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研究課題名(和文) The impact of study abroad programs on international communicative competence

研究課題名(英文) The impact of study abroad programs on international communicative competence

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研究成果の概要(和文)：本研究の目的は、異なる期間、海外で過ごした二つのグループの日本人英語学習者(1ヶ月のグループが79名、1年のグループが70名)を対象に、非言語の変数において異文化体験が与えた影響を検証することであった。留学前と留学後のデータを両グループから回収し分析した。その結果、両グループともL2スピーキングに対する自信が向上し、義務L2自己が弱まった一方で理想L2自己が強化した。これらの改善点については、長期滞在したグループのほうにより顕著に見られるものであった。さらに、1年間滞在したグループのほうが、自民族中心主義的な考えを強め、短期滞在した学生はこの点では弱まる傾向を示した。

研究成果の学術的意義や社会的意義

The results of this study demonstrates the benefits in non-linguistic terms of study abroad both for short-term and long-term programs and shows that L2 learners benefit most through social interaction in the L2, gaining greater confidence in speaking the language and a stronger sense of L2 self.

研究成果の概要(英文)：The purpose of this study was to examine how two groups of Japanese learners of English going abroad for different lengths of time (one month ($n = 79$) and one year ($n = 70$) respectively) were affected by their international experience across a range of non-linguistic variables. Pre- and post-SA survey data were collected from both groups, and results from data analysis indicate that both groups achieved significant benefits in increased L2 speaking confidence and a strengthening of sense of an Ideal L2 self, while also undergoing a weakening of Ought-to L2 self. However, these improvements were often more pronounced in the long-term group. Moreover, those in the one-year program demonstrated an increase in ethnocentrism whereas the short-term SA participants experienced a decline in this measure.

研究分野：英語教育

キーワード：study abroad ICC possible L2 selves L2 confidence

1. 研究開始当初の背景

During the past several decades, as language-learning study abroad (SA) programs have increased researchers have examined various linguistic benefits brought about by studying in a second language (L2) environment. However, few would argue that the sole purpose of SA is to improve language skills. Contact with native speakers of the target culture and/or learners from other cultures is an inevitable outcome of study abroad, and that brings the potential to improve one's *intercultural competence*. This is a widely used term with nonetheless broad and complex interpretations and implications, frequently comprising such variables as knowledge of and respect for other cultures and possession of effective intercultural communication strategies.

Measuring intercultural competence, however, can present challenges due to its complexity and multivariate nature. It arguably makes sense to consider intercultural competence in terms that are somewhat narrower, more clearly defined, and practical for evaluating the effects of study abroad. In our study, we have therefore used the related concept of *intercultural communication theory*, who defined intercultural communication as comprising discrete underlying variables. One of these, *ethnocentricity*, can in a sense be considered an inverse or contrary variable to intercultural competence since those with an ethnocentric view tend to see the world through the lens of their own culture. A second component of the intercultural communication model—*intergroup approach-avoid tendency*—is less well researched than ethnocentrism and indicates a person's willingness to interact with people from other cultures. In terms of SA, one would assume that most participants would move toward the "approach" end of the approach-avoid continuum, but research results remain inconclusive.

In addition to intercultural variables, SA learners' L2 confidence is considered, particularly how it differs over varying lengths of stay. This broad concept is generally operationalized by two discrete variables. The first, *L2 speaking anxiety*, has long been regarded as an impediment to intercultural communication. For instance, learners in Japan may be particularly susceptible to L2 speaking anxiety due to a culturally-based fear of mistakes and loss of face but participating in even relatively short stints abroad can help alleviate this anxiety to some degree. Less is also known about the degree to which length of stay contributes to this effect because most research, especially with Japanese learners, has not focused on long-term SA participants. The inverse of a language learner's L2 anxiety is a perception of their own *L2 self-competence*. The perceived self-competence variable describes the feeling that one is capable of L2 communication. If SA experiences result in decreased L2 anxiety, the same experiences should also result in increased L2 self-competence.

Finally, given the hope that SA enhances one's opportunities to "grow" as a person, we utilized the the L2 Motivational Self System which comprises three components: the *ideal L2 self*, or the learner's vision of him- or herself as a person who is a fluent L2 user; the *ought-to L2 self*, or the learner's vision of the self who must use the L2 because of

obligations or to avoid failure; and *L2 experience*, which is the L2 learning that occurs within the immediate learning environment and influences learning behaviors. Possible L2 selves may contribute to learner L2 identity construction are thus salient to uncovering how L2 learners perceive themselves in relation to SA experiences (Lamb, 2009).

Short-term programs are increasingly popular options for learners, and on a practical level this makes sense as short-term SA allows students to engage in the experience of a foreign sojourn without the commitments of an extended length of stay, which can impact considerations such as planned graduation from university and job hunting. But a short SA experience would naturally seem to limit intercultural interaction and linguistic gains, while longer-term stays of up to a year may logically have more benefits, including creation of stronger social networks and exposure to institutional study programs taught in the L2. Assertions as to the benefits of long-term over short-term are not universal, and most of the studies comparing long- and short-term SA outcomes focused on a single factor, such as linguistic progress or changes in intercultural stances rather than a combination of variables as the current study has done.

2 . 研究の目的

As stated above, most research into SA length of stay has resulted in claims of significant differences between those who stay for longer or shorter terms in the target culture, but there are gaps and limitations in the literature. Many, if not most, prominent studies of SA have been conducted with American students as participants, visiting countries for non-English language study. Fewer studies have included the opposite—English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners visiting nations where English is the primary language, despite a recent pronounced increase in learners from Japan, for instance, choosing to study abroad (JAOS, 2017). Of existing research into the effects of SA on Japanese learners, results have indicated the potential for SA to change learner beliefs for the better but with some limitations. Given the potential influence of varying SA lengths on the variables described above, our research goal was to examine the following: (1) To what degree do long-term and short-term SA affect intercultural communication (as defined by intergroup approach-avoid tendencies and ethnocentricity)? (2) To what degree do long-term and short-term SA improve L2 speaking confidence (as defined by speaking anxiety and perceived self-competence)? (3) To what degree do long-term and short-term SA change perceptions of the L2 self (as defined by ideal and ought-to L2 selves)?

3 . 研究の方法

This study comprised two stages of data collection over a span of three years. The first stage consisted of quantitative data obtained from Likert-scale questionnaires given both before and after SA. The second stage consisted of interviews with individual students following their return from SA. The study participants were 149 university students from three private universities in Japan, all of whom studied abroad during their first

or second year at university. Of the 149 participants, 70 were members of one university's Global Communications department and joined long-term ESL programs at 14 universities located in the five English-speaking nations for between 10 and 12 months. The remaining 79 participants engaged in short-term ESL SA, which took place at two universities in the USA, and studied in a variety of majors, including Law, Economics, Engineering, and English Literature at two separate universities.

Both pre- and post-SA surveys included items targeting the six non-linguistic variables described above, with pairs of variables representing a broader non-linguistic factor. Each variable was represented on the survey by five items, and response categories ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree) on the Likert scale. Survey data was collected during study abroad preparatory classes several weeks before the participants' departure and once again several days to weeks after their return. The data to a mixed (within-between) ANOVA for each of the six variables using *SA length* as the between-groups independent variable and *time* as the within-groups independent variable. This was followed by *t*-test analysis in order to search for significant in-group differences pre- to post-SA. For the participants in the long-term group, we also measured for post-SA differences based on the country they studied in (Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the UK, and the USA) by conducting a one-way ANOVA analysis of post-SA survey variables.

Following preliminary survey data analysis, semi-structured interviews were conducted with select volunteer students upon their return from SA programs in order to gain a deeper perspective of the changes brought about by their SA experiences. Unfortunately, qualitative interviews were limited to 11 students (9 female; 2 male undergraduates) in long-term programs as no short-term SA students volunteered to be interviewed. Nevertheless, their narrative accounts of their sojourns add depth and texture to the quantitative results. A list of interview questions was drawn up based on the factors identified by the quantitative data, crafted to elicit details of the lived experience of the participants in relation to those factors. Not all questions were necessarily posed. Interviewees were encouraged to focus on the experiences they found to be most meaningful; interviewers had the discretion to elicit further responses on issues that seemed most relevant for individual interviewees. Interviews typically lasted between 30 and 45 minutes and were recorded and later transcribed for further investigation using thematic analysis.

4 . 研究成果

Overall, study results demonstrated several non-linguistic consequences that the SA experience can have for language learners, with length of time abroad having a varying degree of impact on sojourners. Improved L2 speaking confidence was the clearest and strongest benefit, likely enhanced by the fact that they were coming from the EFL environment of Japan where opportunities to use the L2 tend to be quite limited outside of the English classroom. Both groups experienced strong decreases in speaking anxiety

and outsize improvement in speaking self-competence, which argues for encouraging SA of any length of time for EFL learners. Nonetheless, the long-term learners underwent more dramatic changes in these L2 confidence variables.

Intergroup approach-avoid tendencies also improved more for those in the group who stayed longer. There was an increase in ethnocentricity among long-term SA learners, however, which seems contradictory given their increase in L2 confidence and ideal L2 self. This may be partially explained by studies of Japanese returnee (*kikoku-shijo*) students, i.e., Japanese students who spend two or three years (or more) overseas outside the Japanese educational system who are frequently regarded as becoming "non-Japanese" upon their return. Long-term SA learners in the present study may have felt uncomfortable at the idea of identifying themselves too closely with the L2. This finding supports results from a narrative study of long-term SA Japanese students in the UK, who felt that interacting too much with British friends would result in fellow Japanese SA students shunning them. Rather than experience an increase sense of an "L2 self" or of being a "world citizen," the Japanese students commented that they felt more comfortable speaking with strangers, which was something they had rarely done in Japan prior to study abroad. The results of the present study suggest that the current model of possible L2 selves may not be precise enough to measure changes in self-identity for Japanese students.

The key finding of the qualitative portion of the study, reinforced by data from the quantitative portion of the study, is that the majority of long-term study abroad students experienced a point of inflection demarking two key phases of their sojourns abroad, which occurred approximately three months into the study abroad experience and were highly situated, comprising myriad factors unique to each learner. In many cases the period before the inflection point was marked by uncertainty, lack of confidence, anxiety, loneliness, homesickness, and in some cases profound for making the decision to study abroad. The inflection point was triggered not only by the learner's growing comfort in their new overseas L2 environment, but by interaction with key individuals of the socio-academic communities in which the learner participated during the SA period.

The nature of these social relationships was diverse and complex. However, the key relationships examined here shared several features. They often arose neither from formal academic settings nor as a means of accomplishing specific academic tasks. They tended to be serendipitous, the confluence of factors no one could have predicted. Finally, these key relationships functioned to fill the socio-academic gaps in the learner's knowledge of the L2 as well as the L2 culture, making academic success and social satisfaction far more likely. The period after the inflection point was marked by improved affect, confidence, satisfaction, academic achievement, and willingness to communicate in the L2 with both other members of the L2 culture as well as other L2 learners also engaging in SA. These findings may be used to help prepare learners before their sojourns begin for the social conditions that may in part determine the success of their academic endeavors during overseas study in a new L2 social context.

5. 主な発表論文等

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〔図書〕 計0件

〔産業財産権〕

〔その他〕

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6. 研究組織

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