

Attitude Change and Personal Development during Summer Study Abroad

Yuko Ono

夏期海外留学における態度と人間的成長への影響

斧 優 子

A study was conducted to examine the effects of the GUEL 1997 summer study abroad program to Canada. 34 female and 10 male 3rd year English majors responded to pre- and post-questionnaires pertaining to changes in their attitude towards English learning and in their personal development. Some significant positive changes were observed in the subjects' perception of their own English skills and attitude towards English learning. Most students perceived themselves as having improved personal qualities after the program.

Key words

ESL, study abroad, attitude, personal development

海外留学の成果を評価する際に、語学力の向上のみならず、学生の性格面での変化（人間的成長）に対する影響についても検討する必要があると考えられる。この研究調査は、アンケート結果をもとに、英語力の自己評価、英語に対する態度の変化、そして人間的成長の変化について考察することを目的としている。調査対象は、本学の1997年度カナダ長期留学プログラムに参加した英米語学科3回生の男女学生44名である。

Introduction

This paper presents a questionnaire survey similar to the one reported by the same author in *The Annals of Gifu University for Education and Languages* No. 34, 1997 examining the effects of the 1995 summer study abroad programs to Lakehead University (LU) in Thunder Bay, Ontario. The survey in this paper contains duplicate questions on attitudes toward English, Canada, and Canadians, but also includes a section on personal development. Interested readers may refer to the above-mentioned article for a review of the literature concerning attitude towards the target language, the

host country and its people.

Study Abroad and Personal Development

Personal development has been identified as an affective factor that can be greatly influenced by study abroad (Kauffman, et al., 1992). The term itself, however, has been used for a wide range of characteristics from world-mindedness and open-mindedness to adaptability, self-reliance, self-confidence, self-esteem and self-efficacy in some studies. Thomlison (1991) surveyed a group of 174 American university students that spent a semester in England and reported the greatest positive change occurred in confidence traveling abroad, followed by sense of personal independence, desire to travel overseas, ability to cope with new and different surroundings, greater self-confidence in general, and confidence in relating to people from other countries. Juhasz and Walker (1987) reported increased self-confidence in skills necessary for international and cultural interaction among American university students after a semester in Italy. For 109 Japanese female junior college students, five weeks in Australia had the greatest impact on their level of curiosity, self-awareness, and autonomy and assertiveness (Iwakiri, 1993). Items on personal development to be examined in this paper are assertiveness and independence, sociability, consideration for others, curiosity for study and broadened view, tolerance of unpleasant situations, self-consciousness, and self-confidence in general.

The Canadian Studies Program

The implementation of the 1997 Canadian Studies Program (CSP) was very similar to the one described in the article on the 1995 program, and therefore details will be omitted. 44 second-year English majors (34 female and 10 male), the largest group ever in the six years since establishment, attended about 30 ninety-minute orientation sessions held in April and May before departure on May 22nd. In Thunder Bay, LU professors from various disciplines conducted lectures on Canada. Comprehension was reinforced by small-group discussions led by eight LU student monitors ; the discussions immediately followed each lecture. Professors assigned reading materials and provided quizzes. No written assignments were given, although students kept journals in English which the monitors read, corrected, and responded to with written comments.

The students participated in many extra-curricular activities as well. A major event in Thunder Bay that summer was the Scouts Jamboree where scouts from foreign countries as well as from across Canada congregated for an international celebration. Our students served as volunteers teaching origami and were able to take part in the native Canadian powwow ceremony. Other events included a visit to the Mayor of Thunder Bay, teaching origami at the Thunder Bay Children's Festival, horseback riding, tubing, hiking, and camping.

A mandatory five-day tour of Toronto, Ottawa, and Niagara Falls divided the CSP at mid-point. After the end of the program at LU, 13 students left for Japan on August 25th, and the remaining 31 students took a 10-day trip to Calgary, Banff, Vancouver, and Victoria before departing for Japan on September 3rd.

The Survey

41 participants (31 female and 10 male) responded to a questionnaire distributed during an orientation session on May 14 (pre-test), shortly before departure. Three female participants were absent on this day. All 44 participants (34 female and 10 male) filled out another questionnaire one month after their return to Japan (post-test) during a post-return orientation session on October 15th. Only three subjects had had experience travelling abroad ; one female had been in Australia for a month in the previous summer, one male had been in the U. S. for a month in high school, and another male lived in New Zealand for a year as a high school student. Some parts of the questionnaires were adopted from one developed by Iwakiri (1993). To assure anonymity, students did not give their names on the questionnaires. The purposes of the questionnaires were to examine the participants',

- 1 . attitude change towards English, Canada and Canadians
- 2 . perceptions of the CSP's effectiveness on English learning
- 3 . perceptions of personal development.

Other questions were also asked in the first questionnaire to find out the participants' motives for participating in the program, what influenced their decision to participate and whether they had second thoughts on participating. In addition to the questionnaires, all participants were required to submit 2 two-page essays in English on "How the CSP Affected My English Skills," and "What I Gained from the CSP (Besides English) " at the end of October. The students gave their names for these essays.

Results and Discussion

87% of females and 80% of males replied their primary purpose in participating in the program was to improve their English skills. On what influenced their decision to apply, the most frequent answer for females was the university orientation (46%), followed by "had decided in high school" (37%). A small percentage answered "was influenced by parents or friends" (10%). The most frequent answer among males was "had decided in high school" (40%). A couple of male students were influenced by their parents and one decided after viewing a videotape made by the university showing footage of a past CSP. It seems the university orientation session introducing the CSP played

an important role in the participants' decisions. Also, many replied they had already decided in high school where they most likely had been informed of the program through the university brochure or their high school teachers.

On the other hand, many (60% of females and 70% of males) had second thoughts about participating at some point. The most frequent reason was "financial concerns" (38% for females and 60% for males). This concern may increase as the value of yen decreases. The next most frequent reason for females was "not wanting to be separated from close friends" (21%) and "anxiety about being a successful participant in the program" (21%). A couple males had considered joining other commercial study abroad programs.

Perception of English Skills

Students rated their English speaking, reading, writing, and listening comprehension skills on a five-point scale (see Table 1). The mean scores for all four items increased in the post-test and a two-tailed t-test was run to compare the pre- and post-test scores. On a probability level of less than .05, the increase in mean scores was significant for speaking, writing, and listening comprehension. The students perceived most improvement in their listening comprehension skill and least in their reading skill following the CSP. This was true in the past two CSP reports as well (Ono, 1997, 1996). Although the past two reports examined only female subjects, the inclusion of male subjects for this part of the data did not seem to affect this trend in student perceptions.

Table 1 Mean Scores of Perception of English Skills

Item	Pre-test a	Post-test b
1. I can speak English well.	2.17	3.07
2. I can read English well.	2.93	3.16
3. I can write English well.	2.61	3.05
4. I can understand spoken English well.	2.61	3.70

Note. Maximum score=5.0 an=41 (31 female & 10 male) bn=44 (34 female & 10 male)

Attitude towards English

The subjects responded to nine items measuring their attitude towards English (see Table 2). The items were rated on a five-point scale on which 1 indicated "complete disapproval," 3 denoted "undecided," and 5 indicated "full approval." On a probability level of less than .05, two-tailed t-test results indicated that items 5 "I am actually studying hard," and 9 "I am not embarrassed to speak in English in class" gained a significant increase in the post-test. This result implies that the students'

motivation to work on their English and their confidence in speaking English increased after the CSP. Interestingly, the mean score decreased for item 6 “I like to speak English with my Japanese classmates,” although not significantly.

Table 2 Mean Scores of Attitude towards English

Item	Pre-test a	Post-test b
1 . I think about English even after class.	3.94	4.03
2 . I want to speak English even if my grammar is not correct.	2.90	3.21
3 . I want to continue learning English even after graduation.	4.68	4.68
4 . I enjoy speaking English with native speakers.	4.61	4.71
5 . I am actually studying English hard.	3.06	3.65
6 . I like to speak English with my Japanese classmates.	3.48	3.27
7 . I feel like speaking English when the teacher speaks English.	4.03	4.29
8 . Learning English is important to me.	4.74	4.76
9 . I am not embarrassed to speak in English in class.	3.10	3.62

Note. Maximum score=5.0 an=41 (31 female & 10 male) bn=44 (34 female & 10 male)

The contents of the essays on “How the CSP Affected My English Skills” supported the above results. 80% of all 44 participants wrote that it seemed their listening comprehension skills improved. One student, for example, wrote she was thrilled to discover she could understand news programs in English after returning to Japan. 66% stated that journal writing was very effective in improving their writing skills, idioms and vocabulary expansion. The students developed fluency in expressing their thoughts in English and learned a great deal from their monitors written corrections and comments. 43% answered their speaking skills seemed to have improved. The next frequent response was gaining confidence (41%). Students reported that they were less afraid to make mistakes and overcame their fear in using English. Other responses were “increased motivation,” “increased reading skill,” “learned non-verbal communication,” “found speaking in English to be fun,” and “was happy when able to do simple things like calling for a taxi.” The students’ responses demonstrated that the students were aware of the numerous aspects of “English skills” or important factors that lead to successful language learning and communication.

Attitude towards Canada and Canadians

Students responded to four items that indicated their attitude towards Canada and Canadians (see Table 3). On a five-point scale, students answered whether they agreed or disagreed to the following statements, “I want to live in Canada,” “It would be useful to adopt some of Canadian ways of living,” “We can learn a lot from Canadians,” and “Canadians are interested in Japanese culture.” There was

no significant increase in post-test scores, but a significant decrease for the second item ($p < .05$). There was a decrease also for the third item. This was unexpected since in the past two reports, post-test scores were higher for all four items. However, both the second and third items were rated quite highly in the pre-test, and perhaps the students formed a more realistic view of Canada and Canadians during the program.

Table 3 Mean Scores of of Attitudes towards Canada and Canadians

Item	Pre-test a	Post-test b
1 . I want to live in Canada.	2.61	2.91
2 . It would be useful to adopt some of Canadian ways of living.	4.39	3.59
3 . We can learn a lot from Canadians.	4.59	4.32
4 . Canadians are interested in Japanese culture.	3.59	3.66

Note. Maximum score=5.0 an=41 (31 female & 10 male) bn=44 (34 female & 10 male)

Perception of Program's Effectiveness on English Learning

In the post-questionnaire students were asked to rate how effective they found the CSP to be on ten items pertaining to English learning. On a five-point scale from -1 to 4 , they chose a number that corresponded most closely with their opinion. -1 corresponded to "had a negative influence," 1 to "not useful," 2 to "a little useful," 3 to "quite useful," and 4 to "very effective."

As shown in Table 4, most mean scores for both females and males were close to 3.0 or above, indicating that the participants generally felt the CSP had a positive influence on their English learning. There was little difference in mean scores between the two groups and both scored highest for item a "improving listening comprehension skill" and lowest for item c "improving reading skill." These results solidify those described in the students' perception of English skills section. Moreover, they coincide with the results reported in the previous Gifu Annals report and those in Iwakiri's report (1993) in which female students evaluated a study abroad program to Australia most effective for improving listening skills and least effective for improving reading skills.

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Table 4 Mean Scores of Perception of Program's Effectiveness on English Learning

Item	Female a	rank	Male b	rank
a. Improving listening comprehension skill	3.6	1	3.5	1
b. Improving speaking skill	3.3	5	3.1	6
c. Improving reading skill	2.4	10	2.2	10
d. Improving writing skill	2.9	8	2.4	9
e. Becoming less embarrassed in using English	3.4	3	3.3	3
f. Becoming less afraid of making mistakes	3.1	6	3.4	2
g. Gaining self-confidence in using English	2.9	9	3.2	4
h. Taking more initiative in asking questions and speaking English	3.0	7	3.1	6
i. Increasing interest in English	3.3	4	3.2	4
j. Becoming more used to speaking with Canadians	3.5	2	3.1	6

Note. Minimum score = - 1 Maximum score =4.0 an = 34 bn= 10

Perception of Program's Influence on Personal Development

A new addition to the questionnaire for this study was a section measuring students' perception of their personal development following participation in the CSP. Students rated seven items on a five-point scale from -1 "had a negative influence," to 1 "no influence," 2 "a little influenced," 3 "quite influenced," and 4 "very effective." Both female and male groups perceived a positive influence on their personal development at very similar levels (see Table 5). All mean scores were above 2.0 and there was little difference in the scores between the two groups. The most highly rated items for females were items a "becoming more assertive and independent" (3.1) and d "increasing curiosity and interest for study and broadened view" (3.1). The male group also rated those items highest (2.9) in addition to item g "gaining general self-confidence" (2.9). These findings support those of Iwakiri (1993) who also noted that "the greatest gain was found in increasing curiosity and interest for study" (p.51).

Table 5 Mean Scores of Perception of Program's Influence on Personal Development

Item	Female a	Male b
a. Becoming more positive, assertive and independent	3.1	2.9
b. Becoming cheerful and sociable	2.7	2.7
c. Increasing generosity and consideration for others	2.6	2.6
d. Increasing curiosity and interest for study and broadened view	3.1	2.9
e. Becoming tolerant of unpleasant situations	2.7	2.6
f. Becoming less self-conscious of what others think	2.2	2.1
g. Gaining general self-confidence	2.6	2.9

Note. Minimum score = - 1 Maximum score =4.0 an = 34 bn= 10

In addition to responding on a five-point scale, students answered an open-ended question on how they felt the CSP influenced their personality. There were 36 responses from the 34 female subjects. Among them, five (14%) gave negative responses, such as “I cannot trust people anymore,” “I now realize I’m a small, shameful person,” “Communal living for 3 months was stressful,” and “I have become more self-conscious of what others think of me” (2 responses). One female wrote her personality was not influenced at all. The 10 male subjects gave 12 responses in total, which included two negative responses, “I do not trust people anymore,” and “It was terribly stressful living with someone I didn’t like.” The remaining positive responses (30 for female and 10 for male) were categorized and tabulated in Table 6.

Table 6 Perception of Program’s Influence on Personality (Positive Responses)

Response	Number of responses
Female	
1 . More tolerant and cooperative	7
2 . More positive	6
3 . More considerate of others	6
4 . Less self-conscious	3
5 . More autonomous	3
6 . More willing to speak with people	1
7 . Was able to reflect on my personality after criticism from friends	1
8 . Was happy to make a lot of friends	1
Male	
1 . More outgoing and sociable	3
2 . More positive	2
3 . Have a more broadened view living with Canadians	2
4 . More tolerant	1
5 . More considerate of others	1
6 . More autonomous	1

Note. Total number of female responses = 30 Total number of male responses = 10

There were some overlapping results between the open-ended and the five-point scale responses. For example, students perceived becoming “more positive” as an important change in personal development. However, there were discrepancies as well. Although “increasing curiosity and interest for study and broadened view” was rated one of the highest among females on the five-point scale, no female had listed this for the open-ended question. Instead, the most frequent answer was “becoming more tolerant of others and cooperative.” The most frequent answer for males, on the other hand, was “becoming more outgoing and sociable.” Overall, it seemed that communal living had a great impact

on their personal development during the program.

From the two-page essays titled, “What I Gained from the CSP (Besides English)” descriptive responses were categorized. Only three made some critical statements; “I felt forced to do activities that I didn’t want to do and I couldn’t say ‘no,’” “I sometimes felt like a child needing permission from the monitors,” and “I lost trust in people, but learned about human relations.” The most frequent positive answer from the 44 participants was gaining “Canadian and Japanese friends” (41%). 65% named qualities of personal development that they gained, such as “learning to get along with others” (8 responses), becoming “confident” (6), “more mature” (6), “independent” (3), “positive” (3), “active” (2), and “responsible” (1). Many (61%) described what they had observed and learned about Canada, and Canadian people and customs. Three students mentioned they learned how to do housework and one added that she felt more grateful to her mother. 43% listed activities they enjoyed and thought they would never have experienced in Japan, such as horseback riding, tubing, and rock climbing. Eight students described the long hike and overnight camping trip in a provincial park in Thunder Bay as a difficult but rewarding and unforgettable experience. Interestingly, six students commented on having “clearer future dreams” and two felt they understood themselves better. Other comments included “learned to express emotions freely,” “learned to say ‘no,’” “gained interest in Canada,” “became proud of being Japanese,” “became disappointed in Japan,” “able to enjoy university life more,” and “learned that Canadians and Japanese are the same.” One female wrote that she began to enjoy spending time with friends, which she claimed was a change more important than improving English skills.

Conclusion

In summary, participants in the Canadian Studies Program perceived their English listening comprehension, speaking, and writing skills to be much better after the program. Their attitude towards English also improved with higher motivation to study English. Many were less embarrassed and more confident to speak in English in class. There was no significant improvement in the participants’ attitude towards Canada and Canadians. In addition to English skills, the participants viewed the CSP as having a positive impact on their personal development. They felt that they became more positive, assertive, independent, confident, tolerant and cooperative, and gained curiosity and interest for study and broadened view. Many participants seemed to have experienced such personal maturation as a result of a three-month communal living arrangement in a foreign country.

Students who decide to study abroad will most likely anticipate improvement in language skills or increased knowledge of the host country. However, few may expect personal growth as a

significant gain. Further research is suggested to analyze the long-term effects of study abroad, as well as to ascertain the difference in degree of impact on personal development depending on length of study abroad.

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Appendix

Parts of the pre-test and post-test questionnaire

6. 今回カナダ長期留学に参加する主な理由は？ 1つだけ選んでください。
1. 英語力を身につける
 2. 生活・文化学習
 3. カナダ人の友達をつくる
 4. 観光
 5. その他
7. カナダ長期留学に参加することになったきっかけは何ですか。1つ選んでください。
1. 大学でのオリエンテーションできいて
 2. 大学より郵送されたビデオテープを見て
 3. 親に勧められて

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4. 友人・知人に勧められて
5. 大学の先生に勧められて
6. 高校のときから決めていた
7. その他

8. カナダ長期留学に参加することに対して、はじめはちゅうちょしましたか。
 ちゅうちょした ほとんどちゅうちょしなかった

8 a. ちゅうちょしたと答えた人は、どのような理由でちゅうちょしましたか。
 主な理由を1つ選んでください。

1. 金銭的な理由
2. クラブなどの課外活動ができなくなる
3. 親しい友達と離れてしまう
4. 親から離れてしまう
5. 学校以外の留学プログラムを考えていた
6. その他

Part 2

今のあなたの気持ちとしてもっとも適当だと思われるものに5，次に4，3，2，全然適当でないものに1を○で囲んでください。

1	2	3	4	5
全然適当でない		わからない		もっとも適当

- | | |
|--|-----------|
| 1. 英語をうまく話すことができる。 | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 2. 英語をうまく読むことができる。 | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 3. 英語をうまく書くことができる。 | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 4. ナマの英語を聞き取ることができる。 | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 5. 授業が終わっても勉強のことは考える。 | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 6. 英語を話すとき、文法の正確さはあまり気にしない | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 7. 卒業後も英語を勉強し続けたい。 | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 8. 英語を母国語とする人（ネイティブ・スピーカー）と
英語で話すのは楽しい。 | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 9. 実際に英語の勉強はがんばっている | 1 2 3 4 5 |

- | | |
|--|-----------|
| 10. 日本人のクラスメートと英語で話すのは好きである。 | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 11. 先生が英語で話していると英語で話したくなる。 | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 12. 英語を学ぶことは私にとって大切なことである。 | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 13. 授業中に英語で話すのは恥ずかしくない。 | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 14. 将来カナダに住みたいと思う。 | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 15. カナダでの生活の仕方をいくつか取り入れればため
になると思う。 | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 16. カナダ人から学ぶべきことはたくさんある。 | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 17. カナダ人は日本の文化について興味をもっている。 | 1 2 3 4 5 |

Part 4

1. 英語に対する態度について

カナダ留学に参加したことは、どのように役立ちましたか。以下の各々の項目について、当てはまるものの番号を○で囲んでください。

- | | |
|----------------|---------------|
| － 1. 悪い影響を受けた。 | 1. 全然役に立たなかった |
| 2. 少し役に立った | 3. かなり役に立った |
| 4. 非常に役に立った | |

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------|
| a. 聴く力の向上 | － 1 2 3 4 |
| b. 話す力の向上 | － 1 2 3 4 |
| c. 読む力の向上 | － 1 2 3 4 |
| d. 書く力の向上 | － 1 2 3 4 |
| e. 英語を使うのが留学前より恥ずかしくなくなった | － 1 2 3 4 |
| f. 英語を使うときに間違えることを恐れなくなった | － 1 2 3 4 |
| g. 英語を使うのに自信が持てるようになった | － 1 2 3 4 |
| h. 英語で自分から進んで質問したり話かけたりするようになった | － 1 2 3 4 |
| i. 英語に対して留学前より関心が増した | － 1 2 3 4 |
| j. カナダ人と接するのに慣れるようになった | － 1 2 3 4 |

4. あなた自身の変化について

カナダ留学に参加したことは、以下の項目においてあなたはどの程度影響を与えましたか。当てはまるものに○をつけてください。

- | | |
|---------------|----------------|
| － 1. 逆の影響を与えた | 1. 全然影響を与えなかった |
| 2. 少し影響を与えた | 3. かなり影響を与えた |

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4. 大変影響を与えた

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------|
| a. いろいろな面で積極性, 自主性, 自立性が増した。 | — 1 2 3 4 |
| b. 明るく社交的になった | — 1 2 3 4 |
| c. 寛容さや思いやりが増した | — 1 2 3 4 |
| d. 物事に対して好奇心, 探求心が旺盛になり, 視野が広がった | — 1 2 3 4 |
| e. 嫌なことがあっても我慢できるようになった | — 1 2 3 4 |
| f. 周囲のことや他人の目が気にならなくなった | — 1 2 3 4 |
| g. 全般的に, 自分に対して自信がついた | — 1 2 3 4 |

5. 性各面でもっとも影響を受けたことはどんなことですか。そしてそれは何が原因だと思いますか。具体的に書いてください。