

Center for Advanced Language Proficiency Education and Research
The Pennsylvania State University

Research
on
Language Learning
in
Study Abroad
(1998 -2005)

by

Celeste Kinginger
CALPER & The Pennsylvania State University

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The following bibliography is divided into four sections:

- I. RESEARCH ON LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT
- II. RESEARCH ON THE QUALITIES OF LEARNERS' INTERACTIONS AND EXPERIENCES IN THE HOST COMMUNITY
- III. WRITINGS ON PROGRAM DESIGN AND INTERVENTION
- IV. WEB RESOURCES

I. RESEARCH ON LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

The research on language development may be divided into categories representing the classic components of communicative competence, namely **grammatical competence** (or the ability to use the formal morpho-syntactic and lexical properties of second languages in communicative contexts); **socio-pragmatic or discourse competence** (including the ability to realize speech acts, to manipulate register and variety, and to understand the social meaning of language in use); and **strategic competence**, or the ability to compensate for lacunae in other domains (here including both communication strategies and learning strategies).

Grammatical Competence

Included in this category are studies examining the development of particular grammatical / lexical/ phonological features along with studies of change in global assessments of proficiency, literacy, and fluency.

Study	Participants	Language	Focus	Major findings
Allen & Herron, 2003	25 participants in a summer SA program in Paris	French	Change in oral and listening skills and in integrative motivation and language anxiety	Significant increase in linguistic skills; significant decrease in language anxiety. Integrative motivation was unchanged except for students with more than 2 years of college study where an increase is documented. Students reported cultural misunderstandings in homestay and lack of contact with NSs.
Boots-Ebenfeld, 1998	30 students in a 4 month program in Russia	Russian	Pragmatics of grammatical aspect	Perfective verbs are formally marked first, the imperfective is the first to be acquired for NS-like usage. SA is shown to have significant effects on the use of aspect by American students.

Study	Participants	Language	Focus	Major findings
Bradley, 2003	7 SA participants and 7 students in 3 rd and 4 th year university courses AH	German	Relationship of discourse features (use of formulaic language, response time, and words per response) to oral proficiency	SA students used more words and more formulaic language, a wider range of fillers. Increased use of formulaic language is a production strategy acquired through the demands of living in the target culture.
Collentine, 2004	46 in two groups: SA and AH	Spanish	Comparison of morpho-syntactic development in Study Abroad vs. At Home (classroom) learners	AH context facilitated more development of discrete grammatical/lexical features. SA participants displayed better narrative ability and increased semantic density.
Collentine & Freed, 2004			Introduction to special number of SSLA	Summary of findings of comparative studies: AH students show superior gains in morpho-syntactic control; SA student show gains in oral fluency and vocabulary; the intensive domestic immersion program proved more beneficial than both in most areas.
Dewey, 2004	15 SA participants and 15 IM participants	Japanese	Comparison of reading comprehension and processes by SA and domestic immersion students (IM)	Significant gain for SA students in one measure of reading comprehension ("self-assessment:" SA students are more confident readers); SA students monitor understanding more than IM students; IM students react and respond to text context affectively more than SA students. More variation is displayed in results for SA over IM contexts.
Días-Campos, 2004	26 SA students 20 AH	Spanish	Does SA facilitate the acquisition of L2 phonology?	Similar patterns of development are documented for both groups.
Fraser, 2002	15 students in a 1 year program, 15 students in a 1 semester program	German	Gains in reading and writing skills as measured by cloze test and matching anaphora to their referents	Students who become involved in extracurricular activities can make impressive gains beyond oral proficiency.

Study	Participants	Language	Focus	Major findings
Freed, Segalowitz & Dewey, 2004	28 students in three contexts: SA, AT & IM	French	Development of fluency (total words, length of longest turn, rate of speech, and speech fluidity)	The IM group outperformed the SA group which made significant gains only in speech fluidity. The AH group made no significant gains. The IM group reported more use of French per week than the other groups. Reported hours per week spent writing outside of class is associated with oral fluidity gain.
Freed, So & Lazar, 2003	15 SA students 15 AH students 5 NS	French	Comparison of gains in written and oral fluency	NS judges reliably found differences in students' speech following a semester abroad; Students in the home setting were judged more fluent in writing than SA students; only the judgments of oral fluency were supported by analysis of textual/ linguistic features; no significant improvement in written fluency was found for either context.
Golonka, 2001	22 participants in semester SA in Russia	Russian	Identification of factors predicting gain in OPI scores to Advanced level	Five variables extracted from the discourse of OPIs predict gain: grammar, vocabulary, percentage of errors, self-corrected errors and sentence repair.
Grabois, 1999	Five groups: L1 speakers of Spanish, L1 speakers of English, expert speakers of Spanish, SA participants, FL learners	Spanish	Appropriation of a Spanish-like conceptual network, as measured by a word-association task	Study abroad students had taken the initial step of moving away from an L1-based conceptual network, whereas classroom learners had not
Howard, 2001	18 Irish learners	French	Comparison of pre-SA, post-SA, and AH learners' development in expression of past time during a sociolinguistic interview	SA students display greater accuracy in past time morphology. However, variationist analysis (controlling for lexical and grammatical aspect, and discourse grounding) shows similarities in contextual uses of past time morphology.

Study	Participants	Language	Focus	Major findings
Ife, et al. 2000	36 students (English L1) two thirds spent one semester away, the rest two	Spanish	Improvement of vocabulary level in terms of: 1) words known; 2) depth of lexical knowledge for Intermediate and Advanced learners	Both groups demonstrated significant improvement on both measures. Significant correlation between length of stay and vocabulary knowledge
Isabelli, 2004	31 advanced learners	Spanish	Acquisition of the properties of the null-subject parameter	Acquisition of features that are infrequent in input occurs only with participation in year-long sojourns abroad.
Isabelli-Garcia, 2003	3 learners in a semester-long program in Argentina	Spanish	Development of oral skills as assessed via informal interviews focusing on past time narrative and SOPs	No uniform development in development of Advanced oral functions (one S of the 3 developed in this area)
Longcope, 2003		English	Longitudinal study of learning contexts (AH pre and post SA, SA) in terms of provision of negotiation, comprehensible input)	SA has an immediate impact on fluency but not on grammatical accuracy or syntactic complexity.
McMeekin, 2003	5 SA participants	Japanese	Comparison of negotiation and communication strategy use in the SA classroom and in the host family setting.	More focus-on-form in the classroom, more negotiation for meaning in the host family setting
Rivers, 1998	Data from the American Council of Teachers of Russian Student Records Data Base from over 2500 participants	Russian	Comparison of homestay and dormitory residents' development in speaking, listening, and reading	Homestay students developed literacy skills more than oral proficiency.
Schell, 2001	English L1 students in a 9-month SA program in Spain	Spanish	Morpho-syntax and semantics of Spanish aspect (preterit and imperfect)	Traces the process by which learners master the lexical aspect of verbs
Segalowitz & Freed, 2004	40 participants in AH and SA settings for 1 semester	Spanish	Relationship of oral performance gains to extracurricular L2 activities and to L2 specific measure of speed and efficiency of lexical access, speed and efficiency of attention control	SA participants made greater gains in OPI scores and in temporal and hesitation phenomena. The relationship between oral proficiency, cognitive abilities, and language contact is complex.

Study	Participants	Language	Focus	Major findings
Stevens, 2001	English-speaking learners	Spanish	Compares L2 pronunciation of SA and AH students through acoustic analysis of phonetic data	SA learners made significantly more progress in acquiring L2 Spanish pronunciation
Thomas, 2004	48 Anglophone Canadian students in junior year abroad program, control group of 39 AH students	French	Acquisition of sociolinguistic variability (morpho-phonemic variables: liaison, schwa, 'ne' deletion) as a specific marker of L2 fluency	SA participants show approximation of NS norms, including those that reflect the standard (in the case of liaison) and those that reflect widespread, popular usage (schwa and 'ne' deletion).
Tanaka & Ellis, 2003	166 participants in a 15 week SA program in the US	English	Changes in TOEFL scores and in beliefs about L2 learning	Statistically significant changes in beliefs and in TOEFL gain were recorded, but no correlation was established between these sets of findings.
Tokowicz, Michael & Kroll 2004	37 individuals proficient in English and Spanish (15 Spanish NS and 22 English NS)	Spanish	Effects of working memory capacity and study abroad experience on types of errors made during single-word translation from the first language to the second language, contrasting non-response with meaning errors (i.e., when individuals translate semantically-related words instead of the target word).	Study abroad encourages the use of approximate translations to communicate, but, due to the need to maintain multiple items in memory simultaneously, this can only be done by learners with relatively high working memory capacity.
Torres, 2003	10 SA and 5 AH participants in one-semester programs	Spanish	Acquisition of clitics	SA does not offer benefits for linguistic accuracy of clitics. SA does offer benefits at the discourse and pragmatic level. SA learners have more NS-like patterns of Noun Phrase distribution.
Yager, 1998	30 participants in a 7-week period of study in Mexico	Spanish	Native speaker assessment of gain	Significant improvement for 22 participants. Students (particularly beginners) reporting more interactive contact with NSs showed greater gain.

Socio-pragmatic / Discourse Competence

This research includes studies examining the acquisition of variable sociolinguistic features of second languages (including colloquial terms, and address terms); the development of the ability to realize specific speech acts (e.g., requests, apologies); and socialization of pragmatic routines (e.g., leave-taking, gift-giving).

Study	Participants	Language	Focus	Major findings
Barron, In press	33 Irish advanced learners in a 10 month program	German	Development of address term competence	Data collected via a 'free discourse completion task' shows development toward a TL -like norm but IL retains a strong learner-like quality at the end of the sojourn.
Barron, 2003	33 Irish advanced learners in a 10 month program	German	Longitudinal study of speech act realization (requests, offers, and refusals of offers)	SA is a favorable if imperfect environment for the development of pragmatic competence. Pragmalinguistic development outpaces sociopragmatic development.
Dewaele & Regan, 2002	29 Dutch L1 speakers (cross-sectional study), 6 Hiberno-Irish English speakers (longitudinal study), 6 NSs of English	French	Sociopragmatic competence in advanced French Interlanguage; Underrepresentation or avoidance of colloquial words; Effect of spending a year in a Francophone environment	Active authentic communication in the TL predicts the use of colloquial lexemes in the cross-sectional study; in the longitudinal study, the use of colloquial terms increased significantly after a year abroad.
DuFon, In press	The author, and 5 learners in a semester-long program	Indonesian	Socialization of taste during dinner table conversations	Mealtimes are a significant means of language socialization for SA participants who are invited to acquire culture-specific information about food and taste.
DuFon, 2000	6 learners (3 beginners and 3 intermediates) in a 4 month program in Indonesia	Indonesian	Ethnography of the acquisition of linguistic politeness (experience questions, greetings, terms of address)	Features with strong indexical properties were salient to NSs & Ss, but NS use of these features sometimes conflicted with learners' values, leading to resistance. Features with weaker indexical properties were also subject to NS comments; did not elicit resistance from Ss. Variability in outcomes.

Study	Participants	Language	Focus	Major findings
Hassall, In press	The author	Indonesian	Diary study of development of pragmatic competence for leave-taking	A 'large amount' of pragmatic learning took place in a short period; acquiring knowledge is a major task for the adult learner.
Hoffman-Hicks, 2001	14 SA participants in France, 10 members of an AH control group	French	Conversational function of greeting and leave-taking, Speech act of compliments	Development for SA students was documented in comparison to the AH group but was slight and limited in scope.
Kingingier & Farrell, 2004	8 students in various SA programs in France	French	Sociopragmatic awareness of address forms (tu vs. vous)	Development of awareness is closely related to the qualities of Ss' access to social interaction.
Matsumura, 2001	97 Japanese exchange students, 102 AH students (control group)	English	Changes in perception of social status and the impact of these changes when offering advice	SA group started lower than the AH group but surpassed them. SA sojourns are effective in developing pragmatic competence.
Owen, 2002	60 NS and 84 NNS (pre-and post-SA) role play performances in OPIs	Russian	Effects of SA and proficiency level on degree of directness in request strategies	SA experience alone leads to approximation of NS strategies, but all NNS performance differs from NS performance in use of mitigating tactics
Regan, 2003	5 Irish learners in a one-year study abroad program	French	Acquisition of NS-like sociolinguistic variation (omission of the 'ne' particle)	3 of the 4 increased their level of 'ne' omission and maintained this feature in their spoken French following the SA experience
Rodriguez, 2001	11 SA participants, 11 AH participants	Spanish	Perception of requests	No significant different between L2 learning in the AH and SA contexts; both groups progressed toward the NS norm

Strategic Competence, Communication and Learning strategies

Study	Participants	Language	Focus	Major findings
Adams, In press	86 American students on 2-4 month programs in the Dominican Republic, France, Brazil, Spain, Austria	Various	Role of SA (including program characteristics and individual characteristics) in use of strategies. Influence of strategy use on self-reported proficiency gains	Ss who spent more time in group travel did not improve use of communication strategies. Ss background did not augment or limit Ss ability to learn strategies while abroad. Ss reporting increased strategy use also report gains in proficiency

Study	Participants	Language	Focus	Major findings
Kuntz, 1999	71 American students and 17 teachers in Morocco and Yemen	Arabic	Beliefs about language learning of students and teachers	Questionnaire data show that students and teachers have significantly varying beliefs concerning strategy use.
Lafford, 2004	46 U.S. learners, 20 AH and 26 SA	Spanish	Effect of context on the use of Communication Strategies	SA learners consistently used fewer strategies than AH learners, significantly decreased their reliance on L1 strategies.
Paige, Cohen, & Shively, 2004	86 U.S. students in French or Spanish speaking countries	Spanish or French	Impact of strategy training on the use of strategies and the effect of strategy use on culture and L2 learning abroad.	Increased use of learning strategies for speaking and listening. SA has a positive impact on intercultural development.

II. Research on the qualities of learners' interactions in the host community.

This research includes studies (ethnographies, discourse analytic research, narrative and diary studies) designed to explore the activities of language learners during study abroad, and studies examining the longer-term qualitative effects of study abroad.

Study	Participants	Language	Focus	Major findings
Alred & Byram, 2002	Former participants in SA programs	Various	Long-term learning of intercultural competence by participants in year-long SA programs	Interviews conducted 10 years after the SA experience show an advantage for people who had a degree of tertiary socialization before SA.
Bacon, 2002	1 American participant in year-long SA program in Mexico	Spanish	Ethnography: Learning of social and academic rules for functioning in the community	Dramatic changes in language ability co-occurred with this student's learning of the rules.
Calvin, 1999	Brazilian, Korean, and Swiss adults in a 12 week intensive English program	English	Case study of L2 acquisition and cross-cultural adaptation	Strong influence of the learning context on the learning process, Shared religious culture reduces L2 anxiety
Churchill, In press	Japanese learners of English on short-term exchanges in the US	English	Ethnography of students' engagement with host schools.	Learners were constructed as more or less competent depending on how they were welcomed/ incorporated into local activities. Competencies were 'situationally contingent.'

Study	Participants	Language	Focus	Major findings
Cook, In press	American learners of Japanese	Japanese	Analysis of dinnertime as an opportunity space for construction/examination of folk beliefs about culture	Learners' interactions with host families include construction and challenge of folk beliefs. Homestay programs can be two-way exchanges.
DeNooy & Hannah, 2003	38 Australian participants in a SA program in France	French	Cultural information gathering assessed via post-return interviews	Failure to understand cultural difference led to perpetuation of negative stereotypes.
Ginsburg & Miller, 2000	Four primary cases	Russian	What do SA student do while abroad and how does this activity impact on L2 learning?	Data from calendar diaries and ethnographic observation show no systematic relationship between SLA and reported time spent interacting in the L2. Investigations of quality of interactions are needed.
Iino, In press	American learners of Japanese	Japanese	Social aspects of NNS Japanese (e.g., the "gaijin tactic," hyper-normalized language use); exposure to non-standard Japanese codes	Learners may encounter linguistic diversity and modified norms of interaction in contact situations. Students are treated like homestay family "pets" OR there is 2-way flow of cultural exchange
Isabelli-Garcia, In press	American students in a SA program in Argentina	Spanish	Role of extralinguistic factors (motivation, contact with the host culture, attitudes) in the development of oral skills and accuracy	Some learners develop broad social networks and experience changes in motivation/ language gain, others maintain motivational and attitudinal deficits which limit their creation of social networks and L2 development
Kinginger & Farrell, 2005	Three American students in semester-long SA programs in France	French	Gender-related ideologies and performance as they influence investment in L2 learning	Stories about L2 learning abroad reflect American gender-related ideologies. Transformation of gendered identity is more problematic for women than for men.
Kinginger, 2004	"Alice" a working class (U.S.) student in a 2 year sojourn in France	French	Language learning as identity re-construction	Language learning is a challenging and complex experience involving the learner's social identity and aspirations.

Study	Participants	Language	Focus	Major findings
Kline, 1998	8 American undergraduates in a junior year abroad program	French	Ethnography based on a "social practices" view of literacy	Learners struggle to mediate conflicts 1) between the academic culture of the program and "French culture"; 2) between the portrayal of French culture at Nisbet College and the reality of home stay families; 3) between identity as Americans and identity as apprentices to French cultural literacy.
Knight & Schmidt-Rinehart, 2002	24 host families in Spain and Mexico	Spanish	The host family's perspective on learning in SA	Homestay families see their role as integral to SA but SA participants do not always avail themselves of their help.
Levin, 2001	4 American female participants in year-long program in France	French	Ethnographic case study of language, identity and learning	3 participants constructed themselves as classroom learners and limited their own access to unpredicted interaction. The SA program defined the experience as 'coming of age' and did not prioritize L2 learning.
Matthews, 2001		Russian	Behaviors affecting gain in speaking and listening for male vs. female participants	Men and women must participate in certain behaviors and avoid others in order to achieve gains.
Li, 2000	66 ESL learners of various nationality in a year-long program	English	Survey research on factors contributing to culture shock	Factors shown to influence participants' perceptions related to culture shock: 1) length of stay in the US; previous travel; 3) number of American friends. No effect for age, gender, marital status, or nationality.
Ogulnick, 1998	The author	Japanese	The diary study as a tool for fostering critical awareness	Reflection allows the learner to uncover social realities (related e.g. to age, gender, social class) that are embedded in L2 interactions and that enable or constrain L2 learning
Pellegrino Aveni, 2005	6 primary cases and 11 members of the 'supporting cast' : University-level learners in Russia	Russian	Qualitative study employing grounded theory to explore construction of the self in the L2	Detailed analysis of social /environmental and learner internal factors influencing self-construction in social interaction. Learners need 'identity competence,' or ability to maintain control, status, safety, and validation.

Study	Participants	Language	Focus	Major findings
Schmidt-Rinehart & Knight	24 host families, 90 students, 6 housing directors from programs in Spain and Mexico	Spanish	Perspectives of each group on student adjustment, common problems, and the homestay advantage	All groups felt the homestay enhances the SA experience.
Talbur & Stuart, 1999	1 African-American student in a 5 week SA program in Spain	Spanish	Ethnography of students' in and out of class cultural learning	Race and gender may become salient aspects of social identity for SA participants.
Tusting, Cranshaw & Callen, 2003	Corpus of focus group and interview data collected by the Interculture Project (Lancaster University)	Various	How SA students speak about their experience and construct generalizations about culture	Stereotyping is the result of particular discursive contexts and is not necessarily based on opinions of individuals.
Wilkinson, 2002	7 American summer abroad participants, of whom 4 collected conversation data	French	Conversation analysis of interactions between students and host families	All participants rely on patterns of interaction typical of classroom talk rather than of standard informal talk.
Wilkinson, 1998a	2 students in a summer SA program in France	French	Ethnography of interactions and their effect on learning	Homestays play a clear role, but so do other factors: pre-departure preparation, absence of an on-site director, prior cross-cultural experiences.
Wilkinson, 1998b	7 students	French	Ethnography of interactions and their effect on learning	Participants' experiences were marked by cultural misunderstandings which led to discouragement and to reliance on other Americans

III. Writings on program design and intervention

Paper	Recommended practices
Archangeli, 1999	Students were required to interview native speakers. Out-of-class contact has a positive effect on students' self-confidence and willingness to use the L2
Cain & Zarate, 1996	Training in ethnography for students
Calle & Alley, 1999	Cross-cultural orientation in four areas: 1) awareness of self and of native and target cultures; 2) attitudes; 3) knowledge; and 4) skills
Chieffo & Zipser, 2001	Structural integration of SA into the language curriculum
Einbeck, 2002	Describes a literature course designed for students studying abroad, aimed at improving their chances of becoming "culturally fluent" during their stay abroad.
Engle & Engle, 1999	Describes a French practicum course developed as part of the curriculum of the American University Center in Aix-en-Provence, France.
Gorka & Niesenbaum, 2001	Short-term study abroad programs spark student interest in L2 learning

Hokanson, 2000	Accommodation of cognitive styles in homestay settings
Ingram, 2005	Describes a pilot program integrating short-term study abroad into the curriculum for courses meeting the basic language requirement at a liberal arts college.
Kiely & Nielson, 2003	International service learning
Paige, Cohen, Kappler, Chi, & Lassegard,	Training in language and culture learning strategies
Ogulnick, 1999	Introspection and reflection via language learning diaries
Pertusa-Seva & Stewart, 2000	Design of "virtual study abroad"
Raschio, 2001	Activities designed to stimulate L2 use during the SA experience
Von Hoene, 1999	Rethinking the mission of foreign language departments as departments of cross-cultural difference

Notes:

- 1) Many of the articles cited are based on unpublished Ph.D. dissertations. Whenever possible, the published version of the research only is included in the table. In many cases both theses and published articles are listed in the bibliography.
- 2) Abbreviations are as follows: S – student; SA – study abroad; AH – at home; IM – domestic intensive immersion; NS – native speaker; NNS – non-native speaker; TL – target language; IL – interlanguage; L1 – first language; L2 – second language

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IV. Web resources for research on language learning in study abroad

- Study Abroad Research Group (SARG)

<http://studyabroadresearch.org/index.html>

“The SARG is a group of ten researchers from eight different universities across the United States. We are committed to investigating the impact of the study abroad experience on Americans (mainly college-level students) who visit other countries largely for the purpose of developing greater their language abilities and cultural competence.”

- Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad

<http://www.frontiersjournal.com/>

- The Center for Global Education

Study Abroad Research On Line

Bibliographies and abstracts on study abroad

<http://www.lmu.edu/globaled/ro/index.html>

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This CPDD can also be downloaded at <http://calper.la.psu.edu/publications.php>

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Contact Information:

James P. Lantolf and Karen E. Johnson, CALPER Co-directors
Center for Advanced Language Proficiency Education and Research
The Pennsylvania State University
5 Sparks Building
University Park, PA 16802-5203
Tel: (814) 863-1212
Fax: (814) 865-1316
Email: calper@psu.edu

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