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STUDY ABROAD: RETHINKING OUR WHYS AND HOWS

The theme of the 17th annual conference of the Central Association of Teachers of Japanese was “Study Abroad: Rethinking Our Whys and Hows.” In the two-day conference, held April 15-16, 2005, at The Ohio State University, we had eleven excellent presentations, including three keynote addresses, which provided the basis for much stimulating discussion. We are pleased to present to the ATJ membership three articles based on the keynote speakers’ original presentations.

Professor Dan P. Dewey’s article, “Maximizing Learning During Study Abroad: Some Research-Based Programmatic Suggestions,” provides an insightful set of suggestions for preparing our students for study abroad. While acknowledging the difficulty of interpreting the various research findings on the one hand, and the large variation among individual students and study abroad programs on the other, Dewey offers practical thoughts on the many aspects of study abroad. These include its timing in relation to the proficiency level, benefits of pre-departure orientation, in-country factors that may influence the quality of the experiences, such as participation in a well-defined social domain, attention, and reflection. He further reflects on post-return issues, ranging from transfer of credit and skill assessment to continuing study.

In her article, “A Year Abroad in Japan: Participants’ Perspectives,” Professor Noriko Iwasaki offers an insider’s view of study abroad experiences, focusing on students’ views on their uses of social registers. Employing both standardized proficiency testing and personal interviews, she examines language gains of individual students that may be neglected in larger-scale statistical studies. Through interviews two years after students’ return from a year abroad in Japan, Iwasaki’s study also offers important insights into long-term impacts of study abroad.

Professor Stephen P. Nussbaum offers fresh viewpoints in “Facilitated Learning on Study Abroad: an Approach.” He is a cultural anthropologist with extensive experience in administering study abroad programs both from the U.S. and within a Japanese institutional setting. Viewing study abroad as both setting and process in socially engaged learning, he argues that educators have several crucial tasks to accomplish: shaping learning environments, providing learners with tools and insights suited to in-situ learning, and developing critical thinking and a sympathetic understanding of other peoples. He then offers a multitude of ideas and concrete suggestions for ensuring that a study abroad experience leads to a better appreciation for the various manifestations of human culture.

For those of us who were fortunate to be present at the time of the presentations, these articles provide valuable reminders of the issues raised at the conference. For those who were not able to attend, we hope you will let these essays engage your own thinking on study abroad.

The conference organizers wish to thank the keynote speakers for submitting their articles for publication. We are grateful to the many supporters of the conference and to Masa Itomitsu for his editorial work, and to the ATJ for publishing these pieces in its *Occasional Papers* series.

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MAXIMIZING LEARNING DURING STUDY ABROAD: SOME RESEARCH-BASED PROGRAMMATIC SUGGESTIONS

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(*Author's note:* This paper is based on a presentation given at the Conference of the Central Association of Teachers of Japanese (CATJ), held in Columbus, OH in April 2005. I am grateful for the participants of that conference for their feedback, and especially acknowledge the thoughts of Professors Mari Noda, Steve Nussbaum, Noriko Iwasaki, Charles Quinn and Etsuyo Yuasa. I am also appreciative of feedback and assistance from my colleagues Ginger Marcus and Masa Itomitsu.)

The purpose of this paper is to provide the reader with some useful suggestions for preparing Japanese language learners for study abroad, assisting them while abroad and facilitating the transition process upon and after return. Where possible, these suggestions will be based on research conducted in Japanese. While a clearer picture of the study abroad in Japan experience is beginning to emerge with recent and on-going research efforts, much more evidence regarding the nature of study abroad is available in other settings—in particular in European-language contexts. As I make suggestions in this paper based on work in other languages, I will note the linguistic contexts of the research and will take into account the possibility of differences between Japan and other settings that might result from broader linguistic and cultural differences. Suggestions will be organized around three time periods: pre-departure, in-country and post-return.

Two factors limit the applicability of recommendations given in this paper. First, there are several common research design problems: a) most of the studies are very small in scale, often including as few as one or two participants; b) measures used to assess Japanese linguistic proficiency and development are limited and occasionally flawed; c) control groups (groups comparable in terms of age, aptitude, language learning experience, etc.) are seldom included; d) key variables such as amount of instruction, nature of instruction, living arrangements and motivation are often not taken into consideration. Point d) relates to the second major limitation in terms of

application of suggestions: the presence of individual and programmatic differences. Even where measures are exercised to control programmatic variables, such as hours and type of language instruction or housing arrangements, individual variation in linguistic and cultural development is great (DeKeyser, 1986; Dewey, 2002, 2004a; Freed, 1995; Huebner, 1995). Careful thought regarding one's curriculum and programs as well as the individual learners involved in study abroad will facilitate evaluation and appropriate adaptation of these suggestions.

Pre-Departure Preparation

Language Learning Prior to Study Abroad

Study abroad early in one's language learning experience can have some powerful benefits, in particular in terms of motivation. For example, Huebner (1995) compared the linguistic and personal development of groups of beginning Japanese learners in Japan with learners in the U.S. with comparable classroom language instruction and found that study abroad participants were more motivated to learn to read and write than their counterparts at home. They saw the learning of *hiragana* and *katakana* as a critical and necessary task and were highly motivated to learn to use the two scripts, whereas learners at home viewed the task as a difficult burden. In a study of learners enrolled in study abroad in Avignon, France, Ingram (2005) found that an early study abroad experience was a powerful motivator for continued language study upon return. Those who went abroad tended to take courses well beyond the two-year requirement, whereas those who did not go abroad tended to stop at the minimum requirement. My own unpublished research showed that while ten early study abroad participants in Japan (learners with one year or less of language learning experience) struggled to communicate and developed many linguistic inaccuracies, they returned highly motivated and all enrolled in additional Japanese courses in the U.S. Seven reported

intentions to minor or major in Japanese, and eight intended to use Japanese in some way in their careers. In short, these learners came home highly motivated to continue studying and using the Japanese language.

Addressing linguistic development, in his comparison of at-home and abroad learners with comparable language instruction, Huebner (1995) discovered that beginning learners of Japanese abroad out-gained at-home learners on measures of oral proficiency and listening and reading comprehension. My own unpublished study of beginning learners of Japanese, mentioned previously, included twelve at-home and ten abroad participants and, though not as carefully controlled as Huebner's, indicated similar advantages for abroad participants. Especially noteworthy were significantly greater gains on two measures of vocabulary knowledge. One of these measures included words necessary to function in Japan, such as those seen on menus, street signs or train schedules. Both studies suggest that early study abroad experiences can motivate students and can lead to linguistic gains greater than those experienced by learners at home with comparable classroom language instruction.

Although the studies of early participants in study abroad in Japan mentioned here indicate important linguistic and motivational benefits, some cautions are still necessary. Of my ten learners, four developed strong linguistic tendencies that were virtually incorrigible, even by regular teacher feedback in Japan and upon return (though these tendencies did not normally impede communication of meaning). My subjective impressions based on two weeks of regular observation of these participants at the beginning and end of their study abroad experience were that these four learners developed communicative strategies that allowed them to engage in basic communication without using the appropriate linguistic tools. These patterns then fossilized and the learners had great difficulty adding to or altering their hard-set linguistic patterns. The problem may have been exacerbated by the fact that three of these four learners engaged in this process for a full academic year, as opposed to a semester for five of the other six participants.

Mills (2005, April) has suggested that fossilization such as that experienced by my learners may be attributed to two Japanese cultural tendencies: the Japanese pattern of praising foreigners for their Japanese, regardless of their errors,

and tendency to be reserved in terms of critiquing others, in particular if doing so would result in any loss of face for the recipient. Mills also suggested that, in addition to inadequate feedback, insufficient instruction might contribute to the fossilization of erroneous patterns during early study abroad, in particular for high school students participating in exchange programs with little support in terms of language courses or tutoring. The college-level participants in my research on early study abroad had extensive formal instruction, but may have lacked sufficient feedback on their linguistic performance, in particular orally. While they regularly used their Japanese, only three learners reported in weekly journal entries receiving explicit feedback regarding their speech from native speakers during their semester or year-long stays, and none of the three struggling speakers indicated receiving any comments or suggestions regarding their speech, other than occasional praise. Classroom instruction focused largely on written Japanese and listening comprehension, providing few opportunities for comments on oral production. Greater feedback may be necessary for more successful Japanese language acquisition during early study abroad.

In short, early study abroad seems to benefit the learner in terms of motivation and language learning, but caution ought to be exercised when deciding on the timing, length and nature of the study abroad experience. Early immersion in Japan can motivate students to take additional courses in Japanese and can lead to significant linguistic developments. On the other hand, without sufficient guidance and instruction, they may encounter obstacles in terms of developing linguistic accuracy. Additional research is needed before firm conclusions can be drawn.

Evidence in Russian (Brecht *et al.*, 1993, 1995) and French (Lapkin *et al.*, 1995) have shown that study abroad participants who are less proficient prior to study abroad in terms of reading, writing, speaking and listening tend to out-gain those who are more proficient during the in-country experience. Based on this, one might assume that it is best to study abroad earlier in one's language learning experience. However, these findings may be attributable to problems with the assessments rather than true differences in terms of gains. Even the authors of these Russian and French studies acknowledge that their measures may have suffered from ceiling effects—advanced learners scored as high or nearly as high as one could on

the assessments, which likely contained only a few items aimed at more advanced learners. Collettine (2004) and Dewey (2004a) have suggested that in order to capture gains made by more advanced learners, novel measures may be necessary. One example is a study I conducted (Dewey, 2004b, 2005b) that assessed three types of vocabulary knowledge (depth of knowledge, breadth of knowledge and knowledge of words used to function in daily life in Japan). In this study, I found that learners who knew more vocabulary initially made gains comparable to those who knew less on two of three vocabulary measures. This suggests that even more advanced learners can show significant linguistic gains while in Japan—gains comparable to or even greater than those of less advanced learners.

Providing support for the concept of developing more advanced language skills prior to study abroad in Japan, Tanaka and her colleagues (Tanaka *et al.*, 1994; Tanaka *et al.*, 1997) found that learners with less advanced skills struggle to develop relationships with native Japanese. Such relationships have been shown to be critical for strengthening one's language skills and for developing better understanding of Japanese culture (Iwasaki, 2005, April; Mathews, 2000; Noda, 2005, April).

Based on the findings I have reviewed here and upon my own personal experience with study abroad participants, I would suggest that programs and individuals consider an early and relatively short study abroad experience, largely with an emphasis on increasing motivation. Instruction and regular feedback ought to be strong components of this experience. Learners could then return to complete additional coursework at home prior to going back to Japan for a later study abroad experience. They would then have sufficient linguistic abilities to facilitate the development of relationships with native speakers—relationships that typically lead to great gains both in terms of linguistic and cultural abilities.

Pre-Departure Orientation

Pre-departure (or early arrival) orientations are often used to cover logistical information and to provide background regarding various aspects of a study abroad program. In addition to giving logistical and background information, programs can include training on dealing with cultural and linguistic challenges.

Burns (1996) found that learners of Japanese struggled to develop relationships with native speakers largely because of failures to understand Japanese cultural norms. With some instruction or intervention, many of these obstacles might have been minimized. Not understanding the concepts of *tatemae* and *honne*, Burns' study participants expected that once they formed relationships with native Japanese speakers, they ought to be open with their feelings. Sensing that their native friends were not opening up and freely sharing their feelings, they questioned the strength of their relationships. These same participants were further surprised by the types of interaction that occurred at social events. Expecting to move about freely and interact informally with others during parties as they chose, they were dismayed by the formal nature of gatherings such as *enkai*, where they were placed in assigned seats and expected to stay in the same location through most of the gathering. Finally, these participants were constantly treated as guests, which made it difficult to develop the equal and informal relationships that the study abroad participants desired. If learners are warned of these sorts of differences in advance through classroom instruction and pre-departure orientations, they will be better prepared to adjust and adapt to Japanese social patterns.

Kawamura (2004), Ogden (2005) and Nussbaum (2005, April) and Noda (2005, April) have suggested that learners be encouraged to take an ethnographic approach during study abroad in Japan. Jurasek and his colleagues (Jurasek *et al.*, 1996) describe an ethnographic approach that includes a pre-departure orientation, during which students practice observation and note-taking techniques in their local community as they prepare for the study abroad experience. Familiarizing students with the ethnographic process prior to departure (i.e., during orientations or coursework) can prepare them for encountering and navigating cultural differences in Japan. Paige and his colleagues (Paige *et al.*, 2002, 2003) have created materials for study abroad participants and corresponding materials for program faculty and staff that provide concrete suggestions for understanding and dealing with both cultural and linguistic differences. These materials encourage much of the reflection typical of ethnographic work. They also provide concrete language learning strategies—strategies useful for learners of Japanese.

While there are a few apparent common general patterns among students in terms of language use and development during study abroad, nearly every study indicates large amounts of individual variation during study abroad—differences far greater than those seen in at-home classroom learning. Whereas some learners acquire lots of oral fluency, others acquire little (Freed *et al.*, 2004b; Segalowitz & Freed, 2004). Although some individuals use the foreign language regularly, others seldom use it (Dewey, 2002; Freed *et al.*, 2004a; Freed *et al.*, 2004b; Segalowitz & Freed, 2004). The nature of experiences such as the homestay can vary greatly such that while one individual interacts frequently and has rich exchanges with her host family, another can have very little interaction (Frank, 1997; Hashimoto, 1994; Wilkinson, 1996, 1998). There are many ways for learners to spend their time while in Japan, and lots of these ways may involve much more use of English than Japanese. Learners can be made aware in advance of the variation that can occur in the study abroad experience both in terms of the experience and learning outcomes. Given the omnipresent variation in study abroad, I believe that learners ought to be encouraged to set goals prior to study abroad and to regularly evaluate and adjust these goals during their time in Japan in order to maximize their linguistic and personal development.

Though it is possible (and in many ways desirable) for students to set very specific language learning goals (e.g., learning ten new vocabulary items a day, mastering five new grammar patterns per week, etc.), broader goals may ultimately be more useful. Broader goal setting can involve skill acquisition that requires the use of the language and assistance from and interaction with others. For example, if a learner wants to learn *ikebana*, he or she will need to learn the language necessary to learn the art. In addition, learning *ikebana* requires one to find a teacher or mentor. Often such mentors can not only teach specific skills and terminology, but also provide friendship and support outside of this teaching context. If learners are open-minded, they will be able to find specific interests and areas where additional goal setting or adjustment of goals might be appropriate while in Japan. This goal-setting process can be encouraged during pre-departure preparation and followed up on during the stay in Japan.

In-Country Assistance

In-country language instruction and feedback are important components of the study abroad experience, especially for less advanced language learners (see the earlier discussion of pre-departure language learning). In addition to language instruction, many of the other measures suggested for pre-departure can be followed up on during the study abroad experience. Workshops and classes can continue to highlight important cultural differences, provide strategy training related to language and culture learning, and encourage evaluation of goals. An ethnographic approach to study abroad can remain a focal point. Materials such as Wagner and Magistrale's (1997) "Writing across culture: An introduction to study abroad and the writing process" can be read by learners as they engage in the process of journal writing and reflective learning.

Two of the strongest determinants of Japanese language growth during study abroad are the development of relatively deep social relationships and participation in a community of native Japanese speakers (Dewey, 2005a, 2005, April; Iwasaki, 2005, April; Noda, 2005, April; Tanaka *et al.*, 1994; Tanaka *et al.*, 1997). The development of social relationships can be facilitated in a variety of ways. One study abroad program connects learners with native Japanese college students in e-mail exchanges prior to arrival. The native Japanese participants then regularly meet their American e-pals at the airport upon arrival and help facilitate the move into the homestay environment. This pre-arrival involvement usually leads to at least one early and significant friendship. Another study abroad program pairs non-native learners together with local university students as "study buddies." Native Japanese students enrolled in Japanese pedagogy or other relevant courses (e.g., courses focusing on issues related to psychological and social adjustment) are required to tutor study abroad participants for two or three hours per week. Both the e-pal and the study buddy programs are frequently praised by students as being helpful for developing meaningful relationships and reducing culture shock.

The homestay setting is usually viewed as one of the most significant means of establishing relationships and interacting with native speakers. While studies in European languages indicate that the homestay experience can often be less than ideal (Frank, 1997; Rivers, 1998), studies in Japanese are more promising. In these studies, learners

in Japanese homestays claimed that their host families were the most useful source for language learning (Hashimoto, 1994). Students regularly had meaningful dinner-table interactions with their host families—interactions that involved negotiation of meaning and the discussion of important cultural concepts (Cook, 2003; Hashimoto, 1994; Iino, 1996; Traphagan, 2000). Learners reported being taught important cultural points and regularly participating in conversations that allowed both them and their Japanese hosts to dispel myths about each others' cultures (Cook, 2003). McMeekin (2003) found that students engaged in 4.2 times as many negotiations of meaning per hour on average with their host families than they did during the same amount of classroom instruction time. In addition, these interactions were richer and longer lasting. "Classroom interactions and topics were carefully controlled by the instructor making interactions asymmetric and reducing the chances that difficult and unfamiliar topics might occur" (p. 503). These findings are more encouraging than studies in other settings and suggest that the learners might do well to engage in a homestay experience during study abroad in Japan.

Some measures are still in order to maximize the benefits of the homestay experience. Host families can be carefully screened, with care taken to re-enlist the help of those given high evaluations by students, in particular on points relating to quantity and quality of social interactions. Training can be done both for the learners and for the hosts to heighten awareness of cross-cultural differences, in particular in terms of expectations. Bachnik's (2005) web-based lessons have been used successfully to orient homestay participants in Japan and prepare them for possible challenges associated with the experience. These materials encourage an understanding of the Japanese perspective and of cross-cultural gaps through careful reflection on a series of scenarios. With a colleague (Dewey & Ogden, in preparation), I am currently refining a series of guides designed for homestay families and students that promote strategies for creating frequent and high-quality interactions with the family.

While the typical impression regarding study abroad is that learners spend lots of time interacting with native speakers, data in Japanese (Dewey, 2002, 2004a, 2005a; Iwasaki, 2005, April; Noda, 2005, April) and in European languages (Freed et al., 2004a; Freed et al., 2004b; Segalowitz &

Freed, 2004) indicate that learners tend to use English much more than their target language during study abroad and that they form groups and interact with their fellow native speakers of English much more than with native speakers of their second language. In order to combat this tendency to use English, some programs have employed language pledges or have forbidden English use in their study abroad center facilities. The use of a language pledge at Middlebury College's domestic Japanese and French schools has been found to be a key contributor to learners developing stronger language skills there than in study abroad centers in Japan and France, even though amount and quality of classroom instruction are similar (Dewey, 2002, 2004a; Freed et al., 2004b). Given this tendency, a language pledge during study abroad may be worth exploring.

Another measure that can be taken to decrease English use and increase Japanese speaking time is to encourage learners to become involved in various Japanese social circles. Several studies in Japanese (Dewey, 2005a, 2005, April; Iwasaki, 2005, April; Noda, 2005, April) have indicated the value of becoming part of some Japanese social circle or domain in terms of the development of linguistic and cultural competence. Iwasaki (2005, April) and Ogden (2005) found that learners were more likely to experience and practice using various levels of politeness and formality in speech when placed in an internship setting than when not. Noda (2005, April) noted that a learner who took the opportunity to become deeply engaged in a school club was eventually moved from guest status to member participant. As a result, he took on a *kohai* role and was expected to speak respectfully and interact as a native participant when addressing and working with his *senpai*. Another one of Noda's learners took part-time work in a café and, as a result, learned the importance of teamwork and customer satisfaction in Japanese. She became competent at using a broad range of set polite phrases used in this service setting. In my own work (Dewey, 2005a, 2005, April), I found similar patterns. Those actively involved in extracurricular activities in my study tended to use Japanese more frequently than those not. Internship participants reported speaking and reading more Japanese each week than those not enrolled in internships. In short, these findings suggest that participation in some domain or social group can contribute significantly to linguistic and cultural development.

One factor found to contribute to language development during study abroad is attention (Dewey, 2004b, 2005b; Segalowitz & Freed, 2004). As learners become overwhelmed with the quantity of new language in their environments, they can fail to pay attention to unknown linguistic and cultural information. I have found (Dewey, 2005b) that the most competent learners of Japanese vocabulary were those who paid regular attention to the unfamiliar and attempted each day to decipher a few unknown words from their environments. Others who were less successful tended to settle for studying and learning materials taught in classes. Instruction and programmatic initiatives that encourage learners to observe new elements (linguistic or cultural) of their environments and to return and report on these elements can be helpful. For example, students might be asked to identify five new words per week and to tell where they saw these words. They might report words to their classmates and discuss their shared and unique linguistic and cultural experiences. Assignments such as these force learners to pay greater attention to the unknown and to attach each piece of new linguistic or cultural information mentally to the context or setting where it was observed. Similar assignments could be made related to any aspect of language or culture.

Finally, one cannot underestimate the importance of allowing learners a venue for reflecting on their cultural and linguistic experiences with their peers and their teachers. Learners in my own studies regularly report on the value of opportunities to speak with their peers and instructors about their frustrations. They feel relieved when they are able to share similar frustrations with others and informed when their instructors help them to better understand the reasons behind their frustrations. Many report that their main motive for interacting with their peers in English is to receive emotional support. Ogden (2005) has suggested that providing learners formal opportunities to discuss their frustrations and experiences openly with each other and combining this emotional outlet with instructor guidance aimed at promoting an understanding and respect for Japanese ways can decrease stress and increase cultural understanding.

Learners are bound to encounter significant cultural and linguistic challenges during study abroad, in spite of programmatic interventions. However, they will be much more capable of coping with and successfully navigating these chal-

lenges if instructors and programs provide support during study abroad through interventions and coursework that encourage frequent, careful and objective reflection and that promote language use through facilitating associations with groups and individuals during study abroad. Training can be provided focusing on cognitive and social skills that facilitate growth in cultural and linguistic competence.

Post-Return Issues

Study abroad can present several challenges for language program faculty. Upon returning, learners often expect to receive credit for coursework or informal learning completed during study abroad. They also may expect to test out of courses offered at home or to place into courses with prerequisites they may not have taken. Sometimes it is difficult to offer advanced courses appropriate for learners who have developed advanced skills through study abroad. Many of these obstacles can be dealt with through thorough pre-departure planning. If faculty members are well aware of the structure and coursework involved in specific study abroad programs in which their students will participate, they will be better able to advise students. They can make specific agreements with students prior to study abroad that will reduce later complications related to course credit and post-return placement. If programs are less familiar, agreements can be made in advanced based on post-return assessment results. Requiring specific levels of performance on measures of linguistic competence could be part of these agreements.

Language assessment is an important issue related to returnees. Given that individual differences are great during study abroad (i.e., while some make large gains, others make none), no outcomes can be guaranteed. Assessment for credit, placement or research purposes is often necessary. Where making decisions about credit or placement, assessments should be mapped as closely to expected course outcomes or requirements as possible. For example, when giving course credit, one might use a previous final exam from that course as one possible evaluation. Similarly, when it comes to placement, if learners are expected to have approximately Advanced speaking skills and to have taken an intermediate Japanese course prior to enrolling in an advanced conversation course, they might be expected to score at the Advanced Low level or above on the

Oral Proficiency Interview and to receive a score of 75% or higher on a sample final exam from the Intermediate Japanese course. Expectations such as these might be part of the pre-departure agreement discussed earlier.

When assessing for programmatic and research purposes, multiple measures ought to be used where possible. Research shows that whereas one measure may not capture gains, others might (Dewey, 2004b, 2005b; Lapkin et al., 1995). A more complete understanding of growth can be achieved not only through analyses of scores, but also through qualitative analyses of individual test results. For example, Freed and her colleagues (Freed et al., 2004b; Segalowitz & Freed, 2004) used recordings of Oral Proficiency Interviews (rather than scores) to gain an understanding of oral fluency development during study abroad. One might also look at individual test items to see if patterns occur (e.g., learners might regularly miss items related to honorific speech use, in spite of having been abroad—an indicator that study abroad alone might not be sufficient for acquisition of these patterns).

Hints of the benefits of additional Japanese language instruction after study abroad have been found by Hashimoto (1994), Russell (2003, 2004, 2005) and Dewey (2005a). Hashimoto found that whereas learners' patterns related to polite and honorific speech forms changed over time abroad, these patterns did not match native tendencies until they had returned home and taken additional coursework. Russell noted hints that learners who had been abroad for two years as missionaries benefited in terms of language retention over time from formal coursework completed shortly after returning from residence abroad. Their counterparts who had not taken post-return Japanese courses tended to lose more of their linguistic abilities. Finally, in my study, I found that learners' comments in post-return surveys and interviews indicated general satisfaction with their decisions to take additional Japanese courses. Most students valued the additional instruction and many indicated specific linguistic benefits, including receiving feedback on errors and developing an understanding of language and concepts heard but not comprehended while in Japan through additional study and instruction following their returns.

One final issue for consideration, in particular for smaller institutions who may not be able to offer advanced language courses for returnees is

post-return involvement in less advanced Japanese language instruction. Jurasek and his colleagues (Jurasek et al., 1996) point out that returnees can be used as teaching assistants and as role models. Their learners at Earlham College typically give presentations regarding mini ethnographies they compile during study abroad. They report on their placements in work settings, host families, or various professional or social circles. They also participate in question and answer sessions for learners interested in study abroad. Through involving returnees in this way, programs can motivate less advanced learners to study abroad and can provide mentors who are able to depict the reality of the study in Japan experience and prepare learners for their own meaningful ethnographic experiences.

Conclusion

In my view, the ideal study abroad plan would include *two* study abroad experiences. Learners would first go to Japan early on (perhaps after a basic introduction to the language) for a short period (several weeks to a semester). The research suggests this early experience can increase motivation significantly. Having been exposed to Japanese culture, learners would be more likely to study Japanese to an advanced level. Once learners completed the early immersion experience, they would return home and take up to two or three years of Japanese before going abroad again. Coursework and feedback would be most critical during the early study abroad, and social interaction and inclusion in groups or domains would be most important in the later study abroad experience. Both study abroad events would be seen as integral parts of the language learning program and as means of promoting advanced linguistic and cultural competence.

In order for study abroad experiences to be most beneficial, I believe that preparation ought to begin early and that careful planning should be done to equip learners with the knowledge and strategies that will allow them to benefit most from study in Japan. As learners are taught language-learning strategies and are encouraged to engage in ethnographic reflection, they are more likely to be able to take advantage of the input they find in their environments. Study abroad programs can facilitate the development of relationships through pairing learners with native speakers and placing them in social, educational or

work settings that require participation in Japanese groups. As language programs at home work with learners to facilitate the development of advanced skills, they can look forward to the return and make suggestions that will help learners to take maximum advantage of resources abroad and be aware of expectations and opportunities they will encounter upon return. Learners can then be assessed through multiple measures after returning home to determine outcomes and to prepare them for placement in appropriate courses. Where appropriate, returnees can be involved with non-returnees to help educate them and motivate them to study in Japan as well. Again, the study abroad experience starts with early preparation and concludes with learners participating in and contributing to language programs at home in a variety of ways.

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A YEAR ABROAD IN JAPAN: PARTICIPANTS' PERSPECTIVES

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Introduction

Japanese language teachers may have a number of questions about their students' study abroad experiences: How much does their Japanese language proficiency really improve while abroad? Why do students do things that study abroad administrators and teachers may consider undesirable, such as leaving their host family's residence and withdrawing from the Japanese program in Japan? Why do some of them start speaking very informally, even to teachers, when returning to the United States? What do their study abroad experiences really mean to them?

A number of previous studies on study abroad provide some answers to these questions, but the majority of them concern Indo-European languages such as Spanish, French, and German—research on study abroad in Japan is scarce. Of the few studies regarding study abroad in Japan, very few investigate college- or university-level students studying in Japan for more than 1 semester (i.e., for an academic year).

In an attempt to answer the preceding questions, I began a research project three years ago, keeping track of a few students who went on study abroad for 1 academic year. Their study abroad experiences and gains were assessed in multiple ways, including 2 types of proficiency tests administered both before and after study abroad, and questionnaires designed to elicit their own focal points of study abroad prior to departure and their own perceptions of their experiences and accomplishments upon return.

Previous Studies

Previous research related to study abroad in Japan primarily investigated either college/university students who studied in summer intensive programs in Japan (e.g., Collier-Sanuki & Hanabusa, 1998; Dewey, 2004; Huebner, 1995; Makino,

1996) or students who studied in Japan for a year as high school students (e.g., Hashimoto, 1993; Marriott, 1993, 1995). One of the few exceptions was Siegal (1994, 1995), who studied the acquisition of sociolinguistic competence by 4 adult women studying in Japan, three of whom were exchange students.

With respect to learning Japanese during study abroad in Japan, Huebner (1995) and Dewey (2004) both compared the gains of students who studied in intensive Japanese programs in Japan to those of students who studied in intensive summer programs in the United States. Huebner found that beginning-level learners who studied in Japan outperformed those who studied in the United States, especially in reading comprehension, which he attributed to the urgent need that the students felt to read text in their surrounding environment in the community, such as signs and print media. Dewey focused on the reading development of students who had studied Japanese for 2 to 4 years prior to their intensive summer language instruction. He found that the 2 groups differed significantly only in self-assessment of their reading comprehension, specifically, that the study abroad group rated their reading comprehension abilities higher, but the groups did not differ on other measures of reading (i.e., free-recall and vocabulary). It is important to note that both Huebner and Dewey found that there was greater variability in language performance and in experience (e.g., contact with language and culture outside of class) among those who studied in Japan.

Makino (1996) and Collier-Sanuki and Hanabusa (1998) also researched college/university students who studied Japanese in summer intensive programs in Japan; both used questionnaires to shed light on the experiences of the students, all of whom stayed with Japanese families. Both studies indicated that the host families were essen-

tial language resources for the students. Although the major linguistic difficulties that the students experienced were related to informal language (Collier-Sanuki & Hanabusa), many students also reported improvement in the use of informal language as a result of homestay (Makino).

The acquisition of register (i.e., appropriate switch between formal and informal styles of language) appeared to be the major obstacle for Australian secondary school students who studied in high school in Japan. Hashimoto (1993), Marriott and Enomoto (1995), and Marriott (1993, 1995) found that high school students who studied in Japan for 1 year had problems in terms of sociolinguistic competence while showing substantial gains in communication skills, especially in listening and speaking (Marriott & Enomoto). In particular, students tended to overuse the informal, plain form in situations where the more formal *~desu/masu* form should have been employed (Hashimoto; Marriott 1993, 1995). Although most students had knowledge of both forms, they were unable to vary them appropriately. Likewise, when Atsuzawa-Windley and Noguchi (1995) examined the language performance of university students who had previously studied in Japan, they found that those who had study abroad experiences had difficulty with expressions of politeness while outperforming students without study abroad experiences in other aspects of performance (e.g., pronunciation, fluency, and comprehension). Considerable variation among the students was also noted in terms of the acquisition of sociolinguistic competence (Marriott, 1993).

Siegal (1994, 1995) conducted an in-depth study of 4 women studying Japanese in Japan and demonstrated the complexity involved in the acquisition of sociolinguistic competence by White women—involving the interplay of race, gender, and social status.

The studies summarized here show that although study abroad may be beneficial for acquisition of Japanese as a second language, it often leads to students' deviance in inappropriate language behavior—namely, overuse of the plain form. The studies also suggest that there is greater variability among those who study abroad compared to those who study Japanese in the United States.

In fact, substantial individual variation is also found in research on acquisition of other languages during study abroad, and the importance of focusing on individual learners is recognized by a number of researchers (DeKeyser, 1991; Pellegrino, 1998; Wilkinson, 2000), because large-scale quantitative studies fail to recognize the individuality of the participants' experiences and their accomplishments. DeKeyser noted that "it would be wise to capitalize on the advantages of intensive case studies first" (p. 48). Furthermore, in her review of studies on students' perspectives of study abroad, Pellegrino underscored the value of introspective techniques to elicit students' perception of their study abroad experience for the purpose of "understanding the language use and social behaviors of students immersed in an L2 environment" (p. 93).

Pellegrino (1998) also pointed out that study abroad experience changes students as individuals, in addition to providing linguistic gains. Barrutia (1971), for example, stated that, as a consequence of study abroad, "Perhaps most valuable of all are increased self-understanding, clarified life purposes, and the broadening and deepening of the value system to which each student gives allegiance and on the basis of which he makes his choices" (p. 233). However, to my knowledge, there is very little research on the personal growth of college/university students who study abroad. Hence, the current study focuses on a small number of students and elicits the students' own perceptions of their study abroad experiences.

Current Study

Research Questions

The current study uses the results of questionnaires, interviews, and proficiency tests to examine the experiences of university students who studied abroad for 1 academic year. Specifically, this study investigates the following questions:

1. Upon their return, how did the participants perceive their own experience and gains of study abroad as compared to the goals that they articulated prior to study abroad?
2. How do they perceive different registers (i.e., informal, plain form vs. formal *~desu/masu* form) as a result of study abroad?
3. What was the reasoning behind some of their actions (i.e., decision to leave homestay ar-

rangement, decision to withdraw from the Japanese program)?

4. In retrospect (almost 2 years after studying abroad), how did they perceive their study abroad experiences? What do they consider to be the impact of study abroad in their lives, beyond gains in language proficiency?

Participants

Students who were going to Japan for the 2002-2003 academic year at a state university in the northeastern United States participated. Among a total of 15 students who were preparing to go to Japan (11 men and 4 women), six students, all of whom were male and non-Asian, volunteered to participate in pre-departure proficiency tests and a questionnaire.

Among the six, five participated in at least to part of the post-study-abroad tasks. One of the five participants had studied Japanese for only 1 year (6 hours of formal instruction per week for 2 semesters) and the other 4 had completed 2 years of Japanese instruction (6 hours of formal instruction per week for 4 semesters). Their ages at the time of departure ranged from 19 to 21. The five students went to 4 different universities in Japan, all of which had an exchange agreement with the students' home university. Four of the five participants, at least initially, stayed with host families in Japan.

Of the five participants, three participated in all the post-study-abroad proficiency tests and interviews in 2003. One participated only in OPI in 2003 and in the retrospective interview 2005. Another completed both proficiency tests and questionnaires in 2003 but did not participate in the retrospective interview in 2005. Four participated in retrospective interviews in 2005.

Methods

Prior to departure for Japan, the Japanese proficiency of the participants was assessed using two measures: the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) conducted by the author, who is a certified tester, and a past version of the Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT) administered by the author. Due to time constraints, of the three sections of the test, namely, listening comprehension, character-vocabulary, and grammar-reading, only the latter two were administered. The 1999

version of the Level 2 JLPT was given to the participants who had studied Japanese for 2 years and the Level 3 JLPT was given to the student who had studied Japanese for 1 year. The students' goals (or focal points of their study abroad) and expectations were assessed by a questionnaire on which students indicated their agreement with 30 statements, such as "I would like to increase my Japanese vocabulary" and "I would like to focus on improving my ability to speak Japanese," on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Appendix A has a list of the items that are most relevant to the current discussion.¹

After the students returned from their year abroad, in September and October in 2003, their proficiency was re-assessed using the OPI and the JLPT (2000 version),² administered by an instructor at the students' home institution; five students participated in the OPI conducted by the author over the phone Japanese Language Proficiency Test is the most established test of the Japanese language. These students were also informally asked about their study abroad experiences immediately preceding or following the OPI. The tapes and ratings were sent to ACTFL Language Testing International to receive official ratings.³ Only four of the five students also completed the JLPT. The Level 2 test was again given to the three who had studied Japanese for 2 years prior to study abroad and the Level 3 test to the one student who had studied Japanese for 1 year before study abroad. They were also given the option to take the test the next level. Two students, including the student with 1 year of prior study, opted to take the higher level test for both sections of the JLPT (character-vocabulary and grammar-reading), and one chose the higher level test for only the character/vocabulary section. These four students also completed the post-study-abroad questionnaire, which contained items that corresponded to those in the pre-study-abroad questionnaire, such as "I am happy with my increased knowledge of Japanese vocabulary" and "I am happy with the improvement in my ability to speak Japanese." The students also provided their own comments about their study abroad experiences immediately preceding and/or following the OPI. These comments and their responses to the questionnaire were used to answer research questions 1 and 3.

In 2005, I asked for their participation in interviews to retrospectively evaluate their

study abroad experiences—almost 2 years later after they studied abroad. Because their OPI performances after study abroad revealed that some of the participants overused the plain form, similarly to what Marriott (1993, 1995) found, I asked the participants to provide observations and thoughts regarding language register and politeness (i.e., informal plain form vs. more formal *~desu/masu* form). I conducted most of these interviews over the phone.

Results

The participants' pre-departure focal points and their outcome. This section provides answers to the first research question: Upon their return, how did the participants perceive their own experience and gains of study abroad as compared to the goals that they articulated prior to study abroad? In order to better understand their perceptions, their actual gains in proficiency, as assessed by the two measures, are first discussed.

The five participants will be referred to using the following pseudonyms: Alan, Henry, Peter, Sam, and Greg. The first four participants took the equivalent of 2 years of Japanese prior to going to Japan, and Greg had studied Japanese for 1 year before study abroad. Alan and Greg went to the same institution in the Kansai region, Henry in the central region, and Peter and Sam in the Kanto region. Among the five, Peter was the only one who did not stay with a host family; he stayed in a university dormitory.

There was little variation in the participants' responses to the pre-study-abroad questionnaire. All five participants expressed a desire to improve in every aspect of the language, but Alan's priority was more on speaking and listening than on reading, writing, or the learning of kanji and vocabulary. Henry placed a higher priority on language skills (speaking, listening, reading, and writing) than on the learning of kanji and vocabu-

lary. Sam, Peter, and Greg all rated their agreement at 5 (strongly agree) on statements that they would focus on speaking, listening, reading, writing, vocabulary, kanji, and cultural understanding.

Peter did not complete the post-study-abroad questionnaire, but the other participants' responses on post-study-abroad questionnaires varied substantially, unlike their responses to the pre-study-abroad questionnaire. Alan was satisfied with his improvement in listening and speaking (rating both as 5), but less satisfied with his improvement in reading (rating 3) and in writing (rating 4). Henry was relatively satisfied with his improvement in listening and speaking (rating both as 4), but quite unsatisfied with his improvement in other areas: 2 for both reading and writing, 1 for vocabulary, and 2 for kanji. Greg was satisfied with his increased knowledge of kanji and vocabulary, rating kanji 5 and vocabulary 4, neutral with his improvement in reading, but unsatisfied with his improvement in productive skills, rating both speaking and listening as 2. Sam was quite satisfied across the board, rating his happiness with improvements in listening and reading as 5 and in speaking and writing as 4, and increase of knowledge of kanji as 5 and vocabulary as 4.

The language proficiency assessments revealed that all the participants improved their proficiency in Japanese. A comparison between the questionnaires and proficiency tests indicated that the areas of their strengths and weaknesses are closely related to the participants' initial focal points, and are mostly compatible with the participants' feelings of their own improvements. Table 1 shows their OPI ratings and Table 2 shows their scores on the JLPT 1999 (administered before study abroad) and 2000 version (administered after study abroad).

TABLE 1. Gains in OPI Ratings

<i>Participant</i>	<i>Prior Instruction</i>	<i>Before Study Abroad</i>		<i>After Study Abroad</i>	
Alan	2 years	Section 1.01	<u>Intermediate-High</u>	Section 1.02	<u>Advanced-Low</u>
Henry	2 years	Section 1.03	<u>Intermediate-Mid</u>	Section 1.04	<u>Intermediate-Mid</u>
Peter	2 years	Section 1.05	<u>Advanced-Low</u>	Section 1.06	<u>Advanced-High</u>
Sam	2 years	Section 1.07	<u>Intermediate-High</u>	Section 1.08	<u>Advanced-Mid</u>
Greg	1 year	Intermediate-Low		Intermediate-Mid	

TABLE 2. JLPT scores

<i>Name</i>	<i>Character-Vocabulary</i>			<i>Reading-Grammar</i>		
	<i>Pretest</i>	<i>Posttest</i>	<i>Higher Level</i>	<i>Pretest</i>	<i>Pretest</i>	<i>Higher Level</i>
Alan	Level 2 52%	Level 2 71%	Level 1 40%	Level 2 29%	Level 2 55%	Level 1 39%
Henry	Level 2 42%	Level 2 60%	n/a	Level 2 23%	Level 2 46%	n/a
Sam	Level 2 59%	Level 2 78%	Level 1 72%	Level 2 17%	Level 2 66%	n/a
Greg	Level 3 56%	Level 3 96%	Level 2 76%	Level 3 68%	Level 3 92%	Level 2 73%

Note: Peter did not take this test; the percentages in parentheses indicate the difference from the scores on the 1999 version of the test.

Alan's and Sam's gains in speaking are evident in their OPI ratings (and so is Peter's gain in speaking although we have no basis to discuss his own perception of the gain in speaking.) Greg felt that he did not improve as much as he wished in speaking, but he was rated one sublevel higher. Henry's rating did not go up, but this may reflect the wide range of the Intermediate-Mid rating. In the interview, he was more confident and fluent.

On the JLPT, Sam's and Greg's gains in character-vocabulary and reading-grammar are salient. Sam showed enough knowledge of character-vocabulary (72%) to be able to pass Level 1.⁴ After study abroad, Greg, who had studied Japanese for only a year before departure, scored better in Level 2 reading/grammar (73%) than the

other three participants, who had studied Japanese for 2 years prior to study abroad. Alan and Henry, who were not happy with their improvements in reading, did show evidence of improvement, though to a lesser extent.

When compared to the participants' own focal points of study, Alan achieved the gain in speaking that he prioritized, and Sam also achieved what he set out as his goals (i.e., across-the-board increase in proficiency). Henry and Greg's gains might not have met their expectations, at least in some areas. Henry did not gain as much as he wished in reading and writing, and the area he believes he improved most, listening and speaking, did not improve enough to obtain higher rating by OPI. Greg gained substantially in reading and

knowledge of kanji and vocabulary, but he felt that he did not improve as much as he wished in speaking although he improved enough to obtain a higher rating in the OPI.

Thus far, discussion has been limited to the students' gains in language proficiency. However, it is extremely important to also consider their perceptions of their overall experiences as well as their gains in other areas such as personal growth and (cross-)cultural understanding. Indeed, all four participants (Peter did not complete the post-study-abroad questionnaire) were happy with their study abroad experiences overall.

Upon their return, the participants responded to the question "In what area did your experience contribute to your growth most?," choosing from three possible answers (language learning, personal growth, and cultural understanding), and then provided their own explanation. Alan chose cultural understanding rather than language learning as the area where he grew most, explaining that "the world looks different nowadays." Henry chose personal growth, explaining that "the Japanese way of thinking is so different from mine, I changed to adapt." Sam chose language learning, but commented that he felt that he grew in all three areas. Greg chose personal growth and explained that he gained much better study skills.

The participants' answers indicate that there are areas of growth that are rarely assessed but undoubtedly have significant value for the participants themselves.

Participants' use and explanation of the *~desu/masu* form and plain form. As discussed in the review of the previous study, on the one hand, students in summer intensive programs tend to encounter difficulties using the informal plain form when they go to Japan. On the other hand, secondary school students who spend a year abroad tend to overuse it after they return to their home country (i.e., Australia). Among the five participants who participated in the OPI both before and after study abroad, two, Henry and Greg, overused the plain form, but it was evident that both of them had a good grasp of both forms. They both maintained the use of the plain form when talking to the interviewer (which is considered inappropriate), but switched to the *~desu/masu* form when they were given role plays in which they had to talk to a teacher to arrange a makeup test or to an apartment manager to

arrange a window repair. The other three, Alan, Peter, and Sam, appropriately maintained *~desu/masu* with the interviewer, but were able to vary forms when given a role play in which they talked to young children. To assess their understanding of when to use *~desu/masu* and how they perceived the form, in the 2005 interviews, I asked the participants their views and understanding of *~desu/masu* forms to answer the second research question: How do the participants perceive different registers (i.e., informal plain form vs. formal *~desu/masu* style) as a result of study abroad?

Peter and Sam's extracurricular activities made them realize the importance of appropriate register. They were always very attentive to how Japanese speakers addressed the senior members of the club or older people. They strived to learn the sociolinguistic rules of the communities and to be members of the communities. Sam initially experienced some confusion as to when to use *~desu/masu* because in the United States he had had only had interaction in Japanese with Japanese teachers and exchange students. He explains:⁵

When I was sort of like, "Okay, I use *desu/masu* to talk to the teacher and I use plain form to talk to practicum."⁶ But besides that, I don't think I had a real good understanding of when to use it and when not. Because, I mean, first of all, teachers and practicum, but when I go to Japan, I was thinking you have to extend it. How do I talk when I'm speaking to someone at the door; how do I talk when I, am, you know, in a meeting with a club member; how do I speak to, the, the head of the Psychics Department who's in a church choir, singing tenor with. You know what I mean? It's very complicated. Especially, when I know people who are, you know, I mean, are in a high position. But <<when>> getting to know you well, xx they use plain form. Then they speak casually. Then you kind of wonder ... they, these things, it confuses you.

It appears that Sam became a very careful observer of Japanese native speakers' verbal behavior. He says the reason why study abroad was a positive experience is that it allows you to observe how people use the language and how language varies within the context.

Alan's experience was somewhat different: A "critical linguistic incident" made him realize how important it is to be sensitive to the expected level of politeness. According to him, although he had been taught that he was supposed to use *~desu/masu* when talking to people who are not close friends, there was some confusion when he arrived, especially because many people that he interacted with at the university were other students who were also studying Japanese.

The critical linguistic incident happened when he was getting comfortable using the plain form, which he described in the following exchange:

Alan: Um, I would be hanging out with my friends a lot. And there was um, when I come back when I was still at (name of the institution) and I was talking to one of my professors. And trying to explain to him why like I should be in the next class because I wanted things more, harder and challenging and more *taihen*. Um, And I hadn't realized it, but in classes, everyone, all the students speak very informally. So I just without even thinking, I went to him and didn't really use any kind of polite forms at all. He uh, he looked kind of shocked.

Interviewer: Really?

Alan: *Shocked* [with emphasis]. Yeah, like, he wasn't happy when I stopped, when finished speaking.

Interviewer: When you say that you didn't use any polite language, you didn't even use *~desu/masu*?

Alan: Yeah.

Interviewer: Oh, I see. So, from that point on, did you try to use *~desu/masu*?

Alan: With him always. I was for him, then I would use the most polite words I could with him. I think he was happier after then on.

Alan says although he is still not good at using the polite expressions like *keigo*, which people do not expect from a White man, he feels that he is able to speak appropriately without offending people.

Of the two participants who showed overuse of the plain form in the post-study-abroad OPI, Greg

and Henry, only Greg participated in the 2005 interview, but his account is very insightful. He says that he has now defaulted to the use of the plain form rather than the *~desu/masu* form. First, he felt that there was a disconnect between the emphasis on *~desu/masu* in the courses at the home institution on the one hand, and Japanese speakers' (especially his host mother's) assumption that the plain form must be easier and better for him to use, and their resultant encouragement of him to use the plain form. Second, he realized how important the plain form is in the grammar of Japanese, such as in relative clauses (e.g., *tabeta keeki* "a cake [I] ate") and how useful knowledge of the plain form is to comprehend and produce more complex language. He felt that in 1 year of Japanese instruction in the home institution, the plain form was not given the attention that it deserves, which probably led him to his preference of this (previously neglected) important form. Third, although he feels that he is probably supposed to use *~desu/masu* with teachers, none of the teachers at either the host institution in Japan or the home institution in the United States seemed to mind his use of the plain form.

The four participants had diverse experiences of interacting with people and their experiences and their perceptions account for their use of the plain form versus the *desu/masu* form. Their responses illuminate the complexity of the use of styles, coupled with expectations of people with whom they interacted. Whereas socialization and interaction with Japanese people in Japan helped Sam and Peter, Greg's responses reveal that the interactions he experienced as a young male foreign student led him to the default use of the plain form.

Participants' accounts of what happened during study abroad. The participants' own accounts of what happened during their study abroad provide some answers to the third and fourth research questions: What was the reasoning behind some of their actions (i.e., decision to leave homestay arrangement, decision to withdraw from the Japanese program)? and In retrospect (almost 2 years after studying abroad), how did they perceive their study abroad experiences; what do they consider to be the impact of study abroad in their lives, beyond gains in language proficiency? The participants' accounts also pro-

vide some hints about why and how they achieved (or did not achieve) their goals.

Henry, who was perhaps the least satisfied with his gains in language proficiency, was unable to successfully adapt to the host stay. He stated that it was very inconvenient for him to have to go back home at a certain time to have dinner with the family, whose residence was quite far from campus. Such tight constraints on his independence, something that American students are used to embracing during their college years, was perhaps difficult for Henry. Henry is not alone—American students in other countries may also encounter this problem given that host families in other countries find Americans to be more independent than their own children (Chilean families reported by Stephenson, 1999; Mexican families reported by Knight & Schmidt-Rinehart, 2002). American students also have difficulty with their host families in other countries (e.g., Wilkinson, 1998; 2000). According to Henry, the members of the host family were also critical of his Japanese, and he decided to leave the host family's house and to share a house with other students, including other foreign students. It has been reported in previous studies He also felt that "unused" Japanese was taught in his Japanese classes. What he learned most was casual speech through interaction with friends that he met in an extracurricular activity circle. Henry did not participate in the interview in 2005, and therefor his delayed reactions were not assessed.

Alan also found his homestay arrangement somewhat undesirable and his classes ineffective. He thought that even though the host family was nice, they were a too busy to interact with him. He was also disappointed to find that he could not take the general education classes that he thought he could take; he wished to take classes to fulfill general education requirements at his home institution and to satisfy his intellectual curiosity by taking challenging courses. Consequently, he decided to leave his host family and withdraw from the host program after one semester. Alan's actions as described thus far might lead an administrator or teacher to conclude that his study abroad experience was an undesirable and unsuccessful one. However, interviews with him upon his return and in 2005 revealed otherwise: He often interacted with the Japanese and he also used his time traveling within Japan and in neigh-

boring countries. He made friends both at the host institution and during his travels. His travels gave him the greatest opportunities to use the language, as shown in the following response to the question of what helped him the most in terms of language learning:

Alan: ... classroom's much pretty much, um, much less, lower stressed. it was a more of a system for learning things, like for studying and, you know, "let's practice things," or like "let's practice that." But there was the need to learn that was much greater outside of the classrooms.

Interviewer: So you are saying in fact there was more stress outside.

Alan: Yes.

Interviewer: I see.

Alan: Yeah. Well, because I mean you're talking to someone then you wanna communicate with them.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Alan: And if you don't understand—

Interviewer: Sometimes maybe embarrassing or something?

Alan: Um, it could be embarrassing or just like your purpose of communicating with them is gonna fail. Like if you want to, I'm trying to think of a good example. Um, most of my examples are like trying to find a place to stay. Um, I just remember one night, I don't remember that night so well. I'm trying to look for a good example, okay, there was one night. This is another one of those need-a-place-to-stay stories. Um I was in um, Maizuru kara minami-no hoo-wa.... What's the next big town down from Maizuru?

Interviewer: I don't know.

Alan: But uh, anyway, so I was traveling then and I was very ill-prepared just because I wasn't prepared xx for it. And I was expecting, you know, that (there would be) like a town or like I could find some lobbies or something. You know, some place just to spend, you know, the night <<to be>> warm. And next day it would be

warm the next day. And then, then the xx no problem. Um but it was really cold and there was nowhere to go. Um, so, what I finally, I was asking about warm places and finally I met this woman who suggested that there is a Tenri-kyoo church down the street and that the owner is nice and he might, you know, let me sleep there. Um, so I tried that. I went there. And, they were of course very reluctant to let anyone kind of, sleep and stay there. Um, and there was, it was a big thing, with like they brought me down to the kooban and like police came. I tried to figure out, like you know, "where can I stay?" and, um, how did this end up? So it's a funny story how it ended up, which is kind of beside the point, which is when I was finally about to give it up, the guy says, it's okay you can stay here. Right? But um, I guess the big point is that if I hadn't been able to communicate to him, that I wasn't some scary, you know, giant guy, um, there would have been no way I could stay there. I would've been cold outside all night long. So, there was definite motivation to really perform my best at communicating

Evidently, he became proficient in speaking Japanese as a result of effortful negotiation outside the class. Furthermore, the recent interview with him revealed his relationship with his host family did not fail either, as seen in the following exchange:

Interviewer: You told me that you have a better relationship with your host family now.

Alan: I do, I do.

Interviewer: How did it improve?

Alan: Oh ... they were happy to see me when I came back... So, I mean, when we lived together, you know, whenever you live together, you know, whenever you live with someone, there's going to be some kind of stress, you know, depending on the two people. Um, so that's the stress we got in the way of our relationship before, but just for a visit, though yeah, that was a wonderful time.

Interviewer: I see, that's nice. So, this was last year?

Alan: I visited them twice now, actually.... Both times, I went to the Osaka area and stopped by for, you know.

Interviewer: That's nice. They must have been very happy to see you.

Alan: Yeah. First time I went back, I didn't know I was going, so it was kind of a surprise visit. So she was so surprised that she slapped me in my face. <laugh>

Interviewer: Really.

Alan: Yeah. She was happy about it but um, she was completely completely surprised.

Interviewer: Is that right.

Alan: Yeah. The second time I actually called ahead. <laugh> ... It was just fun.

A brief report about Alan in 2003 upon his return would have prematurely misled the administrator of study abroad programs that his study abroad was a failure. On the contrary, his study abroad was successful in a number of ways: improvement in his oral proficiency, his cross-cultural understanding, long-lasting relationships with his Japanese friends and the former host family, and impact on his life and career. He states in 2005 that he had the greatest time in his life and that his study abroad experience and his own achievements surpassed his expectations. To him, the study abroad was an unforgettable adventure, whose impact on his life is long-lasting. It is interesting to note that his perception of the study abroad experience is more positive now than at the time of his return. He says that he is more distanced from the downsides and he now has rosier memories. He graduated as a computer science major, with a minor in Japanese. He is now in Japan working for a Tokyo branch of a major U.S.-based company, doing work in which he is fully utilizing his Japanese language skills as well as his specialization.

Whereas Henry and Alan had some difficulties with their homestay while studying abroad, Greg enjoyed his homestay and enjoyed talking with his host mother in Japanese. In fact, the host mother was the primary native Japanese speaker that he interacted with regularly outside the classroom.

He states in the interview that he learned the language and culture the most at homestay where “you really have to communicate something.” He experienced different ways of thinking and acting; for example, he learned how to interpret or convey “no” in Japan. In the recent interview, he says he achieved what he wanted to achieve while abroad. Upon his return, he said that his greatest gain was in his study skills, but now his cross-cultural understanding appears to be what strikes him as the greatest gain other than language proficiency, as seen in this response:

Being in the culture and be able to know sort of what’s out there and found what, how things work.... You are really only exposed to one way of life, unless they travel, most people don’t really know much about what happens in the world ... because there is, you know, a lot of different ways to do things. So there are a lot of different ways for people to act and it’s, it’s interesting to see the different system where those things are done differently ... particularly where values are different. You know, you really didn’t think about that, just because, typically you have a family and the ... you are away from your hometown and, and<<when you are >> in your own town and you are sort of immersed in your own culture, you don’t really think about your value system and how you think about things. There is just one system, and it’s really hard to gauge that.

Greg’s difficulty was in making Japanese friends, and he ended up with too much free time, which he used to study on his own. This may explain the impressive gain in his reading/grammar and character/vocabulary as shown in Table 2. He never thought that he would graduate with a degree in Japanese, but he had decided to major in Japanese as well as his original specialization, computer science. He successfully graduated with the two degrees. He also feels that his perception of study abroad is more positive now than before, with a hint of nostalgia. At the time of the 2005 interview, he was in Japan looking for a job teaching English.

Sam truly enjoyed his homestay. His host mother later visited him and his (American) mother in the United States more than once. He

participated in two major extracurricular activities: glee club and church choir. It appears that he enjoyed every one of his activities and found that all aspects of his experiences contributed to his gains, as seen in this exchange:

Interviewer: Do you think that overall, your study abroad experience met your expectations?

Sam: I think I did more than that. Because first of all, I expected I’d get better <<learn>> Japanese but I was a pretty much in a perfect position to improve. I was in a host family. My host mother was very concerned about my life, very curious about me. So <<we>> talked a lot about many different topics. It allowed me, opportunities xx rest of the family and to learn a lot about Japanese culture to improve my ability. Also, I had a mentor in a school program. Expert expert. I got a lot of guidance that helped there. And also, the club. ... I joined the club, and I joined a church choir, and I feel altogether was just such a great opportunity. I never expected things to come together like that. Because I heard a lot of horror stories from other students that a lot of stories about how things did not turn out well. You know, their host family, they joined a club but didn’t like it, so they ended up hanging around with American students all the time.... Like I said, things like that could have happened to me. That’s one way that it meets my expectations.

Besides gains in language proficiency, he seems to feel that he grew as a person as a result of knowing very different perspectives. He says that being in Japan gave him an opportunity to experience racial minority for the first time:

For one, it’s the first time in my life that I would ever, I can ever state that I was a racial minority. I actually got that experience.... Also, it was difficult to everybody. You feel you do the best to fit in, but still kind of running out against the barrier.

Sam also graduated with two degrees—in linguistics and in Japanese. At the time of the recent in-

terview, he was looking for a job before eventually pursuing a higher degree at a graduate school.

Peter did not complete the first, immediate post-study-abroad questionnaire. The recent 2005 interview revealed that he had been suffering from a reverse culture shock immediately after his return to the United States, which made him unmotivated to study Japanese at his home institution. This may explain his reluctance to participate in the post-study-abroad test and questionnaire—except for the OPI. His responses to the pre-departure questionnaire indicated that he wanted to improve every aspect of his Japanese language. He also indicated that he hoped to achieve personal growth and cultural understanding as well, and that all were equally important to him. As seen in Table 1, his oral proficiency surpassed all the other participants before study abroad and improved further during his time in Japan. What helped him the most was his activity in the kendo club where no one spoke English. He also says that his Japanese improved in all areas, including writing, which was largely due to formal instruction. In addition to his gains in language proficiency, he learned to see his own culture differently. In response to the question of what his greatest gain besides language was, he responded:

Probably being able to take America out of context. Like, I can look at Japan objectively because I'm not Japanese. But coming back to America, I'm able to look at America and politics and societies and things like that, very critically as well. Like it's not just accept this fact, <<that or something>> else. So coming back and realize, hey, you know, there's no reason why we can't have national health insurance and something like that. Pretty important I think.

Peter graduated as a Japanese major, and is now working for a company where he translates Japanese into English.

Concluding Remarks

A close look at individual participants and their own perceptions uncovered the participants' diverse experiences—despite the fact that the five participants were relatively homogenous in terms of their social status, age, race, and gender. Because of this variation, it is vital to consider

participants' own perceptions and accounts when examining the effects of study abroad.

The ways in which the participants choose to speak the Japanese language now (e.g., preference for the plain forms speech style vs. efforts to use more polite language) were shaped by their experiences, such as the host family's and friends' encouragement to use the plain form, another student's conscious efforts not to forget *~desu/masu* after a critical linguistic incident, and the other two students' careful and consistent efforts to use appropriate language in their club activities.

The participants' gains from study abroad extend far beyond language proficiency. They broadened their perspectives in the ways they view the world and their country. The courses of their careers and their lives are, or may be, largely influenced by their study abroad experiences. The impact seems alive and well almost 2 years after their return to the United States.

Notes

1. The entire questionnaire as well as a detailed report of the participants' responses can be found in Iwasaki (in press).

2. To my knowledge, data or studies that support the equivalencies of the tests of the same levels given in different years, but because this is the most well-established published test of the Japanese, this test was used.

3. Only post-study-abroad OPI tapes were sent to ACTFL for official ratings. This was because the author was concerned about potential rating biases as a result of knowing the interviewees' pre-study-abroad proficiency ratings and the fact that they had studied abroad for a year. When an interview conducted by a certified tester is sent to ACTFL (to be precise, its affiliated division Language Testing International), the interview is sent first sent to another certified tester to obtain his/her rating without revealing the interviewer's ratings. When the second rater's rating matches that of the interviewer's, then the rating becomes official. If not, the interview is sent to yet another rater, and the rating agreed by two raters become an official rating.

4. Those who take the JLPT need to score 70% or higher on the Level 1 test to receive a Level 1 proficiency certificate and 60% or higher to receive a Level 2, 3, or 4 certificate.

5. In the transcripts of the participants' responses, "..." indicates that some parts are omitted, xx indicates that the segments were difficult to decipher, and segments within << >> were recorded as the best

guess of the author. The recording quality of two interviews (Sam's and Greg's) was poor, and they thus contained more unintelligible sequences than the other interviews.

6. *Practicum* refers to exchange students from Japan who help with Japanese language courses for course units at the participant's home institution.

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Appendix A

- No.2* I expect that my study abroad experience will change me as an individual.
- No.3 I would like to focus on improving my ability to speak the language.
- No.4 I would like to focus on improving my ability to read Japanese.
- No.5 I would like to focus on improving my ability to write Japanese.
- No.6 I would like to focus on improving my listening comprehension.
- No.7 I would like to increase my Japanese vocabulary.
- No.8 I would like to gain more kanji knowledge.
- No.9 I would like to gain a deeper understanding of Japanese culture.
- No.10 I would like to make a lot of Japanese friends.
- No.11 I would like to have as much contact with Japanese people as possible.

Note: The item numbers on the pre-study-abroad questionnaire correspond to the item numbers on the post-study-abroad questionnaire. There is no item no. 1 on the pre-study-abroad questionnaire because there was no item that corresponds to no. 1 on the post-study-abroad questionnaire.

Appendix B

- No. 1 I feel that I gained the kind of overseas experience I wished to gain.
- No. 2 My study abroad experience changed me as an individual.
- No. 3 I am happy with my improvement in the ability to speak Japanese.
- No. 4 I am happy with my improvement in the ability to read Japanese.
- No. 5 I am happy with my improvement in the ability to write Japanese.
- No. 6 I am happy with my improvement in listening comprehension.
- No. 7 I am happy with my increased knowledge of Japanese vocabulary.
- No. 8 I have gained more kanji knowledge.
- No. 9 I gained a deeper understanding of Japanese culture.
- No. 10 I made a lot of Japanese friends.
- No. 11 I had as much contact with Japanese people as I expected.

FACILITATED LEARNING ON STUDY ABROAD: AN APPROACH¹

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Introduction

I would like to present an argument with, I think, significant implications for the field of study abroad. Much of the argument—especially those aspects dealing with learning—is not particularly new. John Dewey would immediately recognize its contours. Simply stated: *In our development of study abroad programs we need to follow the learning trajectories set by our students as they progress from study at home to study abroad.* As we follow those trajectories, a rich set of implications emerges regarding the structure and goals of study abroad. In this paper I try to unpack some of them.

As examples, I present approaches to institutional development that I have been involved with in Japan. In many ways Japanese universities present the ideal test case for thinking about these issues. They share a widespread interest in institutional development and internationalization. Already, they are one of the leading destinations for international students, especially those from East Asia. Increasing numbers of Japanese students are traveling abroad to study and growing numbers of American and European students are studying in Japan.

In addition, Japanese language and culture are products of long periods of relative isolation. The challenges faced by Japanese students studying abroad, or by foreign students in Japan, are among the most significant challenges faced by any cohorts of cross-border students. Japan's economic doldrums, the rapid growth in economies in neighboring countries, and the need for corporate Japan to shift from a manufacturing to a knowledge base all combine to give considerable urgency to issues of institutional development in higher education. These are highlighted in the decision by Waseda University, one of Japan's

best-known institutions of higher education, to create a new undergraduate division, the School of International Liberal Studies. The school opened in the spring of 2004 after a planning process that stretched over several years. I served as advisor to the university in this process and have played an active role in shaping study abroad programs for its students.

The need for students to be active learners, to take responsibility for their own learning, is widely recognized in Japan. It also provides a key rationale for the creation of the School of International Liberal Studies (SILS). SILS differs from other schools, both within Waseda and throughout much of Japan, because, in its planning, considerable attention was paid to the social contexts within which students would learn. Students would work in small, intensive classes. Courses would be “discussion- and project-based” and would focus on the development of creative thinkers engaging not only each other and their instructors, but also the greater world by virtue of special structures built into the new school. Specifically, it would be kept relatively small, one-third of its students would come from outside of Japan, classes would largely be conducted in English, and all domestic students would be required to spend a year studying abroad. In addition, almost two hundred students, largely from universities in the United States and Europe, but also from Asia, would participate in a one-year study abroad program at SILS taking classes with its regular students. This represents a dramatic shift for higher education in Japan, and, indeed, few comparable institutions are found anywhere in today's world.

Socially Engaged Learning: Settings and Processes

Several trends dominate institutional development in higher education today. These include the need for universities to adapt to new markets, to use technology in new ways, to rethink revenue sources and uses, and to create new partnerships, among others. One trend often not included in such lists, but that is both widespread and growing, is the need for institutions to support and advocate *socially engaged learning*. This is seen, in part, in the expansion of higher education in a variety of new settings including internships, service learning, volunteer activities, and study. Socially engaged learning, broadly conceived, also lies at the basis of the movement of universities into new markets, seen both in the development of extension centers for life long learning and in the growth of professional degree programs. All of these trends are well developed in the United States; they are becoming increasingly commonplace in Japan.

This idea, however, extends well beyond the *settings* of education to include learning *processes*. There is a widespread consensus in the literature on higher education that students learn best when they are fully engaged in a community of learners.² The members of such communities support, encourage, and facilitate each other's learning. This facilitation comes in part by providing a rich social context to encourage inquiry, a context where the enthusiasm or puzzlement of one student plays off against that of another; where, rather than students working in isolation to prepare for tests, they engage complex problems together in search of any of a range of possible solutions.

But the processes of learning extend beyond motivating students to engage challenging tasks. They include, most centrally, the development of critical analytical skills, the ability to evaluate evidence and opposing arguments, the ability to situate problems within complex contexts and to evaluate which of many possible interpretive strategies 'fits' best. Within the literature on higher education, considerable attention has focused on the American liberal arts college as epitomizing these trends. Any institution searching for good practices in higher education will certainly encounter this literature, and many are

likely to replicate at least parts of the process that, viewed from the perspective of learning, led to the creation of the School for International Liberal Studies.

Anyone delving into the literature on learning will soon encounter the works of John Dewey (1859-1952). He is in many ways the pioneer of modern educational theory and his thinking focused centrally on the need to engage students *socially* in learning processes. He argued that education is fundamentally a form of socialization, a form of training in which students learn to think and act in ways that serve them, their futures, and the greater society in which they live. His approach *merged thinking and doing*, and his works include such classics as *Democracy and Education* (1916), *Art as Experience* (1934), *Experience and Education* (1938), and *Logic: The Theory of Inquiry* (1938).

Though he was widely influential during his lifetime, as he watched others implement his ideas, he recognized he was often misunderstood. I suspect much of this comes from two sources: first, the intrinsic difficulty of building institutions around complex and subtle ideas, and, secondly, some of the inherent complexities in his ideas. These complexities have much to do with the moment in which he lived and the novel response he, in large part following the pathbreaking work of a colleague, C.S. Peirce, proposed.

In the body of this paper I would like to examine their work in some detail in search of how we might implement the notion of socially engaged learning as students enter a second culture. I recommend this path to thinking about study abroad for several reasons. A key one is that study abroad, as a field, remains under-theorized. Study abroad—as an extended moment in the lives of students—possesses an integral unity, an *experiential* unity that demands a unified approach able to incorporate the totality of that experience. And yet there is little consensus as to what might constitute such an approach. Finally, our students, as adults, need signposts to aid them in understanding their own experience. Such signposts should aid them in articulating that experience at higher levels of thought. The works of Dewey and Peirce provide, I think, a surprisingly unified way to respond to these issues.

Let me quickly add some caveats. There are many good reasons for studying abroad including

simply taking courses not available at one's home school. I suspect this rationale will become increasingly less important in the future with the development of new technology. The more profound reason, I think, is to learn about and to acquire a second language and culture (note the stress on learning *and* doing). I will focus on this latter area. In doing this I am not suggesting that study abroad sites should marshal all of their educational resources in this area—on training students to link their on-site experience with key debates and controversies in the academy—only that this is one appropriate, and, I think, necessary goal. Secondly, I am not suggesting the Dewey and Peirce are the only source for such ideas. But they seem to be a good place to start.

John Dewey and Experience

Dewey has written extensively on the relation between education and experience. Experience for him has a rather technical meaning closely related to Peirce's notion of semiosis or signification. Experience triggers the movement of chains of signs, of signification, and these, in turn, shape action. This movement, when well placed, leads to thinking or "inquiry." This direct link between experience, the use of signs, and the development of thought is of particular importance to study abroad. And this is especially true of programs conducted in second languages or incorporating the study of local languages. In such programs students are challenged to link experience to *two* systems of signification.

I will go into more detail on this in a moment. But here it is worth stressing that Dewey did not feel all experiences are educative. Indeed, he felt experiences can easily become *mis-educative* and that this is all too often the case in formal education. (Math phobias among Japanese college students are an excellent example.) Educative experiences share two traits: (1) they encourage further learning, further engagement of the tools of thinking with new environments and tasks, and (2) they encourage the development of worthwhile modes of human society. He saw democracy as the ultimate form of social organization—a form in which each individual as a microcosm of the greater society had to have the ability to think and reason clearly. For study abroad, we would pre-

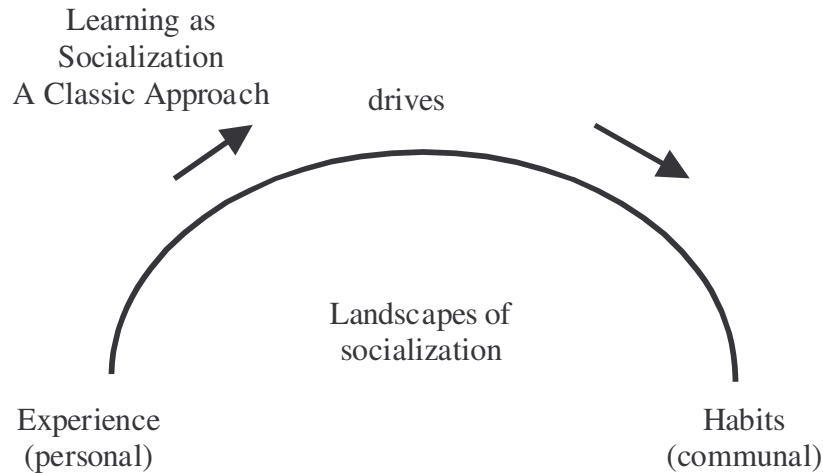
sumably extend this notion to include learning modes of global citizenship and inter-cultural understanding.³

Dewey also argued that students need to be involved in *socially engaged learning*—in learning styles that engage them in working through—often in collaboration with others—the relations between what they know (their past experience) and the immediate settings and tasks confronting them. This 'working through' is done in signs, in playing with signification (i.e., thinking), and comes to define learning. According to Dewey, the role of the instructor is to shape the learning curve students engage by shaping the environments in which they find themselves:

A primary responsibility of educators is that they not only be aware of the general principle of the shaping of actual experience by environing conditions, but that they also recognize in the concrete what surroundings are conducive to having experiences that lead to growth. Above all, they should know how to utilize the surroundings, physical and social, that exist so as to extract from them all that they have to contribute to building up experiences that are worth while. (Dewey 1938: 40)

For Dewey continuity is the key educational principle. New experiences are invariably incorporated into one's understanding of prior experience. In some fundamental sense, we cannot start afresh. All learning, all signification, is linked to prior learning, to our understandings of prior experience. Much of the goal of education is to get each student to activate this relation in his or her own thinking processes.

This process focuses on the active role of the learner. Education becomes less a matter of mastering testable material and more a matter of socialization—socializing students for their future roles, socializing them to the contours of the world they will inherit. Dewey has argued that, throughout this process, students need to participate in shaping their formal learning processes. Presumably one goal of all study abroad programs would be to coach students on how to go about learning on-site so that they might, throughout their subsequent careers, be efficient learners, especially in complex multi-cultural arenas.



I will argue below that as we facilitate these learning processes our key jobs are, following Dewey, (1) to shape learning environments, (2) to provide students with the tools and insights that permit them both to negotiate these environments and to take charge, as possible, of the very special learning processes that unfold as one enters a second culture, and (3) that the goals of study abroad are the goals of liberal education in today's world, the development of critical thinking skills, of sympathetic understandings of other peoples, and of a vigilant awareness of the potential of human life and social organization.

Before elaborating on these issues, I would like to take a brief detour, to discuss institutional constraints often facing the development of study abroad. My focus is on programs linking Japan and other countries, though I suspect similarities can be found elsewhere.

Study at Home, Study Abroad

Often, studying abroad can simply mean studying at another institution. Indeed this is close to its intrinsic Japanese meaning where *ryuugaku* is better translated as “study away.” In Japanese, one can distinguish between “studying away in another country” (*kaigai ryuugaku* 海外留学) and “studying away in your own country” (*kokunai ryuugaku* 国内留学). Indeed, international degree seeking students within Japanese universities are regularly referred to as “study away students” (*ryuugakusei* 留学生).

In contrast the English “study abroad” appears to build on an implicit distinction between studying at one's home institution and studying abroad in the setting of another culture and language. Such distinctions are further complicated by different approaches in Japan and the United States to thinking about credits and credit transfer, as well as residency and graduation requirements. For example, Japan's Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology has only recently made it possible for students to transfer substantial numbers of credits between institutions and there continues to be little student mobility between universities in Japan—in stark contrast to the situation in the United States.

These are just a few of the issues shaping—often in relatively hidden ways—institutional and personal assumptions and expectations regarding study abroad. Others include:

- A strong focus within much of higher education on the transmission of relatively abstract, specialist knowledge. This is typically done in monolingual environments among students and faculty who share a common culture and social class. Such shared experiences, shared ‘life-worlds’, link most local faculty with their local students and implicitly shape much of learning and teaching. They determine both what students and faculty *can* talk about and what they *need* to talk about. Since much of this is hidden it means they often do not recognize the challenges it present to students from distant cultures. In our normal university settings this

supports the notion that language is transparent and that “seeing is believing.” Consequently any shortcomings on the part of the international student are often taken as reflecting shortcomings in language skills, not differing life-worlds, implicit assumptions, or cultural backgrounds.

- If language is transparent, then either students must be trained to understand local faculty in the local language, or local faculty must be asked to teach in the students’ language. In both cases there is little sense that study abroad comprises a special field—caught between languages, between systems of signification. Accordingly there is little sense that faculty should, in their teaching, bridge between both content (their academic disciplines) and the language learning needs of students. At one level this is quite curious in that nearly all faculty have spent considerable time studying a second language. They are well placed, by virtue of such experience, to create bridging courses, perhaps working with specialist language faculty, to serve the needs of students. And yet few such courses are to be found.

- This is often supported by a preference for generalist workers, rather than specialists, and for centralized financial management, especially in Japan. For example, staff and administrative appointments in study abroad programs in Japan will often rotate among all of the available staff and faculty of the university, and financial authority over programs is rarely delegated to those responsible for the programs. Such patterns impede innovation.

- A tendency for home institutions, in both the United States and Japan, to create island programs abroad managed and staffed by the home institution. Such programs have little impact on local universities and their development.

These issues often combine in powerful ways. Their net effect is often:

- Either to ‘ghettoize’ study abroad on the host campus in a “separate” program or language school or to simply integrate such students into the regular student body.

- To discourage sending institutions from thinking seriously about the role of study abroad in the education of their students. Often faculty at the home institution treat this as a gap in the education of their students. And students, sensing this, often travel abroad with unfocused and unrealistic expectations about what they might accomplish. This lack of focus, coupled with a common assumption that magical things will happen to their language fluency as soon as they arrive on-site, often poorly prepare students for the realities they encounter. And this, in turn, can lead to relatively low performance outcomes on the part of students.

- To discourage receiving institutions from thinking seriously about the needs of incoming students and from working out how—educationally—the host institution, its faculty and students, can profit from hosting study abroad student groups.

- To be slow to develop the infrastructural needs of study abroad both within institutions and between them. This becomes a pressing issue as increasing numbers of students participate in cross-border studies. Broadly speaking this is true in three areas: the allocation of sufficient numbers of appropriate staff and faculty, the development of educational models and methods, and finally, securing the safety and wellbeing of students.

Please note that these issues are not true of all schools and programs. And, more importantly, it should be stressed that nearly all students, regardless of where they go and how they are prepared, continue to state that their experience abroad was among the most valuable experiences of their college years.

A Crisis in Reference: The Paradox of Continuity

While Dewey has argued continuity is the key educational principle, study abroad presents the student with a profound sense of discontinuity. Familiar sign systems, flavors, and faces no longer surround the student. This can create a crisis in the student’s sense of self and society. It

is widely recognized that such crises can become powerful educational forces.⁴

Roshelle argues that learning springs from a disjuncture between the past and the present. He refers to this as the ‘paradox of continuity’ (1995). Even then, in agreement with Dewey, he argues that learning proceeds largely from prior knowledge and only secondarily from presented material. And yet, if that is the case, what is the source and what are the dimensions of the prior knowledge that aid students as they begin their sojourns abroad?

I would like to suggest that, as we think about facilitating learning for students in distant languages and cultures, we begin by focusing on our students as well socialized speakers of their native languages, languages that are, by virtue of the student’s new setting, rendered largely silent. Even students exceptionally well prepared in the new language, if this is their first lengthy sojourn within it, will soon encounter what we might think of as a ‘crisis in reference.’ Words invariably mean more or less than their textbook equivalents. Students invariably search for ways of saying in the new language what they would say in their native language. The student’s ability to make sense of the world and, most importantly, to carry out daily transactions, sharing greetings, posing questions, expressing humor or regret, irony or sarcasm are all greatly challenged.

In part this springs from a limited mastery of the new code. As the student searches for words, words ‘fail’ him or her. They do not ‘come to mind.’ But more importantly, again especially for students moving between languages like English and Japanese, it springs from a lack of familiarity with the way in which these languages depend on context as they make meaning.

Far from being transparent, languages articulate well-developed, densely structured symbolic worlds. These worlds, the complex relations between terms and contexts, and the specific semantic and referential ranges shaping them, are instantiated, are created anew, in each usage. This provides for both their dynamism and their persistence.

Speaking can constitute powerful ways of acting.⁵ And social action, in its various guises, lies at the base of the social sciences. All social sciences have well developed methods for analyzing, for thinking about, contextual performance.

These range from notions of rational choice and bureaucratic calculability in fields such as economics and political science to the analysis of schema in social psychology and thick description in anthropology. The literature in this area is immense and much of the modern university is devoted to understanding and developing it. Broadly speaking this literature mirrors much of what occurs in the humanities in the discussion of literary texts. In both cases complex systems of signification are utilized in understanding specific texts or moments. And in both cases these conversations are mediated by the everyday worlds and everyday understandings of participants.

In suggesting that we need to follow the sense making processes our students carry with them on study abroad I am suggesting that these processes, if encouraged to unfold in well shaped environments, should lead to the key concerns of the academy. I am also suggesting that study abroad comprises a special, liminal moment of symbolic disjuncture—a teachable moment—when students are scrambling to get their footing in a new terrain. Rather than leaving this process to them, and to all of the inevitable partial and misplaced understandings that will develop, I am recommending that we engage them in dialogue constructing evocative and critical understandings of the dimensions of their new home in a second culture.

Our students are, especially when they go on study abroad, intellectually and emotionally needy, and very much in search of synthetic moments—moments when the new terrain begins to make sense in new and interesting ways. Such moments of synthesis are all too often lacking in the modern academy and its devotion to narrow specialization. Our students also, at least from my experience, are ready to learn and employ the tools of critical thinking as they engage in making sense of their new environments (much more about this later). Taken together, this combination of personal engagement, critical thinking, and the quest for synthetic understanding, especially when carried out in the context of a second culture defines, I suspect, liberal education, at its best, today. If so, this means that much of an institution’s *best education* can and should be done abroad.

In the following pages I would like to suggest that, to tap the potential of study abroad for learning, we need to develop, or, perhaps, simply

catalogue and share with each other, ideas and practices that help bridge the special field of study abroad and the normal practices of the academy. I should stress that I am not advocating keeping study abroad separate from the larger academy—from students and faculty who typically study at home. If anything much of what follows is meant to encourage faculty to recognize that they can learn much about their disciplines, and much about the often hidden roles of culture and language in their teaching, by building bridges from their normal courses and concerns to those of study abroad.

Our students, as undergraduates, are not likely to be well prepared to engage in advanced research projects, but they are prepared, and might well be ideally so by virtue of their biographies and analytic skills, to produce new knowledge, knowledge situated between human communities.

Bridging Ideas

I have already argued that every discipline roots itself in the everyday world, in everyday experience and that most social science disciplines have specialties dealing with this. Each is well positioned to build bridges between the special concerns of their disciplines and study abroad. Ideally, study abroad programs would link such specialists at the home and host campus so they might work together in guiding students. This is but one area where inter-institutional cooperation is likely to be particularly effective. Such faculty would share ways of thinking and talking, and indeed doing research, that they could introduce to students. In like manner, to marshal appropriate resources for specific groupings of students, host institutions might develop thematic based programs linking language and disciplinary or interdisciplinary study, especially for the initial transitional period of study.

In what follows I would like to suggest one set of bridging ideas to aid in structuring learning environments on study abroad.

In suggesting that the symbolic processes students have mastered in acquiring their native culture and language can guide us in aiding their learning on-site I am not making an argument about human cognition, *per se*. Rather, I am suggesting that our students, as adult learners, have access to a full range of cognitive abilities. On

study abroad our job has much less to do with understanding those abilities than with triggering them. We need to encourage students to use them critically in reflecting on the new “information streams” they find around themselves. These streams, though symbolically encoded in ways that may be unfamiliar to students, are similar to other streams they have spent their lives analyzing, interpreting, and playing with in their home cultures. In stating this I am very much standing in the shadow of Dewey and his colleague, C.S. Peirce. I would like to turn to them more directly now.

I do this for several reasons. First, they both were centrally concerned with critical thinking and with how it might be nurtured in human communities. This is, presumably, the central goal of higher education. Second, in exploring the mechanics of thinking they focused on how we make meaning, or at least how we might grasp the logic of that process, and in doing this they created a body of thought that “fits” study abroad exceptionally well. I will suggest a set of ideas developed directly from their work that provides a vocabulary for discussing the methods and goals of study abroad. They would be the first to acknowledge that no vocabulary is ever complete.

Their way of thinking was very situated, embodied, and, even though it preceded structuralism, post-structuralist. Peirce used the term, pragmatism, to refer to it and saw the logic of signification, or more specifically semiosis, as its central concern. They pursued an approach that emphasized the dynamism of signification arguing that signs move people and thought, that they are intimately connected to human life and culture. For all of these reasons their work has attracted considerable attention in recent years.⁶ To simplify my presentation I would like to present two charts. The first outlines some basic ideas espoused by Peirce that also shape the work of Dewey. The second links their concerns with study abroad as a field.

Peirce (1839-1914) remains an enigmatic figure. He was a philosopher, mathematician, and logician. He wrote continuously and yet never had an enduring academic appointment. His work is abstract, incomplete, and inconsistent, especially in his use of terms. And yet it is also very suggestive.

Four Formal Conditions of Signs, C.S. Peirce

	<i>Firstness</i>	<i>Secondness</i>	<i>Thirdness</i>
	(1) <i>Presentative condition</i> (the ground of a sign; a certain sense or connotation) ---- A feeling, a perception or perceptual judgement (an uncontrollable presence and its effect on consciousness) T/62	(2) <i>Representative condition</i> (the object of a sign; the immediate >> dynamic object) ---- A reaction (a surprise)	(3) <i>Interpretive condition</i> (the interpretant of the sign) ---- A thought (a habit, a mode of behavior or action)
(4) <i>Triadic condition</i>	Sign	Object	Interpretant
Varieties of signs	Icon	Index	Symbol

Liszka in his valuable introduction to Peirce, argues that signs must fulfill four formal conditions (1996: 20-43). First is the “presentative condition.” “The sign always presents its object as that object in some regard or respect.” (Liszka, 29) This may be thought of as the ground of the sign. Each sign incorporates a special character or aspect that qualifies or shapes it. In his 1903 Harvard Lectures, Peirce traces the movement of experience from an initial impulse, a ‘*quality of feeling*.’ (Peirce 1997: 167) It is a perception or perceptual judgment, an uncontrollable presence and its effect on consciousness. Its serves as the basis for the sign to represent its object. He speaks of this as a “*firstness*”.

Second is the “representative condition.” A sign must correlate or represent an object. The object can be broken into both an immediate object and a dynamic object. The immediate object is object viewed from the context of the sign. This has to do with its “connectedness” to an object, with its “aboutness.” The dynamic object offers resistance and provides a constraint on the process of semiosis. It compels the sign driving the signification process. This condition is a “*secondness*,” a *reaction* to the initial perception.

Third is the “interpretive condition.” Every sign, formally to be a sign, must be interpreted, creating what Peirce refers to as the interpretant. This can take different forms and can be viewed

as a product, process, or effect. Interpretants range from the “total unanalyzed effect,” to a “feeling” produced by the sign, to a habit of action which the sign engenders. Often the interpretant is a translation of the sign into another sign or set of signs. The interpretant viewed, for example, from this process of translation can include various modes of inference. Peirce spends considerable time discussing these in that they provide ways, within thought, of moving from one set of signs to another. They include deduction, induction, and abduction. Later in his career he increasingly stressed abduction, moving analogically and metaphorically between ideas, as the key method for the development of thought and science. Peirce speaks of this as a “*thirdness*”.

All of this is summarized in Peirce’s famous pragmatic maxim: “Consider what effects, that might conceivably have practical bearings, we conceive the object of our conception to have. Then, our conception of these effects is the whole of our conception of the object.” (1997: 111) Signs do much of the work of life. They trigger and comprise our thinking and much of our behavior.

The fourth and final formal condition is the “triadic condition.” This refers to the interrelation of the sign, object, and interpretant. These are not separate entities but phases in the process of semiosis. They cannot be reduced to dyadic pairs.

While this is, necessarily, a brief introduction to a complex set of ideas, the general thrust of Peirce's thought should be clear. For Peirce 'thinking' is a natural process. It is, simply stated, what we, as human beings, do. Signs enter us from the outside, they trigger a reaction within us, and this reaction triggers further reactions, many of these ultimately reaching back out into the world. We are in contact with the world; it communicates with us through our sense perceptions. When things go well we add something to that communication, something pushing it in a new or helpful direction as it goes back out into the world. Most of the time it flows through us in relatively automatic ways.

Peirce and Dewey present us with an optimistic vision of the human condition and our future. Both were centrally concerned with the directions in which this cycle of signification would flow. And both felt strongly that history should and perhaps does have a direction. Both wrote at length about the notion of "inquiry." And they both felt that when inquiry is well shaped it will flow in helpful directions. They saw their work as furthering the growth of science, on the one hand, and democracy on the other. Indeed Peirce saw his pragmatism as summarizing the scientific method. As long as signs are free to circulate, and as long as they circulate in good directions, in healthy modes of inquiry, erroneous thinking will eventually be overtaken by better thinking.

At the level of inquiry it would seem that the key question deals with the quality of the process, with the level of the inputs and the outcomes. They both felt that skilled thinkers grow skilled through practice and that, to borrow one of Peirce's terms, the key to practice was *surprise*.⁷ Thinking means encountering new things in new settings and discovering new and unanticipated patterns and processes. Through this process skilled thinkers come into being; they become analytically sophisticated and critical. But they also were both fully aware of the popular adage, 'junk in, junk out.'

Their work is immediately applicable to current debates on the directions of higher education throughout much of the world. Here, again, higher education in Japan, more broadly East Asian higher education, offers a particularly interesting test case. It is driven by a notion of fairness—

fairness that is often mechanically reproducible by virtue of what, I suspect, Peirce and Dewey would view as one-dimensional testing processes. But I think they would also acknowledge that such testing processes have served East Asian societies well. Fairness, even when mechanically administered, is one essential aspect of democracy. Dewey worried greatly that educators would focus on the transmission of facts, of relatively lifeless 'knowledge', to their students. And this worry has come to be widely shared by many educators across East Asia in recent years.

Let me delve more deeply into Dewey's understanding of the nature of thinking. Here he comments on judgments occurring in analysis and synthesis:

Through judging confused data are cleared up, and seemingly incoherent and disconnected facts brought together. Things may have a peculiar feeling for us, they may make a certain indescribable impression upon us; the thing may feel round (that is, present a quality which we afterwards define as round), an act may seem rude (or what we afterwards classify as rude), and yet this quality may be lost, absorbed, blended in the total value of the situation. Only as we need to use just that aspect of the original situation as a tool of grasping something perplexing or obscure in another situation, do we abstract or detach the quality so that it becomes individualized. Only because we need to characterize the shape of some new object or the moral quality of some new act, does the element of roundness or rudeness in the old experience detach itself, and stand out as a distinctive feature. If the element thus selected clears up what is otherwise obscure in the one experience, if it settles what is uncertain, it thereby itself gains in positiveness and definiteness of meaning. (1997: 111)

He goes on:

The method that is employed in discovery, in reflective inquiry, cannot possibly be identified with the method that emerges *after* the discovery is made. In the genuine operation of inference, the mind is in the attitude of *search*, of *hunting*, of *projecting*,

of *trying this and that*; when the conclusion is reached, the search is at an end. (1997: 112)

And

As analysis is conceived to be a sort of picking to pieces, so synthesis is thought to be a sort of physical piecing together As analysis is *emphasizing*, so synthesis is placing; the one causes the emphasized fact or property to stand out as significant; the other gives what is selected its *context* or its

connection with what is signified. (1997: 114)

Study abroad, and especially classes meant to bridge between the students home institution and the new one, between the student's home experiences and his or her new experiences, seem uniquely suited to developing such skills. If so, how can those involved in managing or teaching in such programs facilitate this process?

I think Peirce has already provided a response. Please glance at the chart below.

Facilitating Learning: Inquiry on Study Abroad— A Developmental Arch

<i>Steps</i>	<i>Presentative</i>	<i>Representative</i>	<i>Interpretive</i>
<i>Direct Goals</i>	Participate in the lives of local people	Develop ability to observe and converse with local people	Develop critical thinking skills
<i>Indirect Goals</i>	Create friends in distant lands	Develop 'native intuitions' regarding language use	Develop 'scholarly intuitions' regarding social life and its understandings
<i>Facilitation Team</i> The student and:	Local friends, local people	Study abroad coordinators <i>at home</i> and <i>host</i> institutions (cultural counselors)	Faculty (<i>at home</i> and <i>host</i> institutions)
<i>Methods</i>	Access to social interaction in local community	Representing the process (data collection)	Interpretation of data (discourses in the humanities, natural and social sciences)
<i>Task and Skill Domains</i>	Attention	Memory	Reflection
	Doing	Narrating	Thinking
	Time	Talking	Tools
<i>Example</i>	On-site ethnographic assignments	Ethnographic interviews	Writing ethnography

The goal of the chart is to provide an integrated model of overall processes comprising what I refer to as *inquiry on study abroad*. I am not suggesting that entire programs need to be devoted to such inquiry, only that it should be *a* feature of *most* programs. Programs that do not incorporate this in some form are presumably either working with very different models of learning or they

have simply grafted study abroad onto their institution's normal ways of doing things ('abduced', in Peirce's terms) with relatively little institutional concern for the distinct learning processes characterizing this group of students.

I have tried to frame the chart in such a way that suggests, with some clarity, specific tasks and goals and yet is sufficiently general to be used in

almost any setting. My assumption is that those familiar with the possibilities and limitations of the local context—the fieldsite—would need to fill in and develop the chart, in consultation with the students. It is essential that students be involved in setting the goals and methods for their study (see Dewey 1938: 67). After explaining the overall form of the chart, I comment on some of the specific issues raised within it.

It tracks, and builds, on what Peirce and Dewey saw as the chains of signification linking us to the world, on our natural ways of thinking. Its first vertical column explains the steps involved in planning either the structure of overall programs or assignments in specific courses. These include direct and indirect goals, the different people who would be involved in fulfilling these goals, methods for fulfilling them, and the domains of skills and tasks involved in these processes. I conclude with two examples. The first is an argument that ethnography, as a mode of inquiry, closely parallels inquiry on study abroad and that ethnographic assignments present an immediately available means for fulfilling many of these goals. Secondly I provide a brief, but hopefully suggestive, example of the challenges confronting students moving between the symbolic worlds articulated within Japanese and English. I do this both as an example and because this transition, as a key one facing students going to or from Japan, deserves our attention.

In unpacking these issues I have found it particularly helpful to follow Peirce's triadic approach to the logic of signification, stressing the *presentative*, *representative*, and *interpretive* dimensions of this process.

In general the argument is that students must be *present* to new and rich sources of information, sources that engage and challenge them. While there are many possible sources of such information (e.g., books, lectures, visits to the theatre, museums, etc.). I am in agreement with Clifford Geertz when he states, somewhat cryptically, that there is little reason to go abroad to count the cats of Zanzibar (Geertz, 1973). Our reason for going abroad is to begin to understand the informal logic of other peoples' lives. Inquiry into the lives of local people would seem to be an essential component of study abroad and such inquiry necessarily begins with access to those lives. Access, alone, is insufficient. Students need to

learn to capture, at least partially, what they are witnessing. They need to learn to *represent process*, to capture their experience. This is a new skill for most of our students and it can be taught. Finally having made new information available to thought, they need to puzzle through its implications; they need to play with its possible *interpretations*. Our students are skilled at interpreting experience (most are veterans of twenty years of socialization!), but they have rarely been in situations where, caught between two cultures, so much attracts their attention. This is fertile ground for *inquiry*, for building bridges from such experiences to the best ideas available in today's university for understanding human culture in its various manifestations.

The First Step: Participating in the Lives of Local People

There is intrinsic value in simply visiting a foreign country. Surrounding oneself in a strange language, new sounds, flavors, and behaviors can be tremendously educational. But this is only the first step towards the educational richness of study abroad. The next is the most important: participating in the lives of local people. This can take many forms including roommates, host families, on-campus club and sports activities. The local off-campus community presents a particularly rich source of semi-structured social interactions for the visiting student. These include volunteer and other community activities and are often quite easy to facilitate. Recording the life history of a local senior or making presentations to students in local elementary schools, even babysitting, can be very rewarding and *educational* experiences for the international student.

It is worth stressing that cultural differences extend to the classroom—that simply attending classes with local instructors and, ideally, students, is an effective way to participate in lives structured along lines new to the international student.

For such experiences to be effective, the student must learn to observe and converse with local people. In doing this, students create data; they build up memories that can be tapped at future times. Training them in how to tap these memories, in how to transform experience into memory, becomes a second key objective. In

training students to represent their experience we are creating data that can become the object of critical analysis—of higher levels of thinking. These three stages shape much of Peirce’s work and they fit the logic of study abroad. I unpack each in more detail below.

It should be noted that these goals can be fulfilled in many different ways. They can be incorporated into special field-site seminars or included in assignments given in almost any course. Journal assignments and field-site diaries are especially effective. They encourage students to record their observations and in the process of recording them to reflect upon them. All too many students return from study abroad experiences not recognizing that their experiences, especially well structured ones, are eminently quotable in academic papers. Learning to recognize this transports study abroad from simply ‘studying abroad’ to becoming a year-long (or semester-long) individual research project—one that might well become central to a graduation paper on return to one’s home institution.

If the above constitute direct goals for study abroad then such goals support a set of broader indirect goals. These include creating friends in distant lands, developing ‘native intuitions’ regarding language use, and ‘scholarly’ ones regarding social life. It is worth stressing that such indirect goals, placed within the context of one’s undergraduate education, present an argument for how institutions should allocate resources to support efficient learning. Intuitions, quasi-recognitions of patterns that connect, are nefariously hard to train within the classroom. This is well recognized in language learning (though please recognize Iwasaki’s warning about the mis-educative potential of experience abroad in a companion article). It is also widely acknowledged that one of the lasting benefits of sojourns in new lands comes on returning home: you see your homeland with new eyes. This learning to distance oneself from one’s immediate world is one of the key goals of all the social sciences and humanities. And yet it is hard to imagine learning processes on-campus competing with the efficiency, especially in these areas, of well structured ones abroad.

All of this, in many ways, comes down to the need for our students to discover friendship in foreign lands. Not only does having a friend build

a bridge between differences, but having a friend almost necessarily means having someone with whom you talk *and think* about those differences. Two such friends coming together, both with well-developed sociological imaginations, could trigger in each other, in conversation with each other, all of the learning necessary to make the sojourn abroad worthwhile. It is worth stressing that there is no reason why students should only search among other students for friendships. Members of other generations, both younger and older, can also play this role.

This combination of direct and indirect goals, of those that can be immediately established and pursued by students and those that linger in the background, can be used to judge the success of individual programs. Taken together, they can begin to define study abroad as an educational field within a university curriculum.

The Facilitation Team

The chart includes an institutional argument for a division of labor between students, supporting staff, and faculty at the host *and* home institutions. Please notice that I have placed the student as the first member of the facilitation team. He or she must understand the overall goals of this chart *and* must be willing to take the initiative, to participate in the adventure. There is no substitute for this. From my experience, students recognize this and, when encouraged to reflect on it, will state that they are not fully ready for the challenge. Little in their prior life has prepared them for it.

Many of them have never lived among strangers and many, perhaps surprisingly, have never really spoken with a stranger. Our normal social life provides us with few un-choreographed moments when we interact with unknown people. Nearly all of our encounters are with classmates, colleagues, neighbors, clerks, and salespersons. As Simmel and others have taught, in all of these settings our relation precedes our meeting and channels the information we exchange along narrow tracks. These tracks blend effortlessly with our background knowledge of the world and such communication, while momentarily helpful, does not typically provide a broad stage for observing and conversing—we might “know” many people, but we often see them in a limited range of settings and rarely inquire in any depth about their

life experiences. And yet our students are in need of such a stage. Local friends and local people can provide it, but friendship is never automatic, and local people are often quite clueless about how they might aid a student from another land.

Part of the response to this situation is to encourage students to recognize they will need to become more outgoing, more adventuresome, more risk-taking as they go abroad. They need to recognize that friendship—as it normally emerges—is often based on a complex but familiar play of similarities and differences. Friends-to-be have spent years learning to read and project the signs of potential friendship. The same process occurs as students go abroad, but the signs are often different and there are many new ones. It takes time to make friends—students should be coached about this process and their need to be outgoing, but also about their ability to create new forms of friendship while abroad. Almost all local people, if approached appropriately, are happy to aid an inquisitive student from abroad. A student can turn neighbors, clerks, and fellow students into informants. All he or she has to do is ask a question, and then a follow-up one. But in asking that question she will be creating a new and unfamiliar relation, and this scares many students—until they begin doing it.

Part of the response falls to the program and its supporting structures. If learning is the core of study abroad and if students encounter significant and unexpected challenges, and this paper argues they do, then each program should have within its supporting staff and faculty a specialist charged with facilitating student learning.

This person could carry out multiple functions. First, since many programs are integrated into standard university coursework, often in large educational settings, this person becomes the personal advocate and advisor to the student. He or she, especially for the crucially important first weeks and months, is the only local person who really understands the goals and needs of the student. Depending on programmatic structure, this person might also be involved in arranging special classes and arranging home stays, as well as hiring and coaching instructors. Often, this person's most important task is to become a personal coach or consultant for the student. If much of the weight of learning hinges on the quality of engagement between the student and local society,

then even the best of students are likely to go through a hit-and-miss process as they try to access the people and settings surrounding them. All students can speed up their learning curves by having someone to counsel them, to guide them, as necessary, in their engagement with local society.

Expanding or rethinking the roles of staff and faculty is often one of the most difficult areas for universities as they become involved in new arenas. As institutions think about study abroad they should recognize that, *as an educational field*, it has much in common with fields such as music, lab sciences, computer science, museum and theatre studies, and nature conservation. In all of these areas, docents, lab specialists, instructors for musical instruments, nature guides, trainers and others have been recognized as playing a crucially important role to play in educating students.

In a recent and important text, Stephen Toulmin (2005) argues that much, perhaps most, of the development of modern science is due to implicit assumptions that are passed on to students, lessons that students learn within educational settings, but that rarely enter into the stream of formal education and even less into natural science publications. Such education has much more to do with a form of contextual *reasonableness* than with the abstract rationality. And yet the advancement of the natural sciences would be unthinkable without the rigors of this contextual training.⁸

Such reasonableness is directly linked to modes of *performance*. Specifically I am thinking about learning how hard to shake a test tube, how to distinguish the different songs of a bird, how hard to strike the keys of the piano. In each of these cases performance needs to be coached and the key job of the coach is to call the students attention to specific moments within a larger *performative landscape*.

Study abroad, especially for students moving between distant, non-cognate languages and cultures, poses the most substantive performative challenges a person is ever likely to face. It has become common knowledge that as Japanese students begin their studies abroad they often go through an extensive transitional period as they learn new performative skills. It is as if they must learn to talk in ways they have never talked before. A similar, if less noted, transition awaits students coming to Japan as they learn to talk in “Japa-

nese” ways. They must learn how to recognize and shift between complex forms of address or reference, to move on performative landscapes that little in their prior experience has prepared them for. I will try to explain some of the reasons for this in the concluding section. But here I would like to stress the need for institutions to recognize the performative quality of much of the learning that occurs, or should occur, on study abroad and the need for providing appropriate institutional support for such learning.

Much of this comes down to needing someone to talk with. In this sense the local coordinator functions much like a guide at a nature reserve. The person has a tremendous reserve of local knowledge (about which parties to attend, how to find a part time job, where to volunteer, which course to take or clubs to join...) but the person also understands the student’s and the co-operating institutions goals for study abroad. Understanding the local scene, the person is ideally suited to aid the student in shaping *strategies for engagement* and for giving the student feedback on what, among other things, her host mother probably meant when she made that comment. The coordinator also provides a crucially important safety-net for students. Students become emotionally vulnerable as they enter a new culture and are challenged in new and unexpected ways. It is important that institutions monitor student responses to these challenges and be ready to aid specific students when the need arises.

Finally, and most importantly, local faculty are central to this scheme. They aid the student in bridging between experience and the discourse of the academy. They provide both assignments and feedback to students designed both to enhance engagement with local society and the student’s development of critical thinking skills. As possible, they are centrally involved in planning the overall dimensions of the study abroad program.

Local faculty know better than anyone the strategic settings where observations can be made and conversations held to bridge between the normal concerns of the academy and the learning needs of students. Faculty at the home institution should be responsible for the overall education of students. It is important they not avoid this responsibility and that they encourage students to get the most out of the study abroad experience. Study abroad should be recognized as a process

beginning when a student enters college and not concluded until graduation. The home college should be centrally involved in all phases of this process. It should work closely with host universities to fulfill *its* educational goals. The development of new technologies presents a vast array of new tools for linking educational processes between institutions. These tools will change inter-university cooperation in fundamental ways, ways that we are only beginning to comprehend. Already it is possible for faculty at home to be centrally involved in a student’s education abroad.

Task and Skill Domains

If Dewey’s argument about continuity and learning is on track, and there seems to be much evidence to suggest it is,⁹ then learning is largely driven by prior learning, by prior tasks accomplished and skills developed. But if experience abroad presents a rupture in some of the ways I have suggested, then special attention needs to be given to the task and skill domains that are of central importance to study abroad. I have listed several of these. They are of particular importance in planning programs, activities, and assignments.

New cultural settings have both tremendously obvious dimensions (you take your shoes off in Japan) and absolutely hidden ones (e.g. Question: how do you say the English ‘I’ in Japanese, or the Japanese ‘*desu*’ in English? Answer: you don’t.). For moderately observant students the obvious ones should not need much coaching. But the hidden ones require new modes of *attention*—attention to context, language, and performance. This in turn takes *time*, coaching, and repeated visits to similar performative settings.

In our normal life as instructors we can assume considerable mastery on the part of our students *vis-a-vis* their ability to read local contexts. This is often not the case for students new to a culture and, if so, we need to design methods for sharpening their attentive skills, for calling their attention to dimensions of things they might easily miss. Stated somewhat differently, most assignments are product-driven. We ask students to present a report, or to write a paper, or take a test. Such products assume a fundamental mastery on the part of the student of the supporting skills and tasks. As students travel abroad, increasingly as-

signments should focus on underlying skills. For example, students coming to Japan could be asked to record situations in which they hear either of the alternating copula “*desu*” or “*da*” being used. A more advanced version could be to ask students to record when a speaker switches between these in speech act, and an even more advanced version would be to seek out and observe settings where speakers switch between “*desu*” and another alternative form, “*de gozaimasu*”.

Memory, itself, needs to be trained and one ready method is to encourage students to talk about their experiences. The cultural coordinator or counselor, by simply asking students questions or encouraging students to talk about experiences, is inviting them to *reflect* on experience and, often for the first time, to capture its lessons. Unless language returns to the scene of experience, that scene is often lost in the flood of time. In this sense, focused *talking* is a tremendously valuable *tool*. Talking with a knowledgeable and supportive friend, the cultural counselor, is a low-stakes mode of engagement. Surrounding students with such friends, people who will encourage them to talk should be one of the goals of program management.

In assignments and coursework opportunities should be created for the student to use her own language skills, to encounter her own voice, in highlighting, sharpening, engaging her experiences. Discussion oriented classes, collaborative projects and the like are valuable in large part because they provide the student with multiple opportunities to visit a topic and to search for things to say. This searching is a core skill that study abroad needs to foster.

Narrating—presenting an overview of experience from a single perspective—is another and writing is yet another. Each of these develops different but related skill groups. Teaching the techniques of these voices becomes one with encouraging students to root through a rich experiential environment in search of the most substantive, the most enlightening things to say.

Students will often think they should totally avoid other students from their country or school while abroad. If this encourages them to engage local society it is a good idea. But to the extent that it robs them of opportunities to reflect in language on their experience, an experience only fully shared (shareable?) with other students going

through it, then avoiding students with whom you share a common background can be counter-productive.

Ethnographic Assignments

I often provide students with what I refer to as an “ethnographic tutorial,” a document listing the many settings they should seek out and research topics they might pursue. Examples include: language use with host families, at part time jobs, or in clubs; the social organization of neighborhoods or *shotengai* (neighborhood business associations); institutional sketches of *kominkan* (community centers), the neighborhood temple or shrine; in-depth interviews on topics related to attitudes towards World War II, the peace constitution, the popularity of Korean pop culture in Japan, and the like.

For example, the *Tale of Genji* is one of the classics of world literature. As such, it should be read and taught at all of the universities of the world. Certainly it would be appropriate to include it as part of the curriculum of study abroad programs in Japan. But students who come to Japan also have the ability to explore the on-going reception of *Genji* in the lives of people today. In many ways this is a distinct topic from reading the text itself, and yet exploring “the living *Genji*” complements both a reading of the text and assignments designed to encourage this get students “into” Japan—especially those aspects of Japan they find interesting—in ways that can only be accomplished on-site.

This tutorial includes model sentences and vocabulary for making inquiries—in effect coaching students on language use patterns they might not yet know. It also suggests that students start with simple questions they can ask repeatedly of different people. Such inquiries, and the answers they receive, become the base for progressing to deeper conversations as a student’s skills expand and her knowledge of the topic deepens.

All of this might seem intrusive; we might want our students to figure these things out on their own. But, left to their own pursuits, it rarely occurs. Such activities require a sea-change in the way students see the local world and their role within it. They need to move from passively receiving whatever messages the world has to offer, to recognizing that the world, out there, is struc-

tured by historical, social and cultural forces, forces that can be tapped, if they take the initiative. It is easy to coach students in this, but it is hardly worth waiting for them to discover it themselves.

Ethnography, in its various forms, provides a particularly interesting tool for doing this. Ethnographic assignments can be quite flexible. Some projects could be very small, for example a Japanese student in the States could be asked to “report back on your roommates’ attitude about smoking,” or, at a more substantial level, to “survey the various forms of religion found in the local community and produce paper explaining them. Base this on original sources only—on your interviews with members of different religious groups.”

Most ethnography today is written from a perspective and with a reader in mind. This frees, and indeed, requires, the student to comment on those things attracting her attention. American students might assume that older Americans would prefer to live alone rather than with an adult child. And yet a student from Japan, beginning with other assumptions and carrying out a series of interviews with older Americans, might come to a very different set of conclusions.

Finally, ethnography is writing-intensive, beginning with field-notes and progressing through a series of drafts on the way to a final paper. This process presents multiple opportunities for reflection and for comments to be made on notes or drafts by faculty members, the cultural counselor, or other students.

Grounding Continuity: Capturing Shifting Representations

In closing I would like to present one example of the kind of analysis that Peirce might encourage us to think about as we try to bridge between the symbolic world of Japan and the United States.

Peirce has argued, I think convincingly, that a sign, far from being an isolated unit, will always lead to other signs. Each sign is its function within the process of semiosis, of signification. The interpretant of a sign is most commonly another sign. This is why signs are immediately linked to thinking and are inherently dynamic. They compel interpretation. This also means that expression is never complete; conversations, strings of signification, continue into the indefi-

nite future. This process can be captured at any given point and translations produced. For study abroad I have argued there are three points at which translation needs to be captured, supported, or encouraged. These are the moments of presentation (access), representation (data) and interpretation (discourse).

Any translation, if it succeeds in bridging between these three moments, must begin with grounded reference and move through representation towards, for example, engaging some form of social theory. I have chosen an example dealing with language, though I could just as easily imagine one dealing with markets, kinship, or gender identity—again, any of the concerns of the academy that can be linked to behavior in Japan.

My example builds on other aspects of Peirce’s work. He was also quite interested in what today we call *modeling*. And he developed systems of “existential graphs” to model, in ways that he found easily graspable, logic. In doing this, he was one of the founders of symbolic logic.

As mentioned earlier, he was also quite interested in the ground of signs and the varieties of signs. He gave us the terms icon, index, and symbol to express the three forms of relations to ground. Icons are signs that immediately express their ground. A baby’s cry (an icon) alerts us to the presence of a baby and to its state of agitation. In like manner, a weather vane designed to point in the direction of the wind will always do so. It immediately expresses its relation to its ground. Smoke, a thermometer, a gauge on a machine -- all are icons. They contrast most strongly with symbols. Symbols are defined by virtue of a social contract or agreement. They are, in Saussurean terms, arbitrary. “Green” refers to a particular color, because the speakers of English have agreed to it. They have inherited a compact that divides the world into greens and blues and yellows. None of these terms, as terms, points at colors, per se. They all indicate agreed upon areas within a symbolic system. The same is true for all of the following symbols: “dog,” “health,” “happiness,” or “sodium.”

Indexes are somewhere between these kinds of signs. They point to a relation within a context. Consider, “I did it.” All of the terms in this expression are indexes. We cannot fully know what any of them mean without visiting the ground of the utterance and discovering who “I” points at,

when he or she spoke (i.e. where to locate “did” in time), and what the “it” points at. Contrast this with, “Apples are red.” Here our knowledge of the code provides us with all of the information we need to comfortably understand the expression.

Indexical (or deictic) expressions can only be understood by reference to their ground. The meaning of “I” shifts with each speaker; and yet we also understand this by embedding the meaning of the term in the context of its utterance. Such indexical systems are fundamental to all human languages. They permit us to situate, in quite flexible ways, our signing abilities. Indexes pointing at social relations have been, within Japanese, developed to an extraordinary measure—at least this appears to be the case in contrast to similar systems in English.

In English number is a grammatical category. Because of this, in most utterances we distinguish, often repeatedly, between one and more than one. For example, “The dog is playing with it” presents alternating and obligatory number expressions four times (the/these, dog(s), is/are, it/them). To complicate things English has two categories of nouns, countable and uncountable. And because of this, Japanese students must spend years memorizing, with each new noun, whether it is countable (e.g. “many friends”) or uncountable (“much salt”). There is no particular reason for any of this. It simply is.

Most native English speakers understand the functions of number within English grammar so thoroughly they have never thought about it. In Japanese grammar, however, number is, essentially, a non-category. There are various ways of specifying number when necessary, but, as it turns out, this is rarely essential. And few, if any, of these ways spill over into the structure of the language.

Social deixis, signs pointing at social relations, play a similar role in the structure of Japanese grammar to the role of number in English grammar. Compare the following “translations” of a single text. It comes from a note I recently received from the post office telling me that they had delivered a package at my request. Here is the original:

郵便局からのお知らせ

いつも郵便局をご利用いただきありがとうございます。あなた様から過日お預かりしました下記のお客様あて ゆうパックをお届けいたしましたのでお知らせします。

I assume similar notes are provided by the post office in English speaking countries. If so, they presumably would want to include the following information

We have delivered your package to the address below.

Thank you for your business.

The Post Office

Below I present another translation capturing some of the “*surprising*” complexity, for the native English speaker, of the original. Please note that I have used arrows to express deictic conventions in the original that resist translation into English, but that in each case are part of a series of alternatives in Japanese (i.e. the difference between dog/dogs is similar to that between *shirase/oshirase*). All arrows point at, within the context of a specific ground, social relations as they are coded in Japanese.

Models and diagrams, in this case my use of arrows, are designed to emphasize particular features of complex systems. They do this to call such features “to mind,” to represent them, and in doing this, to make them available for further thought. Here is a translation of the above text.

A ↓note from the post office

(We) ➡thank⇨ (you) for (our) ↙receiving (your) continuing ↑use of the post office.
(We) ↓notify⇨ (you) that (we) have (↓↓)delivered⇨ to the ↑addressee below the package (we) ↓kept⇨ for ↑you earlier.

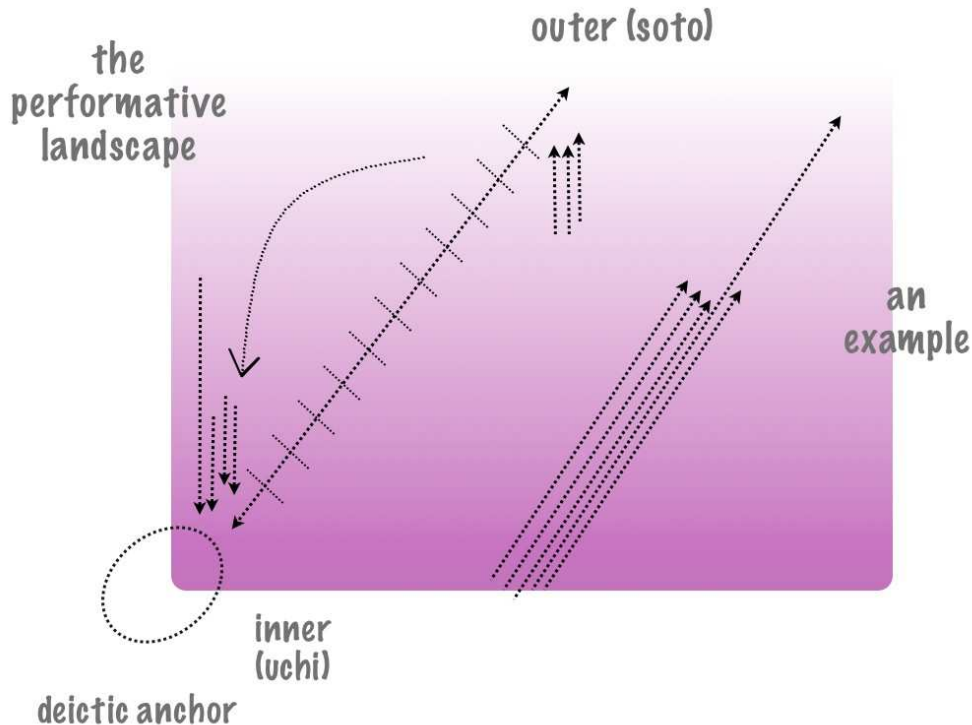
In this translation there are thirteen markers of social distance falling into at least six notional types. Arrows capture this information making it available for thought (e.g., how should we interpret the difference between /↓notify⇨/ and /(↓↓)delivered⇨/).

I am not suggesting the notational system is fully accurate—only that it points toward conversations that students and faculty might have. Here is an alternate transcription:

郵便局からの↓お知らせ

いつも郵便局を↑ご利用↓いただきありがとうございます。↑あなた様から過日↓お預かりしました下記の↑お客様あてゆうパックを(↓↓)お届けいたしましたので↓お知らせします。

And here is another:



This is an attempt to translate the indexical features of the above text into a representation building on performative conventions explained in an important work dealing with these issues (Bachnik and Quinn 1992). Ideally the above diagram would be presented using QuickTime to capture each movement as it occurs through time. This presents a more dynamic model—one that makes aspects of experience, of signification, available to thought.

Unpacking such examples, arguing for better modes of representation, coaching students not only in understanding these things, but in performing them, and, finally, contemplating what all of this might mean for our understanding of culture, and life, and language—all of these are

tasks that I suspect Dewey and Peirce would encourage us to pursue. And in doing this, and other such activities, I think we would be following the learning trajectories of our students as we, and they, develop the potential of this new field.

Notes

1. An initial draft of this paper was presented as a keynote address at the Central Association of Teachers of Japanese, The Ohio State University, April 16, 2005.
2. See for example, Bruffee or Shapiro and Levine.
3. William Perry's (1981) work on the ethical and cognitive development of the college student argues students go through a number of stages as they learn to be adults committed to building a multicultural shared world.

4. Piaget and others discuss this in terms of disequilibrium.

5. See, for example, Austin or Bruner.

6. See, for example, Dickstein.

7. Maxine Greene situates a similar discussion arguing that we need to urge our students to go beyond the “passive gazing” so much encouraged by modern technology to encounter, in Schutz’s terms “experiences of shock” or in Sartre’s the “collapse” of our “stage sets.” See Pedagogy and Praxis in *Landscapes of Learning*.

8. Dewey referred to this as *collateral learning* (1938: 48).

9. See, for example, Vygotsky.

and L.D. Dierking, *Public Institutions for Personal Learning: Establishing a Research Agenda*. Washington, D.C.: American Association of Museums, 37-51.

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