Social Experiences and Linguistic Outcomes through Foreign Language Learners' Short Stays Abroad: A Japanese Case

Submitted by

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I certify that all material in this thesis which is not my own work has been identified and that no material has previously been submitted and approved for the award of a degree by this or any other university.

Signature: ……

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ABSTRACT

It is broadly accepted that even short-term study abroad can lead to language gains, can provide gains in cognitive and affective development, and that longer-term programs and residence abroad may benefit the foreign language learners more. In the age of advanced IT, connectivity and accessibility, how crucial are intensive short stays abroad?

The current study, which takes place in higher education in Japan, answers in what way social experiences and networks can be associated with linguistic outcomes during short stays abroad. Learners of English as a foreign language spent between 3 and 5 weeks in universities in New Zealand or Australia. I investigated both linguistic gains before and after short programs and the community of learning a foreign language while overseas with others. In particular, using mixed methods data collection of pre- and post-tests, questionnaires, interviews, and observations, I examined the amount of contact the learners had with co-nationals, other foreign students, with locals, and with family and friends back home. I also delved into a few cases in which homestay environment appeared to influence their perceived success in benefiting from the short program.

This paper shows that presenting linguistic gains for short-term study abroad is difficult, but that learners gain sociocultural skills, both physically and verbally, which shapes the way they construct their network of friendship both on-site

and at home during short-stays abroad. It is my hope the findings help instructors and program coordinators plan or improve similar programs. It will also add to the existing knowledge on how short-stays abroad work or do not work for Japanese students seeking opportunities to learn and practice English. It also suggests ways how students and administrators can utilize IT and virtual social networks to connect with the target language community as well as their cohorts.

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ABBREVIATIONS

APM: College of International Management

APS: College of Asia Pacific Studies

APU: Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University

CEFR: Common European Framework of Reference

CoP: Community of Practice

ELA: English Language Academy, The University of Auckland

ETS: Educational Testing Service

IELTS: International English Language Testing System

JASSO: Japan Student Services Organization

MEXT: The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology - Japan

SA: Study abroad

SGU: Super Global University

SNS: Social Networking Services

SPM: Syllables per Minute

TOEFL: Test of English as a Foreign Language®

TOEFL iBT: TOEFL Internet Based Test

TOEFL ITP: TOEFL Institutional Testing Program

TOEIC: Test of English for International Communication®

TOEIC IP: TOEIC Institutional Program

WPM: Words per Minute

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Rationale for the Study

Based in an international university in Japan where students from different cultural backgrounds study, I focus on the development of Japanese-speaking students seeking to enhance their English competence abroad. Students at the studied institution are encouraged to participate in various active learning programs, one of which is short-term study abroad. This study investigates how learners on short-stays abroad programs connect with other English learners, homestay families, friends, and their family back home. We know that studying foreign languages abroad, both short-term and long-term, can benefit language learners in many ways, especially in terms of oral proficiency and fluency (Brecht, Davidson, & Ginsberg, 1993; DuFon & Churchill, 2006; Freed, 1995; Magnan & Back, 2007). It is broadly accepted that even short programs can lead to language gains, can provide gains in cognitive and affective development (Jackson, 2005), and that longer-term programs may benefit the program participants more (DuFon & Churchill, 2006). There are several studies (Geis & Fukushima, 1997; Llanes, 2011; Llanes & Munoz, 2009; Matsumoto, 2010; Omori, 2007; Taura, 2009) that try to establish that even three to four weeks' stay abroad experience can lead to linguistic gains, or that learners at least perceive gains (Furuya, 2005; Horness, 2014; Lee, 2009; Nonaka, 2008). However, from my observations as an English as a foreign language teacher, it seems that its benefits in the Japanese contexts are not researched enough to promote it further, as pointed out by Furuya (2005), even though the Japanese government and businesses are encouraging students to

study abroad in recent years (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, hereafter MEXT, 2011b, 2012c).

Short-stays abroad is still a relatively new research field in the study abroad context, much of written works appearing around mid to late 2000s (Allen, 2010a; Jackson, 2005; Lee, 2009; Llanes & Munoz, 2009; Matsumoto, 2010; Omori, 2007; Pitts, 2009). In the context of Japanese higher education, the Japanese government is under pressure from the business sectors to develop “global human resource” (MEXT, 2012d). Global human resource is a term used by the Japanese government to refer to company or government workers who can work competently with international partners, and study abroad is encouraged more, as it is assumed to be an effective way to nurture global citizens. However, the number of Japanese who study abroad has been in decline ever since 2004 (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, hereafter OECD, 2012). A funding project has been underway to “overcome the Japanese younger generation’s "inward tendency" and to foster human resources who can positively meet the challenges and succeed in the global field, as the basis for improving Japan’s global competitiveness and enhancing the ties between nations” (MEXT, 2012d). In other words, it is expected that university alumni become employees who can use English competently. My workplace is one of the 42 universities supported by the Japanese government for The Project for Promotion of Global Human Resource Development, as well as one of 37 universities selected as the Top Global

University[1] in 2014 (MEXT, 2014a). The programs with government funding are surveyed, but still not thoroughly assessed (Japan Student Services Organization, hereafter JASSO, 2012). In light of this, this research is useful not only for study abroad program coordinators and researchers but also for students, parents or sponsors in examining the value of participating in such short-stay programs.

Significance of the current study can be explained in twofold. First, conducting this study could establish the usefulness of short-stays abroad programs if we can exhibit the participants' gains, both linguistically and socio-culturally. Both my colleagues and students tend to believe and often advocate that the longer one studies abroad, the more progress one can make in terms of language gains. For this study, I consider three to five-week programs to be short-stays abroad programs. By looking at all the English immersion programs on offer, we may be able to establish better understanding of what goes on in the programs for students, from which the institution could benefit. Secondly, there is a lack of studies on the effects of short-stays abroad programs in the Japanese context (Furuya, 2005). Interviews and observations with several participants may reveal some indicators as to what contributes to the success of short-term programs for Japanese university students.

Through my experiences of four years in teaching preparation classes at the university for short-stays abroad programs, through visiting partner universities on site, such as in Singapore, the U.K., the United States, and in

[1] Super Global University (SGU) in Japan. Super is used to mean "very best" in Japan. English term used is Top Global University.

Australia, and talking to students, I came to believe that students appeared to improve their listening and sometimes speaking abilities in English. I also found that homestay students tended to benefit more from study abroad than those who stayed at dormitories with other students from the home institution. Yet, even among the cohort of students who did homestay, their experiences vary greatly depending on which family they stay with or how each student spends their time outside classes. However, those were impressions based on pedagogical observations, and not grounded in rigorous research. I was initially interested in assessing students' linguistic gains before and after study abroad but realized through literature it would be difficult to measure changes in a short-stay abroad with small sample sizes. I was particularly interested in the sociocultural paradigm and how a student's social network both real and virtual may affect their language gains during study abroad. It is because these days, it is becoming more and more common to stay connected with family and friends using Social Networking Services (SNS). We even have class groups on Facebook to communicate with students. Based on the above-mentioned reasons, my assumptions for the short-term English study abroad program participants were that: (1) Students on integrated classes and on homestay programs will have improved linguistic skills after several weeks abroad. (2) Students who interact with target language users on a daily basis improve their linguistic skills and expand their social networks more significantly than those who do not. I intend to investigate whether these hypotheses can be accepted or need to be rejected, in other words, whether some of the participants show improvement in their linguistic and sociocultural competence.

1.2 Research Questions

In order to build on previous literature, I adopted a mixed-methods approach. First, I measured participants' English competencies in terms of their listening, declarative grammar knowledge, reading comprehension, writing, and speaking skills before and after the programs quantitatively, using TOEFL Institutional Testing Program (hereafter TOEFL ITP) and mock TOEFL iBT (internet-based tests). Second, I complemented the results qualitatively with interviews in the field, field observations, questionnaires right after the programs, and reflective interviews on their return. Following are the main research questions.

In what way can social experiences be associated with linguistic outcomes during short stays abroad? In order to find out about this, I looked at two components. 1. **To what extent do short stays abroad affect English learners' linguistic outcomes?** 2. **What social experiences do English learners have during short stays abroad?** In particular, at programs where learning and using English is the target, do learners from Japan rely on Japanese language, or try to detach themselves from it? How does the learners' choice affect their learning? Through this study, I hope to understand the benefits of short-stays abroad from the learners' perspectives, and I wish to influence the development of future study abroad programs at the institutional level. One major reason why I undertook this study is because I feel my voice as a teacher and researcher is not heard enough, as each teacher, office staff, or university executive has their own ideas about how study abroad works from their own experiences, and I want to support my ideas with both the literature

review and research findings. Ultimately, I wish to explore the study abroad phenomenon, understand more deeply, and become able to provide better suggestions for recruiting students and for designing more successful and effective study abroad programs.

1.3 Significance of the Study

The way I had originally pictured this research was the integration of the immersion programs with action research, collaborating with other English language teachers, and encouraging more university students to participate in short-term study abroad programs. This research, supported by AY2012 APU Academic Research Subsidy[2], is expected to yield the following outcomes. It helps examine whether short-stays abroad promote English language acquisition in terms of linguistic skills. In a separate small study conducted (Berger, 2012) between February and April 2012, I found that most of the participants improved their test scores, regardless of whether they studied overseas, stayed in Japan, or did volunteer work abroad. In that study, I analyzed what factors influenced particular aspects of any change, including their involvement with the participants' learning community. Findings from this (Berger, 2012) are inconclusive, as discussed below, and suggest the need to follow up on the short-term program participants and to further investigate what makes a difference in language learners' development under coordinated

[2] The APU Academic Research Subsidy is a competitive grant awarded to the institution's faculty, with a budget ranging from JPY500, 000 to JPY2, 000,000. For Academic Year 2012, there were 48 applications and 27 were accepted, one of which was mine, worth JPY1, 000,000 (approximately £6900 as of May 2017).

programs[3]. In the pilot study, the sample size was small at ten, of which only one took part in the university-coordinated program. Most participants increased scores in TOEFL ITP, while their writing test scores did not change, yet their speaking test scores and fluency improved overall. The majority of participants who spent time abroad felt their speaking, listening and reading skills as well as their confidence in English heightened.

I learned that the more learners are involved in meaningful context, the more they felt they gained competence. I also found that 'successful' students interacted with various people, including Japanese, in English, for example keeping up to date via Skype chat. Thus, the study presented in this thesis was designed to examine factors, such as the participants' preferred language choice while abroad, which is often their mother tongue, and I analyzed the various ways students interacted with their cohort and host community, focusing on how participants collaborated with other students during each program. It also helps study abroad researchers understand the study abroad phenomenon from the perspectives of students' community of learning. It is my hope that the findings contribute to add knowledge to and share insights on the short-stays abroad programs coming from Japanese higher education contexts, albeit small in its size. I concur with what Richards (2003) reminds us that "nearly all research is very modest indeed, playing an infinitesimally small but

[3] Coordinated programs here refer to fee-paying, extra-curricular language classes that take place abroad during semester breaks, in which faculty and office personnel conduct preparation classes, on-site observation and post-program classes.

nevertheless valuable part in the advancement of our understanding" (Richards, 2003, p. 264).

1.4 Organization of the Dissertation

This paper is organized as follows. In Chapter 2, I discuss the background and context of the study including a close look at the educational issues in current Japanese higher education. In Chapter 3, I review current literature on study abroad, in particular on effects of short-term study abroad programs and the gaps in knowledge. I introduce Coleman's (2010, 2013a) concentric circles model and explain its relevance and centrality to the qualitative nature of this study and describe how I adapted the model. In Chapter 4, I outline the research methodology for this mixed-method study. In Chapter 5, I report on the results by analyzing and interpreting the data. In Chapter 6, I discuss possible contributions, implications and recommendations. This paper shows that presenting linguistic gains for short-term study abroad may be difficult, but that learners gain sociocultural skills both physically and verbally, which shape the way they construct their network of friendship both on site and at home. It is my hope that this study, which interprets both linguistic development and social interactions on and off site through short-stays abroad, helps university staff plan or improve similar programs. Not only that, but it also adds to the existing knowledge on how short-stays abroad works or does not work for Japanese students seeking opportunities to learn and practice English.

2. BACKGROUND

In this section, I offer detailed information on the Japanese higher education setting and how the recent trend in education is affecting the issue of study abroad at my work place. It starts with the general discussion of global trend, then moves onto the Japanese government policies and show that the study takes place at the center of student mobility and the country's struggle to globalize its domestic, Japanese students.

2.1 Global and Japanese Trends in Education Abroad

In the globalized world, there are more opportunities to work abroad or work with people from around the globe. People with global mind-sets and communicative abilities, including multi-lingual skills, are highly valued both by the government and corporations, and a great number of university students are studying abroad globally. In 2009, roughly 3.7 million students were enrolled in tertiary institutions outside their own country, which was a 6% increase from the previous year (OECD, 2011). Japan is not an exception and many university students go abroad with a hope that their experiences benefit their future careers. Actually, Japan is one of the top sending countries in many parts of the world, as well as one of the top hosting countries. (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2009). However, according to the Japanese Ministry of Education, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT for its official abbreviation), the number of Japanese nationals studying abroad peaked in 2004 at 82,945 and has since been in decline. About 60,000 Japanese nationals studied abroad in 2009 (MEXT, 2012a) and 2010 saw the lowest number in 17 years at 57,501 (MEXT, 2016).

Currently, the Japanese government is offering scholarships for short-term stay and short-term visit programs, in order to promote intercultural understanding and experiential learning (MEXT, 2012b). At the same time, top universities in Japan such as Tokyo University and Keio University started considering a “Gap-Term” system, which encourages more high school graduates to study abroad (Tokyo University, 2012). Tokyo University implemented Fresher’s Leave Year Program in 2013 (Tokyo University, 2013). In Japan, where an academic year runs from April to March, high school graduates are expected to enter a tertiary institution in April right after completing a senior high school in March. Allowing students to study abroad before enrolment is favorable since it becomes more difficult to find time to do so for an extended period of time after enrolment. However, there are arguments against a gap-term system, such that the majority of schools are unable to admit students in autumn, or that students are not able to afford study abroad right out of high school. It is unlikely, therefore, for the gap-term system to become popular in Japan in the foreseeable future. In reality, those who want to study abroad first enter college, then try to find time and resources to study abroad during the four years, as they have opportunities to improve English and work part-time as students. However, there is not enough data on the positive and lasting effect of short-term study abroad in the context of Japanese higher education.

2.2 APU’s Position

There are over 760 universities in Japan, of which 22% are national or public funded schools. The studied institution is a private university in southern

Japan named Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University (hereafter APU), founded in 2000 as part of Ritsumeikan Trust, which runs two universities, four junior and senior high schools, and one primary school spread across Japan. APU has about equal numbers of domestic and international students. Domestic students refer to Japanese-speaking students who completed secondary education in Japan, which encompasses students with foreign heritage such as ethnic Korean residents. APU has two colleges, College of International Management (called APM) and College of Asia Pacific Studies (APS). At APM, AACSB[4]-accredited business school, there are four clusters of majors including strategic management & organization, marketing, accounting & finance, and innovation & economics. At APS, students take a wide variety of social sciences subjects divided into four clusters: environment & development, hospitality & tourism, international relations & peace studies, and culture, society & media. The average annual tuition for private universities in Japan is 864,000 yen (MEXT, 2014b). With over 1.3-million-yen tuition (APU, 2016) for liberal arts and social sciences majors, and albeit the fact that roughly 40% of domestic students receive student loans, students generally come from rather affluent or middle-class families in Japan. APU is located in a touristic town of Beppu with the population of around 200,000 in Kyushu Island, far away from big cities such as Tokyo or Osaka. Thirty-seven percent of its domestic students come from within Kyushu, 20% from Kanto region, and 18% from Kinki region in western Japan (APU, 2018), where the name Ritsumeikan is known as an established brand.

[4] AACSB: The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business. It is an American professional organization which provides accreditation to business schools.

What makes APU unique and attractive is that half of APU students are international students from around eighty countries (42.7% at the time of data collection, i.e. May 2013, and 50.0% as of May 2017). APU accepts students in autumn as well as in spring, making transition from secondary school to college smooth for all. Having a high ratio of international students in higher institutions is considered a prestige in considering global mobility, and this very fact that 50% of the degree program students are from overseas is a great asset and selling point in itself.

The university employs a dual language curriculum, where classes are offered both in English and the vernacular language, Japanese. English language courses, which Japanese-based students are required to take in the first few years of their study, are designed to prepare students for English-medium lectures later on in their academic path. The university encourages both domestic and international students to study abroad, and there are bilateral exchange programs with over 100 universities abroad (113 universities as of January 2016). Selected students study each year at the host university abroad and gain credits, which are transferred to their degree requirement. They learn not only the language of the target country, but also take major subject classes, predominantly in English. On average, nearly 100 students are sent abroad as official exchange students, and there are several hundred more students who study abroad unofficially using the temporary break called “Leave of Absence.” It means students are enrolled but not registered for classes during a semester or longer. For instance, 211 students out of 433 who applied for Leave of Absence during the fall semester of 2012 stated that they took

leave in order to study abroad (Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University, 2013a). It is in principle the same as the so-called “Gap Year” and it is a popular choice for many students who do not qualify for official exchange programs.

One major goal of the English program at APU is to equip students with academic English required in major subject courses in the respective colleges. Japanese-based students must complete 20 credits in English-medium major subjects in order to graduate. In other words, after learning in the general English program for 1 to 4 semesters, depending on which level they are originally placed, students should be ready to take content classes taught in English. For students who need support in academic English, there are so called “Bridge Courses” which are expected to teach content subjects with English language support, but these are not structured to collaborate with English teachers. The level of students’ English is not high to start with, and these classes are often insufficient for Japanese students wishing to study in English as a medium of instruction. On top of that, many students, both domestic and international, aspire to participate in exchange programs at partner institutions overseas in their second or third year. They must satisfy the language requirement set by the university in order to apply, but most domestic students do not have enough English competencies to apply and compete for a spot against international students who are English-based. Increasing proficiency test scores on their own is challenging. Preparation for such objective is offered as a fee-paying, non-credit program. Therefore, the chance of domestic Japanese-based students being selected for exchange programs is

slim. In 2013, 5.4% of domestic students were sent to partner universities as exchange students, as can be seen in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1 *Super Global University Project Task List* (Asia Pacific University, 2013b, my translation)

Performance Indicator	2013 (actual)	2016 (target)	2019 (target)	2023 (target)
CEFR-compliant language subjects offered	0%	10%	100%	100%
Language proficiency at graduation (Domestic students with 3 languages) Japanese + 2	25%	26%	29%	35%
Percentage of students with for-credit study abroad experience (Domestic students; Undergraduate)	9.6%	14.5%	22.8%	**25.5%**
Percentage of outbound Domestic students sent to partner universities	**5.4%**	8.4%	11.7%	13.3%
Percentage of students satisfying English language proficiency standard (550 on TOEFL ITP)	12.9%	19.5%	30.7%	**52.1%**
Percentage of Japanese students with overseas experience	29.4%	50.0%	80.0%	**100.0%**

2.3 APU Immersion Programs

I am a faculty member for the Center for Language Education at APU, and my duties include teaching general and academic English to predominantly first and second year domestic students and coordinating groups of teachers who teach in the same levels, in which we share the same syllabi, course schedules and teaching materials. APU offers short-term study abroad programs called Intensive Language Learning Overseas, frequently referred to as immersion programs. These language immersion programs are extra-

curricular, credit-bearing courses and I had the chances to coordinate them between 2009 and 2012, and again in 2014. This is a fee-paying, credited program, with various destinations including South Korea, China, Vietnam, Indonesia, Thailand and others. The English programs are targeted for Japanese-based students. The list of previous English immersion programs with the number of participants is shown in Appendix 1. A typical program includes a few administrative orientations by academic office staff, one crisis management lecture by a non-language lecturer, four pre-departure lectures by an English lecturer, a written assignment, a post-program student presentation and a debriefing session. I think there are many reasons why the university wants students to study abroad, such as to enhance language competence, to learn different cultures, to study subjects in a different country, and to bring new perspectives and experiences back home. It seems prospective career enhancement is seen to be a significant reason to study abroad by the business sector and the government, and as a backwash, by university students.

For every language immersion program, an APU faculty prepares a course syllabus before advertising the program, which outlines the course objectives, goal of the program, standards for course completion, teaching methods, and other essential information. A copy of the syllabus for the University of Adelaide program is attached in Appendix 2. The teacher appointed for each program has four ninety-five minutes lectures to prepare the students, an on-site visit, and one post-lecture to assess their oral presentation. There are no definitive materials for the lecturers, although in the accumulated years a few programs compiled a program handbook. In order to connect

students' life in Japan and stays abroad, each program assigns tasks or projects that need to be implemented on-site. Typically, students would prepare a scrapbook filled with their background information, which they use to introduce themselves to their host family. Then, they complete several task sheets, such as finding out about their host family's interests, or about unique food or recipe, add what they learned, and write their reflections on the scrapbook. They then use the completed scrapbook for the post-program presentation, using it as a show-and-tell prop. One teacher (Kusumoto, 2014, p. 52) named it "semi-structured project".

This study coincides with and is intended to support the running of immersion programs at APU. Unlike other immersion programs where school subjects are taught in a target language while at home country, I use the term immersion to mean the short-stay abroad programs in which language learners are temporarily immersed in the target language environment through schooling and homestay. When I was the faculty coordinator for English immersion programs at APU, my colleagues and I collaborated with host institutions around the world, such as in Singapore, the U.K., the USA, Australia, and New Zealand. The purpose of the collaboration was to make sure our students receive proper care and quality education. We discussed program dates, contents, assessments, and arranged on-site visits. In the meantime, the office staff arranged the travel tickets, fees, visas and insurance, and dealt with other administrative matters. The office staff also supported as chaperones in some of the programs by accompanying a group on the way to the destination and visiting the institution for a few days.

In the current programs, the Japanese university students spend three or five weeks at a host country and receive intensive English lessons together with students from other universities and countries while living with a host family. In the past, I was in a position to provide pre-departure lectures to English immersion program students who were going abroad for short-term. Students were assessed on their participation and performance before, during and after the program, but they were not assessed on their language gains per se. As a result, I felt I was not able to convince the prospective participants and other stakeholders about the effects or positive influence of these immersion programs. The university wishes to send more students abroad, even for a short-term, and there is a need to indicate the benefits of study abroad to the students, as the participation in these programs has been decreasing, and to their financial sponsors, university administrators, and the wider community, point also shared by Isabelli-García (2006).

2.4 Funding and Pressure

In the past several years, the government proposed several policies regarding English language learning, which affect the English education in Japan, including “Five Proposals and Specific Measures for Developing Proficiency in English for International Communication” (MEXT, 2011) and “Five Proposals for Revising English Education to Accommodate Globalization” (MEXT, 2014d). These projects aim to strengthen the English ability of the Japanese university students. In the fall of 2012, APU was selected by MEXT as one of 10 universities to receive funding for a “Project for Promotion of

Global Human Resource Development" and they were to receive 60 million yen over 5 years. This project

> *"aims to overcome the Japanese younger generation's "inward tendency" and to foster human resources who can positively meet the challenges and succeed in the global field, as the basis for improving Japan' s global competitiveness and enhancing the ties between nations. Efforts to promote the internationalization of university education in Japan will be given strong, priority support." (MEXT, 2012c).*

There are two main objectives to this project, to increase the number of Japanese students who study abroad, and to increase the English level of the students. Consequently, starting in the fall 2012 semester, students who participate in the short-stays abroad programs, including my research participants, could receive partial subsidies for the trip. One challenge is that the language faculty have to exhibit how much students improved in visible outcome, using test scores. For this purpose, pre- and post-program speaking tests were conducted for the program participants in the form of task-based pair conversation and results are added to the report for JASSO, the organization that funds study abroad scholarships.

In 2014, as the final project to promote student mobility, the government proposed a Super Global 30 University project (hereafter SGU). APU administrators applied for the funding and the university was selected as one of 37 among hundred competitors. APU receives Type-B funding, shared with 23 other universities over 10 years. At the time of the proposal, the amount of projected funding was 300,000,000 Japanese yen (£ 2.51 million as of January 2019) per school.

There are many targets for this project, and several of them concern the English program. Table 2.1 shows a summary of the university's target ratio of students in six relevant fields. First, all language subjects need to refer to Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) in the syllabi. As far as the English language subjects are concerned, it was already achieved in spring 2017. Second, more domestic students are expected to have certain fluency in Japanese, English and an additional language. Third, more than twice as many domestic students should take part in credit-bearing study abroad programs, including the immersion programs under study. The achieved rate was 9.6% in 2013, 11.3% in 2014 and the ultimate goal is over 25%. Fourth, more than twice as many students should be sent to partner universities for exchange programs. Fifth, half the graduating students should satisfy the English proficiency standard, indicated in the TOEFL ITP score of 550. Finally, APU's goals include 100% diversified overseas experiences of domestic students (APU, 2013b). This means all its students should go abroad even for a short time by the time of graduation. This was 29.4% in 2013 and 51.7% in 2014 (APU, 2015). If we want to encourage more students to go abroad, there is a need to indicate the benefits of study abroad widely and publicly.

Regarding the fifth major goal concerning the English section, merely 12.9% of graduating students achieved TOEFL ITP score of 550 in 2013 and 17.6% in 2014. The problem is that the university executives and administrators who wrote the application form promised these target ratios without consulting English teachers. It is indeed a tall order for the current students considering that the incoming APU students are average Japanese students who went

through 6 years of English instructions at secondary schools, the majority (80%) of whom fall in CEFR band A1 to A2. In junior high school, students receive approximately 266 hours of English lessons, while in senior high school, they may have received around 361 hours of instruction (Benesse, 2008). It takes approximately 200 guided learning hours for a language learner to progress from one level of the CEFR to the next (Cambridge Assessment English, 2017). If the university's aim is to bring students' level from around A2 to B2 level in CEFR, students need at least 400 hours of instruction. APU's English classes are more intensive than most universities in Japan, and the instruction hours the lowest level students receive in 2 years equals to 350 hours. Finding out the details of the application after APU was granted the SGU funding, the English section is obliged to adjust the course syllabi, teaching materials and approach to teaching. The university goes through curriculum reforms every 5 years or so, and the current discussions for the new curriculum inevitably include the meeting of SGU targets. One could say that intensive study abroad can contribute to accelerate learning. Of course, this cannot be achieved only through some short-term programs, and all the efforts from faculty members are inevitable. However, most major subject professors are not interested in improving students' English competency, and they regard it as English teachers' responsibility, even though the majority of students leave the English program within a few years. It is my hope that this study provides theoretical understanding and offers practical guides for future short-term programs at Japanese higher education. In the next chapter, I detail the theoretical framework for this study and the research questions.

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, I first elaborate on the research question, and establish what we know from literature in relation to the research question and the sub-questions. Next, I highlight some of the key terms related to the topic, discuss key literature that helps answer the research questions, and address the gap that needs to be filled. I reviewed literature from 1987 to 2015, mostly after 2000. As Paige and Vande Berg (2012) observe, there was a lack of research studies on how study abroad influences intercultural learning until after 2000. My data collection was based on literature published between 2005 and 2012, which is when most of the relevant studies on the effectiveness of study abroad and second language learning were published (Yang, 2016). Since then, some new studies have been published. I compare my findings with some selected new literature that has since been published in the findings and discussion sections.

3.1 Research Questions and Data List

This study aims to answer the following research question. The question, originally derived from the institutional need to exhibit the effectiveness of short stays abroad, is concerned with the linguistic aspect of study abroad, as well as with sociocultural aspect, in other words, involvement with the learners' home and the target language community.

In what way can social experiences be associated with linguistic outcomes during short stays abroad? To put it more specifically, do students who integrate well with the target community and have positive, meaningful

experiences abroad also show linguistic gains? In order to find this out, the following sub-questions were formulated, which later are answered through analytical deduction.

1. **To what extent do short stays abroad affect English learners' linguistic outcomes?**

For linguistic outcomes, I compare test scores before and after SA programs on listening, grammar knowledge, reading, speaking and writing skills.

2. **What social experiences do English learners have during short stays abroad?**

I am interested in finding out whether the kind of social interactions students have during SA is related to their linguistic gains and their sense of achievement or confidence. In order to find an answer to this question, I analyzed their questionnaire and interview responses on their language use, social circles, and perceptions toward their linguistic gains. Thus, I examined different factors, including individual differences such as proficiency levels before study abroad, participants' age, lengths of the university-led program, and lengths of previous stays abroad related to students' progress in the study abroad context. These factors were developed in the separate small study mentioned in section 1.3. In terms of validity control in data collection, proficiency level of the participants is controlled, in that learners are recruited to each program with level specification, although within each program there are stronger and weaker learners. Lengths of stay are determined beforehand, thus controlled by each program. Age and lengths of previous stays abroad are not controlled, but there was no significant difference among the participants,

mostly ranging from a few days to a month. These can be explanatory variables, but age and lengths of stay are similar among the participants.

Sub-question 2 delves into the connection between the social interaction abroad and their linguistic gains. If improvements in linguistic proficiencies were successfully measured or perceived, I wanted to find out why or why not this happened. As most variables were controlled, it seemed the individual differences might derive from extra-curricular activities, namely, what kind of host family the participants lived with, how and how much they interacted with them, what languages they used outside school in general, how they spent time after school and on weekends, and whether virtual social networks played any roles in their study abroad experiences. From this the following questions were formulated.

(a) How much time do students spend with outer circle, middle circle and inner circle groups, and how much virtual communication is generated? How does contact with the target language and usage of social media influence learners' perceptions of their achievement during short-stays abroad?

To answer the above, a post-program questionnaire survey was used.

(b) Does the involvement of homestay family influence the learners' language proficiency? Do students attribute their perceived achievements to their social interactions?

To answer this question, I combined the questionnaire survey and interviews. Students' perceptions about their linguistic gains were collected and compared with the actual gains as a way of triangulation.

In order to answer the above research questions, the following data were collected.

- Participants' demographic information such as major, age, gender
- Participants' TOEFL ITP scores before and after short stays abroad
- Participants' TOEFL iBT mock test data for speaking and writing sections before and after short stays abroad
- Questionnaire responses regarding the participants' use of languages, SNS, and their perceptions toward their linguistic improvement
- Interview records of the participants' reflection from the short stay abroad
- Field notes and interview notes recorded on-site in two separate programs in Australia

3.2 Definitions of Key Terms

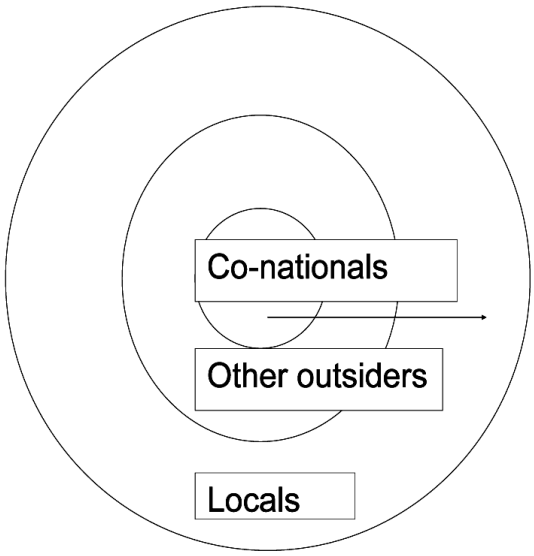
I provide a selection of relevant key terms that set the scenes and propose a working definition for my research purpose. Although based in and primarily intended for professionals in the US colleges, I found the glossary of terms by the Forum on Education Abroad (2011) to be a useful resource in order to define key terms in the field. I also consulted *Handbook of Research on Study Abroad Programs and Outbound Mobility* (2016) after the data collection to cross-check my understanding, but it did not offer any definitions of key terms. The following list is not in alphabetical order; rather it is presented in order of significance for this paper.

Coleman's Concentric Circle Model:

Coleman (2013a), based on years of study abroad research and administration, introduced his concentric circles model of social networks in order to help

represent how learners socialise with each other. This model could easily be confused with the three concentric circles of world Englishes introduced by Kachru (1985), in which the inner circle represents users of English as their first language, but it works in reverse. Coleman (2010, 2013a, 2013b) explains how year-abroad students move in their social network circles, from the mother-tongue peers, to international groups, and then to local target-language speaking groups (See Figure 3.1). The first circle, or inner circle, is made up of cohorts of other students who share the same mother tongue. These are the people that students find it easiest to engage with, and they may form strong ties with each other. The second circle, or the middle circle, is formed with other outsiders, who are often their classmates or homestay mates from other countries. The third circle, or the outer circle, consists of native speakers of the target language, such as their teachers, host family, and other local people. Learners may form weak ties with the middle circle and outer circle friends, who are new to them.

Figure 3.1 Coleman's concentric circles representation of study abroad social networks, (Coleman, 2013a, p.31).



Study Abroad:

The second term is study abroad, or SA. Kinginger (2009, p.11) defines study abroad broadly to be ‘a temporary sojourn of pre-defined duration, undertaken for educational purposes.’ According to The Forum on Education Abroad (2011), study abroad is “a subtype of Education Abroad that results in progress toward an academic degree at a student’s home institution.” Likewise, Salisbury (2011) defines study abroad to be credit-earning programs that happen abroad. Twombly, Salisbury, Tumanut & Klute (2012) also borrow from The Forum on Education Abroad and Institute of International Education (IIE) and reach this definition: “study abroad is not merely for personal development but is a part of and complementary to the academic degree” (Twombly et al., 2012, p.10). In the current study’s context, study abroad does not necessarily aim to achieve a degree but entails earning credits. At APU, study abroad refers to the learning in which a student spends time abroad for any length of time, and the main purpose of the stay is to take courses either on language, major subjects, or even vocational subjects. Talking from the perspective of vocational placement abroad, sometimes APU’s short-term study abroad programs have a short internship placement. Kristensen (2004) defines the term “placement abroad” as a “shorter or longer period spent abroad in a public or private enterprise, which has been consciously organized for learning purposes, which implies active involvement in concrete work processes, and which can be paid or unpaid” (Kristensen, Ed., 2004, p. 16). One of the four programs researched (AUS-1) included an internship placement, although it was more of a pseudo-internship taking place on campus.

Short-Stays Abroad:

The focus of the current study is short-stays abroad. The definition of "short" may differ from institution to institution, or from scholar to scholar. What makes a program labelled short-term study abroad? According to The Forum on Education Abroad (2011, no page number), short-term refers to "Lasting eight weeks or less." Kinginger (2013) defines short-term programs to typically be three to six weeks. Open Doors, the information resources on international students and scholars based in the US, calls study abroad programs eight weeks or less a short-term (Institute of International Education, 2018). All the immersion programs that APU conducted in the past took place during summer or spring breaks, lasting between three and seven weeks. They can be termed short-stays, in comparison with other study abroad options such that lasts for 1 quarter of a year, one semester, or one year. For this study, short-stays abroad therefore last between three and seven weeks. In addition, I use the term short-stays abroad only for credit-bearing programs. Students may organize travel abroad by themselves and attend language schools, stay in dormitory or with homestay families, but sojourns that are not organized by the university are not considered in the current study. Aside from the lengths and organization, for many students, it is a stepping-stone for longer stays abroad in the future. For others, it is an easy way of experiencing life abroad, which comes with credits and with university support.

Immersion Program:

As briefly discussed in the background section, the word immersion usually refers to school programs in which learners take all subjects in the

target language, as in French immersion schools in Canada. The Forum on Education Abroad (2011, no page number) states that immersion program refers to “an informal term for a program that integrates students into the host culture to a substantial degree. (It) includes integrated university study programs and some varieties of field study programs.” Allen and Herron (2003, p. 372) define immersion programs to be “typically a few weeks to a few months in length.” APU has used the term “language immersion program” to refer to the short-stays abroad programs organized by the university, as the ideal program participants immerse themselves in the target language and culture during the program on-site. In the spring of 2011, its official course title within APU became Intensive Language Learning Overseas, which includes immersion programs in other languages such as Chinese, Indonesian, Korean, Spanish, and Vietnamese.

Homestay:

APU’s recent English immersion programs generally provide homestay placements. The Forum on Education Abroad (2011, no page number) describes homestay expectations well. It is a “private housing hosted by a local family that often includes a private or shared bedroom, meals, and laundry. Homestay experiences usually provide the greatest immersion in the host language and culture, giving students first-hand experience with family life in the host culture and the opportunity to use the host language in an informal setting. In many cases, the host family welcomes the student as a member of the family and provides a support network.”

Homestay can be said to be a strong contributor to learners' proficiency improvement, especially because it offers direct contact with native speakers in the target language (Kaplan, 1989, cited in Regan, Howard & Lemée, 2009). Studies by other researchers have argued that the amount of contact with native speakers influences the acquisition of sociolinguistic as well as sociocultural knowledge, meaning learners acquire the language necessary to function smoothly in a social context. Since the amount of time the learners have in the target community is limited in short-stays abroad, it is important to provide maximum input and practice opportunities in the target language. That said, people who host foreign students have different motivations. Some may do it for enjoyment of meeting new people and helping learners, while others may do it to make use of their spare rooms and earn a living. Examples of the kinds of host family sojourners were placed into are documented in several literature such as Rivers (1998), Jackson (2005, 2010), Tanaka (2007), Kinginger (2009) and Allen (2010a). For instance, Rivers (1998) found that living in a Russian home as opposed to a dormitory did not predict gains in speaking ability. In addition, Magnan and Back (2007) were unable to establish any correlation between living arrangements and the development of proficiency in French. Naturally, therefore, students often have varied experiences depending on which family they are placed in.

Pre-Departure Orientation:

When discussing pre-departure orientation, some people may picture administrative preparations. The Forum on Education Abroad (2011, no page number) tells us that it is "programming intended to prepare students for a

meaningful, successful, and educational experience abroad." At APU, academic office staff takes care of most of administrative preparations such as with passports, visas, crisis management, housing, through in-person meetings and written documents. A faculty from outside the language section prepares students on cultural adjustment and intercultural learning by providing one workshop for all off-campus program participants for the upcoming break period. The language faculty are expected to prepare students on academic matters through screening application forms, interviewing applicants, providing pre- and post-tests, four pre-departure lectures, and one post-program presentation session. Pre-departure lectures include discussions on cultural adjustment, intercultural learning, and intercultural problem solving. One lecturer from the Center for Language Education is assigned for each immersion program, and they are responsible for awarding the credits for the course, combining the grade reports received from the host institution and the in-house assessments conducted before and after the on-site program. The lecturer for English immersion programs usually travels to the site in the middle of the program, while for some other languages, the lecturer in charge is actually a contracted lecturer from the host institution, so it is their home-coming visit, and they stay in the destination during the entire period of the program.

Outline of Immersion Programs:

English immersion programs allow APU students to take English courses during spring or summer breaks at foreign universities and gain extra credits at APU. These types of courses are typically between 3 and 6 weeks in

length (2 or 4 credits, with a minimum of 60 hours of study for a two-credit course and 120 hours for a four-credit course).

The aims of the programs are:

I. To provide students with an opportunity to experience overseas study early in their university life;
II. To act as a stepping stone toward participation in student exchange programs;
III. To enable students to enjoy learning and using the target language;
IV. To boost students' general English competencies and motivation for studying English.

(Berger, 2012, "English Advisor Description." Unpublished internal document.)

Service-Learning Program:

The Forum on Education Abroad (2011, no page number) defines service-learning program as "a subtype of field study program in which the pedagogical focus is a placement in an activity that serves the needs of a community." At APU, one of the four programs under study with the University of Adelaide incorporates service-learning program as part of the course. Students take language classes four days a week, and they spend one day of the week learning about different volunteer groups and activities and participate in some of them. For instance, on one occasion, students learned about Cara, a not-for-profit organization to help children and adults with disability, during the week, then on Friday they participated in garden making activity with local volunteers for the share house they were building. On another occasion, students learned about protecting local animals and preventing invading species from entering Australia and visited the local zoo. I participated in both of these activities during my visits in the past. Service-learning programs differ

from internship programs in that the activities are not directly career-oriented. Another of the programs at APU, with the University of Western Australia, offers an internship program as part of the course. In the program, students are first given career focused tasks such as selecting a job advertisement or writing résumé, then in the afternoon, they are placed in different offices around the campus to do simple tasks.

3.3 Previous Research on Study Abroad

Regarding what is usually scrutinized for research on education, outcomes-based education is often required as there are both external and internal pressures to justify university education and its cost (Bleistein & Wong, 2015). In this section I exemplify what we know in terms of the positive effects or outcomes of study abroad programs prior to my data collection, and what we do not know. There may be various outcomes, such as academic, cultural, intercultural, personal and professional factors, but I focus on linguistic outcomes as an English as a foreign language teacher.

3.3.1 Study Abroad and its Effects

Study abroad experience can influence language learners in a variety of ways, both positively and negatively. It can influence language learners positively in every domain of language competence (Kinginger, 2009), while some students are disappointed by it (Meier & Daniels, 2013). Learners can improve on their overall fluency, listening, reading, or writing abilities, vocabulary knowledge and usage, cognitive skills, intercultural skills, social skills, deepen understanding of the world and different culture, and more. We also know that contact with target language speakers is beneficial for learners

(Allen & Herron, 2003; Coleman, 1997; Freed, 1995; Regan et al., 2009). The great majority of the literature in the field is from studies on long-term study abroad, often referred to as residence abroad. The current study is informed by several studies on short-stays abroad, but mostly in different languages and locations, mainly Western, such as Allen and Herron in French learners from US (2003), and Llanes and Munoz (2009) in English learners from Spain. In the study by Llanes and Munoz (2009), the researchers aimed to find out if foreign language competency could be enhanced as a result of short stay at the target language immersion program. It focused on three aspects of linguistic gains: oral fluency, accuracy, and listening comprehension. Results showed that the short stays did show significant improvements on most of the measurements, and that learners' proficiency level strongly influenced the gains. In Llanes and Munoz (2009), quantitative method is used in that research "measures variables in a quantifiable way" (Mertens, 1998, p. 6). I think emulating Llanes and Munoz (2009) partially is appropriate for the purpose of my study, part of which is to test whether there is a significance of short-stays abroad or not.

Secondly, what can previous literature tell us about the social experiences English learners have during stays abroad? There is a need to document learning opportunities and how linguistic developments interact with them (DuFon & Churchill, 2006). Immersion program participants in my university in general engage in classroom instructions of up to 20 hours per week during the on-site program, which is about 4 hours per day. How do they spend the rest of the day? I think it is very important to investigate how else the learners immerse themselves linguistically, but there is little literature on the

extra-curricular activities. Some literature can be located among ethnographic studies such as in Churchill and DuFon (2006) in which stay abroad participants were interviewed during or after a semester or year abroad, or students kept periodical journals and reported on their social activities. Dewey, Belnap and Hillstrom (2013) report on D'Urso's finding (1997) that participants' language proficiency is an important factor influencing the development of social networks with native speakers. Since investigating extra-curricular activities necessitates evaluating learners' interactions with others, it is worth investigating how language proficiency may be related to learners' social networks during short stays abroad. Finally, in the age of instant connectivity, people are starting to wonder what effect virtual social network may have (Coleman & Chafer, 2010; Engle & Engle, 2012; Holzmüller, Stottinger & Wittkop, 2002; Huesca, 2013), while some discuss the benefits and ways of harnessing social media (Reinig, 2013a, 2013b), there is little study of the added effect of virtual social interactions during stays abroad.

Many researchers have discussed developments of pragmatics and sociolinguistic skills in a long-term study abroad context (Barron, 2006; Cook, 2006; DuFon, 2006; Fe'lix-Brasdefer, 2004; Hassall, 2006; Iino, 2006; Kinginger & Farrell, 2004; Marriott, 1995; Regan, 1995, 1998, 2005; Regan et al., 2009; Schauer, 2006; Siegal, 1995; Taguchi, 2008). Pragmatic abilities examined in study abroad contexts refer to the acquisition of routines, register, terms of address, and speech acts (DuFon & Churchill, 2006). Pre- and post-program data, questionnaires, and ethnographic data are often collected for investigation, such as through recorded conversations, diaries, interviews, and

observation notes. For instance, Hassall (2006) conducted a diary study on learning to take leave in social conversation. Barron (2006) investigated the acquisition of sociolinguistic competence using a production questionnaire, asking respondents to write a role-play or dialogue.

Another area often measured as an effect of study abroad is the acquisition of intercultural skills. Intercultural adaptability is often assessed using tools such as Intercultural Knowledge and Competence VALUE Rubric from Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U, 2010, cited in Bleistein & Wong, 2015). I did not consider measuring intercultural adaptability for my study for several reasons. First, it is not realistic to expect a learner to acquire intercultural adaptability through such short programs as three weeks. Second, APU students already study at the most culturally diverse university in Japan, where they are immersed in different cultures on a daily basis. It would be difficult to judge whether they change or do not change their cultural adaptability because of the short stays abroad or through their interactions with the multicultural environment at APU. Third, applying the assessment tools which require not only budgeting, but an array of administrative procedures was not practical considering the timeframe and the size of the current study.

3.3.1.1 Study Abroad and Linguistic Gains

Considering the most apparent and convincing ways to exhibit positive outcomes from a stay abroad program for stakeholders leads me to test the learners' ability to perform in linguistic tasks, often focusing on different language learning skills such as listening, reading, speaking, and writing. Below I discuss each language skill and its probable connection to study abroad.

Looking at each skill separately, listening ability “is recognized as an integral component of communicative language ability” (Wagner, 2014, p. 47). Listening is fundamental in second or foreign language acquisition because a lot of input is given orally. However, Churchill & DuFon (2006) report the lack of research on listening skills acquisition in study abroad context. Listening ability for this study is measured through the use of TOEFL ITP scores before and after the program. Score reliability and comparability are important in comparing test results. Educational Testing Service (hereafter ETS) has implemented thorough measures to enhance them, as can be observed in its research reports (ETS, 2011). I think therefore it is safe to use TOEFL scores to evaluate the students’ linguistic outcomes. According to ETS (2016), the reliability of TOEFL ITP is quite high at 0.96 for the total score, and the standard error of measurement (SEM), which is used to describe how imprecise the test score can be, is approximately 13. It means if a test-taker has a true score of 500, he or she may receive a score between 487 and 513. All of TOEFL ITP questions are multiple choice items. TOEFL’s Section 1 measures the learner’s ability to comprehend conversational as well as academic dialogues and monologues. According to APU’s expectations, students are expected to develop their listening skills through their immersion abroad.

According to a summary by Churchill & DuFon (2006, in DuFon & Churchill), there is little indication as to whether study abroad is more advantageous than learning at home for grammar acquisition. The general finding is that learners’ development patterns vary, and learning takes a long time. Grammatical accuracy has been evaluated in previous studies, but

according to Arnett (2013, as reported in Ecke, 2014), study abroad students did not do better or worse than at-home students. For this study, grammar ability is measured through the use of TOEFL ITP scores before and after the program. Bachman and Palmer's (1996) conceptualization of language knowledge is used as a test development guide in TOEFL, the Cambridge tests, and numerous other tests (Purpura, 2014). In this framework, grammatical knowledge means "how individual utterances or sentences are organized with respect to knowledge of phonology or graphology, vocabulary and syntax" (Purpura, 2014, p. 103). The TOEFL paper version measures grammatical knowledge at the sentential level in Section 2, Structure and Written Expression, while the internet-based version does not test a learner's knowledge of grammar. Structure questions require students to complete a sentence by choosing the correct word or phrases, which is a limited production task. Written Expression questions require students to detect an error in a sentence, which is a receptive response task. Besides, none of the immersion programs focus on grammar instruction per se. Still, it is worthwhile to check whether there is any change in the grammar section scores of TOEFL ITP through stays abroad.

Reading ability, or literacy skills, is not researched extensively in study abroad context (Churchill & DuFon, 2006). Dewey (2004a, 2004b) is one of few researchers who compared SA students with at-home students and found that SA students gained confidence but were not better at vocabulary gains or recall. Fraser's long-term SA study of American students in Germany (as reported by Ecke, 2014) suggested substantial gains in reading and writing

skills. He stresses that experiential learning in extra-curricular environment impacts students' gains. In this current study, reading ability is measured through the use of TOEFL ITP scores before and after the program. TOEFL's Section 3 measures the learner's ability to comprehend academic texts of varied subjects. Topics can cover any subjects in arts, humanities, life sciences, physical sciences, and social sciences (ETS, 2018a). Students are expected to develop their reading comprehension skills through their on-site program.

Speaking tests judge one's "ability to use language under particular conditions" (O'Sullivan, 2014, p. 159). According to O'Sullivan (2014), the study of speaking tests is under-researched, even though speaking tests are used widely worldwide. Within the study abroad field, however, oral proficiency is the most extensively researched area (Ecke, 2014). An example of a comprehensive, standard assessment is the ACTFL Oral Proficient Interview, which is used to measure speaking gains (Baker-Smemoe, Dewey, Bown & Martinsen, 2014). In the study by Freed, Segalowitz and Dewey (2004), they found that intensive domestic immersion students on a 7-week program improved their speaking abilities more than SA students or at-home students on a 12-week program.

Writing ability is sometimes measured in SA research, most notably by Sasaki (2004, 2007, and 2011) for Japanese learners of English. However, I have come across no study of writing skills from short-term SA programs. The current study can serve as a step toward filling the gaps of research on writing skills through short-term SA in Japanese university context.

Finally, vocabulary is sometimes the focus of study abroad research (Collentine, 2004; DeKeyer, 1991; Dewey, 2008; Foster, 2009; Ife, Vives & Meara, 2000; Milton & Meara, 1995), but it is generally associated with long-term SA programs, and I believe the accumulation of vocabulary takes a long time, and it is not in the scope of this study.

3.3.2 Short-Stays Abroad and their Significance

In this section, I review literature that examines the benefits of short-stays abroad, which range from between three and seven weeks in duration. How short can short-stays abroad be? Can a program of seven, five, or even three weeks long contribute positively to English learners' linguistic outcomes? Even if there is no or little expectation of improvement, is it worth promoting the program to the prospective participants? In other words, is it worth the expense? Often students and their parents are required to prepare a large sum of money to take part in study abroad programs, especially those held in English speaking countries. If the university wants to promote the benefits of the immersion programs, the most important consideration for those funding the participation is whether it is effective – that is to say, there is an observable improvement attributed to stays abroad. There is a popular belief that the longer a student studies abroad, the more benefits there are (Dwyer, 2004; Isabelli, 2004). Dwyer (2004) claims only programs of 6 weeks or longer can yield various outcomes based on her data. However, short-stays abroad is proven to provide gains in linguistic (Allen, 2002; Allen & Herron, 2003; Campbell, 1996; Simões, 1996; Woodman, 1999), cognitive and affective development (Jackson, 2005). Still, the benefits of short-stays abroad are still under-researched (DuFon

& Churchill, 2006; Dwyer, 2004; Jackson, 2006, 2008), or “ignored” according to Jackson (2006, p. 134). Mitchell, McManus & Tracy-Ventura (2015) also note the current state in which few studies examine the impact of length of stay abroad on linguistic gains. With short stays abroad, the amount of foreign language input and output is restricted. Hence, it is imperative that the learners receive a large amount of high quality input and output opportunities while abroad, although in a recent study, Bown, Dewey and Belnap (2015) report that for language gains the quality of interactions is more important than the quantity of interactions. Considering overall proficiency of English through short-stays abroad, Heubner (1995) found that SA students improved global L2 proficiency over at-home students in 9 weeks. Yager (1998) found that participants with low L2 level had gains in overall L2 proficiency and motivation.

Focusing on linguistic gains, encouragingly, Evans and Fisher (2005) found that British adolescent learners of French had considerable gains in listening and writing after only 6 to 11 days abroad. Cubillos, Chieffo and Fane (2008) also report that American learners of Spanish improved their listening abilities more than at-home students in 5 weeks. Besides, Simões (1996) reports on Spanish learners that students who went abroad for a few weeks improved their oral proficiency. In Japanese context, Sato (2012) has written several papers regarding the benefit of short-stays abroad for Japanese university students and reports the development of fluency, vocabulary and affective impact, although her definition of short-term refers to 3 to 4 months, which is long-term in my definition. Matsumoto (2010) reports on English listening skill’s improvement from the four-week study abroad programs by

Japanese university students. Kuno (2011) even indicates that a 3-week program abroad may be as effective as a 10-month-long e-learning program in improving TOEIC scores.

Several studies find that lower proficiency learners make more gains than higher proficiency learners (Lapkin, Hart & Swain, 1995; Regan et al., 2009). In Nonaka's study (Nonaka, 2005) of Japanese students studying overseas for 20 days, only low-level students showed increase in reading section and overall scores in Pre-TOEFL, a watered-down version of TOEFL. Nonaka's subsequent study (Nonaka, 2008) showed overall increase in listening scores, but he used TOEIC IP, a different measurement from before.

Regarding oral fluency and accuracy, Llanes and Munoz (2009) discovered that lower proficiency learners gained more syllables per minute than higher proficiency learners, and that they decreased ratio of L1 words as well as the ratio of lexical errors. They also report that when the proficiency level is the same, the longer participants stayed abroad, the fewer errors they made. Furthermore, longer stay increased participants' ability to speak fluently. These are important observations, because such results can be used to encourage longer stays abroad for foreign language learners, even by a week. As the above review of the literature shows, there are several studies that report on the improvement of learners' listening and oral proficiency scores. Therefore, one may hypothesize that students participating in APU's short-term immersion programs, who are at the pre-intermediate to upper-intermediate level, may make some progress from a three to five-week program, especially with the listening and speaking skills. Traveling abroad and living with a host family

necessitates students' listening and talking to people on a daily basis, which is a situation the students are not regularly exposed to in their home country. In order to maximize these, pre-departure orientations, finding the right partner institutions, and accommodations are all important. Equally important is how well students are integrated into the host society and culture, with enough opportunities to immerse in the target language.

3.3.3 Applying Social Capital Approach to Study Abroad Participants

In this section, I introduce discussions on the roles of social networks that consist of outer circle, middle circle and inner circle groups, which forms learning communities for language learners overseas. Some of the recent empirical studies, although not many, examined associations between the linguistic gains, out-of-class interaction, and social integration (Ayano, 2006; Dewey, Bown & Eggett, 2012; Dewey, Ring, Gardner & Belnap, 2013; Meier & Daniels, 2013; Pearson-Evans, 2006; Tanaka, 2007; Trentman, 2013; Zappa, 2007). In terms of social integration, Lave and Wenger (1991) and Wenger (1998) proposed that people everywhere construct a community of practice (CoP), building relationships at home, in the community, and in the workplace. Jackson (2008), as well as Isabelli-García (2006) and Dewey, Bown and Eggett (2012) put this construct in study abroad context, and explained that as sojourners enter the host community, "they need to learn to participate in the group's activities to gradually become 'full-fledged members of that community' (Jackson, pp. 43-44)." The formation of a community of practice takes time, as it is also an identity formation. It is hard to find literature that focus on social integration during short stays abroad. Drawing on Meier and Daniels (2013), we

know that concentric circle model, social capital theory and sociocultural theory, which refers to social and cultural context and deals with socialization and the construction of identities (Lantolf &Thorpe, 2006), can help understand, interpret and support students on year-abroad programs. First, social interaction in itself is an important objective. Many students did not feel they were successful at making friends while abroad. Thus, unlike what prospective study abroad students may assume, social integration was not an automatic process.

Social networks, a term coined by Milroy (1987), play a key role in that everything a language learner does outside classrooms depends on the relationships formed and how one spends the free time. Milroy introduced the term social network to explain dialect users in Belfast. As shown in figures 3.2 and 3.3 below, low-status speakers usually interact with people they know well, forming high-density personal network, while high-status speakers interact with various people, forming low-density personal network. To put this concept to SA context, one can imagine highly competent learners of a foreign language can interact with various people in the host community, while low-level learners may get stuck with a small circle of friends or host family. In the case of X in Figure 3.2, A, B, C, and D may all be X's friends, who know other members of X's social circles very well. On the other hand, in Figure 3.3, the sojourner has access to multiple interlocutors, therefore A, B, C and D may or may not belong to the same social circles and know each other.

Figure 3.2 *High-density personal network structure: X is the focal point of the network* (adapted from Milroy, 1987, p. 20)

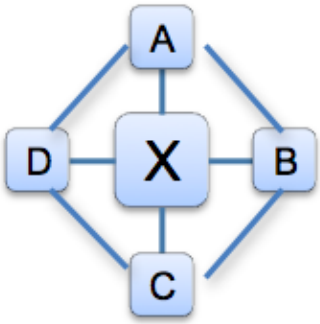
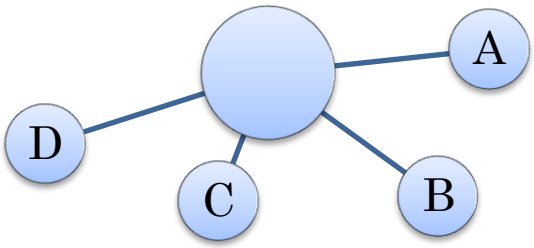


Figure 3.3 *Low-density personal network structure: The large circle is the focal point of the network* (adapted from Milroy, 1987, p. 20)

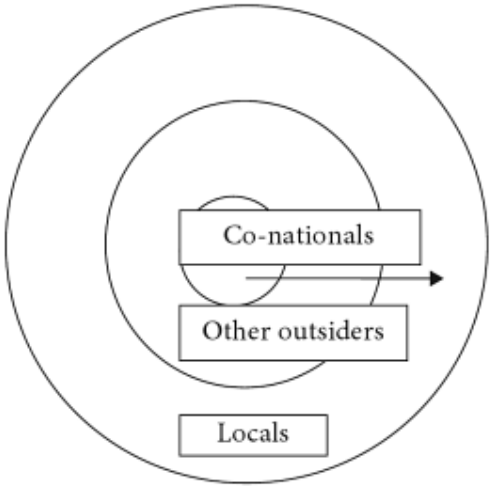


Negative effects of social networks or ties with home have been reported by Kinginger and Whitworth (2005), Li (2000), and Knight and Schmidt-Rinehart (2002). In the meantime, cases where students developed close relationships with host nationals are reported by Campbell (1996), Isabelli-García (2006), Jackson (2016), Kinginger (2004), Kinginger and Farrell (2004), Kinginger and Whitworth (2005), Levin (2001), and Schumann (1997). Isabelli-Garcia's study (2006, p. 257) tells us that learners who had extended social networks and practiced the target language show that "informal, out-of-class contact can greatly enhance acquisition". In discussing the social network formation, we also hear about the strengths of relational ties. Weak ties represent connections with new acquaintances formed during SA (Coleman,

2013b), while strong ties represent well-established, long-lasting connections with friends and family. When people have established close and strong links with family and friends, they may not try to connect with short-term sojourners or sojourners may not try hard to make new friends.

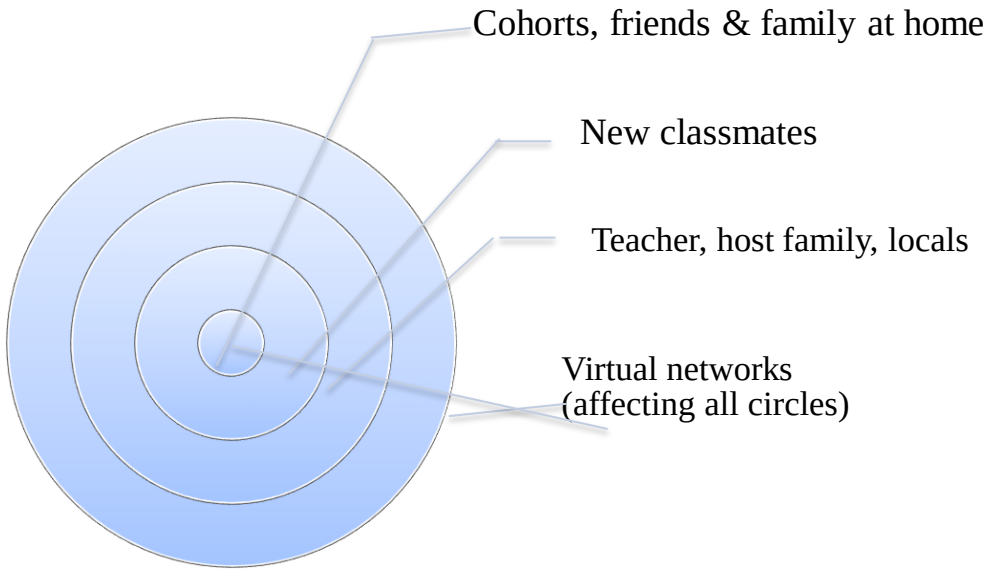
I argue that as in the concentric circles presented by Coleman (2013a), similar social networks exist in short-term study abroad groups as well, and that nowadays there is a fourth circle: the virtual network (See Figure 3.4). In Meier and Daniels' study (2013), they found that virtual social contacts were deemed important for emotional support, as well as a useful tool for organizing social life in the outer circle. Over the past decade, an increasing number of people have started to own devices such as tablet PCs and smartphones, which enables them to easily stay connected to the Internet and through this, to their circle of friends and family. This affects how people communicate in general, including when they are abroad. Preparation for study abroad started to include the creation of a Facebook group at APU, for instance. This led me to wonder how sojourners make use of virtual networks while abroad, and it became a focus for me to try and observe the sojourners' social networks during their study abroad period.

Figure 3.1 *Coleman's concentric circles representation of study abroad social networks*



Coleman (2013a, p.31)

Figure 3.4 *Concentric circles representation of immersion program participants' social network, based on Coleman's concentric circle model (2013a, p.31).*



3.3.4 Social Networks during Study Abroad

In this section, I explain how the social networks influence study abroad students.

3.3.4.1 Contact with the Outer Circle Community

One main reason why language learners study abroad is to gain access to native speakers of the target language. Therefore, gaining access to locals, or the outer circle relationship, is of paramount importance to students' language learning. Homestay environment is found to offer interaction opportunities in the target language (Kaplan, 1989, cited in Regan et al., 2009), thus it can be said to be a positive contributor to learners' proficiency improvement (Milton & Meara, 1995; Opper, Teichler & Carlson, 1990, both cited in Coleman, 1998), especially because it offers the direct contact with native speakers in the target language. Research by Martin (1980) supports the assumption that homestay environment yields better TOEFL results than non-homestay English language students. Many researchers have advocated that the amount of contact with native speakers influences the acquisition of sociolinguistic and sociocultural knowledge (Isabelli-García, 2006; Lafford, 1995; Lapkin et al., 1995; Marriott, 1995; Regan, 1995; Siegal, 1995). However, Campbell (2016) writes about learners' disappointment with the amount of interaction and number of friendships students develop during study abroad in Japan. We can see that this issue may be a universal concern. Since the amount of time the learners have in the target community is limited due to the length of the short-term stay abroad programs, it is important to provide as much input and practice opportunities in the target language as possible. Oftentimes, the contact with one's host family turns out to be the only contact a student has during a short program. Of course, it is premature to assume that a homestay guarantees a student's success, as Jackson (2008) points out that

the hosts and sojourners “may have different agendas (p. 48).” In this study, all the students experience homestay, and I want to learn how the interaction with their English-speaking families influence the learners. Some scholars such as Shaules (2007) and Kobayashi (2009) claim that group study tour students nowadays do not try to immerse themselves in local communities, but I do not think this can be generalized globally. With so much time and money invested in a short study abroad, I think students seek opportunities to interact with their host family and other native speakers.

Corder and Meyerhoff (2007), as cited in Jackson (2008), found that those who actively participate in ‘cultural performances’ within the community of practice can transform themselves, suggesting that the study abroad participants can develop new self-identities by fully immersing themselves in the host community, such as through the host family and their social networks. Jackson (2008) also suggests that if the sojourners find their hosts welcoming and supportive, they may be able to develop both personally and linguistically, feel positive toward the host culture as well as the language, and as a result, make more efforts to be part of the host culture. At the same time, Jackson (2008) reminds us “not to assume that homestay placements will lead to frequent and positive host-sojourner interactions and mutual identity reconstruction” (p.126).

3.3.4.2 Contact with the Middle Circle Community

Gaining interaction opportunities with middle-circle group, such as classmates from other countries, can also be valuable for learners. Since the immersion program participants are placed in part or entirely in English classes

with other learners of the language, they have contact with non-Japanese, non-native speakers of English in their classes to a certain degree. This could formulate a middle circle in the social community, in which participants use their target language as a means of communication in and out of classroom. As far as I am aware, no studies have yet investigated the extent of the learners' contact with the middle circle community. The extent to which APU students interacted with their middle circle group is evident from the questionnaire data, which is presented in 5.3.1.1.

3.3.4.3 Contact with the Inner Circle Community

When a group of students participate in an organized study abroad program, it is natural or even sometimes required for them to form a supportive relationship before departure. They take preparation classes together, travel to the destination country together, and some even take the same classes at the host institution. Spencer-Oatey and Xiong (2006, p. 39) report that students expect local students to help them academically, but that they prefer to rely on inner-circle friends "for emotional support." One issue with a group program is that Japanese students often spend a lot of their free time with co-nationals, resulting in their speaking in Japanese among themselves. Jackson (2008) cites Joseph (2004) and states that existing social networks can limit the behaviors of the study abroad participants. The same issue is reported by Jackson (2006, 2008). We see there that Cori in Jackson's case study (2008) feels English should rather be used with locals than with co-nationals.

3.3.4.4 Technology and Social Networks

With increasing availability of the Internet and other IT media, it has become easy for students to stay connected virtually with the people, information and culture from home. As Holzmüller et al. (2002) state, research studies have not yet evaluated the impact of electronic communication of study abroad students. Holzmüller et al. (2002) hypothesize four negative impacts of IT, which are that (1) IT leads to limited cross-cultural competence; (2) that IT inhibits students' cultural immersion; (3) that IT reduces interactions within the international community and with the locals, and that (4) IT increases xenophobia from local students, but evidence for or against these is lacking. Kashima and Loh (2006) investigated social networks of international students and found that if the students had developed local and international ties, they adjusted well psychologically in the host culture. Besides, in their study, the length of stay in the target culture did not matter.

Considering the sociocultural perspective of the social networks and language choice, Allen's study (2010a) is useful and relevant. Students saw peer-to-peer interaction in French to be useful for developing confidence. At the same time, Savicki (2010), considering the recent advancement of technology, hypothesized that electronic contact could have effects as offering cultural contact. However, his quantitative finding showed that home culture contact did not interfere with host culture contact and that students' accessing home culture support may actually help them to deal with stress abroad.

3.4 Gaps in Research

This study aims to fill five salient gaps in the published literature with regards to short-term study abroad and connections between linguistic and social gains. First of all, it addresses relationships between linguistic gains and social integration. In year abroad literature, there are “six generally accepted categories of learning objectives: academic, cultural, intercultural, linguistic, personal and professional (Coleman, 2005; Meier, 2013, p. 5). However, social interaction is missing from this list and is rarely addressed in relation to linguistic gains. Llanes and Munoz’s (2009) study is interesting and informative; however, they did not study what learners actually did or what kind of social networks they had in their stay abroad programs. Neither did the study include personal and cultural gains, such as cultural understanding and motivation. Sato (2012) suggests qualitative case studies such as interviews with students, but her studies are quantitative and cannot provide a complete picture of the impact of study abroad. Large scale quantitative studies such as Coleman (2010) and Savicki (2010) are useful for generalizations but having qualitative data such as interviews enables the researcher to triangulate the data. The current study can shed light on the possible cause of individual differences by examining each case closely.

Secondly, literature taking virtual community into account is lacking. Mitchell (2015) touches on the possible effects virtual media has on sustaining existing social networks. However, use of technologies such as Wi-Fi access,

Facebook, Skype, and LINE[5] and how these contribute to the student's social circles are potentially important but hardly studied (Ecke, 2014). I believe this mixed-method study does help us understand the topic deeper and add credibility to the findings.

Thirdly, more research is necessary to establish the language gains because of lack of literature, as Mestenhauser (2002, p. 167) writes, "international educators are often criticized for not documenting their activities and for providing mostly anecdotal evidence rather than research-based data" and because the existing literature shows contradictory results, as pointed out by Llanes (2011). Fourthly, few cases from Japan or Asia are reported. Of the available literature on short-term SA gains, many come from US students studying another language in European countries or European students studying in another European country. It is well known that Indo-European languages have many similarities, and most research on study abroad focuses on learning another Indo-European language. Meanwhile, there is more difficulty for a Japanese speaker to learn English.

Finally, most of the previous literature addresses long-term study abroad, and short-stays abroad research is still in developmental stage. In addition, there are few studies on short stays abroad with a longitudinal research design (Nakayama, Sixian & Mann, 2013) as this. There are limited data on Japanese university students studying English abroad, especially regarding collaborative learning and learning in the community. Since this is

[5] LINE is a freeware application for instance messaging, which was launched in 2011 and was gaining popularity among students at the time of the data collection.

something APU values and is promoting, an official study into the effectiveness of such programs is warranted. The current research follows Meier and Daniels's (2013) social capital approach and concentric circle model, in which the researcher looks at the participants' interactions and compares their English language skills before and after language immersion programs.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES AND JUSTIFICATION FOR THE APPROACH

In this chapter, I illustrate the research methodologies used for the study and how the collected data answer the research questions. I utilized a mixed-method case study collecting and analyzing quantitative and qualitative data.

4.1 Research Methodologies and Research Questions

Both quantitative and qualitative methodologies are widely used in study abroad research. In order to answer the research question, "**In what way can social experiences be associated with linguistic outcomes during short stays abroad?**" and the Sub-Question 1, **To what extent do short stays abroad affect English learners' linguistic outcomes?** We need to look at participants' basic information such as age and prior study experience and measure linguistic ability to observe progress through pre-post data. Therefore, I collected data on the students' linguistic proficiency before and after study abroad. In order to answer Sub-Question 2, "**What social experiences do English learners have during short stays abroad?**" I collected qualitative data delving into students' individual, social experiences through reported language use, perceived improvement and their reflections. The section is structured by first introducing the research framework, treating quantitative and qualitative aspects separately and justifying the use of mixed method research design. Bringing the two methods together, I discuss the benefits of examining the quantitative and the qualitative data from a relatively small number of

participants. I then outline the research procedures, data collection tools, and how to analyze the data.

These are more specific questions derived from Sub-Question 2.

(a) How much time do students spend with the outer circle, middle circle and inner circle groups, and how much virtual communication is generated? How do contact with the target language (TL) and usage of social media influence learners' perceptions of their achievement during short-term study abroad?

(b) Does the involvement of homestay family influence the learners' language proficiency? Do students attribute their perceived achievements to their social interactions?

In order to gather data that can answer the above research questions, various data collections were conducted over the period of one year and half. To address Sub-Question 1, I collected the participants' English language proficiency data, using TOEFL ITP scores and mock TOEFL materials. To answer Sub-Question 2 (a), I collected what participants reported through a questionnaire. To answer Sub-Question 2 (b), I looked at all the available data, including test scores, questionnaire responses, follow-up interviews, on-site observation notes and field notes.

4.1.1 Quantitative Aspect of the Research

People's ideas, relationships, and behavior are so complex that there can be a number of hypotheses that cannot be verified or proven. However, it is necessary and often effective in educational contexts to use pre-tests and post-tests to measure potential changes or improvements in test scores to assess

potential language gains and to see to what extent an educational activity works. In the current study, as I explain in section 4.4.4, I use language tests to measure test scores, and questionnaires to measure target language contact time and learners' perceptions regarding improvements. One of the strongest reasons for using quantitative instruments is that some people, including policy makers, find numbers more convincing. If there is a clear indication of a learner's linguistic development, it becomes easy to convince the stakeholders of the benefits of short-term study abroad. For language tests, it is imperative that a test is assessing the learners' ability accurately, assuring the quality of the quantitative instruments. Therefore, selecting the right tests or questionnaire is important. In this study, I use TOEFL ITP and iBT-type test items as testing instruments for several reasons: The test is (a) trusted widely, (b) it is used regularly in the studied institution, (c) data are accessible, and (d) the students are motivated to take it for their study abroad goals. In addition, questionnaires must be constructed carefully, trialed and revised so that the responses will help answer the research questions. How I dealt with the questionnaires is discussed in 4.4.6.

4.1.2 Qualitative Aspect of the Research

I side with interpretive methodologies, also referred to as constructivist paradigm. An interpretive researcher tends to employ qualitative data collection methods and analysis, for instance interviews, observations, and document reviews (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006) and mixed methods are also not uncommon. Interpretivists believe that our knowledge and value influence the world we know; the world we know is socially constructed. Therefore, the goal of such a researcher is to interpret and understand, rather than to explain.

As Jackson supports, qualitative data can measure learners' "personal, social, linguistic, and academic development" (Jackson, 2008, p. 5). Many researchers (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007; Creswell, 2007; Maxwell, 2005) suggest several strategies for qualitative research to test validity. These include intensive, long-term involvement, rich data, triangulation, peer review, member checks, self-reflection, sampling sufficiency, theoretical thinking, external audits and participatory clarification of researcher bias. As Merriam (1998) remarks, triangulation of data increases reliability and internal validity. Either way, qualitative researchers would agree that research procedures be coherent and transparent, results be clear, and conclusions to be trustworthy (Miller, 2008a). There are weaknesses to qualitative data, as identified by Dörnyei (2007). He points to five major issues of qualitative research often associated with this methodology: (i) the small sample size and ungeneralizability, (ii) the subjective researcher role, (iii) the lack of methodological rigor, (iv) overly complex or too narrow theories, and (v) the time-consuming process of data collection and analysis. These shortcomings are also present in my research, and I address them at section 6.5.

There is no way we are 100% sure of validity (Wellington, 2000). Therefore, there is a need to examine reliability, to see whether different researchers can observe consistent results in different contexts. Reliability, also expressed as the dependability, consistency, and or replicability (Miller, 2008b; Wellington, 2000) in data collection, interpretation and or analysis, is seen to be different between quantitative and qualitative research.

4.1.3 Mixed Methodology

More and more researchers are employing mixed methods approaches nowadays, making use of strengths from both (Bleistein & Wong, 2015; Savicki & Brewer, 2015). Mixing methods is not only beneficial, but it is actually necessary in order to understand a phenomenon (Yardley & Bishop, 2017). A mixed-methods approach to research is one that involves gathering both numeric information and text information so that the final database represents both quantitative and qualitative information (Creswell, 2003). It is seen to be a new and beneficial approach, combining, connecting or embedding the strengths of quantitative and qualitative research (Creswell, 2007, 2009; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). Quantitative research often lacks understanding of the context and the voices of participants are not heard, while qualitative research is sometimes seen as being unreliable since it involves a small sample size and lacks generalizability. As a result of mixing methods, a researcher can complement each approach. In this study, the quantitative data documents the change, and the qualitative data help us understand why there is a change in the participants. The mixed method approach is not only practical but also natural (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011) for understanding the world and its people. By using methods that can offset biased and limited results, one can enhance the validity or credibility of the findings (Greene, 2007). Although mixed-methods research is gaining popularity, like other types of research, it requires close scrutiny in employing the method. Challenges in using mixed methods posed by Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) include the question of skills, of times and resources, and of convincing others. For instance, a

researcher should be familiar with both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis techniques. Second, the mixed methods approach takes time, and researchers need to consider if there are enough time and resources to collect and analyze two or more different kinds of data. In the case of this study, data collection plans with multiple-phase were made well in advance and implemented accordingly. The third difficulty is with convincing stakeholders with the value of a mixed methods approach. Several of recent studies on study abroad employ a mixed methods approach (Allen, 2010a; Allen & Herron, 2003; Bogain, 2012; Horness, 2014; Dewale, Tracy-Ventura, Köylü & McManus, 2016), and I expect there will be more and more.

A number of qualitative studies on study abroad rely on ethnographic research methods (Jackson, 2005 and others). Pitts (2009), who takes on interpretive methodologies, reports on the findings from an ethnographic study that took place over 15 months in France. According to Pitts (2009), more students are studying abroad for shorter periods of time, but with high expectations. When this happens, students often struggle with the gap between their expectations and reality. The purpose of Pitts' study was "to describe the process of sojourner adjustment across the course of a short-term sojourn," and to "explore and explain the role of expectations, talk, and identity in the short-term sojourn" (Pitts, 2009, p. 451). She lived in Paris, observed, filmed and interviewed over a hundred college students who came mainly from the USA for a semester period. Through intensive data collection and analysis, she identified students' expectations, expectation gaps, sources of such expectations, and the types of talk students employed in order to solve their

problems. Pitts' study is useful in that it provides empirical support to the integrative theory of communication and stressors, connects well with other similar studies, and investigates a new focus in the field. As Pitts stresses, the findings add to our knowledge on how to recognize and develop appropriate expectations of SA. In the current study, although close observations of participants would be beneficial, the time and resources were limited, so I employed alternative methods of data collection, combining tests, questionnaires, observations and interviews.

Greene (2007, p. 43) supports mixed methods, saying "when two or more methods that have offsetting biases are used to assess a given phenomenon, and the results of these methods converge or corroborate one another, then the validity or credibility of inquiry findings is enhanced." Interpretive research is often qualitative in nature, employing methods such as ethnographic studies, case studies and grounded theory research. An interpretive study tends to employ qualitative data collection methods and analysis, for instance interviews, observations, and document reviews (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006), although mixed methods are also not uncommon. For example, Allen and Herron (2003), Allen (2010a), Bogain (2012) and others used mixed methods to investigate study abroad phenomena. In interpretive research, "rigour, precision, systematicity and careful attention to detail" are often required (Richards, 2003, p. 6). Unlike positivists looking into natural sciences, interpretivists would see the difference between the natural and the social world (Grix, 2004). In other words, as an interpretive researcher, my goal is to interpret and understand, rather than to explain. As a consequence, I am

sometimes part of the study rather than being detached. There are many critics who emphasize the weaknesses of interpretive methodology. Brannen (2005, p. 7) explains that “quantitative researchers have seen qualitative researchers as too context specific, their samples as unrepresentative and their claims about their work as unwarranted.” Here, the sample is the group that I have chosen from the population from which to collect data (Mertens, 2005). This is so because qualitative studies, coming from interpretive paradigm, often employ small sample sizes, and positivist critics judge from the point of statistical generalizability. In order to counter the weaknesses of qualitative data, I use the mixed methods approach by utilizing the quantitative data such as TOEFL test scores. At APU, TOEFL is used as an achievement test. External tests such as TOEFL and International English Language Testing System (hereafter IELTS) are often used and sometimes even required by the university, which is pressured by MEXT, as is evidenced from the curriculum reforms implemented in 2011 and revised in 2014, and again reformed in 2017 at APU. MEXT is promoting the use of these high-stakes tests as a way to exhibit the Japanese university students’ performance internationally (MEXT, 2014e). APU uses the data to show how many percentages of the students reached TOEFL ITP 500. Also, Tanaka and Ellis (2003) use TOEFL and a belief questionnaire as a measurement of proficiency.

4.2 Research Procedures: Sampling and Data Collection

In order to recruit research participants, I invited all the students who joined English immersion programs to participate in the study, but it is important to note here that not all the students who went on the English immersion

programs wanted to be part of the research study. Participation in the study involved many additional tests, and the students were already tasked with other tests, such as application letters in Japanese and English, group interview screening, a placement test for the host university's classes, and another speaking test to meet the JASSO scholarship requirement. This could have been one reason some students avoided involvement. I included minimal information on all the students necessary to explain the context but excluded them from the data analysis. The total number of students who were on four different programs was 54 post-adolescent students at Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University in Japan, aged between 18 and 24 (Ave. 19) with 20 males and 34 females. Of these, I obtained data for 23 students' TOEFL ITP pre- and post-tests, 19 writing pre- and post-tests, and 20 speaking pre- and post-tests. 33 students (61% of all the students) took the post-program questionnaire. Furthermore, 2 students were interviewed on-site, 8 students (2 male, 6 female) took part in a post-program interview immediately after the SA, and 1 student was interviewed long after SA. I also list one of 10 pilot study interviewees in Table 4.4.

All the participants were compensated with either cash or book tokens and confectioneries for their time spent on tests and interviews. They participated in immersion programs organized by the Center for Language Education, the English part of which I coordinated at that time. In order to take part in the immersion programs, the students had to write an application form in Japanese and English and take a screening interview conducted by at least one English faculty together with one or two academic office staff. Therefore, the

sample used in this study was a convenience sample from those students who agreed to take part in the research study. The participants' native language is predominantly Japanese, and they had had between one and five semesters' university learning experiences.

Their English level at the time of application was between pre-intermediate to upper intermediate. I did not collect information about socioeconomic status, it being a sensitive matter to ask of a university student. As reported by Verba et al. (1987), as cited in Larson-Hall (2008), there is not strong correlation between income and educational level in Japan. However, the fact that the participants attend a private university and that all the participants spent a large sum of money to take part in the short-term study abroad program indicates that they may be from a medium to higher income family. In addition, 25 out of 33 participants who answered the questionnaire (76%) had spent some time abroad before participating in the program, and 20 of them used English during those times while abroad. The lengths of their previous stays abroad ranged from 3 days to 3.5 years. Excluding the data for two students who had lived or studied abroad for an extended period of time, the average length of stays abroad was about 3 weeks. This shows that the participants have the resources to travel abroad, considering the fact that Japan is an archipelago, requiring overseas travel to go abroad. For interview participants, I asked them about their hometown. However, whether students come from rural or urban cities do not seem relevant in the Japanese context, and APU attracts students who usually want to study abroad. Consequently, I did not include this data in the analysis. A more detailed summary of the

participants is in Appendix 3. Regarding other variables, gender was not controlled, and there were more female participants than male participants. As regards motivation, we can say that everyone who joined the program had high motivation to learn English. Regarding previous language learning experiences, as mentioned above, most students' background was similar, with the exception of one ethnic Korean raised in Japan and one Chinese student. Finally, aptitude and learning strategies were not checked in this study.

Table 4.1. *Summary of Immersion Program Participants Including Non-Research Participants*

	All program participants	Research participants	Study Abroad Dates	Length of stay	English class level
NZ-1	9 (M : F = 4 : 5)	**9 (M:F = 4 : 5)**	Aug. 2012	3 weeks	Pre-Intermediate
AUS-1	11 (M : F = 2 : 9)	**8 (M : F = 1 : 7)**	Aug.-Sep. 2012	5 weeks	Intermediate
NZ-2	16 (M : F = 5 : 11)	**12 (M : F = 3 : 9)**	Feb.-Mar. 2013	3 weeks	Pre-Intermediate
AUS-2	18 (M : F = 9 : 9)	**10 (M : F = 4 : 6)**	Feb.-Mar. 2013	5 weeks	Intermediate
Total	54	**39**			

The column for "All program participants" refers to the total number of students who participated in the university-led program. The next column, for "Research participants," refers to those students who submitted a research consent form and took part in either part or all of the data collection, which included pre-post-tests, a questionnaire, and an interview.

4.3 Pilot Study and Ethical Dimensions

In the next section, I explain in detail how I conducted the pilot study, and in the following section, I discuss ethics of this study.

4.3.1 Pilot Study

Pre- and post-tests, questionnaire and interviews were conducted with 10 participants 1 semester prior to the main study. The same test materials were used in both the pilot study and the main study. The questionnaire and the interview questions were based on the pilot study but were amended to suit the main study's research questions. One major difference from the main study was that the pilot study participants had stayed abroad during the spring break, but only one of the ten students was on the university-organized English immersion program. The others also studied abroad, participated in a volunteer program abroad, or simply travelled abroad. Another difference was that most of the interviews were conducted in pairs to encourage discussing ideas freely, to save time, and also because the pilot-study students knew each other well, having studied together on a special program for students who wanted to study abroad as exchange students. The pilot study group's English proficiency level overall was higher than the main study students, and some of them chose to be interviewed in English. In addition, pilot study participants were highly motivated learners of English who were trying to reach a higher level of English proficiency of more than TOEFL ITP 500. It was also relatively easy to recruit the pilot study participants, because I knew them very well, having accompanied them on overseas field study the previous year. Considering the differences between the pilot study participants and the main study participants, I do not compare them in any way. The pilot study served as a procedural practice and to test the questionnaire and interview questions. That said, one of the interviewees participated in the English immersion program organized by the university, and

her experiences echo what another student in the main study experienced, therefore I cite her quotes in the Discussions chapter. The list of pilot study's paired interview questions is in Appendix 4.

4.3.2 Ethical Dimensions

A consent form was produced and explained to all participants in detail, spoken in Japanese and written in English and Japanese. I emphasized that they did not have to sign the form, and that it in no way would affect their grades, and they were told that they could request to withdraw their responses at any time or ask to delete the data. I explained that all results would be kept anonymous. After the explanation, the participants signed two copies of the consent form, kept one copy and submitted the other copy to the researcher (Appendix 5). Furthermore, the participants' names were kept out of the notes, printed questionnaire results, and other documents. I worked according to *Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University Research Code of Ethics* (APU, 2007) and *Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University Guideline of Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Human Subject* (APU, 2012), as well as *Certificate of Ethical Research Approval* from the University of Exeter (Appendix 6). I also had support from the Director of the English section and the Director of Center for Language Education at APU. All the data associated with the study were stored in a password-protected data folder or in a locked desk drawer in the locked office. The audio files were stored on a designated desktop computer, which was password protected and no one else had access to them. After all the data were collected and found that there were fewer than 50 participants, I coded their names using Japanese alphabets, which has 50 characters, by assigning

each person with a character. Whenever necessary, I invented a pseudonym matching their gender, using the assigned character to report on each case.

4.4 Data Collection Tools and Procedures

One weakness of small-scale study abroad research is the small number of participants (Ecke, 2014). In order to gather as much data as possible, I collected data from four groups of students. The following methods to gather data were used in each research phase, explained in the following sections. Since the data collection took place over a long period of time on multiple occasions, I present a table here. There were two groups each semester, and the main study took over 2 semesters. Data collection took place pre-SA, during SA, and post-SA.

Table 4.2 *Data Collection Process in 2012-2013*

Timeframe	Location	Dates	Activities	Data collected
Pre-sojourn	Japan	Jan. 2012	Pilot study phase 1: pre-test	11 speaking test data and 11 writing samples
Post-sojourn	Japan	Apr. 2012	Pilot study phase 2: post-test, questionnaire, interviews	11 speaking test data and 11 writing samples
				10 questionnaire responses
				10 interview audio & transcripts
	Japan	May. 2012	Refine questionnaire from Pilot study	
(NZ-1&AUS-1)	Japan	Jun. 2012	Immersion program selection process at APU	
Pre-sojourn	Japan	Jul. 2012	Recruit Summer Cohorts of research participants; **Data collection 1**: pre-tests	Participants' demographic data
				13 speaking test data and 16 writing samples
3-5-wk sojourn	New Zealand/ Australia	Aug.- Sep. 2012	On-site observation & interview in Australia	Field notes; interview notes
Post-sojourn	Japan	Sep. 2012	**Data collection 2**: questionnaire	12 questionnaire responses
Post-sojourn	Japan	Oct. 2012	**Data collection 3**: post-tests	14 speaking test data and 16 writing samples
				TOEFL ITP data (pre-data for all, 4 score data for post program)
(NZ-2&AUS-2)	Japan	Nov. 2012	Immersion program selection process at APU	
Pre-sojourn	Japan	Jan. 2013	Recruit Spring Cohorts of research participants ; **Pre-departure data collection 1**	Participants' demographic data
				8 speaking test data and 6 writing samples
3-5-wk sojourn	New Zealand/ Australia	Mar. 2013	On-site observation & interview in Australia	Field notes; interview notes
			Data collection 2: questionnaire	19 questionnaire responses
Post-sojourn	Japan	Apr. 2013	**Data collection 3**: post-test	10 speaking test data and 11 writing samples
				TOEFL ITP data
Post-sojourn	Japan	May. 2013	**Data collection 4**: follow-up interviews	6 interview audio & transcripts

4.4.1 Selection of Participants and Introduction to the Research

Students were invited to participate in the study, which included pre- and post-tests, an on-line questionnaire, and interviews. Detailed information on these instruments can be found in the appendices. I took part in the initial selection process for the immersion programs, and already knew all the potential research participants, thus their email addresses were obtained from the academic office at the university. I used their email addresses to arrange

pre-post tests and to send the web link to the post-program questionnaire. The majority of the participants were Japanese, with the exception of one Chinese and one ethnic Korean raised in Japan, both of whom were Japanese speakers, taking university subjects in Japanese and learning English as a foreign language.

As the majority of the enrolled students did not participate in the SA program, the stay-at-home students with similar levels can be paired up randomly to serve as a control group. However, this is possible only if both groups take the same assessments post-program. All the students in the standard track curriculum were required to take the same TOEFL ITP at the end of each semester at the time, which is roughly four months after the study abroad program, so the result from this test served as a delayed post-test. Regarding the type of participants, the sample was convenience samples. In scientific research, researchers often opt to have an experimental group and a control group, and people are randomly assigned. However, in study abroad research, people are rarely randomly assigned. People choose to go on the program: in other words, the participants are self-selected. Besides at APU, students are screened to participate in the university-organized programs. Those who do not go choose not to, cannot afford to, or are not eligible to go. These choices are based on various factors as well. Therefore, it is impossible to compare these groups. One type of research to resolve this issue is to study the same group of people three times: before SA, during SA, and post-SA. Another variable that needs consideration is the cost. Attending these extra-curricular programs, especially in English-speaking countries such as Australia

and New Zealand, is costly even if it is for 3 weeks. Therefore, students who participated were likely to be from higher socioeconomic families than others who did not study abroad.

After the students returned to Japan, an email with the questionnaire link was sent in September 2012 to a total of 20 students, and in March 2013 to a total of 34 students. Reminders were sent to non-respondents. By April 2013, responses were received from 33 students with a 61% response rate. In this paper, all names are pseudonyms, and all responses are cited verbatim, although I translated any responses written or spoken in Japanese into English.

4.4.2 Consent and Data Protection

The participants were over 18 years of age, so no consent of parents or guardians was required. All potential participants were informed about the purpose and scope, as well as the voluntary nature of the study. I only surveyed participants who formally consented in written form. Any personal information about participants was kept confidentially, and participants were assured that this information was used solely for the purpose of this study, and they could refer to their own data to check their progress. They were also informed that pseudonyms would be used in order to grant anonymity.

4.4.3 Validity and Reliability: Credibility and Trustworthiness - TOEFL ITP examination record

I used Test of English as a Foreign Language, known as TOEFL, to measure the linguistic proficiency of the participants. TOEFL is used globally as a way to measure one's English ability as a foreign language. Over 7,500

educational institutions in 130 countries use it to admit foreign students (ETS, 2010). A survey conducted by the Guardian (ETS, 2013) revealed that approximately two-thirds of higher-education academics view TOEFL to be the most trustworthy English language test available. The ITP tests are based on the TOEFL Paper Based Test that was developed by ETS. At APU, TOEFL has been used as an achievement test since its foundation. The university commissions an external organization, the Council on International Educational Exchange (CIEE), to administer the tests, and receives only the scores. Therefore, the test contents cannot be provided in the thesis. APU uses the data to exhibit to MEXT how many percentages of the students reached TOEFL ITP 500, which is said to be the lowest score necessary to attend US colleges. Using TOEFL ITP is, therefore, beneficial in that it is trusted. Using official scores, one can also expect each test to be of an equivalent level of difficulty. The ITP has three sections covering receptive skills: listening, grammar, and reading.

The main reason why I decided to use TOEFL format test was because the university regards students' TOEFL score growth as a benchmark for students' success. As ETS (2010) claims, TOEFL *is* one of the most widely accepted tests of English in the world. The test results for receptive skills are counted toward the students' final grades in the English courses. Therefore, students were already familiar with TOEFL ITP.

Tanaka and Ellis (2003), in their 15-week study abroad program, also used TOEFL scores as a measurement for learners' English proficiency. Other

studies on short-term study abroad that used TOEFL ITP results include Kobayashi (1999, cited in Matsumoto, 2010) and Tanaka and Ellis (2003). However, TOEFL may not always work as a valid assessment tool. Geis and Fukushima (1997) used TOEFL scores for a six-week program evaluation but found it problematic. They thought the TOEFL may not be the best tool to measure improvement for a short-term study abroad.

Another issue with the use of TOEFL is that because of test item security, one cannot learn which questions students answered correctly or incorrectly. We cannot therefore conduct item analyses and see in detail what improvements, if any, a test taker made. The fact that it is not possible to find out which questions students answered correctly or incorrectly limits the extent to which I can argue for the linguistic benefits of study abroad, not to mention the difficulty in advising students on how to improve their scores.

One means of enhancing internal validity was to standardize the testing conditions and the collection and analysis of a great deal of information on the participants. The participants had taken a TOEFL ITP before departure. They took another TOEFL ITP soon after their return. With participants' consent, I used the data to objectively compare their receptive knowledge before and after their study abroad. There is a possibility that once the participants know how the test works, they have better results simply because of the familiarity with the test style. However, the test is designed in order to test the test taker's general language skills so that it is still challenging if the test taker's language level remains the same. According to the test developer, ETS,

(2018b, no page number), “test developers construct tasks specifically with the aim of eliciting evidence about what test takers know and can do in the target areas.”

4.4.4 Use of TOEFL iBT mock tests

In order to measure productive skills, I conducted a TOEFL iBT-style speaking and writing tests immediately before and shortly after the SA. The total of 21 students took both the pre- and post-speaking and writing tests. TOEFL ITP is part of assessment in the English program at APU, and its validity is well proved. However, speaking and writing skills are not tested in TOEFL ITP, and it is more desirable to test these skills than not. At APU, TOEFL ITP is held regularly on campus, but not TOEFL iBT, and students are not familiar with speaking and writing assessments using this instrument. Test questions for the study were adapted from sample questions in a commercial TOEFL preparation book students are unlikely to have seen (Vittorio, 2011), which were already tested in the pilot study. The university library did not purchase the book until after April 2013 and it is not regularly sold in bookstores. The book has two tests, and I used Test 1 as the pre-test, and Test 2 as the post-test. With regards to the difficulty levels of these tests, according to the author, the book was created for students who “have a score of 70 and above” (Vittorio, 2011, p. 5). A total score of 70 is equivalent to a TOEFL ITP score of 523 (ETS, 2005). The book does not state whether both tests are at the same difficulty level; however, it claims “the two tests reflect the level and types of questions found in the TOEFL iBT exam (Vittorio, 2011, p. 5). Therefore, I trusted them to approximately be of the same level of difficulty. On reflection, considering the

fact that only one of the research participants had a score of 500 at the time of the data collection, it was a demanding test, and some tasks were possibly too difficult for measuring improvement. The speaking component of TOEFL iBT tests the speaker's speaking fluency. Some students who wish to study abroad as exchange students are required to take TOEFL iBT. Therefore, conducting this type of test as practice opportunities free of charge was also an incentive to get more participation. Besides, Lindsay and Knight (2006, p. 130) state that

> "*As well as testing language skills separately, it is possible to test them together in an integrated way. Often testing skills in this way is closer to the way the skills will be used outside the classroom. For this reason integrated skills testing is often considered more communicative and more like using language in real life.*"

Therefore, TOEFL iBT's speaking section, which has integrated skills tasks, is a more communicative test than it seems. However, I did not come across any study abroad literature that used TOEFL iBT as a pre- and post-program assessment tool, which is understandable because taking iBT is expensive, at $235 in Japan as of May 2018. There are other tests that may be appropriate, such as IELTS, Cambridge ESOL and others, but both the recognition and resources weigh much lower than TOEFL in the current context.

4.4.4.1 Writing Task Procedures

Writing ability is measured through the use of mock TOEFL iBT tests given before and after the SA. The writing task was given at a computer lab at the university. Students were given one timed-writing task at each occasion on a different topic. In the TOEFL iBT writing section, there are two tasks: an integrated writing task and an independent writing task. The integrated writing

task requires reading an academic passage for three minutes, listening to a short lecture on the topic, and summarizing the points and explaining the relationship to the reading passage. This part takes about 20 minutes (ETS, 2009). For the independent writing task, a question is presented, and students have 30 minutes to write a response essay. The question asks the test taker to give an opinion on an issue (ETS, 2009). Participants spent 30 minutes to work on an independent writing task. Since giving both kinds of tasks would require a lot of time for the participants, I chose to only assign an independent writing task. The independent writing task was scored on three criteria: development, the organization, and language use. The writing task descriptions and the scoring rubric are in Appendix 8 (ETS, 2009, p. 209).

Below is the instruction given to the students for the pre-SA writing task.

> For this writing task, you will write an essay in response to a question that asks you to explain and support your opinion on an issue. You have **30 minutes** to plan and write your response. Read the question.
>
> | |
> |---|
> | Many celebrities, such as actors, athletes, and rock musicians, often speak about subjects or causes they feel strongly about. Because of their fame, many people listen. Do you think that celebrities make a difference in the world because they voice their opinions? Use specific examples to support your answer. |
>
> You have **30 minutes** from now to complete your essay.

For the post-SA writing task, the students were given a different topic, but completed the task in the same manner. Below is the task topic.

Some people believe that human activity causes harm to the Earth and its environment. Others feel that human activity is necessary to make the Earth better for all. What is your opinion on this topic? Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer to the question.

In the TOEFL iBT, the test-taker types their response on the computer, and the responses are later scored by human raters. On the test day, I sent an email to the students with a Word document, which explained the task. I had the students open the file on the computer in the test room, and they wrote in the file for thirty minutes. At the end of the given time, the student saved the document on the desktop, from where I copied to my data storage device.

For grading, to provide inter-rater reliability, each essay was marked using the official rubric by the researcher and two collaborators, both of whom are native speakers of English and TESOL professionals at the same university. One of them is from the USA and the other from New Zealand, with tertiary teaching experiences of 8 and 10 years respectively.

4.4.4.2 Speaking Task Procedures

Students took two kinds of speaking tests before and after the program. One was a pair conversation test, and the other was a mock TOEFL test. As part of the requirement for the study abroad scholarship by JASSO, all the program participants were required to take part in a pair conversation test before and after study abroad. Tests were made by the English faculty,

including the researcher, and the same test was conducted for all four programs currently being studied.

The pair interview was conducted by other English teachers. This test itself was not part of the research data collection. The topics of the interview differed from pair to pair, but they were on general conversational topics such as the weather, lunch, classmates, favorite TV shows, hobbies, football, teachers, music, family, and the weekend. Only the test data for the second cohort (for two groups, NZ-2 and AUS-2) were released to the researcher, but based on these results, all students (N=21) improved their scores. The score average was 78 points out of 100 pre-departure, and 88 after the program.

Regarding the mock TOEFL iBT test, so that students would not be distracted by others and to accommodate the participants' scheduling needs, I held the speaking section at various times in a small computer lab with small groups. Since TOEFL iBT speaking tasks are largely academic, there was a possibility some students would not be able to respond to some tasks. In addition, I needed to ensure the responses were properly recorded. At the beginning of the speaking test, I asked students to record the practice responses and listen to the recording to check that the files are audible. This activity also served to measure their natural speaking speed in relatively undemanding tasks. The practice questions asked at pre-departure were: (1) Please state your name, and talk about your hobbies; (2) Please talk about your hometown; (3) What do you hope to achieve during your immersion program? Questions asked post-SA were: (1) Please state your name, and talk freely about your experience during the immersion program; (2) What was the best

part of the immersion program? (3) Do you think your goal for the immersion program was achieved? Why or why not? The recording conditions such as the preparation and recording times were the same as the pre-test.

For the main tasks, participants spent about 20 minutes listening to instructions and recording their answers to each question. This method measures the learners' ability to respond to academic lectures, although it is not the most suitable way to measure social interaction skills that students may have gained abroad, because there is no interlocutor for the student, as also pointed out by Wagner (2014). Thus, the focus here was only on their speaking speed and task achievement, and observations and interviews were used to deepen an understanding of their speaking practices on-site. Two research assistants supported the transcriptions of speaking test data, which also served to address the external validity. They accessed the audio files on a secure shared folder, and typed the utterances on Word documents, which I later checked and edited carefully.

The materials used for speaking tasks are in Appendix 9 and the copy of the rubrics are in Appendix 10 (ETS, 2009, pp. 187-190). Below is the summary of the six speaking tasks.

Table 4.3 *TOEFL iBT Speaking Task Types*

	Task 1	Task 2	Task 3	Task 4	Task 5	Task 6
Question Types	Independent		Integrated			
Used skills	Speaking		Listening/Reading/Speaking		Listening/Speaking	
How to answer	Draw on own experience		Use a mixture of provided materials and multiple skills			
Context	General	Choose a preference from two	Campus-related	Academic	Campus-related	Academic
Prompt length	N/A		Pre: 60 sec. Post: 70 sec.	Pre: 82 sec. Post: 98 sec.	Pre: 138 sec. Post: 97 sec.	Pre: 121 sec. Post: 152 sec.
Preparation Time	15 seconds		30 seconds		20 seconds	
Response Time	45 seconds		60 seconds			

In the TOEFL iBT speaking section, there are a variety of topics that draw on the test taker's personal experience, campus-based situations, and academic content material. There are six questions of two types. The first two questions are called Independent Speaking Tasks, which require the speaker's ideas and opinions. The next four questions are called Integrated Speaking Tasks. Students need to read a passage and or listen to a conversation or part of a lecture. Students need to integrate the given information in their response. The speaking test takes about 20 minutes, and I used all types of questions for the data collection. The speaking test is scored holistically, based on these criteria: delivery, language use, and topic development. There are two sets of speaking scoring rubric, one for Independent Speaking Tasks and the other for Integrated Speaking Tasks, as shown in Appendix 10.

In TOEFL iBT, the test-taker's performance is recorded for later scoring by human raters. Therefore, the mock test was recorded using an IC recorder and all the recorded tasks were rated by three raters. As for the grading procedures, in order to ensure inter-rater reliability, each task (T1 to T6) was marked by the researcher and two collaborators who are also TESOL professionals at the same university. Both of them are native speakers of English; one from Canada, the other from the USA, with tertiary teaching experiences of 6 to 10 years respectively. These are different persons from those who marked the writing tasks. Before scoring, my colleagues and I had attended a TOEFL iBT workshop given by an ETS-certified TOEFL iBT trainer, who is also a colleague in the same university. I also asked for advice on marking and appropriate compensation. Based on the guidance received, I

provided the raters with the rubrics and explanations as to what to look out for. Whenever scores differed by more than 2 points on the rubrics, I checked the responses, reexamined the recordings, and made sure the difference was 1 point or less. The average scores given by the three raters are used for the analysis.

4.4.5 Field Notes

Credibility of findings increase when more methods are used (Green, 2007). One form of triangulation Denzin (1978) proposed to offset limitations of data, as cited in Greene (2007, p. 43), is of “methods (specifically interview and observation)”. As a way of triangulation, it is especially important to ask participants their interpretations of their experiences as well as to observe them in action. As Green comments (2007, p. 43), “what people say and what people do are not always the same.” Therefore, I collected field notes to strengthen my data.

During their short-term sojourn, I conducted field observations and interviews with 2 of 4 groups. Each program conducted in summer 2012 and spring 2013 had between 9 and 18 participants (see Appendix 1). For two groups studying in Australia for 5 weeks, my colleagues, one for each program, visited the host university during the third week of the program. Their objective was to observe the program as a faculty in charge of grading the students. As part of their duty, they had meetings with the local program directors and with all the students, and they shared their reports with me. Of four programs, one of the colleagues was actively supporting my research, and he helped me with detailed observation of the cohorts who were staying in Western Australia. It

was appropriate for me to keep distance from the students as an observer and not to interfere, which is an important stance in qualitative research. Even though I was part of the recruiting committee, I did not present myself as a teacher and made clear that their interactions with me would not affect their grades. I visited the participants three times in total, initially during the second week (20-21 August 2012), next during the 5th week (11-14 September 2012) for the AUS-1 group, and the 5th week (14-22 March 2013) for AUS-2 group. For 2 groups studying in New Zealand for 3 weeks, my colleagues visited the host university during the second week of the program. As the program length was short, I reached the students only after the program through selective interviews.

I did not observe groups who went to New Zealand during data collection because of time and budget constraints, but it was beneficial to observe groups in Australia. I hand-recorded most of my observations on the research journal I had kept since August 2012, collected worksheets from class observations, and also typed up summaries to organize the data and to submit a travel report to the university. An example page is attached in Appendix 11. At the time of observations, I had not decided who I would be interviewing later, but I did focus class visits to those who had signed the research participation consent form. Therefore, I was able to observe all of the Australia program research participants in their classrooms.

Although it is an addendum, and different to the observations I did in Australia, after the data collection had finished, in August 2014, I had an opportunity to chaperon the next cohort of students who joined the immersion

program in Auckland, New Zealand. This time, my role was not as a researcher, but as a guide and observer. I was able to see the students meet their host family at their homes, observe the placement test, participate in the campus tour, observe the first two days of classes and to interview the students to see how they were coping. This provided me with deep insight into the Auckland program, and I was able to reflect on what the research participants had discussed from their time in Auckland.

4.4.6 Questionnaire Data

After their study abroad, an online questionnaire was given in English and Japanese. The questionnaire was designed to answer two questions, partly adapting the 'Language Contact Profile (LCP) questionnaire (Freed, Dewey, Segalowitz & Halter, 2004). One was to investigate how much time was spent in contact with different people, thus assessing the degree of immersion in English. The other was to assess student perceptions of their linguistic development. In a longitudinal study, Meara (1994) asked questions on the amount of time spent on the target language, and about students' perceptions during a long-term SA. From short-term SA research, Furuya (2005, p. 30) conducted pre- and post-questionnaires and broadly asked open-endedly, "Do you think your English has improved? How?" and about how the participants' homestay family helped them. The questions I asked were based on the above but were revised and refined by myself with suggestions from my supervisor. The questionnaire was answered by 10 students in the pilot study and modified for the current study. Since there were four different cohorts with different SA lengths and periods, I made four separate forms, by copying the format but

adapting the questions. For example, Question 3 asked “While in Adelaide, who did you interact with frequently during the program?” The answer choices included references to their destination, such as “teachers and staff in Adelaide, APU friends in Adelaide, or people in town”. All the participants spent up to 20 minutes answering open-ended questions on how they studied English, what kind of homestay environment they had, and with whom they interacted, in what languages, and how they would act differently if given another chance. Respondents were also asked to evaluate their linguistic development, thus measuring the perceptions of their own progress. The questionnaire was held using an online survey tool called Google Form, and the participants could request to withdraw their responses at any time or ask to delete the data. The link to each form was sent to the students’ university email address within one week of their return to Japan. In order to collect as much data as possible, I sent the questionnaire form to everyone who went on the English immersion program as an informed guest, even if they had not signed the research participation form. The participants provided their first name and e-mail address, so that I could contact them for clarification or for further questions. A copy of the questionnaire is in Appendix 12. Although questionnaire items were designed independently and prior to, it appears study abroad social interaction questions resemble SASIQ designed by Dewey et al. (2013). The questionnaire items measured the frequency and intensity of the participants’ linguistic social networks.

4.4.7 Ethnographic Components via Observations & Interviews

During my visits to the first Australia program, I was able to arrange a host family interview. I sent the list of questions in advance via e-mail, and on the interview day, the student and I took the bus ride home together. The host mother warmly welcomed me, and answered all the questions, which I recorded and transcribed.

Several of the participants were asked to be interviewed as a follow-up to investigate the kind of social environment they were immersed in during the program, and how that influenced their language learning. I interviewed the students in Japanese for between 5 and 17 minutes each, on average for 10.5 minutes. At the pilot study stage, I let the participants choose the language for the interview, and some chose to be interviewed in English, while the rest in Japanese. The interviews for the main study were conducted in Japanese so that participants, whose English level was on average lower than the pilot study students, could answer easily. One participant and I were in the interview room at a time. I took brief notes during the interview, so as not to break the flow of the interviews, but also audio-recorded the conversation and transcribed them. The notes and audio files served as double recording and were later checked as verification of the data. Interviews were semi-structured, focusing on the participants' narratives about their experiences abroad. The participants were given the list of questions beforehand so that they could think about them and start answering questions immediately. The interview style allowed free speech and closeness to authentic conversation. The interview questions were purposefully exploratory, and half of the questions were open-ended questions

in order to elicit information. The pilot study's interviews tested out methods and procedures for interviews. I transcribed the entire interviews in the original Japanese. This methodology, combined with the questionnaire data, served as a triangulation of both kinds of data collected at different times. Below is the summary of the students who were interviewed.

Table 4.4 The *Profile of Interviewees*

Code No. and pseudonym	Sex	L1	TOEFL score	Faculty	Year of study	Host country	When	Length (weeks)
P1 Sayako	F	Japanese	497	APM	1	Adelaide, AUS	Mar-Apr 2012	5
S2 Ina	F	Japanese	403	APS	1	Auckland, NZ	Aug-Sep 2012	3
S10 Koharu	F	Japanese	517	APS	2	Perth, AUS	Aug-Sep 2012	5
S11 Sasuke	M	Japanese	510	APS	2	Perth, AUS	Aug-Sep 2012	5
S14 Seiko	F	Japanese	453	APM	3	Perth, AUS	Aug-Sep 2012	5
S17 Tia	F	Japanese	490	APM	1	Perth, AUS	Aug-Sep 2012	5
S20 Nana	F	Japanese	400	APS	1	Auckland, NZ	Mar. 2013	3
S27 Hunter	M	Chinese	433	APM	1	Auckland, NZ	Mar. 2013	3
S30 Mia	F	Japanese	470	APS	2	Adelaide, AUS	Mar. 2013	5
S32 Mei	F	Japanese	410	APS	3	Adelaide, AUS	Mar. 2013	5
S33 Molly	F	Japanese	440	APS	1	Adelaide, AUS	Mar. 2013	5
S38 Riki	M	Japanese	430	APM	1	Adelaide, AUS	Mar. 2013	5

For the four cohorts from the first round of immersion programs, S2, S10, S14 and S17, I focused on their progress during the program and over the semesters but did not conduct the same interviews as the second cohorts from NZ-2 and AUS-2. For S2, I interviewed her in October 2012 after the immersion program, and again in March 2014 when she was studying abroad for a year in

Australia. For S10, S14 and S17, I focused my attention on observing them on-site, and interviewed S10's host family. The list of interview questions, made based on my experience and tested in the pilot study, are shown below.

- What was good? What do you want to praise yourself about?
- What was bad? Why was it a negative experience?
- What would you do differently if you had another chance?
- How can the university or English teachers support you more in improving your English?

Another important question asked during the on-site visit and with the questionnaire was about the connectivity to the Internet and how students approached them. Results of how the students utilized the virtual networks are presented in the findings chapter.

4.4.8 Feedback and Compensation

Upon completing all the tasks, each participant received either a small amount of book token or cash via bank transfer as an honorarium, depending on the amount of time spent on the tasks. The honorarium was subsidized by the research fund provided by APU. The students also received confectioneries when they took post-test and were interviewed. In addition, when a student brought a TOEFL score sheet, the researcher looked at the score before and after SA and provided advice where appropriate. Table 4.2 on page 81 has details of the research process timeline.

4.5 Data Analysis

In the following three sections, I explain how the data were analyzed.

4.5.1 Linguistic Outcomes through Quantitative Data Analysis

In this section, I present the analysis of five kinds of linguistic outcome data: listening test scores, grammatical knowledge test scores, reading test scores, writing test data, and 2 sets of speaking test data. In order to compare the results with students who did not join the immersion program, I used the test data from all the test-takers in the university. Since there is no information on how the rest of the student body spent their long-term break, the comparison is fairly general. From my experience I have noticed that students' English competencies decline at the start of the new semester than at the end of the previous semester, having seemingly had little opportunity to use English during the long break of 2 months. As a result, students may either keep their exit level or forget what they had learned during the previous semester to varied extent, but there is no concrete data to indicate the amount of English immersion among all the students. Therefore, I cannot discuss the likelihood of at-home students to improve their English level as shown in TOEFL scores during the long break.

(a) Listening test

The TOEFL ITP listening section has 50 questions. There are three parts, A, B, and C. Part A has 30 short conversations and questions. Part B usually has 2 long conversations and 8 questions for each. Part C generally has 2 talks and 12 questions. Students receive a section score out of 68, depending on how many questions they answer correctly. For instance, if you score all 50 questions correctly, you receive 68, and if you answer zero questions accurately, you still receive 24. At APU, all Japanese-basis students are

encouraged to reach the ITP score of 500, and the preferred score in each section would be 50. To receive 50, you need to answer 29 out of 50 questions accurately, which is 60% accuracy rate.

(b) Grammatical knowledge test

The TOEFL ITP grammar section has 40 questions. There are two sections: Structure, and Written Expression. Structure generally has 15 sentences, and test takers need to choose one word or phrase to complete a gap in each sentence. Written Expression has 25 sentences with a grammatical error, and students need to identify the one underlined word or phrase in the sentence. Students receive a section score out of 68. If you score all 40 questions correctly, you receive 68, while you still receive the score of 20 if you answer zero questions accurately. In order to gain the preferred score of 50, you need to answer 26 out of 40 questions, at 65% accuracy rate.

(c) Reading test

The TOEFL ITP reading section has 50 questions. There are generally five short academic passages, with 10 questions each with topics and styles similar to those that North American university students would encounter in foundational subjects. The questions could be about the main ideas, detailed ideas, stated or inferred ideas, or about vocabulary. Students receive a section score out of 67. If you score all 50 questions correctly, you receive the section score of 67, while you still receive 21 for not answering any questions correctly. In order to gain the ideal score of 50, you need to answer 33 out of 50 questions accurately, at 66% accuracy rate.

(d) Writing test

For data analysis, I compared pre-post-performance in two categories: the amount of words they wrote, and the quality of the response, as measured in TOEFL independent writing task rubrics. The tasks were rated by three raters including myself.

(e) Speaking test

For data analysis, I compared pre-post-performance in three categories: the amount of output, the fluency as measured in words spoken per minute (WPM), and the quality of output as measured in TOEFL speaking task rubrics. When counting the number of words spoken, if words were contracted, such as *wanna* for want to and *don't* for do not, I counted them as one word. There are three reasons why I measured WPM rather than syllables per minute (SPM). In English teaching context in Japanese secondary and tertiary education, WPM is usually used to train students to speak more. Similar to Iida and Herder (2019) who employed WPM to measure students' speaking speed in response to the TOEFL iBT-type tasks, I also measured the reading speed using WPM. There is an argument that speech rate measured in SPM is "the best predictor of fluency" (Kormos, 2011, p. 162). Therefore, I acknowledge that my results may be limited due to not including SPM data.

In order to speed up the data analysis, I hired two student assistants to transcribe some of the test data, namely, pre- and post- speaking tests. Both were Japanese undergraduate students with an advanced English competency who also participated in both short-term and long-term study abroad programs while at the university. They signed a consent form (Appendix 13) to protect the

privacy of the research participants. Additionally, a pair-conversation test (pre- & post) was conducted and rated live by my colleagues. The outline, procedures and the grading rubric are in Appendix 7.

4.5.2 Social Experiences through Qualitative Data Analysis

The qualitative data, collected through a combination of open-ended questions included in questionnaires, interviews, and observations, were analyzed as follows. First, I looked at each item in the questionnaire one by one and analyzed the results. Second, I scrutinized the interview data by listening, transcribing, printing out, reading, and by eliciting themes using pile sorts, well-illustrated by Bernard and Ryan (2010). First, I printed out the interview transcripts, which is in Japanese (see Appendix 15 for an example), and noted down the main themes on the index card in English. On the back of each card, I wrote down the coded name of the informant. I stapled the index card on top of the Japanese original and spread them on the table. Next, I examined the quotes and divided them into different aspects of the immersion programs that affected the informants' learning. I gave each chunk a theme, which represents the quotes. Within each theme, I moved around the quotes to see if one represents the core aspects of the theme or if it is more peripheral. In the end, most quotes were positioned in the center as they were often similar. After that, I selected the typical quotes that may best represent the group. Finally, I turned over the cards and examined who said what, so that I can use more than one informant and also see if there is any pattern. I looked out for repetitions, similarities and differences, positive or negative experiences, and for linguistic connectors such as "if" or "I should have." Third, I returned to the questionnaire

responses again to see if there was overlap. I also examined the field notes to see if I observed the phenomena that the interviewees reported.

From the questionnaire data, I identified the following themes: (1) Sense of immersion in English speaking environment (amount of time spent using a certain language); (2) Sense of belonging to social circles; (3) Sense of improvements (expected and perceived improvements by skills area). From the interview data, I identified six themes that affected the students' learning: (1) Interaction opportunities; (2) Support on English competence; (3) Students' hesitation; (4) Social circles; (5) Virtual community; and (6) Continuing English learning. I discuss each theme in the Findings chapter. In addition, perceptions of gains in sociolinguistic skills and the students' willingness to continue learning English were explored through interviews, which are also explained in Chapter 5.

4.5.3 Complementing Different Methods

The broad purpose for mixing methods, as presented by Greene (2007), is for better understanding of the phenomena under study. My study employed mixed methods of data collection to allow triangulation and to complement different data sets. The quantitative sets of data help us measure whether a short stay abroad program can present linguistic development of participating students, while the qualitative data allow us to delve into learners' perceptions, social circles, and the influence of virtual social networks in modern days. Combining the two may shed light on aspects of study abroad literature not measured or verified in previous SA literature.

The list of data sets is shown below.

Table 4.5 *List of Data Collected for both Quantitative and Qualitative Analyses*

Data title	**Data format**	**Data prepared for analysis**
Group 1 & 2 participants list	Excel	Name, gender, nationality, date of birth, college, year, email, consent form, English course level, TOEFL scores
Group 1 Pre-test: speaking	MP3, Word	13 transcriptions
Group 1 Pre-test: writing	Word	16 writing samples
Group 1 Post-test: speaking	MP3	14 transcriptions
Group 1 Post-test: writing	Word	16 writing samples
Field notes on site	Notes, Word	AUS-1 (UWA), hand written and typed
Group 1 interviews on site	Notes, Word	1 host family visit in Perth, transcript 2 on-site interviews for AUS-1
TOEFL scores	Paper copy & data	Pre-data for all, 4 score data for post program
Post-questionnaire	Google form	UWA: 8 responses, Auckland: 7 responses
Follow-up interview	Notes, Word	Interview, 1 year later
Program survey data from the office	Excel	For all programs that the university sent students to
Program Report from APU faculty	Word	Auckland & UWA
Program grade summary	Excel	Auckland & UWA
Group 2 Pre-test: speaking	MP3	8 speaking samples & transcriptions
Group 2 Pre-test: writing	Word	6 writing samples
Group 2 Post-test: speaking	MP3	10 speaking samples w/o transcription
Group 2 Post-test: writing	Word	11 writing samples (6 matching)
Interview data	Notes, MP3	6 interviews (conducted in Japanese)
TOEFL scores	Paper copy & data	Pre-data for all, 7 score data for post program
Post-questionnaire	Google drive	Adelaide: 8 responses, Auckland: 11 responses
Field notes on site	Notes, Word	Adelaide

Program survey data from the office	Word	Summary in English & Japanese
Program grade report from the host university	PDF, Excel	Auckland & Adelaide
Program report from the APU faculty & office staff	Word	Auckland
Program grade summary	Excel	Auckland & Adelaide

4.6 Challenges and Limitations of the Study

One of the things to note as a methodological challenge is that the tests may not accurately reflect language skills of the students compared to task requirements. That is, students are immersed in a foreign language and culture and take language classes abroad, but what the tests like TOEFL require students to perform may not be directly linked to what they learn in short-term study abroad programs. TOEFL may be more appropriate for students on a semester or year-long programs in which they take curricular courses in English.

One of the methodological limitations of the study lies in the lack of some data for some students. Due to various reasons, some students failed to take a TOEFL ITP test, pre-test, or post-test that they were supposed to take, eliminating them from the data analysis. Another issue lies in the data collection from the first cohort. Although several students agreed they could be interviewed upon return, organizational and time constraints meant I was not able to arrange interviews with them. Yet another weakness of my methodology lies in the fact that I collected and analyzed the data mostly alone, although I

had the support of research assistants in transcription, and colleagues in field note collection, and writing and speaking test data analysis.

On reflection, I realized that the way I analyzed the data was largely descriptive, and I did not consider using inferential statistics. Inferential statistics would necessitate collecting a larger sized data set but would enable one to make inferences about a larger population, for example university students in Japan. The main reason for my not choosing to use such statistics was because I felt the sample size would be too small to begin with. Since my study required me to seek research participants among the short-term study program cohorts at the beginning of each semester, I could not know in advance how many participants would be involved. Had I planned to adopt inferential statistics and been successful in enlisting a much larger number of research participants over a longer period of time, I might have drawn more salient conclusions based on the language tests alone.

5. FINDINGS

5.1 Overview

In this chapter, I report findings according to each research question and research method. The first part of the findings, reported in section 5.2, is related to linguistic gains in order to answer Research Question 1. Language proficiency was measured through the combination of pre- and post-test analysis and it is augmented by the questionnaire that investigated the students' perceptions of their improvements. The second part of the findings, see section 5.3, is related to social experiences. Research Question 2 requires both questionnaire responses and interview data post-SA. The third part of the findings, see section 5.4, considers any associations between the two, with a close look at three individual cases. I discuss the integrative results, in particular regarding relationships between social networks, virtual networks, and contact with family and friends at home. I report that some improvements can be observed from short-term study abroad, which is also perceived by the students, and that students attribute their success to various factors including their relationships with the target language community.

5.2 Research Question 1

The first question was designed to find out to what extent short stays abroad affect English learners' linguistic outcomes. Linguistic outcomes based on pre- and post-tests were measured through quantitative test data analysis of TOEFL ITP test scores. The results are presented in order of listening, grammar knowledge, reading, writing and speaking skills.

5.2.1. The Result of TOEFL ITP scores

First, I analyze the relationship between pre-SA and post-SA TOEFL ITP scores of the participants to see if there are any gains. The focus is on each participant's absolute score improvement, rather than relative to other students.

(a) Listening section score improvements of the participants

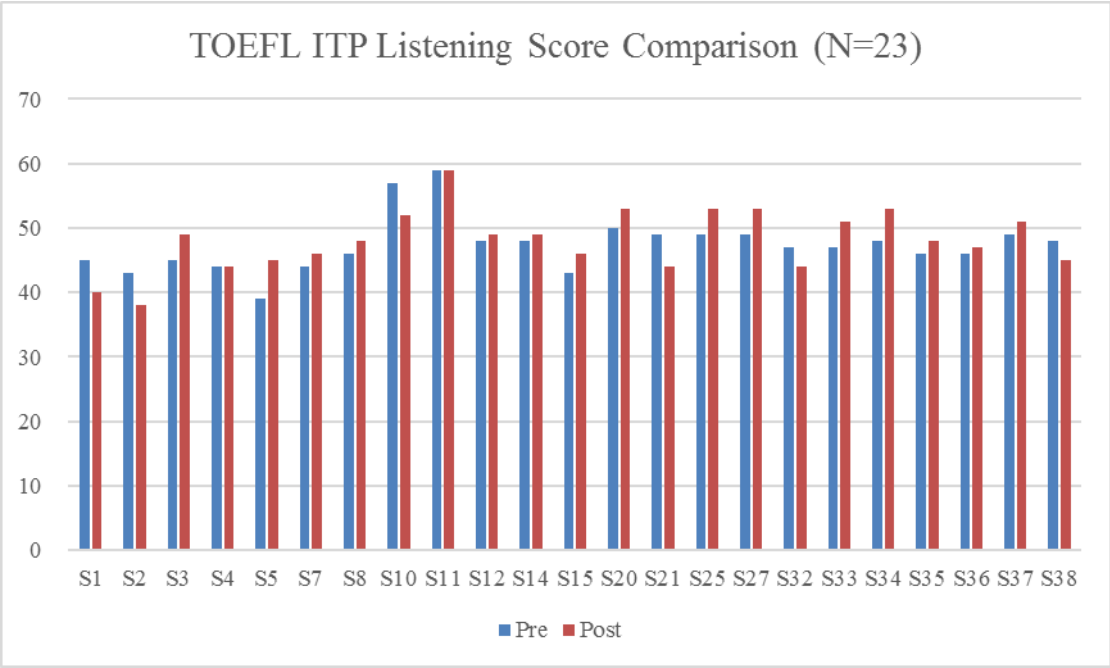
Below is a summary of the listening section score improvements presented as Table 5.1 and Figure 5.1. The figures are only for those students who took tests before and after the SA. When a student took more than one test before- or after-SA, all the scores were considered, and if a student exceeded a pre-SA score even once, it was considered to be an improvement, even if the test was taken some time after-SA. Groups are named NZ-1, AUS-1, NZ-2, and AUS-2 to indicate the destination and when the data collection took place. Codes for students who improved their test scores are listed in the second column. The letter S followed directly by a number represents each student among the 37 participants in the dataset.

Table 5.1 *TOEFL ITP Listening Score Comparison (N=23)*

Group	Code for students who improved	The number of students whose score improved	Did not improve	Total number
NZ-1 (3 weeks in NZ)	S3, S5, S7, S8	4	3	7
AUS-1 (5 weeks in AUS)	S12, S14, S15	3	2	5
NZ-2 (3 weeks in NZ)	S20, S25, S27	3	1	4
AUS-2 (5 weeks in AUS)	S33, S34, S35, S36, S37	5	2	7
Total		15 (65%)	8 (35%)	23 (100%)

Note: S20 is color coded as I discuss her case in 5.4.2.

Figure 5.1 *TOEFL ITP Listening Score Comparison (N=23)*



As can be seen from the data above, fifteen out of twenty-three participants showed an increase in the listening section scores after-SA. If the trend could be generalized, this would be an encouraging result for students considering short-term stays abroad. Despite being based on a small cohort, 65% of the participants showed improvement in the listening section scores. There appears to be little difference between 3-week and 5-week program participants. When I compared the listening section scores of the students whose pre- and post-SA data were available, the average score for 3-week program participants pre-SA was 45.7, and post-SA was 46.6. The average score for 5-week program participants' pre-SA was 48.8, and post-SA was 49.5. In both cases, this means the students on average answered correctly on one item more than before, which is not a significant improvement.

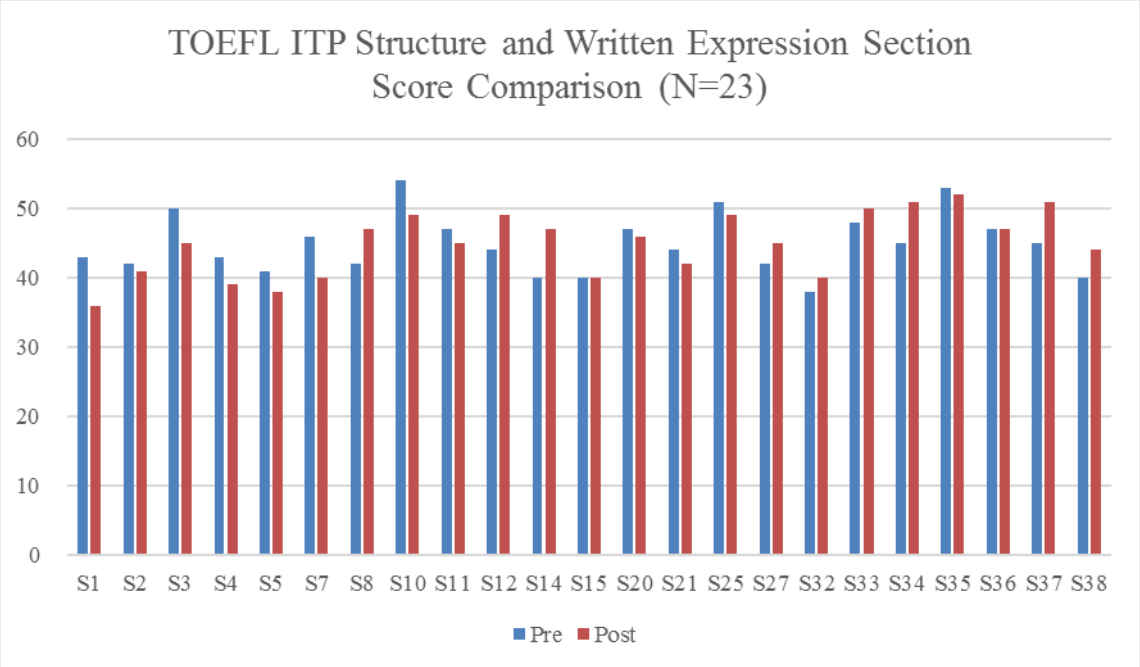
(b) Grammatical knowledge section score improvements of the participants

Below is a summary of the grammar section score improvements presented as Table 5.2 and Figure 5.2. As with the listening section scores, the figures are for those students who took tests before and after the SA. When a student took more than one test before- or after-SA, all the scores were considered, and if a student exceeded a pre-SA score of the grammar section even once, it was considered to be an improvement.

Table 5.2 *TOEFL ITP Structure and Written Expression Section Score Comparison (N=23)*

Group	Code for students who improved	The number of students whose score improved	Did not improve	Total number
NZ-1 (3 weeks in NZ)	S8	1	6	7
AUS-1 (5 weeks in AUS)	S11, S12, S14	3	2	5
NZ-2 (3 weeks in NZ)	S27	1	3	4
AUS-2 (5 weeks in AUS)	S32, S33, S34, S37, S38	5	2	7
Total		10 (43%)	13 (57%)	23 (100%)

Figure 5.2 *TOEFL ITP Structure and Written Expression Section Score Comparison (N=23)*



Of the twenty-three students, ten saw an increase in their grammatical knowledge section scores. Looking at each program, it is notable that hardly any student from 3-week programs improved their grammar section scores, while eight students from 5-week programs improved theirs. Looking at each student's grammar section scores, the average score for 3-week program participants' pre-SA was 44.6, and post-SA was 42.5, showing a decline rather than improvement. The average score for 5-week program participants' pre-SA was 45.1, and post-SA was 47.1, which is a slight increase.

(c) Reading section score improvements of the participants

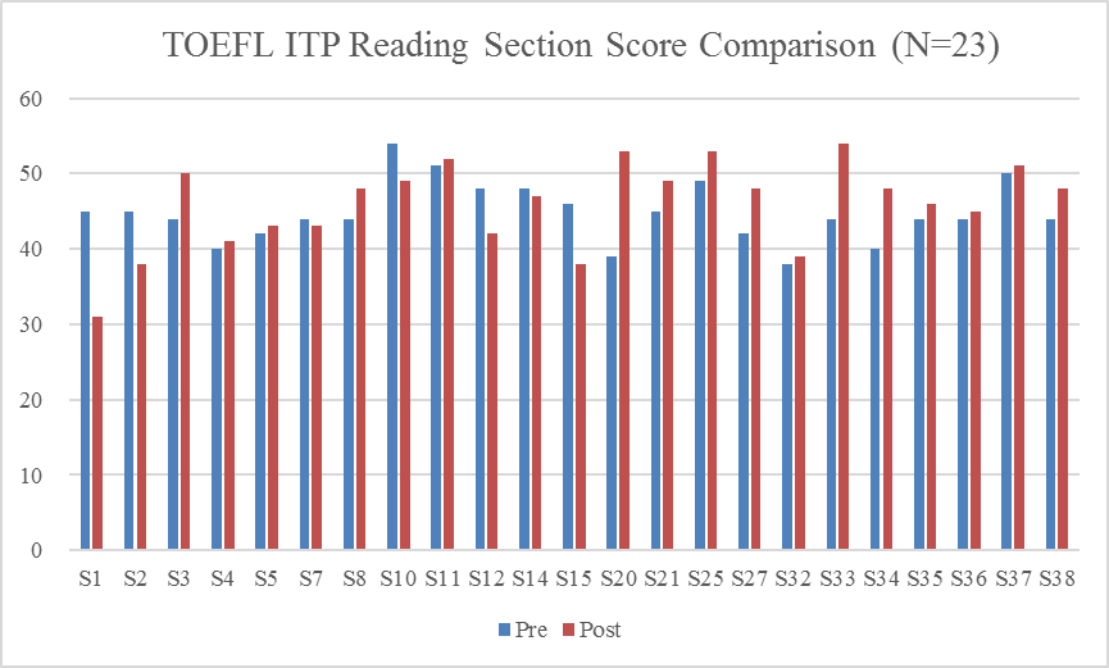
Below is a summary of the reading section score improvements presented as Table 5.3 and Figure 5.3. As with the listening and grammar section scores, the figures are for those students who took TOEFL ITP tests before and after the SA. When a student took more than one test before- or after-SA, all the scores were considered, and if a student exceeded a pre-SA score of the reading section even once, it was considered to be an improvement.

Table 5.3 *TOEFL ITP Reading Section Score Comparison (N=23)*

Group	Code for students who improved	The number of students whose score improved	Did not improve	Total number
NZ-1 (3 weeks in NZ)	S3, S4, S5, S8	4	3	7
AUS-1 (5 weeks in AUS)	S11	1	4	5
NZ-2 (3 weeks in NZ)	S20, S21, S25, S27	4	0	4
AUS-2 (5 weeks in AUS)	S32, S33, S34, S35, S36, S37, S38	7	0	7
Total		16 (70%)	7 (30%)	23 (100%)

*Note: S20 is color-coded as I discuss her case in 5.4.2.

Figure 5.3 *TOEFL ITP Reading Section Score Comparison (N=23)*



Of twenty-three students, sixteen saw an increase in their reading section scores. When we look only at the first cohort of New Zealand and Australia program students (NZ-1, AUS-1), it appears fewer students made improvements to their reading section scores. However, when we look at the results from the second cohort of students (NZ-2, AUS-2), all of the available data point to improvements over the following months. All in all, 70% of the students improved their TOEFL ITP reading section scores after short-term SA. Examining each student's reading section scores, the average score for 3-week program participants' pre-SA was 43.5, and post-SA was 45.2, showing a modest improvement. The average score for 5-week program participants' pre-SA was 45.9, and post-SA was 46.6, which is a slight increase. Eight students from both 3-week and 5-week programs each improved their reading section scores.

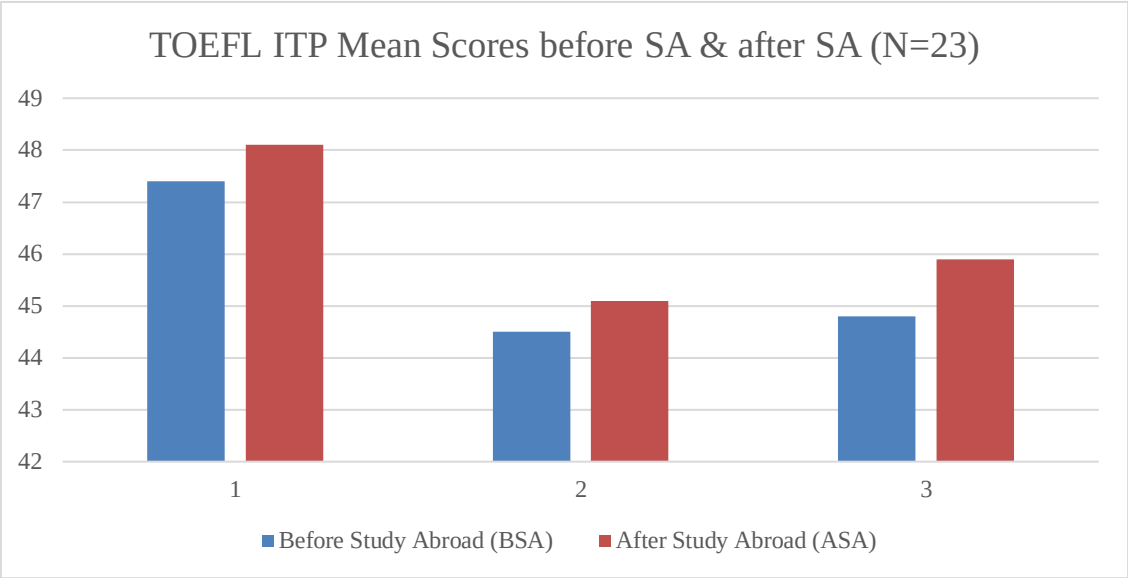
Of particular interest regarding the result above is that there are five students who improved their test scores in all three sections of the TOEFL ITP. Two of these five (S27, S33) were later interviewed on their experiences abroad, and it is examined in sections 5.3.2.1 and 5.3.2.4 for S27, and 5.3.1.2, 5.3.2.3, and 5.3.2.6 for S33. For reference, below is the summary of best scores for each section before and after short-stays abroad for 23 students whose data are available for statistical analysis.

Table 5.4 *TOEFL ITP Mean Scores Before and After SA (N=23)*

	Before Study Abroad (BSA)	After Study Abroad (ASA)
TOEFL ITP Listening	47.4	48.1
Standard Deviation	4.1	4.5
TOEFL ITP Structure & Written Expression	44.5	45.1
Standard Deviation	4.5	4.5
TOEFL ITP Reading	44.8	45.9
Standard Deviation	3.8	5.6
Total	447.8	462.0
Standard Deviation	29.9	42.4

*Note: Listening: ASA>BSA, Structure: ASA>BSA, Reading: ASA>BSA, Total ASA>BSA

Figure 5.4 *TOEFL ITP Mean Scores Before and After SA (N=23)*



5.2.2. The Result of TOEFL iBT-style Tests

Secondly, the relationship between pre-SA and post-SA writing and speaking test scores was analyzed using TOEFL iBT mock tests.

5.2.2.1 Writing Task

A total of 27 students participated in the pre-post-writing tests. However, three students only completed the pre-SA task, while another five students only completed the post-SA task. Therefore, the data from the remaining 19 students were analyzed. In terms of writing fluency, pre-SA, students on average wrote between 60 and 282 words within the time limit of 30 minutes, averaging 135 words. Post-SA, students wrote between 93 and 338 words, averaging 170 words, which is an increase of 26%. All but three students wrote more than pre-SA. S10 wrote slightly fewer words post-SA, but her essays were well organized, and the scores were higher than other students. All three students, however, received lower marks post-SA. Comparing students who participated in 3-week and 5-week programs, 3-week program students

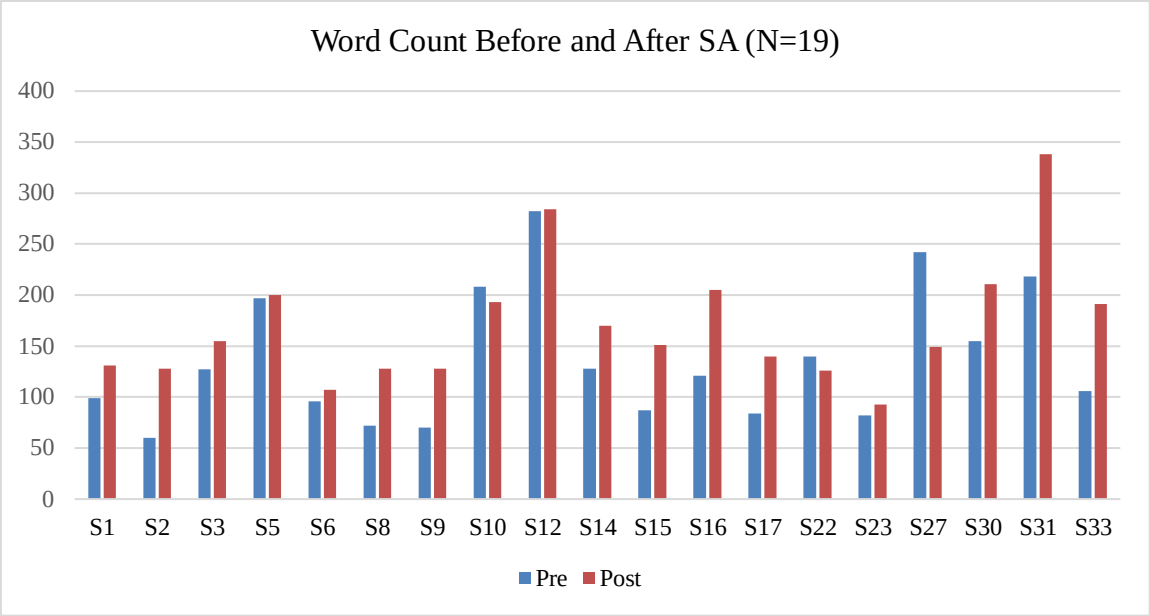
wrote 119 words pre-SA, and 135 words post-SA on average. 5-week program students wrote 154 words pre-SA, and 209 words post-SA. It is clearly seen that 5-week program participants were already more fluent writers, and they improved writing fluency much more than 3-week program participants. From this result, it appears most students increased their writing fluency after short stays abroad. Table 5.5 below shows which students produced more words for the writing task post-SA, and Figure 5.5 shows how much each student wrote pre- and post-SA.

Table 5.5 *Comparison of the Number of Words Written in Response to Writing Task for each Student Before and After SA (N=19)*

Group	Code for students who wrote more ASA	The number of students whose wrote more	The number of students who did not write more	Total number
NZ-1	S1, S2, S3, S5, S6, S8, S9	7	0	7
AUS-1	S12, S14, S15, S16, S17	5	1	6
NZ-2	S23	1	2	3
AUS-2	S30, S31, S33	3	0	3
Total		16	3	19

Note: S30 is color-coded as I discuss her case in 5.4.3.

Figure 5.5. *The Comparison of the Number of Words Written in Response to Writing Task for each Student Before and After SA (N=19)*



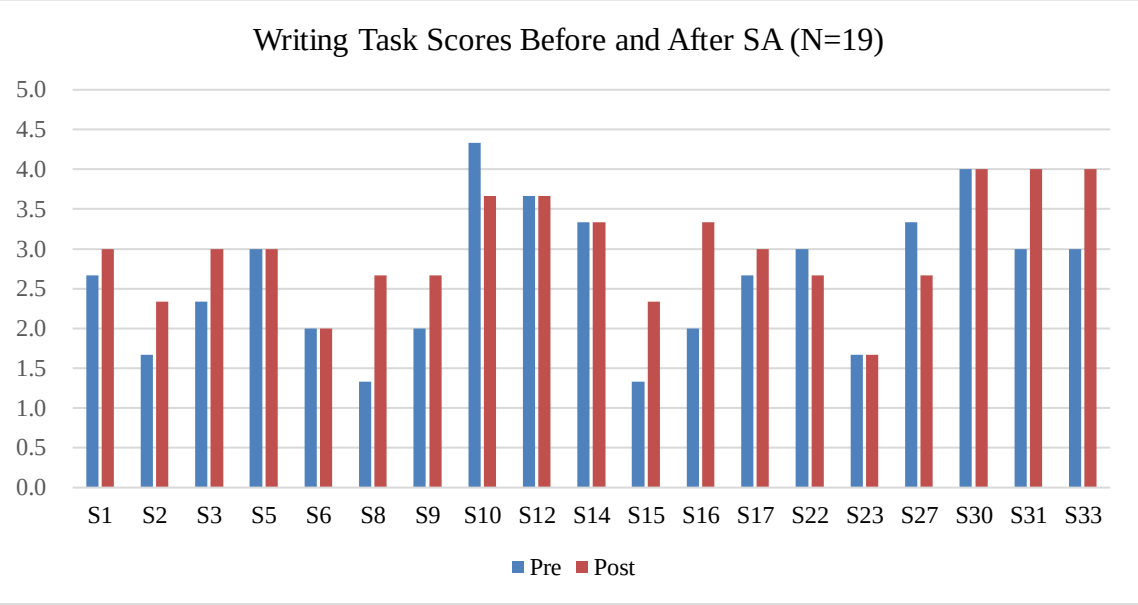
As regards the quality of the writing task, scores were close for most cases. The average scores given by the three raters are used for analysis. Overall, 10 students (53%) scored higher than before, while 6 students received the same score as before, and the three mentioned above received lower scores after-SA. Comparing the lengths of stay and the quality of writing, the average score for 3-week program participants was 2.3 pre-SA and 2.6 post-SA. The average score for 5-week program participants was 3.0 pre-SA and 3.5 post-SA. The writing ability was clearly different between them in the first place, and there is not really a difference in terms of the degree of improvement. Three raters agreed that even when an essay score did not improve, looking at before- and after-SA essays of the same students, it was possible to observe improvements in writing fluency and structure. This is intriguing since classes at the SA sites do not generally focus on writing skills instruction. We can argue that the SA program helped improve the students' overall performance including

writing. Table 5.6 below shows which students received higher marks for the writing task post-SA, and Figure 5.6 shows the score difference pre- and post-SA.

Table 5.6 *Writing Task Scores Before and After SA (N=19)*

Group	Code for students whose score improved	The number of students whose score remained the same	The number of students whose score went down	Total number
NZ-1	S1, S2, S3, S8, S9	2	0	7
AUS-1	S15, S16, S17	2	1	6
NZ-2	N/A	1	2	3
AUS-2	S31, S33	1	0	3
Total		16	3	19

Figure 5.6 *Writing Task Scores Before and After SA (N=19)*



5.2.2.2 Speaking Task

A total of 25 students participated in the pre-post-speaking tests. However, one student only completed the pre-SA task, while another four students only completed the post-SA task. Therefore, the data from the remaining 20 students were analyzed for the study. Three aspects of the test

results were studied, including the amount of words produced, fluency gains, and score gains. Each of these aspects is elaborated in more detail below.

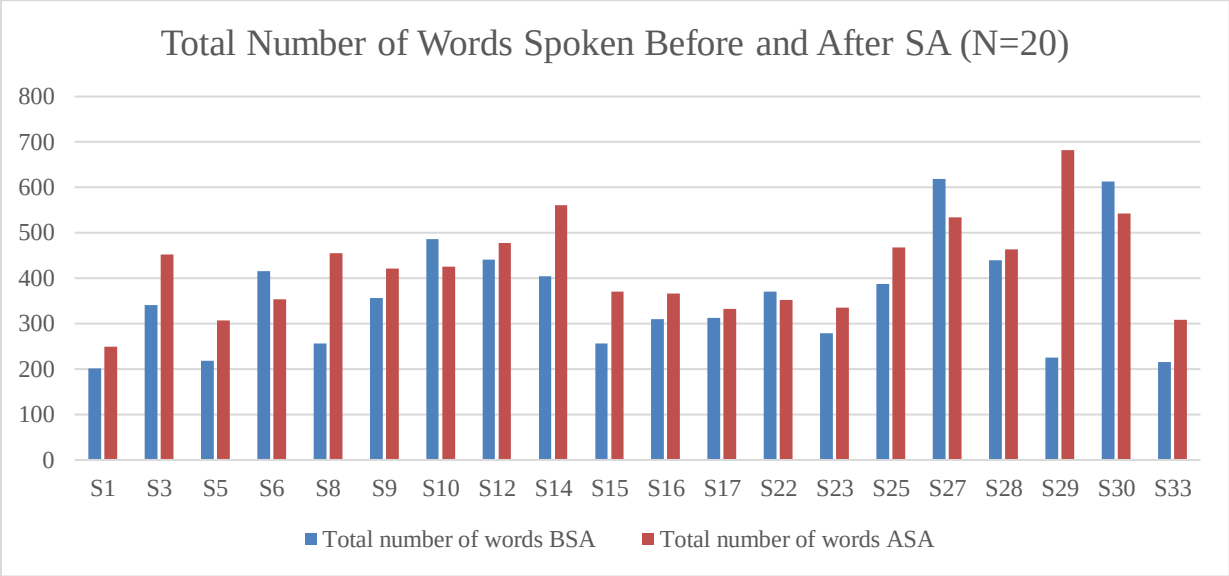
(a) Amount of words spoken for each test

In terms of the amount of speech produced by the students, overall there was an increase in the amount spoken in the given time. Excluding two cases in which there was a recording error, or a student had to stop recording due to severe coughing, I looked at 18 students' pre-post-production data. 15 out of 18 students (83%) produced more after SA, with an average 13% increase. Looking at the task type, students produced about the same amount in tasks 1, 2, 5, and 6. However, tasks 3 and 4 saw some increases. The pre-test production average for task 3 was 33.65 words (N=20), while post-test was 49.45 words, an increase of 47%. The pre-test production average for task 4 was 20.57 words (N=19), while post-test was 34.9 words, an increase of 70%. The raw data is presented in Table 5.7 below.

Table 5.7 *Words Spoken for Each Speaking Task Before and After SA (N=20)*

No	Intro	Hometown	Goal	Task 1	Task 2	Task 3	Task 4	Task 5	Task 6	Total	Intro	Best	Goal	Task 1	Task 2	Task 3	Task 4	Task 5	Task 6	Total
S1	30	32	20	22	25	21	12	28	12	202	51	47	35	25	29	8	3	25	26	249
S3	43	26	64	34	57	49	8	54	6	341	55	115	42	63	75	47	7	48	1	453
S5	34	36	9	23	38	30	0	29	20	219	35	30	37	42	37	47	26	53	0	307
S6	40	77	69	48	59	26	16	57	23	415	69	39	59	25	46	57	14	38	7	354
S8	45	39	52	30	34	3	9	40	4	256	64	59	68	37	55	63	49	56	4	455
S9	43	43	52	31	59	28	29	40	32	357	86	38	53	31	43	51	54	42	23	421
S10	26	53	58	63	68	50	51	81	36	486	56	70	51	37	53	65	32	49	12	425
S12	20	46	58	39	45	44	68	63	58	441	42	75	89	47	37	65	29	49	44	477
S14	40	62	72	56	44	37	29	35	30	405	126	87	76	44	62	66	6	53	41	561
S15	35	52	39	29	32	16	5	34	14	256	56	44	62	50	35	21	36	56	10	370
S16	37	57	55	38	34	28	18	31	12	310	75	69	52	38	15	30	21	40	27	367
S17	28	51	61	31	39	30	15	48	10	313	30	45	40	32	35	41	18	49	42	332
S22	57	54	58	21	53	41	25	27	34	370	62	48	32	error	55	40	47	41	27	352
S23	35	52	61	40	19	26	0	31	15	279	51	49	58	22	33	35	27	51	9	335
S25	52	56	65	61	46	36	20	38	14	388	51	62	65	47	49	45	51	56	42	468
S27	75	86	99	92	86	21	41	78	40	618	65	58	98	41	67	41	80	84	0	534
S28	48	61	79	53	48	65	8	67	10	439	78	36	79	38	56	50	54	53	19	463
S29	35	28	49	22	54	37	N/A	N/A	N/A	225	80	72	106	48	73	93	92	57	61	682
S30	61	77	119	50	58	74	37	88	49	613	76	53	78	63	68	80	30	64	30	542
S33	33	37	56	33	19	11	0	27	0	216	41	39	43	29	48	44	22	42	0	308
Average	40.85	51.25	59.75	40.8	45.85	33.65	20.5789	47.1579	22.0526	357.45	62.45	56.8	61.2	39.947	48.55	49.45	34.9	50.3	21.25	422.8

Figure 5.7 *Total Number of Words Spoken Before and After SA (N=20)*



*Note: One student (S29) did not complete pre-test tasks 4 to 6, so his data appear skewed.

As mentioned earlier in section 4.4.4.2, Table 4.3, and reproduced in Table 4.3 below, both Tasks 3 and 4 are integrated skills tasks. Task 3 requires students to read a short, campus-related passage, listen to a conversation, look at a picture and summarize the information. Task 4 requires students to read a

short, academic passage, listen to a professor, look at a picture and explain the talk. Both the preparation time and response time are longer than Tasks 1 and 2, on the other hand, the preparation time is longer, but the response time is as long as Tasks 5 and 6. In addition, the conversation and lecture are much shorter than those of Tasks 5 and 6. These may have helped the students give more time to respond to the tasks. It may be possible to argue from these results that the students were exposed to similar task types that were not too long and which provide enough preparation as well as response time through study abroad.

Table 4.3 *TOEFL iBT Speaking Task Types*

	Task 1	Task 2	Task 3	Task 4	Task 5	Task 6
Question Types	Independent		Integrated			
Used skills	Speaking		Listening/Reading/Speaking		Listening/Speaking	
How to answer	Draw on own experience		Use a mixture of provided materials and multiple skills			
Context	General	Choose a preference from two	Campus-related	Academic	Campus-related	Academic
Prompt length	N/A		Pre: 60 sec. Post: 70 sec.	Pre: 82 sec. Post: 98 sec.	Pre: 138 sec. Post: 97 sec.	Pre: 121 sec. Post: 152 sec.
Preparation Time	15 seconds		30 seconds		20 seconds	
Response Time	45 seconds		60 seconds			

Comparing the total words spoken between 3-week and 5-week programs, 3-week program students produced 351 words in total on average pre-SA, and 404 words post-SA, while 5-week program students produced 380 words pre-SA, and 439 words post-SA. Therefore, there was little difference between the lengths of the programs in terms of the amount of words spoken toward the TOEFL iBT-style tests.

(b) Fluency gains in terms of words produced per minute

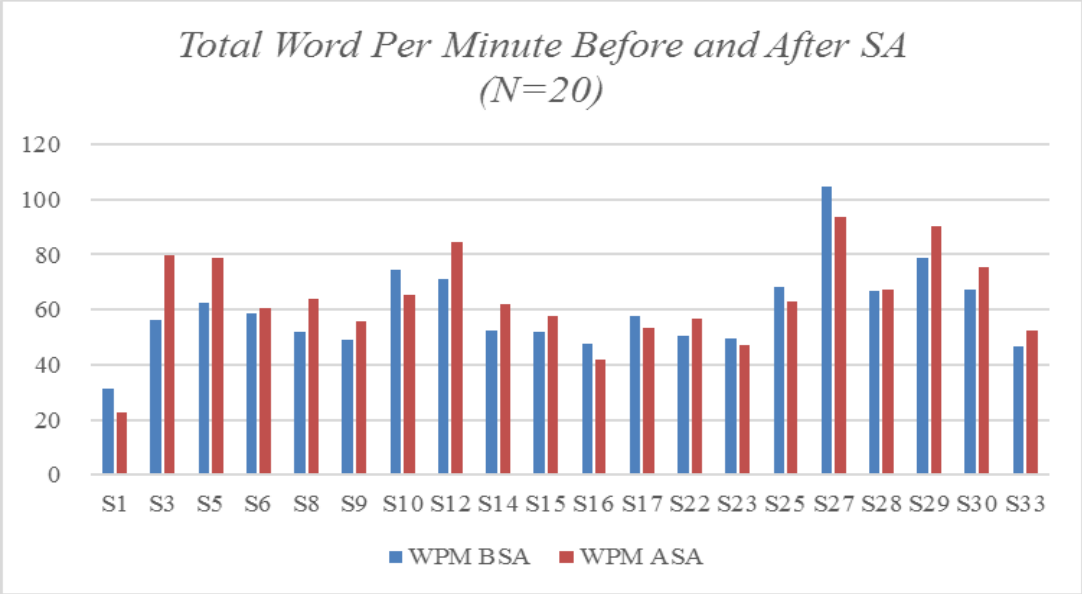
Of the total of 360 tasks completed by all the students including practices, 11 tasks (3%) have no recording either because of a technical error

or students' inability to respond to tasks. I calculated the spoken words per minute (WPM) for each student excluding these cases. The word per minute is the number of words uttered in response to a task. Repetitions performed by the learners were counted each time. False starts and rephrasing that did not form a word were not counted. This was calculated by dividing the total number of words by the total time of speech in minutes. For instance, S1 uttered 22 words for Pre-SA Task 1, which is 30 seconds long. This calculates as 0.5 word per second. The average of all the tasks was 0.52 word per second, which is 31.33 words per minute. A summary of the results is provided in table 5.8 below. The table shows Word Per Second for each task and Word Per Minute on average, before and after SA. Overall, 13 out of 20 students (65%) improved their WPM. The total average WPM was 59.81 WPM pre-SA and 63.64 WPM post-SA. There were no notable differences in terms of task types. Students generally produced more than 1 word per second for tasks 1 and 2, but less than 1 word for tasks 3 through 6, except for task 6 post-SA. In a similar study, Llanes and Munoz (2009) used 6 measures of fluency: syllables per minute, other language word ratio, filled pauses per minute, silent pauses per minute, articulation rate, and longest fluent run. They compared syllables per minute (SPM) produced by students. I did not count the utterances by SPM or used other measures utilized by Llanes and Munoz above as each task given was very short and I hardly observed aspects such as use of other language, filled pauses or long fluent runs.

Table 5.8 *Word per Second for Each Task and Total Word Per Minute Before and After SA (N=20)*

No	Intro	Home	Goal	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	Ave.	WPM	Intro	Best	Goal	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	WPS	WPM
S1	0.8	0.5	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.2	0.5	0.8	0.5	31.33	0.5	0.5	0.3	0.5	0.6	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.0	0.4	22.53
S3	0.9	0.7	1.1	0.7	1.2	1.3	1.1	1.1	0.4	0.9	56.13	1.3	1.3	0.9	1.5	1.6	1.3	1.8	1.0	1.4	1.3	79.80
S5	1.6	1.2	0.6	0.9	1.3	0.7		1.0	1.1	1.0	62.40	1.5	1.1	1.5	1.1	1.4	1.2	1.5	1.3		1.3	78.98
S6	1.1	1.3	1.0	1.1	1.2	0.6	0.8	1.0	0.8	1.0	58.60	1.1	0.8	1.0	1.0	1.1	1.0	0.9	1.0	1.2	1.0	60.53
S8	1.1	0.9	1.3	0.8	0.9	0.8	0.6	0.7	0.8	0.9	51.80	1.1	1.1	0.9	0.8	1.2	1.2	1.0	1.2	1.0	1.1	63.80
S9	1.1	0.8	0.9	0.7	1.3	0.6	0.7	0.6	0.7	0.8	48.87	1.2	0.8	1.0	0.8	1.2	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.9	55.87
S10	1.0	1.2	1.1	1.2	1.4	1.1	1.1	1.6	1.4	1.2	74.33	1.4	1.6	1.0	0.9	1.4	1.2	0.8	0.8	0.7	1.1	65.13
S12	1.4	1.4	1.5	0.8	1.2	1.1	1.0	1.1	1.2	1.2	71.13	1.5	1.6	1.7	1.7	1.3	1.5	1.2	1.3	1.0	1.4	84.73
S14	0.9	1.1	1.1	1.3	0.9	0.7	0.5	0.6	0.7	0.9	52.40	1.0	1.1	1.0	1.0	1.4	1.2	0.8	0.9	1.0	1.0	62.20
S15	1.0	1.0	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.3	0.6	0.8	1.3	0.9	52.00	1.1	0.8	1.0	1.1	0.8	0.9	1.1	1.1	0.6	1.0	57.73
S16	1.2	0.9	0.8	0.9	1.1	0.6	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.8	47.40	0.7	0.8	0.7	0.7	0.6	0.8	0.6	0.7	0.6	0.7	41.87
S17	1.0	1.1	1.2	1.2	0.8	0.8	0.7	1.0	0.8	1.0	57.53	1.2	1.2	0.9	0.7	1.0	1.2	0.3	0.8	0.8	0.9	53.47
S22	1.3	1.0	1.0	0.7	1.2	0.7	0.5	0.6	0.7	0.8	50.33	1.4	1.1	0.7		1.3	0.7	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.9	56.55
S23	0.9	1.2	1.1	1.1	0.7	0.6		0.7	0.4	0.8	49.65	1.1	1.2	1.0	0.6	0.7	0.7	0.5	1.0	0.3	0.8	47.00
S25	1.3	1.4	1.2	1.4	1.3	1.0	0.7	0.8	1.2	1.1	68.27	1.2	1.5	1.1	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.9	1.0	0.9	1.1	63.00
S27	1.9	2.0	1.7	2.1	1.9	1.4	1.5	1.7	1.4	1.7	104.47	1.4	1.8	1.7	1.0	1.7	2.2	1.4	1.4		1.6	93.75
S28	1.3	1.4	1.3	1.2	1.0	1.1	0.7	1.1	0.9	1.1	66.87	1.6	0.9	1.3	1.2	1.6	0.9	0.9	1.0	0.8	1.1	67.33
S29	1.3	1.1	1.2	1.5	1.6	1.1				1.3	78.60	1.9	1.7	1.8	1.2	1.6	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.2	1.5	90.40
S30	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.1	1.4	1.0	0.7	1.3	0.9	1.1	67.47	1.5	1.2	1.3	1.2	1.6	1.3	1.2	1.2	0.8	1.3	75.47
S33	0.8	0.8	1.0	0.8	0.9	0.7		0.5		0.8	46.71	1.2	1.0	0.8	0.6	1.3	0.8	0.5	0.8		0.9	52.58
Ave.	1.2	1.1	1.1	1.0	1.1	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.9	1.0	59.81	1.2	1.2	1.1	1.0	1.2	1.1	0.9	1.0	0.8	1.1	63.64

Figure 5.8 *Average Word Per Minute for Six Tasks Before and After SA (N=20)*



Comparing the fluency between 3-week and 5-week programs, 3-week program students uttered 59 words per minute on average pre-SA, and 63 words post-SA, while 5-week program students uttered 61 words pre-SA, and 65 words post-SA. Both groups on average uttered 4 words more per minute

post-SA. Therefore, there was no difference between the lengths of the programs in terms of the spoken fluency in relation to the TOEFL mock tests.

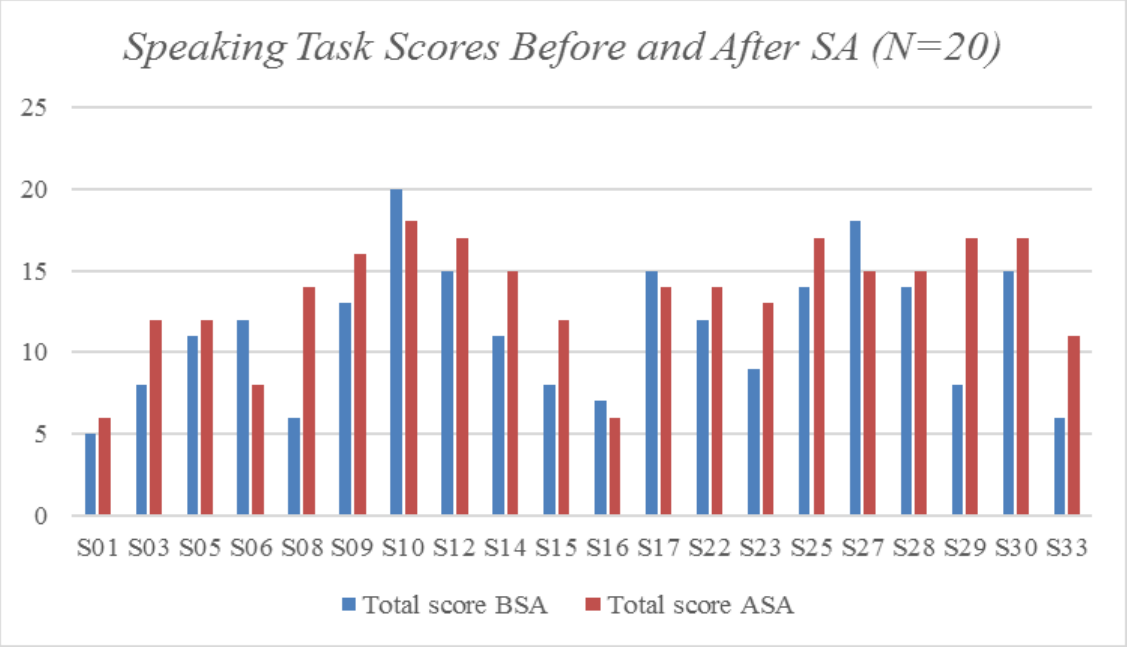
(c) Score gains

As regards the quality of the speaking task, excluding one student who had to stop recording mid-test, overall, 14 out of 19 students (74%) scored higher post-SA, while five students scored slightly lower than before. Each task is scored between zero and four points. The maximum total score possible is 24 points. In TOEFL iBT, the speaking test scores are calculated out of 30 points, using an ETS formula, but the formula is not made public. Thus, I used the raw scores for analysis. The overall scores for 18 students increased on average from 11.5 points pre-SA to 13.2 points post-SA. In terms of task type, only Task 3 saw a notable increase in the scores, from 2.0 to 2.6. Table 5.9 below shows the average scores each student received for each task, and Figure 5.9 shows each student's score change.

Table 5.9 *Speaking Task Scores Before and After SA (N=20)*

No	Task 1	Task 2	Task 3	Task 4	Task 5	Task 6	Total	Task 1	Task 2	Task 3	Task 4	Task 5	Task 6	Total
S01	1	1	1	1	1	0	5	2	2	1	0	1	0	6
S03	2	2	2	0	2	0	8	3	3	3	0	3	0	12
S05	2	3	3	0	2	1	11	3	3	2	1	3	0	12
S06	3	2	1	1	3	2	12	2	3	2	0	1	0	8
S08	2	2	0	1	1	0	6	2	3	3	3	3	0	14
S09	2	3	1	2	3	2	13	2	3	3	3	3	2	16
S10	4	4	3	3	4	2	20	3	4	4	3	3	1	18
S12	2	3	3	2	3	2	15	3	3	3	3	3	2	17
S14	2	2	2	2	2	1	11	3	4	3	0	3	2	15
S15	2	2	1	1	1	1	8	3	2	2	2	2	1	12
S16	2	2	2	0	1	0	7	2	0	1	1	2	0	6
S17	3	3	3	2	3	1	15	2	3	3	1	3	2	14
S22	1	3	2	2	2	2	12		4	3	3	2	2	14
S23	2	2	2	0	2	1	9	2	3	2	2	3	1	13
S25	3	3	3	2	2	1	14	3	3	3	3	3	2	17
S27	4	4	2	2	3	3	18	3	3	3	3	3	0	15
S28	3	3	3	1	3	1	14	3	3	3	3	2	1	15
S29	3	3	2				8	3	4	3	2	3	2	17
S30	2	3	3	2	3	2	15	4	3	3	2	3	2	17
S33	2	2	1	0	1	0	6	3	3	2	1	2	0	11
Average	2.35	2.6	2	1.263	2.211	1.158	11.35	2.684	2.95	2.6	1.8	2.55	1	13.45

Figure 5.9 *Speaking Task Scores Before and After SA (N=20)*



Note: Student 29 did not complete pre-post-tasks 4 to 6 and his data are not included in statistical analysis.

Comparing the quality of task responses between 3-week and 5-week programs, 3-week program students scored 11 on average pre-SA, and 13 post-SA, while 5-week program students scored 12 pre-SA, and 14 post-SA.

Therefore, there was no difference between the lengths of the programs in terms of the TOEFL mock test scores. Results reflected experiences students might have had at school, at homestay, and their daily life. TOEFL iBT-style tests were more demanding academically, and students struggled to answer questions even after short study abroad. Overall, however, some improvements were observed in the oral proficiency of most students.

In summary, both program type students increased their amount of output, speaking speed, and improved the test scores slightly in the speaking tasks, but to a similar and subtle degree.

5.2.3. Summary of TOEFL Data

An analysis of the quantitative data for this study showed that even three or five-week study abroad can yield linguistic improvements, albeit limited, that can be measured using commercial high-stakes exams like TOEFL. However, it is important to acknowledge that the sample size is relatively small and cannot be generalized. The linguistic gains measured in this study are summarized as follows: In terms of receptive skills, for listening, 16 of 26 students who have pre- and post-test TOEFL ITP data improved their listening section scores. For grammar, 12 students improved their grammar section scores. For reading, of the 26 students, 17 improved their reading section scores. With regards to productive skills, for writing, students on average produced 26% more words than before SA, and more than half of the students scored higher on the writing task scoring rubric. For speaking, students on average produced 70% more words than before SA. 13 out of 21 students

improved their fluency as measured in words spoken per minute, and 15 students out of 19 scored higher on the speaking task scoring rubrics.

5.3 Research Question 2

The second research question aimed to find out **what social experiences English learners have during short stays abroad.** In order to elicit first-hand experiences of as many students as possible, an online questionnaire was sent to all the English immersion program participants. The next section reports on the findings of the responses.

5.3.1 Questionnaire Data Analysis

Questionnaires were conducted using an online tool, called Google Form, which was later downloaded as an Excel file. I made four slightly different questionnaire forms, so that the questions were appropriate for each study destination, as explained in section 4.4.6 above, and I combined the results into one spreadsheet. An example of the questionnaire form is found in Appendix 12.

5.3.1.1 Language Use In and Outside Class

One of the three themes I identified from the questionnaires is the "sense of immersion in English speaking environment." The English instructions that students receive must surely help them improve their English competencies, but twenty hours a week of immersion in the target language classes is not all that should be available to sojourners. As discussed in the literature section, there is a lack of knowledge in what goes on outside classroom. Therefore, I asked the students directly to see if and when they used the target language English in their free time, how often, and with whom.

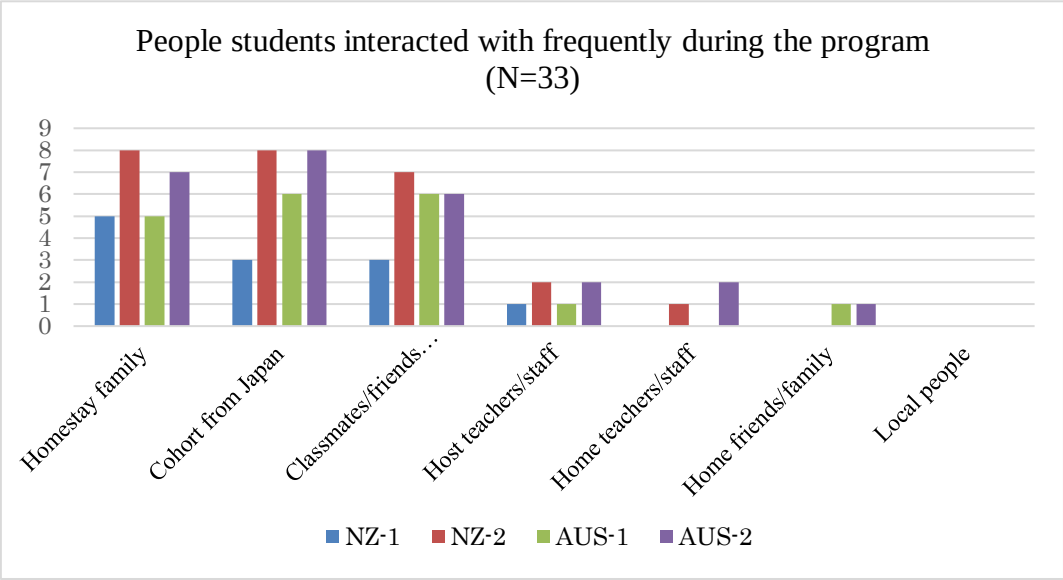
Question 2 asked, “While you participated in the immersion program, when did you use English?” 33 participants in total from 4 immersion programs responded, and the result showed that students used English at school, at home, and elsewhere. It is notable that 75% of them reported using English with other cohorts from APU. Table 5.10 and Figure 5.10 below show the answer options and the number of students who chose each option.

Table 5.10 *Question 2 Response: Where English was Spoken (N=24)*

Location	The number of responses	Percentage out of all respondents
During my classes	22	92%
At home	24	100%
In town (shopping, traveling etc.)	22	92%
During my free time with other non-APU students	18	75%

The following table shows with whom the students interacted frequently, regardless of the languages used. Question 3 asked, “While in *the destination city*, who did you interact with frequently during the program? (Including face-to-face, telephone, or online communication)

Figure 5.10 *People Students Interacted with Frequently During the Program (N=33)*

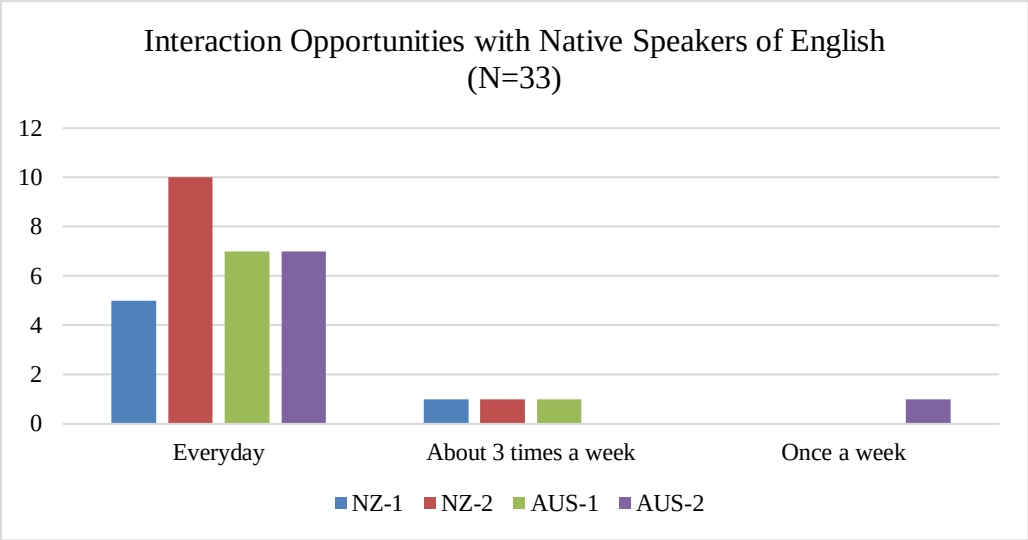


The majority of students naturally reported interacting with their homestay family, but not everyone in each program reported interacting with them frequently. This indicates that placing students in homestay environments do not always guarantee constant interaction opportunities. Many students reported interacting with university friends who went on the immersion program together, as well as classmates on site, which includes students from other Japanese universities or from other countries. Very few students reported interacting with teachers and staff at the SA site, and even fewer with APU teachers. None of the respondents reported interacting frequently with local people, which is understandable considering the shortness of their sojourn. The result indicates that many APU students were able to move to the middle circle but did not reach the outer circle social network involving English native speakers.

In order to investigate how often students had interaction opportunities with different kinds of people, I asked them how often they talked to native

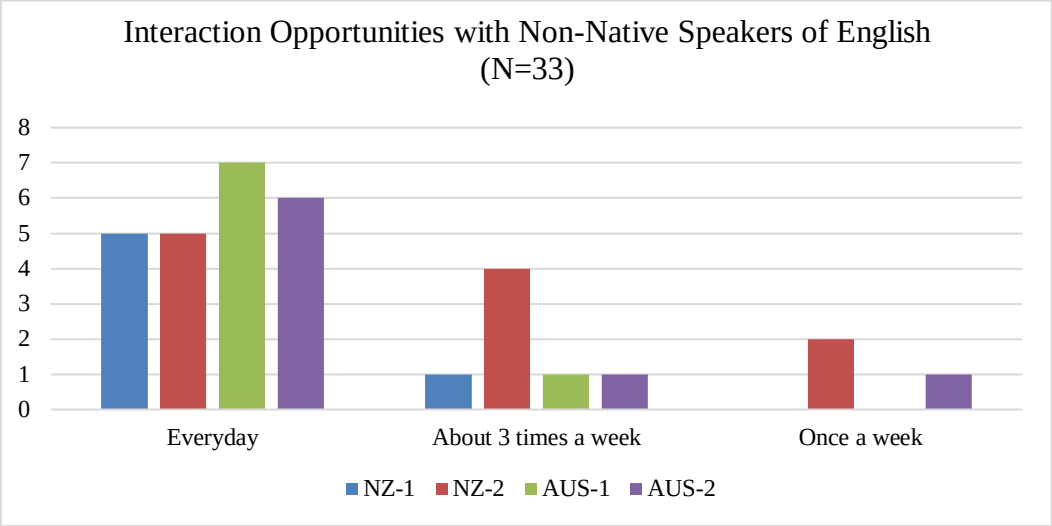
speakers of English, non-native English speakers who are not Japanese, the Japanese who speak English, and with the Japanese who speak Japanese with the student. They chose from these frequency options: Everyday, about three times a week, once a week, once a month, or never. Figure 5.11 below provides a summary of the findings by interlocutor type. Question 4 asked: “How often did you have chances to talk with native English speakers?”

Figure 5.11 *Interaction Opportunities with Native Speakers of English (N=33)*



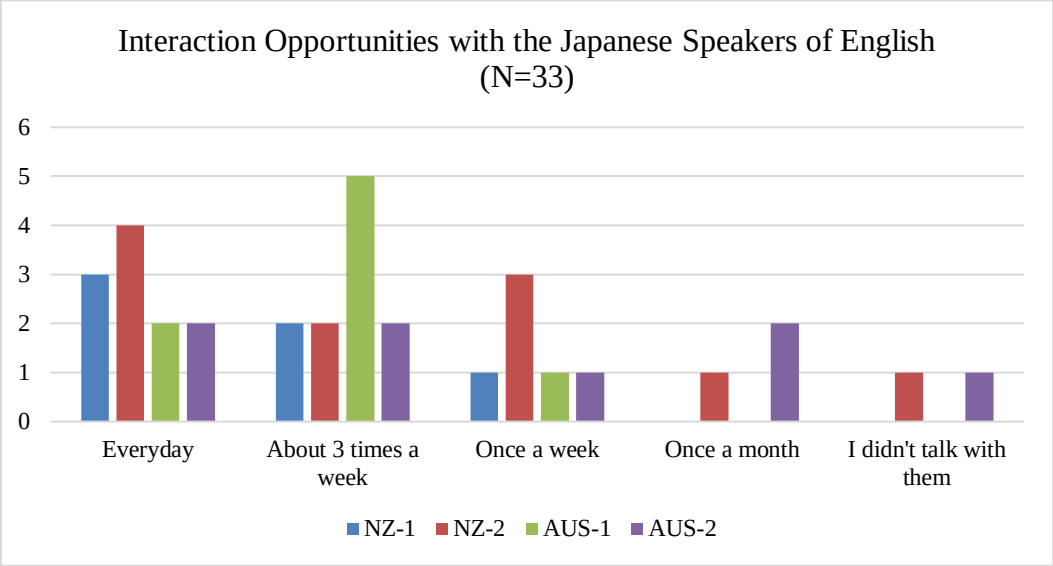
These were the interaction opportunities students reported. Host family and their English teacher probably were the main interlocutors. No one chose “once a month” or “I didn’t talk to them” as an option. The Figure 5.12 is based on the Question 4-b: How often did you have chances to talk with non-native English speakers other than Japanese?

Figure 5.12 *Interaction Opportunities with Non-Native Speakers of English (N=33)*



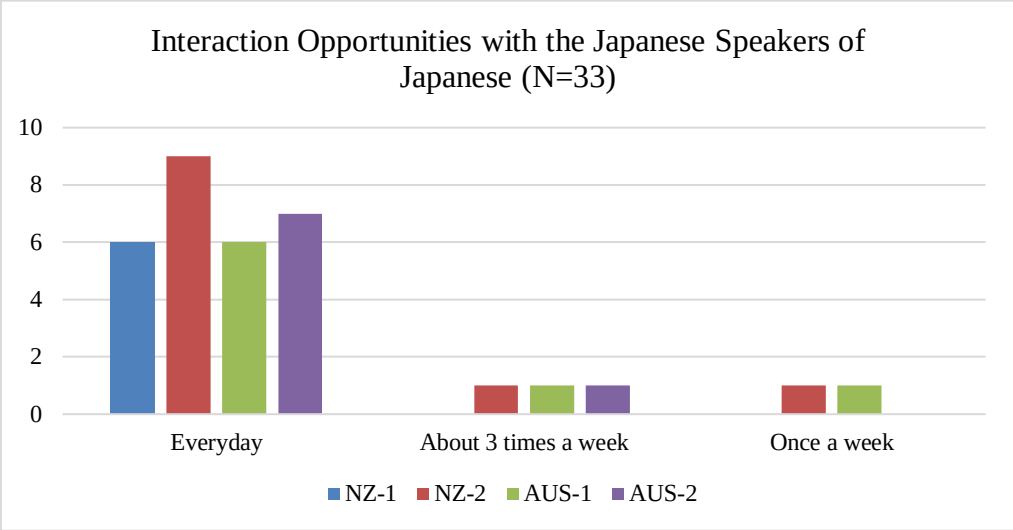
Similar to Figure 5.11, the majority of the students reported interacting with non-native speakers of English in English. It is most certain classmates are the main interlocutors. Again, no one chose “once a month” or “I didn’t talk to them” as an option. An interesting quote comes from Sasuke (S11), who was at the 5-week program in Western Australia. He made many international friends there, who are other L2 users, and did not make any Japanese friends. He observed that students from another university in Japan spent time with their Japanese cohorts and ate Japanese food, which showed him a bad example not to follow. He even advised other APU students not to befriend each other, although they found it too difficult. The fact that he was the only Japanese male in the cohort probably enabled him to act independently. Figure 5.13 is based on the Question 4-c: How often did you have chances to talk with Japanese in English?

Figure 5.13 *Interaction Opportunities with the Japanese Speakers of English (N=33)*



They often talked to their APU classmates in English, being used to the English-speaking environment and also trying to help each other practice English. This does not often happen with Japanese students from other universities, as APU students report, students from other universities in Japan are not used to speaking English to each other. Figure 5.14 below is the result of the Question 4-d: How often did you have chances to talk with Japanese in Japanese?

Figure 5.14 *Interaction Opportunities with the Japanese Speakers of Japanese (N=33)*

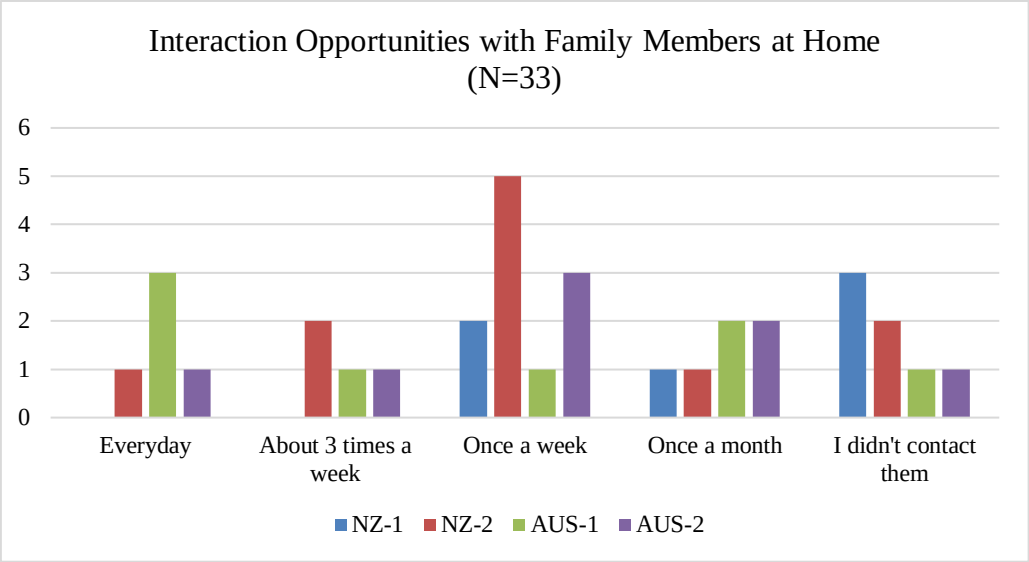


It is clear from the results presented above that students talked to their Japanese classmates on-site and the cohorts from APU in Japanese almost on a daily basis, regardless of the fact they usually speak English to each other in APU English classes.

5.3.1.2 Virtual Connectivity during Short-Term Study Abroad

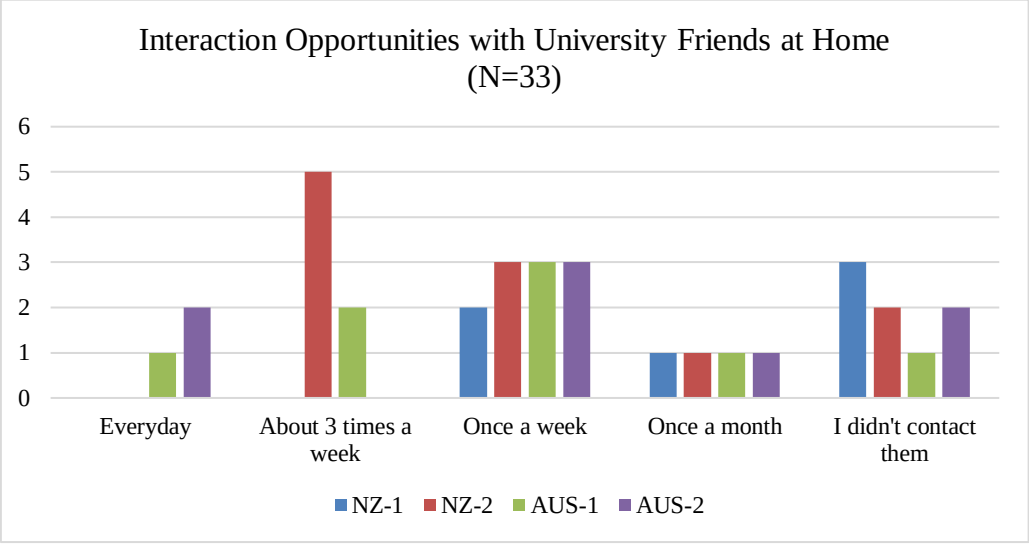
Together with the data in which students reported on their face-to-face interactions with various people, I investigated how the use of virtual networking might have influenced their study abroad. First, I needed to establish how often students interacted with people who were not on study abroad sites, utilizing methods such as telephone, email, and online tools. Figure 5.15 is the result of the questionnaire Question 5-a: While abroad, how often did you have chances to interact with family members back home?

Figure 5.15 *Interaction Opportunities with Family Members at Home (N=33)*



The frequency with which students interacted with their family differed from student to student. For New Zealand groups, whose stays abroad were only three weeks, most did not contact their family at all or only occasionally. Next, Figure 5.16 is the result of the Question 5-b: While abroad, how often did you have chances to interact with APU friends who were not on site?

Figure 5.16 *Interaction Opportunities with University Friends at Home (N=33)*

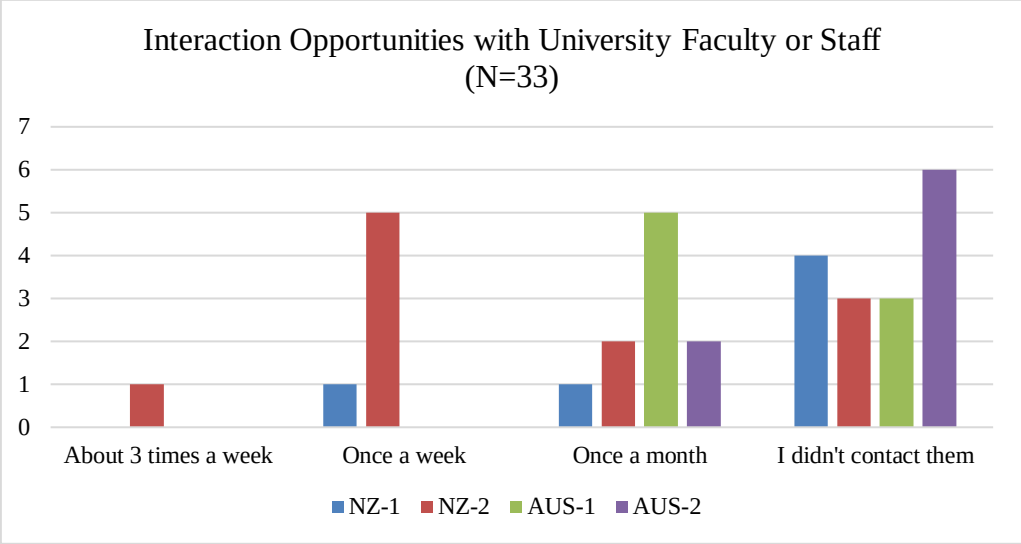


Compared with the interaction with family members, the result for university friends was somewhat more even, with an equal number of students

interacting with their university friends at home on a weekly basis, or not interacting with them at all. To give one example, Molly (S33) said she kept in touch with an APU friend who was studying in New Zealand at that time, via Facebook and LINE, using English.

The following Figure 5.17 is the result of the Question 5-c: While abroad, how often did you have chances to interact with APU teachers and staff?

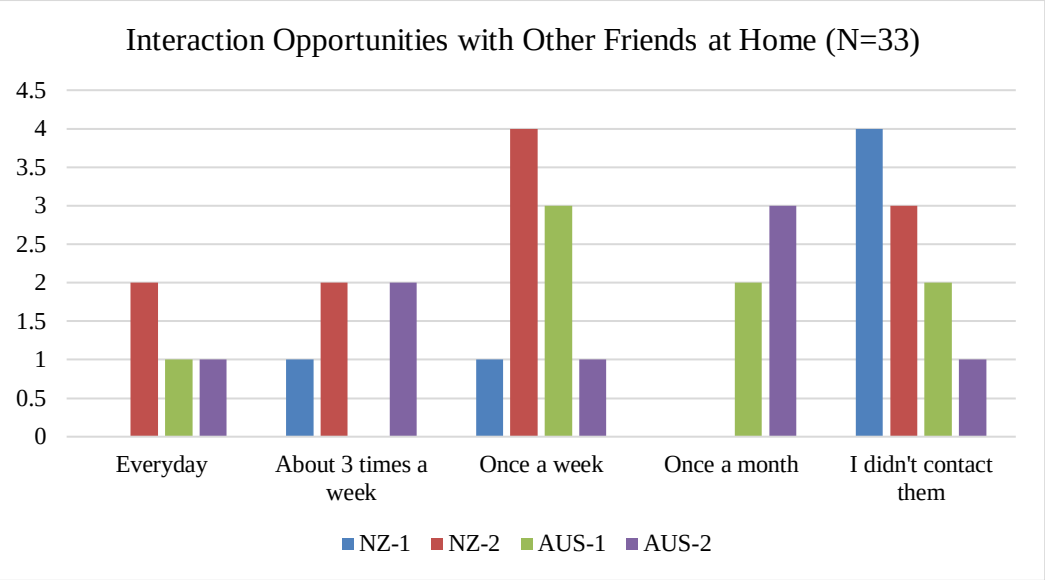
Figure 5.17 *Interaction Opportunities with University Faculty or Staff (N=33)*



Unlike university friends, students interacted with APU teachers or office staff even less frequently or not at all. No one answered, “Every day.” It was clear most students did not feel the need or desire to interact with the sending institution. This is possibly because, in part, they were independent, and in part because they did not have any issues to report, which is a positive result. Students at APU come from all over Japan, and they may have contacts with other friends outside the university social networks, including their part-time work colleagues, relatives, partners and others. Question 5-d below tried to cover all other relationships and interactions with them. Figure 5.18 is the result

of the Question 5-d: While abroad, how often did you have chances to interact with other friends at home?

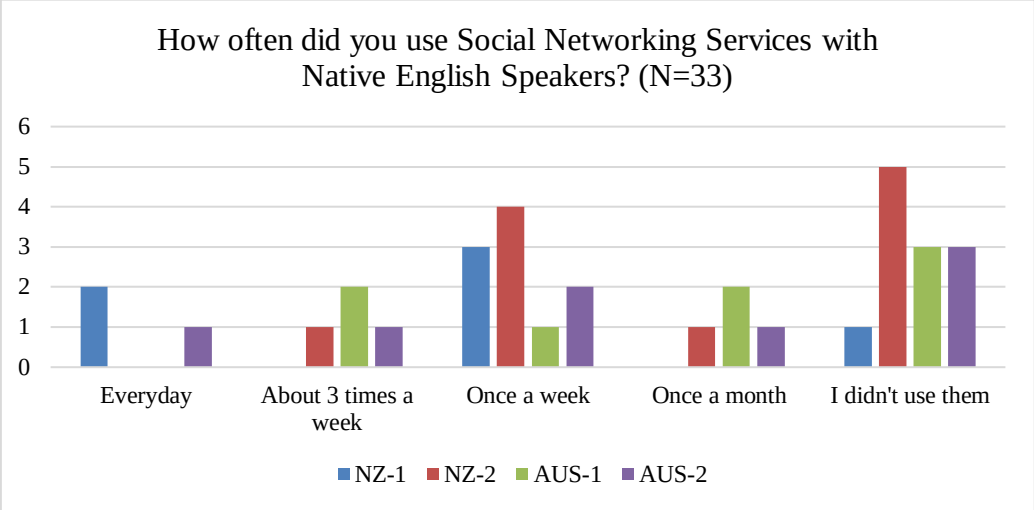
Figure 5.18 *Interaction Opportunities with Other Friends at Home (N=33)*



The result was quite similar to the responses given for interactions with family members back home. The most salient response was that they interacted with people back home about once a week.

The next question, “How often did you use Social Networking Sites, such as Facebook, Mixi, and Twitter?” was used to identify the common methods of virtual connectivity at the time. I wanted to know if the method to connect with people was different based on the kind of social networks the students had. Therefore, the students answered how frequently they used SNS with native English speakers, non-native English speakers excluding Japanese, Japanese in English, and with Japanese in Japanese. From the results, it was obvious that all the participants used social networking tools daily. However, the extent to which students used SNS differed greatly depending on with whom they interacted. Figure 5.19 is the result.

Figure 5.19 *Frequency of Social Networking Services Usage with Native English Speakers (N=33)*



According to the result, not many students used SNS with native English speakers. Figure 5.20 shows how often students used SNS with non-native English speakers who are not Japanese.

Figure 5.20 *Frequency of Social Networking Services Usage with Non-Native English Speakers Who are Not Japanese (N=33)*

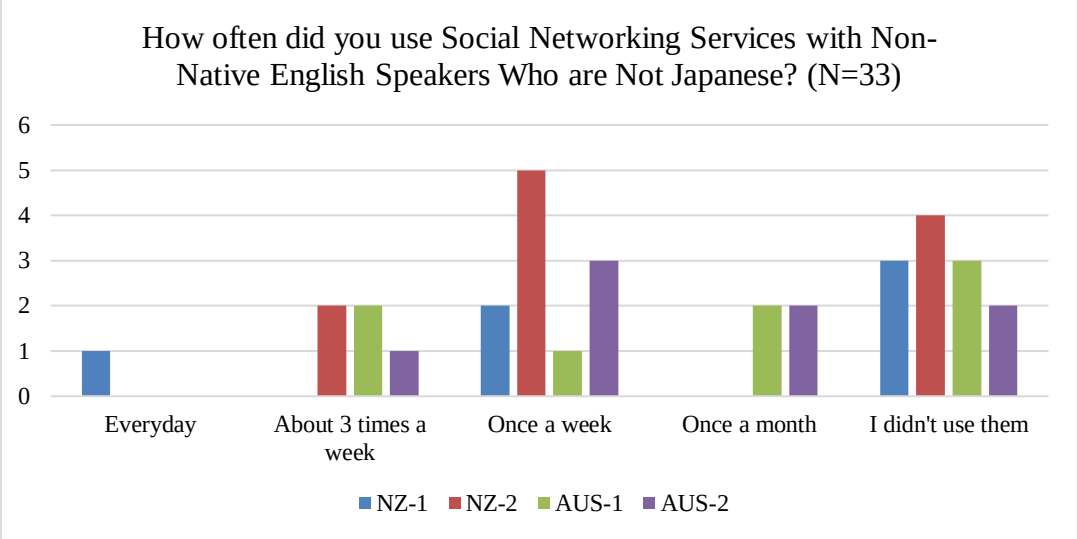
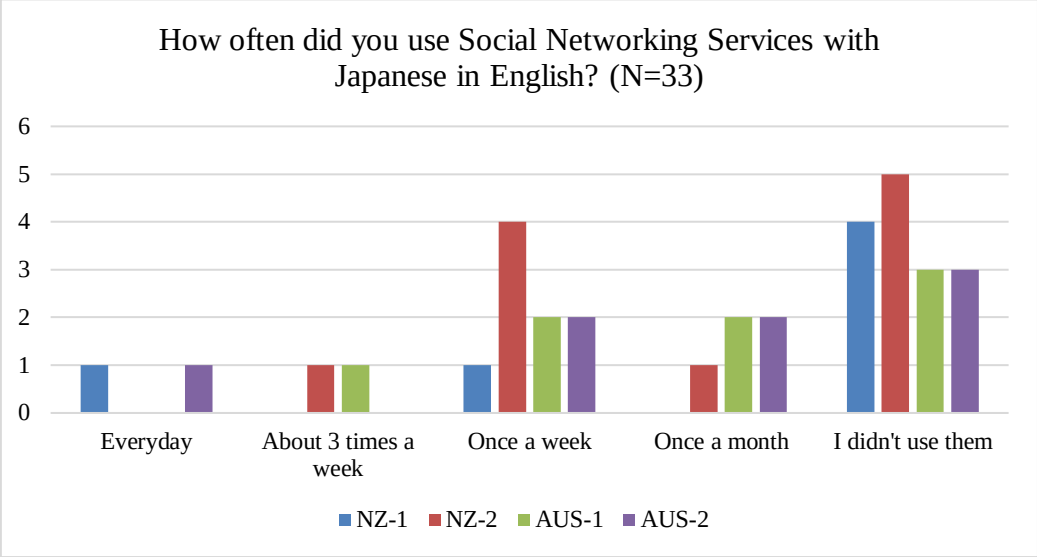


Figure 5.19 and Figure 5.20 are somewhat similar. Around one-third of the students used SNS once a week with non-Japanese interlocutors on site, while

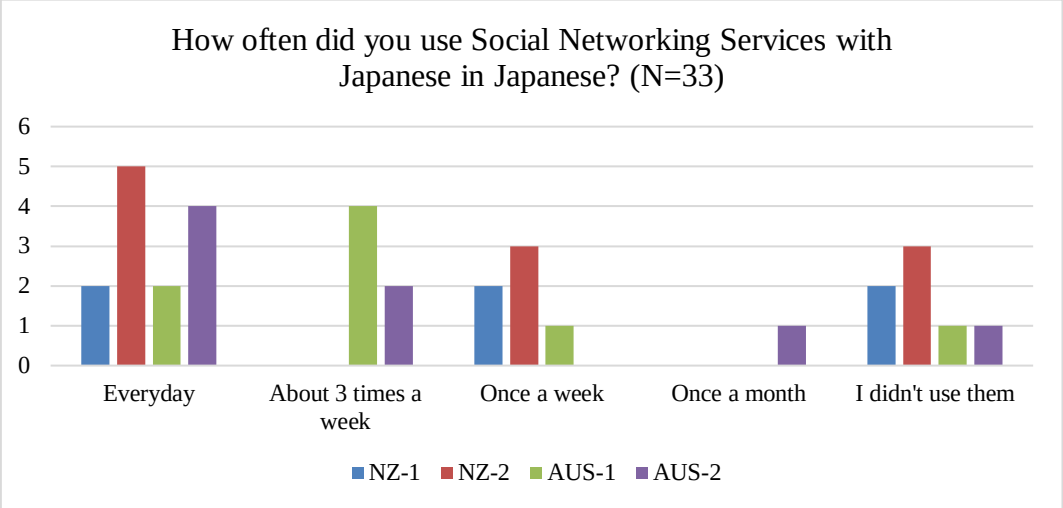
more than one-third did not use any form of SNS. The following data, Figure 5.21, shows how often students used SNS with Japanese using English.

Figure 5.21 *Frequency of Social Networking Services Usage with Japanese in English (N=33)*



Nearly half of the respondents reported not using SNS at all in English with other Japanese speakers, while others interacted in English occasionally. Three of the four immersion programs (AUS-1, AUS-2, and NZ-2) each had a closed Facebook group, which their program instructor facilitated initially. They wrote in their Facebook group page sometimes in English, but more in Japanese, as can be seen from the result below. I also had access to these group pages, and I concur with the students' statements. Finally, Figure 5.22 below shows how often students used SNS with Japanese using Japanese.

Figure 5.22 *Frequency of Social Networking Services Usage with Japanese in Japanese (N=33)*



Below is almost an overlapping question, but I asked in which languages students used SNS. They were able to add languages not listed, as shown in Table 5.11 below. Here is the result.

Table 5.11 Languages Students Use for SNS (N=31)

Language used	NZ-1	NZ-2	AUS-1	AUS-2	Total
English	4	5	8	4	21
Japanese	4	9	8	6	27
Korean			1		1
Answered more than 1	3	5	6	2	16

Of the 31 respondents, 16 students reported using more than one language for SNS. This indicates that they use SNS to interact with both people in their inner circle, most likely in their native language or with the target language, and with people in the outer circle, in the target language. Regarding the one student (S33) who reported Korean on SNS, her native language is Japanese, and she was studying Korean as well, so she wanted to practice it. Looking at the reasons why they used particular languages is helpful in

understanding the phenomenon. The follow-up question to Question 6, “Why did you use SNS during immersion program?” was answered as text responses. The summary is divided into two categories, on site and connection with home. Of 27 responses given, 15 reported using SNS for use abroad, while 16 reported using it for connecting with family and friends in Japan. Four out of 27 students used them both ways. Here are the details of the reasons.

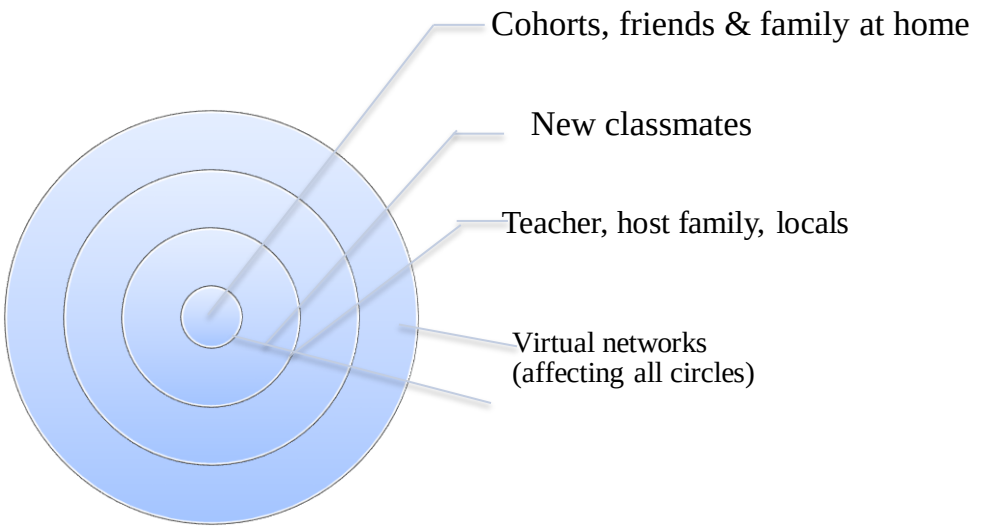
Eleven students mentioned the use of SNS as a way to get in touch with people abroad, for example to confirm meeting times and places, in place of mobile phones (N=11). For these students, using online tools was an indispensable part of their life abroad. On the other hand, five students mentioned the use of SNS to communicate and socialize with classmates for friendship, sharing photos and making plans (N=5). For these students, online tools served as a lubricant for expanding and maintaining their social circles. As one student reported, she used it to interact not with students from her home university, but with students from other universities. Another example was given by Molly (S33) at the interview. She posted her ideas in English because she wanted to practice writing English and because she would like many people to read her posts.

Fifteen students reported using SNS to get in touch with family and friends in Japan and sharing experience abroad (N=15). In other words, they were reaching out to people in Japan with information from short stays abroad. In the meantime, a few students (N=3) also reported using SNS to get information about Japanese news, job hunting, class registration, and to read

their friends' posts online. We can observe that internet tools are utilized by many to stay connected to their home community while abroad.

Looking at the usage of the media tools in terms of the concentric circles, there appear to be three patterns. I refer back to the concentric circles representation of immersion program participants' social network in Figure 3.4 below previously presented in section 3.3.3.

Figure 3.4 *Concentric circles representation of immersion program participants' social network, based on Coleman's concentric circle model (2013a, p. 31).*



Within the inner circle among Japanese-speaking cohorts, we can observe that students maintained both face-to-face and virtual connections and support for each other using SNS. In the middle circle, students are also using SNS with their new friends, whom they connected with after SA started. Although it is outside the scope of the current study, these students may stay connected to their newly acquired friends after study abroad. In the outer circle, students in some cases were using online tools with their host family, to practically get connected via Facebook or Skype. I did not hear any cases in

which SNS was used with their host institution's teachers or locals. Plus, a virtual, expanding circle emerged, which connects the SA students with their family and friends back home, the home community including the Japanese media, the home university, prospective companies and all others.

Regarding connectivity, in order to grasp how easily accessible they were to the Internet, I asked about the students' Wi-Fi access abroad while I was in Perth (AUS-1) and Adelaide (AUS-2). The Perth group did not use the Internet as much as they usually did in Japan, while everyone had internet access at home for the Adelaide group, although one student had limited data capacity. Most students at the University of Western Australia felt the Internet at UWA was slow and insecure, while the internet access at the University of Adelaide was very good. It was even better and faster than APU, a point that I noticed while I was visiting the site. The New Zealand group also had good connectivity to the Internet, especially at the English Language Academy (ELA) where they studied. On my site visit in 2014, I found the Wi-Fi access smooth at ELA.

In addition, 2 groups (NZ-2 and AUS-2) had individual iPads APU had lent out to students. When I asked the Adelaide group how they used the iPad they borrowed from the university, they reported using it to take photos, to take class notes and to look up words as a dictionary in class, to use Google Maps for directions, to access Facebook, to take photos and videos, and to check the next semester's course syllabi. Riki (S38), for instance, reported that it was great to have the iPad. He had Mexican classmates, and he was able to use the translation function to help them. A great majority of students (15 out of 18 in

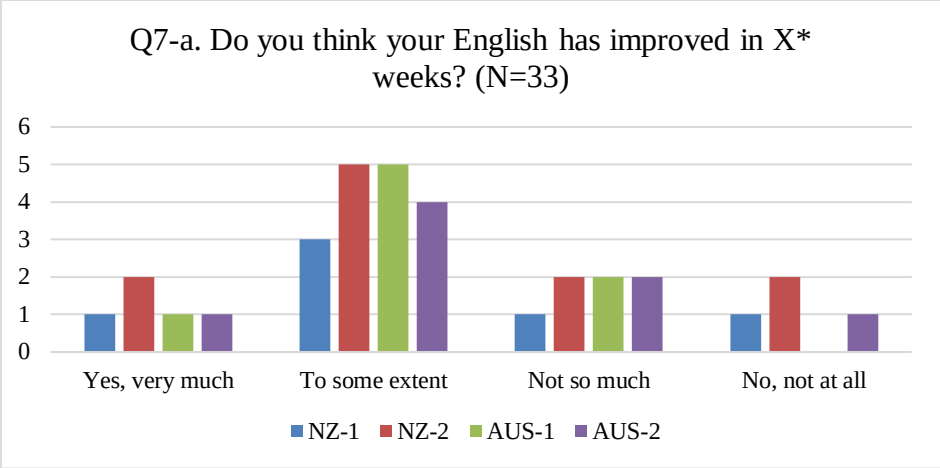
AUS-2) brought their own phone from Japan and used it whenever there was free Wi-Fi access. On top of that, many students (16 out of 18) also had a local phone, which they either borrowed from their host family, rented or bought on site. They used these phones for calling or texting their host family.

Considering the connection between SNS and learner experience, it was evident that students made use of SNS and mobile devices, but their main communication was through direct, face-to-face interactions. Of various options, they used Facebook most often for practical reasons such as arranging a meeting time and place, and for sharing their current status with people at home and away. One of the key points I wanted to investigate was whether the students attribute their linguistic achievements to their social interactions. To answer this, I next look at the students' perceptions of their proficiency improvement.

5.3.1.3 Students' Perceptions of their Proficiency Improvement

The second theme I identified from the questionnaire responses was that of "sense of improvement." Students' perceptions on their linguistic development were analyzed through the questionnaire data. I could observe both negative and positive types of perceptions toward their own development, meaning some believed they made an improvement and have positive perceptions, and vice versa. Figure 5.23 below shows students' own assessment of whether they thought their English improved as a result of their short-term study abroad.

Figure 5.23 *Students' Overall Perceptions toward their English Improvement (N=33)*



*Note: X is the number of weeks they stayed abroad, 3 for NZ-1 and NZ-2, and X=5 for AUS-1 and AUS-2

In the follow-up question to the overall improvement, I asked in what way their English improved. Thirty students filled in text responses. There were responses mentioning listening, speaking, gaining confidence and motivation to study more. Sixteen students claimed their listening abilities improved. They reported it became easier to understand their homestay family, or that they became used to different accents such as British or Chinese accents. For students who have learnt English in Japan, American English is more familiar to them. The British accent probably refers to English spoken by their teachers, while Chinese accent probably refers to English spoken by their classmates from Chinese speaking countries and regions. Thirteen students mentioned their speaking abilities improved. Two students wrote that the response time in conversation became shorter. Others reported they could make themselves understood even if they were not fluent, or that they were able to speak up without worrying about grammar. In addition, five students reported gaining confidence to use English. Of these, one said she was not afraid to speak in

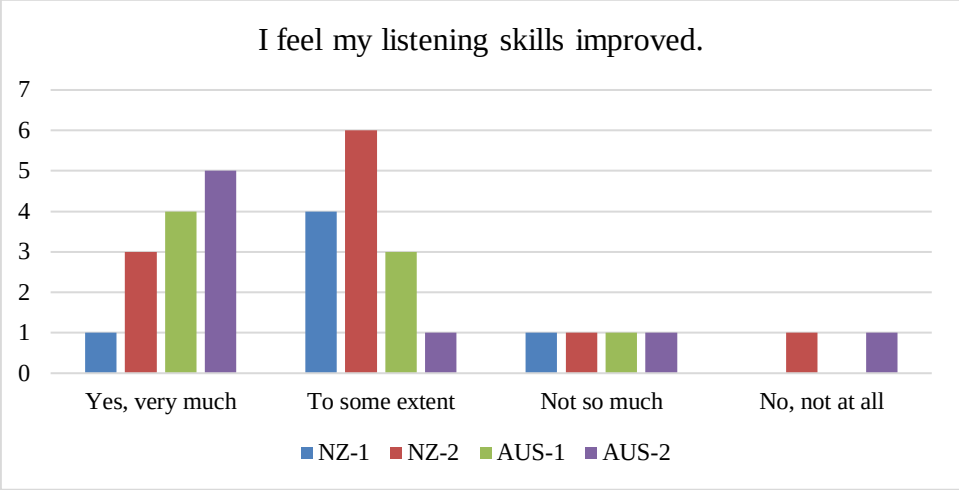
English anymore. Finally, three students reported their motivation to study English further or their curiosity to learn more about other cultures heightened. One other student reported her ability to understand colloquial expressions such as slang increased.

To prove reflective judgement on their improvement or lack of it, I also asked them what they thought influenced their improvement. All 33 students filled in their reasoning. The great majority of responses were positive, that is, they thought their English improved. As many as 28 students attributed their English improvement to engaging in English speaking environments with their host family, teachers, classmates, and with locals in town. Sixteen students named their host family as a contributor. Eight students named their teachers, classmates or their classes as contributors. Five students specified conversations with the locals as a contributor. Just three students reported that their English did not improve. Reasons given were either because the class level and their classmates' motivation were low, because there were many Japanese students abroad, or because their stay abroad was short, in this case five weeks.

To strengthen the data, I asked questions specific to the four language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing, together with their reasons, plus whether or not the students gained confidence in their English competence. I did not ask their perception toward grammatical knowledge, because it is unlikely to have been a focus of their study or instruction. It is clear from the figures below (see Figure 5.24 and Figure 5.25) that students felt improvement in their aural/oral skills: listening and speaking skills, but not

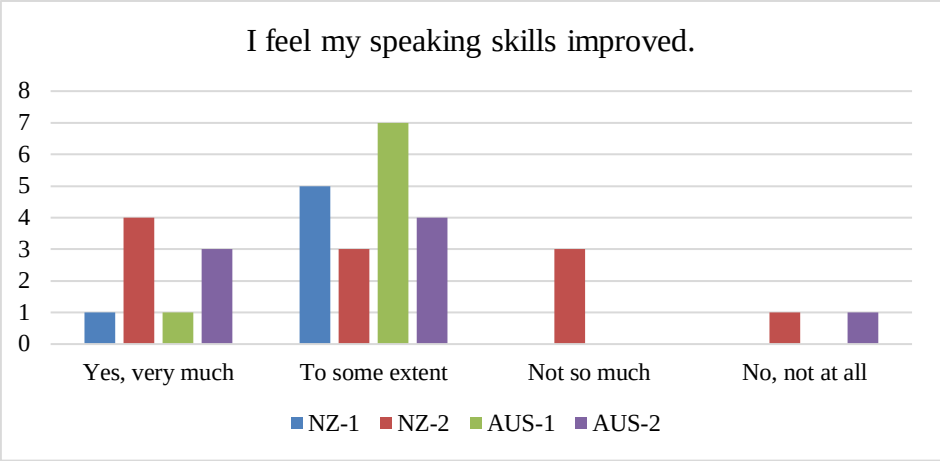
significantly in written skills: reading and writing. For instance, 27 out of 33 students (82%) perceived that their listening skills improved. Regarding the overall confidence in their English, many students answered that they gained confidence. Figure 5.24 shows whether students perceived their listening skills improved or not.

Figure 5.24 *Students' Perception toward their Listening Skills Improvement (N=33)*



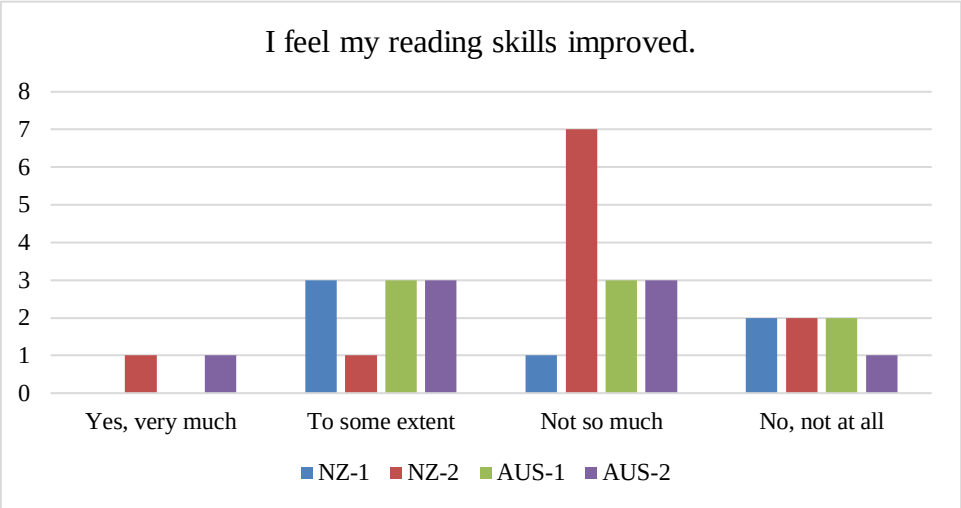
Fourteen of the students who felt their listening skills improved gave similar reasons, reporting it was because they had opportunities, especially with their host family, people in town, or in class every day, to listen and speak in English. The only perceived challenges came from two students who said it was still difficult for them to understand natural speed English without asking the interlocutors to repeat themselves. Figure 5.25 below shows whether students perceived their speaking skills improved or not.

Figure 5.25 *Students' Perception toward their Speaking Skills Improvement (N=33)*



Regarding reasons why students thought their speaking skills improved, as many as 28 students said their speaking skills improved, while four felt they did not improve their speaking skills. Of the twenty-eight, 23 said they had ample opportunities to use English, especially with their host family, teachers, classmates, friends, and with locals. Three reported that they were better able to express themselves in English over the course of the program. For negative reasons, two said they also used Japanese with other students. One said 3 weeks was too short to improve his speaking skills. One other negative reason was that the student was influenced by Japanese students from other universities who spoke English with strong Japanese accents. She also said that local people seemed to find her Japanese accent difficult to understand, which made her reticent. Figure 5.26 below shows whether students perceived their reading skills improved or not.

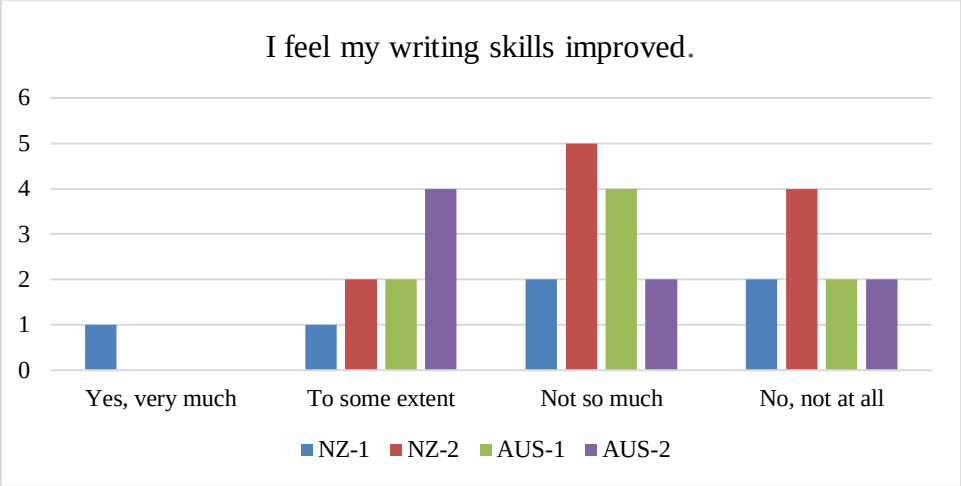
Figure 5.26 *Students' Perception toward their Reading Skills Improvement (N=33)*



Compared with listening and speaking skills, fewer students felt their reading skills improved. Eight students said they improved their reading skills because they were immersed in English texts every day through sign boards, instructions, maps, newspapers, and books. Positive reasons included six other students who reported that their English classes helped. One of them, Mia (S30), mentioned that she was surprised at the reading speed of her classmates, and that she learned reading skills such as guessing meaning from the context from her classmates. Four of the students who said their reading skills improved read books or newspapers of their own accord, outside of class time. On the other hand, 17 students gave reasons why their reading skills did not improve. These included 15 students who said they did not have opportunities to read much in English. Of these, six said their English classes did not focus on reading skills. Whether students benefited from their English class most likely depended on which class they were assigned to. This finding suggests that reading skills improvement may depend on whether students go out of their way to make time and find materials to read while abroad. Not many

students may seek to improve their reading skills if they want to focus on communicating with people during stays abroad. Finally, Figure 5.27 below shows whether students perceived their writing skills improved or not.

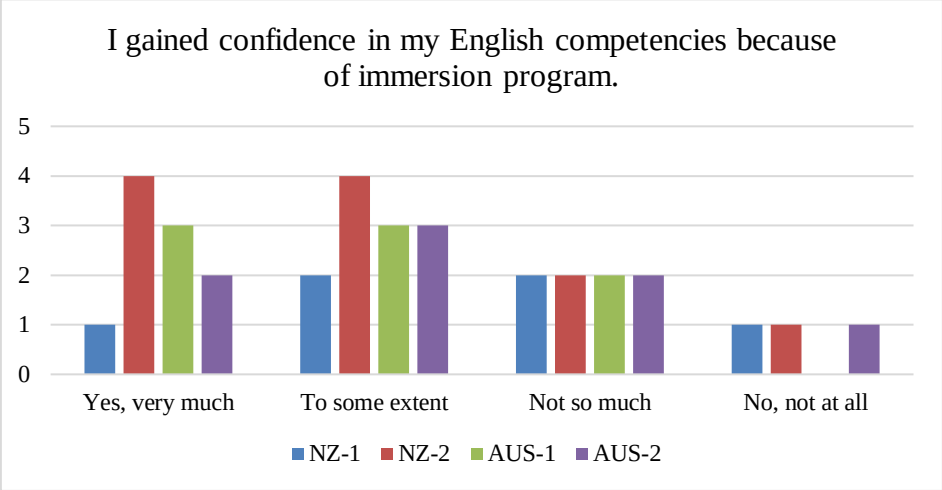
Figure 5.27 *Students' Perception toward their Writing Skills Improvement (N=33)*



Twelve students gave reasons why they thought their writing skills improved, while 23 students gave reasons why it did not, including three students who explained both positive and negative factors that helped or did not help with their writing. Eight students said they had to write English a lot in their classes, and three said they voluntarily kept a diary in English. Twenty students said they did not have much opportunity to write in English. Of these, eleven mentioned that their English classes did not focus on writing. Two even mentioned that they did not receive feedback on their writing assignments from teachers. The perception about the improvement of writing skills is quite similar to the perceived improvement of reading skills. Two students stated clearly in their reasoning that they focused on improving listening and speaking abilities, thus did not seek to improve their writing abilities.

The following figure, Figure 5.28, shows whether participants gained confidence in English after study abroad.

Figure 5.28 *Students' Perception toward their Confidence in English (N=33)*



Twenty-two students gave positive reasons why they gained confidence in their English competences, while 11 gave reasons why they did not. Many mentioned the opportunity or need to use English, enjoying communication with others, and having had successful experiences making themselves understood. To quote a typical response, one wrote, "Because I used English every day and I think I communicated with lots of people smoothly."

In summary, the questionnaire data tell us first that immersion program students used English daily with different groups, but some also used Japanese frequently. Secondly, they were fairly well-connected through the Internet and SNS, using both Japanese and English frequently but not excessively. Thirdly, students perceived improvement in their English, especially in aural/oral skills and with regards to confidence.

5.3.2 Interview Data Analysis

I would like to mention several traits observed by pilot study participants because they raised an important point relevant to the main study. From the pilot interview, I noted down these key behaviors: conformity to the participant's inner circle group, avoidance of the inner circle, connection with target language speakers, connection with middle circle speakers of other languages, virtual networks among the students, and connection with the target language community after SA. To expand a little on the above traits, Sayako (P1) reported that she tried to use English all the time, but when she was in the same class as other Japanese students, they used Japanese, so she tried to talk more to her teacher. She also talked to other Japanese in English, and it helped her maintain her English-speaking self. Sayako also told me that her host father taught her new words, and that he still sent her two new words every day.

Interviews with the pilot study participants served in two ways: first to test the interview questions to see if the structure allowed for responses, and second to extract preliminary themes. The pilot study students said they remained in touch with some of their friends from APU frequently through Skype conversations, and provided emotional support for each other, which led me to also consider the virtual networks in the main study. Many of the behaviors from the pilot study interviews were also observed in the main study. As described in 4.5.2, I used the pile sorts method to develop the theme based on the interview data, as well as observation notes, which are presented in the following. The quotes used to illustrate the themes are my translation of Japanese original

quotes. (See Appendix 15 for an example.) Since two of the themes were about the students' English competence and their attitudes, I also used the pile sorts with the questionnaire responses on their confidence with English. Below is the summary of the main contributors introduced previously in 4.4.7.

Table 4.4. *Profile of Interviewees*

Code No. and pseudonym	Sex	L1	TOEFL score	Faculty	Year of study	Host country	When	Length (weeks)
P1 Sayako	F	Japanese	497	APM	1	Adelaide, AUS	Mar-Apr 2012	5
S2 Ina	F	Japanese	403	APS	1	Auckland, NZ	Aug-Sep 2012	3
S10 Koharu	F	Japanese	517	APS	2	Perth, AUS	Aug-Sep 2012	5
S11 Sasuke	M	Japanese	510	APS	2	Perth, AUS	Aug-Sep 2012	5
S14 Seiko	F	Japanese	453	APM	3	Perth, AUS	Aug-Sep 2012	5
S17 Tia	F	Japanese	490	APM	1	Perth, AUS	Aug-Sep 2012	5
S20 Nana	F	Japanese	400	APS	1	Auckland, NZ	Mar. 2013	3
S27 Hunter	M	Chinese	433	APM	1	Auckland, NZ	Mar. 2013	3
S30 Mia	F	Japanese	470	APS	2	Adelaide, AUS	Mar. 2013	5
S32 Mei	F	Japanese	410	APS	3	Adelaide, AUS	Mar. 2013	5
S33 Molly	F	Japanese	440	APS	1	Adelaide, AUS	Mar. 2013	5
S38 Riki	M	Japanese	430	APM	1	Adelaide, AUS	Mar. 2013	5

5.3.2.1 Interaction Opportunities

The most salient of the quotes relating to the theme of social interaction opportunities were the words homestay and host family. Hunter (S27), who spent 3 weeks in Auckland, said, "The best part was that I tried to communicate with my host family as much as I could. I spoke English a lot." Mei (S32), who also spent 3 weeks in Auckland and whose only host interlocutor was the host mother, said, "The good thing was that I was more outgoing than usual. My host mother and her friend often went out together and I followed them, so I had

more opportunities to speak English. I think every weekend I was out with my host mother." Almost identical quotes came from Koharu (S10), who spent 5 weeks in Perth, and Mia (S30), who spent 5 weeks in Adelaide, both of whom tried to speak with their host family as much as possible. I discuss their cases in 5.4.1 and 5.4.3 respectively. Another quote comes from Riki (S38), who spent 5 weeks in Adelaide. He said that the best part about the program was that he was able to communicate well with his host family.

> "*My host family tried to understand me, so I didn't get lost in conversations with them. Very much, yes. One time the host mother was washing dishes or something, and I had to tell her something. For example, let me see, there was a dance. I had to tell her that there would be a bush dance. The university gave us an invitation card, and I had to explain it to her. Then she looked at me. I'm not sure what she had been doing then, but it was clear that she was paying attention to me. Then I realized she was a person who would focus on what I had to say.*"

These quotes were given at the start of each interview when I asked them about the best part of their short-term SA experience. As can be seen here, several students identified interaction opportunities in which they had to speak English as their best experience. Except for Hunter's case, whose host mother was perceived as hostile toward him, and going away for a whole week without telling him, which caused him to request her to never be a host for our students again, all others reported that their host family was caring and understanding.

5.3.2.2 Support on English Development

The second theme I identified from interviews is the support the students received from their host family regarding their English learning. Four of the interviewed students reported receiving help from their host family, or

receiving compliments that their English had improved. Mei (S32) said her host mother helped her with a writing assignment one time and advised her, “You should say it like this” or “We don’t say like this.” Mei’s host mother also said toward the end of her three-week stay, “Your English has become better than before,” and that her use of a knife and fork had gotten better. As Japanese typically eat food with chopsticks, Mei’s host mother had given her tips on how to use the knife and fork. This seems to indicate that the host family sees the language as something the students should acquire as part of the host culture. Mia’s (S30) host mother also explained vocabulary to her and even gave her a dictionary, which she brought back to Japan after her stay. Mia also reported how her host mother supported the development of her speaking fluency.

> *“In the beginning, I was thinking what to say in my head. And I would also, when I am speaking like now, pause between a verb and an object. When I explained it to my host mother, she said, ‘It is fine to pause and think about what to say rather than be fluent and panic.’ She took it nicely, positively.”*

Another comment was given by Mia’s host, who said, “You are speaking more fluently than before.” As cited above, Mia used to pause when she spoke English, but her host mother noticed that she could speak without halting in the middle of a sentence. The host families at these programs are English speakers, but they are not applied linguists, therefore, we cannot expect them to judge the students’ proficiency accurately. However, from the comments received from various hosts, it seems these students received positive feedback on their learning.

5.3.2.3 Students' Challenges Related to Social Interaction

The third theme I arrived at is the hesitation of the students. Six quotes below are concerned with the way students interacted with their host family. Two of them are concerned with the way they interacted with their classmates while abroad, which relates to the conformity to the inner circle group that I had identified in the pilot study. Firstly, Riki (S38) reported,

> *"Perhaps I should have made more requests such as 'I'd like to go to…,' 'I want to buy … here.' They didn't go out as much as a family on weekends. I think everybody was aware that I was there for only 5 weeks. So perhaps, if I had asked, maybe they would have listened to me. Ah, I know. If that's the case, I should have asked for more."*

Secondly, Molly (S33) has similar regrets to Riki. She said when her host family met her at the airport at the start, she was nervous, and she continued that way throughout the five-week stay. She said she did not talk with her host family as much as she could have. Also, there was a handicapped family member, about whom there was no explanation, and it was difficult to understand the host sister's speech. She also said,

> *"My host had a big swimming pool, but I didn't want to swim, and I could not explain why and just told them I didn't like swimming. But the family loved swimming and they had two small kids. If I had bathed and played with them more, I might have become friendlier with them."*

Reflecting on this failure, Molly said, "If there were a second time, I would be more forward from the beginning." Thirdly, Mia (S30) reported that when her host mother was talking non-stop and she did not understand, she pretended to understand. On reflection, she feels she should have stopped her host and asked, "What does that mean?" Fourthly, Nana's (S20) case shows her shift from hesitation to integration. Nana's family often spent time together, but

initially she felt she did not belong with them, and spent time alone in her room, doing homework or other things and feeling lonely. Toward the end of the three-week stay, she decided to interact more with them. The first few weeks, she spent time with her friends on the weekend, but on the final weekend she went for a walk with her host mother and the mother's friend. She felt she should have interacted with them more. The fifth quote also comes from Nana, who talked about her hesitation in her class.

> "*In the English class, I thought 'it's just for three weeks, so I don't have to make friends,' and I was quiet. But I heard in intermediate and lower classes, APU students were very active among all the Japanese students. They were so responsive in class, and a student was told not to speak up by her teacher. Hearing that, I thought I should have been more active. If there were another chance, I would be more active and make friends.*"

During her stay in Auckland, Nana made just one close friend. Based on Coleman's concentric circle model (2013a), they would form the middle circle with weak ties. Nana said she had valued English study over friendship forming, but she reflected that perhaps she should have made more friends with whom she could stay in touch. Sixth, Molly (S33) explained how she got stuck with speaking Japanese while in Australia, while she now speaks more English in APU classes in Japan.

> "*In Australia, there are students from other universities in Japan. APU's English classes are similar to classes here – local teachers are teaching English – but apparently it is rare in other universities. They have classes in big lecture halls. So, their English abilities may be similar to ours as measured in computer tests, but they haven't had much opportunities to speak English. So, they are afraid they cannot make themselves understood in English. Because of their influence, I was also speaking in Japanese.*"

Molly's reflection explains and supports the observation note I made while I visited her class.

Field notes from 18 March 2013, Adelaide, Australia.

> "*The second class was Lower-intermediate with Molly, Kazu and Yuta. Molly was often quiet, and worked with other Japanese girls, sometimes using Japanese.*"

Japanese people are often characterized as shy and humble, but the above behaviors cannot be explained solely as a virtue especially if students are studying abroad to learn a foreign language. I have another observation note regarding the use of Japanese, which explains her avoidance of English.

Field note from 15 March 2013, Adelaide, Australia.

> *"Students read an article to prepare for today's lecture and field work. They prepared questions to ask at the zoo. I noticed some students talked to each other on topics irrelevant to class in Japanese a lot, while some others discussed in English."*

This incident occurred during a closed class, that is, a special class designed for APU students. There was no need for them to conform to students from other universities, but it is possible that they had developed a culture to use Japanese among themselves.

5.3.2.4 Social Circles

As reported in the questionnaire finding, the students reported spending a lot of time with their host family or with other students. The next two quotes exemplify what went on outside class time. Mei (S32) explained,

> "*I lived with my host mother, and I followed her everywhere. I never planned and went out with APU friends or friends from other universities, so maybe I should have done that. After we came here, I saw some APU friends had become good friends with people from other universities in Japan, and I kind of regretted not making friends with them.*"

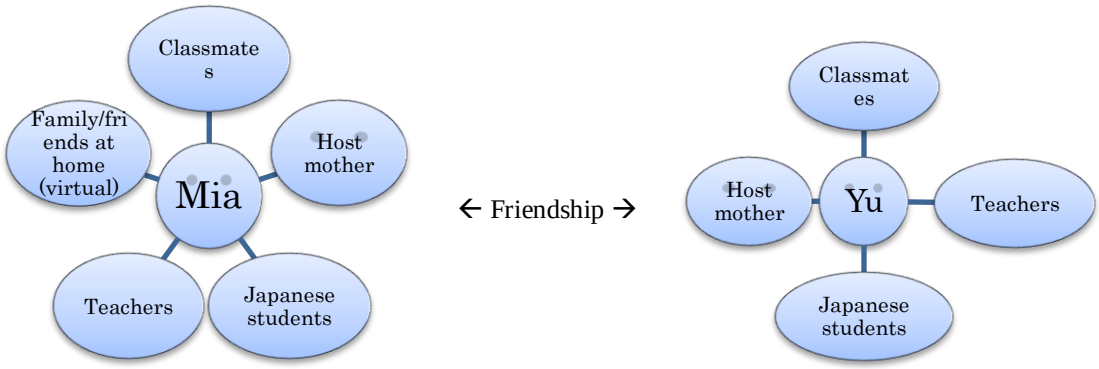
In Mei's case, just like Mia and Koharu, she spent most of her free time with her host, which enabled her to reach out to the outer circle group but remained loosely connected to her inner circle group. Hunter (S27) exhibited a different situation. His classes were in the early afternoon, and he had a free time in the morning. He spent time with other students in ELA, where the university's English school was located, and "had fun but wasted time." Hunter's host mother was strict with time. If he wanted to have dinner at home, he had to tell her by 3 p.m., which was during his class time. Therefore, he could not plan to go out with his friends as much as he wanted. Hunter found that there were not enough chances to go out or use English in town, nor at home, as the time was limited, and he had things to do on his own too. He explained one incident when he did have an opportunity:

> "*If the classes were in the morning and if I could go somewhere in the afternoon, I would have opportunities to speak English with others. Once I asked the way on the street. I asked the girl, 'Where are you from? Are you from New Zealand?' Then she said, 'No, I'm from Sweden.' 'Oh, Sweden?' Like this, there would be more unexpected opportunities to speak English.*"

From Hunter's experience, I noticed that some students were seeking interaction opportunities with outer circles, but had limited chances to come across authentic conversation, due to the length of stay, class timetable, host family situation, or other factors.

There was also a case with Mia (S30) who reported on developing stronger ties with the outer circle network. Below is a figure that explains the interaction opportunities Mia (S30) had while in Australia.

Figure 5.29 *Mia's (S30) Social Networks*



Mia and Yu (S35) both stayed at a host family at a suburban town in Adelaide, and their hosts were good friends. Both students celebrated their birthdays during SA. Yu's host family organized his birthday party, and Mia and her host mother were also invited. In this way, their outer circle expanded through the host-hosted connection. In addition, Mia stayed in touch with her family and friends in Japan virtually, as a result she had varied social networks.

5.3.2.5 Social Interaction through Virtual Community and Connectivity

The fifth theme concerns the students' virtual connectivity to other students, family at home and on-site. There are both negative and positive influences of the way that modern technology contributes to the forming of virtual communities that enable social interaction. First, I look at the use of technology during the immersion program. One negative influence comes from Mei (S32). While she was in Auckland, she spent a lot of time talking to her friends in Japan using Japanese via Skype. She feels she should have reduced the Skype time and increased opportunities to speak in English more, even by watching TV there. A benefit of technology can be seen in the case of Nana (S20). She and her cohorts used the Facebook group page during SA for information sharing. If someone wrote a question, someone else would answer.

They were advised to check the group page for updates. Nana also told me that the female students who were on the immersion program had a LINE group. Currently in Japan, LINE is more popular than Facebook among Japanese youths.[6] Nana said,

> *"Everyone has a LINE account nowadays, so it's a good idea to make a LINE group. You can use Facebook too, but I think everyone will look at LINE. If you have a lot of information, Facebook may be better, but if you have a quick announcement such as 'Come to school at X o'clock', then it's effective. There is also a function called Mailing List. If you register, the message is sent to everyone in the group."*

Considering the fact that the majority of the students had brought their smart phones and had a good Wi-Fi access, it seems to have been easy to stay connected to their cohorts while abroad. Below is an excerpt of my note that exemplifies how well wired the students were.

Field note from 15 March 2013.

> "*Mark's host family provided him with a mobile phone, so he is in touch with his host family a lot. Kazu also has a phone, and he called Mark at the zoo to find each other. From this I can observe that Mark is easily connected to both the inner and outer circle communities. University of Adelaide has a great Wi-Fi system and computer stations, so it is easy to stay connected. Students are assigned online tasks, such as blog posting on Friday's special programs, and they also have iPads from APU. I think this group can take advantage of the technology.*"

Next, I also discuss the way virtual community is maintained after SA. Although Mei had a good relationship with her host mother, they were not in

[6] Facebook users in Japan were 28,000,000 as of September 2017, while domestic LINE users were 71,000,000 as of September 2017, and Twitter users in Japan were 45,000,000 as of October 2017. (https://www.uniad.co.jp/260204)

touch with each other anymore at the time of the interview, which was conducted in mid-May 2013, two months after their return. On the other hand, Nana (S20), who was on the same program as Mei, kept in touch with her host family after SA via e-mail. Nana said, “They said, ‘We must stay in touch.’ If I can afford it, I will go visit them someday.” Nana became close with the host toward the end of her stay. Another positive quote comes from Mei, who also connected well with her host. They sent messages and shared photos on Facebook frequently after SA.

5.3.2.6 Future Prospects on Continuous Learning of English

Although initially I did not expect this to become a theme, I noted several quotes that related to the students’ perception of their English competency and how they intend to work on it in the future, which developed as an inductive theme. Below are some of the representative quotes. First, Molly (S33) had thought she could speak English well before her SA. However, she realized that she really could not when she visited Australia. Therefore, she started to study seriously on-site. She studied in the Hub, a place for students to meet, study, and unwind, by herself and felt she wanted to study abroad longer. Molly noted, “Noticing my lack of ability was a good thing.” Second, Riki (S38) reflects, “Immersion program was a good experience. It became a stepping stone to consider other options to go abroad. I don’t have a concrete plan yet, but I will feel less scared than when I went on the immersion program.” As regards his English, he said, “My English ability is not good enough. I want to be able to write essays in English, and I want to communicate what I want to say perfectly well. I think English will be necessary for jobs in the future, even if

I stay in Japan." Thirdly, Mia (S30) listed many things that positively affected her English learning: She uses the English-English dictionary now; she feels she was able to make herself understood in English; she feels more at ease speaking English. In other words, she has more confidence; she can converse with someone she met for the first time more easily; and she wants to get a job in which she can use her English ability. These positive attitudes were also observed during a visit by an English faculty member. Following is an excerpt shared by my colleague.

Written on April 19, 2013 by APU instructor for the course:

> *"All in all, though, I think it was a very successful program this time round, and I got a real sense of engagement and enjoyment from the students, and many expressed an ongoing interest and desire for studying/travelling abroad in the future."*

As manifested by the interviews and supported by observations, it is possible to argue that for some students, the program offered interaction opportunities, or direct links to the outer circle, support outside classroom to improve their English competency, albeit with some challenges on the students' side while they formed friendship circles among the cohorts and with their host, which in some cases are maintained virtually. All these lead to some students thinking ahead with their learning, connecting even to their future careers. Combining the interview quotes above with some more observational data, I would like to point out some connections among the themes in the next section.

In summary, interview data, combined with field observation notes and other data, provided me with these traits among interviewed participants.

(1) Despite the shortness of their stay, students reported having had ample opportunities to interact with others in English, and they tried to maximize such opportunities.

(2) Students appreciated their homestay family's support in learning English, sometimes providing them with feedback and advice.

(3) Some students felt inhibition about socializing with the host family, and sometimes regretted not getting fully involved.

(4) Each student formed different kinds of social circles, some navigating between different circles, others having some difficulty reaching out to the host community.

(5) Students harnessed the IT tools such as mobile phones, the Internet, and SNS to connect with their social circles.

(6) Students were even more motivated to study English as a result of the short-term SA.

5.4 Synthesizing the Test Data and the Qualitative Data

In this section I summarize the test data per different length of stay abroad, and where there is a difference, try to determine the reasons for this difference with the help of qualitative data. With regards to listening skills, as reported in 5.2.1, the listening test scores were slightly higher pre-SA for 5-week programs in Australia, which was aimed at intermediate level students. Both programs' participants on average showed a slight increase in their listening section scores, but hardly any difference is observed between the lengths of programs. Regarding grammatical knowledge, the 3-week program participants hardly exhibited an increase, while 5-week program students

improved their scores by 2 points on average. As for reading skills, both programs' students showed a subtle improvement in their test scores, but no difference was observed between the program lengths. Regarding the writing skills, it was clear that 5-week program students already possessed better writing fluency before SA, and they improved their scores somewhat more than 3-week program students. About the quality of writing, students who went on a 3-week program in New Zealand had lower writing skills both before and after SA than students on a 5-week program in Australia. Both groups showed an increase, but the difference was not wide. I looked at the speaking test results from three perspectives: the amount of words produced, fluency, and quality. In terms of the amount, most students produced more than pre-SA, but there was no difference between the lengths of stay. Fluency-wise, some students improved fluency, but there was no difference overall between the lengths of stay. Quality-wise, again, many students improved their scores, but there was no difference between the lengths of stay as measured in TOEFL iBT-style tests.

Now I compare the test data with students' perceptions of their improvement. I examined whether there was any pattern among students who perceived linguistic skills improvement, who actually raised their test scores. Table 5.12 below compares the actual data with the students' perception of their improvement. We can see that with regards to productive skills, students felt improvement and it was also confirmed through the test data. On the other hand, reading and writing tests did show slight improvement, but students did not feel improvement so much.

Table 5.12 *Comparison between the Test Data and Students' Perceived Improvement*

	Test Data	Perceptions	Match
Listening	Slight improvement	Improved	O
Grammar	Inconclusive	No data	-
Reading	Slight improvement	Neutral	-
Writing	Improvement	Neutral	-
Speaking	Improvement	Improved	O
Confidence	No data	Improved	-

Regarding the connection between SNS and learner experience, participants made use of SNS and mobile devices, but their main communication was through direct interactions. They used Facebook most often for practical reasons, and for sharing their 'now.' I had wondered whether students attributed their achievements to their social interactions. The finding is mixed, in that we can say that personal, face-to-face interactions affected learners' experiences, while SNS is perceived more to be a lubricant, and not used for English improvement.

Test scores did not show significant improvements across all the students but did improve for some students. From the available TOEFL ITP data, 18 out of 26 students improved their overall scores post-SA, and most of their scores were higher than the APU students' average. Significant improvement in this case would mean a clear transition from a lower competency to a higher one, for instance from CEFR A2 to B1, or an IELTS score from 5 to 6, which would be equivalent in TOEFL ITP from at least 450 to 497. Meanwhile, many of the participants felt their speaking, listening and reading skills as well as confidence increased through short-term SA. I also

found that students interacted with various people, including Japanese, in English, for example, keeping up to date via Skype chats. It seems when learners were involved in meaningful context, they also gained competence. The size of the dataset is relatively small for statistical analyses, thus instead of making a general statement, I highlight a few cases in the next section.

5.4.1. Case 1: Koharu (S10) in Perth, Australia

Of all the research participants, I knew Koharu (S10) best, since she was my English class student in her first semester at APU in the spring of 2011. Prior to the study, she had spent just one week in Australia. She joined the Australia program after completing three semesters of mandatory English classes, and her English level was upper-intermediate, which may explain why her TOEFL post-test did not show improvements. For instance, her speaking test score was 20 pre-SA, which was the highest among all the participants. Her score post-SA was 18, a slight decline, but that is still higher than that of any other student. Similar assessments can be made about her speaking amount and speed, writing scores, and the amount of words produced. After the SA program, she continued studying English, and took TOEFL ITP twice post-SA. However, her score did not exceed the initial score of 517, which still qualified her for a place as an exchange student in a Taiwanese university in her third year. Although we did not observe improvements in test scores, she reported her perception of aural/oral skills improvements, especially in listening. I now describe how her social experiences in Australia supported it. She completed all the pre-post-tests, the questionnaire, and I observed her classes, interviewed her host family, and interviewed her both on-site and after SA.

The amount of time students spend using the target language seems to be a big contributor to their success at the SA. During the program, I visited the AUS-1 group twice – once during the second week and the other during the fifth week of the five-week program. In terms of the interaction opportunities, discussed in 5.3.2.1, Koharu spent more than 1 hour on weekdays with her host family, whom I observed to be affluent and culturally-sensitive. They spent time together preparing meals, chatting, watching TV, as reported by her host mother at the on-site interview. On weekends, they spent the whole day together, going to the children's soccer games, attending birthday parties, and having family gatherings, so Koharu spent a good amount of time to immerse herself in the target language. Koharu's host mother told me that they often had a big family gathering and Koharu had chances to talk to different people. Koharu was exposed to people who talked differently than she was used to, and she got accustomed to meeting new people.

Regarding support on English development, as discussed in 5.3.2.2, when I asked Koharu's host mother, "Do you ever teach her English language, for example grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation etc.?" She replied,

> "*Yes, some vocab. Her English was quite good already, so she can pretty much communicate very well. She can understand us perfectly. I guess we teach her some new words she didn't know. In terms of pronunciation because she has pretty much American accent and the words we use are obviously different from hers, so we tease her. (Laughter.) So, we taught her Aussie words. Not much grammar, but lots of vocabulary, for example, spider cob, prawn…*"

Unless a host family is keen on teaching the language, they may not try to teach it, but vocabulary is something easy and useful to teach. This was also

observed in the pilot study, in which Sayako (P1) had said that her host family taught her new words every day. When the host is supportive, they also seem to note the development of the student over time. At the host family interview, I asked, “Have you noticed any change in Koharu’s listening abilities, speaking abilities, or communication skills in the past 5 weeks?” At first, she said, she was not sure, but she answered,

> “*Her English was already quite good – intermediate – so I don’t know. Obviously, she has, somehow. I guess because she’s interacting more, not just us, we have quite a big family gathering, and she gets to talk to different people. People talk differently. She’s been exposed to different kinds of talk. I can see that the way she interacts with others – she’s getting more used to.*”

This quote was also evidence that Koharu was using English frequently at home. The support was not limited to the host family relationship. In one of the classes I observed, Koharu was the second person to turn in the writing assignment and the teacher seemed impressed with her writing, saying, “This is perfect English here”, “That’s a perfect sentence”, “It sounds like a native speaker”, and “Sounds very natural”.

However great the host experiences may have been, Koharu had some challenges related to social interactions. Here is an excerpt of our conversation to illustrate this.

Interview note: August 20, 2012. MB refers to the author.

MB: Do you talk more at home or at school?

Koharu: I think home. Because the surroundings – there are too many Japanese. It’s quite difficult to use English between friends.

MB: We talked a little bit when I came that you were trying to talk with some people in English. Maybe with Seiko, Tia, Sachi. Did you keep doing that? Or did it become difficult?

Koharu: Ah – it's difficult.

MB: Do you think it's peer pressure, or easier?

Koharu: Ah – because Sachi, I didn't meet. I don't meet her because different class, and Seiko and Tia, maybe it's easier.

MB: Maybe it's culture. Culture of friends?

Koharu: And to make sure that understanding is correct in the class. It's easy to use Japanese.

MB: To check that you are on the right track.

Koharu: Now I prefer to use Japanese (compared to the beginning of SA).

On my first visit, these students mentioned above told me that they were trying to use English among themselves. As shown above, I noticed the students talked to each other in Japanese, except when they addressed the talk to me. My interpretation is that they appreciated the presence of an able English speaker, or even better, native-English speaker, because then they do not need to conform to their L1-speaking community, and they can practice L2 more. Another example is from the second visit. Another student (S15) introduced me to another Japanese student from another university in Japan. She introduced me proudly, "This is our teacher. She's from Japan, but she speaks English very well." It was really nice of her to say so, and in English. As seen above, the Japanese students find it difficult to move out of the inner circle of friendship and continue using the target language abroad.

5.4.2. Case 2: Nana (S20) in Auckland, New Zealand

To draw on an exceptional case regarding gains, I discuss the case of Nana (S20). Prior to the study, she had only visited Korea for four days. She did not take speaking and writing tests, but did take the questionnaire, the interview, and the TOEFL ITP post-SA three times. She took part in the immersion program after her first semester at APU. Her TOEFL ITP score at university enrolment was very low, at 313. Right before the immersion program, her score was 400. Three months after SA, her score improved to 430 and one year after SA, the score was up to 483. This was the most significant improvement among around 600 first-year students in Academic Year 2012 – from 313 to 430, and she received a 100,000-yen scholarship from the university.

Even within a three-week program, Nana adapted to the host family norm in Auckland by learning to communicate straightforwardly and directly with her host brother. During her 3-week stay in Auckland, she initially experienced difficulty socializing with her handicapped host brother, but she changed her attitude toward him by being frank and direct with him, resulting in his changing attitude toward her. She and her host family became very close and kept in touch with each other after the SA. I do not have data on how she maintained her connectivity to the outer circle, how she continued studying after SA, maintaining her motivation to study for so long, but this is something a longitudinal study could investigate further.

I would like to draw on Nana's social circles, introduced in 5.3.2.4. She reported that nearly all of the students in her classes were Japanese, so the

environment was not so different from her home university. She had classes in the mornings, and she went out with a new, Chinese friend she met on-site in the afternoons, and she spoke English to her. However, thinking it was just a three-week sojourn, she stayed quiet in class and did not try to make good friends, which she regretted later. In Nana's case, even though her network remained small and tight, she formed friendships with a middle-circle friend from China, and a strong tie with her host family, with whom she had interaction opportunities in English, while she spoke Japanese with other Japanese students, and got in touch with her friends in Japan in Japanese every day. Clearly, students differentiate which languages to use based on the interlocutors, and going on an organized program like this has its disadvantages in terms of practice opportunities.

As for social interaction through virtual communities discussed in 5.3.2.5, first, the New Zealand group had a Facebook group page, in addition she and other female cohorts from APU formed a virtual social network using the smart phone application LINE, which helped them stay up-to-date on events and assignments. She reported that the Facebook group was useful. Anyone could post a question, and soon someone else would offer an answer or suggestion. The NZ-2 group was relatively large, but she agreed that having a virtual community helped them stay connected. The students were placed into different classes and did not meet each other all the time, so having a platform such as a Facebook or LINE group helped them when they had events or announcements. In Nana's case, the virtual social circle affected her inner circle only, but it also connected her friends at home, teacher and staff from home.

5.4.3 Case 3: Mia (S30) in Adelaide, Australia

Thirdly, I introduce Mia. Her case is somewhat similar to Koharu's, but her social networks were interesting and she also discussed her future plans inspired by the SA. Prior to the study, she had never been abroad, but her English was already at intermediate level. She took the pre-post-speaking and writing tests, the questionnaire, and the interview, but not the post-SA TOEFL ITP.

Looking at her speaking test results, her score improved by only two points. The amount she spoke pre-SA was second highest in the group. The amount she spoke post-SA decreased, but it was still the second highest in the group, so I do not think her speaking skill declined. In terms of speaking speed, she spoke at 67 words per minute pre-SA, while she spoke at 75 words per minute post-SA, therefore we can say that her fluency improved. As for her writing test results, her score remained 4 out of 5, while the writing fluency improved from 155 to 211 words, an increase of 36%. In terms of her own perception, she perceived that her listening and speaking skills improved greatly, because she paid attention to English speakers not only in classes but also at home, and she noticed she was able to say what she had to say more smoothly in the fifth week. As a result, her confidence was enhanced. She wrote, "Through life abroad, I became able to communicate with others more smoothly. Words came up in my head quickly, I understood better, and I became better at responding to and reacting with others."

For Mia, she and her host mother were the only interlocutors for each other at home. Mia and the host mother spent a lot of time together every day.

Baker-Smemoe et al. (2014, p. 481) report that “having deeper conversations with close friends is more important than the amount of time spent speaking the L2.” Therefore, it might be better to infer that she spent a good deal of quality time with her interlocutor, as well as the quantity. Every day, the host mother asked her, “What did you do in class today?” and on Saturday mornings they had the week’s reflection time together. This was not a requirement of a host family, and they did it voluntarily. Mia explained to me that it was because her host was a Christian. From the interview it was clear that the host mother was interested in Mia’s learning. Even though it appears Mia had plenty of interaction opportunities, she also said she was tired and sleepy the first five days. Therefore, she said she would maximize limited opportunities to a greater extent if she had another chance.

Mia had only one host, but they and another host family got together for socializing, such as for birthday parties, and Mia had a lot of opportunities to talk to students from different backgrounds, having been placed in an advanced level English class alone. When I visited one of her classes, there were three Japanese students including Mia, and there were students from Spain, India, Saudi Arabia, Ukraine, South Korea, and Libya (See Appendix 11). This enabled her to immerse herself in an English-speaking environment more than other students. She reported that she concentrated on improving her listening and speaking skills, and that she had plenty of opportunities to use English with her host and classmates.

Regarding virtual connectivity, she reported using SNS with English users every day, mainly to post photos and write about them on Facebook, and

to read her friends' posts. However, she used Japanese for the SNS interactions with Japanese speakers. Once she returned to Japan, she used SNS such as Facebook's photo album with her host mother to stay in touch. This is another example which shows that social media has a place in the students' life abroad, but it is not the central aspect of their daily life. Rather, it is used on-site to connect with people at home, and back home to remain in touch with people they met abroad.

Finally, with regards to the future prospects on continuous learning, as already mentioned in 5.3.2.6, Mia reported that her SA experience influenced how she studies English, as seen in the way she used an English-English dictionary after SA. In addition, she stated her wish to find a job that enables her to use the English skills she has acquired.

6. DISCUSSIONS and CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the results presented in Chapter 5 and to consider the implications of these in understanding the relationship between social interactions during SA and linguistic gains and perceptions in order to improve future English immersion programs. In this section, I re-examine and link the findings to existing literature, and shed light on what the findings reveal about. In Section 5.2, I found that many students improved their linguistic competency as measured in TOEFL, to a varying degree, and in Section 5.3, I found that students perceived that their aural/oral skills had improved, and when they felt they had interaction opportunities, they felt they fully benefited from the short-term SA. Each of these findings will be discussed below.

In terms of social outcomes, I found that students, who perceived the SA contributed to their skills and confidence enhancement, interacted with various people, including Japanese, in English, for example, by updating their friends on their study abroad activities via Skype chat. Based on this finding, it is possible to conclude that, when learners are 'involved' in meaningful context throughout the short-term study abroad, they also gain competence as well as perception toward their competence.

6.1 Summary of the Main Findings

This study's main research question was "**In what way can social experiences be associated with linguistic outcomes during short stays abroad?**" This question can be divided into two parts, as follows.

1. To what extent do short stays abroad affect English learners' linguistic outcomes? 2. What social experiences do English learners have during short stays abroad?

Rather than trying to establish a correlation between two different research questions, I interpret the relationships between linguistic and social gains by presenting several examples to increase understanding of these relationships. Starting with the traits of students whom I interviewed, I observed the following. First, they are used to an English-only environment at APU. Second, they are used to actively participating in class activities. Third, they expect other English learners to be as active. Fourth, they expect to make the best out of the study abroad experience. Therefore, depending on the English classes and homestay families they are placed into, their reactions to the short-stay abroad experience varied. Overall, the interaction in the target language happened most with the host family, followed by their English class teacher, non-Japanese classmates, and finally with their Japanese cohorts. In terms of the student-host relationship, the following can be said. Their host family is the main provider of language input as well as output and practice opportunities for students. Some students also interacted with other people, for example with friends and family of the host family. Before their sojourn, students filled in a host family application form, in which they stated whether they had allergies and other important notes, and also wrote about their interests. Whether students are matched with an ideal host or not is not the student's choice, though. Besides, that the students interact well with the host family does not necessarily mean the students penetrated the inner circle social networks, because the

relationship does not usually go beyond the host family. Getting through to a host family just about takes all their energy and time in three or five weeks.

If a student felt they had a good relationship with their host family and felt they benefited from their homestay experience, they often mentioned these characteristics as the most important. First, the family spends a lot of time with the student. Second, they are interested in the student's language improvement, and may offer help in learning new words, expressions, or they may ask about what the student did at school. Third, the host is often in contact with the student even after the program.

Looking back on the linguistic gains from short-stays abroad, Heubner (1995) and Yager (1998) saw that short-stays SA students improved L2 proficiency in 7-9 weeks. Evans and Fisher (2005) report that French learners exhibited gains in listening and writing within 2 weeks abroad. Likewise, Cubillos et al. (2008) say that Spanish learners gained listening abilities in 5 weeks. Another study by Llanes and Munoz (2009) with Catalan/Spanish learners of English showed considerable gains in speaking in 3 or 4 weeks.

In terms of the connections between gains and social experiences, Allen's (2010b) finding from American learners of French matches with the findings discussed in 5.3.2.6. Allen reports on L2 learning motivation and observes that participants who have linguistically oriented motives see study abroad to be an important step to achieving fluency. She argues that participants who were motivated to improve their linguistic skills, rather than those who had pragmatic reasons, developed more motivation to continue studying or using the language after a 6 week program. I did not ask the

participants at the post-SA interviews about this issue, but it would have been worthwhile to ask everyone if short study abroad motivated them to study for a longer period abroad. Some of them, for example, Koharu (S10), Nana (S20) and Molly (S33), had already intended to apply for an exchange program abroad and they took part in the immersion program as a way to improve their English efficiently. The finding on future prospects confirms the point illustrated by Coleman (1997, p. 5) who wrote, “one key element in motivation is success: well-motivated classroom learners perceive their progress, are encouraged by it, and this in turn motivates further effort and further success, in a virtuous circle.” I observed this attitude from several students who reported heightened motivation to study English further after the English immersion program.

The questionnaire results correlate with the findings from the pre-post-tests, showing a slight increase of their scores, although students may have underrated their improvement in contrast to the actual results. I saw in the students’ perceptions that receptive skills such as in reading and writing did not seem to improve. We could argue that the short study abroad periods are particularly suited to developing aural/oral communicative skills, thus social interaction would be of particular relevance, as this may provide opportunities for usage.

As part of my main research question, I wanted to know whether there was any connection between the use of SNS and learner experience. I learned that the participants made use of SNS and mobile devices, but that their main mode of communication was through direct interactions. They used Facebook most often for practical reasons, and for sharing their lived experiences.

Students who attributed their achievements to their social interactions had a lot of face-to-face interactions. SNS was a communication facilitator, but the participants did not consider it to be a tool for English improvement.

6.2 Contributions to the Knowledge of the Study

I would now like to consider what I could add to the existing knowledge on short-term study abroad research. Methodologically, this study was complicated and perhaps ambitious. Mixing quantitative data with qualitative data can illuminate phenomena in question, but it is a challenge to make sense of a range of datasets. However, I believe experimental test data alone cannot explain why one student improved their test scores in 5 weeks and another student could not. What happens on-site, especially outside instructional hours, remains largely unknown. Only by delving into one's experience, can we start to understand what actually takes place on-site.

It appears that even fairly short-term immersion programs of three weeks can facilitate improvement in linguistic skills, test scores, and heighten confidence in students. Therefore, there is no reason not to promote joining a language immersion program to our students. Besides, both the questionnaire comments and interview responses tell us that students have positive experiences and often gain confidence in their English use. There are gains outside what can be tested that students can bring home.

I would now like to refer to recent literature and consider some of the counterarguments. Kinginger (2016) summarizes recent studies from Japanese learners of English and states that Japanese learners in Anglophone settings struggle for access to an engagement in the target communities. The

investigation of Japanese learners in the present study supports this finding. However, there is a strong tendency among students to study in Anglophone, “inner circle” English speaking destinations. She suggests that it may not be necessary to send Japanese students to such destinations “if imagined international communities are available at school or in other settings (e.g. social networking)” (Kinginger, 2016, p. 63). APU is an international university with half of the students coming from ninety different countries and regions, however, students often fail to or struggle to engage in English-speaking communities, partly because international students are much more eager to learn and practice Japanese with them. As reasons against sending Japanese students to inner circle countries, Kinginger lists students’ shortcomings, for instance, students cannot understand local norms and academic practices, and they cannot access local social networks, preferring to keep company with co-nationals. All these conclusions are based on other studies of Japanese students, but this study does not support such conclusions.

Some students in this study adapted themselves to local academic practices by participating actively in class activities and by not confining themselves to interactions with co-nationals. According to my study, during her five weeks’ stay in Adelaide, Mia (S30) learned to collaborate with her classmates in pair activities, received advice from her highly motivated classmates, and recognized the importance of learning English, having classmates from Saudi Arabia, India, and others. Some of the students I interviewed, such as Koharu (S10) and Mia (S30) accessed local social networks, especially with their host family but also with their friends and

relatives. Most importantly, most of the immersion program participants sought opportunities to speak English. Now that these participants have a personal connection with people in English-speaking countries, and with the help of IT media and various technology people can stay connected virtually. As a consequence, they may maintain their motivation and find meaning in studying the language further as a communication tool.

6.3 Theoretical Perspectives: On Virtual Networks

One novel aspect of this study was to consider foreign language learners' community of learning encompassing physical and virtual social networks. At the physical level, through observations, via questionnaires and interviews, I saw mixed attitudes toward social grouping among Japanese university students. For instance, at the on-site observation in Perth, Australia on 12 September, 2012, I noted, "APU students seem to hang out among themselves a lot." During class time, I noted that some students always sit in the far back of the classroom with other Japanese speaking peers. They also talked in Japanese during break time and outside class. They tended to stick with the comfort of the inner group. Some students were trying to break out of their comfort zone, for instance, in the case of Sasuke (S11), he did not make any Japanese friends in Perth. In addition, on my first visit to Perth, Koharu (S10), Sachi (S12), and Seiko (S14) told me that they used English among themselves. This only exemplifies the inner circle group's relationship, which can also change over the course of the program. On my second visit to Perth, the above-mentioned students were not talking to each other in English anymore.

What I really wanted to see was whether and how the students harnessed the presence of advanced technology, social media and SNS. It was not evident in the AUS-1 group described above, which did not have a very good Wi-Fi access nor borrowed iPads. On the other hand, through observations and especially from interviews, I saw that the second cohorts, NZ-2 and AUS-2, did make use of a virtual network in several ways, on top of their physical, although invisible social networks. However, whether the use of virtual socializing tools enhanced the students' learning or not was not really identified in this study. Instead, it was possible to observe that digital tools do sometimes help in getting in touch, sharing information, and sustaining relationships, but real, face-to-face communication is much more important in learning, especially in forming relationships and in practicing the target language in situ.

6.4 Implications and Further Research

In the following sections, I list the implications of this study, including recommendations for students and for policy makers and organizers, as well as for further research.

6.4.1. The Implications for Students

Based on the findings, I am in a position to make various recommendations to future participants of language immersion programs. Firstly, it is important during a short-term SA to maximize opportunities to use the target language in every waking minute. This is a crucial factor especially for Japanese university students, because they generally do not need to use a foreign language at home, and it is difficult for them to find practice opportunities, even at an international university such as APU. If they are on a

homestay, they should spend as much time as possible with the family and talk to them. Interacting with the host family is the quickest way to join the outer circle community. If the host family is too busy or not interested in the students, they should at least have a discussion to express their needs. If students have access to student clubs, events or organizations at the host institution, they should join them, even if their length of stay is limited. If they have classmates from different countries, they should always talk to them in the target language, and they can form a middle circle together. If it happens that they are surrounded by students with the same native language, they do not need to avoid each other, but rather support each other, by using the target language together as much as possible. Of course, it is easier to use the native language, but being in the SA program is a good reason to use the target language.

Another of the recommendations for students is, if learners want to improve certain linguistic skills, they may need to go out of their way to seek opportunities, and not just rely on class time. For instance, short-term programs usually do not focus on improving one's reading skills, in which case, the student may need to use the library or self-access center's facilities to read graded readers or buy paperbacks on site to read for pleasure. Similarly, if students want to improve their writing skills, they may wish to keep a diary, write blogs, send messages to friends, or post entries on SNS in the target language.

Students nowadays are able to control their study environments fairly freely. Therefore, another recommendation is to use SNS efficiently to connect with people in the target community and to stay connected after SA. The kind of tools people use may differ from country to country, or maybe unavailable to

students when studying there. For example, some internet programs do not work in certain countries or are not used by many locals. The students need to be flexible and adaptable. In order to maximize the limited time during short-term SA, making sure you can get in touch with host family, classmates, or cohort instantly is beneficial. Even more valuable perhaps is to maintain the friendly relationship with them after SA, which sustains the motivation to continue studying. Besides, frequent contact can help the relationships last, so that it becomes part of their real life, and not just a sojourn.

6.4.2 Implications for SA Program Instructors and Coordinators

The findings of this study suggest at least four practical recommendations for short-term study abroad program administrators including teachers and coordinators in the future. There are several variables that can be controlled by the university, which may help future immersion program participants. First is the control of the language environment through the program structure. As observed through the on-site visit and reported by students, Japanese university students tend to talk to each other in Japanese even in English class. Activities just for Japanese SA students are not so meaningful to students in a study abroad context. Even if there is an instructor or organizer on site, the students' interactional opportunities with them is limited. Therefore, closed group classes should be avoided as much as possible. If we do organize special programs, we should minimize the preparation lessons and spend most of the time in the field, interacting with people at the SA site.

The second recommendation is creating target language use opportunities outside class time. Even when we provide homestays, some students have limited opportunity to use English. Organizing activities in collaboration with the local student group, such as the activities organized with the University of Auckland, are useful. It would be a good idea to plan a program with a university that has a Japanese language department or section, Japanese society, or Japanese clubs. Students should also be encouraged to join activities run by the host institution. In addition, if we are assigning a task such as a Japan Exposition, which was held in Adelaide, they should plan ahead and invite students and locals who are interested in Japan. However, as one interviewee pointed out, it can be difficult to do extra activities if classes are held later in the afternoon. Of course, the timetable can depend on each host institution's schedule and the students' levels, but it would be ideal to start a day with language classes, and end in the early afternoon to leave some time for extra-curricular activities, especially on a very short program. Another idea would be to make a requirement or at least a request to host families so that the family and students spend enough time together and interact with each other verbally. We could prepare a kind of check list with things to do with the students and provide it to the host family and ask them to complete it. In the past programs, students were assigned ethnographic tasks that necessitates interaction with the host family, such as introducing themselves, interviewing the host, cooking a meal together, watching a sports game together, and so on. It was effective to activate the students' learning, but it would be helpful if all the host families are cooperative and supportive of these tasks.

The third is facilitating virtual social connections on-site. People of all ages lately are well wired, at home or outdoors, and college students especially enjoy staying in touch with friends using online tools. Mei (S32) said at the interview it would have been helpful to know in advance about the mobile phone or Wi-Fi system at the SA site. Mei and Riki (S38) said they wanted to receive more information about a given task from the APU teacher. Mia (S30) said her friend did not know whether and when to make a complaint about her homestay because there was not much information sharing. Several students mentioned the usefulness of online tools such as Facebook, LINE, and Skype. Of course, students have access to the more traditional email system, and if they have a problem or question, they can do so. However, email is usually used on a one-to-one basis, while Facebook or LINE groups are easily used as a closed group, and people can check who has read a message or not. All these seem to indicate that the program administrators can harness these resources to create and facilitate discussions and more information sharing so that the university and the students can stay in touch somewhat loosely but still support the students when necessary.

Finally, but most practically and importantly, teachers devote their time and energy to prepare a program but have a hard time recruiting students. For the English language immersion programs, cost is always an issue for the students because travel costs are high, the cost of living is quite high in destination cities, partner universities require a minimum number of students, and when we send our students, schools are flooded with other Japanese university students. It is difficult to resolve all these issues, but the following

initiatives may be feasible. One is to allow students to arrange their own flight tickets, so they can purchase a discounted ticket. The students take responsibility for arriving at a designated site and on a certain date. Another is to extend the on-site program as long as possible, for instance to 6 or even 7 weeks, so that students have more time and opportunities to be immersed in the target culture, language and community. Japanese universities have almost 2 months' break each semester, so this should be possible. In addition, the Japanese university's teachers can lead part of the on-site activities or classes to save cost and to integrate learning at both sending and receiving English programs.

6.4.3 Recommendations for Further Research

There are four recommendations for further research. First, in the future, this study could be replicated with a control group that studies at home, and with a comparison group that study abroad on private programs, such as a student-run program in the Philippines. Usually between semesters, university students are not obliged to continue studying, which often results in the decline of English competency because students rarely use the foreign language at home. However, starting in the spring of 2018, the English section at APU started assigning vacation homework. As a fairly easily trackable assignment, we currently use an online extensive reading program called Xreading[7].

[7] Xreading is "an online, virtual library with hundreds of graded readers supported by an easy to use learner management system. The system has been developed to make graded readers more accessible for students and extensive reading programs easier for teachers to manage and assess." (https://xreading.com/pages/helpcenter)

Examining the usefulness and comparing such assignments with short-term SA programs would be worth considering. Besides, a large number of students, reportedly about sixty per break, study abroad for around 6 weeks in the Philippines. The unofficial program is managed by students who had participated in a private program, and they recruit new students, give guidance and preparatory assignments and lessons, and place students into difference schools and dormitories. This is thought to have been part of the reason why few students applied for APU's official English immersion programs in recent years. It would be valuable to collect data on those students who study abroad privately, and for the university to learn from such programs.

Secondly, only the short-term effects of study abroad were captured in this study. In the long run, it would benefit us to keep track of the participants and report on the long-term effects of short-term study abroad, including the semesters following SA and after graduation. As Nakayama et al. (2013) suggest, little post-SA follow-up is provided to students in general. An interesting avenue that is worth exploring in the future is looking at life after study abroad (Campbell, 2015). Few studies have investigated what happened to the target language speaking networks after stays abroad. It would be worthwhile to follow up on the short-term program participants and to further investigate what makes a difference in language learners' development, and how we can maximize the learning experiences of university-run programs. In support of this recommendation, consider the case of one participant, Ina (S2), who I met one and a half years after the 3-week immersion program in Auckland. She was studying in Sydney, Australia on a Working Holiday visa at

the time. Ina told me that she stayed in close contact with her short-term SA cohort, sent LINE messages and had frequent Skype chats with one of her friends even at that time. I also kept in touch with her, and it has been a pleasure observing how she has continued working hard and achieved the dream job that she had told me about – working as a cabin attendant abroad.

Thirdly, in connection with long-term study abroad, it is possible to conduct similar studies with mid-term length SA program participants and exchange program students. Since DeKeyser (1991) raised the issue, ways to connect study abroad programs with classroom interaction is still an under-researched area. Not as many students as the university would like currently participate in long-term programs, as was shown in the SGU task list (See Table 2.1). In order to increase the number of students who can participate, the immediate issue is the low English proficiency level of Japanese university students. As a means of developing more effective methods to prepare our students while they are studying at their home institution, it would be useful to conduct a needs analysis with the students who have experienced exchange programs abroad or those who are currently on-site, which can inform the current and future English curriculum at APU.

Fourthly, I note the methodological weakness in this study. In terms of the methods to measure the students' linguistic competency, I believe using the official TOEFL iBT or a combination of other highly regarded proficiency tests such as IELTS, rather than the TOEFL ITP currently in use, is more relevant and accurate to measure the students' proficiency. The difficulty is with the cost and the time it takes for students to take the tests. Therefore, the sample size in

the present study was limited, however, if we can find participants who are willing to take these tests, we could gain deeper insights from these learners.

6.5 Limitations

This study tried to investigate multiple objectives, which complicated the methodology. Naturally, this resulted in several shortcomings. First of all, the number of research participants was limited, and the quantitative data cannot be generalized. Secondly, I tried to see if short-term SA resulted in linguistic improvements for individuals, but not relative to others. The study lacks close examination using the control group. If I were to conduct a similar study in the future, I will make sure that I have a control group which stays home during the break time, who also take part in the pre and post-tests. Thirdly, the participants were selected or convenience from a pool of students who had self-selected to study abroad, therefore results need to be analyzed carefully and we should not generalize the findings to a larger student body.

Fourthly, reflecting on the findings from the pre and post-tests, in speaking, I found that participants increased the amount of output, the speaking speed, and improved their test scores. However, as mentioned above, it is not possible to conclude that the use of TOEFL iBT-style test is the most beneficial way for determining the result and effectiveness of study abroad, because the speaking section is a one-way communication. In other words, the assessment lacks authenticity. Students go abroad and learn to speak better by talking to people on site. Therefore, two-way communication styles such as face-to-face interviews, paired tasks or real-life tasks that would represent a situation abroad would be more appropriate. However, these were not possible under the scope

of the current study, for administrative and budgeting reasons. Taking an official IELTS or Cambridge speaking tests would increase costs, and it would require careful planning and implementation.

Fifth, the longitudinal effects of short-term study abroad need to be examined and verified. This is also expected by MEXT because of the funding the university receives. Do the participants retain, lose or improve the skills? Does the SA experience influence their course of further study or career design? Future steps in this process could include conducting a longitudinal ethnographic study with a small group of students over a few years, before, during and after the study abroad, both short-term and long-term.

The final limitation of the study lies in the fact that several years passed since the data were collected before the full analyses were made and the thesis was written up. During that time, the participants graduated and became mostly inaccessible for follow-up, and the situation at the university changed dramatically. Unfortunately, increasingly fewer students wanted to take part in the university-led English immersion programs, preferring to participate in longer programs organized by the university's academic office or in cheaper, student-organized programs such as in the Philippines. As a result, programs were regularly cancelled after the application period was closed and extended, and in 2017 and 2018, no English immersion programs were offered. Instead, the university is trying to devise different styles of study abroad options so that we can send more students abroad.

6.6 In Conclusion

There are many reasons why students study abroad, and why we want students to study abroad. It may be to enhance language competence, to learn about different cultures, to study subjects in a different country, to bring new perspectives and experiences back home, to enhance their career opportunities, or simply to have fun. The environment we live in is constantly changing, and the way we relate to friends and family is also shifting sometimes slowly but constantly. In order to understand contemporary students, we can hardly ignore digital technology especially as communication tools.

People talk about Industry 4.0 nowadays, the current state in which manufacturing is automated and data are exchanged. The students we teach in college now are called Generation Z, who have grown up with the Internet and are comfortable with high technology and using social media. Considering the background and current state, it would be no surprize to see studies on the benefits of virtual social networks to support language learners' social network development and linguistic gains. However, in my study, students were using various technologies to help maintain real social networks, and they were not dependent on virtual networks, which is actually reassuring because I believe we can learn best through direct interactions with people. Both the social experiences and linguistic development, which can lead to better outcomes, are very important in considering study abroad. The latter is especially emphasized in the case of Japanese universities. I confirmed through this study that representing short-stays abroad in terms of quantitative outcomes is very difficult. However, having a positive social experience can lead to sustained

motivation to study the language and possibly eventually lead to greater linguistic development to a greater degree. With that in mind, it is worthwhile to continue promoting short-stays abroad to our young generations.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Past APU Immersion Programs between 2007 and 2013

Time	Duration (Weeks)	Partner location	Number of students	Total number of students per year
2007 summer	4	Singapore	26	26
2008 summer	4	US	26	
2008 summer	4	UK	15	41
2008 summer	4	Canada	12	
2008 summer	6	New Zealand	14	28
2009 spring	6	US	15	
2009 spring	4	US	9	24
2009 summer	4	Singapore	19	
2009 summer	5	UK	11	30
2010 spring	6	US	11	
2010 spring	7	Australia	12	23
2010 summer	6	New Zealand	19	19
2011 spring	6	US	16	
2011 spring	5	Australia	10	26
2011 summer	4	Singapore	9	9
2012 spring	3	New Zealand	26	
2012 spring	5	Australia	17	43
2012 summer	**3**	**New Zealand**	**9**	
2012 summer	**5**	**Australia**	**11**	**20**
2013 spring	**3**	**New Zealand**	**16**	
2013 spring	**5**	**Australia**	**18**	**34**

Appendix 2: Sample Syllabus

2012 Winter English Immersion Program

University of Adelaide (Australia)

Course title: Intensive Language Learning Overseas **(Language Education) Syllabus**

Item	Details
1. Recommended qualifications/ knowledge	This course is open to Japanese based APS and APM students who are currently enrolled in or have completed and earned credits for Intermediate English (A/B) in 2011 curriculum or who are currently enrolled in or have completed and earned credits for Intermediate English (I/II) in 2006 curriculum. Alternatively, the applicant must have a TOEFL/ITP score of at least 450 at the time of application. Course title: Intensive Language Learning Overseas Grade: Pass (P) or Fail (F) Credits: 4 (Counted as grades for Fall 2012 semester.) Languages used for guidance: English Location: Adelaide, Australia Language of instruction: English
2. Course Objectives	This course aims to develop the communication, language and learning skills needed to operate on personal and social levels within an Australian academic context. In the General English Academic Program (GEAP) at the University of Adelaide, the students can enhance their general English skills in the appropriate classes, depending on the students' current English levels. Students will take all day study-tour programs each Friday. This program will focus on issues around environment, conservation and volunteering and will be in the form of discussions, seminars, workshops or guest speakers focusing on volunteer and conservation programs. These classes, seminars or workshops will be followed by volunteer and conservation activities.
3. Goal of this program	Students will live and study in Adelaide, Australia for 5 weeks. Students will learn about Australian culture and learn academic English. In classes, students will be asked to be proactive and express their ideas clearly. Students will also conduct qualitative research on various topics in the city of Adelaide, aspects of their homestay

	experience and facets of language. They will synthesize their research, and make presentations when they return.
4. Standards for Course Completion	Students will work to develop their English language and academic skills through the study of various topics in an English-only environment in Australia. Students must: ・Participate actively in class; ・Communicate verbally in English with the instructor and classmates; ・Communicate in English with culturally diverse groups inside and outside the classroom to increase their knowledge of global issues; ・Read and listen to short texts and answer questions about them; ・Speak on a topic and respond to questions; ・Improve their written fluency through regular journal entries; ・Work individually and with a group to give formal presentations.
5. Teaching Methods	1. There will be four pre-departure guidance lectures in preparation for the program. Students will gather information on the host location, prepare for home-stay, and create a scrapbook with self-introduction, materials and activities to support their study abroad experience. Please see point 6 below for the pre-departure class instruction schedule. 2. <u>In addition, students will complete the following tasks during their stay:</u> 2.1 Students will do qualitative research by conducting ten small communicative tasks involving an aspect of their stay and studies. This will be incorporated in their scrapbooks. 2.2 Students will work in groups of 4-5 to organize, plan and present a 'Japanese cultural exchange' or Expo event on the Adelaide campus during the 4th week of their stay. This will be recorded for presentation purposes upon their return and will form part of their assessed grade. 2.3 Students will submit a written report based on their independent research, and give an oral presentation after their return.
6. Overview of Each	*Guidance 1: 11/14 (Wed)* • Active learning program participant guidance

Class (Pre-departure)	• Immersion program guidance
	Class 1: 11/28 (Wed) 5th period • Self-introduction, ice-breaking activity • Discover Australia - Quiz • Start diary recordings • Introduction and overview to the syllabus • Introduce and divide into working groups for Japanese Expo at University of Adelaide • Goal setting – What to do before departure *Homework:* Scrapbooks, Fact finding mission: Australia and Adelaide, Preparation of ideas for Expo
	Class 2: 12/12 (Wed) 5th period • Feedback on Assignment 1 • Diaries: check progress • Discussion: how can we make best of study abroad experience? • Start information research on the country and university, e.g. currency, transportation, culture, language, religion, race, etc. • Groups report on their expo ideas and continue planning • Prepare mini-presentation of research as homework (in teams). • Introduce home-stay scrapbooks. Students think of items that would be appropriate contents for the scrapbook. *Homework 1*: Prepare mini-presentations of research *Homework 2*: Scrapbook preparation and organization
	Class 3: 12/19 (Wed) 5th period • Students deliver mini-presentation on the themes chosen. • Diaries: check progress • Aim to complete their ideas for the Japanese Expo • Discuss home-stay scrapbook contents Proposed content materials: *>Pictures that students can use to describe their lives in Japan (family, friends, pets, everyday life objects, etc.), Contact info in Japan* *>Ten tasks to fulfil during the five weeks of the homestay. All these include a conversational element and involve collecting material that*

	will: (a) ensure they engage with their environment, and (b) prepare them for required presentations on return to APU. • *Homework 1*: Compile materials for homestay scrapbook. • *Homework 2*: Students continue working in Blackboard discussions to create and complete their Expo ideas.
	Class 4: 1/16 (Wed) 5th period • Final presentation of Japanese Expo outline for each group. • Final scrapbook self-introductions • Finalization of their group and individual project presentation and reports upon return. • Students set goals on how to make the immersion program a success while they are in AUS.
	Guidance 2: 1/23 (Wed) 4th period • Risk Management Class
(Post-program)	*Class 5:(*Date and time to be advised) Post-program assessments • Post-program assessments • Final presentations and videos of Japanese Expo • Submissions of scrapbooks • Grade finalization
7. On-site classes in Australia	Monday, February 18 ~ Friday, March 23, 2013 Departure: Saturday, February 16, 2013 Returning to Fukuoka: Sunday, March 24, 2013 GEAP classes from Monday – Thursday (4 hours per day) and Friday program are designed around Volunteering and Conservation specifically designed for APU students (8 hours). These classes are aimed at: • Developing the understanding of the structure and function of the English language; • Developing their ability to use spoken English in order to meet their day-to-day needs in Australia; • Gain confidence in applying their knowledge and skills actively inside and outside of the classroom; • Present their ideas in written styles appropriate to their level; • Experience the benefits of working cooperatively with others; • Learn about aspects of Australian society and education; and

	• Appreciate the diversity of cultures in Australia and develop intercultural awareness.
8. Method of Grade Evaluation	Students are evaluated on the following criteria: 1. 60%→ Evaluation provided by the host program 2. 10%→ Participation at pre-departure lectures 3. 30%→ Evaluation based on post-program assignments (Scrapbook 10%, Written report: 10%), and presentation (10%)
9. Requirements for Students	<u>Participation:</u> Students are expected to participate actively in all class activities. <u>Attendance:</u> Students are expected to attend all classes. <u>Responsibility of absent students:</u> Students who are absent from class must contact the Faculty Advisor to find out about work done or assigned during their absence. <u>Plagiarism:</u> Students must not copy the work of others, in whole or in part, without use of academic citation. Instructors check student's work for plagiarism carefully, especially with reference to online sources. A student who plagiarizes will receive a mark of zero on the assignment and may possibly fail the course. <u>Classroom Policy:</u> The following are not permitted in the classrooms: • Food and drink; • Private Internet searching and email access; • Mobile Phones.
10. Textbook	To be provided by the university on-site
11. Faculty Advisor & Program Coordinator	Name e-mail:
12. Instructor	Name e-mail:
13. Course-related links	APU Blackboard The University of Adelaide http://www.adelaide.edu.au/ Facebook group: APU NZ-AUS Immersion Program 2013

Appendix 3: Detailed Description of the Research Participants

Participant codes	Gender	Faculty	Grade	Age	Level	Travel Year	Destination	Duration
1 A	F	APS	1	19	Pre-Intermediate	2012	Auckland, NZ	3 weeks
2 I	F	APS	1	18	Pre-Intermediate	2012	Auckland, NZ	3 weeks
3 U	M	APS	1	19	Pre-Intermediate	2012	Auckland, NZ	3 weeks
4 E	F	APS	1	18	Pre-Intermediate	2012	Auckland, NZ	3 weeks
5 O	F	APM	1	19	Pre-Intermediate	2012	Auckland, NZ	3 weeks
6 KA	M	APM	1	19	Pre-Intermediate	2012	Auckland, NZ	3 weeks
7 KI	F	APM	1	18	Pre-Intermediate	2012	Auckland, NZ	3 weeks
8 KU	M	APM	1	19	Pre-Intermediate	2012	Auckland, NZ	3 weeks
9 KE	M	APM	1	19	Pre-Intermediate	2012	Auckland, NZ	3 weeks
10 KO	F	APS	2	20	Upper-Intermediate	2012	Perth, AUS	5 weeks
11 SA	M	APS	2	21	Intermediate	2012	Perth, AUS	5 weeks
12 SI	F	APS	2	19	Intermediate	2012	Perth, AUS	5 weeks
13 SU	F	APM	3	20	Intermediate	2012	Perth, AUS	5 weeks
14 SE	F	APM	3	21	Intermediate	2012	Perth, AUS	5 weeks
15 SO	F	APM	2	20	Intermediate	2012	Perth, AUS	5 weeks
16 TA	F	APM	2	19	Intermediate	2012	Perth, AUS	5 weeks
17 TI	F	APM	1	18	Upper-Intermediate	2012	Perth, AUS	5 weeks
18 TU	F	APS	2	21	Pre-Intermediate	2013	Auckland, NZ	3 weeks
19 TE	F	APS	1	19	Pre-Intermediate	2013	Auckland, NZ	3 weeks
20 NA	F	APS	1	20	Pre-Intermediate	2013	Auckland, NZ	3 weeks
21 NI	F	APS	1	19	Pre-Intermediate	2013	Auckland, NZ	3 weeks
22 NU	F	APS	1	19	Pre-Intermediate	2013	Auckland, NZ	3 weeks
23 NE	F	APS	1	19	Pre-Intermediate	2013	Auckland, NZ	3 weeks
24 NO	F	APS	1	19	Pre-Intermediate	2013	Auckland, NZ	3 weeks
25 HA	F	APS	1	19	Pre-Intermediate	2013	Auckland, NZ	3 weeks
26 HI	F	APM	2	20	Pre-Intermediate	2013	Auckland, NZ	3 weeks
27 HU	M	APM	1	22	Pre-Intermediate	2013	Auckland, NZ	3 weeks
28 HE	M	APM	1	19	Pre-Intermediate	2013	Auckland, NZ	3 weeks
29 HO	M	APM	1	19	Pre-Intermediate	2013	Auckland, NZ	3 weeks
30 MA	M	APS	2	22	Intermediate	2013	Adelaide, AUS	5 weeks

31 MI	F	APS	2	19	Upper-Intermediate	2013	Adelaide, AUS	5 weeks
32 MU	F	APS	1	19	Intermediate	2013	Adelaide, AUS	5 weeks
33 ME	F	APS	1	18	Intermediate	2013	Adelaide, AUS	5 weeks
34 MO	F	APS	1	19	Intermediate	2013	Adelaide, AUS	5 weeks
35 YA	M	APS	1	18	Intermediate	2013	Adelaide, AUS	5 weeks
36 YU	M	APS	1	19	Intermediate	2013	Adelaide, AUS	5 weeks
37 YO	F	APS	1	19	Intermediate	2013	Adelaide, AUS	5 weeks
38 RA	F	APM	1	19	Intermediate	2013	Adelaide, AUS	5 weeks
39 RI	M	APM	1	19	Intermediate	2013	Adelaide, AUS	5 weeks

Appendix 4: Pilot Study Paired Interview Questions

Q1. What was good? What do you want to praise yourself on?　何がよかったですか。自分をほめてあげたいことはなんですか。

Q2. What was bad? Why was that?　悪いことはありましたか。それはどうしてでしょうか。

Q3. What would you do differently if you had another chance?　もしもう一度春休みがあったとしたら、どこを変えますか？

Q4. How can SRC or teachers support you? SRC として、あるいは教員からこんな支えがあったらよいというものはありますか。

Appendix 5: Consent Form Sample

Center for Language Education; Graduate School of Education

Brief description of this research project: 調査概要

In this study, the researchers (Maiko Berger & Paul Sevigny) wish to investigate whether there are observable effects from short-term Intensive Language Learning Overseas study, especially on language skills development, and if so, what the determining factors are to enhance their language skills, with attention to their environment and amount of time spent in the target language. We wish to conduct pre-and post-tests with Japanese learners of English as a foreign language to assess students' language gains. We also wish to conduct a questionnaire and group interviews to investigate what kind of environment may lead to the success of a student. We would like to collect the following information and data: Your TOEFL ITP scores from March, July and October (we will subsidize you for extra test you need to take); writing samples, speaking samples, questionnaire, and interviews. All the information gathered will be anonymous, and you can tell us not to use your data at any stage.

皆さんがイマージョンプログラム参加中にどのような英語学修、あるいは英語に触れる機会があるかと、実際の英語4技能の関わりを調べたいと思っています。この結果は、皆さん自身の参考になることはもちろんですが、長期休暇の過ごし方について学術的な示唆を得るために、以下の情報を提供していただきたいと考えています。2012年3月30日のTOEFL ITP、2012年7月時点でのTOEFL ITP、および2012年10月時点でのTOEFL ITP点数。（義務受験でない学内TOEFLを受験する場合は、受験費用を補助します。）TOEFL iBT形式の英作文及びスピーキング音声。夏休みの過ごし方についての質問表への回答。プログラム中およびプログラム終了後のインタビュー。これによって得られる情報は全て匿名とし、データを使用して欲しくない場合にはいつでも申し出ることができます。

英作文は、CAI教室で一斉に実施します。所要時間は30分程です。スピーキングテストでは、他の参加者に聞こえないように配慮し、各人にICレコーダに記録して行います。所要時間は20分程です。質問表は、各人の都合のいい時にオンライン上で回答していただきます。所要時間は15～20分程です。全てのテスト及び質問表に回答をいただいた方には図書カードを進呈します。テストは受けたいがデータを使って欲しくないという方がいましたら、この同意書に記入する必要はありません。

調査の結果を、英語教育関連学会や学術研究誌にて出版する可能性があります。その場合も個人の特定はできないように配慮します。また、出版の際には皆さんにもお伝えします。

CONSENT FORM 研究同意書

I have been fully informed about the aims and purposes of the project.
私はこの研究の目的について十分情報を得ており、以下のことを理解しています。
I understand that:

- There is no compulsion for me to participate in this research project and, if I do choose to participate, I may at any stage withdraw my participation
  私はこの研究プロジェクトに参加する義務はなく、参加することに決めても、いつどの段階でも参加を取りやめることができる。
- I have the right to refuse permission for the publication of any information about me
  私は自分に関するどのような情報も出版されることを拒否する権利がある。
- Any information which I give will be used solely for the purposes of this research project, which may include publications
  私が提供するどの情報も、出版を含んでこの研究プロジェクトのためだけに使われる。
- All information I give will be treated as confidential
  私が提供する全ての情報は秘匿される。

Center for Language Education; Graduate School of Education

The researcher(s) will make every effort to preserve my anonymity
研究者は私の匿名性を保護するあらゆる努力を行う。

....

(Signature of participant 参加者自筆) (Date 日付)

.....

(Printed name of participant 参加者名ブロック体)

One copy of this form will be kept by the participant; a second copy will be kept by the researcher(s)
この用紙の 1 部は参加者が、もう 1 部は研究者が保持する。

Contact phone number of researcher(s): +81 977 781312
研究者連絡先電話番号

If you have any concerns about the project that you would like to discuss, please contact:
この研究に関する心配事あるいは協議したいことがあれば、以下にご連絡ください。

maiko@apu.ac.jp
OR あるいは
BII 262, 1-1 Jumonjibaru, Beppu-shi, Oita-ken
Center for Language Education
Maiko Berger
大分県別府市十文字原 1 丁目 1 番言語教育センター BII 262　ベルガー　舞子

.....

Data Protection Act: The University of Exeter is a data collector and is registered with the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner as required to do under the Data Protection Act 1998. The information you provide will be used for research purposes and will be processed in accordance with the University's registration and current data protection legislation. Data will be confidential to the researcher(s) and will not be disclosed to any unauthorised third parties without further agreement by the participant. Reports based on the data will be in anonymised form.

Appendix 6: Certificate of Ethical Research Approval

STUDENT HIGHER-LEVEL RESEARCH

Graduate School of Education

Certificate of ethical research approval

STUDENT RESEARCH/FIELDWORK/CASEWORK AND DISSERTATION/THESIS
You will need to complete this certificate when you undertake a piece of higher-level research (e.g. Masters, PhD, EdD level).

To activate this certificate you need to first sign it yourself, and then have it signed by your supervisor and finally by the Chair of the School's Ethics Committee.

For further information on ethical educational research access the guidelines on the BERA web site: http://www.bera.ac.uk/blog/category/publications/guidelines/ and view the School's statement on the 'Student Documents' web site.

READ THIS FORM CAREFULLY AND THEN COMPLETE IT ON YOUR COMPUTER (the form will expand to contain the text you enter). **DO NOT COMPLETE BY HAND**

Your name: Maiko Berger

Your student no: 590030602

Return address for this certificate:
Maiko Berger
Center for Language Education
Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University
1-1 Jumonjibaru,
Beppu City
Oita Prefecture 874-8577
JAPAN

Chair of the School's Ethics Committee
last updated: August 2009

STUDENT HIGHER-LEVEL RESEARCH

Graduate School of Education

Certificate of ethical research approval

STUDENT RESEARCH/FIELDWORK/CASEWORK AND DISSERTATION/THESIS

You will need to complete this certificate when you undertake a piece of higher-level research (e.g. Masters, PhD, EdD level).

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READ THIS FORM CAREFULLY AND THEN COMPLETE IT ON YOUR COMPUTER (the form will expand to contain the text you enter)**. DO NOT COMPLETE BY HAND**

Your name: Maiko Berger

Your student no: 590030602

Return address for this certificate:

Maiko Berger

Center for Language Education

Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University

1-1 Jumonjibaru,、Beppu City

Oita Prefecture 874-8577

JAPAN

Degree/Programme of Study: EdD TESOL Dubai

Project Supervisor(s): Gabriela Meier

Your email address: mb389@exeter.ac.uk

Tel: 81-80 52060888

I hereby certify that I will abide by the details given overleaf and that I undertake in my dissertation to respect the dignity and privacy of those participating in this research.

I confirm that if my research should change radically, I will complete a further form.

Signed: *Maiko Berger* date: June 12. 2012

NB *For Masters dissertations, which are marked blind, this first page must* ***not be included*** *in your work. It can be kept for your records.*

Certificate of ethical research approval

Your student no: 590030602

Title of your project: Investigation into the Effectiveness of Short-Term Study Abroad

Brief description of your research project:

In this study, the candidate wishes to investigate whether there are observable effects of short-term study abroad program called Intensive Language Learning Overseas, especially on language skills development, and if so, what the determining factors are to enhance their language skills, with attention to their environment and amount of time spent in the target language. I wish to conduct pre-and post-tests with Japanese learners of English as a foreign language to assess their language gains. I also wish to conduct a questionnaire and group interviews to investigate what kind of environment may lead to the success of a student.

Give details of the participants in this research (giving ages of any children and/or young people involved):

The participants will be 4 groups of learners of English as a foreign language studying at Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University in Japan, aged between 18 and 24. Each group will contain between 9 and 20 participants. The group of students are pre-selected by the researcher, co-researchers and academic office personnel. The candidate supports this extra-curricular program as part of her directorial duty. The main goals of this program are:

V. To provide students with an opportunity to experience overseas study early in their university life;
VI. To act as a stepping stone toward participation in student exchange programs;
VII. To enable students to enjoy learning and using the target language;
VIII. To boost students' general English competencies and motivation for studying English.

The participants' native language is Japanese, Chinese or Korean, and they have had 1 to 6 semesters (3 years) university learning experiences. Their current English level is pre-intermediate to upper-intermediate. For the summer group, 11 of the participants will take part in the program in Perth, Australia for 5 weeks, and 9 participants will take part in the program in Auckland, New Zealand. Each student will stay with a host family throughout their stay. For the spring group, the number of the participants is not determined, since the recruitment will not be conducted until

October, 2012. One group will study in Adelaide, Australia for 5 weeks, and the other group will study in Auckland, New Zealand for 3 weeks.

Give details regarding the ethical issues of informed consent, anonymity and confidentiality (with special reference to any children or those with special needs) a blank consent form can be downloaded from the SELL student access on-line documents:

A consent form will be produced and explained to all participants in detail, in Japanese and English. I will emphasize that they do not have to sign the form, and that it in no way affects their academic pursuits. I will also explain that all results would be kept anonymous. After the explanation, all participants will sign the consent form. Furthermore, the participants' names will be kept out of the paper. There is no need to seek permissions to conduct research at the studied university, as long as the researcher pays attention to its *Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University Research Code of Ethics*, as well as *Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University Guideline of Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Human Subject*. (These documents are accessible below: http://www.apu.ac.jp/researchsupport/modules/research/index.php?content_id=19&lang=english) I have read and fully understood requirements and responsibilities as a researcher in the university. I will inform the Director of English Section and the Director of Center for Language Education, who support and advise on all my research activities.

Give details of the methods to be used for data collection and analysis and how you would ensure they do not cause any harm, detriment or unreasonable stress:

I will use the following methods to gather data:

1. Recruitment of participants – Students will be invited to participate in the study which includes pre and post-tests, an on-line questionnaire, and interviews. Because MB takes part in the initial selection process, she already knows all the potential research participants, and their email addresses are obtained from the Academic Office at the university.
2. Consent and data protection – The participants will be over 18 years of age, so no consent of parents or guardians is required. All potential participants will be informed about the nature and scope, as well as the voluntary nature of the study. MB will only survey participants who formally consented. Any

personal information about participants will be kept confidentially, and participants will be assured that this information is used solely for the purpose of this study, and they can refer to their own data to check their progress. They will also be informed that pseudonyms are used in order to grant anonymity to participants.

3. TOEFL ITP examination record – All of them will take a regular test before departure, which focuses on academic listening, grammar and reading skills. They will take another regular test soon after their return. With participants' consent, I can use this data to objectively compare their receptive knowledge before and after their study abroad.
4. To test productive skills, I will conduct additional TOEFL iBT style speaking and writing test before and after the two months' break. – All participants will take part in 2 kinds of English test that focuses on productive skills. Test questions are adapted from sample questions in a TOEFL preparation book, which were already tested in the pilot study. Writing section will be held at a computer lab at the university. Participants will spend 30 minutes to work on an independent writing task. Speaking section will be held in a small computer lab in small groups, so as not to be distracted by others but at the same time to secure a safe environment. Participants will spend about 20 minutes listening to instructions and recording their answers to each question on an IC recorder.
5. During their study abroad, I will conduct observation and interviews with 2 of the groups using the APU Academic Research Subsidy. For 2 groups studying in Australia for 5 weeks, my colleagues will visit the host university during the third week of the program. I will then visit them during the fourth or fifth week of the program. If not, I will reach the students via Skype interviews. For 2 groups studying in New Zealand for 3 weeks, my colleagues will visit the host university during the second week of the program. As the program length is short, I will reach the students via Skype interviews.
6. After their study abroad, questionnaire will be given in Japanese, followed by English translation. All the participants will spend up to 20 minutes answering questions on how they studied English, what kind of home stay environment they had, and with whom they interacted, in what languages. The questionnaire will be held using an online survey tool (i.e. Survey Monkey), and the participants can request to withdraw their responses at any time or ask to delete the data. I will ask the participants to provide their first name and e-mail address, so that I can contact them for clarification or for further questions. Their

names, if I need to refer to them in the thesis, in a presentation or publication, will be changed to pseudonyms. It is important that the participants are given the opportunity not to answer any of the questions if they so wish.

7. Several of the participants will then be asked to join a focus group interview as a follow-up to investigate the kind of social environment they were immersed in during the program, and how that influenced their language learning.

8. Feedback and compensation – Upon completing all the tasks, each participant will receive a small amount of book token as an honorarium. Unless any negative repercussions on individuals or groups could be expected, I will publish findings to inform the wider public. Participants will be given contact details, so they can obtain information about the study at any time, or withdraw consent at any time.

Give details of any other ethical issues which may arise from this project (e.g. secure storage of videos/recorded interviews/photos/completed questionnaires or special arrangements made for participants with special needs etc.):

The test record, as well as the questionnaire results, are digital but can also be printed out. The questionnaire results and test files will be downloaded to MB's PC for marking and analysis. They will be stored in a password-protected data folder or in a locked desk drawer in the locked office. The audio files will be stored on my desktop computer, which is password protected and no one else has access to it. The data will be deleted permanently 5 years after the completion of the study from all data carrying devices.

Give details of any exceptional factors, which may raise ethical issues (e.g. potential political or ideological conflicts which may pose danger or harm to participants):

I cannot envisage at the moment.

This form should now be printed out, signed by you on the first page and sent to your supervisor to sign. Your supervisor will forward this document to the School's **Research Support Office** for the Chair of the School's Ethics Committee to countersign. A unique approval reference will be added and this

certificate will be returned to you to be included at the back of your dissertation/thesis.

N.B. You should not start the fieldwork part of the project until you have the signature of your supervisor

---

This project has been approved for the period: **until:** 30.9.2015

By (above mentioned supervisor's signature): .....G. Meier.....**date:** 14.6.2012

N.B. **To Supervisor:** Please ensure that ethical issues are addressed annually in your report and if any changes in the research occurs a further form is completed.

SELL unique approval reference: D/11/12/56

Signed: Salah Troudi.....date: 14/6/2012

Chair of the School's Ethics Committee

This form is available from http://education.exeter.ac.uk/students/

Chair of the School's Ethics Committee
last updated: August 2009

Appendix 7: Speaking Test Instruction and Paired Conversation Test Rubric

Immersion Program Speaking Test Instructions

(Student-Student Conversation)

Pair Conversation

Students will attend a pair conversation test. The details and procedures for the interview test are as follows:

Objectives: Assess students' speaking skills. (Carrying out a conversation)

Length: 3-5 minutes per pair

Place: Classroom

Procedures:

1. Provide students with the preparation handout.
2. On the test day, call the first pair to the test location; tell the next pair to standby.
3. Greet the students.
4. A student draws the conversation topic from a box.
5. Students hold a casual conversation related to the chosen topic for 3-5 minutes.
6. The teacher evaluates the student on the points outlined in the grading form.
7. When students are finished asking their questions and the conversation has died out, or if the assigned time is over, thank the students, and call the next pair to come in. Tell the students to call the following pair to stand by.

Evaluation:

Teachers should evaluate the students using the individual interview evaluation form. When grading, avoid using numbers that are not labeled as much as possible.

Immersion Program Speaking Test - Pair Conversation Evaluation Form

Name : _____ Program: _____ Topic#: _____

1. Initiating and Maintaining Conversation (15%)				
Asking Q1	**0**	**2**	**3**	**5**
•Student asks a question with accurate grammar (Questions such as, "How about you~?" "And you?" are not counted as questions)	Does not ask the question	Often has some mistakes	Mistakes a little	Has no mistake
	0			**3**
•Student follows up on partner's response on giving a comment or asking additional questions)	No			Yes
Asking Q2	**0**	**2**	**3**	**5**
•Student asks another question with accurate grammar (Questions such as, "How about you~?" "And you?" are not counted as questions)	Does not ask the question	Has some mistakes	Mistakes a little	Has no mistake
	0			**2**
• Student follows up on partner's response on Q2 (giving a comment or asking additional questions)	No			Yes
			Subtotal	/15

2. Quality of Interaction (15%)				
	0	**3**	**4**	**5**
•Student provides a relevant answer to questions	No	Sometimes	Most of the time	All the time
	0	**3**	**4**	**5**
• Student answers in more than 2 sentences (Sentences starting with conjunctions are considered as a sentence.)	0 sentences	Mostly 1 sentence	Sometimes more than 2	2 or more sentences
	0	**1**	**3**	**5**
•Student uses reasonably accurate grammar when answering questions	All sentences have mistakes	Often has mistakes	Mistakes a little	Has no mistake
			Subtotal	/15

3. Attitude (15%)				
	0	**1**	**2**	**3**
•Eye contact	None	Seldom	Sometimes	Almost always
	0	**1**	**2**	**3**
•Voice volume	Difficult to hear	Difficult to hear most of the time	Difficult to hear sometimes	Clear and loud at all times
	0	**1**	**2**	**3**
•Student does not speak in 'choppy' sentences (No long gaps between words/sentences or repeating a word many times)	All sentences are choppy	Most sentences are choppy	Some sentences are choppy	Speech is smooth
	1		**2**	**3**
•Student exhibits confidence in speaking in English	Does not appear confident, seems nervous		Somewhat confident	Appears confident
	0	**1**	**2**	**3**
•Student does not use any language other than English …3 points (Go down one scale per non-Eng use. Maximum deduction is 3 points.)	Uses other language 3 times or more	Uses other language twice	Uses other language once	Only English
			Subtotal	/15

4. Teamwork (5%)				
	0	**1**		**2**
•Students continue conversation for 3 minutes (excluding long gaps) 5 minutes for groups of 3	1-2 minutes	2-3 minutes		3 min or more
	0	**1**	**2**	**3**
•Students discuss the given topic.	Do not talk about the topic	Talk about the topic a little	Talk about the topic at least half of the time	Talk about the topic the whole time
			Subtotal	/5

Comments:

Total /50

Percentage %

Appendix 8: TOEFL Independent Writing Rubrics

Score	Task Description
5	An essay at this level largely accomplishes all of the following: ▪ Effectively addresses the topic and task ▪ Is well organized and well developed, using clearly appropriate explanations, exemplifications, and/or details ▪ Displays unity, progression, and coherence ▪ Displays consistent facility in the use of language, demonstrate syntactic variety, appropriate word choice, and idiomaticity, though it may have minor lexical or grammatical errors
4	An essay at this level largely accomplishes all of the following: ▪ Addresses the topic and task well, though some points may not be fully elaborated ▪ Is generally well organized and well developed, using appropriate and sufficient explanations, exemplifications and/or details ▪ Displays unity, progression and coherence, though it may contain occasional redundancy, digression, or unclear connections ▪ Displays facility in the use of language, demonstrating syntactic variety and range of vocabulary, though it will probably have occasional noticeable minor errors in structure, word form or use of idiomatic language that do not interfere with meaning
3	An essay at this level is marked by one or more of the following: ▪ Addresses the topic and task using somewhat developed explanations, exemplifications and/or details ▪ Displays unity, progression and coherence, though connection of ideas may be occasionally obscured ▪ May demonstrate inconsistent facility in sentence formation and word choice that may result in lack of clarity and occasionally obscure meaning ▪ May display accurate but limited range of syntactic structures and vocabulary
2	An essay at this level may reveal one or more of the following weaknesses: ▪ Limited development in response to the topic and task ▪ Inadequate organization or connection of ideas ▪ Inappropriate or insufficient exemplifications, explanations or details to support or illustrate generalizations in response to the task ▪ A noticeably inappropriate choice of words or word forms

	▪ An accumulation of errors in sentence structure and/or usage
1	An essay at this level is seriously flawed by one or more of the following weaknesses: ▪ Serious disorganization or underdevelopment ▪ Little or no detail, or irrelevant specifics, or questionable responsiveness to the task ▪ Serious and frequent errors in sentence structure or usage
0	An essay at this level merely copies words from the topic, rejects the topic, or is otherwise not connected to the topic, is written in a foreign language, consists of keystroke character, or is blank.

Appendix 9: Speaking Tasks Used

Note: The directions were given using a PowerPoint slide. Materials were sourced from Vittorio (2011).

Pre-Spring Break Speaking Task: directions

In this section of the test, you will have the opportunity to demonstrate your ability to speak clearly and coherently on a variety of subjects. There are **six** tasks in this section with special directions for each task. You should answer each question as thoroughly as possible.

Tasks 1 and 2 are independent speaking tasks. After you hear and read each question you will have **15 seconds** to prepare your response and **45 seconds** to speak and record your response.

Tasks 3 and 4 are integrated speaking tasks. For these two tasks, you will read a short text and then hear part of a discussion or short lecture that is connected to the text. You will have **45 seconds** to read the text. After you listen, you will see a question about what you have just read and heard. You will have **30 seconds** to plan a response and **60 seconds** in which to answer the question.

Tasks 5 and 6 are integrated speaking tasks. For these tasks, you will hear a short conversation or lecture. Then you will read a question related to what you have just heard. You will have **20 seconds** to plan your response and **60 seconds** in which to answer the questions.

You will hear a tone on the CD indicating when your preparation time is up and you should begin your response. You may begin speaking when you hear the tone.

You should record all your responses on the IC recorder. You can pause the recording after each task. When you are finished, you may upload and copy your file onto your data device. Do not delete the files from the IC recorder.

Speaking Task 1

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? *Experience in life is just as important as knowledge from books.* Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

Preparation time: 15 seconds Response time: 45 seconds

Speaking Task 2

Which do you prefer? Would you rather communicate with your friends on the phone, via e-mail, or face-to-face every day? Give reasons and examples to support your choice.

Preparation time: 15 seconds Response time: 45 seconds

Speaking Task 3

Reading time: You have 45 seconds to read the passage. You may take notes.
Read the following notice from a university institute regarding their summer internships.

The Office of Academic and Research Programs of the World Cultural Institute in pleased to announce the Summer Internship Program. Through the program, students will be able to apply for full-time summer internships within one of the many divisions of the World Cultural Institute. Internships are available for both undergraduate and graduate students and all positions are paid. Please note that only current students of All-State University are eligible. Students graduating in May are not eligible. Applicants must be in good academic standing and should submit a résumé that details their relevant work and educational experiences, along with a cover letter stating their interests, qualifications, and the internship they are applying for. If responding by e-mail, all applicants must state the name of the internship in the subject line of the e-mail.

Now listen to two students discussing this notice. You may take notes as you listen.
<Photo>
Read and listen to the question. When you hear the tone, begin recording your answer.

The woman expresses an opinion about possibly applying for the summer internship program. State her opinion and her reasons for being concerned about applying.

Preparation time: 30 seconds Response time: 60 seconds

Speaking Task 4

Reading time: You have 45 seconds to read the passage. You may take notes.
Read the following passage on ozone depletion.

According to the U.S. government's Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the main substances that destroy the ozone are chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) and hydro-chlorofluorocarbons, (HCFCs), which are chemicals found in products like fire extinguishers and pesticides. These ozone-depleting substances are released into the upper ozone layer and destroy it very slowly over time. The EPA has prohibited nonessential use of all products containing CFCs and HCFCs. In order to prevent further depletion of the ozone, the EPA and other agencies around the world have taken precautions. With wider restrictions on products that contain ozone-depleting chemicals, the governments believe that the ozone layer should return to a more normal state by 2050.

Listen to part of a lecture in a geological sciences class. The professor is discussing ways to repair the ozone layer. You may take notes as you listen.

<Photo>

Read and listen to the question. When you hear the tone, begin recording your answer.

The professor's lecture is about beliefs about the ozone layer. Using information from the passage and the lecture, discuss what the professor says about the ozone layer and why it is a controversial subject.

Preparation time: 30 seconds Response time: 60 seconds

Speaking Task 5

Listen to a conversation between a student and a librarian. You may take notes as you listen.

<Photo>

The student and the librarian discuss two possible solutions to the student's problem. Describe his problem and explain which on the two solutions you prefer, and why.

Preparation time: 20 seconds Response time: 60 seconds

Speaking Task 6

Listen to a professor in an anatomy and physiology class. You may take notes as you listen.

<photo>

Using points and examples from the talk, explain the two types of muscles presented by the professor.

Preparation time: 20 seconds Response time: 60 seconds

Post-Spring Break Speaking Task: directions

In this section of the test, you will have the opportunity to demonstrate your ability to speak clearly and coherently on a variety of subjects. There are **six** tasks in this section with special directions for each task. You should answer each question as thoroughly as possible.

Tasks 1 and 2 are independent speaking tasks. After you hear and read each question you will have **15 seconds** to prepare your response and **45 seconds** to speak and record your response.

Tasks 3 and 4 are integrated speaking tasks. For these two tasks, you will read a short text and then hear part of a discussion or short lecture that is connected to the text. You will have **45 seconds** to read the text. After you listen, you will see a question about

what you have just read and heard. You will have **30 seconds** to plan a response and **60 seconds** in which to answer the question.

Tasks 5 and 6 are integrated speaking tasks. For these tasks, you will hear a short conversation or lecture. Then you will read a question related to what you have just heard. You will have **20 seconds** to plan your response and **60 seconds** in which to answer the questions.

You will hear a tone on the CD indicating when your preparation time is up and you should begin your response. You may begin speaking when you hear the tone.

You should record all your responses on the IC recorder. You can pause the recording after each task. When you are finished, you may upload and copy your file onto your data device. Do not delete the files from the IC recorder.

Speaking Task 1

What are the qualities of a good teacher? Use specific reasons and examples to support your response.

Preparation time: 15 seconds Response time: 45 seconds

Speaking Task 2

Would you rather see a new movie or go to a sporting event? Use details and examples to explain your choice.

Preparation time: 15 seconds Response time: 45 seconds

Speaking Task 3

Reading time: You have 45 seconds to read the passage. You may take notes.

All-State University Campus Bookstore Tired of paying a lot of money for your textbooks and not getting much back when you try to sell your used book? All-State University bookstore is now offering students a solution! Textbook rental! BOOKS-2-RENT is a new system set up by the university to help you save money. Students can save almost half price off every book rental! It's easy. With BOOKS-2-RENT you have the option of ordering your books online and having those heavy tomes shipped to your home, or, just bring your receipt and pick up your textbooks at the bookstore! Save even more with no shipping charges!

Now listen to the conversation between the two students. You may take notes as you listen.

<Photo>

Read the question. When you hear the tone, begin recording your answer.

The woman expresses an opinion about the new rental system at the bookstore. State her opinion and explain the reasons that she gives to support it.

Preparation time: 30 seconds Response time: 60 seconds

Speaking Task 4

Reading time: You have 45 seconds to read the passage. You may take notes.

Hybrids were the focus of study by biologists such as Charles Darwin and Alfred Wallace. The hybrid, which is a cross between two subspecies of animals, is found to differ greatly from both of its parents in aspects of its *phenotype* – that is, what the animal looks like. The mule is one example. Its mother is a horse and its father is a donkey. The mule is more like the donkey with its ears, its coloring and its temperament. On the other hand, if a female donkey breeds with a male horse, the result is a hinny – which is not as large as the mule.

Listen to a professor giving a lecture in a zoology class. You may take notes as you listen.

<Photo>

Read the question. When you hear the tone, begin recording your answer.

In the lecture, the professor describes the various hybrids that differ from those in the reading passage. Describe these animals and explain how they are examples of animal diversity.

Preparation time: 30 seconds Response time: 60 seconds

Speaking Task 5

Listen to a conversation between two students. You may take notes as you listen.

<Photo>

The students discuss two possible solutions to the woman's problem. Describe her problem and explain which of the two solutions you prefer, and why.

Preparation time: 20 seconds Response time: 60 seconds

Speaking Task 6

Listen to a professor in a history class giving a lecture about the Erie Canal. You may take notes as you listen.

<Photo>

Using points and examples from the talk, explain the benefits of Governor Clinton's idea for the Erie Canal.

Preparation time: 20 seconds Response time: 60 seconds

Appendix 10: Speaking Task Rubrics

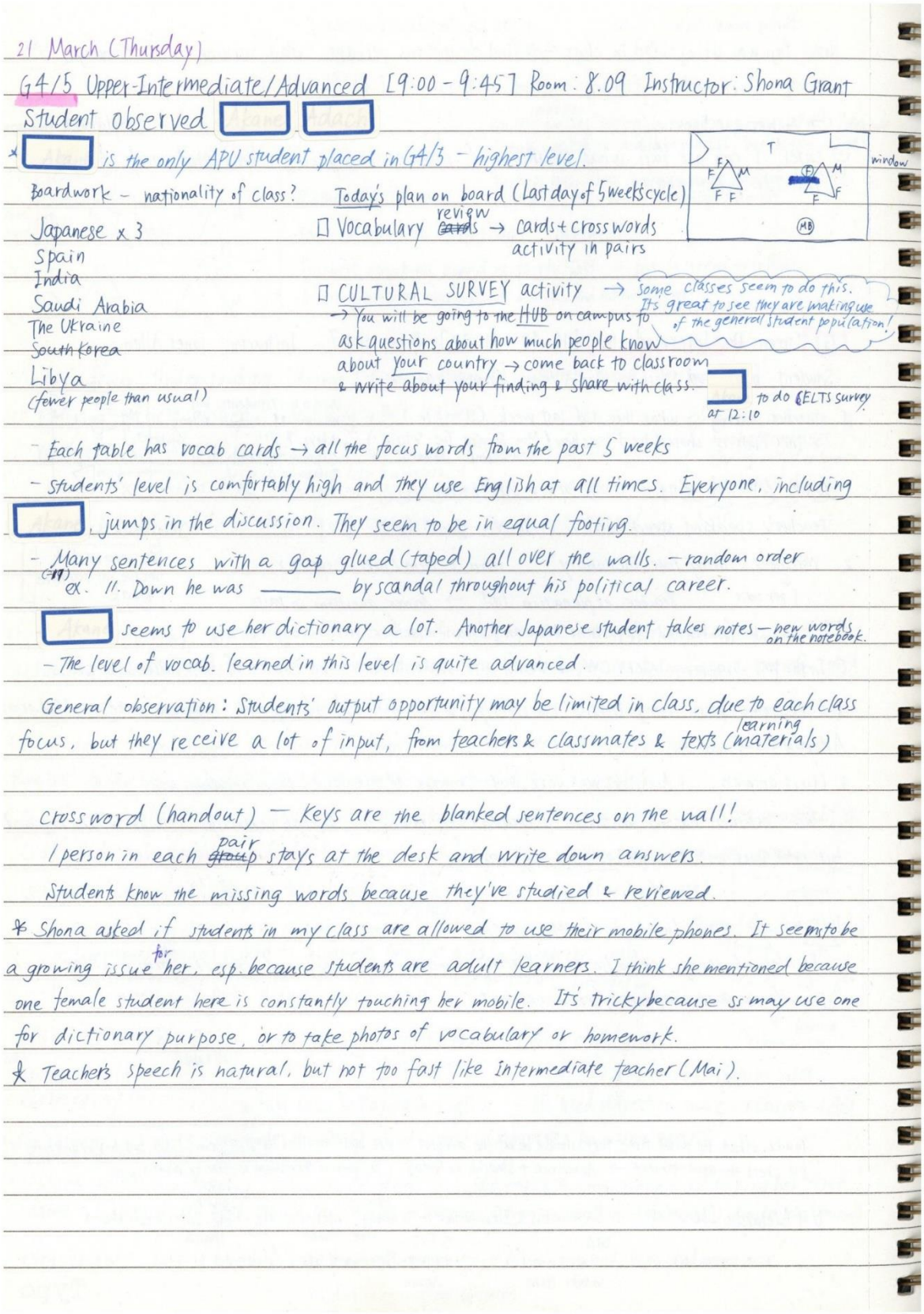
Independent Speaking Rubrics (Questions 1 and 2)

Score	General description	Delivery	Language use	Topic development
4	The response fulfils the demands of the task, with at most minor lapses in completeness. It is highly intelligible and exhibits sustained, coherent discourse. A response at this level is characterized by all of the following:	Generally well-paced flow (fluid expression). Speech is clear. It may include minor lapses, or minor difficulties with pronunciation or intonation patterns, which do not affect intelligibility.	The response demonstrates effective use of grammar and vocabulary. It exhibits a fairly high degree of automaticity with good control of basic and complex structures (as appropriate), some minor (or systemic) errors are noticeable but do not obscure meaning.	Response is sustained and sufficient to the task. It is generally well developed and coherent; relationships between ideas are clear (or clear progression of ideas).
3	The response addresses the task appropriately but may fall short of being fully developed. It is generally intelligible and coherent, with some fluidity of expression, though it exhibits some noticeable lapses in the expression of ideas. A response at this level is characterized by at least two of the following:	Speech is generally clear, with some fluidity of expression, though minor difficulties with pronunciation, intonation, or pacing are noticeable and may require listener effort at times (though overall intelligibility is not significantly affected).	The response demonstrates fairly automatic and effective use of grammar and vocabulary, and fairly coherent expression of relevant ideas. Responses may exhibit some imprecise or inaccurate use of vocabulary or grammatical structures or be somewhat limited in the range of structures used. This may affect overall fluency, but it does not seriously interfere with the communication of the message.	Response if mostly coherent and sustained and conveys relevant ideas/information. Overall development is somewhat limited, usually lacks elaboration or specificity. Relationships between ideas may at times not be immediately clear.
2	The response addresses the task, but development of the topic is limited. It contains intelligible speech, although problems with delivery and/or overall coherence occur; meaning may be obscured in places. A response at this level is characterized by at least two of the following:	Speech is basically intelligible, though listener effort is needed because of unclear articulation, awkward intonation, or choppy rhythm/pace; meaning may be obscured in places.	The response demonstrates limited range and control of grammar and vocabulary. These limitations often prevent full expression of ideas. For the most part, only basic sentence structures are used successfully and spoken with fluidity. Structures and vocabulary may express mainly simple (short) and/or general prepositions, with simple or unclear connections made among them (serial listing, conjunction, juxtaposition).	The response is connected to the task, though the number of ideas presented or the development of ideas is limited. Mostly basic ideas are expressed with limited elaboration (details and support). At times relevant substance may be vaguely expressed or repetitious. Connections of ideas may be unclear.
1	The response is very limited in content and/or coherence or is only minimally connected to the task, or speech is largely unintelligible. A response at this level is characterized by at least two of the following:	Consistent pronunciation, stress and intonation difficulties cause considerable listener effort; delivery is choppy, fragmented, or telegraphic; frequent pauses and hesitations.	Range and control of grammar and vocabulary severely limit or prevent expression of ideas and connections among ideas. Some low-level responses may rely heavily on practiced or formulaic expressions.	Limited relevant content is expressed. The response generally lacks substance beyond expression of very basic ideas. Speaker may be unable to sustain speech to complete the task and may rely heavily on repetition of the prompt.
0	Speaker makes no attempt to respond OR response is unrelated to the topic.			

Integrated Speaking Rubrics (Questions 3, 4, 5, and 6)

Score	General description	Delivery	Language use	Topic development
4	The response fulfils the demands of the task, with at most minor lapses in completeness. It is highly intelligible and exhibits sustained, coherent discourse. A response at this level is characterized by all of the following:	Speech is generally clear, fluid, and sustained. It may include minor lapses or minor difficulties with pronunciation or intonation. Pace may vary at times as speaker attempts to recall information. Overall intelligibility remains high.	The response demonstrates good control of basic and complex grammatical structures that allow for coherent, efficient (automatic) expression of relevant ideas. Contains generally effective word choice. Though some minor (or systematic) errors or imprecise use may be noticeable, they do not require listener effort (or obscure meaning).	The response presents a clear progression of ideas and conveys the relevant information required by the task. It includes appropriate detail, though it may have minor errors or minor omissions.
3	The response addresses the task appropriately but may fall short of being fully developed. It is generally intelligible and coherent, with some fluidity of expression, though it exhibits some noticeable lapses in the expression of ideas. A response at this level is characterized by at least two of the following:	Speech is generally clear, with some fluidity of expression, but it exhibits minor difficulties with pronunciation, intonation, or pacing and may require some listener effort at times. Overall intelligibility remains good, however.	The response demonstrates fairly automatic and effective use of grammar and vocabulary, and fairly coherent expression of relevant ideas. Responses may exhibit some imprecise or inaccurate use of vocabulary or grammatical structures or be somewhat limited in the range of structures used. Such limitations do not seriously interfere with the communication of the message.	The response is sustained and conveys relevant information required by the task. However, it exhibits some incompleteness, inaccuracy, lack of specificity with respect to content, or choppiness in the progression of ideas.
2	The response is connected to the task, though it may be missing some relevant information or contain inaccuracies. It contains some intelligible speech, but at times problems with intelligibility and/or overall coherence may obscure meaning. A response at this level is characterized by at least two of the following:	Speech is clear at times, though it exhibits problems with pronunciation, intonation, or pacing and so may require significant listener effort. Speech may not be sustained at a consistent level throughout. Problems with intelligibility may obscure meaning in places (but not throughout).	The response is limited in the range and control of vocabulary and grammar demonstrated (some complex structures may be used, but typically contain errors), This results in limited or vague expression of relevant ideas and imprecise or inaccurate connections. Automaticity of expression may only be evident at the phrasal level.	The response conveys some relevant information but is clearly incomplete or inaccurate. It is incomplete if it omits key ideas, makes vague reference to key ideas, or demonstrates misunderstanding of key ideas from the stimulus. Typically, ideas expressed may not be well connected or cohesive so that familiarity with the stimulus is necessary to follow what is being discussed.
1	The response is very limited in content or coherence or is only minimally connected to the task. Speech may be largely unintelligible. A response at this level is characterized by at least two of the following:	Consistent pronunciation and intonation problems cause considerable listener effort and frequently obscure meaning. Delivery is choppy, fragmented, or telegraphic. Speech contains frequent pauses and hesitations.	Range and control of grammar and vocabulary severely limit (or prevent) expression of ideas and connections among ideas. Some very low-level responses may rely on isolated words or short utterances to communicate ideas.	The response fails to provide much relevant content. Ideas that are expressed are often inaccurate, limited to vague utterances, or repetitions (including repetition of prompt).
0	Speaker makes no attempt to respond OR response is unrelated to the topic.			

Appendix 11: Field Observation Notes Example



21 March (Thursday)

G4/5 Upper-Intermediate/Advanced [9:00 - 9:45] Room: 8.09 Instructor: Shona Grant

Student observed [redacted] [redacted]

* [redacted] is the only APU student placed in G4/5 - highest level.

Boardwork - nationality of class?

Japanese x 3
Spain
India
Saudi Arabia
The Ukraine
~~South Korea~~
Libya
(fewer people than usual)

Today's plan on board (Last day of 5 weeks cycle)

☐ Vocabulary ~~cards~~ review → cards + crosswords activity in pairs

☐ CULTURAL SURVEY activity → You will be going to the HUB on campus to ask questions about how much people know about your country → come back to classroom & ~~write about your finding & share with class.~~ [redacted] to do IELTS survey at 12:10

Some classes seem to do this. It's great to see they are making use of the general student population!

- Each table has vocab cards → all the focus words from the past 5 weeks
- Students' level is comfortably high and they use English at all times. Everyone, including [redacted], jumps in the discussion. They seem to be in equal footing.
- Many sentences with a gap glued (taped) all over the walls. - random order (??)
  ex. 11. Down he was _____ by scandal throughout his political career.

[redacted] seems to use her dictionary a lot. Another Japanese student takes notes - new words on the notebook.

- The level of vocab. learned in this level is quite advanced.

General observation: Students' output opportunity may be limited in class, due to each class focus, but they receive a lot of input, from teachers & classmates & texts (learning materials)

crossword (handout) - Keys are the blanked sentences on the wall!
1 person in each ~~group~~ pair stays at the desk and write down answers.
Students know the missing words because they've studied & reviewed.

* Shona asked if students in my class are allowed to use their mobile phones. It seems to be a growing issue for her, esp. because students are adult learners. I think she mentioned because one female student here is constantly touching her mobile. It's tricky because ss may use one for dictionary purpose, or to take photos of vocabulary or homework.

& Teacher's speech is natural, but not too fast like Intermediate teacher (Mai).

Appendix 12: Questionnaire Form Sample

Note: The forms were sent in e-mail, and participants could directly type in their responses.

Post-Immersion Survey イマージョン事後アンケート(Auckland Feb-Mar 2013)

Hello everyone,

Welcome back to Japan!

I would appreciate if you could answer these questions by the end of March. If you have trouble writing the answer, will you let me know? Thank you very much in advance!

Thank you very much for taking the survey. This questionnaire is different from the APU survey. Results are used only for the research, and it will not influence your grades in any way. All information will be kept anonymous and used only for the research purpose.

イマージョンプログラム（オークランド）参加者の皆さん

オークランド滞在は、いかがでしたか。事後アンケート調査への参加協力をいただき、ありがとうございます。3月末迄に回答いただけると助かります。もし回答時に技術的問題があればご連絡ください。このアンケートは、アカデミックオフィスから依頼のあるサーベイとは異なります。皆さんから得られた情報は研究目的のみに用い、また、成績等にも一切関係ありません。ここで得られる情報は全て匿名で扱い、研究目的にのみ利用されます。

Maiko Berger

Center for Language Education

Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University

Question 1 (History) *

Did you spend any time abroad before participating in immersion program?イマージョン参加以前に、日本国外で過ごしたことがありましたか。

- ○ Yes はい
- ○ No いいえ

Question 1 (Which country)

If you answered "Yes", please state which countries or regions you visited and how long you were there.「はい」と答えた方は国・地域と滞在期間を教えてください。

Question 1 (Language)

Did you use English there? そこで英語を使うことはありましたか?

Question 2 (English use) *

While you participated in the immersion program, when did you use English?イマージョン参加中、いつ英語を使いましたか。You can tick as many as you like. 複数回答可

- ○ During my classes 授業中
- ○ At home 家庭で
- ○ In town (shopping, traveling etc.) 街での買い物や移動で
- ○ During my free time with other APU students 他のAPU学生と過ごした時
- ○ During my free time with other non-APU students APU以外の学生と過ごした時
- ○ Other:

Question 3 (In Auckland) *

While in Auckland, who did you interact with frequently during the program? (Including face-to-face, telephone, or online communication)プログラム中、どのような人たちと頻繁に連絡を取り合いましたか。（対面、電話、メール、オンライン含む）You can tick as many as you like. 複数回答可

- ○ Homestay family ステイ先の家族
- ○ Teachers and staff in ELA オークランド大学の教職員
- ○ APU friends in Auckland オークランドに来ていたAPUの友人
- ○ Classmates and other friends in Auckland 滞在先で知り合ったクラスメートや友人
- ○ People in town オークランドの街で会った人々
- ○ APU staff and teachers APUの教職員
- ○ Other:

Question 4 (In Auckland, frequency) *

How often did you have chances to talk with these people?
以下の人たちとどのくらい話す機会がありましたか。

	Everyday 毎日、もしくはほぼ毎日	About 3 times a week 週3日程度	Once a week 週1回程度	Once a month 月1回程度	I didn't talk with them.全く話さなかった
Native English speakers 英語を第1言語とする人	○	○	○	○	○

Non-Native English speakers but not Japanese 英語が母語ではない日本人以外の人					
Japanese who speak English with you 日本人（会話は主に英語）					
Japanese who speak Japanese with you 日本人（会話は主に日本語）					

Question 5 (Outside country) *

While in Auckland, how often did you have chances to interact with these people? (Including telephone, e-mail or online communication)

オークランド滞在中、以下の人たちとどのくらい連絡をとりましたか。（電話、メール、オンライン含む）

	Everyday 毎日、もしくはほぼ毎日	About 3 times a week 週3回程度	Once a week 週1回程度	Once a month 月1回程度	I didn't contact them.全く連絡しなかった
Family members back home 自国の家族					
APU friends who are not in Auckland オークランドに滞在していないAPUの友人					
APU teacher or staff APUの教職員					
Other friends at home その他の友人					

Question 6 (SNS) *

How often did you use Social Networking Sites, such as facebook, mixi and twitter?

どのくらい頻繁にフェイスブックやミクシイといったソーシャル・ネットワーキングサイト(SNS)を利用しましたか。

	Everyday 毎日	About 3 times a week 週3回程度	Once a week 週1回程度	Once a month 月1回程度	I didn't use them.全く利用せず
With native English speakers 英語を第1言語とする人と	○	○	○	○	○
With non-Native English speakers but not Japanese 英語が母語ではない日本人以外の人と	○	○	○	○	○
With Japanese in English 日本人と英語で	○	○	○	○	○
With Japanese in Japanese 日本人と日本語で	○	○	○	○	○

Question 6 (Language)

If you answered yes to above questions, which languages do you use?

上記で「はい」と答えた人は、何語でそのようなサイトを利用していますか?You can tick as many as you like. 複数回答可

- ☐ English
- ☐ Japanese
- ☐ Korean
- ☐ Chinese
- ☐ Other: ____

Question 6 (Reason for Usage)

If you answered yes, why did you use SNS during immersion program?

「はい」と答えた人は、イマージョン中どのような目的でSNSを利用しましたか?

____

Question 7 (Overall Improvement) *

Do you think your English has improved in 3 weeks? 3週間で英語の力が伸びたと思いますか?

	1	2	3	4	
Yes, very much 伸びたと思う	○	○	○	○	No, not at all 伸びていないと思う

Question 7 (How)

In what way did your English improve? どんな点で伸びたと思いますか。

Question 7 (Reason) *

Why do you think so? それには何が影響したと思いますか。

Question 8 (Writing) *

I feel my writing skills improved over 3 weeks. ライティング力が伸びたと感じる。

	1	2	3	4	
Very much	○	○	○	○	Not at all

Question 8 (Reason)

Why do you think so? それはどうしてだと思いますか?

Question 9 (Speaking) *

I feel my speaking skills improved over 3 weeks. スピーキング力が伸びたと感じる。

	1	2	3	4	
Very much	○	○	○	○	Not at all

Question 9 (Reason)

Why do you think so? それはどうしてだと思いますか?

Question 10 (Listening) *

I feel my listening skills improved over 3 weeks. リスニング力が伸びたと感じる。

	1	2	3	4	
Very much	○	○	○	○	Not at all

Question 10 (Reason)

Why do you think so? それはどうしてだと思いますか?

Question 11 (Reading) *

I feel my reading skills improved over 3 weeks. リーディング力が伸びたと感じる。

	1	2	3	4	
Very much	○	○	○	○	Not at all

Question 11 (Reason)

Why do you think so? それはどうしてだと思いますか?

Question 12 (Confidence) *

I gained confidence in my English competencies because of immersion program.
イマージョンへの参加によって英語力に自信がついたと感じる。

	1	2	3	4	
Very much	○	○	○	○	Not at all

Question 12 (Reason) *

Why do you think so? それはなぜだと思いますか。

Question 13 (Date of Birth) *

Please tell me your date of birth. 生年月日を教えてください。Example:1990-12-31

Question 14 (Gender) *

Please tell me your gender. 性別を教えてください。

- ○ Male 男性
- ○ Female 女性
- ○ I do not want to answer

Question 15 (Follow-up) *

I would like to talk to a few students to find out more about your experiences in New Zealand. The interview will be held at a time and place convenient for you in April or May and take approximately 30 minutes. May I interview you for further details?
ニュージーランドでの体験について、数人の学生にインタビューをしたいと考えています。所要時間は30分程度で、4~5月中で皆さんの都合のよい日に行われます。もう少し詳しい内容をインタビューしてもよいですか?

- ○ OK. はい
- ○ No, thanks. いいえ

Appendix 13: Consent Form for Research Assistants

Center for Language Education, Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University;
Graduate School of Education, University of Exeter
Brief description of this research project: 調査概要

In this study, the researcher (Maiko Berger, MEd TESOL; EdD TESOL candidate) is investigating whether there are observable effects from short-term Intensive Language Learning Overseas study, especially on language skills development, and if so, what the determining factors may be to enhance their language skills, with attention to their environment and quality of time spent in the target language. In addition, the researcher is studying how the learners interact with the target language community, their learning community, and their home community while abroad. In order to gain in-depth understanding of learners, I wish to record students' speaking samples before and after short-term abroad, and have the research assistants transcribe the audio files. All the information gathered will be anonymous.

当該研究において、研究者（ベルガー舞子―教育学修士・教育学博士候補）はイマージョンプログラム参加を通して英語4技能の変化が見られるか、そしてその要因は何かを調査しています。その焦点として、学修環境、住環境およびその他の英語に触れる機会がどの程度あるかと、実際の英語4技能の関わりを調べています。また、学習者が留学中に学習言語の土地で、学習者間で、そして母国とどのような関わり合いを持って過ごすかについても研究しています。参加学生の短期留学前と後のスピーキング
音声を録音することになっており、研究補助者にその書き起こしを依頼しています。調査によって得られた情報は全て匿名で保存されなくてはなりません。

Consent Form for Research Assistant 研究補助者同意書

As part of the role as a research assistant, I will make every effort to preserve the participants' anonymity, and will not share any personal information about the participants to outside parties.
研究補助者の義務として、研究参加者の匿名性を保護する努力を行い、この研究によって得られた個人情報を一切他言しないことを誓います。

.....
.....
(Signature of research assistant 研究補助者自筆) (Date 日付)

……
(Printed name of research assistant 研究補助者名ブロック体)

One copy of this form will be kept by the research assistant; a second copy will be kept by the researcher(s)
この用紙の1部は研究補助者が、もう1部は研究者が保持する。
Contact phone number of researcher(s): +81 977 781312
研究者連絡先電話番号
If you have any concerns about the project that you would like to discuss, please contact:
この研究に関する心配事あるいは協議したいことがあれば、以下にご連絡ください。
maiko@apu.ac.jp
ORあるいは
BII 262, 1-1 Jumonjibaru, Beppu-shi, Oita-ken
Center for Language Education
Maiko Berger
大分県別府市十文字原1丁目1番言語教育センターBII 262　ベルガー　舞子

Appendix 14: Post-Immersion Program Interview Questions

The following questions were asked to all the interviewees as guiding questions for the semi-structured interview post-program.

Q1. What was good? What do you want to praise yourself on? 何がよかったですか。自分をほめてあげたいことはなんですか。

Q2. What was bad? Why was that? 悪いことはありましたか。それはどうしてでしょうか。

Q3. What would you do differently if you had another chance? もし同じようなプログラムにまた参加するとしたら、どこを変えたいですか?

Q4. How can the university or English teachers support you more in improving your English? あなたの英語力を向上させるために、大学や英語教員からどのようなサポートがあったらよいと思いますか。

Appendix 15: Interview Transcript Sample

What was good?

一生懸命ホストファミリーとコミュニケーションをとったことです。英語をたくさんしゃべりました。[That I communicated a lot with my host family. I spoke a lot of English.]

What was bad?

夜ホストファミリーの家に帰って、英語の勉強をあんまりしませんでした。[When I came home in the evening, I didn't study English much.]

What would you do differently if you had another chance?

ホストファミリーの構成と態度を変えて欲しいです。授業を午前中にして欲しいです。[I want to have the host family selection and their attitude changed. I want the classes to be held in the mornings.]

How can the university or English teachers support you more in improving your English?

ニュージーランドでなれないことやホストファミリーの問題を聞いてくれたり、解決してくれたりしました。[The university staff and my teacher listened to my story about difficult life in New Zealand, and about my problems with the host family, and solved them.]

Appendix 16: Summary of the collected data

Date	Data name	Data form	What I have
2012/07	Group 1 Pre-test material: speaking	MP3, Word	13 transcriptions
2012/07	Group 1 Pre-test material: writing	Word	16 writing samples
2012/10	Group 1 Post-test material: speaking	MP3	14 transcriptions
2012/10	Group 1 Post-test material: writing	Word	16 writing samples
2012/08	Field notes on site (Perth)	Word, notes	
2012/08	Interview on site (Perth)	Notes	1 host family visit & interview
2012/09	Post questionnaire	Google drive	UWA: 8 responses, Auckland: 7 responses
2012/10	TOEFL scores	paper copy	pre-data for all, 4 score data for post program
2013/01	Group 2 Pre-test material: speaking	MP3	8 speaking samples & transcriptions
2013/01	Group 2 Pre-test material: writing	Word	6 writing samples
2013/04	Group 2 Post-test material: speaking	MP3, Word	10 speaking samples w/o transcription
2013/04	Group 2 Post-test material: writing	Word	11 writing samples (6 matching)
3/4/2013	Post questionnaire	Google drive	Adelaide: 8 responses, Auckland: 11 responses
2013/05	Interview data	MP3, Word, notes	6 interviews (Japanese)
5/7/2013	TOEFL scores	paper copy	pre-data for all, 7 score data for post program
2013/03	Field notes on site (Adelaide)	Word, notes	

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