

報告番号	※	第	号
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## 主 論 文 の 要 旨

論文題目

Readiness, Language Contact, and  
Oral Performance Development  
During a Study-Abroad Program

氏 名

MIKAMI Hitoshi

## 論 文 内 容 の 要 旨

It is a widely held belief that language learners can effectively improve their oral performance in their target language (TL) in a study-abroad (SA) context (Allen, 2010; DeKeyser, 2007, 2010; Kinginger, 2011; Magnan & Back, 2007). This assumption is actually true for the learners who are able to make the most use of learning resources in an SA context. Such learning resources are called language contact (hereafter TL contact) in SA research and this encompasses the variety of language activities (a) from which SA participants can learn knowledge and skills in their TL (i.e., written and spoken inputs, including feedback for one's production), and (b) where SA participants can practice their newly learned knowledge and skills in the TL for more proficient oral performance (Mikami, 2014). When language learners are capable of utilizing TL contact, it allows them to construct a spontaneous TL learning cycle; this self-investment widens the opportunity for TL leaning/practice; and, as the learning cycle continues, the chance of TL oral development will also increase. Regarding this, the findings of prior SA studies have clarified that pre-SA grammatical skill and motivation (international posture, in particular) behave as readiness that predicts success or failure of TL learning in SA contexts (Allen, 2010; Davidson, 2010; Dekeyser, 2010; Glonka, 2006; Mikami, 2014).

Yet, we still have little understanding of how two different types of readiness—grammatical skill and international posture—jointly affect SA participants' TL contact behavior during an SA visit and change the outcome of SA learning, due to a lack of empirical data. In response to this problem, the author decided to clarify the relationships between initial readiness, TL contact behavior, and the development of TL oral performance sampling Japanese university students studying English as their foreign language who joined a one-semester SA program. The author set the following research questions (RQ) for his study.

1. Is one-semester of SA long enough for SA participants to improve their TL oral proficiency?
2. Do SA participants' initial grammatical skill and international posture jointly impact on their general spontaneous TL contact behavior? If so, how do these two different aspects of readiness affect SA participants' spontaneous TL contact behavior and to what extent do they do this?
3. Does SA participants' general spontaneous TL contact behavior impact on the gains in their TL oral proficiency?
4. Do initial grammatical skill and international posture impact on SA participants' spontaneous TL reading, listening, writing, and speaking behavior?
5. Do SA participants' spontaneous TL reading, listening, writing, and speaking behavior impact on the development of TL oral proficiency?

Prior to participating in the SA program, the 46 participants first took the TOEFL iBT® to measure their pre-SA English oral performance. Subsequently, they completed a grammatical task (section two of TOEFL® ITP) and a questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of two parts: (a) personal information, and (b) motivational indexes. The participants' initial international posture was documented in the second part of the questionnaire. During their sojourn, the participants were interviewed twice. The second interview was followed by the completion of the language contact profile (the self-report of the amount of weekly TL contact). Interviews and completion of the language contact profile were conducted over the Internet. Finally, participants took TOEFL iBT® within six weeks of their homecoming to record their post-SA English oral performance. The participants' gains in L2 oral proficiency were reckoned by deducting their pre-SA oral scores from the post-SA oral scores.

First of all, the results pertaining to research question one were consistent with those of prior SA studies. That is, one-semester of SA can be a benchmark for the development of TL oral skill (e.g., Hernández, 2010; Magnan & Back, 2007; Segalowitz & Freed, 2004).

The results of statistical and interview analysis confirmed the positive link between grammatical and motivational readiness, the amount of general out-of-class TL contact, and the gains in TL oral performance (RQ two and three). In a nutshell, these links mean that initial grammatical and motivational readiness allow SA participants to increase the amount of general out-of-class TL contact, and an increase in the amount of general out-of-class TL contact helps SA participants to develop their TL oral performance.

Regarding the former, the model used in this study showed that two different types of readiness jointly account for 55% of the variance of the participants' general out-of-class TL contact behavior. Possible explanations for this result were shown in the interview data—initial grammatical knowledge supports SA participants to decode or learn from TL inputs and compose

TL outputs in the out-of-class context; and motivational readiness helps SA participants make a greater amount of self-investment in TL learning. Based on these data, the author accepted the idea that grammatical and motivational readiness indeed made behavioral difference in the amount of general TL learning effort made outside the classroom.

In the successive regression analysis, 51% of the variance of pretest to posttest gains in TL oral performance was explained by the amount of general out-of-class TL contact. This model not only confirmed the link between the domain-general TL learning effort made outside the classroom and the development of TL oral performance, but also connected the initial readiness with the outcome of SA learning: In this study, initial readiness could explain 28.05% of the variance of the gains in TL oral performance if we calculate the direct impact of initial readiness on the gains in TL oral performance using the coefficient determinations of two models.

Regarding RQ four and five, the following were confirmed: (a) initial readiness is the key to increase the amount of out-of-class TL listening and speaking; (b) of the above two variables, only the amount of out-of-class TL speaking showed a clear association with the gains in TL oral performance; (c) the amount of out-of-class TL listening and reading may indirectly contribute to the development of TL oral performance; (d) the amount of out-of-class TL writing may contribute to the development of one facet of TL oral performance (i.e., the oral fluency); (e) if we are interested in the relationship between initial TL learning motivation and the TL contact behavior in a specific domain, it will probably be more productive to use domain-specific language learning motivation as an index; and (f) the method for measuring out-of-class TL reading should be reconsidered.

First, the association between initial readiness, the amount of out-of-class TL speaking, and the development of TL performance was also backed by the relevant theory (i.e., the skill acquisition theory), and therefore accepted in this study.

Second, even though it was shown that out-of-class TL reading, listening and writing theoretically could facilitate the development of TL oral performance, this hypothesis is awaiting confirmation.

Third, compared with a situation in which TL contact data is integrated into a single variable (i.e., the amount of general out-of-class TL contact), the predicting power of international posture on the amount of four types of out-of-class TL contact was reduced. This study attributed the reason for this to the domain-generality of international posture. As pointed out by a large body of literature in applied linguistics, domain-general motivation is strongly connected to the general TL learning effort while domain-specific TL motivation is associated with the learning effort made in a specific domain. The behavior of domain-general and domain-specific out-of-class TL contact were consistent with this argument and the findings of prior studies. Based on these, this study proposed new directions for future SA studies: measurement of TL learning motivation should be decided considering the characteristics of dependent variable(s) (domain-general vs.

domain-specific).

Lastly, it was suggested that future studies should use both time and volume (i.e., the number of words or pages that have been read in a certain timeframe) to document the amount of out-of-class TL reading.

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