を得ています。

平成____年____月____日 研究者：田 島 千 裕

*****キリトリ*****

研 究 承 諾 書

上の研究の趣旨や倫理的誓約をふまえ、研究に協力することを承諾します。なお、研究承諾書は2部作成し、研究者と研究協力者で1部ずつ保管することに同意します。

氏名： _____ 平成____年____月____日

Appendix B

Informed consent form for recording interview

インタビューの録音に関する承諾書

本状は、「英語を学ぶ日本人大学生の留学に関する調査研究」に含まれるインタビューの音声を録音することを承諾して頂けるようお願いするものです。

●インタビューについて

インタビューは、留学前、留学中、留学後の3回に渡り行います。一度のインタビューは20分程度です。

●倫理的誓約

- 1) 匿名性を徹底し、本人を特定する情報は一切公開致しません。もちろん、お名前が公開されることはありませんし、人物が特定される可能性のあるイニシャルなどを用いることもございません。
- 2) 録音データは安全かつ厳重に保管致します。また、分析の終了したデータは、厳重な管理のもと、完全に破棄します。
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ご不明な点等ございましたら、研究者にご確認ください。インタビューの録音を承諾していただける方は、以下のインタビューの録音承諾書への記入をお願い致します。なお、本研究は、本学研究倫理委員会の承認を得ています。

平成 年 月 日 研究者：田 島 千 裕

*****キリトリ*****

インタビューの録音承諾書

インタビューの録音を承諾します。「インタビューの録音に関する承諾書」は2部作成し、研究者と研究協力者で1部ずつ保管することに同意します。

氏名 _____ 平成 _____ 年 _____ 月 _____ 日

Appendix C

L2 Willingness to Communicate (6-point Likert Scale) (Yashima, 2004)

Q. How willing are you to speak in English in each of the following situations?

1. In class, when you have a chance to discuss in a group discussion.
2. In class, when you are given a chance to talk freely with classmates.
3. In class, when you have a chance to talk in front of the class.
4. In class, when you have a chance to make a presentation.
5. In a line, when you find your friend standing before you.
6. In a line, when you find someone you know standing before you.
7. In a small group of friends, when you have a chance to talk.
8. In a small group of strangers, when you have a chance to talk.

Appendix D

Motivation (6-point Likert scale)

1. Do you want to study English because you want to communicate better and be friendly with the local people here?
2. Do you like your classes, including the teacher and the classmates?
3. Are you putting effort and trying hard to learn English?
4. Do you have a goal (about your English level) and want to achieve it?
5. Is learning English fun, enjoyable, and challenging for you?

Appendix E

Language Anxiety (6-point Likert scale)

1. Do you feel nervous when you are asked how to get to a place in English by an English speaker?
2. Do you feel nervous when you have to speak in English?
3. Do you feel worried when you have to speak to a native speaker?
4. Do you feel worried that people around you who can speak English might think your English is not correct and is strange?

Appendix F

Homesickness (5-point Likert scale) (Fisher, 1989)

(The questionnaire was translated into Japanese for the participants.)

1. I feel able to cope here.
2. I feel optimistic about life here.
3. I feel satisfied here.
4. I feel excited about studying here.
5. I feel fulfilled here.
6. I feel confident here.
7. I feel loved here.
8. I feel needed here.
9. I have many friends here.
10. I feel settled here.
11. I feel lonely here.
12. I miss my friends I have at home (in Japan).
13. I feel cut off from the world here.
14. I think of past events.
15. I feel uneasy here.
16. I feel unhappy here.
17. I wake up wishing that I were home.
18. I miss my family.

Appendix G

The Pretest Version of the Language Contact Profile (Freed et al., 2004)

(The questionnaire was translated into Japanese for the participants.)

Part 1: Background information

1. Gender: Male / Female
2. Age:
3. Country of birth:
4. What is your native language? 1) Japanese 2) English 3) Other
5. What language(s) do you speak at home? 1) Japanese 2) English 3) Other
 - 5a. If more than one, with whom do you speak each of these languages?
6. In what languages(s) did you receive the majority of your *precollege* education?
 - 1) English 2) Other
 - 6a. If more than one, please give the approximate number of years for each language.
7. Have you ever been to an English-speaking region for the purpose of studying English?

Circle one: Yes / No

If yes, answer below.

For first time abroad:

 - 7a. When? (Ex.:2nd year in High school)
 - 7b. Which country?
 - 7c. Length? Less than 1 semester / two semesters / more than two semesters/others

For second time abroad:

7d. When? (Ex.: 2nd year in High school)

7e. Which country?

7f. Length? Less than 1 semester / two semesters / more than two semesters/others

For third time abroad:

7g. When? (Ex.:2nd year in High school)

7h. Which country?

7i. Length? Less than 1 semester / two semesters / more than two semesters/others

8. How would you rate your English skills? Indicate with a number from 0 to 3 for each skill.

0 (low)

1

2

3 (almost native-like)

	Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing	Years of study
English Language	8a.	8b.	8c.	8d.	8e.
Another language					

9. What is your English education history? Specify the length of study in each of the designated period below.

- a) Elementary school: no yes: less than 1 year 1-2 years more than 2 years
- b) Junior high school: no yes: less than 1 year 1-2 years more than 2 years
- c) Senior high school: no yes: less than 1 year 1-2 years more than 2 years
- d) University: no yes: less than 1 year 1-2 years more than 2 years
- e) Others: no yes: less than 1 year 1-2 years more than 2 years

10. On the average, how often did you *communicate* with native or fluent speakers of English in English in the last 1 year prior to the start of this semester (including English classes at school)?

- 0) never
- 1) a few times a year
- 2) a few times a month
- 3) a few times a week
- 4) almost everyday

11. Use this scale provided to rate the following statements.

- 0) never
- 1) a few times a year
- 2) a few times a month
- 3) a few times a week
- 4) almost everyday

Prior to this semester, I tried to speak English to:

- _____a) my instructor outside of class
- _____b) friends who are native or fluent speaker of English
- _____c) classmates
- _____d) strangers whom I thought could speak English
- _____e) a host family, if living in an English-speaking area
- _____f) service personnel (e.g., bank clerk, cashier)

12. For each of the items below, choose the response that corresponds to the amount of time you estimate you spent on average doing each activity in English prior to this semester.

- _____a) watching television in English (i.e., news and talk show)
- _____b) watching movies in English
- _____c) reading newspapers in English
- _____d) reading magazines in English
- _____e) reading novels and books in English
- _____f) listening to music in English
- _____g) writing emails and blogs in English
- _____h) reading internet sites in English
- _____i) studying for English tests (i.e., TOEIC)
- _____j) studying English by using textbooks (i.e., studying grammar)

13. List any other activities that you commonly did using English prior to this semester (i.e., taking conversation lessons in English, performing in plays in English :

Activities:

How often:

14. Please list all the English courses you are taking this semester. This includes English language courses as well as content area courses taught in the English language.

Course name 1:

Course name 3:

Course name 2:

Course name 4:

Appendix H

The Posttest version of the Language Contact Profile (administered at while-abroad)

(Freed et al., 2004)

Part 1: Self-perceived English Skills

1. How would you rate your English skills? Indicate with a number from 0 to 3 for each skill.

0 (low) 1 2 3 (almost native-like)

	listening	speaking	reading	writing
English				

Part 2: Homestay environment

1. Please describe your homestay family (i.e., mother, father, 12-year old boy, 4-year girl)

2. Do they speak in English? Circle one: Yes / No

3. Were there other non-native speaker of English living with your host family?

Circle one: Yes / No.

If "Yes", who are they? _____

Part 3: Language Contact

For the following items, please specify:

1) How many days per week you typically used English in the situation indicated, and

2) On the average how many hours per day you did so.

Circle the appropriate numbers.

1. On average, how much time are you speaking in English **out of classroom**, with **native (or fluent) English speaker?**

Typically, how many days per week?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
On those days, typically how many hours per day?	0-1	1-2	2-3	3-4	4-5	more than 5		

2. **Out of classroom** , I am trying to speak English to:

2a. my instructor (**out of classroom**).

Typically, how many days per week?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
On those days, typically how many hours per day?	0-1	1-2	2-3	3-4	4-5	more than 5		

2b. friends who are native or fluent English speakers (**out of classroom**).

Typically, how many days per week?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
On those days, typically how many hours per day?	0-1	1-2	2-3	3-4	4-5	more than 5		

2c. classmates in English (**out of classroom**).

Typically, how many days per week?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
On those days, typically how many hours per day?	0-1	1-2	2-3	3-4	4-5	more than 5		

2d. strangers whom I thought could speak English (**out of classroom**).

Typically, how many days per week?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
On those days, typically how many hours per day?	0-1	1-2	2-3	3-4	4-5	more than 5		

2e. a host family or roommate in English (**out of classroom**).

Typically, how many days per week?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
On those days, typically how many hours per day?	0-1	1-2	2-3	3-4	4-5	more than 5		

2f. service personnel (i.e., sales person and bank clerk) in English (**out of classroom**).

Typically, how many days per week?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
On those days, typically how many hours per day?	0-1	1-2	2-3	3-4	4-5	more than 5		

3. How often do you **speak English out of classroom** for each of the following purposes on the average?

3a. to clarify classroom-related work (**out of classroom**).

Typically, how many days per week?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
On those days, typically how many hours per day?	0-1	1-2	2-3	3-4	4-5	more than 5		

3b. to obtain directions or information (e.g., “Where is the post office?” “What time is the train to...?”, “How much are stamps?”) (**out of classroom**).

Typically, how many days per week?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
On those days, typically how many hours per day?	0-1	1-2	2-3	3-4	4-5	more than 5		

3c. for superficial or brief exchanges (e.g., “greetings, “Please pass the salt,” “I’m leaving,” ordering in a restaurant) with my host family, English classmate (**out of classroom**).

Typically, how many days per week?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

On those days, typically how many hours per day? 0-1 1-2 2-3 3-4 4-5
more than 5

3d. extended conversations with my host family, English roommate, friends, native speakers of Japanese with whom I speak English (**out of classroom**).

Typically, how many days per week? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
On those days, typically how many hours per day? 0-1 1-2 2-3 3-4 4-5
more than 5

4. How much time do you spend doing each of the following activities (**out of classroom**) on the average?

4a. overall, reading in English (**out of classroom**).

Typically, how many days per week? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
On those days, typically how many hours per day? 0-1 1-2 2-3 3-4 4-5
more than 5

4b. reading English newspapers (**out of classroom**).

Typically, how many days per week? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
On those days, typically how many hours per day? 0-1 1-2 2-3 3-4 4-5
more than 5

4c. reading novels in English (**out of classroom**).

Typically, how many days per week? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
On those days, typically how many hours per day? 0-1 1-2 2-3 3-4 4-5
more than 5

4d. reading English language magazines (**out of classroom**).

Typically, how many days per week? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

On those days, typically how many 0-1 1-2 2-3 3-4 4-5
hours per day? more than 5

4e. reading schedules, announcements, menus, and the like in English (**out of classroom**).

Typically, how many days per week? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
On those days, typically how many 0-1 1-2 2-3 3-4 4-5
hours per day? more than 5

4f. reading e-mail or Internet web pages in English (**out of classroom**).

Typically, how many days per week? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
On those days, typically how many 0-1 1-2 2-3 3-4 4-5
hours per day? more than 5

4g. overall, **listening** to English (**out of classroom**).

Typically, how many days per week? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
On those days, typically how many 0-1 1-2 2-3 3-4 4-5
hours per day? more than 5

4h. listening to English television and radio (**out of classroom**).

Typically, how many days per week? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
On those days, typically how many 0-1 1-2 2-3 3-4 4-5
hours per day? more than 5

4i. listening to English movies or DVDs (**out of classroom**).

Typically, how many days per week? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
On those days, typically how many 0-1 1-2 2-3 3-4 4-5
hours per day? more than 5

4j. listening to English songs (**out of classroom**).

Typically, how many days per week?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
On those days, typically how many hours per day?	0-1	1-2	2-3	3-4	4-5	more than 5		

4k. trying to catch other people's conversations in English (**out of classroom**).

Typically, how many days per week?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
On those days, typically how many hours per day?	0-1	1-2	2-3	3-4	4-5	more than 5		

4l. overall, writing in English (**out of classroom**).

Typically, how many days per week?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
On those days, typically how many hours per day?	0-1	1-2	2-3	3-4	4-5	more than 5		

4m. writing homework assignments in English (**out of classroom**).

Typically, how many days per week?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
On those days, typically how many hours per day?	0-1	1-2	2-3	3-4	4-5	more than 5		

4n. writing personal notes or letters in English (**out of classroom**).

Typically, how many days per week?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
On those days, typically how many hours per day?	0-1	1-2	2-3	3-4	4-5	more than 5		

4o. writing email in English (**out of classroom**).

Typically, how many days per week?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

On those days, typically how many hours per day? 0-1 1-2 2-3 3-4 4-5
more than 5

5a. using things learned in class (i.e., grammar, vocabulary, and phrases).

Typically, how many days per week? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

On those days, typically how many hours per day? 0-1 1-2 2-3 3-4 4-5
more than 5

5b. asking questions in class about what is learned out of class (grammar, vocabulary and phrases).

Typically, how many days per week? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

On those days, typically how many hours per day? 0-1 1-2 2-3 3-4 4-5
more than 5

6a. Speaking English with native speakers.

Typically, how many days per week? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

On those days, typically how many hours per day? 0-1 1-2 2-3 3-4 4-5
more than 5

6b. Speaking English with non-native speakers. (i.e., : Speaking English with Japanese classmates)

Typically, how many days per week? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

On those days, typically how many hours per day? 0-1 1-2 2-3 3-4 4-5
more than 5

Appendix I

Examples of Pre-Departure Interview Prompts

1. About English Skills:

- What English activities are you planning to do to improve your English skills?
(for conversational English and other than conversational English)

2. About homestay:

- Do you have any concerns about lifestyle? (such as meals and using bathrooms)
- Do you have any concerns about English communication?

3. About homesickness:

- Do you expect to be homesick? Why or why not?
- How would you cope with homesickness?

4. About intercultural competence:

- How would you rate your intercultural competence, in terms of language skills, communication skills, and accepting differences?
- Why did you rate in such way?

5. About study abroad in general:

- What do you expect to get out of this study abroad experience?

Appendix J

Examples of While-Abroad Interview prompts

1. About English Skills:

- How is your English communication going?

2. About homestay:

- How was the first five weeks of homestay?
- Have you had any difficulties at homestay?
- How are your conversations with your host family? Are they fun to talk to?

3. About homesickness:

- Do you feel homesick?
- How are you coping with homesickness?

4. About intercultural competence:

- Do you feel you want to have similar lifestyle you had in Japan here? Why?
- Do you feel frustrated about the cultural differences?
- Are you willing to compromise and change yourself to fit to the host culture?

Appendix K

While-Abroad Written Questions

1. Who do you speak to the most in your host family (i.e., host mother)?
 - 1a. What is this person's native language?
 - 1b. What do you talk about the most (i.e., weather, daily happenings, TV program)?
2. Who do you speak to the second most in your host family (i.e., host mother)?
 - 2a. What is this person's native language?
 - 2b. What do you talk about the most (i.e., weather, daily happenings, TV program)?
3. What were the happiest or most interesting things in the last one month?
4. What were the most worrying things or troubles in the last one month?
5. How do you feel about your English skills? Do you feel that they are improving?
6. Are there any worries about English studying or English skills?
7. In your future, would you like to use English at work? What type of job would you like to do?
8. What are your goals of English level (i.e., about TOEIC 700, near native, fluent conversation, or use English at work)?

Appendix L

Post-Return Written Questions

1. During the last half of the SA, what were the happiest or most interesting things?
2. During the last half of the SA, what were the most worrying things or troubles?
3. What did you do to improve your English while abroad?
4. Do you think your English skills have improved?

Please circle one, then explain your choice.

went down / no change / improved a little / improved / improved a lot

5. Are there any worries about English studying or English skills?
6. What did you do to adjust to the life with host family?
7. What were the best solutions or most effective ways in dealing with homesickness?
8. What did you try in order to speak in English with native speakers?
9. What personal development did you make through this study abroad experience?
10. Please give any other impression or comments about this study abroad experience.

Appendix M

Sample of Student Responses and Performance at Pre-Departure