INTERACTION AND SOCIAL NETWORKS WITH TARGET LANGUAGE SPEAKERS DURING STUDY ABROAD AND BEYOND:

THE EXPERIENCES OF LEARNERS OF JAPANESE

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CMC Computer-Mediated-Communication

ICT   Interactive Communications Technology

NS   Native Speakers

NNS Non-Native Speakers

SLA Second Language Acquisition

SNS Social Network Sites

TL   Target Language

L1   First Language

L2   Second or Subsequent Language

ABSTRACT

A significant number of studies highlight the importance of informal interaction and social networks for second language acquisition and social support during study abroad. Many also indicate the importance of study abroad for providing language learners with opportunities to meet, interact, and establish social networks with other target language (TL) speakers. However, although an increasing amount of research has investigated the development of language learners' social networks during study abroad, research examining learners' ongoing network maintenance and development with TL speakers after their program completion remains scarce.

The current study aims to address this gap in the literature by investigating the impact of study abroad on language learners' engagement with the host country, its language and its speakers. In particular, focus is placed on interaction and social networks with TL speakers during study abroad *and* onwards throughout their life trajectories. The study employed a qualitative, semi-longitudinal and cross-sectional approach, focussing on 134 learners of Japanese language who had participated in a university-level study abroad program. Eight focal informants completed a series of in-depth interviews and one-week interaction journals, and online questionnaire data collected from 126 respondents further validated and expanded upon this data. The analytical frameworks that guided this study were based upon Boissevain's (1974) criteria of network analysis, Fehr's (1996; 2000) factors influencing friendship development, and Grosjean's (1972) factors influencing language selection. Additionally, Norton's (2000) notion of investment and Markus and Nurius' (1986) possible selves theory were also drawn upon.

This study increases our understanding of the nature of learners' interaction and social networks both during and post-study abroad. It provides insight into the development and

maintenance of TL-speaking networks, patterns of language use within them, and the various personal, environmental and situational factors influencing these practices. Of primary importance to network development/maintenance and language use both during and post-study abroad were the environments in which the informants engaged, and their ongoing investment in the TL. One of the key findings was that, for the majority of informants, study abroad was a seminal event that positively influenced their L2 self-concept and ongoing engagement with TL-speaking networks throughout the life trajectory. In particular, it was found that study abroad experiences often resulted in a shift in L2 identity from language learner to user, and that established patterns of TL use during study abroad were, in the majority of cases, maintained once informants returned to their home countries.

The current study also increases our understanding of the role of Interactive Communications Technologies (ICTs), such as social network sites (SNSs) and smart phone applications, in post-study abroad contexts. An important finding was that in addition to increasing the ease with which networks could be maintained, SNSs such as Facebook in particular facilitated more frequent engagement with network members, providing enhanced opportunities for continued TL use and learning. The thesis concludes with a discussion of the implications of these findings for study abroad programs and future program participants, as well as for future theoretical and empirical/applied research concerning the analysis of social networks and language selection.

STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma at any university or equivalent institution and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, this thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text of the thesis.

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1. INTRODUCTION

*In terms of the people I met, I'm really, I'm so glad that I had the
opportunity to meet the people that I did. I made some best friends while I
was there and I think that was one of the best things [about study abroad]*
– Phoebe, 1 year post-study abroad

*I think there is a special place for Japanese people in my heart
because of that one year* – Angela, 15 years post-study abroad

For many students, study abroad represents a momentous, often life-changing event: an exciting and novel experience of a lifetime (Pellegrino Aveni 2005:150). For language learners in particular, it presents an important opportunity to be immersed in the target language (TL) and culture, and establish what may potentially be life-long relationships with TL speakers. As the above quotes from two informants in this research – Phoebe and Angela – indicate, the social relationships established while abroad represent a significant component of the overall experience, and may continue to influence learners' lives years, even decades, after program completion. These relationships – encompassed within larger social networks – offer important opportunities for TL use and subsequent maintenance or acquisition, often combined with linguistic and/or social support. Indeed, my own experiences also echo the sentiments expressed by the participants in this study.

As the sections to follow indicate, although research concerning learners' language use and acquisition, social interaction and relationships while abroad has received considerable attention, research concerning what happens to these relationships after program completion, and the ongoing impact of study abroad on learners' engagement with TL speakers and language, remains scarce. This thesis thus endeavours to explore this fertile area for research.

This chapter firstly provides a brief introduction to the fields of study abroad, second language acquisition (SLA), and social network research, which will be considered in more

depth in Chapter 2. Based upon this discussion, the research questions and justification for this study are presented, followed by an outline of the thesis structure.

1.1. Study abroad and language learners

It is commonly believed that one of the best ways to learn a foreign or second language (L2) is to develop friendships with native speakers (NSs) and to communicate with them using that language (Kurata 2004:153). However, particularly for students studying a foreign language in a first language (L1) dominant environment, it is not always easy for them to gain access to opportunities for interaction outside the language classroom (Kurata 2010:396). In order to increase such opportunities, study abroad programs are frequently recommended, and research indicates that study abroad students desire and expect to have contact and develop friendships with host nationals (Smart, Volet & Ang 2000; Ward, Bochner and Furnham2001; Grey 2002; Ayano 2006; Benson, Barkhuizen, Bodycott & Brown 2013).

In a comprehensive review of research on study abroad and second language acquisition, Kinginger (2009:11) defines study abroad as 'a temporary sojourn of pre-defined duration, undertaken for educational purposes'. It is temporary in the sense that it is part of a longer-term educational process, and that 'the student intends, or is expected to, return home when it is over' (Benson et al. 2013:34). Additionally, Freed (1995:5) states that study abroad 'combine[s] language and/or content learning in a formal classroom setting, along with immersion in the native speech community', and Rivers (1998:492) suggests that for language learners, it represents 'an environment which most closely resembles the environment of the first language learner: continuously available TL input, in all possible modalities, registers, and domains'.

Due to the nature of such environments, participation in study abroad is considered to play a crucial role in language learning trajectories by students and faculty (staff) in most universities (Schrier 2010:3). Therefore, study abroad is often an educational goal for many foreign language learners, and for university degrees in foreign language, is often compulsory. Study abroad programs vary in length from a few weeks to one or two semesters, as well as in terms of entry TL competence, language used in coursework, and context of academic work (Engle & Engle 2003). The present study has not restricted its examination to a particular type of program, but rather considers learners' experiences in a large variety of study abroad programs, at both universities and language institutes, from four weeks to one year in duration. The working definition of study abroad employed in this research is therefore a period during students' university studies that they spend overseas in an academic context, for which study of, or in, a second language is the primary purpose.

In terms of L2 acquisition and advancement, there is a widespread belief that students who reside abroad will ultimately become more proficient users of their L2. As highlighted by Kinginger (2011), this belief has resulted in four main streams of research in regards to study abroad and language learning. The first of these is language outcome based research that often utilises quantitative methods to compare 'study abroad' verses 'at home' students and any changes in their language proficiency during the same period. This perspective argues that study abroad is a contextual variable that potentially influences language learning when compared to the 'control' of staying at home (Collentine & Freed 2004; Collentine 2009).

Although several reviews of literature (e.g. Freed, So & Lazar 2003; Isabelli 2004) have shown that students studying abroad have indeed achieved more proficiency than students studying at home, Benson et al. (2013:37) argue that this type of research is problematic.

This is because it isolates language learning outcomes from other outcomes that may be equally or more important to students, as well as the study abroad period from the overall, larger context of the students' longer-term language learning experience.

The second stream of study abroad research attempts to explain disparities in language outcomes by identifying individual variables that correlate with language proficiency gains. This research focuses on the learning processes involved in study abroad, and draws upon both quantitative and qualitative methods. Although this research assumes that TL immersion is beneficial for language learners, it questions the quality and quantity of the immersion. Many studies in this stream have thus drawn upon the Language Contact Profile (Freed, Segalowitz and Dewey 2004) to examine the amount of time learners spend using the TL during study abroad, and its relationship with language proficiency.

The third stream of study abroad research – with which the current study most closely resonates – is primarily qualitative in nature, and aims to understand the experience of study abroad from the perspective of learners themselves. Thus, case studies and ethnographies are common. Kinginger (2011:64) observes that studies of this type 'reveal that language learning in study abroad is a complex, dialogic, situated affair in which the subjectivities of students and hosts are deeply implicated'.

Finally, Kinginger (2011:65) writes that the most recent development in study abroad research is the rising prominence of mixed method studies, which combine in-depth qualitative enquiry with assessment or other documentation of language acquisition, such as Oral Proficiency Interview scores. Although the current study does not explicitly deal with language acquisition, it draws on a reoccurring theme of findings in all four of the above-mentioned streams of research: that gains in L2 proficiency have generally been attributed

to increased opportunities for L2 contact and more varied opportunities for interaction with NSs during study abroad.

1.2. Study abroad, informal language contact and communicative competence

Language educators and learners alike have long assumed that studying abroad automatically guarantees increased contact with the TL, and that this ultimately leads to enhanced proficiency in the TL (Freed 1995:5). As a result, within the field of SLA research, the connection between increased language contact and interaction provided by the study abroad experience and its impact on language proficiency, sociolinguistic, and sociocultural knowledge has increasingly been explored and tested (e.g. Regan 1995; Segalowitz & Freed 2004; Mendelson 2004; Isabelli-García 2006; Magnan & Back 2007; Jackson 2010; Hernandez 2010).

Although numerous studies have found evidence of a relationship between learner interaction with NSs and gains in communicative competence in study abroad contexts (Regan 1995; Yager 1998; Allen & Herron 2003; Isabelli-García 2000, 2006; Whitworth 2006; Hernandez 2010; Dewey, Bown & Eggett 2012), a number of other studies have found that while study abroad could lead to gains in oral proficiency, these gains were not correlated to interaction with NSs (Freed 1990; Segalowitz & Freed 2004; Mendelson 2004; Magnan & Back 2007). However, each of these studies that did not find a correlation focused on study abroad programs of one semester or less; researchers arguing that this duration was probably not long enough for the participants to significantly invest in the kind of social relationships that provide the interaction necessary to enhance TL acquisition (Segalowitz & Freed 2004; Magnan & Back 2007).

In addition to gains in communicative competence, interaction with NSs while abroad has also been found to positively impact a range of affective factors, including language

learners' motivation (Bachner & Zeustschel 1994; Simoes 1996; Isabelli-García 2006); learners' confidence in themselves and their language skills (Tanaka 1997; Tanaka & Ellis 2003; Allen & Herron 2003; Magnan & Back 2007; Zappa 2007; Xu 2010); and levels of both classroom and non-classroom anxiety (Tanaka & Ellis 2003; Allen & Herron 2003; Zappa 2007; Xu 2010). Furthermore, interaction and social relationships with NSs can better facilitate cultural competence, acculturation and the feeling of connectedness to the host culture (Lybeck 2002; Pearson-Evans 2006; Shiri 2015). While each of the above-mentioned studies has focused on interaction with NSs during study abroad, as will be discussed in the following section, follow-up research concerning learners' ongoing interaction with NSs, and its related benefits, once learners return to their home countries remains scare. This has become one of the goals of this thesis.

Although this section has highlighted the importance of interaction with NSs for study abroad students, and language learners in general, considerable research has indicated student disappointment in not being able to meet and interact with NSs as much as they had hoped or expected, despite being in the TL country (Allen & Herron 2003; Mendelson 2004; Magnan & Back 2007; Ayano 2006; Tanaka 2007; Jackson 2008; Hernandez 2010; Xu 2010). A possible means of examining the complexities behind students' interaction and social relationships while abroad and after their return is through analysis of their social networks. Social network theory can help shed light on their contact with TL speakers, as well as on their patterns of language use (Mercer 2014:79). Additionally, network analysis can help us to better understand group dynamics, and how learners interact and identify with the host culture and community as a whole. In the section below, a more general discussion of the significance of social networks in the field of SLA and applied linguistics is provided.

1.3. The significance of social networks in the field of SLA and applied linguistics

The study of social networks has a comprehensive history in the fields of anthropology, sociology, communications, and more recently, linguistic fields (Kim 1988). Lesley Milroy, who is well known for her use of social network theory in research on dialectal variation and code switching, concisely defines social networks as 'the informal social relationships contracted by an individual' (1987:178). In a later article (Milroy & Milroy 1992), she and her colleague further elaborated, explaining that a social network is 'a boundless web of ties that reaches out through a whole society, linking people to one another, however remotely' (1992:5). This perspective is what is usually termed a 'whole' or 'complete' network. For practical reasons, however, many researchers focus on 'egocentric' or 'personal' networks, which consist of one individual (ego), their set of connections (alters), and the relations among those alters (Borgatti & Ofem 2010; Carolan 2014). According to Milroy and Milroy (1992:5), these 'alters' are people with whom ego directly and frequently interacts, otherwise called 'first-order network ties'.

Milroy and Milroy (1992:138-139) also define three distinct types of network structures: 1) exchange networks that are constructed of ties with family and close friends; 2) interactive networks that are made up of ties with acquaintances; and 3) passive networks that consist of physically distant ties. While some studies have investigated exchange networks or interactive networks exclusively (e.g. Bochner, Hutnik, & Furnham 1985; Mollenhorst, Volker & Flap 2008), the present study considers all three types as important components of the larger network, and as such, examines ties from all three structures.

As Milardo (1988:18) states, a distinctive advantage of network analysis is 'its ability to specify attributes of local social structure influential in the formation and development of personal relationships'. Furthermore, network analysis is useful for gaining an

understanding of how 'social structures facilitate and constrain opportunities, behaviors, and conditions' of individuals (Carrasco, Hogan, Weilman & Miller 2006:5). Therefore, although Li Wei (1994:32) rightly states that individuals intentionally develop social networks for specific reasons, it must be recognised that while individuals can directly influence the size of their network, social relationships and networks also depend upon environmental or contextual conditions beyond control of the individual (Milardo 1988; Volker, Flap & Mollenhorst 2009). As explained by Blau (1993:204), social structure 'creates probabilities or chances for various actions and interactions, and the interests and choices of individuals divide them into opportunities and constraints'. In other words, because social network analysis accounts for both social structure and individual agency, it provides a means of linking individual behaviour at the micro level to 'larger embedded patterns at the macro level' (Carolan 2014:36).

Social network theory is also 'likely to be of particular relevance in SLA, given that language use and meaning-making through language is inherently social and interactional in nature' (Byrnes 2013:225). Furthermore, by providing a link between community and social interaction, network analysis also offers an integrated social theory of language selection, accounting for both 'interactional behaviours of individual speakers and broader questions of social relations and social organisation' (Li Wei 1992:37).

Over the past two decades, a considerable amount of research has thus utilised network analysis to examine patterns of language choice in bilingual communities (Li Wei 1992, 1994; Li Wei, Milroy & Ching 1992; Li Wei 1994; Karahan 2004; Kurata 2007, 2011). A growing number of studies have also investigated social network development in study abroad contexts (e.g. Furnham & Bochner 1982; Kato and Tanibe 1997; Murakami 1997; Iwami and Adachi 1997; Tanaka 1997, 2000; Nakayama 2001; Murakami 2005; Ayano

2006; Isabelli-García 2006; Pearson-Evans 2006; Zappa 2007; Brockbank 2011; Dewey, Ring, Gardner & Belnap 2013). As will be discussed in the following chapter, these studies have made important contributions towards an understanding of study abroad students' social networks in terms of ethnic-based composition, social support, patterns of language use, and/or their relationship with second language acquisition.

Despite the growing interest in research concerning the composition and function of social networks during study abroad, follow-up research regarding learners' interaction and social networks once they return to their home countries remains scarce (Kurata 2002, 2004; Campbell 2011). My previous research (Campbell 2011) was the first known study to investigate this important, emerging area of enquiry through in-depth, qualitative analysis of language learners' social networks prior to, during, and post-study abroad. As will be further discussed in the following chapter, it found that study abroad facilitated opportunities for learners of Japanese to meet and subsequently maintain contact with NSs after returning home. It also found that the six informants reportedly used a greater amount of Japanese for communicational purposes post- compared to pre-study abroad.

Although my previous research increased understanding of post-study abroad networks and interaction, it had several limitations, some of which are addressed in the present study. In particular, the current study expands my previous research by drawing upon a significantly larger number of informants from a more diverse range of backgrounds. Study abroad experiences at both universities and language institutes are examined, and time since program completion has been expanded from one to five years in my previous study to one month to 39 years in the current study. Furthermore, given that non-native speakers (NNSs) may also provide important opportunities for TL use, the present study considers social networks with both NSs and NNSs of Japanese.

1.4. Research questions

Previous research has tended to focus on either the study abroad period or the outcomes of study abroad. In contrast, the current study has adopted a semi-longitudinal and cross-sectional perspective and aims to examine language learners' experiences abroad *and* their impact on learners' life trajectories and ongoing interaction with TL speakers. Based upon a series of interviews and interaction journals with eight focal informants and questionnaire data from 126 respondents, the current study addresses the following research questions:

1. What is the nature of L2 Japanese language learners' social networks and interaction with Japanese speakers during study abroad, and what factors influence this?

   1.a. What are the structural and interactional characteristics of learners' L2 networks during study abroad?

   1.b. What factors influence social interaction and network development during study abroad?

   1.c. How do learners' use their L1/L2 within these networks, and what factors influence language selection?

2. What is the nature and extent of L2 Japanese language learners' ongoing engagement with Japan, its language and its speakers post-study abroad, and what factors influence this?

   2.a. How do learners continue to engage with Japan throughout their ongoing life trajectories?

   2.b. What factors influence interaction, network maintenance and development with Japanese speakers post-study abroad?

   2.c. How do learners use their L1/L2 within post-study abroad networks, and what factors influence language selection?

Although the focus of this research is on learners of Japanese language who have studied abroad in Japan, it is hoped that the findings will also be applicable to students of other languages who have previously participated or intend to participate in study abroad programs in other contexts.

1.5. Justification of the study

As established at the outset of this chapter, experiences during study abroad and the relationships established during that period play important roles in language learners' learning trajectories. Although great strides have been made in recent years concerning learners' patterns of interaction, social networks, and language use during study abroad, there remains fertile ground for investigating how learners go about establishing and maintaining their TL networks and opportunities for TL use both during and post-study abroad. Indeed, Segalowitz et al. (2004:15) have argued for more qualitative research concerning study abroad experiences, and more specifically, for greater focus on learners' opportunities for interaction and the nature of communication that occurs both inside and outside the classroom. A number of other researchers (Burns, 1996; Zappa, 2007; Kurata, 2011; Coleman 2013) have also called for more longitudinal and/or follow-up studies examining how the study abroad experience impacts learners in various social, personal, and academic contexts once they return to their home countries. In particular, Coleman (2013:27) has argued that 'far too few studies have sought to explore the long-term impact of the always challenging and often life-changing experience of study abroad'.

The research described in the following chapters therefore responds to these researchers' calls, and is the first known in-depth qualitative study to explore the long-term impact of study abroad on participants' ongoing interaction and networks with both NSs and NNSs of the TL. It is hoped that this research will facilitate a more comprehensive understanding of the processes involved in development and maintenance of networks and opportunities for

TL use both during study abroad and onwards throughout the life trajectory. The findings of this research should be of interest to study abroad administrators, coordinators, and future program participants, as well as to researchers in the fields of study abroad, applied linguistics, and/or social network analysis.

1.6. Thesis Structure

In order to investigate the research questions outline above, this thesis will take the following structure. Firstly, Chapter 2 reviews relevant literature from both study abroad and social network perspectives. Chapter 3 then outlines the analytical framework, the methodology employed in this study, including informants' backgrounds, methods of data collection, and analysis procedures. The following six chapters then focus on the analysis and discussion of the data in relation to the research questions. Responding to research question 1, Chapters 4 to 6 examine the informants' social networks and interaction with Japanese speakers during study abroad. In particular, Chapter 4 provides a discussion of the nature of the informants' social networks with Japanese speakers during study abroad; Chapter 5 examines the factors influencing patterns of interaction and network development during study abroad; and Chapter 6 examines the patterns of language use within these networks.

Chapters 7 to 9 then respond to research question 2, focusing on the informants' ongoing engagement with Japan, its language and its speakers after study abroad completion. Chapter 7 focuses on the informant's post-study abroad life trajectories, the ways they align or misalign with Japan, and how they incorporate TL-speaking networks. In doing so, it also introduces a number of factors influencing interaction and social networks with Japanese speakers in relation to specific stages of the life trajectory. Chapter 8 then systematically draws these factors together and examines factors influencing interaction and network development/maintenance common to all phases of the life trajectory; and Chapter 9

describes the informants' patterns of language use and selection within these networks. Finally, Chapter 10, the conclusion, summarises the major findings presented in the preceding chapters and highlights the implications of these for language learners, study abroad program development, and for future research.

2. STUDY ABROAD, INTERACTION, AND SOCIAL NETWORKS: STUDIES PAST AND PRESENT

While the literature presented in Chapter 1 aimed to situate the current study within the broader fields of SLA and study abroad research, this chapter provides a more detailed review of literature that has informed the methodological approach, analysis and discussion presented in the chapters to follow. As a truly comprehensive review of all related and relevant studies is beyond the scope of this chapter, the literature discussed below represent a selection appropriate for the focus of this thesis. In particular, Section 2.1 summarises research concerning study abroad and opportunities for interaction with NSs; Section 2.2 focuses on study abroad networks and patterns of language selection; Section 2.3 introduces research related to the ongoing impact of study abroad in regards to identity, life trajectories, and network maintenance and development; and Section 2.4 considers research in relation to social networks in the age of computer-mediated communication (CMC).

2.1. Interactional opportunities during study abroad

As shown in Chapter 1, there is a common belief that students studying abroad will be immersed in the TL culture, providing ample opportunities to meet and interact with NSs (Segalowitz & Freed 2004; Dewey et al. 2014). Furthermore, the fact that study abroad students desire and expect to have contact and develop relationships with host nationals has also been well documented (e.g. Smart, Volet and Ang 2000; Ward et al. 2001; Grey 2002). However, research has shown disappointment in the lack of opportunities for sojourner-host contact and/or friendship development (Allen & Herron 2003; Mendelson 2004; Magnan & Back 2007; Tanaka 2007; Hernandez 2010; Xu 2010; Meier & Daniels 2011), and that the contact that does occur often tends to be superficial and/or minimal compared to contact with co-nationals or other sojourners (Nesdale et al., 1995; Tanaka & Ellis, 2003; Allen, 2010). Magnan and Back (2007), for example, found that 18 of the 24 American students in their study did not make as many NS friends as they had hoped in their semester abroad in

France. The majority (17/24) of the students from the University of Bath in the study of Meier and Daniels (2011) also reported difficulties in achieving social integration with NSs during their three to 12 months abroad in a variety of European countries, some reporting no social ties with locals at all. Likewise, at least half of the 219 students from an Australian university in Forsey, Broomhall & Davis' (2012) study made less contact with local hosts than they expected, with students studying in Japan, in particular, mentioning that they established more friendships with American or European students than with local Japanese.

Before explicitly discussing factors found to influence interaction and network development in study abroad contexts, it is useful to firstly introduce what Fischer and colleagues have termed a 'choice-constraint' approach to the examination of personal networks (Fischer et al. 1977; Fischer 1982). The basic premise is that 'personal networks are the results of individual choices made within social constraints' (Fischer et al. 1977:42). This means that 'the socio-demographic composition of the contexts in which people live, work and socialize constitutes the opportunity structure to get to know particular others' (Mollenhorst, Völker & Flap 2008:938).

In further regards to context, Feld (1981) has discussed two dimensions that influence personal relationships and larger networks. Firstly, he argues that social contexts vary in the degree to which they regulate or enforce interaction. Enforced interactions affect both the emergence of personal relationships, as well as with whom they are likely to originate (cf. Feld 1982; Fischer 1982; Mollenhorst, Völker & Flap 2008). The second dimension of social contexts discussed by Feld (1981) is that they vary in regards to the amount of time individuals generally spend in each of them. Because individuals have a limited amount of time, they are restricted in the number of contexts in which they can engage, and the more time an individual spends in a certain context, the more likely they will establish social ties

from within that context. Consequently, the composition of individuals' social networks usually reflects the composition of the contexts in which they engage (Fischer 1982; Fischer et al. 1977; Marsden, 1990; Mollenhorst, Völker & Flap 2008). In other words, in order for study abroad students to effectively establish networks with local hosts, they are best to socialise in contexts where a large number of host nationals are present. In contrast, socialising in contexts primarily involving international students is more likely to result in networks with other international students.

While the structured nature of study abroad programs places some constraint on the types of contexts participants engage in, and the degree to which these regulate interaction with local hosts, a range of individual variables also influence with whom study abroad students interact and/or establish social networks (Churchill & DuFon 2006). Both individual and programmatic variables and their impact on interaction and network development are discussed in further detail in Sections 2.1.1 and 2.1.2 below.

2.1.1. Individual variables influencing interaction and network development

Individual variables are those that are attached to the individual, dealing with personal dispositions, traits and skills (Takai, 1990:200). According to Antonucci, Langfahl and Akiyama (2004:24), they 'shape the type of relationship an individual needs or seeks, the kinds of support exchanged, and the ways in which those relationships are evaluated'. However, as Carolan (2014:4) has explained, individual variables not only shape individuals' social networks, but are also shaped by them.

In his state-of-the-art article, Coleman (1997) drew attention to many of the individual factors that come into play during study abroad, which he categorised as affective, cognitive, biographical, linguistic, and circumstantial variables. Since then, a considerable amount of research has been conducted on the relationship between such variables and

various aspects of second language acquisition. Of particular relevance to the current study, Wilkinson (1998b:122) has argued that individual variation during study abroad means that two individuals participating in the same program will likely encounter the environment in two unique ways. More specifically, individual differences play a significant role in determining the quantity and quality of study abroad students' interaction with NSs. Table 1 below provides a sampling of related works and the individual variables they have identified as influencing intercultural contact and network development.

Table 1 Individual variables influencing sojourner-host contact

Individual Variables	**Relevant literature**
Anxiety	Allen & Herron 2003; Kudo & Simkin 2003; Xu 2010
Cultural similarity/difference	Gudykunst 1985; Sudweeks et al. 1990; Takai 1990; Burns 1996; Gareis 2000; Kudo & Simkin 2003; Trice 2004; Zappa 2007; Dunne 2009
Confidence	Kudo & Simkin 2003; Whitworth 2006; Dunne 2009; Xu 2010
Ethnicity of study abroad student	Selltiz et al. 1956; Yokota & Tanaka 1992; Siegal 1998; Pavlenko 2002; Pearson-Evans 2006; Morita 2012
Identity	Miller 2000; Norton Pierce 1995, 2000; Whitworth 2006; Jackson 2008; Benson et al. 2013
Individual similarity/difference	Brehm 1985; Sudweeks et al. 1990; Kim 1991; Gudykunst et al. 1991; Sias & Cahill 1998; Smart, Volet & Ang 2000; Kudo & Simkin 2003; Ujitani 2006; Peng 2011
Interest in language/cultures	Gudykunst et al. 1991; Kudo & Simkin 2003; Ujitani 2006; Sias et al. 2008
Intercultural sensitivity	Wilkinson 1998a; Isabelli-García 2006
Language competence	Gudykunst 1985; Freed 1990; Sudweeks et al. 1990; Kim 1991; Yang et al. 1994; Krywulak 1995; Gareis 2000; Ying 2002; Kudo & Simkin 2003; Trice 2004; Segalowitz & Freed 2004; Tan & Goh 2006; Ujitani 2006; Tanaka 2007; Dunne 2009; Brockbank 2011
Learner Investment	Norton Pierce 1995; Norton 2000; Benson et al. 2013
Motivation toward host contact	Takai 1990; Kudo & Simkin 2003; Isabelli-García 2006; Hernandez 2010; Meier & Daniels 2011
Personality type	Takai 1990; Yang et al. 1994; Ying 2002; Toyokawa & Toyokawa 2002; Mendelson 2004; Pavel 2006; Ujitani 2006; Benson et al. 2013
Previous intercultural experience	Gudykunst 1985; Pavel 2006; Sias et al. 2008; Peng 2011; Benson et al. 2013

As indicated in Table 1, an individual's L2 competence is the most frequently cited factor influencing interaction and relationship development, as it is essentially tied to the interaction process (Gareis 2000:73). More proficient learners have a greater ability to effectively interact in the L2, which has been found to increase linguistic confidence and prospects of interacting with host nationals (Freed 1990; Sudweeks et al. 1990; Gareis 2000; Ying 2002; Kudo & Simkin 2003; Tanaka 2007). In contrast, the real or perceived lack of L2 proficiency may exacerbate fears of making mistakes, and restricts conversations in terms of diversity and depth of topics, and as such, degree of self disclosure. This can lead study abroad students to avoid seeking out, initiating or extending interaction with local hosts (Lee & Boster 1991; Krywulak 1995).

Some other studies have found that extroverted personalities, along with positive and open-minded attitudes towards forming relationships with hosts help facilitate initial intercultural contact and friendship development (Yang, Teraoka, Eichenfield & Audas 1994; Ying 2002; Toyokawa & Toyokawa 2002; Pavel 2006). Prior experience of living or traveling abroad also appears to impact degree and quality of intercultural interactions (Pavel 2006; Sias et al. 2008; Benson et al. 2013). Furthermore, affective factors such as motivation (Takai 1990; Isabelli-García 2006; Hernandez 2010; Meier & Daniels 2011), anxiety (Allen & Herron 2003; Xu 2010), and confidence (Xu 2010) also come into play.

While it is acknowledged that each of these factors influences study abroad students' interaction and friendship development with host nationals, the current research places a more significant focus on program variables. This is because without an environment that facilitates contact between study abroad students and local hosts, there will be no opportunities for interaction and relationship development (Blau 1977:79). Moreover, Simard (1981) has also found that people prefer to rely on situational factors to foster

relationship development rather than initiating interaction themselves. Program variables identified as influencing interaction and network development are discussed below.

2.1.2. Program variables influencing interaction and network development

Program variables are responsible for bringing two or more individuals into physical proximity, establishing ground for interaction and potential friendship development. Program design thus plays a crucial role in facilitating interaction because, if caution is not taken, programs may promote a grouping of learners that constrains their opportunities for interaction with local hosts (Churchill & DuFon 2006: 23). Table 2 below provides an overview of the key program variables found to influence sojourner-host contact in particular.

Table 2 Programs variables influencing sojourner-host contact

Program variables	Relevant literature
Class type	Goldsen, Suchman & Williams 1956; Burns 1996; Kato & Tanibe 1997; Kudo & Simkin 2003; Whitworth 2006; Zappa 2007; Morofushi 2008; Dunne 2009; Campbell 2011
Duration of study abroad	Burns 1996; Dunstan 2003; Dwyer 2004; Mendelson 2004; Murakami 2005; Peng 2011; Brockbank 2011
Extra-curricular activities	Goldsen, Suchman & Williams 1956; Burns 1996; Kato & Tanibe 1997; Umeda 1997; Tomiya 1997; Toyokawa & Toyokawa 2002; Morofushi 2008; Kim & Yang 2010; Campbell 2011; Meier & Daniels 2011
Frequency of contact with other foreigners	Krywulak 1995; Burns 1996; Kato & Tanibe 1997; Murakami 1997; Kim 2001; Allen 2002; Tanaka & Ellis 2003; Kinginger & Farrell 2004; Pearson-Evans 2006; Dunne 2009; Allen 2010
Peer-programs	Westwood and Barker 1990; Murakami 2005; Morofushi 2008; Badstübner & Ecke 2009; Campbell 2011
Residential situation	Selltiz et al. 1956; Goldsen, Suchman & Williams 1956; Bochner, McLeod & Lin 1977; Furnam & Bochner 1982; Bochner 1985; Yokota & Tanaka 1992; Krywulak 1995; Rivers 1998; Wilkinson 1998b; Myles & Cheng 2003; Mendelson 2004; Isabelli-García 2006; Ujitani 2006; Tanaka 2007; Kinginger 2008; Dunne 2009; Campbell 2011; Forsey et al. 2012
Size of university	Selltiz et al. 1956; Kezar 2006; Morofushi 2008; Campbell 2011

In the following sections, the ways in which various features of program design have an explicit and sometimes unintended impact on learners' contact with NSs are discussed. The most frequently cited factors discussed below are: residential situation, duration of program, class type, peer programs, extracurricular activities, and the extent of contact with co-nationals and other foreign students.

<u>Residential Situation</u>

As Bochner (1985:689) has noted, there is an underlying assumption that the close residential proximity provided by dormitories or housing accommodating both local and international students will result in better intercultural understanding and the formation of long-standing intercultural friendships. A number of studies have supported this claim, finding that shared residence is an important element of intercultural friendship formation (Gareis 2000; Yokota & Tanaka 2002; Kudo & Simkin 2003; Ujitani 2006). Yokota and Tanaka (2002) found that international students living in an integrated dormitory in Japan had stronger connectivity with local Japanese students than those living in apartments or dormitories exclusively for international students. Similarly, Kudo and Simkin (2003) found that for Japanese students studying in Australia, student dormitories offered a higher degree of intercultural contact than university flats or off-campus accommodation, while Tanaka (2007) and Allen (2010) have found that interaction with the homestay family provided their participants with the most frequent and important opportunity for language and/or cultural learning while abroad.

However, numerous studies have also identified student disappointment in their degree of linguistic/social interaction and friendship development with NSs at their residence, regardless of whether it was a homestay (Rivers 1998; Wilkinson 1998b; Schmidt-Rinehart & Knight 2004; Kinginger 2008) or integrated dormitory or apartments (Bochner, McLeod

& Lin 1977; Furnam & Bochner 1982; Bochner 1985; Tanaka 2007; Campbell 2011). Participants in my previous research (Campbell 2011), for example, found that it was difficult to establish relationships with local Japanese students in an integrated dormitory in Japan. Similarly, Ujitani (2006) has found that in such dormitories, the ratio of international to local students, as well as rules restricting visiting hours and places of recreation, may inhibit interaction between Japanese and international students (Ujitani 2006).

Furthermore, several families and housing directors participating in the study by Schmidt-Rinehart and Knight (2004:260) indicated that students frequently travelled on weekends, and during the week often spent much time in their bedrooms or participated in activities with friends outside the home, where the majority of interactants were other Americans. A number of studies have also found that study abroad students with close ties to home spent a considerable amount of time communicating with friends and family, consequently reducing opportunities to engage in activities with their hosts (Li 2000; Knight & Schmidt-Rinehart 2002; Kinginger & Whitworth 2005).

Duration of Program

It has frequently been argued that longer study abroad periods lead to greater L2 proficiency gains and an overall more significant and enduring impact on students' lives (Isabelli 2004; Dwyer 2004). Furthermore, several researchers have suggested that study abroad programs of one semester or less are not long enough for learners to significantly invest in social relationships with local hosts (Segalowitz & Freed 2004; Magnan & Back 2007). Similarly, it has also been argued that the brevity of short-term programs may limit study abroad students' contact with the host culture and thus also opportunities for language practice (Day 1987; Allen 2002). However, studies conducted by Burns (1996) and Peng (2011)

have found that even a longer one-year program places limits on the intimacy of friendships to be formed, with close friendships taking a longer period of time to develop.

The duration of program seems to be particularly important in the Japanese context. Neustupný (1987:49) explains that a more intimate level of friendship with the Japanese 'can only be entered on the basis of a long and well-established contact'. It has been found that compared to Western cultures, considerably more frequent and prolonged contact is necessary to reach even the first level of friendship (Pearson-Evans 2006; Campbell 2011). Murakami (2005) has therefore argued that it is important for study abroad students to be proactive about making contact with host nationals from the very beginning of their program.

It thus seems that study abroad students, and in particular those in short-term programs, may require active direction in their engagement with the host culture (Ingram 2005:216). Simply being abroad is not enough; programs must be designed to help facilitate L2 usage and interaction with host nationals. A students' success in establishing simply one acquaintance can have an enormous influence on their out-of-class experiences, as this contact has the potential to lead to further opportunities for meeting other local hosts (Laubscher 1994).

Class types during study abroad

Another important factor affecting the opportunities for interaction with NSs while abroad is the type of class in which students are enrolled. Short-term study abroad programs of a few weeks generally offer TL instruction as well as 'subject-matter' or cultural classes in English, with little to no opportunities to integrate with host students (Engle & Engle 2003). Whitworth (2006) has found that students enrolled in such classes socialised exclusively

amongst themselves for around eight hours per day, and thus questioned whether this type of classroom context actually discourages interaction with local students. Although longer-term programs of one semester to a year also offer such international-student-specific language and cultural courses (taught in English or the TL), students in these programs may also be able to enrol in 'regular' or integrated classes with local students (Engle & Engle 2003; Teichler & Steube 1991).

Some studies have found that regular classes provide important opportunities for meeting and interacting with more local students (Burns 1996; Kudo & Simkin 2003; Pavel 2006; Zappa 2007; Peng 2011; Campbell 2011). Importantly, Burns (1996) found that from the local Japanese students' perspective, study abroad students' participation in such classes facilitated more similarity with local students, and thus led to greater acceptance in the university hierarchy. In contrast, one of Morofushi's (2008) participants who enrolled in such classes found that although the class offered opportunities for speaking the TL, he 'felt isolated and separated from the existing members' as they would often actively avoid him (p39). Furthermore, studies conducted by Kato and Tanibe (1997), Whitworth (2006), and Zappa (2007) have found that participation in regular classes does not necessarily guarantee interaction or friendship development with local students. Zappa (2007) has suggested that because local students already have established groups of friends, they may be less motivated to expand these to include newcomer study abroad students. Thus, program directors also often aim to facilitate interaction outside of the classroom.

Peer Programs

One way of enhancing out-of-class interaction is by promoting participation in peer mentoring, tutoring, pairing or buddy programs (Westwood & Barker 1990; Abe, Talbot & Gellhoed 1998; Lassegard 2008; Morofushi 2008; Badstübner & Ecke 2009). The overall

aim of such programs is to pair international students with local students to provide social and/or academic support. A number of studies have found that these programs provide various benefits to second language learners studying abroad (Westwood and Barker 1990; Murakami 2005; Morofushi 2008; Badstübner & Ecke 2009; Campbell 2011). Badstübner and Ecke (2009), for example, found that for their participants on a one-month study abroad program in Germany, twice-weekly meetings with peer tutors provided the most frequent and extensive opportunities for L2 German usage while abroad.

Several studies also found that various peer-programs in Japan offered extensive opportunities for friendship development with host students. Murakami's (2005) participants on either one- or two-semester study abroad programs mentioned having access to 'E-pal', tutor, and language exchange programs that offered varying degrees of support and friendship with local students. Several participants in Murakami's (2005) and my own (Campbell 2011) previous research have also mentioned that participation in various peer-programs could help promote further friendship development with other tutors/E-pals and/or their friends. Moreover, the E-pal program in Murakami's (2005) study and the 'buddy community' in Morofushi's (2008) study further enhanced opportunities for interaction and friendship development by organising activities and events with the specific purpose of promoting friendship between local and international students. These studies therefore suggest the importance of incorporating peer programs into study abroad programs of all lengths, as they provide not only academic and/or social support, but also invaluable opportunities for network development.

Extracurricular Activities

In order to facilitate development of close and mutual relationships with host nationals, a number of studies have found that study abroad students should be encouraged to participate

in a variety of activities, both inside and outside of the university (Burns 1996; Kato & Tanibe 1997; Umeda 1997; Tomiya 1997; Kim & Yang 2010; Meier & Daniels 2011; Dewey et al. 2013). In the Japanese context in particular, research has shown that participation in university clubs/circles [1] promotes frequent contact and increased opportunities for interaction and friendship development with local students (Burns 1996; Kato & Tanibe 1997; Morofushi 2008; Campbell 2011). One of the participants in my previous research (Campbell 2011) for example, mentioned receiving 'the impression that Japanese people don't even make friends outside their circle… it really tended to be that your circle or your club was like your social group' (p. 39).

Therefore, for students who live in international student residence and/or attend international student specific classes, participation in clubs/circles may offer a particularly important source of Japanese interaction and friendship opportunities (Campbell 2011). Importantly, Kato and Tanibe (1997) have also found that friendships developed through clubs might become key persons, introducing study abroad students to their other friends. Burns (1996) and Campbell (2011), on the other hand, have found that interaction may be restricted to club hours, with a high frequency of group interaction, but few opportunities for one-to-one interaction.

Extent of contact with co-nationals and other foreign students

As Churchill and Dufon (2006:23) have noted, study abroad programs 'by their very nature, bring large groups of learners together'. Depending on program factors such as those mentioned in the previous sections, 'programs can promote a grouping of learners that actually restricts opportunities for interaction with NSs'. Empirical studies conducted by Tanaka and Ellis (2003) and myself (Campbell 2011) have found that international student

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[1]An extra-curricular 'circle' (*sākuru*) in Japan is similar to a club, however, is less serious or competitive in nature.

specific classes and residence, in particular, influence the degree of interaction with local hosts. Moreover, Tanaka (2007) has found that inadequate L2 proficiency is also a contributing factor.

The issue of study abroad students grouping together with other students who share the same native language, and using their L1 to communicate, is thus frequent in the study abroad literature (Tanaka & Ellis 2003; Freed, Segalowitz & Dewey 2004; Mendelson 2004; Pearson-Evans 2006; Tanaka 2007; Dewey 2008; Coleman & Chafer 2010). Many of these studies also suggest the detrimental effect of interaction with study abroad peers on the development of friendship with host nationals, and also on subsequent L2 acquisition (Tanaka & Ellis 2003; Pearson-Evans 2006; Tanaka 2007; Dewey 2008; Coleman & Chafer 2010).

While Kato and Tanibe (1997:117) have argued that friendships with other foreigners may help alleviate the stress of being immersed in a completely L2 environment, Pearson-Evans (2006:43) has warned that although foreign friends may help facilitate cultural and linguistic adjustment at first, they may also hinder it later on. Adopting a diary study approach to examine the cross-cultural adjustment of six Irish students in Japan, she found that while conational and other international friends in Japan provided solidarity and support for her participants, they also reduced her participants' motivation to adjust to the host culture and were a 'stumbling block' for the pursuit of Japanese friends. Furthermore, she found that exclusion from the Japanese 'in-group' contrasted with automatic inclusion in the foreigner 'out-group', which, combined with English as the lingua franca and assumed common values, meant that making friends with other foreigners was easier.

In sum, the research reviewed in Sections 2.1.1 and 2.1.2 above has highlighted a number of individual and program variables that may influence learners' opportunities for interaction and network development with NSs while abroad. Opportunities for such interactions are important for language learners because, as outlined in Chapter 1, research generally suggests a relationship between interaction with NSs and gains in communicative competence. However, as discussed above, numerous studies have indicated study abroad students' disappointment in lack of host contact, as well as the issue of foreign students grouping together while abroad. While these studies have provided very important insight into various study abroad experiences, a limitation of many is that they do not provide in-depth analysis of exactly who students are spending their time with, in what ways, and in what language. One means of examining such interactional behavior of study abroad students is through investigation of their social networks, as discussed in Section 2.2 below.

2.2. Social networks and language use during study abroad

As outlined in Chapter 1, studies investigating social networks during study abroad have been considerably increasing over the past few decades. While earlier studies tended to be primarily quantitative in nature, focusing on network composition in terms of nationality (e.g. Furnham & Bochner 1982; Bochner, Hutnik & Furnham 1985; Tanaka, Takai, Kohyama & Fujihara 1994; Tanaka 2000; Nakayama 2001), a number of recent studies have taken a more qualitative approach to address the relationship between social networks and various aspects of second language acquisition and identity (e.g. Isabelli-García 2006; Ayano 2006; Pearson-Evans 2006; Zappa 2007; Dewey et al. 2013). These two streams of research are discussed respectively in Sections 2.2.1 and 2.2.2 below.

2.2.1. Composition of social networks during study abroad

A number of earlier studies conducted by Bochner and his colleagues are often cited in the study abroad literature, as they provided an important framework concerning sojourners'

social network composition (Bochner, McLeod & Lin 1977; Bochner & Orr 1979; Furnham & Bochner 1982; Bochner, Hutnik & Furnham 1985). According to these studies, international students tend to belong to three distinct social networks: the *monocultural network* consisting of close friendships with other compatriots residing overseas; the *bicultural network*, consisting of ties between international students and significant host nationals; and the *multicultural network,* consisting of friendships and acquaintanceships with other non-conational international students.

Relying on 'companion' or 'best friend' name elicitation devices, Bochner and his colleagues obtained quantitative data on the composition of international students' networks in Western countries, including Australia and England (Bochner, McLeod & Lin 1977; Furnham & Bochner 1982; Bochner, Hutnik & Furham 1985). These studies found that the bicultural network appeared to be the least salient of all networks, with the number of conational friends significantly outweighing the number of host national friends. However, in terms of methodology, these studies have some major limitations. The fact that the number of elicited network members was constrained to a mere three to five people who were considered close friends within the university means that the vast majority of their networks were not effectively represented. As stated by Tanaka et al. (1994:214), study abroad students' social networks 'can be conceived of being composed of friends, acquaintances and a myriad of relationships, both shallow and intimate, both on and off campus'.

Taking these factors into consideration, a number of studies have expanded upon the research of Bochner and colleagues' to investigate the composition of study abroad students' networks in Japan. By including relationships outside of university, and increasing the number of elicited network members to a maximum of 10 per participant, some studies have

found that relationships with host nationals comprised more than half of study abroad students' networks (Tanaka et al. 1994; Tanaka 2000; Nakayama 2001; Murakami 2005). However, considering the fact that these studies were examining students' networks with host nationals, co-nationals, and other foreigners, the maximum of 10 elicited network members appears to remain insufficient.

While it is acknowledged that it would be impractical in most studies to elicit the entirety of an individual's social network, the question network researchers face, therefore, is what constitutes an adequate sample. To put this into perspective, Milroy and Milroy (1992:5) have suggested that by 'anchoring' a social network to an individual, that is, examining only first-order ties with whom they directly and regularly interact, the field of study is limited to between 30 and 50 network members. Moreover, Milardo (1988:23) has cautioned that if a researcher limits the network under study to close associates, or persons whom the individual under study considers important (e.g. Tanaka et al. 1994; Tanaka 2000; Nakayama 2001; Murakami 2005), there may be little correspondence between individuals who are perceived as important and individuals with whom regular interaction occurs.

Another limitation in some of the aforementioned network studies (Tanaka et al. 1994; Tanaka 2000) is the reliance on quantitative surveys or questionnaires and statistical analysis, reducing a sample of study abroad students' networks to overall trends and percentages. While these methods of data collection and analysis have their strengths, such as the ability to determine correlations between variables, their shortcoming is that by averaging out responses across all participants, they do not account for subjective variety between individuals (Dörnyei 2007:35). This is of particular importance in regards to social networks, as no two networks will have the exact same composition.

Indeed, by drawing upon a combination of questionnaire and interview data or interview data alone, Murakami (2005) and Nakamura (2001) respectively have been better able to interpret the idiosyncrasies of and reasons behind their participants' individual network configurations. In particular, both studies found that even though the average of all participants' networks showed a preference for local Japanese network members, there was a large discrepancy in the composition of individual networks. For example, Nakamura (2001) found that as a whole, many of the reported Japanese networks members were limited to three participants, while one participant reported zero Japanese networks members. Similarly, Murakami (2005) found that one participant had more than twice as many conational American network members than local Japanese in his network, which was related to the fact that he lived in a dormitory exclusively for American study abroad students. Furthermore, it was found that over half of the network members formed were students in the same study abroad program, suggesting that students face difficulties in developing networks in other contexts.

As with several of the other previously mentioned studies (Bochner, McLeod & Lin 1977; Furnham & Alibhi 1985; Tanaka 2000), Nakayama (2001) and Murakami (2005) also found that their participants received language support from their Japanese network members. Importantly, Nakamura (2001) additionally found that her participants received language support from co-nationals and other foreigners as well. She discovered that even if they did not speak in Japanese directly to other study abroad students, listening to more proficient peers using Japanese appeared to be a useful learning strategy. Moreover, when it came to explanations about Japanese language, non-Japanese network members were found to be more helpful than Japanese network members who had no experience in Japanese language education.

Importantly, although many of the above-mentioned studies have reinforced the significance of networks during study abroad for provision of L2 support (Bochner et al. 1977; Furnham & Alibhi 1985; Tanaka 2000; Nakayama 2001; Murakami 2005), none of them specifically examined the language use patterns occurring within their participants' networks. Research that has addressed this issue is introduced in the following section.

2.2.2. Patterns of language use during study abroad

Despite the increase in studies examining the relationship between interaction with NSs and gains in communicative competence (e.g. Allen & Herron 2003; Isabelli-García 2000, 2006; Whitworth 2006; Hernandez 2010; Dewey, Bown & Eggett 2012), as well as in studies utilising network analysis to examine patterns of language choice in bilingual communities (e.g. Li Wei 1992; Li Wei, Milroy & Ching 1992; Li Wei 1994; Kurata 2007, 2008, 2010, 2011), research investigating the language use patterns occurring within study abroad students' social networks remains limited (Isabelli-García 2000, 2006; Ayano 2006; Pearson-Evans 2006; Zappa 2007; Campbell 2011). In contrast to some of the more quantitative-focused network studies outlined in section 2.2.1 above, these studies all fall into the qualitative paradigm.

Firstly, Isabelli-García's (2000, 2006) ground-breaking research offered considerable insight to the role and importance of social networks during study abroad for language learners. Through examination of oral proficiency and informal interviews, network logs and diary entries from five university-level Spanish learners on a one-semester program in Argentina, she found that broader, multiplex networks with host nationals provided increased opportunities for both observation and participation in extended L2 interaction, which ultimately led to more significant and advanced linguistic and discourse development. In contrast, it was found that learners who primarily socialised with other study abroad students used more L1 English, which negatively impacted their L2 gains. In regards to this

last finding, it is important to note that the network analysis Isabelli-García presented in her research only includes ties with local Argentines. In order to fully comprehend the relationship between social networks, language contact, and language proficiency while abroad, it seems important to examine social networks with both locals and study abroad peers and other foreigners.

Zappa (2007) rectified the above-mentioned deficiency in her investigation of the effect of social networks on academic literacy socialisation of Mexican exchange students at a Canadian university. Through a series of individual interviews and focus groups, she identified a number of factors that prevented interaction with locals and subsequent language socialization, including 'cultural differences, personality traits, positionings and identities, as well as language proficiency' (p. 202). Furthermore, she found that most of the Mexicans' connections were formed with co-nationals, and that exclusion of Anglophones from their networks meant that out-of-class interaction was primarily in L1 Spanish.

My previous research (Campbell 2011), and that of Pearson-Evans (2006), has also made important observations regarding language use within Japanese language learners' networks while on study abroad in Japan. Pearson-Evans (2006) found that although her participants preferred to use English with other foreigners to express their *gaijin* (foreigner) identity and 'be themselves' (p. 51), they were reluctant to use English with local Japanese. She mentioned that they questioned the motivation of anyone who initiated conversation in English, as they felt that unwillingness of hosts to use Japanese was a means of excluding them from Japanese culture. Rather, they felt most comfortable when they sensed linguistic equality, which was conveyed by use of both languages and mutual assistance with language difficulties.

Similarly, the majority of participants in my previous study (Campbell 2011) claimed to predominantly use English when interacting with students from other Western countries, and Japanese when interacting with students from Asian countries. However, one informant also noted that many local Japanese attending 'regular' classes with international students were heavily invested in learning English, and thus attempted to transfer this opportunity through to out-of-class English practice as well, impacting her own opportunities for Japanese use.

Ayano (2006), who examined the patterns of social networks and language use of Japanese students on study abroad in Britain, also found that it tended to only be British students studying Japanese who showed interest in establishing friendships and a desire to get close with her informants. These superficial relationships produced mixed feelings for her participants; while they were glad to have contact with local students, they also understood that using their L1 to communicate was of no benefit to their L2 acquisition, and were thus disappointed in the lack of opportunities for practicing English.

A number of other studies, though not specifically addressing social networks, have also made important findings concerning patterns of language use during study abroad. Firstly, a number of studies have found that the status of the learners' L1 in the study abroad country can significantly impact their opportunities for L2 use (e.g. Schumann 1980; Hashimoto 1993; Wilkinson 1998a; Freed et al. 2004; Oya, Manalo and Greenwood 2009). As stated by Pellegrino (1998:110), 'even in environments geared toward being supporting of learners, NS interlocutor behavior may prevent learners from fully using their L2 skills'. Indeed, 'access to language is shaped not only by learners' own intentions, but also by those of the others with whom they interact' (Kinginger 2004:221). It is therefore often only the most

determined and persistent learners who are successful in obtaining opportunities for using their L2 (Dufon 2006:29).

Schumann (1980), for example, reporting on her own language learning experiences as an American in Iran, mentioned that as soon as NSs heard her foreign accent, they would immediately switch to English. Similarly, one of the Australian high school exchange students studying in Japan in Hashimoto's (1993) study also mentioned having a 'very foreign experience in Japan' (p. 212) because all of her host families were persistent in using English with her, and L2 French students in the studies of Wilkinson (1998b) and Freed et al. (2004) used more English than French in their out-of-class contact. In contrast, for ESL students travelling to countries where English is the dominant language, they often have no choice but to use the L2 with host nationals. Oya, Manalo and Greenwood (2009), for example, argued that because there are few Japanese residing in New Zealand, and because the majority of the population cannot comprehend Japanese, their participants would have been required to use L2 English in the vast majority of everyday situations.

While it is evident that time spent with other foreign students subtracts from opportunities to interact in the L2 with host nationals, several studies have found learners eager to use the L2 with other NNSs (Tanaka 2007; Magnan & Back 2007; Allen 2010). Tanaka (2007), for example, found that his Japanese participants perceived it to be considerably less difficult to develop regular interactive relationships with other international students than with English NSs because they had a similar level of L2 proficiency. Several participants in the studies of Magnan and Back (2007) and Allen (2010) also held the belief that speaking L2 French with other English speakers would help improve their French proficiency. Although this did not appear to be the case in these studies, the fact that this belief led to significant L2 usage is still of importance.

In sum, although the studies introduced in this section have examined general patterns of language use during study abroad, they do not provide detailed analysis of individual language selection made within learners' networks. This dearth in the research indicates an important area for investigation, which will be taken up in the present study.

2.3. Study abroad outcomes and experiences after program completion

Over the past few decades, a considerable amount of research has been conducted concerning the effects of study abroad. For example, Biscarra (2011) has recently presented an annotated bibliography that contains hundreds of studies examining the breadth and depth of the impact of living and studying in another culture. However, the vast majority of these studies focus on the short-term impact of study abroad, and research concerning the longer-term impact is comparatively scarce (Coleman 2013). Thus, although an all-encompassing review of research related to study abroad outcomes and experiences after program completion is impossible given the scope of this chapter, Section 2.3.1 below aims to provide an overview of the ongoing impact of study abroad in general, and Section 2.3.2 continues on to discuss its impact on network maintenance, development, and ongoing opportunities for L2 use in particular.

2.3.1. The ongoing impact of study abroad

The experience of studying abroad for language learners has a multitude of potential benefits. As outlined in the introductory chapter, study abroad, and in particular interaction with NSs, can lead to various gains in linguistic, sociolinguistic, and sociocultural skills, as well as various affective factors, including motivation, confidence, and anxiety levels (e.g. Tanaka & Ellis 2003; Allen & Herron 2003; Pearson-Evans 2006; Isabelli-García 2006; Whitworth 2006; Magnan & Back 2007; Zappa 2007; Hernandez 2010; Jackson 2010; Dewey, Bown & Eggett 2012). Longitudinal studies have also found that study abroad can

reinforce commitment to foreign language study, promote ongoing L2 use, and deepen relations with foreign nationals even decades after students return home (e.g. Dwyer & Peters 2004; McMillan & Opem 2004; Nunan 2006; Mistretta 2008; DeGraaf 2013). A number of studies have, however, also found that lack of L2 language use after study abroad completion contributes to the loss of proficiency over time (Wallace 1999; Dwyer 2002).

A review of the broader literature concerning the impact of study abroad for students in general further indicates that it has a positive influence on areas such as personal, intellectual, intercultural, and professional development (e.g. Opper, Teichler, & Carlson 1990; Akande & Slawson 2000; Dwyer & Peters 2004; McMillan & Opem 2004; Hadis 2005; Nunan 2006; Mistretta 2006; Hansel 2008; Paige et al. 2009; Coleman & Chafer 2011; DeGraaf et al. 2013). Of particular importance to the current research and its investigation of post-study abroad trajectories, study abroad has also been found to heighten an interest in or attainment of further educational qualifications (McMillan & Opem 2004; Nunan 2006; Paige et al. 2009), impact career direction (Armstrong 1984; Dwyer 2002; Norris & Gillespie 2009; Benson-Schrambach 2009; Paige et al. 2009; Forsey et al. 2012; DeGraaf, Slagter, Larsen & Ditta 2013), enhance participants' international perspective (Wallace 1999; Dwyer 2002; Forsey et al. 2012), and increase likelihood of working with other cultures professionally (Akande & Slawson 2000; Orahood, Kruze & Pearson 2004; Hansel 2008). Additionally, Dwyer (2002) has also found that study abroad encouraged alumni to seek out a greater diversity of friends, and Dwyer and Peters (2004) and Wallace (1999) observed that several of their participants met their spouse while studying abroad.

A small number of qualitative studies have also revealed changes in learner identity as a result of study abroad (e.g. Pellegrino Aveni 2005; Allen, Dristas & Mills 2007; Kinginger 2008; Jackson 2008; Benson et al. 2013). Pellegrino Aveni (2005), for example, examined

the identities of American students who studied abroad in Russia for one or two semesters in terms of their ideal and actual self-concepts. Based upon her informants' experiences, she concluded that study abroad 'result[s] is a new sense of personality and purpose' that lasts long after students return home (p. 150).

Focusing on Hong Kong students who studied abroad in England, Jackson (2008) has also highlighted how even a five-week program can result in important identity shifts. In particular, she found that her informants 'incorporate[d] new elements into their evolving sense of self and enter[ed] the creative world of 'thirdspace'': an identity that was not exclusively anchored in one language/culture or the other (p. 2). Similarly, Allen et al. (2007) has also found that an eight-week study abroad program could result in increased identification with the target culture, and decreased identification with the native culture.

Furthermore, Jackson (2008) also found that study abroad could raise students' awareness of their place in the world, increase their appreciation of their cultural and ethnic identities, and strengthen their affinity with the L2 and their willingness to use it. Importantly, one informant no longer saw English as a tool for academic success, but as a 'living language' used for practical purposes (p. 194). Indeed, Benson et al. (2013) have also pointed out the effect of study abroad on reinforcing students' self-perception as L2 users rather than L2 learners.

In sum, this section has provided evidence of the various personal, intercultural, professional, and language-related outcomes of study abroad. Section 2.3.2 below will now discuss the impact of study abroad on social networks and ongoing opportunities for L2 use.

2.3.2. Post-study abroad network maintenance, development, and opportunities for L2 use

Although an increasing number of studies have investigated language learners' interaction and social networks while studying abroad, research concerning the maintenance of these networks and future development of new networks with TL speakers after returning home remains scarce. Firstly, studies conducted by the Institute for the International Education of Students (IES) (Dwyer 2004; Dwyer & Peters 2004; McMillan & Opem 2004) and Nunan (2006) mentioned in Section 2.3.1 above have highlighted the ongoing impact of study abroad even decades after the experience. Of particular significance to the current research, each of these studies found that a substantial number of participants (>50%) still maintain relationships they developed while abroad, and/or had subsequently returned to the host country (29-60%). Importantly, the IES studies found that degree of network maintenance appeared to be influenced by duration of study abroad program: while 29 percent of full-year participants still maintained at least some of their study abroad network, this decreased to 14.5 percent for semester-long participants, and seven percent for summer-term students (Dwyer 2004).

Coleman and Chafer (2010; 2011) have since conducted a related study concerning the impact of 32 British students' experiences studying abroad in Francophone West Africa. These students represented 13 different cohorts who studied abroad in Dakar, the capital of Senegal, Africa, in the 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s. The program differed from 'traditional' university-level study abroad programs in numerous ways, especially concerning the fact that students went to a developing country, and that university attendance was optional, with a greater focus on work placements. Nevertheless, their findings are of particular importance to the current study.

Based upon closed and open-ended questionnaire data, Coleman and Chafer found that 90 percent of students had maintained contact with people they had met during study abroad for at least some period of time, and that just over half of them were still in contact, especially if they had recently completed their program. Importantly, it was found that all informants who had graduated between 2006-2009 were still in contact with each other. Several students had also been back to Senegal, visited friends initially met in Senegal in other countries, or had concrete plans to do so in the near future.

Importantly, one informant who completed her study abroad program in 1993 mentioned that she did not maintain contact with her Senegalise friends due to the limited international communications at that time. In light of these findings, Coleman and Chafer (2010:163) suggest that future research examines the extent to which technology-enabled maintenance of networks established during study abroad strengthens and prolongs the impact of study abroad on related learning outcomes.

Although the above-mentioned studies offer important insight concerning post-study abroad network maintenance, largely based on survey or questionnaire data, they primarily report on overall trends, and thus do not account for the idiosyncrasies of individual learners. A longitudinal study conducted by Jiménez Jiménez (2003), however, has taken a qualitative approach to examine American learners of Spanish and their L2 interaction during and post-study abroad. Although he found a significant decline in the degree of interactive Spanish use once students returned to America, some of his participants continued to use the L2 daily through telephone calls to friends, partners, and host families remaining in Spain, as well as sporadic face-to-face interaction with NSs or study abroad peers in America. It was also found that the informants' degree of post-study abroad L2 usage was noticeably impacted by differences in their future plans, where students planning on utilising Spanish

in future activities such as travel or work exhibited a greater degree of usage than those who did not. Furthermore, several students who did not increase their Spanish proficiency as much as they had hoped to while in Spain mentioned having self-conscious feelings of failure, which further prevented them from using the L2 post-study abroad.

Similarly, Fridhandler (2006) has also explored the experiences of L2 Spanish learners studying abroad in Mexico and then returning to Canada. Within a primarily psychological framework, she examined changes in her six informants' personal identities, worldviews, and cross-cultural competence. Of particular importance to the current study, she found that her informants established extremely strong relationships with both host nationals and other international students while in Mexico, and that these relationships often provided support and comfort after the informants returned home. Many of the informants also created new social groups with Latin Americans once returning to Canada and exhibited a deep, ongoing connection with Mexico. This was clearly observable in their future personal, travel and career plans, which Fridhandler (2006) explained were often linked to Mexico.

Studies conducted by myself (Campbell 2011) and Kurata (2002; 2004) have also found that sojourns in Japan provided crucial opportunities for Japanese learners to meet and subsequently maintain contact with Japanese speakers after returning home. The majority of informants in these studies also claimed to further expand their networks to also include a larger number of native Japanese speakers residing in Australia, and reported an overall increase in frequency and duration of Japanese use post-study abroad. Networks both maintained from study abroad and developed since returning home thus provided valuable sources for friendship and ongoing Japanese interaction through a wide range of channels, including letters, email, online chat, Skype and Facebook, which most of the informants were not exposed to pre-study abroad.

Similar findings were also reflected in Pasfield-Neofitou's (2012) study, where participation in international exchange provided a gateway into online interaction with Japanese speakers. Additionally, Kurata (2007) and Shiri (2015) have also highlighted the importance of modern technologies for maintaining or solidifying what may otherwise be short-lived, passing acquaintanceships with TL speakers. Shiri (2015), for example, found that the vast majority of her participants relied on social media or other technologies such as email or Skype to maintain contact with their host families upon their return to America from a study abroad period in Tunisia. The impact of technology on social networks is further discussed in Section 2.4.

Kurata (2007) further examined the language use patterns of Japanese learners in an Australian setting, the majority of whom had spent at least some time in Japan. By employing Grosjean's (1982) framework of factors influencing language choice in bilingual settings (participant, situation, discourse, and interactional function related factors) and Norton's (2000) notion of investment, Kurata (2007) revealed a number of interrelated factors influencing language choice for the participants and their interlocutors.

The factors identified by Kurata are considerably more complex than those originally presented by Grosjean (1982), as they also account for learners' investment, or 'the socially and historically constructed relationship of learners to the TL, and their often ambivalent desire to learn and practice it' (Norton 2000:10). Under Grosjean's category of participant-related factors, the most significant and interrelated factors that Kurata identified were perceived L2 proficiency (as opposed to actual proficiency), investment in relationships as well as the L2, and awareness/sensitivity to interlocutors' language needs and identities.

My prior research (Campbell 2011) also sheds light on the interrelationship between these factors, finding that although the informants were more invested in using Japanese with NSs in Australia post- compared to pre-study abroad, they would often leave the language choice up to their network members. This was because they claimed to have greater empathy with Japanese students studying in Australia (having themselves been Japanese learners studying in Japan), and respected the fact that they had come there to learn English. The final participant-related factor identified by Kurata (2007), and also by Grosjean (1982) in his original study, was history of linguistic interaction. In particular, Kurata identified a number of cases where interactants appeared to have an agreed-upon language of interaction, which they would use regardless of the context of interaction.

In addition to Grosjean's (1982) original situation-related factors of location/setting and presence of monolinguals, Kurata (207) also identified that fatigue and lack of time, as well as the channel of interaction, played an important role in language selection. In regards to this last factor, Kurata especially focused on the impact of new technology, and noted a number of cases where although participants used Japanese with their network members in face-to-face interaction, they preferred to use English in email messages.

A recent study by Cunliffe, Morris and Prys (2013) also supports the claim that channel of interaction may play a role in language selection. Focusing on English/Welsh bilingual youth, they found that although online language use tended to reflect offline language use, in a small number of cases, it differed. In particular, they found that when reporting offline/online language use with three specific friends, participants who reported bilingual English/Welsh oral communication were significantly more likely to use exclusively English with them in online communications, especially on Facebook. One participant specifically related this to the 'ease' of using English because it was their first language, and

the researchers indicated that 'there appears to be a relationship between self identified first language and main language used on Facebook' (p. 349).

The two discourse content-related factors influencing language selection identified by Kurata (2007) were the same as those originally outlined in Grosjean's (1982) framework: topic of discourse and type of vocabulary. As with participant-related factors, however, function of interaction-related factors identified by Kurata were slightly different to those identified by Grosjean. The functions of interaction originally identified by Grosjean were: to raise status, to create social distance, to request or command, and to exclude someone. Although Kurata also identified the function of exclusion, she additionally identified assistance to an L2 learner as a factor related to L1/L2 language selection.

In sum, Sections 2.3.1 and 2.3.2 above have introduced a number of studies that have investigated the ongoing impact of study abroad for second language learners. Although existing research indicates that many learners do continue to engage with the TL country, language, and its speakers post-study abroad, the factors influencing these processes remain relatively under explored. The present study thus aims to address these missing gaps in the literature under research question two, with a focus on post-study abroad trajectories; factors influencing post-study abroad interaction and networks with TL speakers; and patterns of post-study abroad language use and selection. An emerging theme important to all of these areas is the impact of CMC, which is discussed in Section 2.4 below.

2.4. Social networks in the age of CMC

Although geographical distance has traditionally been viewed as negative for relationships due to the increased costs associated with a lack of face-to-face contact (Davis 1973; Fehr 2000), the ever-increasing development of CMC has 'tipped this balance of rewards and costs' for long-distance relationships (Johnson 2011:232). As argued by Vitak (2012:842):

> The increasing ubiquity of information and communication technologies has dramatically impacted interpersonal communication and relationship maintenance processes. These technologies remove temporal and spatial constraints, enabling communication at a distance for low to no physical costs.

Research concerning new technologies has proliferated over the past decade, and various studies have found that one of the principal ways CMC is used is to develop and maintain interpersonal relationships (Rabby 2007; Ramirez & Broneck 2009; Ledbetter 2010). As stated by Bryant et al. (2011:6), social network sites (SNS) in particular 'are embedded in user's daily lives as a means to maintain relationships with a variety of people'. Additionally, a number of studies have also found that SNSs may be used to re-acquire lost contacts (Joinson 2008; Madden & Smith 2010; Ramirez & Bryant 2014).

Currently, Facebook reigns as the most popular social network site worldwide, with 1.35 billion active users as of December 2014 (Kemp 2014). As such, it has received increasing attention in the literature concerning CMC and relational maintenance, and numerous studies have found that it provides an easy, effortless, and cost-free way to keep in touch with friends both near and afar, and all importantly allows users to create and maintain larger, more diffuse networks of weak ties (Donath & boyd [2] 2004; Ellison, Steinfield & Lampe 2007; Lewis & West 2009; Houser, Fleuriet & Estrada 2012).

Lewis & West (2009), for example, found that Facebook offered UK undergraduate students (n=16) a means to keep in touch with people who are not seen on a regular basis, and also enabled them to passively keep tabs on what network members were doing, without necessarily making any contact. Bryant et al. (2011:7) have argued that the ability to obtain such information may assist people in maintaining the 'minimal level of contact necessary to feel their relationship is being maintained even if they rarely converse in a one-to-one

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[2] danah boyd's name is spelled in all lowercase in all of her publications. Her preferred format has been retained here.

manner'. Lewis & West (2009) and Cummings, Lee and Kraut (2006) have therefore argued that the use of SNS and other CMC technology may postpone the 'natural decline' that is witnessed in many relationships. As a result, individuals may develop what Donath (2008:231) has termed 'social supernets'– networks with 'many more ties than is feasible without socially assistive tools'.

In addition to offering the possibility of increased social contact, Interactive Communications Technologies (ICTs) such as Facebook also possess various features that function to remind users of their Friends[3] (Donath & boyd 2004:80). Lewis & West (2009), for example, found that almost all of their participants reported regularly checking the 'News Feed', which provides an automatic update on users' recent posts and other activities. Ellison et al. (2007) and Viswanath, Mislove, Cha and Gummadi (2009) also revealed that the 'birthday' feature of Facebook prompted the sending of greetings with minimal effort, and Stern and Taylor (2007) found that the ability to simultaneously communicate (both publicly and privately) with multiple users through posts, pictures, and messages helped their college student participants feel more connected with friends from high school and college.

In sum, although relationships in the past often deteriorated or ended when proximal distance increased (e.g. Davis 1973; Rose 1984), with the development and popularity of CMC, and in particular, SNS, people increasingly hold the assumption that such relationships will be maintained through time and space (Adams 1998). These technologies therefore hold important implications for maintenance of networks after study abroad completion. Although studies introduced in Section 2.3.2 demonstrated that CMC, and in particular, ICTs, is increasingly being used to maintain such networks, relatively little is

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[3] Following boyd and Ellison (2007) capitalisation is used to distinguish the articulated list of Friends on SNSs from the colloquial term 'friends'.

known about the kind of interaction that takes place through online channels. The present study thus aims to address this research gap under research question 2, in particular, by examining the factors impacting post-study abroad interaction and social networks with Japanese speakers. The next chapter now introduces the research design employed in the current study.

3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORKS

3.1. Introduction to methodological approach

This study adopts a semi-longitudinal and cross-sectional qualitative approach to address the research questions outlined in Chapter 1. Patton (2002:4) explains that the collection and analysis of qualitative data is a means of capturing rich and complex details of informants' experiences, knowledge, opinions, and feelings, as well as daily activities, behaviour, interpersonal interactions and organisational processes. Furthermore, value is placed on the emic perspective, as it is only the informants themselves who can unveil the true meanings and interpretations of their experiences and behaviour (Dörnyei 2007:38; Patton 2002:84). In particular regards to study abroad research, Jackson (2008:5) argues that qualitative data can help gauge learners' 'personal, social, linguistic, and academic development… and provide vital information for program administrators and teachers'.

Therefore, in order to investigate language learners' informal interaction, social networks, and patterns of language use, a focus on qualitative data is appropriate. In order to do so, the analysis presented in this study draws upon two different sets of data. The primary dataset was drawn from a series of in-depth interviews and interaction journals completed by eight focal informants. In order to validate and further expand upon the focal informants' data, the secondary dataset was composed of 126 online questionnaire responses. This chapter provides a description of the analytical frameworks that guided the study, followed by details of the data collection procedures and analysis methods employed. The chapter concludes with an outline of the participant recruitment process and detailed description of the focal informants involved in this study, which sets the scene for the analysis chapters to follow.

3.2. Analytical frameworks

As Fitzgerald (2003) and Dunne (2009) have argued, when it comes to analysis of intercultural encounters, interaction and communication, there is no one generally agreed upon framework suitable for all purposes. Rather, researchers draw upon concepts from a wide range of disciplines to help explore and explain their findings (Dunne 2009:263). Indeed, the data collection analysis and discussion in the present study were systematically guided by constructs from sociological, anthropological, psychological, and linguistic fields. The analytical frameworks employed in this study are discussed in sections 3.2.1 to 3.2.4 below, with a focus on network analysis, relational development and maintenance, patterns of language selection, and, to a lesser extent, second language identity.

3.2.1. Conceptualising social networks

In order to examine social networks and the changes that take place within them, numerous different techniques and analytical variables can be employed. As discussed by Boissevain (1974) and Milroy and Milroy (1992), however, anthropologists usually distinguish the characteristics of networks into two types: structural criteria and interactional criteria. Structural criteria concern the shape and pattern of the network, such as size, density, clustering and degree of connection, and interactional criteria concern the content of the relationships, such as multiplexity, durability, frequency and duration of interaction, and transactional content.

To analyse the nature of the informants' networks during study abroad, the present study considers both structural and interactional criteria as defined by Boissevain (1974). In particular, their networks are analysed in terms of 1) network size, 2) density, 3) clusters, 4) multiplexity, 5) transactional content, and 6) frequency of interaction. As this research focuses on L2 learners, attention is also given to two additional criteria not covered in

Boissevain's framework: 7) channels of interaction, and 8) language of interaction. Each of these criteria for network analysis is outlined below.

Size

Boissevain (1974:35) regards the 'size', or total number of links in a network, to be the most important structural characteristic because all other criteria are calculated as a percentage of the total possible or definite links in the network. However, caution needs to be taken when comparing individuals' network size, as this does not signify the quality of the links, only the number of contacts. In this study, network size was measured in terms of NSs and NNSs of Japanese. Furthermore, network members were considered to be people the informants knew by name, and could contact by phone, email, or Internet. In regards to post-study abroad networks, they were also required to have had contact in the past two years.

Density

As noted by Meyerhoff (2011:295), not all members of an individual's social network will know each other. Boissevain's (1974) concept of 'density', therefore, refers to the degree that members of a person's network are in touch with each other independently of the individual. It is a measurement of the potential communication between the individual network participants, and thus also of the quantity and types of transactions that can occur (Boissevain 1974:40). Within more dense networks, individuals are likely to have more group interaction than one-on-one interaction (Kurata 2004:161), and are also likely to have more multiplex relationships (Milroy 1987:52). In the present study, although absolute density was not measured, basic examination of which network members knew each other helped identify areas of density, as well as sparse ties, within the informants' networks.

Clusters

Related to network density, 'clusters' are sections of the networks that have a relatively high density. Individuals forming a cluster are more closely tied together than they are with other network members, and clusters are usually recruited from different activity fields (Boissevain 1974). In the current study, examination of the informants' key activity fields therefore assisted in identifying clusters within the informants' networks.

Multiplexity

'Multiplexity' refers to diversity of linkages within a network that arise from participation in a number of different activity fields. Boissevain (1974:28) defines these links as 'role relations', and if two individuals know each other through only a single role relation, then the network tie is said to be 'uniplex'. On the other hand, if an individual is connected to another through a variety of different role relations, the network is considered 'multiplex' (Boissevain 1974:28). While study abroad students' social networks usually begin as uniplex, they gradually extend to multiplex structures through time (Isabelli-García 2006:236). Isabelli-García (2006:236) explains that while uniplex relationships offer opportunities for conversation on a single topic (e.g. schoolwork), multiplex relationships require individuals to speak to others in a number of different capacities. This means that conversations with multiplex ties will likely cover a broad range of topics, which allow the learner to practice differing features of the L2 with greater frequency.

In order to identify the existence of multiplex and/or uniplex ties in the current study, the various activities that the informants claimed to engage in with their network members were examined. If they held more than one role relation (e.g. tutor and friend) they were classified as multiplex; if they only held one role relation (e.g. classmate) they were classified as uniplex.

<u>Frequency of interaction</u>

According to Boissevain (1974:34), 'frequency of interaction' is related to the quality of the relationship, and can be an indication of the investment of the people in the relationship. A number of studies have also found that frequency of contact is perhaps the most influential factor impacting relationship development (Paige 1983; Rose & Serafica 1986; Neustupný 1987; Burns 1996; Kudo & Simkin 2003). Thus, the focal informants in this study were requested to provide an estimate of how frequently they interacted with each of their network members both during study abroad, and then post-study abroad at the time of each of their subsequent interviews. While data concerning questionnaire respondents' frequency of interaction with individual network members was not collected, comments concerning frequency of interaction in general arose in the open-ended questions and were coded and analysed accordingly.

Although Boissevain's (1974) related concept of 'duration of interaction' also proved useful when discussing proximally close networks with the focal informants, they themselves mentioned that it seemed unfitting and impractical to estimate their duration of interaction with proximally distant networks, with whom the majority of interaction was online, written communication. Thus, although Boissevain's (1974) framework also includes duration of interaction as an important indicator of relationship quality, I decided not to explicitly include it in this study. However, as outlined below, transactional content may also serve as a means of measuring relational quality.

<u>Transactional content</u>

Boissevain (1974:32) defines 'transactional content' as 'the material and non-material elements which are exchanged between two actors in a particular role relation or situation'. In addition to quality of relationship, examination of transactional content can also help

indicate the emotional investment of the individuals within it, as well as the anticipated benefits from the relationship (Boissevain 1974:32). Following Kurata (2004), the current study examines and discusses transactional content in terms of activity types that the informants claimed to participate in with their network members. Examples include studying together, language exchange, parties, travel, and so on.

Channel of interaction

Although Boissevain's framework does not include the criteria of 'channel of interaction', it seems essential to include such criteria when investigating networks that may expand beyond face-to-face interaction, and are possibly geographically diffuse. Although there appears to be a significant deficit in the number of studies investigating learners' means of communication while abroad, my previous study (Campbell 2011) found that Japanese learners utilised mobile phones as a means of organising future face-to-face interactions when living in Japan. As mentioned in the previous chapter, several studies have also found that Japanese language learners in Australia maintained contact with friends in Japan through a variety of channels, including CMC such as email, Facebook and Skype; and non-CMC methods such as letters and telephone calls (Kurata 2002; Takahama 2010; Pasfield-Neofitou 2010; Campbell 2011). Therefore, when investigating the informants' networks in the current study, their means, or channel of interaction, was also examined. As with the studies presented above, these channels included both CMC and non-CMC channels.

Language of interaction

Finally, in order to examine the informants' opportunities for L2 usage within their networks, it is clearly essential to address the 'language of interaction' with each network member. As noted by Neustupný (1987:7), even if a learner has numerous NS members in

their network, if they do not communicate in the learner's L2, then there will be no opportunities for language practice or learning.

In order to classify the informants' language use patterns, Nishimura's (1992) categories of bilingual speech were employed. She identified three categories, namely 'the basically Japanese variety', 'the basically English variety', and 'the mixed variety', which refers to simultaneous use of both languages. In the present study, these were renamed as 'Predominantly Japanese', 'Predominantly English', and 'Mixed' varieties, and, because some of the informants are speakers of other languages, an additional category of 'Other language' was also employed. When informants mentioned using 'exclusively', 'mostly', or 'mainly' one language, it was classified as predominant language use accordingly. On the other hand, if they mentioned using 'both', 'a mixture', or 'sometimes Japanese, sometimes English', it was classified as the Mixed variety. While Nishimura's (1992) categories of bilingual speech were used to classify the informants' patterns of language use, Grosjeans' (1982) framework was used to classify the factors influencing their selection, as discussed in Section 3.2.2 below.

3.2.2. Patterns of language selection

In order to guide the analysis and discussion of the informants' patterns of language selection in this study, a social network perspective is drawn upon. Li Wei (1994) explains that the social network perspective assumes that 'speakers' language use is influenced and shaped by the types of social contact they have, and in the meantime it actively contributes to the social relations which speakers maintain' (p. 23). He argues that such an approach is advantageous because it combines aspects from both macro-societal and micro-interactional perspectives of language selection, and as such enables researchers to systematically investigate the relationship between social structures one the one hand, and individuals' capacity to make their own choices on the other. Furthermore, the social network

perspective is also useful to investigate 'how speakers develop their social identities through interaction' (p. 23).

In his seminal book *Life with two languages: an introduction to bilingualism* (1982), Grosjean established a framework of factors that takes into account both the macro-societal and micro-interactional perspectives of language selection that was discussed by Li Wei (1994). In order to do this, he established four key categories of factors: participants, situation, content of discourse, and function of discourse. As Grosjean's framework is based on earlier studies conducted in bilingual communities such as German-Hungarian bilinguals in Oberwart, and Swahili-English bilinguals in Kenya, a number of the participant-related factors he identified, such as socioeconomic status and kinship relations, can be considered irrelevant to Japanese language learners and their bilingual networks in either Australia or Japan. As discussed in Section 2.3.2 of the previous chapter, however, this framework has effectively been utilised by Kurata (2007) to examine the language use and learning patterns of Japanese language learners in an Australian setting. As such, it also appeared useful for the analysis of the informants' patterns of language selection in the current study.

Given that the context and informants in the present study more closely resemble that of Kurata's (2007) as opposed to Grosjean's (1982) study, Table 3 below summarises the factors identified by Kurata, according to Grosjean's framework.

Table 3 Kurata's (2007) factors influencing language selection, based on Grosjean (1982)

Participants	*Situation*
Perceived L2 proficiency of learners and their social network members	Location/setting
	Presence of monolinguals
Investment in L2 by learners and their social network participants	Fatigue and lack of time
	Channel/use of new technology
Awareness/sensitivity to interlocutors' language needs and their identities in relation to their L2 proficiency	*Discourse content*
	Topic
	Type of vocabulary
History of linguistic interaction	*Function of interaction*
	To exclude someone
	Assistance to an L2 learner

While Kurata's (2007) findings provided a good basis for examination of factors influencing language use in the current study, as will be discussed in Chapters 6 and 9, the informants also identified a number of additional factors. Furthermore, although Kurata classified channel of interaction/use of new technology as a situation-related factor, given the increasing "polymedia" nature of social relationships (Madianou & Miller 2013), it was decided to utilise this a key category of factors in its own right in the present study. Thus, factors influencing language use identified by the informants were classified and analysed in Chapters 6 and 9 as follows:

> *Participant-related factors*: those related to the informants' or their network members' attributes or histories.

> *Situation-related factors*: those related to the situation in which the language use occurs.

> *Discourse content-related factors*: those related to the discourse content of the interaction.

> *Interactional function-related factors*: those related to the purpose or function of the interaction.

> *Channel of interaction*: factors related to the channel (means) through which interaction occurred.

3.2.3. Relational development and maintenance

While the framework for analysing the nature of social networks was introduced in Section 3.2.1, this section now introduces the framework utilised to analyse factors influencing the

development and maintenance of relationships that make up larger networks. As established in the previous chapters, although individuals directly influence the characteristics of their social networks, their development and maintenance also depends upon environmental conditions and social circumstances beyond their control (Fischer et al. 1977; Milardo 1988; Li Wei 1994; Feld, Suitor & Hoegh 2007; Mollenhort, Volker & Flap 2008). A framework that appears useful for the classification of factors influencing both the nature of networks as well as their development and maintenance is Fehr's (1996; 2000) typology of factors influencing friendships. Although not all network members identified by the informants in this study were necessarily 'friends', the key categories included in this framework also seem applicable to other types of relationships, such as those in educational and professional domains.

In her book *Friendship Processes*, Fehr (1996:43) has argued that in order for a relationship to develop and be maintained, environmental, situational, individual (personal) and dyadic factors must all converge. Similarly, it can be argued that a combination of these four factors also impacts the network characteristics outlined in Section 3.2.1 above. In reviewing relevant literature, Fehr (1996; 2000) identified a range of factors that fell under each of the above-mentioned four categories, a summary of which is presented in Table 4 below.

Table 4 Fehr's (1996; 2000) factors influencing friendships

Environmental factors	*Individual factors*
Proximity	Physical attractiveness
Residence	Social skills
Workplace	Shyness
Involvement in clubs/groups	Responsiveness
	Relationship status
Situational factors	*Dyadic factors*
Probability of future interaction	Reciprocity of liking
Frequency of exposure	Self-disclosure
Availability	Dis/similarity

Commencing with environmental factors, Fehr (1996:44) explains that 'a first step in the formation of most friendships is that two individuals are brought into contact with one another through physical proximity or propinquity'. While proximity itself is therefore considered an environmental factor, so too are the contexts or settings in which individuals engage, such as residence, workplace, and clubs. Referring back to Table 2 in the previous chapter, additional contexts relevant to study abroad students include classes and peer-programs.

While Fehr herself does not actually provide a definition of her 'situational' category of factors, Takai (1990:200), in his discussion of factors influencing intercultural contact, has explained that situational factors help account for elements beyond the control of the individual. Indeed, the situational factors identified by Fehr (1996; 2000), namely probability of future interaction, frequency of exposure, and others' availability to establish or maintain relationships, are all beyond the control of the individual. For example, in regards to availability, Fehr (2000:72) explained that 'even if two people are enjoying frequent pleasant contact, a friendship will not develop unless each person has sufficient time, energy, and other resources to devote to a new relationship'.

Individual factors, renamed as personal factors in the current study, are those that are attached to the individual, and 'shape the type of relationship an individual needs or seeks, the kinds of support exchanged, and the ways in which those relationships are evaluated' (Antonucci, Langfahl & Akiyama 2004:24). They include 'personal dispositions, traits and skills' (Takai 1990:200) which both influence and are influenced by an individual's networks (Carolan 2014:4). In addition to the personal factors of physical attractiveness, social skills, shyness, responsiveness, and relationship status listed in Table 4 above, a number of the individual variables identified in Table 1 in the previous chapter are also

relevant here. For example, other factors of particular relevance to study abroad students include language competence, motivation towards host contact, previous intercultural experience, learner investment and identity. The ways in which these last two factors are conceptualised in this study are discussed in Section 3.2.4 below.

Personal factors are also closely linked to dyadic factors, which refer to the attraction between two individuals. In particular, Fehr (1996; 2000) identified reciprocity of liking, self-disclosure, and dis/similarity. Indeed, literature reviewed in the previous chapter (c.f. Table 1) also found that cultural and individual similarity/difference and different interests/lifestyles are factors influencing sojourner-host contact.

In addition to Fehr's four categories outlined above, a review of recent literature and analysis of the data in the current study indicated the necessity for a further category: technological factors. As discussed in Section 2.4 of the previous chapter, new technologies have drastically increased the ability for individuals to maintain globally dispersed relationships, enabling long-distance communication at little to no physical cost. As such, access to and use of technology are important technological factors expected to influence network maintenance. As discussed in the previous chapter, various features of technology may also play a role in influencing frequency of interaction (e.g. Lewis & West 2009; Bryant et al. 2011; Vitak 2014b).

In sum, the key categories used to classify and discuss the factors influencing the informants' patterns of interaction and network development/maintenance in this study are as follows:

Environmental factors: those related to the environment in which the relationships/networks are enacted.

Situational factors: those related to situations or circumstances beyond the control of the individual.

Personal factors: dispositions, traits, and skills of the informants and their network members.

Dyadic factors: those related to the attraction between two individuals.

Technological factors: those related to access to and use of technology for ongoing contact.

Finally, it should be noted that because considerable overlap arose in the analysis of environmental and situational factors in this study, it was decided to combine and examine these as a single category in Chapters 5 and 8.

3.2.4. The notion of investment and other (L2) identity concepts

The final component of the analytical framework employed in this study concerns language learners' (L2) identities. Although examination of the informants' identity was not an original aim of the research, and as such, was not a focus in the analysis, its importance in learners' experiences and behaviour was evident in the informants' data. Indeed, the link between identity and L2 learners has received increasing attention in the literature in the past two decades (e.g. Norton 2000; Kinginger 2004; Whitworth 2006; Jackson 2008; Benson et al. 2013).

In the current study, the informants' and their network members' identities and L2 investment were identified as important participant/personal factors influencing both social networks and patterns of language use. Therefore, although there is no section dedicated to the discussion of identity in the chapters to follow, it is an aspect integrated throughout. Norton (2000:5) defines identity as 'how a person understands his or her relationship to the world, how that relationship is constructed across time and space, and how the person understands possibilities for the future'. In particular, the analysis presented in the following chapters draws upon two key conceptualisation of identity: Norton's (1995; 2000) notion of investment, and Markus and Nurius' (1986) possible selves theory.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, Norton's (1995; 2000) notion of investment refers to 'the socially and historically constructed relationship of learners to the TL, and their often ambivalent desire to learn and practice it' (2000:10). Norton emphasises that a learner's investment in a language is not fixed, but rather 'complex, contradictory and in a state of flux' (2000: 11). As such, the notion of investment aims to 'capture the relationship of the language learner to the changing social world' (Norton Peirce 1995:17).

Drawing upon Bourdieu's (1986) notions of 'cultural capital', 'symbolic resources', and 'material resources', Norton (2000) suggests that if learners invest in a second language, they do so because they hope or expect that it will yield a return, giving them access to a wider range of resources. Such resources include symbolic resources such as language, education, and friendship, and material resources such as capital goods, real estate and money. By acquiring such resources, learners increase the value of their cultural capital. Norton also explains that when learners converse with TL speakers, they are not only exchanging information, but are 'constantly organising and reorganising a sense of who they are and how they relate to the social world' (2000:11). By investing in their TL, therefore, language learners are also investing in their own identities.

Furthermore, Norton also has suggested that a relationship exists between language, identity, and social networks. She writes:

> It is through language that a person negotiates a sense of self within and across different sites at different points in time, and it is through language that a person gains access to – or is denied access to – powerful social networks that give learners the opportunities to speak (Norton Peirce 1995:13).

Norton's notion of investment has therefore informed the current study in the sense that it provided me with a useful way to understand the processes involved in the informants' construction of opportunities to interact, establish relationships, and/or use Japanese with

other TL speakers. As such, this concept is drawn upon when discussing personal/participant-related factors influencing both social networks and language selection.

This study also draws upon possible selves theory (Markus and Nurius 1986) as a means of conceptualising aspects of the informants' (L2) identities. According to Markus and Nurius (1986:954), possible self-concepts pertain to 'how individuals think about their potential and about their future'. More specifically, they define possible selves as representations of individuals' ideas about what they might become (expected self), what they would like to become (hoped-for self), and what they are afraid of becoming (feared self). As such, individuals have both positive and negative future-oriented aspects of their self-concept. Although possible selves are derived from past experiences, they also impact upon one's current identity, and form an important connection between past, present, and future.

Markus and Nurius (1986:954) state that 'an individual's repertoire of possible selves can be viewed as the cognitive manifestation of enduring goals, aspirations, motives, fears, and threats'. Possible selves are therefore important because they can act as a self-regulation and assessment mechanism: envisioning one's future selves can orient current choices, behaviour, energy and effort to increase the possibility of attaining their positive and avoiding their negative possible future selves (Markus & Nurius 1986; Strahan & Wilson 2006; Oyserman & James 2009). Under these conceptualisations, possible selves theory therefore considers motivation to be a conscious endeavour to approach or avoid future selves.

More recently, Dörnyei and other researchers have brought possible selves theory to attention in the field of SLA, through its use in the L2 Motivational Self System (e.g Dörnyei 2005, 2009; Dörnyei & Ushioda 2009; Ushioda 2011). The relationship between

possible self-concept and social networks has also been highlighted in a number of studies in the fields of sociology and psychology (e.g. Yost, Strube, & Bailey 1992; Ibarra 1999, 2003; Ibarra, Kilduff & Tsai 2005). In particular, Ibarra, Kilduff & Tsai (2005:363) have explained that networks both influence and influenced by the types of possible selves that individuals experiment with. More specifically, individuals may establish new connections with people in order to help explore possible self-concepts, while at the same time ending or weakening relationships associated with outdated identities (Ibarra 2003).

As explained by Oyserman and James (2009:373), at any given time, an individual's self-concept includes numerous possible selves, which are 'often linked with differing social roles and identities'. One is therefore likely to establish possible selves in domains relevant to current life tasks and activities, such as being a student, an employee, or a parent (Cross & Markus 1994). In other words, possible self-concepts change throughout the life course, and as such, are likely to influence changes in behaviour including social interaction, network development/maintenance and language usage.

Based upon Unemori, Omoregie and Markus (2004), Nakamura (2013) has recently utilised the following four thematic categories for classifying the domains of Japanese language learners' possible future self-concepts:

1. Interpersonal domain (communicating with friends, communicating with family, mediator)
2. Extracurricular domain (enjoying media, enjoying other hobbies)
3. Career domain (desired job)
4. Education domain (study abroad plan, concern for grades, mastering the language)

As Nakamura's study concerned learners of Japanese language in an Australian context, his modified schema of domains of possible future selves also seemed applicable for analysis in the current study. Thus, Chapters 7 and 8, which focus on informants' post-study abroad trajectories and ongoing networks with Japanese speakers, at times draw upon Markus and

Nurius' (1986) concepts of expected self, hoped-for self, and feared self, within each of the four domains listed above. In particular, these concepts are used to help explain aspects of the informants' identity that influence their ongoing engagement with Japan and Japanese speakers.

3.2.5. Interrelationship between frameworks and summary of their application

The various analytical frameworks discussed in Sections 3.2.1 to 3.2.4 are presented in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1 Analytical frameworks of current study
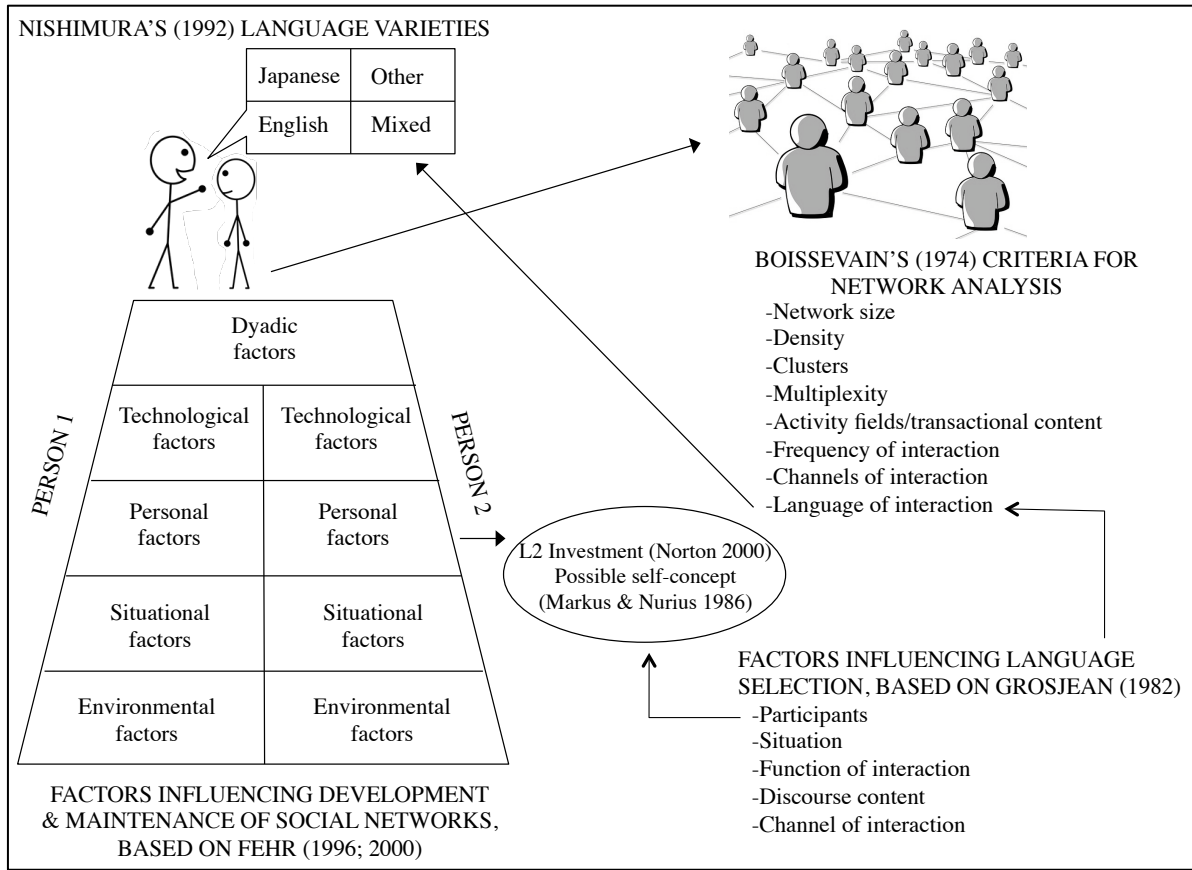
As evident in the figure above, there is an interrelationship between various components of the analytical frameworks. Firstly, it can be seen that while language of interaction has been added to Boissevain's (1974) framework as an interactional characteristic of networks, which languages the informants use will be classified according to Nishimura's (1992) language varieties, and the factors influencing their selection analysed in terms of

Grosjean's (1982) framework. Figure 1 also shows overlap between several of Grosjean's (1982) factors influencing language selection and Fehr's (1996; 2000) factors influencing development and maintenance of social networks. Specifically, factors related to the participant/person and factors related to the situation are included in both Grosjean's and Fehr's original frameworks. It was also previously mentioned that informants' (L2) identity, which can be conceptualised in terms of L2 investment (Norton 2000) and possible self-concept (Markus & Nurius 1986), was identified as an important personal factor within each of these frameworks.

Furthermore, there is also an interrelationship between the additional categories of 'channel of interaction' and 'technological factors' that I have added to Grosjean's framework and Fehr's framework respectively. However, other factors remain particular to each of the separate frameworks: Grosjean's function of interaction-related and discourse content-related factors specifically relate to the process of language selection, and Fehr's dyadic factors specifically relate to the development/maintenance of networks. Therefore, it was considered appropriate to utilise these frameworks separately to analyse the two distinct but related stages of (i) network establishment/maintenance and (ii) language selection within that network.

To recap the application of the frameworks discussed above, a modified version of Boissevain's (1974) criteria for network analysis is utilised in Chapter 4 to discuss the nature of the informants' networks during study abroad, and Fehr's (1996; 2000) factors influencing friendships are utilised to classify and discuss the factors influencing network development and maintenance in Chapters 5, 7 and 8. Nishimura's (1992) categories of bilingual speech are used to identify the informants' patterns of language use in Chapters 4, 6 and 9, while Grosjean's (1982) framework is used to classify the factors influencing these

patterns. Finally, although not a major element of the analytical frameworks, chapters 5-9 also draw upon the notion of investment (Norton 2000) and possible selves theory (Markus & Nurius 1986) when discussing factors related to the informants' identities. Sections 3.3 and 3.4 below will now outline the processes of data collection and analysis employed in this study.

3.3. Data collection methods

In order to gain in-depth information in regards to the research questions outlined in Chapter 1, a triangulation of data collection methods was employed with two groups of informants: focal informants and questionnaire respondents. For the focal informants, who are introduced in Section 3.5, the multiple data collection procedures consisted of a background questionnaire, followed by a series of four semi-structured interviews and interaction journals completed over a period of approximately seven to 12 months. This semi-longitudinal data collection was supplemented by the use of retrospection, allowing data to reflect a longer time period than was possible through the longitudinal data alone. As mentioned above, an online questionnaire was also created for completion by a larger population sample. Because both groups of informants were interviewed/surveyed at different stages of their study abroad-post-study abroad trajectories, this research therefore also includes a cross-sectional element. Each of the data collection methods employed in this study is explained in further detail in sections 3.3.1 to 3.3.5 below. A summary of data collected from the focal informants is also provided in Appendix 3.

3.3.1. Background questionnaire

The first step in the data collection process for the focal informants was their completion of a simple questionnaire to provide basic personal information. In particular, they were asked to detail their demographic and linguistic backgrounds, as well as sojourns in Japan and social contact with native Japanese speakers. This information was then used as a reference

point for the initial interview. A copy of the background questionnaire is available in Appendix 4.

3.3.2. Initial interviews

After the focal informants had completed their background questionnaire, an initial interview was arranged at a time and place convenient for them. For two of the focal informants, Sophie and Phoebe, who were studying abroad when the data collection commenced, the initial interview was conducted in Japan, and aimed to elicit information concerning their experiences prior to and during study abroad, particularly in regards to their social interaction and network development. For the six remaining focal informants, the initial interview was conducted in Australia (either in person or via Skype), and, in addition to addressing their experiences prior to and during study abroad, the post-study abroad period was also explored. Regardless of their phase of study abroad (during or post), these interviews also elicited details concerning the informants' current networks and interaction with Japanese speakers. Interview questions were shaped by previously mentioned findings in the literature, particularly concerning characteristics of networks, and the influence of both personal and environmental/ situational factors on the nature of networks, interaction and language selection. Samples of interview questions are provided in Appendices 5 and 6.

Each of the initial interviews was semi-structured in nature, in that they were directed by pre-prepared guiding questions, which were flexible in terms of content and order (Dörnyei 2007:136). In particular, they followed Patton's (2002:343) *Interview Guide Approach*, which 'provides topics or subject areas within which the interviewer is free to explore, probe, and ask questions that will elucidate and illuminate the particular subject'. The semi-structured nature therefore allows the researcher to follow up interesting developments, and the interviewee to elaborate on issues of personal importance.

According to Dowsett (1986:50-56), semi-structured interviews are an effective means of eliciting rich information concerning social relationships. This can be attested by the fact that interviews seem to be the most commonly utilised data collection method for studies concerning social networks in language learning settings (Nunan 1992; Burns 1996; Kato & Tanibe 1997; Umeda 1997; Tomiya 1997; Kurata 2002, 2008, 2010; Wiklund 2002; Whitworth 2006; Tanaka 2007; Zappa 2007; Allen 2010).

As the current study has a focus on social networks, the interviews utilised the most common way of gathering egocentric network data: name generator questions. As Carolan (2014:80-81) explains, this method relies on a 'free recall format', where respondents are asked to recall from memory members of their social network. In the current study, social network members were defined as friends or acquaintances that the informant knew by name, could contact by phone, mail, and/or Internet, and with whom they had had contact in the past two years. This time frame was employed in order to better capture the informants' active (as opposed to dormant) networks (Killworth et al. 1998).

As respondents are often prone to forget potential network members (Carolan 2014:76), prompts were given to elicit ties in various contexts such as residence, classes, and extracurricular activities. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the decision of whether to restrict the number of network ties elicited, or leave it open, is one challenge that network analysts face. While some researchers have requested informants to nominate a maximum of 10 ties (e.g. Tanaka et al. 1994; Tanaka 2000; Nakayama 2001; Murakami 2005), the primarily qualitative nature of the current research resulted in the decision to not restrict the number of network members the focal informants could provide.

Once names were generated, a second phase of questioning, known as the 'name interpreter' (Borgatti & Ofem 2010:28), elicited information about the network members and the informants' relationships with them. Guided by Boissevain's criteria for network analysis outlined in Section 3.2.1, the informants were systematically asked to detail how they first met each of their network members, their means, frequency and duration of interaction, activities undertaken together, and language used, both during and post-study abroad (if applicable). Additionally, whether or not the network members knew each other was also elicited. Valente (2010:63) notes that this type of information is useful for examining the relationship between individuals' social networks and its possible influence on their behavior and attitudes. At the end of the initial interviews, the opportunity was then taken to request the focal informants to complete their first interaction journal as soon as convenient. These are discussed in Section 3.3.3 below.

3.3.3. Interaction journals

In regards to detailed data elicitation concerning L2 usage and interactions, Badstübner and Ecke (2009:48) have cautioned that retrospective accounts may have limitations such as overestimation of L2 usage, and therefore suggest that the use of a daily journal is a more reliable means of data collection. A number of recent studies have also shown that the use of one-week logs is an effective means of eliciting language learners' social networks (Isabelli-García 2000, 2006; Pearson-Evans 2006; Whitworth 2006; Kurata 2002, 2004, 2011). Thus, in order to elucidate patterns of the focal informants' out-of-class interaction and network development with other speakers of Japanese, they were requested to keep an interaction journal for a period of one week at three different stages. As will be seen in Section 3.5, two informants, Jane and Carla, withdrew from the study partway through their participation. Thus, Jane only completed one interaction journal, and Carla did not complete any.

It was envisaged that by requesting the focal informants to complete the journals at several different periods, any changes in network development, interaction and language usage as time progressed would be illuminated. The focal informants were sent several pre-formatted journal pages via email, in which they recorded their daily interaction with both NSs and NNSs of Japanese. More specifically, they were requested to detail time and place of interaction, interactants involved, the type of interaction (e.g. in person, online, etc.), the language used by themselves and their interactants, as well as the topics discussed. A copy of the interaction journal is provided in Appendix 7.

At the outset of this research it was planned that the journals would be completed at three to four month intervals; however, some intervals were extended to as long as six months in order to incorporate the informants' busy schedules, including assessments and exams at university and/or travel. Due to the semi-longitudinal and cross-sectional research design, Sophie and Phoebe, who were participating in study abroad at the commencement of the data collection, completed their first interaction journal in Japan, whereas the other focal informants' journals were completed at various locations according to their post-study abroad movement.

Once the focal informants had completed each interaction journal of one week's duration, they returned it to me via email, and a time and place for a subsequent interview was arranged. Although it would have been desirable for the focal informants to keep interaction journals over the entire period of the data collection, it was recognised that this would have imposed too great a demand, especially considering the voluntary nature of their participation. Therefore, interaction that occurred outside of the period covered by the journal was discussed at the end of each subsequent interview, as outlined below.

3.3.4. Subsequent interviews

The subsequent interviews conducted as soon as possible after the completion of each interaction journal were also semi-structured in nature. Unlike the initial interviews, however, they also drew upon elements of stimulated recall, which is an introspective method of data collection that aims to explore learners' thought processes at the time of an event. According to Gass and Mackey (2000:17-18), the theoretical foundation of this method is based upon an information-processing approach, where it is assumed that a tangible stimulus will enhance the recall of mental processes that occurred during the event itself. Importantly, Gass and Mackey also argue that stimulated recall can reveal learners' impressions of social interactions and their focus of attention. By utilising the interaction journals as stimuli, this type of interview has an advantage over a standard post hoc interview, which relies on memory alone. It was therefore hoped that significantly detailed data could be obtained for the three one-week periods.

In the initial part of each subsequent interview, the interaction journal acted as a stimulus for the informants to recall their recent interaction, where I asked them questions concerning the initiation of contact, what occurred in the interactional encounters, any factors believed to have impacted language selection, and factors related to satisfaction/dissatisfaction with the quality and quantity of interaction achieved during each one-week period. I had read through the interaction journal prior to the interview, and was thus able to highlight and discuss any points of particular interest.

Following the stimulated-recall section, the informants were asked questions concerning their most recent interaction with network members not detailed in the interaction journal. After listing any new relationships established since their last interview, they were asked to describe their interaction with each network member in detail, including the social context,

what occurred in the interaction, and details of language selection. A sample of the questions asked in each subsequent interview is provided in Appendix 8.

Each of the interviews described in Sections 3.3.2 and 3.3.4 above ranged from 30 minutes to two hours in duration, depending upon how much information the informants had to report. Each interview was conducted in English, audio-recorded, and transcribed verbatim soon after completion. A slightly modified version of Sack, Schegloff and Jefferson's (1974) Conversation Analysis transcription conventions, as presented in Table 5 below, were utilised.

Table 5 Transcription conventions

Symbol	Description
::	Elongated sound
WORD	Increased volume
word-	Cut-off
word -	Short pause
?	Rising intonation
.	Falling intonation
( )	Unclear utterance
(word)	Transcriber's translations
word	Whispers, laughs etc.

Any Japanese utterances within the interviews were transcribed using the Hepburn style of romanisation, with English translations included in parentheses.

3.3.5. Online questionnaire

As mentioned above, in addition to the data collected from the focal informants this research also drew on data collected via an anonymous online questionnaire, which was hosted on SurveyMonkey (www.surveymonkey.com). Dewaele & Li (2013:8), who have themselves employed online anonymous surveys, suggest that such a means of data collection is likely to have a high validity rate for linguistic research because i) anonymous volunteers reap no benefits from falsifying answers, and ii) it reduces social desirability, which in turn leads to enhanced levels of honesty.

The questionnaire (provided in Appendix 9) was devised after the initial analysis of focal informants' data, and was designed to enhance generalisability and further illuminate issues that had become apparent through the initial analysis. An additional aim was to gather more longitudinal data, which enabled examination of wider variety of trajectories over a longer period of time. The questionnaire was composed of 30 closed and open-ended questions, with the intention of obtaining both simple quantitative and qualitative data concerning respondents' experiences during and after participation in a study abroad program in Japan. In particular, questions focused on the respondents' social interaction, patterns of language use, and network development and maintenance with NSs and NNSs of Japanese, as well as the perceived impact of study abroad on various personal and academic/professional life aspects. The following section will now outline the data analysis processes employed in this study.

3.4. Data analysis

As stated by Zappa (2007:55), the common principle of qualitative inquiry is 'the inductive, recursive, iterative nature of data collection and analysis', which results in blurred temporal boundaries between the two processes. Such was the case in the current study, where the numerous stages of data collection and analysis were conducted both systematically and simultaneously. To assist in the organisation and analysis of the various forms of collected data, the qualitative data analysis software, QSR NVivo, was employed. Within the NVivo Project, a separate folder was created for each focal informant, and once completed, their background questionnaires, interviews, and interaction journals were all imported as Mp3s, PDFs or Word document files. An additional folder was also created for the online questionnaire responses, where excel documents downloaded from SurveyMonkey were imported for qualitative analysis.

The primary use of NVivo was for the qualitative coding of data. Richards, co-developer of the NVivo application, has pointed out that the use of such analysis software serves to assist the researcher by facilitating the management, storage, and retrieval of data and codes (Richards 2005). Importantly, NVivo does not replace the need for the researcher's own careful analysis and interpretation of data; the categories for coding are not developed by the software. Rather, the coding categories are grounded in the data and the literature previously reviewed. This research utilised three types of coding for analysis, as outlined by Richards (2005: 90-95).

1. *Descriptive coding* – the identification of qualities such as the informants' age, duration of time spent abroad, and so on that describe each case.

2. *Topic coding* – The classification of chunks of text by topic. For example, sections of interview transcripts that discussed language use with NS contacts were identified and coded as a node (NVivo term for code) called 'language use NSs'.

3. *Analytical Coding* – Coding that results from interpretation and reflection on meaning, and leads to theory emergence and affirmation. For example, after reviewing the interview excerpts enclosed in the 'language use NSs' node, various factors influencing language use were identified and coded according to Grosjean's (1982) framework of factors (cf. Section 3.2.2).

In addition to qualitative analysis conducted in Nvivo, basic quantitative analysis and graph/chart generation was also carried out in Microsoft Excel. The following sections therefore outline the data analysis that was carried out for the different types of data collected.

3.4.1. Interviews

After completion of each interview, the Mp3 file was imported into NVivo and transcribed verbatim. Utilising Richard's (2005) three types of coding, preliminary data analysis was

then conducted in order to identify emerging categories, themes, and patterns, which then informed further data collection and analysis. The analytical framework discussed in section 3.2 above guided the data analysis throughout all stages, and further categories and constructs were derived from the literature and data. Throughout the coding process, the nodes were constantly revised and restructured. While some nodes remained stand-alone, others were grouped into hierarchies in the form of tree nodes. For example, 'Japanese use' and 'English use' were classified as child-nodes of the 'Language use' parent-node.

Once the data collection was complete, the transcripts were reviewed in greater depth and comparative analysis at both the within-case and cross-case levels was carried out. Within-case analysis, that is, looking at the data collected from a single informant, affords a more profound understanding of that informant (Bazeley 2007). This was achieved through comparison of their interview data collected at the different stages, as well as their interactional patterns with different network participants. On the other hand, cross-case analysis has two goals: to enhance generalisability, by testing whether the findings can be applied to other settings/informants or if they are more idiosyncratic in nature; and to strengthen understanding and explanation. Moreover, cross-case analysis assists in narrowing down the conditions necessary for a phenomenon (such as use of the L2) to occur, and also helps development of theories as to how the conditions may be related (Miles and Huberman 1994).

3.4.2. Interaction journals

Although the interaction journals were primarily used as stimuli to aid discussion in the subsequent interviews, they also provided quantitative data concerning the informants' degree of out-of-class interaction and L1/L2 usage. This data was entered into Excel for basic quantitative analysis both within and between cases, concerning the degree, means, and language of interaction during each one-week period. Although much of this analysis is

not included in the chapters to follow, it formed an important basis for interpreting the qualitative analysis of the focal informants' subsequent interviews in regards to their patterns of interaction and language use, as well as the factors influencing them.

3.4.3. Online questionnaire

As introduced in Section 3.3.5, the online questionnaire generated both quantitative and qualitative data. The responses of close-ended questions were imported into Excel for basic statistical analysis and graph/chart generation in regards to aspects such as network size, patterns of language use, and career choice. As not all respondents completed every question, when quantitative data from the closed questions is used in the chapters to follow, the number of responses is provided alongside statistics. The open-ended responses from the questionnaire were imported into Nvivo for qualitative analysis in the same manner as the focal informants' interview data. Responses were coded according to the nodes generated from the focal informants' data, though additional nodes were also created when new constructs arose.

3.5. Participants

3.5.1. Participant recruitment

Once ethical clearance was obtained from the institution, the initial phase of participant recruitment for this research was commenced. Learners of Japanese language who would soon begin, were currently participating in, or had already completed a university-level study abroad program in Japan were invited to participate in the study. Initially, the Japanese study abroad coordinator at an Australian university sent an email on my behalf to present and past study abroad students, and I made an announcement of the research at the university's Japanese language course tutorials. After these recruitment strategies were met with little success (partially due to the fact that the study abroad coordinator only had alumni's university email addresses, not personal ones), I received ethical clearance to also

place an advertisement on an online Facebook community for current and alumni students of the university who are interested in Japanese language and cultural exchange. Additionally, snowball sampling was also utilised, where Japanese learners contacted through the above means were requested to pass on fliers to others who may have been interested in the study.

While it is acknowledged that the investigation of a single cohort of students would enhance the generalisability of findings, the broad selection criteria in this study was employed for two different but related reasons. Firstly, the university from which the majority of focal informants were recruited has multiple exchange partners in various destinations in Japan, which accept students from introductory to advanced levels of Japanese proficiency. Most of these programs limit the number of participants from a single university to one or two people per intake. This is the case for most Australian universities sending students on study abroad to Japan, thus presenting difficulties in recruiting a single cohort with a uniform study abroad experience. Secondly, it was believed that by having relatively relaxed selection criteria, more diverse factors influencing study abroad experiences would emerge.

In total, 11 potential volunteers contacted me and were provided with explanatory statements and consent forms (provided in Appendicies 1 and 2), after which 10 consented to participate. At the time of initial contact, two (Sophie and Phoebe) were currently participating in study abroad programs in Japan, and the remaining six had completed their programs and were residing in Australia. Two of these informants withdrew from their participation at an early stage of their data collection, and their data was not used. Additionally, one informant, Jane, withdrew three months after the commencement of her data collection due to her busy schedule, and another, Carla, withdrew after her initial interview as she believed her ongoing participation would be of no benefit as she no longer

engages with Japanese language or Japanese-speaking networks. Although these two informants were unable to complete the entire phase of data collection, the data collected was highly detailed and informative, so it was decided to keep them as two of the eight focal informants. Basic demographic backgrounds and a more detailed overview of each of the focal informants' pre-study abroad histories are provided in Section 3.5.2 below.

The final phase of recruitment was for the second group of informants: the online questionnaire respondents (Note: focal informants did not fill in the questionnaire). Here, the target audience was native or near-native speakers of English who had been on a university-level study abroad program to Japan. In order to recruit respondents, an email requesting assistance in distributing a recruitment flier was sent to the Japanese department and/or exchange coordinator at a number of Australian and Japanese universities, to various Japan-related organisations such as the Australia-Japan Society and Japan Foundation, and to 'The Linguist List', an online linguistics community that sends out a regular mailing list. Individuals interested in participating were instructed to follow the link to the online questionnaire, and were also requested to pass the details on to other potential respondents.

Between June and November 2013, 126 responses were received. The respondents were all native or near-native speakers of English, from a range of countries including Australia, North America, New Zealand, several European countries and a few Asian countries. The date of study abroad program participation spanned from 1974 to 2013, although the majority (89/126 or 71%) completed their programs within the past decade.

3.5.2. Focal informants

According to Layder (1993), individuals' sociocultural histories must be taken into consideration in order to thoroughly comprehend any type of social action, such as engagement with other speakers and the development of social networks. Thus, this final

section of Chapter 3 provides an overview of the eight learners of Japanese language who constitute the focal informants of this study. As the only requirement for participation in the study was having participated in a university-level study abroad program in Japan, the informants come from a broad range of backgrounds, and differed in terms of age, language learning history and in-country experience. This section begins with an overview of the focal informants' pre- and post-study abroad backgrounds to highlight some of their similarities and differences, and then provides a more detailed description of individual sociocultural histories. All of the informants have been assigned pseudonyms to protect their anonymity.

In terms of linguistic background, all of the focal informants have native or near-native English proficiency, though Oscar's first language was Spanish, Marie's was French, and Alex claimed Polish to be an additional first language. Furthermore, Oscar also speaks French and Chinese, and Alex speaks Korean and Chinese (to varying degrees of proficiency). One informant began her Japanese language education in primary school, six commenced at high school, and one began her Japan studies at university. However, as can be seen in Table 6 below, prior to commencement of their study abroad programs, all of the informants had studied to the level of 'Independent User' (B1/B2) based on the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) for Languages (cf. Council of Europe 2001).

As the informants' level of proficiency varied even within these CEFR levels, the class level to which they had studied at university, and the equivalent Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT) levels obtained from the informants' universities have also been provided. In terms of class level, the numbers correspond to number of semesters studied (e.g. Japanese

9 represents the level equivalent to nine semesters of study at university)[4]. Moreover, of the eight informants, four had travelled to Japan prior to their study abroad program, three for high school exchanges and/or brief holidays, and one whose initial study abroad program was stopped early and postponed in the wake of the Great Eastern Japan Earthquake and Tsunami of March 2011. These pre-study abroad details are outlined in Table 6 below, followed by a summary of the focal informants' study abroad programs in Table 7.

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[4] Note that completion of Japanese 9 at university does not necessarily mean nine semesters of study at university itself. As some of the informants entered university with prior Japanese study, they were able to jump ahead to an appropriate level.

Table 6 Focal informants' background pre-study abroad

Informant	Age at commencement of study abroad program	Ethnicity	First language(s)	Other language (s)	Years of Japanese study prior to university level study abroad	Level of formal Japanese study prior to study abroad	Length and purpose of trips to Japan prior to study abroad
Jane	21	Caucasian Australian	English	Japanese	University = 2.5 years	CEFR B1 JLPT N4 (Japanese 5)	• 2011 Two weeks, program was postponed in wake of Tohoku Disaster
Phoebe	19	Caucasian Australian	English	Japanese French	High school = 6 years University = 2 years	CEFR B1 JLPT N2 (Japanese 8)	• 2007 Five-week high school exchange (homestay) • 2011 One-week holiday
Oscar	21	Hispanic Colombian	Spanish	English French Japanese Chinese	High school = 5 years University = 2 years	CEFR B1 JLPT N3 (Japanese 6)	• Nil
Sophie	20	Caucasian Australian	English	Japanese	Primary school = 7 years High school = 6 years University = 2.5 years	CEFR B2 JLPT N2 (Japanese 9)	• 2006 Two-week high school tour (homestay)
Carla	22	Caucasian New Zealander	English	Japanese French	High School = 5 years University = 3 years	CEFR B1 JLPT N2 (Japanese 8)	• 2003 Three-week high school trip
Marie	20	French	French	German English Japanese	High school exchange in Japan = 1 year University = 1 year	CEFR B1 JLPT N2 (Japanese 8)	• 2004 Three-week holiday • 2005-2006 One-year high school exchange • 2006 One-month holiday to see host family • 2007 Three one-week trips
Alex	19	Caucasian New Zealander	English, Polish	Japanese Chinese Korean	High school = 2 years University = 1.5 years	CEFR B1 JLPT N2 (Japanese 8)	• Nil
Angela	20	Australian-born Chinese	English	Japanese Cantonese (very basic)	High school = 3 years University = 2.5 years	CEFR B1 JLPT N4 (Japanese 5)	• Nil

Table 7 Focal informants' background during study abroad

Informant	Age at commencement of program	Duration and year of program	Type of institution and study abroad program	Type of residence	Type(s) of classes enrolled in
Jane	21	One year (2011-2012)	University; Exchange program	International dormitory with Japanese 'advisors'	• Japanese language classes • Integrated class taught in Japanese
Phoebe	19	One semester (2012)	University; Exchange program	International student dormitory	• Japanese language classes • Integrated class taught in English
Oscar	21	One year (2011-2012)	University; Exchange program	Integrated apartment complex	• Japanese language classes • Integrated class taught in Japanese
Sophie	20	Six weeks (June-July 2012)	Language Institute; Intensive Japanese language program	International student dormitory	• Japanese language classes
Carla	22	One year (2008-2009)	University; Exchange program	International student dormitory	• Japanese language classes • Integrated classes taught in Japanese/English
Marie	20	One year (2008)	University; Exchange program	International student dormitory	• Japanese language classes • Content classes taught in English
Alex	19	One year (2007-2008)	University; Program for research scholars	International student dormitory	• Japanese language classes
Angela	20	One year (1997-1998)	University; Exchange program	International student dormitory	• Japanese language classes • Integrated class taught in English

As shown in Table 7 above, each of the focal informants participated in various study abroad programs between 1997 and 2012. Although their program variables will be discussed in significant detail in Chapter 4, it can be seen that Sophie's program lasted six weeks, Phoebe's one semester, and the remaining informants' for one year. While Sophie's program was at a language institute, the other informants all attended Japanese universities, most as 'exchange students', but Alex as a research scholar. Types of residence and classes enrolled in also differed. The majority of informants lived in international student exclusive dormitories, though Oscar lived in an apartment complex that housed both local and international students, and Jane lived in a dormitory that also housed a small number of local students who acted as 'advisors' to the exchange students.

A summary of the focal informants' post-study abroad backgrounds is provided in Table 8 below. As they commenced their participation in the present study at different times, the time since study abroad program completion is reflective of their most recent interview. In terms of post-study abroad experiences, all of the focal informants, except Oscar and Carla continued with their Japanese studies after completing their study abroad programs. Furthermore, whilst Sophie, Marie, Carla and Angela have since returned to Japan for various reasons, the other focal informants have not. Finally, four of the focal informants are currently full-time undergraduate students, two are full-time doctoral students, one recently commenced working at company in Japan, and one is working at a law firm in Australia. These various differences obviously present difficulties in directly comparing the focal informants' experiences, emphasising the importance of a qualitative research design. While the data provided in Table 8 above serves as a simplified means of reference, in-depth discussion of the focal informants' post-study abroad experiences constitutes the focus of the later chapters in this thesis

Table 8 Focal informants' background post-study abroad

Informant	Age at commencement of data collection	Approximate time since program completion (at end of data collection)	Subsequent Japanese studies	Subsequent trips to Japan	Current occupation
Jane	22	6 months	• Semester 2, 2012 Japanese 8	Nil	Full-time undergraduate student
Phoebe	20	1.5 years	• Semester 1, 2013 Japanese 11	Nil	Full-time undergraduate student
Oscar	22	1.5 years	• Nil	Nil	Full-time undergraduate student
Sophie	20	1.5 years	• Semester 2, 2012 Japanese 10	• Jul. 2013 holiday (10 days)	Full-time undergraduate student
Carla	27	4 years	• Nil	• 2012 10-day research trip to Tokyo	Full-time doctoral student
Marie	25	5 years	• 2009 Japanese 10, 11 & 12 • 2010 Intensive Japanese course at university in Tokyo (one year)	• Jul. 2009 holiday (three weeks) • Dec. 2009 holiday (one week) • 2010 Intensive Japanese course at university (one year) • Jun. 2013 Commenced working in Japan	Working at a company in Japan
Alex	23	5 years	• 2011-2012 Honours student in Japanese/ Korean • 2013-present PhD in Japanese translation	Nil	Full-time doctoral student
Angela	35	15 years	• 1999 Honours in Japanese	• 1999 Research trip (one week) • 2003 holiday (three weeks) • 2006 holiday (one week) • 2007 holiday (one week) • 2010 holiday (one week)	Working at an Australian law firm

In order to better set the scene for the analysis chapters to follow, the remainder of this chapter will now provide a detailed description of each of the focal informants involved in this study. In particular, focus is placed on their Japanese language learning histories and the lead up to their university-level study abroad experiences, including interaction with Japanese speakers as well as their motivations, goals and/or expectations for the period abroad.

Sophie

Out of all the informants, Sophie has studied Japanese for the longest period of time: 'all of primary school, all of secondary school, all of university'. She went on a two-week school tour of Japan during high school, and explained that it was this experience that made her 'really want to continue Japanese'. Although she did not claim to maintain contact with anyone met during that trip, she mentioned having weekly interaction with her three close family friends based in Australia: an Australian male married to a Japanese woman, and their five year-old daughter. Sophie claimed that she would speak to the entire family in Japanese, and found interaction with them to be beneficial for both linguistic and cultural learning. When Sophie commenced her university-level study abroad program in 2012, she had not returned to Japan for six years. While she was eager to apply her textbook knowledge to practical situations, she mentioned that studying abroad wasn't so much about improving her language, but 'was more about being able to meet other like-minded people', and experiencing the '*hontō nihon*' (sic)(real Japan).

Phoebe

Phoebe commenced her Japanese studies in high school, and similar to Sophie, went on a five-week high school exchange program to Japan, which she claimed strengthened her desire to pursue Japanese studies. She maintained contact with two individuals met at this time, predominantly through email in a mixture of Japanese and English. In addition, she

also occasionally conversed with her Australian-raised Japanese friend from high school in Japanese to practice the language. Phoebe's decision to study abroad in Japan for a second time was strongly influenced by her high school exchange experience, where she 'fell in love with Japan' and knew that she 'REALLY wanted to come back'. She mentioned that at the lead up to her university-level study abroad she felt comfortable in using Japanese language, and had 'confidence in the range of communication' she could utilise, though also expected that her Japanese would further improve, 'because it just kind of happens by osmosis'.

Jane

Unlike Sophie and Phoebe, Jane commenced her Japanese studies at university, and at the same time joined her university's Japanese club because she had 'an interest in the culture and wanted to meet Japanese people'. Although she claimed that her participation in the Japanese Club was her primary source of out-of-class interaction with both native and non-native Japanese speakers, she explained that she predominantly used English or 'a weird mix of Jap and English' because she 'wasn't so confident speaking Japanese'. Jane's decision to study abroad was motivated by the desire to improve her Japanese language proficiency and cultural understanding. Although Jane claimed that she did not have any pre-departure expectations for what her experience would be like, she was aware that because all of her classes would be with other exchange students, she would 'have to be proactive in meeting Japanese people'.

Oscar

Oscar commenced his Japanese studies at high school, but had never been to Japan. Like Jane, Oscar's main opportunities for interacting with other Japanese speakers were at his university's Japanese and Anime clubs. However, he also claimed that he would primarily interact in English because his Japanese 'was very low still'. However, with the

encouragement of one of his NNS friends, Oscar actively started trying to use more Japanese a few months before his study abroad program commenced. This also coincided with the establishment of close friendships with a number of Japanese exchange students at his university. Like Jane, Oscar's decision to study abroad in Japan was motivated by the desire to improve his Japanese proficiency, holding the belief that an extended in-country experience was necessary for any further language development. Moreover, he was also wary that he would 'be with mostly exchange students' during his time in Japan, and thus had a 'plan… to be sure that I hung out with Japanese students and not the foreign students who'd just speak English'.

Alex

Alex also commenced his Japanese studies in high school, though like Oscar and Jane, had never been to Japan. Prior to his study abroad program in Japan, he had frequent online contact with a large number of Japanese individuals he met on Mixi (an online Japanese social networking site), as well as face-to-face interaction with several Japanese language exchange partners he met through his university. Like Phoebe, Alex reported that he was comfortable with and confident in using Japanese at the lead up to his study abroad program. He reported that he 'just really wanted to use Japanese', and felt as though Japan was 'calling' him. Like Oscar, Alex believed it necessary to go to Japan in order to 'achieve any sort of real proficiency in the language', and planned to maximise his use of Japanese whilst abroad by avoiding English speakers.

Marie

Unlike any of the other focal informants, Marie, a French national, commenced her Japanese studies in an immersion environment, living with Japanese families and attending a Japanese high school as an exchange student after she graduated from high school in France. Although she initially found it difficult, she reported that her Japanese increased

quickly as a result of the immersion. She also established some very close relationships with local Japanese and other exchange students, many of whom she maintained contact via email and phone calls, predominantly using Japanese. The following year, Marie commenced her undergraduate studies in Australia, with the intention of returning to Japan as a study abroad student as soon as possible.

During her first year in Australia, Marie established a significantly large network of Japanese contacts, the majority of whom with she claimed to use Japanese. Compared to the other focal informants, she appeared to have greater confidence in using Japanese, and found that her proficiency significantly improved during this period as a result of her frequent practice, both inside and outside of the language classroom. She also made an additional three trips to Japan that year, and claimed to meet up with her contacts over there each time. Even though Marie was advised that she could not 'really expect to go abroad' during her second year of university, her hard work and motivation in class paid off, and she was accepted to her chosen Japanese university.

Carla

Carla presents a significantly different case to the rest of the focal informants in that although she had studied Japanese for five years at high school and three years at university, 'it was always just a subject'. More than anything Carla appeared to be extrinsically motivated to study the language. At high school, she decided to study Japanese because 'my French teacher was a moron and I didn't want to do German'. Similar to Sophie and Phoebe, she participated in a three-week high school exchange, and explained that although she enjoyed herself and 'wanted to go back', she found it difficult to 'feel comfortable' with the language. Her decision to continue her Japanese studies at university was then motivated by the belief that 'doing a minor in a language would be really useful when doing a Business degree'.

At university, Carla 'never really used conversational Japanese', and did not have any contact with native Japanese speakers. Carla also differed from the other focal informants in that although they had all actively sought out the opportunity to study abroad during their university studies, Carla's decision to study abroad was the result of her university's Japanese department approaching her and guaranteeing a semester abroad if she signed up for honours, to which she agreed. Similar to the other focal informants, however, Carla 'wanted to improve [her] Japanese while over there', and hoped to achieve this by 'speak[ing] Japanese and hang[ing] out with Japanese people'.

Angela

Angela described herself as an 'Australian-born Chinese', and, like Phoebe, Oscar, Carla and Alex, commenced her Japanese studies at high school. During this period she became friends with a Japanese exchange student and maintained contact with her after she returned to Japan via letters in a mixture of Japanese and English. Once at university, Angela also established contact with three other Japanese students, with whom she interacted in both English and Japanese. She recalled that at this time, she was not very confident in her Japanese, and was 'probably quite slow'. As with several of the other informants, Angela's decision to study abroad in Japan was motivated by the belief that she 'really needed to go in order to advance further… to understand the culture and the way they think'. She recalled that through studying abroad, she wanted to take any opportunity she had to immerse herself and learn the language. Similar to Oscar and Alex, she also wanted to ensure that she did not 'just associate with other foreigners', and 'wanted to make a conscious effort to get to know some Japanese people there'.

3.6. Summary

This chapter has outlined the methodology utilised in this study. The description of the methodological approach and analytical frameworks was followed by discussion of the five

methods of data collection. For the eight focal informants, this was a background questionnaire and series of semi-structured interviews and one-week interaction journals. To further expand upon the focal informants' data, online questionnaire data was also collected from 126 respondents. Next, the data analysis procedures were outlined, including qualitative analysis conducted in Nvivo, as well as basic quantitative analysis in Excel. The chapter then concluded with description of the participant recruitment process and provided discussion of the focal informants' backgrounds.

It was shown that the focal informants in this study exhibit a wide range of pre-study abroad histories. Although this presents difficulties in directly comparing their data, it reconfirms the fact that no two students going on study abroad are the same, and that they will thus interpret their study abroad experiences in different ways. Investigation of the focal informants' and questionnaire respondents' interaction and social networks with TL speakers during study abroad and onwards throughout their life trajectories is the focus of the following six analysis chapters. Responding to research question 1, Chapters 4 to 6 examine the informants' social networks and interaction with Japanese speakers during study abroad. Chapters 7 to 9 then respond to research question 2, focusing on the informants' ongoing engagement with Japan, its language and its speakers after study abroad completion.

4. THE NATURE OF LEARNERS' SOCIAL NETWORKS DURING STUDY ABROAD

The best parts [of study abroad] would have been the friends, and the people, and the little bit of travel that I was able to do – Angela

4.1. Introduction

The above quote from Angela emphasises the importance of social networks to students' overall study abroad experiences. Many of the other informants also praised study abroad for bringing them into contact with significantly more Japanese speakers than when in their home countries, many with whom they maintained contact for years, if not decades post-program completion. For example, Marie commented: 'I met some very cool people, some of my best friends now were studying with me [during study abroad]'. Similarly, Oscar, Phoebe and Jane all commented that they 'made great friendships' during study abroad.

In line with previous studies (e.g. Tanaka et al. 1994; Meier & Daniels 2011; Forsey et al. 2012), many informants indicated that although the nature of their various study abroad programs meant it was easy to interact and develop friendships with other foreigners, it proved more challenging with local NSs of Japanese. QR2[5], for example, commented: 'Most of the people I spent time with were other NNSs studying abroad'. She believed that her lack of network development with NSs was due to her 'fairly low confidence when speaking Japanese so [she] was nervous about speaking with [them]'. On the other hand, QR32 reported on his dissatisfaction with relationships with NSs as follows:

> Japanese people do not strike up conversations with foreigners off the street so unless forced together by living situation or classes together, there doesn't seem to be any real way to meet Japanese people.

Although factors influencing patterns of interaction and network development during study abroad are discussed in the following chapter, the comments above importantly highlight

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[5] Questionnaire respondents are referred to as QR plus the number of their response. i.e. QR2 was the second respondent to complete the online questionnaire.

the commonly reported view that satisfaction with networks was primarily attributed to (i) personal factors, or (ii) program variables.

The remainder of this chapter will now examine the nature of the informants' social networks with Japanese speakers during study abroad. Section 4.2 provides a general overview of the characteristics of the types of networks established during study abroad, presenting visual representations of the focal informants' networks. Sections 4.3 to 4.7 then draw upon Boissevain's (1974) criteria of network analysis to discuss the nature of both the focal informants' and questionnaire respondents' networks during study abroad. In particular, the sections consider network size, key activity fields, density, multiplexity, general patterns of language use, and frequency of interaction.

4.2. Visual representations of the focal informants' networks during study abroad

This section provides an overview of the focal informants' social networks during study abroad through means of visual representations. More detailed analysis of their structural and interaction characteristics is then discussed in the sections to follow. In particular, Figures 2 to 7 below indicate: number of NS and NNS network members; clusters formed around primary activity fields or groups (indicated by boxes) and, when provided by the informant, number of people within these clusters; frequency of contact (indicated by the use of arrows); and reported language use within each activity field/group (indicated by colour of box or names next to box). To help situate key people mentioned throughout the rest of this thesis, the names (pseudonyms) of these people have also been provided in their respective activity field/group. If the focal informants had a differing degree of contact with these individuals compared to the larger group, this is indicated by an arrow connected to their names either inside or next to a smaller box.

To differentiate between NS and NNS networks members, NSs have been given Japanese pseudonyms, and NNSs pseudonyms reflective of their background (e.g. German, Chinese) that have also been italicised. As some NNSs were referred to by Japanese nicknames in the interviews, they have been given Japanese pseudonyms (also italicised) in an effort to maintain authenticity. Visual representations are presented in three groups: (i) networks that are relatively balanced but with more NSs; (ii) networks that are relatively balanced but with more NNSs; and (iii) networks that are unbalanced with significantly more NNSs.

4.2.1. Networks that are relatively balanced but with more NSs

The three focal informants who established fairly balanced networks, but with more NSs, were Oscar, Jane and Marie. Their network diagrams are respectively presented in Figures 2, 3 and 4 below.

Figure 2 Oscar's network during study abroad
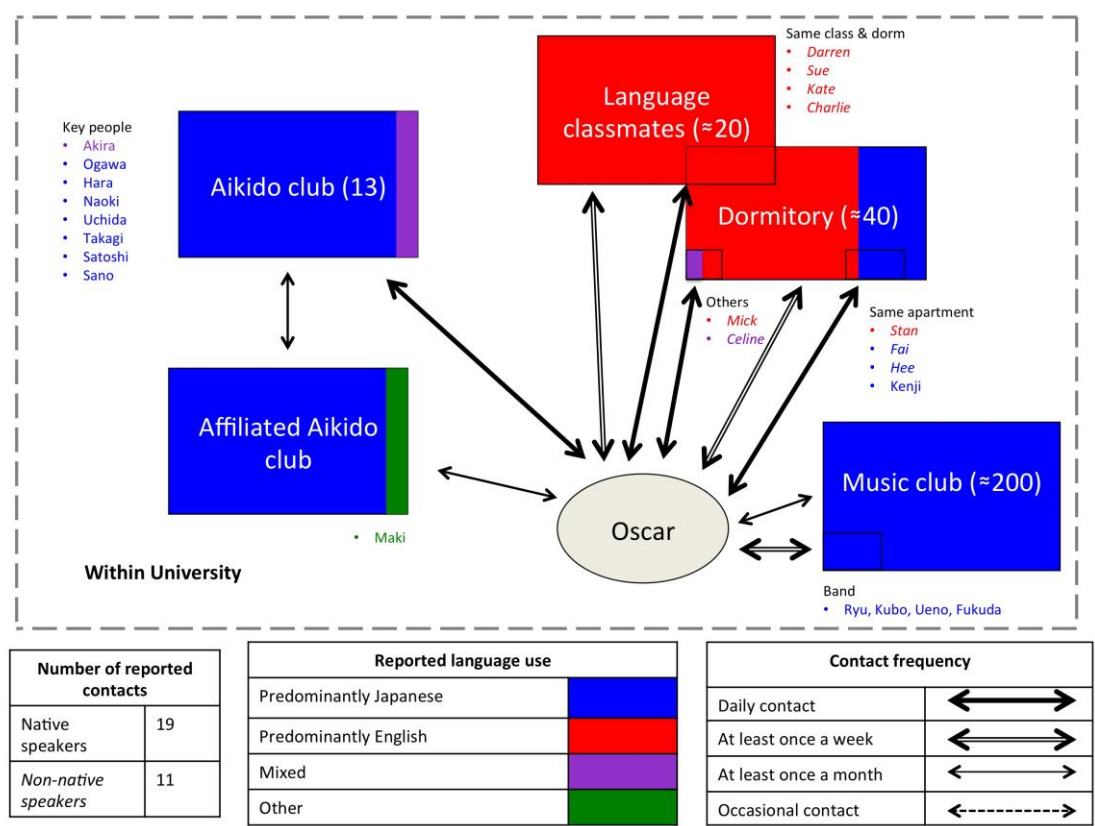
Figure 3 Jane's network during study abroad

Within University

Key people
- Miho
- Kana
- Mari

International Association

Dormitory (28)

Key people
- Laura
- Elise
- Lilly
- Akemi

English conversation students
Mika, Kyoko, Tatsushi

Key people
- Mana
- Kei

Buddy program

Jane

City Karate club

Outside University

Home visit Family (4)

Number of reported contacts	
Native speakers	22
Non-native speakers	18

Reported language use	
Predominantly Japanese	
Predominantly English	
Mixed	
Other	

Contact frequency	
Daily contact	
At least once a week	
At least once a month	
Occasional contact	

Figure 4 Marie's network during study abroad

Pre-SA

High school in France

Noriko

Japanese High school students (2 + 3) & teachers (3)

Prior host family

Host Mum
Host Dad
Yutaka
Kiyomi
Satoshi

Australian University

Haruki
Sosuke
Toshi
Takeru

Met randomly in France

Isamu
Tetsu
Eiko

Outside University

Key people
- Ryota
- Naoto
- Yuka
- Yuri

"International Japanese"

Taka

Within University

French community (15)

Paul, Rogier,   Marc, Jacqui

Pat, George, Harry, Carrie, Chisa

Class

Key people
- Yuito
- Soshi; Daisuke (teaching assistants)

Marie

Other Japanese

Met through others in dorm

Masaya
Nobu
Tadao

Tetsu's brother

Yuji

(except Yuji)

Dorm

Number of reported contacts	
Native speakers	29
Non-native speakers	26

Reported language use	
Predominantly Japanese	
Predominantly English	
Mixed	
Other	

Contact frequency	
Daily contact	
At least once a week	
At least once a month	
Occasional contact	

4.2.2. Networks that are relatively balanced but with more NNSs

Two focal informants, Phoebe and Angela, established networks that were relatively balanced, but had more NNSs than NSs. These are presented in Figures 5 and 6 below.

Figure 5 Phoebe's network during study abroad

Within University

Class

Sae, Yuta, Mayuki, Aiko

Key people
- Takumi
- Nobu
- Hiroki

Buddy Community(≈20)

Eri

Dormitory/same program (16)

Key people
- Binh
- Claire
- Hiro
- Dave
- Cathy
- Josie
- Sakaya

Josie's host parents

Phoebe

Key people
- Jenny (pre-SA)
- Paul
- Carl
- Drew
- Ben

Friends at University K

Aika (previous host sister)

Outside University

Number of reported contacts	
Native speakers	18
Non-native speakers	21

Reported language use	
Predominantly Japanese	
Predominantly English	
Mixed	
Other	

Contact frequency	
Daily contact	
At least once a week	
At least once a month	
Occasional contact	

Figure 6 Angela's network during study abroad

Same class & dorm
- Max
- Datu
- Bela
- Tate
- Ethan
- Leah
- Faith
- Soojin

Class

Maho

Dormitory (≈30)

Jade

Jazz Club (~30)

Within University

Key person
- Tomoe

Ōhashi home visit family (5)

Hōkei connection

Assigned buddy

Nari
Ami

International Association

Key people
- Maiko
- Kaoru
- Masaki

Outside University

Pre- SA

Scott

Kaito

Nana

Chika

Kaito's family (3)

Nana's family & friends (5)

Angela

Takae (language exchange partner)

Hokkaido exchange program

Key people
- Andy
- Daisy
- Hank

Summer exchange program

Key people
- Host family (4)

Number of reported contacts	
Native speakers	33
Non-native speakers	35

Reported language use	
Predominantly Japanese	
Predominantly English	
Mixed	
Other	

Contact frequency	
Daily contact	
At least once a week	
At least once a month	
Occasional contact	

4.2.3. Networks that are unbalanced with significantly more NNSs

The three remaining focal informants, Alex, Sophie and Carla, each established networks that were unbalanced, with significantly more non-native than native Japanese speakers. These are presented in Figures 7 to 9 below. It should be noted here that although each of the other focal informants' network diagrams are representative of their networks at the completion of their study abroad period, Alex presented a significantly difference case in that approximately halfway into his program, his girlfriend (now wife) moved over to be with him from Korea. Although Alex established a considerable network with TL speakers in the first five months of his program, he explained that 'once my girlfriend came over, we just stuck to ourselves, we wouldn't meet anyone else'. Alex's network presented in Figure 7 below, therefore, is representative of the first five months of his study abroad program.

Figure 7 Alex's network during study abroad
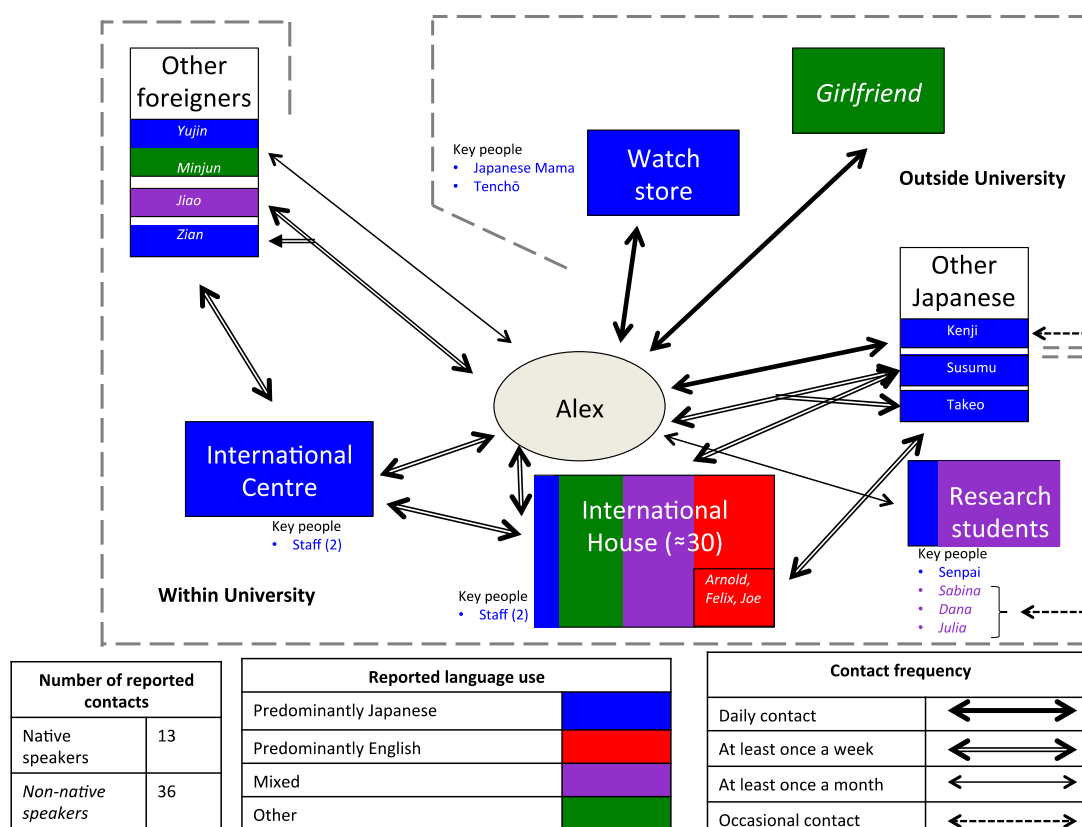
Figure 8 Sophie's network during study abroad

Inside "The Centre" (24)

Burmese breakfast buddies (3)

All others

Classmates (8)

Isra

Clubbing group (4)

Jill, Cynthia, Dewi

Students from university tour(4)

Wada

Outside "The Centre"

Home visit family (5)

Sophie

Number of reported contacts	
Native speakers	9
Non-native speakers	24

Reported language use	
Predominantly Japanese	
Predominantly English	
Mixed	
Other	

Contact frequency	
Daily contact	
At least once a week	
At least once a month	
Occasional contact	

Figure 9 Carla's network during study abroad

Within University

Key People
• *Nhu*
• *Ji-ae*
• *Chunhua*
• *Hee*
• *Nam*

(language use outside of class not reported)

Class

Jasper

Dormitory

Key people
• *Milly*
• *Suzie*
• *Jaques*
• *Bailey*
• *Santo*

Rika (buddy)

Shinjuku Aikido Club

Carla

Outside University

Local Gym

Number of reported contacts	
Native speakers	1
Non-native speakers	11

Reported language use	
Predominantly Japanese	
Predominantly English	
Mixed	
Other	

Contact frequency	
Daily contact	
At least once a week	
At least once a month	
Occasional contact	

As the diagrams above indicate, the focal informants' networks presented both similarities and differences in terms of size, key activity fields, density, frequency of interaction, and general patterns of language use. These characteristics, as well as degree of multiplexity, are discussed in Sections 4.3 to 4.8 below. In each of these sections, general patterns observed in the questionnaire data are reported, followed by similarities and/or differences observed in the more in-depth data of the focal informants.

4.3. Network size

At the most basic level of network analysis, it was found that while abroad, each of the informants managed to establish networks that incorporated both NSs and NNSs of Japanese. Rather than examining network size as a whole, this section considers the size of the informants' NS networks as well as their NNS network. Given the differing nature of data gathered from the two groups of informants in relation to network size, the questionnaire respondents' data will be discussed first, followed by that of the focal informants.

4.3.1. Questionnaire respondents' network size

In order to examine the questionnaire respondents' network size, their responses to four key questions were considered. These concerned: i) relationships and interaction with three most significant NSs and three most significant NNSs of Japanese, and ii) estimations of how many other NSs and NNSs of Japanese they interacted with for social reasons. The respondents were explicitly asked to only include people they knew by name, and could contact by phone, email, or Internet. The respondents' NS network size is presented in Table 9 below[6].

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[6] Note that the non-standard increments in this table are due to the fact that the respondents initially listed their three most significant contacts, and then reported how many additional network members they had. Thus, three contacts have been added to the range initially provided by the respondents in order to reflect total network size.

Table 9 Questionnaire respondents' native-speaker network size

Number of NS contacts	Response count	Response percent
4-8	13	16.9%
9-13	19	24.7%
13-18	18	23.4%
18-23	7	9.1%
23-28	4	5.2%
28-33	5	6.5%
33-38	0	0.0%
38-43	3	3.9%
43-48	0	0.0%
48-53	2	2.6%
More than 53	6	7.8%
		Response rate: 77/126 (61%)

Of the 77 respondents who answered this question, the majority (65%) indicated that in addition to their three most significant contacts, they had between one and 15 further contacts. The most selected response was 9-13 contacts, and the average size was 13-18 contacts. The remaining 27 respondents' networks ranged in size from 18 to more than 53 contacts.

Of the six respondents who indicated that that they had more than 53 NS contacts, one of their study abroad programs lasted two months, one six months, and the remaining four lasted one year. The respondent whose program lasted two months, QR65, was studying at a language institute, and lived and studied in international student exclusive environments. Although he claimed to meet his three most significant NSs contacts at the institute through friends, unfortunately he did not indicate where he met the remainder of his significantly large network.

The five remaining respondents, on the other hand, all went to universities, lived in an integrated residence and participated in integrated classes with NSs. Additionally, four of them attended university club activities. As will be shown in the following chapter, participation in these activity fields generally increased informants' opportunities for

interaction with NSs. However, analysis also indicated that of the five respondents who indicated that they had 4-8 NS contacts, two lived in an integrated dormitory and attended integrated classes, and one of these respondents also attended club activities. Thus, participation in such activity fields does not necessarily correlate with larger networks. A range of other activity fields for network development mentioned by the questionnaire respondents are introduced in section 4.4, and are discussed in further detail in Chapter 5 which specifically focuses on factors influencing social networks during study abroad.

The respondents' NNS network size is presented in Table 10 below.

Table 10 Questionnaire respondents' NNS network size

Number of NNS contacts	Response count	Response percentage
4-8	5	7.1%
9-13	8	11.4%
13-18	15	21.4%
18-23	11	15.7%
23-28	9	12.9%
28-33	9	12.9%
33-38	0	0.0%
38-43	4	5.7%
43-48	2	2.9%
48-53	0	0.0%
More than 53	7	10.0%
		Response rate: 70/126 (56%)

Although there was more of a spread in their responses, the most selected response and average size of NNSs networks were both 5-10 contacts larger than the NS network equivalent, at 13-18 and 18-23 contacts respectively. Furthermore, the proportion of respondents who reported a smaller NNS network of 4-13 contacts (n=13 or 19%) was less than half the proportion of respondents who reported the same sized NS network (n=32 or 42%). This also means that the proportion of respondents who reported a medium to large sized network of 13 or more NNS contacts (n=57 or 81%) was considerably larger than the proportion of respondents who reported the same sized NS network (n=45 or 58%). Reflecting the findings of Tanaka (2007), these results suggest that it was easier for respondents to establish relationships with NNSs than it was with NSs.

While the scope of this research did not permit a definitive correlation analysis, vigorous examination of the data utilising Survey Monkey's 'compare' function indicated that for the majority of respondents, there did not appear to be a relationship between larger NNS networks and smaller NS networks, and vice versa. For example, of the 13 respondents who reported a larger NNS network size of 38 or more contacts, only two reported a significantly smaller NS network size of 9-13 contacts (none reported less), while eight reported a NS network size of 28 or more. Furthermore, of the 13 respondents who reported a small NS network size of 4-8 contacts, more than half (n=6) also reported a NNS network size of less than 18 contacts.

These results therefore suggest that although the questionnaire respondents often had more NNSs than NSs in their network, the difference in size was not extreme: those who reported large networks with NSs also tended to report large networks with NNSs, and those who reported smaller networks with NSs also reported smaller networks with NNSs. Although qualitative comments explicitly concerning overall network composition and size were scarce, QR62 mentioned that she felt her 'network was balanced, with many native [Japanese] speakers, some compatriots, and many non-native Japanese speakers from all over the world'. Moreover, the data related to 'significant contacts' and network development in general suggested that all respondents managed to establish networks within the three social circles outlined by Bochner et al. (1985): the monocultural network (with compatriots); the bicultural network (with host nationals); and the multicultural network (with other international students).

4.3.2. Focal informants' network size

The data concerning the focal informants' networks while abroad was primarily drawn from their initial interviews, which, as discussed in the previous chapter, relied upon name generator questions to elicit information about their network members. When confronted

with the task of listing their out-of-class social contacts whilst on study abroad, several of the focal informants mentioned that they had difficulties in recalling their entire networks, regardless of time since program completion. For example, Jane, who completed her program two months prior, stated 'I can't encapsulate my entire friendship circle, it's kind of hard'. Similarly, nine months post-study abroad, Oscar claimed that a list of his network members from during study abroad was 'not gonna happen' as it would be 'VERY long'. Interestingly, although Angela (15 years post-study abroad) commented 'I can't remember everybody… because it's fuzzy in my memory', as will be seen in the sections below, she ended up reporting the largest network of all the focal informants. It should be noted, however, that she independently took it upon herself to report members she had forgotten in her initial interview when we met for a subsequent interview one month later.

Overall, the focal informants reported network sizes that were relatively similar to those reported by the questionnaire respondents. The average size of networks with NSs was 18, though individual sizes ranged from 1-33. As with the questionnaire respondents, the average size and range of NNS networks was slightly higher than with NSs, at 23 and 11-36 network members respectively. Although the range of network sizes was not as high as those reported by the questionnaire respondents (4-53+ for NSs and NNSs), this was likely related to the nature of data collection, where focal informants had to report individual network member names, while questionnaire respondents selected number of contacts from a multiple choice question. Nevertheless, the findings for both questionnaire respondents and focal informants reflect the findings of Nakamura (2001) and Murakami (2005), in that there was considerable variance in the composition of individual networks.

As with the questionnaire respondents, the majority (5/8) of focal informants' networks were relatively well balanced between NSs and NNSs, with a difference in size of 2-8

network members. However, the three informants, Carla, Sophie and Alex, who reported the smallest number of NS network members, importantly had larger differences in NS and NNS network size of 10, 15, and 23 network members respectively. Unlike the other focal informants, they did not live in integrated housing, enroll in integrated classes, and/or participate in university clubs/associations. In particular, Sophie mentioned feeling isolated from the Japanese community, and primarily attributed this to the nature of her program. At 'The Centre' – the name she gave to the language institute she was studying at, where residence, classes and frequent field trips were restricted to international students.

On the other hand, reflecting the findings presented above, Marie and Angela, who reported the largest NS network sizes of 29 and 33 respectively, established many of their NS contacts through engagement in clubs/associations and/or integrated classes. Both of these informants also did, however, have a significant number of NS network members in Japan who they had got to know pre-study abroad. The informants' key activity fields for network development are discussed below.

4.4. Key activity fields

As Boissevain (1974) has indicated in his criteria for network analysis (cf. Section 3.2.1), examination of the activity fields from which relationships are drawn can help establish patterns of density and multiplexity in individual's networks. Thus, before providing a discussion of the density and multiplexity of the informants' networks, this section provides an overview of the key activity fields from which their networks were established. These will then be discussed in further detail in Chapter 5 as environmental factors influencing interaction and network development.

4.4.1. Questionnaire respondents' key activity fields

Examination of the questionnaire respondents' comments in regards to their most important contacts and general patterns of interaction and network development indicated the vast majority of both NS and NNS networks appeared to be established within the university/language institute domain. More specifically, of the 144 most important NS contacts that the questionnaire respondents reported, 110 (76%) were established inside the university/language institute. In this domain, the most commonly reported activity fields were buddy/tutor programs, clubs/circles, and dormitory. Similarly, of the 202 reported most important NNS contacts, 167 (83%) were established inside the university, however, slightly different to NS networks, the most commonly reported activity fields were dormitory and class.

Outside of university/language institute, the most common meeting context for most important NSs was homestays, and several respondents also mentioned having one or more important NS contacts initially met pre-study abroad. The majority of the respondents' NNS networks established outside of the educational institute were those initially met pre-study abroad, though a few respondents also mentioned establishing NNS contacts at parties, concerts, or bars located outside of the university/language institute domain.

4.4.2. Focal informants' key activity fields

Similar to the questionnaire respondents, the majority of the focal informants' NS and NNS network members were established within the domain of the university or language institute. Also congruent with the questionnaire respondents, the most commonly reported activity fields for network development with NSs within the educational institution were integrated residences, clubs/associations, buddy programs, and integrated classes. Similarly, the majority of NNS network members established within the educational institute were drawn from their residence and classes.

With the exception of Oscar, each of the focal informants also engaged in activity fields outside of their educational institution. In regards to NSs, commonly reported activity fields for network development were homestay/home visit programs (Sophie, Angela, Phoebe, Jane) and community-level sport clubs/gyms (Carla, Jane), and Angela, Marie, and Phoebe also mentioned interacting with one or more NS network members they had initially met pre-study abroad. Additionally, Sophie established friendships with a number of NSs through a 'university tour' run by her language institute, Jane established friendships through her work, and Alex initially met the NSs with whom he spent the most time with through a random encounter at a car park (n=1) and at a nearby watch store (n=2). These findings therefore support Tanaka et al.'s (1994) argument that researchers investigating study abroad students' social networks need to consider ties both on and off campus.

4.5. Density

Although it was not feasible to calculate the absolute density of the informants' networks, it was possible to make a number of observations based upon their comments concerning interaction in the key activity fields discussed above, as well as network development in general.

4.5.1. Questionnaire respondents' network density

Overall, it appeared that the majority of questionnaire respondents managed to develop networks that were relatively dense in nature. This was especially observed with other study abroad peers. QR31, for example, mentioned that 'close bonds developed among program participants', and QR43 also referred to the 'bubble of the international crowd', which suggests considerable density. The vast majority of respondents mentioned interacting with their 'most important' NNS contacts in group activities or contexts that suggest group interaction (e.g. parties, socialisation at dorm), and thus also network density.

Likewise, the questionnaire respondents' comments also suggested that they managed to form dense clusters with NSs within activity fields such as residence, class, and clubs/associations. For example, two of QR17's most important NSs were member of her Ultimate Frisbee Club, and she also mentioned that her Ultimate Frisbee team took her 'everywhere *they* went really'. In other words, her team mates interacted as a highly dense group. Additionally, the fact that nine respondents noted that they initially met one or more of their three most important NSs through other friends or host family members also provides evidence of at least some density within their NS networks.

4.5.2. Focal informants' network density

As with the questionnaire respondents, the focal informants each managed to establish relatively dense networks. These were primarily formed in clusters around the key activity fields mentioned in Section 4.4.2, including residence, class, clubs/associations, buddy systems and other extracurricular activities. Both Phoebe and Jane indicated that most of the international students also got to know others' buddies as well, indicating that a highly dense network was formed between these two clusters. Additionally, it was apparent that many other study abroad peers also joined the international associations/clubs of which Jane, Marie, and Angela became members, indicative of another area of high density.

Other clusters of high density also occurred when network members introduced the focal informants to other friends. For example, Phoebe explained that she met a number of exchange students at another university through her NNS friend Jenny, who she had known prior to arriving in Japan. Phoebe interacted with the key people previously listed in Figure 5 approximately once a month, where they would also usually socialise with other local Japanese students who were around at the time. Moreover, she also met up with her NNS friend Josie's host family several times, and it is evident that both Josie and Jenny were facilitators of Phoebe's network development (cf. Kato and Tanibe 1997; Campbell 2011).

Similarly, both Marie and Angela also mentioned that their pre-study abroad contacts residing in Japan introduced them to their family and/or friends, creating additional areas of density. These cases therefore suggest the positive impact that pre-established networks can have on future network development, as it did for the questionnaire respondents as well.

Also in line with the questionnaire respondents, many of the focal informants reported one or more sparse ties in addition to areas of high density within their networks. In particular, it was shown in Figure 7 that the vast majority of Alex's NS network was composed of sparse ties. Perhaps more importantly, the majority of his time was spent in one-on-one interactions with these ties, which likely offered more opportunities for L2 use and feedback than group interactions do. On a related note, Angela and Carla also mentioned that they met up with a language exchange partner weekly; these network members also being sparse ties who offered important opportunities for individual language use and learning.

4.6. Multiplexity

Analysis of the various types of activities in which the informants engaged with their listed network members was used to make observations about their network multiplexity, or the types of role relations that they had with their network members. These are discussed below.

4.6.1. Questionnaire respondents' multiplexity

Examination of the types of activities in which the questionnaire respondents engaged with their most important contacts indicated that the vast majority were multiplex in nature. Perhaps this is not surprising, however, considering a relationship exists between multiplexity and tie strength (Boissevain 1974). With NNS contacts, role relations included dorm-mate, classmate, study partner, friend, club member and/or travel companion. Only one instance of a potentially uniplex tie with a NNS contact was identified, where QR64 listed his contact Terry as someone for whom he was 'working as a tutor, teaching him

German'. As he did not include any further activities, it therefore appears that the uniplex role relation was as tutor-students.

The majority of important contacts with NSs also appeared to be multiplex in nature, with roles such as roommate, host parent/sibling, club member, advisor, tutor, and/or friend. There were, however, considerably more instances of uniplex ties with NSs compared to NNS contacts. Examples included classmate, assigned buddy/tutor, and language exchange partner. This tendency for NS networks to be less multiplex than NNS networks is possibly related to the fact that the nature of study abroad programs inevitably leads to more overlap in international students' 'required meeting contexts' (cf. Allan 1979:138) such as classes and residence, thus presenting more opportunities for the development of role relations in different activity fields. It is, however, highly possible that a larger number of uniplex ties existed in the respondents' wider networks, especially with contacts that that were not included as 'three most important', for which greater detail was collected.

4.6.2. Focal informants' multiplexity

The focal informants supported the findings presented above, in that their networks were composed of both uniplex and multiplex ties. In particular, they indicated that while some ties remained uniplex as 'buddy', 'club/association member, 'tutor', 'host family', 'classmate' or 'co-resident', many of the reported ties evolved over time to be multiplex in nature, with the additional role of 'friend'. As mentioned in Chapter 2, Isabelli-García (2006) has also found that study abroad students' networks generally start as uniplex, and gradually increase in multiplexity. As with the questionnaire respondents, the focal informants' multiplex ties often resulted from overlap between several activity fields, where network members held role relations such as co-resident and classmate (all but Alex and Marie); co-resident and Japanese advisor (Jane); club member and English advisor (Oscar); or buddy and classmate (Phoebe). Highlighting the multiplexity of her relationships with her

four closer NNS friends who she called the 'clubbing group' (because they often went out clubbing together), Sophie claimed that they did 'all activities [together] except sleeping and class'. Analysis indicated that multiplex role relations included program peer, close friend and confidant, and travel companion, amongst others.

In contrast, Sophie indicated that the majority of her NS contacts remained uniplex in nature, such as home visit family or research participants. Sophie mentioned, however, that she only met each of her nine NS network members in person once or twice, and maintained contact via Facebook or email. Reflecting the findings of previous studies, therefore, it appears that the brevity of Sophie's program influenced her degree of engagement with the host culture and the quality of relationships she was able to establish (Day 1987; Allen 2002; Segalowitz & Freed 2004; Magnan & Back 2007). Nevertheless, it appears that she was able to establish at least one multiplex relationship with a NS, Wada, whose role relations included university tour guide, interviewee for a class project, language teacher, and eventually friend.

Although it was mentioned in Section 4.6.1 above that the questionnaire respondents reported more instances of uniplex ties with NSs compared to NNSs, this did not appear to be the case for the majority of focal informants. This finding may be related to the nature of the data collected, in that the focal informants' provided significantly more detail concerning their interaction with each of their individual network members. Supporting the hypothesis made above, however, the focal informants' data did indicate that participation in a larger number of shared activity fields with NSs often results in more multiplex relations with them.

4.7. General patterns of language use

Although patterns of language use and factors influencing language selection are discussed in depth in Chapter 6, this section aims to provide a brief overview of the general patterns of language use that occurred within the informants' social networks.

4.7.1. Questionnaire respondents' general patterns of language use

Drawing upon Nishimura's (1992) categories of bilingual speech, it was found that each of the questionnaire respondents utilised varying degrees of Predominantly Japanese, Predominantly English, and Mixed varieties within their Japanese-speaking networks while abroad. Additionally, a small number of respondents also utilised the 'Other' language variety, where languages included German, Indonesian and Russian.

While the respondents' language use differed with their various network members (to be discussed in Chapter 6), in general, reported patterns followed Coleman's (2013) concentric circle model, in that when interacting with local hosts (outer circle) the L2 (Japanese) was primarily used; when interacting with international students who did not share the same L1 (middle circle) either the L2 (Japanese) or English was used; and when interacting with co-nationals or other L1 speakers (inner circle), the L1 (English or other language) was primarily used. For example, QR10 commented: 'I tried to speak only Japanese to Japanese NSs and NNSs of English. With [native] English speakers it is hard to avoid English, but we occasionally used Japanese'.

However, as can be seen in Table 11 below, some activity fields and social contexts were more facilitative of Japanese use than others. Although environmental factors influencing patterns of language use while abroad will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 6, this table provides a basic overview of the questionnaire respondents' frequency of Japanese

use, with both NSs and NNSs, in five key contexts/activity fields: club activities, residence, work, social life, and classes other than Japanese language class.

Table 11 Questionnaire respondents' frequency of Japanese use in various contexts

Context	All of the time (5)	Most of the time (4)	Sometimes (3)	Infrequently (2)	Never (1)	N/A	Rating Average
Club Activities	20	14	5	2	0	27	4.27
Residence	13	19	19	15	1	1	3.42
Work	6	5	13	6	1	37	3.29
Social life	4	19	38	6	1	0	3.28
Classes other than Japanese language class	8	12	17	21	1	9	3.08
						Response rate: 68/126 (54%)	

Table 11 shows that although individual responses varied in range from using Japanese all of the time to never, on average, the 68 respondents who answered this question used Japanese at least sometimes in all of the contexts examined. The highest ranked activity field was club activities, where the vast majority of respondents who participated in such activities indicated that they used Japanese most or all of the time. Two respondents did, however, indicate that they only used Japanese infrequently in this activity field. As QR73 indicated, this is because some clubs, such as English Club, predominantly use English.

Although the next highest ranked activity field for frequency of Japanese use was residence, slightly more respondents indicated that they used Japanese sometimes or infrequently (n=34) compared to most or all of the time (n=32). This was primarily related to residency type, where respondents living in home stays or integrated dormitories claimed to use more Japanese than those living in residencies with exclusively international students. For example, while QR4 and QR77 both mentioned that they used Japanese 'all the time' with their host families, QR25 stated: 'I wish I could have used [Japanese] more at my residence but the other international students were not wanting to use it often'.

Interestingly, QR26 also commented that 'with friends from my University [I used] only English and with friends outside of my university only Japanese'. Further analysis of the respondents' data supported this claim, where interaction with network members established in non-university domains such as homestays and church was overwhelmingly conducted in Japanese, whereas interaction with network members met in class, at university residence, or on campus tended to incorporate more English use. As will be discussed in Chapter 6, this was likely due to a number of personal and situational factors that differed for network members inside versus outside university, such as interactants' Japanese/English proficiency, own or other's L2 investment, and, in instances of group interaction, composition and dominant language of the group.

Although the work domain is also considered a context outside of university, as can be seen in Table 11, frequency of Japanese use at work was more heavily weighted towards sometimes, infrequently, or never, though 11 of the 31 respondents for this question did claim to use Japanese all or most of the time. Language use at work obviously depended upon the type of work that the respondents engaged in. QR73, for example, explained 'I worked two jobs. One job required me to speak only in English, another had me speaking Japanese almost exclusively'. Anecdotal and personal observations indicate that for many native English speakers, the most common job while on exchange is English teaching, which may help explain the less frequent use of Japanese in the work domain.

Referring back to Table 11, it can be seen that when it came to the respondents' social life, just over half of them (n=38) claimed to use Japanese sometimes, just over one-third claimed to use it most (n=19) or all (n=4) of the time, and the remaining 10 percent claimed to use it infrequently (n=6) or never (n=1). As the findings at the start of this section suggest, more frequent interaction with NSs usually resulted in more frequent Japanese use,

whereas more frequent interaction with other international students generally resulted in more frequent English use in the respondent's overall social interaction. Of the respondents who indicated that they used Japanese all of the time in their social life, QR30 stated:

> I think I can count on one hand the number of times I spoke English, even briefly. I made a concerted effort to speak only Japanese and create an environment in which I could accomplish this.

Similarly, QR63, who claimed to use Japanese most of the time, commented: 'I made it a point to try and avoid English at all cost when interacting out of class'. In other words, these informants appeared to be particularly invested in using only Japanese throughout the duration of their programs. This will be further discussed in Chapter 6.

In contrast, the majority of informants who indicated that they used Japanese infrequently or never in their social life attributed this to limited opportunities to interact with NSs, influenced by a range of environmental and situational factors. QR31, for example, experienced 'relative isolation from native Japanese speakers', and QR34 also mentioned that 'there was a divide between the internationals and the local students'. A number of other personal factors influencing degree of Japanese usage, such as shyness, lack of proficiency, and others' disinclination to use Japanese were also mentioned.

Finally, it was shown in Table 11 above that classes other than language class ranked lowest in terms of frequency of Japanese use. The variance in individual answers greatly depended upon whether classes were taught in Japanese or not. For example, of the 22 respondents who indicated that they infrequently or never used Japanese in class, the vast majority (20) did not participate in any non-language classes taught in Japanese or Japanese and English. As my previous research (Campbell 2011) found, although regular classes for both local and international students that are taught in English may enhance opportunities for network

development with NSs, they do not always result in opportunities for Japanese use, as local students taking such classes are usually invested in learning English.

4.7.2. Focal informants' general patterns of language use

The focal informants' primary language use patterns within each of their key activity fields or groups, as well as with their key persons, were highlighted in the diagrams in Section 4.2. As with the questionnaire respondents, their reported patterns also generally followed Coleman's (2013) concentric circle model, in that they tended to use Japanese with NSs, the L1 (English or, in Marie's case, French) with conationals or other L1 speakers, and English or Japanese with all other international students. More specifically, Phoebe mentioned that she would use the Predominantly Japanese variety with Japanese and other Asian network members, and the Predominantly English variety with other Western (predominantly native English-speaking) network members. Similarly, Sophie and Angela also claimed that with NNSs, they would use the Predominantly Japanese variety with those who did not have a functional fluency in English, and the Predominantly English variety with the rest.

Marie was an exception to this trend, in that although she claimed to use the Predominantly English or Predominantly Other (French) language varieties with NNS network members, in contrast to the other focal informants, she claimed to use a combination of the Predominantly Japanese, Predominantly English, Predominantly Other (French), and Mixed language varieties with NS network members. In particular, although she tended to use the Predominantly Japanese variety with NSs outside of her university, she used the three other language varieties with contacts established inside of the university. While the other focal informants primarily interacted with their NS contacts in specific, organised activity fields (e.g. at clubs, residence), Marie did not. As discussed below, key activity fields tend to have an established, dominant base language, which Marie did not experience with her NS

contacts (though she did with NNSs). This may have been one factor influencing her more varied language use with them.

Referring back to the visual representations of the focal informants' networks in Section 4.2, it was shown that some activity fields were more conducive for Japanese use than others. In line with the data provided by the questionnaire respondents, the focal informants who participated in club activities also indicated that the Predominantly Japanese variety was used in this activity field most of the time. Such activities were particularly important for Carla, as her engagement at a local gym and an Aikido Club outside of university offered her main opportunities for Japanese use. Although she did not develop any friendships with these people, or have interaction outside of the activities, she was thankful for this opportunity. Other activity fields identified by the focal informants as particularly facilitative of Japanese use were buddy programs (Jane & Phoebe), language exchange (Carla & Angela), home visits (Sophie, Angela, Phoebe & Jane) and classes with both local and international students (Angela & Phoebe).

As found in previous studies, in the majority of cases, dormitories exclusively for international students were not facilitative of Japanese use, as English tended to be used as the lingua franca (Rivers 1998; Mendelson 2004; Tanaka 2007; Morofushi 2008). However, as mentioned above, some instances of Japanese use were identified with dorm-mates who were not L1 English speakers. Alternatively, it was also shown in Alex's network diagram (cf. Figure 7) that he employed the Other or Mixed language varieties (Chinese, Korean, Japanese) with non-English speakers.

Jane was the only focal informant who claimed to use the Predominantly Japanese variety with the vast majority of other residents in her dormitory. As will be discussed in the

chapters to follow, this was because her dormitory also housed Japanese 'advisors' who were particularly interested in engaging with international students (though were not necessarily proficient in English). In contrast, although Oscar also lived in an integrated dormitory, he did not claim to interact with any NSs other than the ones living in his apartment, and hence the dominant language of his interaction in this activity field was English.

Finally, Jane was the only focal informant who mentioned engaging in any work during her study abroad period. She explained that although she used English with her English conversation class students when she held classes for them, she used Japanese with them outside of class. Thus, her language use with them was classified as Mixed.

4.8. Frequency of interaction

Although environmental factors influencing frequency of interaction and network development are discussed in greater detail in the following chapter, this section aims to provide a more general overview of general frequency of interaction, and its relationship with activity fields discussed in Section 4.4 above. As the questionnaire respondents' frequency of interaction with their network members was not collected, this section focuses on the focal informants' data.

Overall, it was found that the activity fields that facilitated the most frequent contact with NS and/or NNS network members were residences and classes. As indicated in the network diagrams presented in Section 4.2, the vast majority of focal informants claimed to have daily contact with others residing in their residence. The two exceptions were Marie and Alex, who claimed to primarily only have incidental interaction if they met other residents in passing. Similarly, although Oscar explained that he had daily contact with those network

members sharing his same apartment, the majority of interaction with others living in the dormitory was in-between classes or 'every few weekends'.

Although frequency of interaction with classmates who were also co-residents was therefore also daily, interaction with classmates who did not share the same residence generally occurred slightly less, but at least once a week. Again, Alex was an exception, because as will be shown in the following chapter, he received permission not to attend classes. He did indicate, however, that he caught up with other NNS students and his university-appointed *senpai* (senior student) from his research program approximately once a month.

It was also found that participation in clubs or associations also facilitated at least weekly interaction, where it is usually expected that members will attend regularly structured activities or events. In particular, Oscar, who was one of the few focal informants who claimed to have more interaction with NSs compared to NNSs, attributed this outcome to his club participation. He explained:

> I didn't really see them [international students] that often. Uni[versity] would finish and I would, 5 days, other than Wednesday I would have Aikido and so I would run straight to Aikido. And then after that… most nights we'd also go to dinner… So most of the time life was just like Aikido Club, and I also eventually joined a Music club as well (Oscar, Initial Interview).

Each of the above-mentioned activity fields, namely residence, classes and clubs, presents a 'required meeting context', where individuals are required to interact on a regular basis. As discussed in Chapter 2, such enforced interaction affects both the emergence of social relationships, as well as with whom they are likely to be established (e.g. Mollenhorst, Völker & Flap 2008).

Importantly, although Sophie shared required meeting contexts with NNSs, as mentioned in Section 4.3.2, she did not share any with NSs. Although she mentioned that the university

tours and home visit program organised by her language institute facilitated the establishment of relationships, she mentioned that if she were to make any recommendations for her programs' improvement, 'it would be to increase interaction with Japanese people… maybe structure events and things like that'. Similar to the comment given at the start of this chapter from QR32, who also attended a language institute, Sophie further explained:

> At the Centre here you're with people from SO many different cultural backgrounds, which is great. But your interaction with Japanese people is SO small. You're not having lunch or dinner with them, and that's a big thing for Japanese use (Sophie, Initial Interview).

These findings therefore suggest the importance of integrated required meeting contexts organised by the host institution in order to promote frequency of interaction with NSs.

In addition to Oscar, the other focal informant who claimed to have more frequent interaction with NSs compared to NNSs was Alex. In contrast to the findings above, however, Alex's frequency of interaction was not facilitated by a shared context, but by his own initiative to engage in interactions with individual NSs. In particular, he commented that while he spent most mornings conversing with the boss (Tenchō) and employee (Japanese Mama) at a nearby watch store, or with two administrative staff at his university's International Centre, most afternoons and weekends were spent with his best friend Kenji, traveling and doing other various activities.

4.9. Summary

Although this chapter has shown that the nature of the networks during study abroad varied from informant to informant, some more common trends could also be observed. Firstly, it was found that both the questionnaire respondents and focal informants managed to establish networks with NSs and NNSs, both within and outside their educational institutions. While the majority of informants indicated that their networks contained more

NNSs than NSs, instances of a larger number of NS contacts were observed in both the questionnaire respondents' and focal informants' data. The size of NS and NNS networks, however, did seem to be related, with those having less of one tending to have less of the other as well. The majority of network members were established within the domain of the informants' educational institutions, through activity fields such as residences, classes, buddy programs and clubs or associations. Additionally, a smaller number of primarily NS contacts were also established outside of the educational institution, through participation in homestays and non-university-related extracurricular activities.

Although the questionnaire respondents' frequency of contact with their network members was not examined, the focal informants' data indicated that in the majority of cases, interaction was more frequent with network members in domains within, as opposed to outside of the educational institutes. Engagement in activity fields such as those mentioned above resulted in highly dense clusters within the networks. However, a number of the informants' networks also incorporated one or more sparse ties. Many relationships were multiplex in nature, with role relations such as classmate, dorm-mate, friend, tutor and/or club member, but the focal informants' data also pointed to the existence of a number of uniplex ties.

While this chapter has alluded to some of the factors influencing the informants' patterns of interaction, network development, and language selection, these will now be discussed in greater detail in Chapters 5 and 6.

5. FACTORS INFLUENCING INTERACTION AND NETWORK DEVELOPMENT/ MAINTENANCE DURING STUDY ABROAD

My advice would be 'ichi-go ichi-e'[7]. Like you've got once chance, one opportunity, make the most of it. Be the person who always says yes – Jane

5.1. Introduction

The above quote from Jane reflects a widespread view that study abroad presents a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to live and be immersed in the TL country. As shown in the previous chapter, Jane was one of the few focal informants in this study who established more NS than NNS network members while abroad. She primarily attributed this to the fact that she was proactive: 'the person who always say yes'. As discussed in Chapter 2, however, individuals' networks are not only the results of individuals' choices, but also of the social contexts in which they find themselves (Fischer et al. 1977).

This chapter provides an examination of the factors influencing the informants' interaction and network development and/or maintenance with Japanese speakers during study abroad. In contrast to the previous chapter, data collected from the questionnaire respondents and focal informants is discussed simultaneously. Influential factors have been classified and are discussed according to Fehr's (1996; 2000) typology of factors influencing friendships. Section 5.2 examines environmental and situational factors, Section 5.3 examines personal factors, and Section 5.4 examines dyadic factors.

5.2. Environmental and situational factors

As discussed in Chapters 2 and 3, environmental and situational factors are responsible for bringing two or more individuals into physical proximity, establishing ground for interaction and potential network development and/or maintenance. Socialisation in environments where a large number of Japanese speakers are present obviously increases

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[7] *'ichi-go ichi-e'* is a Japanese proverb translated as 'once-in-a-lifetime-encounter'.

proximity, thus enhancing opportunities for interaction and network development/ maintenance. This is in line with theories of relational maintenance, which argue that spending time together through routine events and places facilitates relational maintenance (Dindia & Baxter 1987; Canary & Stafford 1994). In the sections below, five environmental factors that offer such 'required meeting contexts' are discussed: residence, classes, buddy systems, clubs and homestay/home visit programs. Although discussion is based around these environmental factors, several important situational factors, such as duration of program, frequency of exposure and availability, are also integrated throughout.

5.2.1. Residence

Consistent with previous research (Yokota & Tanaka 2002; Kudo & Simkin 2003; Ujitani 2006), place of residence was found to be a particularly important domain for social interaction and network development in this study. Of the focal informants, Marie, Angela, Carla, Phoebe, Alex and Sophie lived in international student exclusive dormitories, Jane lived in a dormitory that also housed five Japanese local student 'advisors', and Oscar lived in an apartment complex for both international and Japanese students. As shown in Table 12 below, international student dormitories, host families and integrated dormitories were the most common type of residential type for the questionnaire respondents, though a range of other residence types also existed[8].

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[8] 'Other' types of residence included guesthouse for Japanese and foreigners, staying in Japanese temples with students and instructors, and a hotel for program participants.

Table 12 Questionnaire respondents' residence type during study abroad

Residence type	Response count	Response percent
I lived in an international student dormitory	45	39.5%
I lived with a host family	36	31.6%
I lived in a student dormitory for both local and international students	28	24.6%
I lived alone	8	7.0%
I lived in an apartment with local Japanese and other foreigners	7	6.1%
I lived in an apartment with other foreigners	5	4.4%
Other (please specify)	5	4.4%
I lived in an apartment with local Japanese	3	2.6%
Response rate: 114/126 (90%)		

All of the focal informants and a number of questionnaire respondents indicated that they were in contact with other residents on a frequent basis, though the degree of planned (as opposed to incidental) interaction and friendship development differed between each of the informants, and for each of the informants and other residents. Each of the focal informants mentioned being on friendly terms with all other residents, socialising in common areas and at frequent parties. Phoebe commented:

> Social gatherings are really easy to organise and the way the dorm is set up, the kitchen is pretty much where people hang out. So, people just, there's the communal kitchen and communal bathrooms and things like that so it's very much centered around community which I personally quite like (Phoebe, Initial Interview).

In particular, Phoebe favored the 'closeness of having a small dorm', which meant that she got to 'know everyone very well'. Similarly, Jane claimed to form a 'really close bond' with the people she lived with, defining them as her *sekai kazoku* (sic)(world family). Interestingly, the term 'family' was also used by two of Utijani's (2006) participants when describing the kinds of relationships they formed at an integrated International House in Japan, which further emphasises the closeness of bonds formed in such an environment. When listing their three most important contacts during study abroad, a number of questionnaire respondents also included people they resided with at their dormitories: seven included one or more NSs, and 25 included one or more NNSs.

Angela and Sophie claimed that they were friends with everyone in their dormitories, but had smaller circles of friends with whom they spent significantly more time. Marie, on the other hand, mentioned that she did not form many close relationships in her dormitory. She stated that the closer friends with whom she spent most of her time lived in other student dormitories, and that although she occasionally socialised with people who lived in her same dormitory, she 'wouldn't actually try to do things with them'.

Similarly, Oscar did not have much planned contact with the other residents in his apartment complex outside of parties. He claimed that 'I knew them and they knew me', but that he would not consider them as friends. This may be related to the fact that while Angela, Phoebe, Sophie and Jane were participating in specific exchange programs at institutions with a relatively small number of international students, Marie and Oscar studied at much larger institutions with significantly more international students, and were not members of a particular program. This meant that international students resided in a number of different buildings, and did not necessarily know each other outside of the dormitory setting. Indeed, several other studies have also found that university size is another factor influencing degree of intercultural contact (Selltiz, Hopson & Cook 1956; Morofushi 2008; Campbell 2011).

As previously mentioned, Jane, Oscar and 74 questionnaire respondents shared their accommodation with local Japanese, an advantage that Angela, Phoebe, Alex, Sophie and QR32 did not have, but all mentioned desiring. Reflecting the findings of Forsey et al. (2012), QR32 stated that 'the situation of being in an international dorm greatly limited contact [to being] with foreigners', and suggested that living together was the best way to 'force' interaction with NSs. Although Phoebe 'loved' her international dormitory life, she also believed that living with Japanese students 'would definitely help to enhance deeper

relationship with Japanese people, because you'd see them on a regular basis'. Indeed, QR41 indicated that 'the main Japanese friends [she] made were linked to the dormitories', and that because she 'had so many…[she] wasn't very proactive' in establishing networks outside of this context. Jane also mentioned that the Japanese people with whom she had the largest degree of interaction and formed the closest bonds with were those who resided in her dormitory.

A noteworthy point here, however, is that the Japanese residing in Jane's dormitory were not just students, but also held the role of 'advisors', receiving reduced fees for on-campus accommodation in exchange for assisting the international students. Jane explained:

> They had to go through applications and interviews to live there, and they only picked five students each semester. So these people, one of them wanted to go on an exchange to America, so they had an interest in us as well, so that made it a lot easier (Jane, Initial Interview).

This was in stark contrast to QR58's experience, recounted as follows:

> Being in an international dorm you would think the blend of NSs and NNSs would make for a greater cohesion between all the cultures, but I found that the natives mostly ignored us or were too shy. Also they were awful roommates. The NNSs were far more friendly and easier to relate to.

It therefore appears that the appointment of advisors such as at Jane's dormitory may be beneficial for enhancing intercultural integration, as the competitive application process ensures that only local students eager to interact with internationals are accepted. Thus, as some previous studies (Yokota & Tanaka 1992; Tanaka 2007; Campbell 2011) have also indicated, although integrated dormitories increase the potential for sojourner-host contact, they do not necessarily lead to the development of sojourner-host friendships.

Finally, although 36 questionnaire respondents indicated that they lived with a host family for the duration of their program, only nine of them provided any data concerning how this

influenced interaction and network development. Eight of these respondents included host family members in their lists of three most important NSs during study abroad, and one of them mentioned that they became close friends with two additional NSs who were introduced by their host family. Although these cases therefore suggest a positive impact of homestays on network development, QR75 had a different experience, commenting:

> Doing a homestay was helpful in terms of language practice, but possibly detrimental in terms of lasting friendships. My friends who stayed in the dorm for the semester made more lasting friendships with students (both NSs and NNSs). My homestay was far from campus and it made interacting with students kind of difficult. Living in a dorm with native speaking students would have made this easier.

Although Castañeda & Zirger (2011) have found that homestay families may enhance learners' network development by actively introducing them to relatives, friends, and other members of the wider community, this did not appear to be the case for QR75 or for 34 of the other questionnaire respondents who lived in homestays, at least not in terms of 'lasting' or 'important' friendships. Although the respondents did not state any reasons for this, lack of secondary network development could be due to a number of factors related to the informants, their host families, location of placement, duration of stay, and so on.

As the literature indicates, however, homestays can provide students with numerous linguistic, cultural, and psychological benefits (Knight & Schmidt-Rinehart 2002; Magnan & Back 2007; Kinginger 2008; Hernandez 2010). One possible means of promoting both the friendships with local students that QR75 desired in combination with local families is through short-term homestay or home visit programs, while permanently residing in other accommodation types.

During their time abroad, Phoebe, Jane, Sophie, and Angela were each involved in such programs, and indicated that they provide international students with an important insight to Japanese family life, and offer an opportunity to expand Japanese networks outside of the

university/language institute setting. Jane, for example, became involved in the local City Council's home visit program, where she met up with the same family every fortnight. The opportunity to have a host family was 'special' to Jane, and she explained that:

> I sort of gained an opportunity to see a "real" Japanese house. I remember the first time I went inside a Japanese person's house, I was so honored. Because Japanese people don't usually invite people over as hosts (Jane, Initial Interview).

Angela participated in a home visit program organized by her university, as well as two independent homestay programs arranged during her vacations, that each lasted one or two weeks. Each of these offered different experiences, and also exposed her to 'behind the scenes' aspects of Japanese family life.

The family that Phoebe got to know was originally her friend Josie's host family, who adopted her as an additional (unofficial) host child. Although she only saw the family three times in total, this exposed her to a more local experience. She explained: 'We went to a really small festival that seemed to be just local people from their area, and that was great to see, get a feel for the proper atmosphere of a proper, local festival'.

For Sophie, whose primary interaction was with other international students, the home visit experience provided important exposure to natural Japanese language. Although she only met this family twice in person, she continued to have contact with them via email, and mentioned that their persistent use of local dialect was a significant experience for her, as classes are usually taught in standard Japanese.

5.2.2. Classes

The second key environmental/situational factor identified as influencing interaction and network development while abroad is the type of classes that students enrolled in. As described in Engle and Engle (2003), study abroad programs may offer TL instruction as well as 'subject-matter' or cultural classes taught in English and/or the L2. Table 13 below

indicates the variety of classes in which the questionnaire respondents in this study participated.

Table 13 Questionnaire respondents' class type during study abroad

Class type	Response count	Response percentage
Japanese language classes with other international students	103	90.4%
Other classes taught in English with international and local students	49	43.0%
Other classes taught in English with other international students	46	40.4%
Other classes taught in Japanese with international and local students	30	26.3%
Other classes taught in Japanese with other international students	27	23.7%
Other classes taught in both English and Japanese with international and local students	22	19.3%
Other classes taught in both English and Japanese with other international students	20	17.5%
Other (please specify)	12	10.5%
Response rate: 114/126 (90%)		

It can be seen that the majority (90%) of respondents were enrolled in Japanese language classes with other international students, and the two other most common classes were those taught in English, with international and/or local students. In contrast, other content classes taught in at least some degree of Japanese were enrolled in by 18-26% of respondents, and 11% of respondents listed other class types such as those with local students taught in other languages (French, German, Chinese), seminars and conferences (language was not specified), and Japanese classes specifically for students from one of the respondents' home university.

Only two of the questionnaire respondents specifically commented on the impact of class type on their patterns of interaction and network development, and both suggested the need for integrated classes. QR31 stated:

> Overall, although I was happy with my choice of program and thus deepened knowledge of Japanese religions, I was disappointed with the (1) lack of Japanese language instruction, and thus (2) relative isolation from native Japanese speakers. In terms of network development, however, close bonds developed among [NNS] program participants.

Similarly, QR32 mentioned that classes with NSs would 'force' them together and better facilitate interaction. While many of the focal informants indicated that integrated classes did indeed enhance interaction, comments concerning their success in promoting network development were mixed.

Each of the focal informants were, at least initially, enrolled in Japanese language classes, and Phoebe, Oscar, Jane, Carla and Angela were each enrolled in at least one class that was attended by both international and local Japanese students. The classes that Phoebe and Angela took were taught in English, Oscar and Jane's were taught in Japanese, while Carla attended a selection taught in either Japanese or English. Phoebe mentioned that although her classes were taught in English, they had a positive impact on her network development with NSs, as well as her Japanese language acquisition. She explained:

> The whole of the student population can take the classes, so you get to meet lots of people. And pretty much every class is based around class discussion where you're put into groups with Japanese people (Phoebe, Initial Interview).

Moreover, she explained that 'the common bonding thing of having shared work… it's definitely helped because it gives us a regular time to meet up and hang out afterwards'. Although she made one friend from a different campus, she indicated that 'it does tend to be mostly buddies in the classes, because they're the ones who have the biggest interest in English and they're all the international subjects as well'.

Jane had a similar experience, in that although her integrated Intercultural Communications class was 'really awesome' because Japanese students and exchange students from other universities took it as well, she primarily socialised with the other exchange students and Japanese people from her dormitory, because the teacher put them into groups together. While there were other friendly classmates, she indicated they did not ever meet socially, and that she 'didn't make any lasting friendships out of the class'. Likewise, Carla indicated

that although the Japanese students who took her English-medium classes 'wanted to practice their English', she did not establish any friendships with them.

In terms of L2 acquisition, Phoebe mentioned that despite the English-medium of class instruction, informal discussions usually ended up being in Japanese, which aided her acquisition of Japanese relevant to her areas of study. This reiterates Lassegard's (2006) and Morita's (2012) findings that even in English-medium classes, Japanese students prefer to use Japanese for class discussions. Although this is viewed negatively concerning English language education in Japan, for Phoebe, it was beneficial, and she mentioned the satisfaction of being able to apply newly acquired Japanese knowledge outside of the classroom, giving the example of being able to expand her *'jikoshōkai'* (self-introduction) beyond her previous 'very superficial' version.

On the other hand, although Angela mentioned establishing two friendships with local Japanese in her cultural class taught in English, she expressed great disappointment in the fact that they were not encouraged to take a class that was taught entirely in Japanese. She continued by explaining:

> I did sit in on a Law lecture that related to my studies back here [in Australia]. But I struggled 'cause it was Japanese law. But to do that, at least you understand what studying in university is like for a Japanese person. And I was shocked because most of them there would sleep, and that would be considered extremely rude in Australia, but it was quite different there (Angela, Initial Interview).

This comment highlights the importance of exposing study abroad students to authentic Japanese lectures not only for linguistic learning, but also for increasing cultural competence.

Reiterating the findings of Kato and Tanibe (1997), Whitworth (2006), and Zappa (2007),

however, Oscar and Carla both found that 'regular' classes with local students, taught in Japanese, were not facilitative of friendship development. Oscar stated: 'I only took one Japanese class, which was Judo, a sports class, once a week but I didn't really make friends with them. I just sort of talked to them and then went back home. That was it'.

Similarly, although Carla had 'fond memories' or learning Latin in Japanese with local students, she never interacted with them outside of class. As Zappa (2007:202) has suggested, because local students already have established groups of friends, they may be less motivated to expand these to include newcomer study abroad students. Comparing Oscar's experience to that of Jane, Angela and Phoebe, however, it appears that factors such as the language of instruction and content of integrated courses may also impact network development potential, where classes taught in English or concerning intercultural communication are likely to attract a larger degree of students interested in establishing intercultural contacts.

In contrast to the six focal informants discussed above, Sophie and Marie's classes were all exclusively for international students. They both indicated that although this type of arrangement was facilitative of their language acquisition, if given the choice, they would have opted to take classes that allowed contact with local Japanese students. Although they were not regular classmates, Marie did mention that she became friends with some Japanese students who attended one of her classes on odd occasions to help out, and started dating one after a period of time. Sophie, on the other hand, was required to interview students from a number of different universities as part of one of her classes. She explained that without this opportunity, her 'interaction with Japanese people would be so:: limited', as this became her primary context for network development. In addition to two university tours, Sophie was also required to participate in a number of field trips to various places

around Japan. Reflecting the findings of Brockbank (2011), although these field trips appeared to facilitate knowledge of Japan and its culture, time spent traveling with study abroad peers also likely impeded opportunities for friendship development with locals.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, Alex, who was a research student as opposed to a regular 'exchange student', was an exception when it came to classes, in that he received permission from his teachers not to attend them. He explained:

> My teacher there, they asked me why wasn't I going to class. And I told them that I meet that Japanese guy [Kenji], and traveled with him a lot and spoke Japanese with him. And they could tell that my Japanese was improving a lot. So they said that because my Japanese was improving a lot, and that was the main point of the exchange, I didn't have to come to class, it was okay. If I was getting enough Japanese interaction outside of class, because they said a lot of foreign students just use English or whatever language, which is why they have to come to class (Alex, Initial Interview).

Alex further explained that he found daily interaction with this friend more interesting than class content, and more facilitative of language acquisition. Moreover, by spending basically the whole day together most days of the week, extended interaction also aided friendship development, with Alex describing Kenji as his 'best friend'.

5.2.3. Buddy systems

Another important environmental/situational factor influencing interaction and network development with NSs was the implementation of 'buddy' or 'tutor' programs, where international students were paired up with local Japanese students from the commencement of their programs. Of the focal informants, Jane, Phoebe, Alex, Carla and Angela mentioned participating in such a program, as did 18 of the questionnaire respondents. Phoebe explained that at her university, each of the international students had a designated buddy, who was there to help them ease in to life in Japan, assisting with phone accounts and other initial requirements. Alex gave a similar description, and Carla explained that her university 'did a really good job of matching us up with students who had similar tastes and interests'

based upon information students provided before arriving in Japan. Angela and Phoebe had only praise for the buddy systems available to them, claiming that they greatly aided the development of friendships with local students. Referring back to the network diagrams in Section 4.2, it was shown in Figure 6 that Angela's assigned buddy, Nari, was the link between Angela, the Hōkei Connection, and the International Association, and Figure 5 indicated that the vast majority of Phoebe's key Japanese contacts were located within the Buddy Community.

Buddy programs appeared to be particularly beneficial for network development at the beginning of the study abroad programs. Phoebe explained:

> In the beginning it was almost like, not an obligation, but an EXCUSE to meet with Japanese people. You know like 'we're organising this thing so let's hang out', we didn't have to wait for getting to know someone and then the 'lets hang out now' period. So it was an immediate... access to Japanese people (Phoebe, Initial Interview).

Phoebe was aware of the buddy system before leaving for Japan, and stated that 'it was really good knowing that there'd be definite Japanese contacts, that if you want to you can say 'let's meet up, let's do this''. After arriving, however, she mentioned being considerably surprised by the whole 'buddy community' that existed, stating that 'because we have a lot of organised gatherings, I've made friends with other people's buddies as well'. Jane, QR22 and QR61 also mentioned establishing friendships with other peoples' buddies, reinforcing previous findings that such programs can offer an effective starting point for network development (Murakami 2005; Campbell 2011).

As stated by Jane, however, the success of buddy programs is 'basically down to the individuals you get paired with'. Whilst she claimed to become very close with one of her own two designated buddies, she mentioned that she hardly even spoke to her other buddy, who was four years younger than her and already had a well-established social circle. In

other words, the lack of relational development with this buddy was possibly due to their lack of availability, as well as the dyadic factor of individual dis/similarity (cf. Section 5.4.1).

Alex had a similar experience to Jane, explaining that his buddy

> …was like an *ikemen* (good looking guy), handsome and popular, really tall. But we only met once or twice, because he was busy doing his own stuff, and once he found out my Japanese was pretty good, he said 'oh your Japanese is fine you don't need my help' (Alex, Initial Interview).

Likewise, Carla explained that although she met up with her buddy once a week for a chat and thought that she was 'sweet', she struggled to become friends with her and 'never kind of just got absorbed into a wider network of friends'. Alex also expressed that he 'probably would have been a lot happier if maybe [the buddy] could have introduced some people to me as well'. Jane also believed that in order to really strengthen buddy programs, more efficient organisation was necessary:

> I think they should have done some group activities at first instead of just putting everyone in a room and saying 'this is your buddy and this is your buddy go do stuff'. The first activity should have been there (Jane, Initial Interview).

Phoebe's university had already implemented such strategies, where students were initially introduced to their buddies at a welcoming barbeque. She stated that this turned into a *nomikai* (drinking party), and was 'really fun'.

5.2.4. Duration of program

Another important program variable found to influence degree of network development was duration of program. Reflecting the findings of previous studies (Allen 2002; Segalowitz & Freed 2004; Magnan & Back 2007; Brockbank 2011), it was found that short-term programs of four months or less limited informants' opportunities for interaction and development of more meaningful relationships with NSs. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Sophie established considerably fewer NS network members than the other focal informants during

her study abroad program. Although she did not explicitly state that duration of program was an influential factor, she put it down to 'environmental circumstances' of her six-week program at a language institute. Although she exchanged Facebook details with a number of students she met on a tour of a university, she mentioned that due to her busy study and field-trip schedule, it was only in the final week after her classes had finished that she was able to 'go out and meet Japanese people and catch up with people [sh]e'd met over the program at other universities'. Perhaps if her program had been longer she would have had more opportunities for the more frequent and prolonged contact that is particularly important for establishing friendships with Japanese people (Neustupný 1987; Burns 1996; Pearson-Evans 2006; Campbell 2011).

Indeed, some questionnaire respondents indicated that even a program of several months duration limited the quality of relationships established with NSs. QR27, for example, believed that a program longer than four months would have resulted in 'more long-standing and meaningful relationships with people that didn't speak English'. Similarly, QR39, whose program was also of four months duration, commented:

> If I had stayed for a year, the answers I have given to this survey would be completely, 100%, different. The short length of stay and my superficial language abilities made it difficult to make deep, enduring friendships with NNSs.

5.2.5. Clubs, associations and other activities

Jane, Oscar, Marie, Angela, and 13 questionnaire respondents mentioned being involved in student clubs or circles during their study abroad period. Reflecting the findings of previous studies (e.g. Burns 1996; Kato & Tanibe 1997; Morofushi 2008; Campbell 2011; Dewey et al. 2013), this positively influenced their opportunities for interaction and network development with both NSs and NNSs. For example, QR35 commented:

> I think I was lucky enough to go to a university with not one, but three societies dedicated to exchange students, both incoming and outgoing. Club activities through them really helped the short-term exchange students to meet a lot of people and form friendships.

QR17 also explained that because the members of her Ultimate Frisbee team 'took [her] everywhere they went' in addition to the twice-weekly practice, this 'gave [her] an advantage over [her] American classmates who didn't have much social life outside of our other American friends'. On the other hand, retrospectively realising the benefits of joining a club, two questionnaire respondents indicated regret in not doing so. QR4 commented: 'for some reason I decided not to join a club. I have no idea why, but I think if I had, I probably could have made more friends/network connections that would have lasted longer'.

A number of focal informants also indicated that joining clubs positively influenced their understanding of Japanese language, society, culture, and ways of thinking. This is reflected in the following excerpt from an interview with Angela, who joined one of her universities dance clubs:

> I got a better insight into how they think, you know in a group sense,
> which I don't know that others had, because they wouldn't understand that had they
> not joined a club. It teaches you how society and hierarchy works here. So I think
> that was a really big thing for me. How things work in groups, which you wouldn't
> get through the classes we had or anything else (Angela, Initial Interview).

Oscar also reflected on how his participation in the Aikido and Music clubs enhanced his sociocultural knowledge. He mentioned that it was 'ridiculous' how dedicated members of the Aikido and Music clubs were to their club activities, and how they would apologise profusely if they were unable to attend, even for legitimate reasons such as illness.

Moreover, Oscar's participation in the Aikido club, which had a very small number of members, gave him first-hand experience of *senpai-kōhai* (senior-junior) relations. When he first joined, he held the role of *kōhai*, but then in second semester, he became *senpai* to the new members. He explained that this was an 'interesting experience [because he] got to experience both'. He continued, stating that:

> Because I was only 1st year in Martial Arts, with the other first years - I had to clean the *dōjyō* (training hall) every time. I'd always had to do stuff for the *senpai* (seniors) like get them their water and stuff. But then when we upgraded the level, we just saw how first years had to do it. It was interesting. There was one particular girl in first year who always spoke *keigo* (honorifics) to me. Like properly *~irassharu* (honorific 'to be', 'to go/come'), *nani o irasshatteimasu ka* (honorific 'what are you doing'). It was really weird… Just the way it creates a gap is incredible (Oscar, Initial Interview).

These experiences of Angela and Oscar who participated in predominantly Japanese student oriented clubs, however, interestingly contrast with those of Jane and Marie who joined their universities' International Associations. According to both of these informants, such associations were primarily composed of local students who had an interest in things such as internationalisation, going overseas, and making international friends. Although they both managed to establish some friendships with local students through attending events, they mentioned an underlying vibe that exposed the motivation behind some Japanese students' contact with foreigners. In particular, Jane explained the 'Catch 22' that she experienced, where in order to promote friendship development 'it helps if they have an interest in Western culture or are going on exchange or something like that… [however]… there's a danger in that too, because sometimes all they see is the foreigner'. She continued, commenting:

> I got stuck in a trap a few times with a couple of people there because they just liked me for the fact that I was blonde... And a lot of the other exchange students stopped going to a lot of the events after a while because that's what they felt like, like the token foreigner (Jane, Initial Interview).

Although she was disheartened by this realisation, she had also established 'some real friends' in the association, so continued to go to their events, and still enjoyed it.

Marie, on the other hand, stopped attending her university's International Association after a few months, when she realised that the reason behind many male students' memberships was that they 'wanted to try and get a *gaijin* (foreigner) girlfriend'. She did, however, continue to meet several friends she initially made there outside of the association, claiming

that 'we didn't need it to have a good time'. The issue of 'foreigner appearance' is clearly an important factor influencing network development in Japan, and will be further discussed in Section 5.3 as a personal factor.

Finally, a small number of informants also mentioned attending social activities outside of their host institutions, which, in line with the findings of Dewey et al. (2013), helped foster interaction and/or network development with NSs of wider demographics than those inside host institutions. As previously discussed, a number of focal informants participated in homestay or home visit programs, which could be considered such an activity. Additionally, Carla joined a local gym and attended an Aikido Dojo in Shinjuku, which she found more welcoming compared to those offered by the university. As mentioned in Section 4.7.2, these activities provided her the most opportunities for interacting with NSs; however, she further explained that 'it was never anything that happened outside of the class… generally people were polite and they were friendly, but they were NEVER open and would never invite you out for anything'. In contrast, Jane attended the local city Karate Club, and commented:

> It was nice to have a circle of friends outside of university entirely… It was good to get an outside-of-university perspective. 'Cause when you worked there, lived there and you learned there it was kind of trapped in the bubble thing, so that got me out (Jane, Initial Interview).

Similarly, QR45 stated: 'Because of church, I had more opportunities to meet the locals and made friends with the Japanese. I don't think I would have met as many locals if I did not go to church'.

5.2.6. Pre-established networks

As illustrated in the in the previous chapter, while in Japan, Phoebe, Angela, Marie, and a number of questionnaire respondents had varying degrees of face-to-face interaction with native and/or non-native Japanese contacts from pre-study abroad. Similarly, several of the

questionnaire respondents also indicated that pre-study abroad contacts were amongst their most important network members during SA. The majority of these contacts were initially established at the home university, or on previous trips to Japan. Interestingly, although Alex had been 'arming' himself with Japanese people on Mixi with whom he 'could be friends with' before he departed for Japan, he mentioned that he 'didn't actually get to meet a lot of those people once [he] was there because [he] was so busy and had met new people'. While he did meet one girl in person, he explained that 'we only met twice, and then we kind of stopped. After we met in person, we didn't really talk on Mixi either'. It could therefore be suggested that whilst the other four informants' relationships with their contacts were already solidified, Alex's contacts on Mixi had been more superficial and instrumental in nature, and thus were quickly replaced by new people he met in person.

For Phoebe, Angela, and Marie, pre-established networks not only offered opportunities for social interaction in outside-of-university contexts, but also offered possibilities for further network development. Indeed, Kato and Tanibe (1997) and Dewey et al. (2013) have also found that introductions through friends are a highly effective means of building social networks. Angela explained that two of her pre-study abroad Japanese contacts introduced her to their family and/or friends, and that her 'network went out a bit more broader through that contact'. Similarly, Phoebe's networks greatly expanded through interaction with her pre-study abroad contact Jenny, who actively introduced her to her dormitory co-residents. Although Marie had the largest number of pre-study abroad contacts in Japan, they did not appear to be as facilitative of network development, as she only met one additional contact, Yuji, through his brother Tetsu.

5.3. Personal factors

In addition to the environmental and situational factors discussed above, the informants mentioned a number of different personal factors that influenced their interaction and

network development with Japanese speakers whilst in Japan. In the sections below, four key personal factors are discussed: L2 investment and motivation for contact, ethnicity, language proficiency and use of the L1, and relationship status.

5.3.1. L2 investment and motivation for contact

As suggested in Chapter 3, the vast majority of informants in this study were significantly invested in Japanese language, with the objective of enhancing their Japanese proficiency being a primary motivation for the decision to study abroad. Many of them shared the commonly expressed belief that they could achieve this through interacting with NSs (cf. Kurata 2004). For example, Angela stated: 'I knew that the best way to learn is to try and talk Japanese with NSs'. Similarly, Oscar mentioned that in order to increase his proficiency, 'it was much more important to have Japanese than international friends'. Therefore, their motivation towards host contact was of particular importance as a prelude to creating opportunities for interaction and network development.

It was also established in Chapter 3 that several of the focal informants were aware of potential difficulties in making Japanese friends despite being in Japan, and established strategies to overcome this potential outcome. Jane, Phoebe and QR53 stated that they went out of their way to interact with local Japanese, and Alex explained that 'you have to be quite proactive. You can't just go to Japan and expect that people are going to come and want to be your friends'. Consistent with a small number of informants in Meier and Daniels' (2011) study, Oscar, QR30 and QR64 went so far as to consciously avoid or regulate frequency of contact with international students in order to enhance their interaction with local Japanese. Indeed, Pearson-Evans (2006) has previously found that friendships with other international students may be a stumbling block for establishing networks with local Japanese.

Given the above-mentioned informants' high level of motivation for host contact, often coupled with strategies to achieve such contact, it is not surprising that each of them claimed to have regular interaction and effectively establish considerable networks with NSs. Indeed, a number of previous studies have also found a relationship between learner motivation and development of social networks with NSs during study abroad (Isabelli-García 2006; Hernandez 2010; Meier & Daniels 2011). On the other hand, although Sophie desired interaction with local Japanese, she explained:

> Because we didn't get to spend a lot of time with Japanese people, unless you made the extra extra extra EXTRA effort to catch up with people that you research during your time there, you would not have ANY contact with Japanese people whatsoever, unless you went down to Family Mart (Japanese convenience store) and said 'hi...' (Sophie, Interview 3).

In line with Simard's (1981) findings, it seems that Sophie, like many other informants, preferred to rely on situational factors to foster opportunities for interaction rather than seeking them out herself, emphasising the important role program organisers play in initiating contact between study abroad students and local hosts.

Equally important to the informants' motivation for contact with local Japanese was Japanese nationals' interest in foreigners, and at times, their investment in L2 English. QR69, for example, commented: 'most of my friends were bilingual Japanese people. Those that do not seriously study English (or another foreign language) made no effort to speak to me'. Similarly, QR62 stated that 'those Japanese able to speak English were naturally engaged in meeting international students'. These findings reflect those of Ayano (2006), who found that local British students who showed interest and became close friends with her Japanese informants studying abroad in the United Kingdom were often those learning Japanese.

As seen in Section 5.2 above, many of the activity fields in which the informants engaged

inherently attracted Japanese who were interested in meeting international students (e.g. classes taught in English or concerning intercultural communication, International Associations, buddy systems). Although such meeting contexts often resulted in the establishment of meaningful relationships, it was shown that in other cases, interaction was very superficial.

For example, Phoebe commented on the buddy system at her university as follows:

> The good majority of them are doing it because they want to have interaction with international students or they're going on exchange themselves so they just want to have international friends, or they're studying English literature (Phoebe, Initial Interview).

In other words, the buddies had what Vigil (2007:143) terms 'reciprocity potential', displaying the ability and willingness to engage in a mutually beneficial relationship. On the other hand, Phoebe also mentioned that some buddies were instrumentally motivated, volunteering 'because it looks good on their resume'. She found that these buddies 'tend to be the ones that people don't hear from very much'. Similarly, it was also previously shown that although International Associations provided beneficial opportunities for meeting and interacting with local Japanese, at times, these interactions were superficial in nature, and did not result in relational development. Similar to the experiences of Marie and Jane discussed in Section 5.2.5, QR13 commented on her lack of relational development with her NS roommate as follows:

> A big sticking point for me was that I always felt she was interested in me as an American/English speaker, rather than as a person. We did not really get to know each other, despite living together for 8 weeks, and I feel that she was not really interested in doing so.

Indeed, the identification of the informants as 'foreigners' was an important factor influencing their interaction and network development, and is further discussed below.

5.3.2. Ethnicity

Although the informants' ethnicity and physical appearance did not emerge as a factor influencing relational development between international students, analysis of the data reveals that it was important concerning interactions with local Japanese. As mentioned in Section 5.2.5, Jane portrayed emotions of frustration and hurt at being reduced to the 'token foreigner' by Japanese who she thought were her friends, being 'liked' for her blonde hair, and not necessarily her personality. She recalled one incident at a barbeque as follows:

> Like they'd want to take my photo, they'd all take a photo together. Then they'd walk away. Like they didn't actually want to talk, they just wanted a photo to put up on Facebook and say 'look I met a foreigner' sort of thing (Jane, Initial Interview).

Having discussed the issue with a Japanese friend who was 'higher up in the society', Jane mentioned that 'she said she's aware of this and that it's an inherent problem in that sort of society. Like when you've got that sort of size in the association it's hard to control'. Interestingly, Jane compared her experiences in the International Association with those in the local city Karate club, revealing a clear contrast in motivation for contact. She believed that the people at Karate genuinely liked her for her 'because they had nothing to do with foreigners in the first place. It wasn't like they joined to meet foreigners sort of thing'.

Nevertheless, Jane was not alone in her experiences in Japan based upon her appearance. For example, Sophie (also a blonde Caucasian) explained that when she went to a nightclub in Kyoto:

> …this girl saw us and started squealing. The first time I experienced that I thought what have I done wrong, have I insulted someone? She said '*gaikokujin gaikokujin*' (foreigner, foreigner) and I was like 'oh my gosh' (Sophie, Interview 2).

Similarly, Carla was also disheartened by the fact that she was always stared at as a foreigner, and that some people appeared to be afraid of her. In particular, she recounted how when she approached the Aikido club members room at her university, she was met with horrified looks, and felt very unwelcomed. There was also a moment when she boarded

a local train in Tokyo, and overheard a Japanese man on his phone say '*gaijin, gaijin*' (foreigner, foreigner) before changing carriages.

As suggested by Bakhtin (1986), Ting-Toomey and Chung (2005), and Jackson (2008), 'racially shattering' events such as these may lead to a heightened awareness of Self and Other, as well as one's racial/ethnic identity. Furthermore, Ting-Toomey (2005:220) has theorised that sojourners may experience 'identity awkwardness or estrangement in interacting with unfamiliar others because unexpected behaviours occur frequently and intrusively'. Indeed, Siegal (1998) and Pearson-Evans (2006) have also both discussed cases where local Japanese have randomly approached Caucasian students for quick, spontaneous intercultural experiences. Whilst the women in Siegal's study viewed the attention positively, like Jane, the Irish participants in Pearson-Evan's (2006) study developed negative attitudes towards Japanese with whom they had superficial contact, feeling used as 'token *gaijin*', or for 'free English practice' (p. 46).

In the present study, QR42 also commented that she found it 'harder to form a closer friendship' with Japanese, because 'most were only concerned with us being foreigners but not [in] actually making an effort to actually be close friends'. She had a slightly different experience to Jane and Sophie, however, because she was a New Zealander of Chinese background. Specifically, she explained that she 'had experiences where some [Japanese] would only be interested in white friends and would not bother very much with exchange students who are not white'. Indeed, QR72, from Singapore, 'felt the Japanese students were often more interested in the international students that look 'obviously foreign'', and noted that 'not many people talked to me as I looked like a Japanese student myself'. These findings mirror those of Yokota and Tanaka (2002) and Morita (2012), who have also found that Japanese were more willing to interact and establish friendships with international

students of Western as opposed to Asian backgrounds. It is important to note that in the present study, neither Angela (Chinese heritage) nor Oscar (Hispanic heritage) mentioned experiencing such superficial contact, and did not appear to ever question the motivation behind local hosts' interaction with them. Both did, however, provide accounts of how their ethnicity influenced the languages used with them, which will be further discussed in the following chapter.

As explained by Kobayashi (2010:324), 'in the Japanese context, European-looking, NSs of English are hailed as the visible embodiment of "internationalization"', and an aesthetic fascination for the West has long been observed in Japanese society. Advertisement imaging featuring (predominantly Caucasian) foreigners, the use of blondes in fashion magazines, and Caucasian dummies in shop fronts serve to reinforce a popular interest in foreigners as outsiders or 'other' (Buruma 1984; Creighton 1995; Arudou 2013), and 'social conceits and business marketing using skin tone and racially based phenotype have the effect of differentiating and separating peoples', which leads to differential treatment (Arudou 2013:67).

5.3.3. Language proficiency and use of L1

Another important factor influencing the informants' patterns of interaction and network development was their language proficiency and use of their L1. As established in Chapter 3, the focal informants had varying degrees of Japanese proficiency, and had studied the language for between 2.5 and 15.5 years prior to studying abroad (such data was not explicitly collected from the questionnaire respondents). Comments from focal informants and questionnaire respondents alike suggested that regardless of proficiency level, the vast majority were motivated to use Japanese language whilst abroad. However, the ease or comfort associated with use of English, and its impact on relationship development, was also observed in the data.

Reflecting the findings of previous studies (Tanaka & Ellis 2003; Pearson-Evans 2006; Tanaka 2007), a number of questionnaire respondents commented that a lack of Japanese proficiency and/or confidence in using the language resulted in dissatisfaction with interaction and relational development with NSs. For example, QR51 commented:

> I was able to use far more Japanese in situations outside of class than in Australia… [though] my limited extent of Japanese and the fact I am slow to make friends means I was not able to meet as many people, and consequently speak in Japanese with, and improve as much as I would have liked… I believe that with an initially higher level of Japanese, I would have been quicker to gain confidence, meet more people and overall have a more enjoyable overseas experience.

Sophie, Jane and Phoebe indicated that although they knew the importance of using Japanese to improve their second language, being able to fully express themselves was important for developing closer friendships. This can be related to the 'expressive function' of language, through which language is used to express one's feelings and 'present oneself to others as a unique individual' (Appel & Muysen 1997:30). Appel and Muysen (1997:30) state that many non-fluent speakers have considerable difficulty with this function, a notion that is reflected in Phoebe's comment below:

> With native English speakers, or people who are fluent in English, I guess I feel a lot more comfortable in the conversation just because I feel like I can fully express myself. There are moments when I feel a little bit anxious trying to get what I mean across to Japanese people so sometimes that stands in the way of having a proper conversation (Phoebe, Initial Interview).

This comment reflects those of participants in Kudo and Simkin's (2003) study, whose anxiety and uncertainly due to L2 difficulties also influenced their degree of self-disclosure. Moreover, Sophie and a number of questionnaire respondents also suggested a relationship between language proficiency, self-disclosure, and relationship development, as found by Kudo and Simkin (2003) and Gudykunst et al. (1991). In particular, QR27 believed that a higher initial proficiency in Japanese would have resulted in 'more long-standing and meaningful relationships with people that didn't speak English'. QR75 also noted:

It's difficult to be close to someone where you have to kind of dumb down your speech for them, or conversely to be able to share feelings and experiences, thoughts etc. when you have a very limited vocabulary.

Similarly, Sophie also explained:

One of the other Australians, she ONLY speaks in Japanese. Which is great for her language use but it has made her very isolated from the other Australians… often because her language is limited, she's not able to say a lot or contribute a lot to the conversation (Sophie, Initial Interview).

Interestingly, this 'isolation from Australians', or rather other exchange students in general, was the motivation behind Oscar's decision to initially pretend he could not speak English.

He explained:

Because I am Colombian I, for the first, at least for a month, I made everyone think that I didn't speak English. I just spoke Japanese, and if anyone talked to me I'd be like "I'm Colombian, I speak Spanish"… I did that on purpose because I was forcing myself to speak Japanese. I was forcing everyone else to speak it to me (Oscar, Initial Interview).

In other words, he exhibited a high level of investment in his L2. As with the other Australian in Sophie's program, however, Oscar also found that by forcing others to use Japanese, he significantly reduced the quality of communication with other NNSs. For example, he explained that due to his British housemate's lower Japanese proficiency, there was a 'gap', because they 'couldn't really communicate too much without English'. Therefore, it was not until Oscar stopped caring about 'trying to keep up the masquerade' and spoke English that they 'became better friends'. When asked why he decided to eventually speak in English, Oscar explained that it was because he 'had enough Japanese friends' through the clubs he joined, so no longer cared about trying to increase his Japanese use. Moreover, he believed that he 'wasn't going to learn from Exchange students anyway', but rather 'from being involved in the culture, with other people from Japan'. Similar to one of the informants in Benson et al.'s (2013) study, Oscar had learned from his previous experiences acquiring English in Australia that the best way to develop L2 proficiency was to engage with locals, and thus this was one of the primary goals of his study abroad

program.

In further regards to L2 proficiency and relationship development, Marie indicated that 'as long as someone can speak a first language it's quite good. Otherwise when we all have to communicate in a second or third language, it's a bit you know, *mendokusai* (of a bother)'. Although she believed that 'it's always easy to stick with people who speak your language', she effectively managed to establish a significantly large network composed of both NSs and NNSs (cf. Figure 4 in Section 4.2). Thus, although previous studies have found that L1 interaction with study abroad peers may impede development of friendship with host nationals (Tanaka & Ellis 2003; Pearson-Evans 2006; Tanaka 2007), it appears that this is not always the case. Moreover, although Marie believed that it was convenient that many of her Japanese friends could speak several languages and that this may have influenced their degree of closeness, she also had 'some very very good friends who are just monolingual', so did not believe that knowledge of other languages was essential for relationship development.

5.3.4. Relationship status

The final key personal factor identified as influencing interaction and networks during study abroad was relationship status. Upon commencement of their study abroad programs, Oscar and Carla were both in committed relationships, and Alex and Marie also entered relationships while abroad. Oscar, who was maintaining a long distance relationship with his Japanese girlfriend back in Australia, believed that being in a relationship impacted the development of networks with Japanese members of the opposite sex. He commented:

> I've noticed that a lot of Japanese girls don't want to become friends with you if you already have a girlfriend. In fact, it's not with everyone, but in Japanese culture there's this thing that exists, where if you already have a girlfriend you are not allowed to meet for coffee or hang out with another girl just the two of you. If you are doing that you have to take someone else (Oscar, Initial Interview)

In fact, a review of Oscar's network presented in Figure 2 in Chapter 4 shows that he only had one key female Japanese contact whilst in Japan. As previous studies have found, however, networks tend to exhibit strong homophily by gender in general, in that male networks are dominated by males, and female networks dominated by females (McPherson, Smith-Lovin & Brashears 2006; Roberts, Wilson, Fedurek & Dunbar 2008).

Similar to Oscar, Carla found that when Japanese people saw her ring and realised she was engaged, they would not want to talk to her. She commented:

> I kind of got the understanding that once you've gotten engaged that that meant that you generally were supposed to hang out with other engaged people, or married people. Not single people anymore' (Carla, Initial Interview).

In contrast to Oscar, however, she also explained that she herself was 'reluctant to get involved in anything' due to her strong 'attachment back home'. Indeed, her attachment was evident in her claims of 'constant texting', frequent Facebook use, and two or three Skype conversations a week with her fiancé. As several previous studies have found, such frequent communication with ties back home limits availability for interaction with hosts (Li Wei 2000; Knight & Schmidt-Rinehart 2002; Kinginger & Whitworth 2005).

As discussed in Section 5.2.5, Marie's experience with members of the opposite sex at her International Association contrasted with Oscar's and Carla's experiences mentioned above, where the main objective of a few of the guys with whom she was initially socialising with was 'to try and get a *gaijin* [foreigner] girlfriend'. While she deterred such contacts, sometime later she started dating Soshi, one of the teaching assistants in her Japanese class. Although she mentioned that she felt quite close to him, she said that she 'hardly ever saw him', and it does not appear that her network which was established before they met was affected to any significant extent.

In contrast to Marie, however, Alex's network was considerably impacted when his Korean girlfriend came over from South Korea to live with him. Reflecting the findings of previous studies (Wellman Wong, Tindall & Nazer 1997; Kalmijn 2003; Bidart & Lavenu 2005), this significantly reduced his sociability, as he virtually stopped interacting with the network he had established over the preceding five months. Although he still had hallway encounters with other international students in his dormitory, he explained that:

> A lot of my Japanese contacts had actually ceased to exist at that time. I spent ALL of my time with my girlfriend… I think we might have spent too much time together… Not because of her, but I'm that sort of person. If I meet someone who means a lot to me, I think that I might as well spend most of my time with that person (Alex, Initial Interview).

Similarly, Angela also mentioned that there was a couple in her program that 'mainly kept to themselves [and] didn't really socialise much'. It therefore appears that the act of couples living together as opposed to separately may also negatively impact network development and/or maintenance, as both Marie and Oscar developed and maintained well-sized networks regardless of being in a relationship. Interestingly, Oscar's case also contrasts with the findings of other studies (Whitworth 2006; Pearson-Evans 2006) whereby learners emotionally dependent on partners back home struggle to establish networks abroad. The informants in both of these studies, however, were female, which presents a gender variable worthy of future investigation.

5.4. Dyadic factors

Dyadic factors discussed in this section are those that describe the interaction and attraction between a pair of individuals. The focal informants and questionnaire respondents identified two key dyadic factors influencing their patterns of interaction and social network development during study abroad: individual similarity/difference, and cultural similarity/difference.

5.4.1. Individual similarity/difference

Congruent with the findings of previous research (Kim 1991; Sudweeks, Gudykunst, Ting-Toomey & Nishida 1990; Kudo & Simkin 2003; Dewey et al. 2013), individual similarity in terms of personality and shared interests appeared important for friendship development with both NSs and NNSs. Sophie mentioned that after initially meeting someone, 'you're more likely to keep going and doing more social things together if you've got the same personality traits'. Similarly, Phoebe explained that the Japanese people with whom she felt closest were those who shared similar personalities, which meant they 'got along really well'. She stated that being able to talk about Japanese bands and sports was also 'a good way of developing a relationship with Japanese'. When it came to her closer international friends, however, Phoebe stated that humor was of particular importance as something that she 'really bonds over with people' (cf. Canary, Stafford, Hause, & Wallace 1993; Ujitani 2006).

Marie explained that her closest friends shared the 'same personality… were very similar, [and had the] same interests'. Reflecting the findings of previous studies (Gudykunst et al. 1991; Burns 1996; Kudo & Simkin 2003; Ujitani 2006), she also found it easier to get along with Japanese people who were interested in other cultures, or had themselves been abroad. She defined them as being 'International', and believed that this 'helps create bonds between people', providing more commonalities and topics of conversation. In contrast, she mentioned that 'when you see that there's nothing in common, it's really hard to have a conversation' (let alone develop a relationship). Indeed, Morita (2012) also found that Japanese students who had themselves studied abroad were better able to empathise with international students, and were more encouraged to establish intercultural friendships.

Although personal similarity and shared interests were found to bring people together, a number of informants also indicated that differences impeded relational development. QR50,

for example, stated: 'friendship is difficult to be developed if we do not have similar beliefs, habits or interests'. QR38 more explicitly expressed dissatisfaction in her relational development with NSs, commenting: 'I just felt like I had nothing in common with Japanese uni students. They were all still living at home/dependent on their parents. I hadn't been like that for 5 years'. Similarly, QR13 commented:

> I was not very satisfied with the relationships I developed with most of the [NS] roommates in our program, but I attribute that more to some serious discrepancies in lifestyle/personality/intelligence/general social situation between the Japanese and international students rather than some fundamental issue of intercultural communication.

Concerning NNSs, Alex also revealed that although he sometimes socialised with a group of Germans and Americans, he did not feel part of that group, because he 'wasn't really interested in the sorts of things they did, going out and getting drunk'. Similarly, Sophie also mentioned that there was one girl in her program with whom she did not have much interaction because 'she's VERY out there and outgoing, which is a bit of a personality clash'.

5.4.2. Cultural similarity/difference

In addition to personal similarity, a number of informants also spoke of cultural similarity or difference playing a role in relational development. Interestingly, this was not so much with local Japanese, but within the foreigner group, where cultural segregation was often present. Sophie, for example, claimed that 'one of the hardest things with this program is a lot of different cultural differences'. She continued, explaining that:

> As a woman in Australia you have a lot of freedom and all sorts of things and you can pretty much do any sort of social activity or any job you put your mind to. Whereas in other countries their social activities are very different because of our cultural backgrounds, which prevents a lot of social interaction. For example, on the first night we were here we were really hungry, and we went down to Family Mart around 9PM, and the other students from some of the more protective cultures we like 'oh no it's too dangerous it's late at night', and some of the things like that (Sophie, Initial Interview).

On the other hand, Sophie found that 'being able to have your own group and fit in with like-minded people, you know that whatever activity you do, it'll be something that you're comfortable with'.

Alex also experienced the cultural segregation of his peers at his residence, where there were groups such as the Germans, the Chinese, and the Eastern Europeans. As argued by Dunstan (2003:70), despite close physical proximity, students are 'frequently alienated from each other and… prefer to stay on their own side of cultural borders'. The separation of study abroad students into cultural groups is common in the literature, and it has been found that the presence of large numbers of international students from the same country may inhibit intercultural interaction (Volet & Ang 1998; Dunstan 2003; Dunne 2009). As the only student from Oceania at his residence, Alex 'felt a bit excluded' and found it 'hard to get along with anyone in particular'. He actually felt that he could 'belong to the Japanese group the most', as he could spend a lot of time with them without them going off to 'meet their friends from THEIR country'. In line with Dunne's (2009) findings, therefore, it seems that limiting the number of cultural peers in study abroad programs may be an effective strategy for enhancing intercultural contact.

5.5. Summary

This chapter has explored some of the environmental, situational, personal and dyadic factors found to influence the nature of the informants' networks and interaction with TL speakers while abroad. It appeared that the informants' patterns of network development were consistent with Fischer's (1982) choice-constraint approach, where networks were the result of individual choices made within contextual constraints. Factors were classified according to Fehr's (1996; 2000) framework, and are summarised in Table 14 below.

Table 14 Factors influencing networks and interaction during study abroad

Environmental factors Residence Class type Buddy/tutor systems Extracurricular activities (clubs, activities outside educational institute) Homestay/home visit programs Part-time work	*Personal factors* Language competence L2 Investment Prior experience Motivation for intercultural contact Ethnicity Relationship status
Situational factors Duration of program Frequency of exposure Availability	*Dyadic factors* Personal similarity/difference Cultural similarity/difference

As suggested above, the informants drew upon a range of environmental factors to establish networks with both NSs and NNSs of Japanese. While integrated environments such as residence, classes, buddy systems, extracurricular activities and work facilitated interaction and network development with NSs, segregated environments and the grouping of study abroad students did not. To what degree these environments were facilitative of network development, however, depended upon a number of different personal, situational, and dyadic factors concerning both the informants themselves and the individuals with whom they came into contact.

Of particular importance were the personal factors of motivation for intercultural contact, investment in the L2, and language competence. Additionally, a small number of informants also indicated the influence of prior experiences, relationship status, and ethnicity on interaction and network development. In particular regards to this last factor, it was suggested that local Japanese were more interested in establishing friendships with Caucasian students than with those of other backgrounds. In order for contact to eventuate into relationships, the influence of dyadic factors including cultural dis/similarity and personal dis/similarity in terms of personality and interests, as well as situational factors such as frequency of exposure and availability for relationships, were also identified. In the

following chapter, the informants' patterns of language use and selection within their social

networks are examined.

6. PATTERNS OF LANGUAGE USE DURING STUDY ABROAD AND FACTORS INFLUENCING THEM

I was able to use far more Japanese in situations outside of class than in Australia. This improved my speaking skills and confidence to some extent – QR51

6.1. Introduction

The above quote from QR51 reflects a commonly expressed view by the informants in this research: studying abroad in Japan provided significantly more opportunities for Japanese language use compared to in their home countries, which they often believed contributed to various aspects of second language acquisition. As stated by QR5, Japanese language 'practise [occurred] with both NSs and NNSs'. However, as was seen in Chapter 4, each of the informants exhibited use of not only Japanese, but also of English and/or other languages within their social networks. In this chapter, their patterns of language use and selection are discussed in greater detail. Section 6.2 focuses on language use with NSs of Japanese, and Section 6.3 discusses language use with NNSs of Japanese.

In both of these sections, Nishimura's (1992) categories of bilingual speech are firstly drawn upon to identify the informants' primary patterns of language use. As explained in Chapter 3, these were renamed as 'Predominantly Japanese', 'Predominantly English', and 'Mixed' varieties, the latter referring to simultaneous use of two or more languages. Furthermore, because some of the informants are speakers of other languages, an additional category of 'Other language' was also employed.

After establishing patterns of language use, Grosjean's (1982, 2010) factors in language choice in bilingual settings are then drawn upon to examine the factors influencing these patterns with (i) NSs and (ii) NNSs. As explained in Chapter 3, the four main categories identified by Grosjean are: participants, situation, content of discourse, and function of

interaction. Additionally, the necessity for a fifth category, 'channel of interaction', also arose from the data.

6.2. Language use with native Japanese speakers

Each of the focal informants and a number of questionnaire respondents claimed to be highly motivated to use Japanese with NSs in order to improve their language proficiency during their study abroad period. Angela, for example, mentioned that upon commencing her study abroad program, she had intended to take every opportunity she had to immerse herself in the language in order to learn it. Similarly, Jane commented: 'I wanted to improve my Japanese. So even if I couldn't fully understand, and we couldn't have in-depth conversations, I was still willing to go the extra mile [and speak Japanese]. Indeed, comments from a number of informants indicated that they experienced difficulties with natural NS discourse at the start of their programs. Phoebe, for example, stated that she was 'a little bit anxious' and struggled with listening at the start, though conversing in Japanese 'became relatively nothing' over the course of time. Oscar had also struggled with listening to NSs' natural Japanese before going to Japan, though believed it was 'getting better and better' just before he left, and QR9 and QR66 both commented that they used more and more Japanese as their proficiency increased over the duration of their programs.

Similarly, Jane mentioned having a few difficulties understanding "men's speech" during the outset of her program. Most of her teachers in Australia had been female, and she had only studied the 'girl versions' in class, so the combination of masculine forms and fast paced speech meant she 'really had to focus to talk to guys'. Although she was embarrassed at not being able to fully comprehend them to start with, she claimed to 'pick it up fast enough'. Comparably, Sophie commented on how textbook language differs from natural spoken Japanese, which she found somewhat challenging. She explained that:

When you're immersed in a whole group of young Japanese people, talking in *Kansai-ben* (Kansai dialect), with their onomatopoeia and youth culture language, it's just so different (Sophie, Interview 2).

These findings reflect those of Jackson's (2008), where her informants, at the start of their sojourn, expressed difficulty in understanding local's fast-paced and colloquial social discourse. Nevertheless, as will be discussed below, the Predominantly Japanese variety was the most commonly and frequently utilised language variety with NSs during the informants' study abroad experiences.

Firstly, Table 15 below provides an overview of the informants' dominant patterns of language use with their individually identified Japanese NS contacts, depicting number of contacts with whom each variety was reportedly used throughout the duration of their study abroad programs. Although predominant language use patterns were reportedly fairly constant during the informants' study abroad periods, any deviations highlighted in the interviews are also discussed below.

Table 15 Focal informants' patterns of language use with native Japanese speakers during study abroad

Language Variety	Sophie	Alex	Phoebe	Carla	Oscar	Jane	Angela	Marie	Overall network
Predominantly Japanese	9 (100%)	13 (100%)	18 (100%)	1 (100%)	17 (90%)	19 (86%)	23 (69%)	20 (64%)	120 (83%)
Predominantly English	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3 (13%)	3 (2%)
Predominantly other language	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (5%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3 (13%)	4 (3%)
Mixed	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (5%)	3 (14%)	10 (31%)	3 (13%)	17 (12%)

As shown in Table 15 above, each of the focal informants reported using the Predominantly Japanese variety with the majority of their network members during study abroad. Four of the focal informants also claimed to use the Mixed variety, combining Japanese with English and/or French. Oscar also mentioned using Predominantly Spanish with one

network member, and Marie Predominantly French with three. Marie was, however, the only focal informant who claimed to use the Predominantly English variety with any NSs.

Table 16 below also shows a similar trend in the language use patterns of the questionnaire respondents, where data was drawn from their reported language use with their three most important NS contacts during study abroad.

Table 16 Questionnaire respondents' patterns of language use with native Japanese speakers during study abroad

Language Variety	Number of contacts used with	Percentage of overall network used with
Predominantly Japanese	139	63%
Predominantly English	37	17%
Predominantly Other	0	0%
Mixed	43	20%

As with the focal informants, Predominantly Japanese was used with over 60 percent of reported contacts, while the Predominantly English and Mixed varieties were used with significantly fewer network members. The respondents who reported use of the Mixed variety indicated that they simultaneously employed Japanese and German, Danish, or Finnish. None of the questionnaire respondents reported use of a language other than Japanese or English exclusively.

The sections below will now draw upon thematic analysis of the informants' data to discuss the multitude of factors that influenced their language selection with NSs during study abroad.

6.2.1. Participant-related factors

According to Rampton (1995:277), participant-related factors are those that relate to the speakers' more stable attributes, and often account for linguistic preference. The informants in this study identified six key participant-related factors that influenced their language

selection with NSs during study abroad: the informants' and their social network members' proficiency in English, Japanese, and/or other language(s), informants' and their social network members' investment in their L2(s), preference of interlocutor, history of linguistic interaction, prior experiences abroad, and ethnic appearance.

Although individuals (often subconsciously) take into consideration a wide-variety of factors when selecting a language of interaction, the fundamental consideration is 'which language will be most successful for communication?' In order to linguistically communicate, at least some degree of proficiency in a shared language is essential. Thus, as stated by Grosjean (1982:135), one of the most influential participant-related factors impacting language choice is the proficiency of the speaker and of their interlocutor(s). Indeed, the most common factor influencing the informants' language use during study abroad in this study was the perceived proficiency of their shared language(s). Obviously, if Japanese was the only shared language then this became the language of interaction by default. QR27, for example, commented that it was helpful to have 'friends that lived with me that didn't speak English'. QR45 also stated that at the local church she attended, 'no one could speak English, [so] I was forced to speak Japanese all the time. Similarly, numerous other informants also mentioned that they used Japanese because their network members 'didn't speak English'. If, however, the informants' network members were also bilingual, this resulted in possible use of one of the four language varieties: Predominantly Japanese, Predominantly English, Mixed, or Predominantly Other language.

In general, the greater their network members' proficiency in a language other than Japanese was, the more likely the informants were to use it with them. Reflecting the findings of Ikeda & Bysouth (2013), in most situations this resulted in use of the Mixed variety, where the informant and their network members would negotiate language use.

Phoebe, for example, mentioned that within her buddy community, Japanese students held various levels of English proficiency, which was useful if she was struggling with a particular word, because she could ask them if they knew it in Japanese. If they wanted to practice their English, however, she indicated that it would result in non-reciprocal language use, 'where they might speak a bit of English and I'll speak in Japanese and get practice that way'.

Non-reciprocal language use seemed to be a means of respecting their network members' language choice while upholding their own preference at the same time, or as a strategy for developing ongoing discourse between bilingual speakers of varying language proficiency. On the other hand, QR7 commented:

> I think that I felt obligated to speak English with people who spoke it to me so unless I was in a situation where someone absolutely COULDN'T understand me, I usually ended up speaking English.

In other words, she did not attempt to employ non-reciprocal language use, but rather responded in the language she was addressed in. Similarly, QR36 also explained that she used both English and Japanese with her NS friend Tomi, 'depending on what language the conversation started in'. In terms of participant-related factors, this could be classified as preference of interlocutor. Indeed, as Kinginger (2004:221) has noted, 'access to language is shaped not only by learners' own intentions, but also by those of the others with whom they interact'.

The three NS contacts that Jane used the Mixed variety with were all students from the English conversation class she taught, who later became her friends. She mentioned that although they used English during class, outside of class they used Japanese, because 'they're not very good at English'. Thus, it appears that her language use was not only influenced by the participant-related factor of perceived proficiency, but also by a

situational factor: location or setting of interaction. This will be further discussed in section 6.2.2.

In addition to perceived language proficiency, Angela also mentioned a number of other participant-related factors that influenced her use of the Mixed variety of language with her home visit mother. She explained that her home visit mother would teach the home visit students Japanese, but could also speak English. Angela believed that 'for the two who had a lower level of Japanese it was quite good'. She also mentioned, however, how her Asian appearance may have influenced the home visit mother to use Japanese with her, but more English with Bela, an Indian-Australian student. Angela explained:

> [Bela] found that because she doesn't look Asian, people automatically assume that she will never be able to master Japanese. And they'll talk with her in a way so that she gets really frustrated because they won't speak to her much in Japanese. And her level of Japanese is way higher than mine (Angela, Interview 4).

This excerpt resonates quite closely with Gumerz et al.'s (1979) findings that an L1 speaker's assumptions about an L2 user and their L2 proficiency may at times be as much an obstacle to interaction as the L2 proficiency itself. With particular regards to Japan, Siegal (1996:363) has also discussed how historically and socially constructed beliefs of superiority and inferiority concerning nationality and race fluctuate in Japan, along with their relationship to language use. In the past, there was a prevalent belief among Japanese that no NNS could achieve native-like proficiency in Japanese language, and although anecdotal evidence suggests this belief no longer prevails, some NSs still have low expectations concerning the Japanese language ability of (often Caucasian) Westerners. As Siegal (1996) found in her study, this often results in non-Asians being addressed in English, even if they have initiated an interaction in Japanese. Such was the case for QR15, who mentioned that 'Japanese people often refused to talk to us in Japanese'.

Through her experiences in Japan, and witnessing first-hand the discrimination that Bela

experienced, Angela came to view her Asian heritage as an 'advantage', because 'people don't stereotype you as much'. Moreover, she vividly recalled Bela expressing her frustration while in Japan, commenting along the lines of:

> "You're really lucky. Japanese people will accept you and talk to you and you will be able to have a deep connection with them because they will never assume, because you are Asian, that you can't speak Japanese" (Angela quoting Bela, Interview 4).

At least in the case of Angela, Bela, and their home visit mother, it appears that the participant-related factor of ethnicity or appearance also significantly influenced patterns of language use.

In addition to her Asian ethnicity, Angela also mentioned various other reasons that she felt impacted the language use with her home visit mother. Firstly, she explained that when the host mother was a university student herself, she had been on exchange to America, but had to leave halfway through due to family circumstances. Apparently 'she always really regretted that she lost that opportunity. So this was her way to try and find another means to [engage with English speakers]'. Although Angela believed that the initial motivation behind this woman's decision to be a host mother was to 'keep up the English', she also felt that her prior experiences as an exchange student herself influenced their interaction:

> So I think if a Japanese person has that sort of experience then they want to share their Japanese with people like me [Japanese learners]. Whereas if they haven't had something like that then they probably don't have an incentive to reach out. You kind of come across people like that (Angela, Initial Interview).

Angela's use of the Mixed variety with her home visit mother therefore clearly reveals the complexity of language negotiation, suggesting a range of influential participant-related factors such as learners' Japanese proficiency, learner's ethnicity, and network members' English proficiency and prior experiences.

As previously shown in Table 15, Oscar and Marie were the only informants who mentioned using either the Predominantly English or Other language variety with NSs. Oscar, on the one hand, only claimed to use Spanish with one of his contacts, Maki, who he met through Aikido. He claimed that because 'she was re::ally devoted, really good at Spanish', that became their primary means of communication when they were alone together. Marie, on the other hand, claimed to have a larger group of 'international' Japanese friends with whom she would speak in Predominantly English, Predominantly French, or the Mixed variety combining either of these with Japanese. Many of her friends in this group had spent time in either French- or English-speaking countries, and were eager to practice these languages. She mentioned that it was 'good' and 'handy' to have Japanese friends who could speak languages other than Japanese, and that she had 'no issues speaking other languages' with them. Similarly, QR49 commented that although she 'felt comfortable using Japanese, it was good to have many friends who spoke both Japanese and English to socialise with'.

The above findings suggest that Japanese network members' use of languages other than Japanese were influenced by three different participant-related factors: whether or not they had knowledge of the language, prior experience abroad, and their desire to practice their L2. Indeed, many of the informants indicated that their NS network members' investment in L2 English, and desire to practice it, resulted in increased English use. QR39, for example, explained that with his NS friend Taka, they used 'more English than Japanese, as Taka and his friend group were all looking for opportunities to speak it'. Q56 also explained that her friend Kotaro 'had [been] to Australia and he mostly spoke to us in English'. It is thus possible that Kotaro's prior experiences influenced his language selection, as was suggested in the case of Angela's home visit mother.

Another participant-related factor highlighted by Marie as influencing language use was the language of relationship establishment. She stated: 'when you meet someone in one language it's really hard to switch to another', and provided a number of interesting examples as follows. Toshi was one of Marie's Japanese friends that she first met in Australia, and although she had tried to start a few conversations with him in Japanese when they first met, he would always revert to English, and thus English became their primary language of conversation. When Marie met up with Toshi again during her study abroad period, English continued to be the language of choice, despite the dominant societal language changing from English to Japanese.

In contrast to the situation above, Marie also explained that although her friendship with Noriko was originally established in French (because Marie did not know Japanese at that stage), when Marie went to Japan for her university study abroad program four years later, Noriko had forgotten much of her French, but still wanted to practice. Thus, Marie and Noriko's interaction during study abroad was of the Mixed variety: Japanese and French. In other words, although there may be a relationship between the initial language of relationship establishment and ongoing language use, ongoing proficiency in the language(s) also plays a contributing role.

In further regards to language of relationship establishment, Alex emphasised the importance of communicating in Japanese with NSs from the first encounter. Although he claimed to use predominantly Japanese with all of his NS contacts, he had witnessed others fall into the habit of using English, as it was the language they first spoke in. Alex stated:

> It's really important to FORCE people to use Japanese by using Japanese. I think it all starts from within. You have to use Japanese. If you start using Japanese, and you keep using Japanese, then the person you're talking to, they'll have to use Japanese (Alex, Initial Interview).

Alex's observations should not be directly compared to Marie's cases listed above, however, as context needs to be taken into consideration. More specifically, Marie's relationships were formed outside of Japan, where the dominant language was not Japanese, whilst Alex was talking about relationship development in Japan, where it may be considered more appropriate to insist on using Japanese. Nevertheless, it appears that history of linguistic interaction, which Grosjean (1982) classifies as a participant-related factor, was influential in patterns of language selection. QR74 further supported this belief, indicating that his relationship with his tutor was particularly important because he 'really pushed me to use Japanese from the moment I arrived, even though it was hard'.

Finally, the above excerpt from Alex's interview also indicates the relationship between learners' investment in the L2 and their patterns of language use. It was also established at the beginning of section 6.2 that Angela and Jane were highly motivated to use Japanese with NSs in order to enhance their proficiency. Likewise, it was shown in Section 4.7.1 that QR30 and QR63 made a concerted effort to avoid using English in order to enhance their degree of Japanese use.

6.2.2. Situation-related factors

The informants identified two key situational factors that influenced their language selection with NSs during study abroad: location or setting of interaction, and composition of the group. In terms of location, Jane indicated that when she was in Japan, Japanese became her 'de facto language per se… [because she was] speaking Japanese most of the time'. During their study abroad period, Japanese was the dominant societal language of interaction. QR50, for example, stated: 'Most of time I was using Japanese, as I cannot survive without using it. Other languages are not common and people cannot understand even English in the city [where I lived]'. QR17 further highlighted the relationship between location of interaction, language proficiency, and patterns of language use:

Many residents only knew a tiny bit of English, and it made them more comfortable when I could speak their language. It also felt unfair to make my entire Ultimate Frisbee team speak English when I could at least try Japanese.

On the other hand, some of the informants indicated that certain situations/locations of interaction also called for English use with NSs. QR73, for example, explained:

There were some cases where I couldn't use Japanese (I worked two jobs. One job required me to speak only in English, another had me speaking Japanese almost exclusively) also some clubs used English (such as English club) and others I was the only foreign student and would only speak Japanese.

As mentioned in the previous section, Jane also used English with her English conversation students when interacting with them in class, but Japanese when interacting with them outside of class.

The second situation-related factor that the informants identified, namely composition of the group, meant that language selection was influenced by who was present in the interaction. Marie, for example, explained that 'with Taka I'd use English, Naoto was French, but then if we were with a group of other people then we'd all switch to either Japanese or English depending upon who was there'. She further commented:

I had a few monolingual Japanese friends, and I didn't really see them that much when I was with my foreign friends because when it was a big group of international people it was mainly English that we were speaking (Marie, Initial interview).

It is therefore evident that the dominant language of other people present in the group was another significant situation-related factor impacting the complexity of language selection when interacting with peers from various language backgrounds.

Similarly, QR35 also commented that although she used 'mainly Japanese' with her NS friend Kumi, they would use 'English when other international students are involved in the conversation'. Phoebe also indicated such a pattern in her one-week interaction journal that she completed while on study abroad. In the journal, she noted a night of playing card games at the dormitory of Jenny, a NNS friend who was studying at a different university in

Tokyo. There were a number of native and NNSs present, and she mentioned that they used mostly English, with a bit of Japanese. In the subsequent interview, she explained that 'because the Japanese people were fluent in English it tended to be English spoken. But if there was something they didn't understand we'd explain it in Japanese'.

6.2.3. Channel of interaction

Although Grosjean (1982; 2010) has not discussed the impact of channel of interaction on language selection, in his earlier research (1982) he observed that in some bilingual communities, different languages are used in different modes. He provided an example from the Native American Navajo reservation, where they kept court records in English even though the cases were heard in Navajo. He explained that this phenomenon usually occurs when one of the languages lacks a writing system, or has a writing system that is not widely used (p. 142). As discussed in Chapter 2, more recent studies of language learners conducted by Kurata (2007) and Cunliffe, Morris and Prys (2013) also supports the claim that channel of interaction may play a role in language selection. In the current study, the key channel of interaction-related factor influencing the informants' and their network members' language selection was whether they communicated through a written or spoken channel.

Even though each of the informants in the current study had at least some degree of proficiency in the fully developed writing system of their L2(s), Marie and four of the questionnaire respondents indicated that while they used Predominantly Japanese when speaking with NSs, they would sometimes use English in written modes of communication. Although QR37 and QR70 simply indicated that they used occasional English for 'written communication', QR74 indicated that with his tutor, he used 'Mostly Japanese unless filling out some obscure paperwork', and QR13 that with his friend Hiroaki, he used 'a little English online, since he speaks good English and likes to practice'. Similarly, Marie

explained that although she would usually converse with Tetsu in Japanese, 'email was French because he wanted to practice. Usually I tended to email him in English, but then he'd reply in French'. She elaborated: 'I'm lazy... I don't like writing in Japanese so I only do it when I have to, when people don't understand English'. This reflects the comments of one of the English-Welsh bilinguals in Cunliffe, Morris and Prys' (2013) study, who stated: 'There isn't anything stopping us from using Welsh on the web, we're just lazy' (p. 359).

In sum, the findings above indicate that, at least for these informants, language selection in written modes was influenced by (i) informants' preference, (ii) network members' desire to practice their L2, and (iii) informants' and/or network members' L2 proficiency. The importance of this additional category – channel of interaction – will be further discussed in Chapter 9, where a greater amount of in-depth data was available for analysis of language use patterns in the post-study abroad period.

6.2.4. Discourse content-related factors

In discussing discourse content-related factors, Grosjean (2010) refers to the complementarity principle, which states that 'bilinguals usually acquire and use their languages for different purposes, in different domains of life, with different people. Different aspects of life often require different languages' (p29). For example, bilinguals may use different languages in the family, education, and business domains. Under his category of discourse content, Grosjean (1982) listed two factors influencing language choice: topic of discourse and type of vocabulary. The informants in this study also indicated that topic of discourse influenced their language selection with NSs during study abroad.

Oscar, Jane, and several of the questionnaire respondents indicated that in particular, English was occasionally used with Japanese network members when talking about the

English language. Oscar, for example, explained that 'when [he and Akira] were discussing his homework we would do it in English. But when we were speaking in general, as friends, at Aikido, always in Japanese'. Similarly, QR54 stated that she and her friend Masami used 'mostly Japanese, or English when we're discussing English language', and QR34 and QR46 each indicated that one of their NS network members used English when asking questions or making references to American culture.

On the other hand, Jane mentioned that some of her NS friends would ask her questions concerning their upcoming TOEIC[9] tests in English, but that she would explain the answer in Japanese. In particular, she recalled an incident where a Japanese friend asked her a question concerning a job application letter in English as follows:

> And you know how the language in letters and job applications is very different to natural English, I was trying to explain that, and I had to turn to Japanese to do that 'cause there's no way she was going to understand it in English (Jane, Initial Interview).

In this case, it appears that Jane's language choice was influenced by not only by the topic of discourse, but also by her network member's English proficiency, as well as by an interactional function-related factor: providing L2 assistance. Interactional function-related factors are discussed in section 6.2.5 below.

6.2.5. Interactional function-related factors

As Grosjean (2010:47) has stated, when examining patterns of language use, 'we should keep in mind that people often communicate to achieve something and not just to pass information along to someone else'. In other words, the function of the interaction may influence language selection. The informants identified two interactional function-related factors influencing their language use with NSs during study abroad: to provide or request L2 assistance, and to quote someone.

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[9] TOEIC=Test of English for International Communication

Firstly, many of the informants indicated that when they experienced language difficulties, such as with grammar or vocabulary, a common strategy was to code-switch to English to find out an unknown word, and then back to Japanese for the rest of the conversation. QR51, for example, explained:

> I tried to use Japanese whenever conversing with Japanese students, and since many of them studied English, they were able to help me find words and expressions I needed and this contributed to my improvement.

Similarly, QR57 commented that with her Homestay Mum from her previous exchange, she used 'Japanese mostly but English when I couldn't understand or was unable to say what I wanted to say'. This communicative strategy of relying on the L1 to override communicative stumbling blocks has also been identified by Masuda (2007) and Liebscher and Dailey-O'Cain (2006), and is what Lüdi (2003:176) calls 'translinguistic wording'. He states that 'this strategy consists in the conscious use of single words or longer sequences of the L1 (or any other language likely to be understood by NSs of the L2) as a form of rescue device'.

In regards to providing language assistance, it was shown in section 6.2.4 above that Jane would sometimes switch from English to Japanese in order to provide her Japanese network members assistance with their language-related questions. On the other hand, she also mentioned that occasionally she would have other Japanese friends approach her wanting to practice something they had just learned in English class. In this situation, she explained that she would 'have five minutes of English conversation to help them', but then switch back to Japanese.

The second interactional function-related factor, to quote someone else's speech, was only mentioned by one informant, Marie. More specifically, she explained:

> So with Yuka we'd mainly use French, but then there'd be random Japanese sentences in the conversation sometimes. Like when we'd be talking about Japanese people and say what they said, we'd do that in Japanese (Marie, Interview 2).

While obviously this factor would not necessarily influence learners' language use on a day-to-day basis, it has been identified by a number of linguists as a factor influencing code switching in various bilingual environments (Rayfield 1970; Valdés-Fallis 1978; Gumperz 1982; Saville-Troike 2008).

6.3. Language use with non-native Japanese speakers

The latter half of this chapter will now discuss the informants' patterns of language use with other NNSs of Japanese during study abroad. Firstly, Table 17 below provides an overview of the dominant language varieties each of the focal informants reported using with their non-native Japanese speaker contacts during study abroad.

Table 17 Focal informants' patterns of language use with non-native Japanese speakers during study abroad

Language variety	Jane	Angela	Sophie	Phoebe	Oscar	Marie	Alex	Carla	Overall network
Predominantly Japanese	13 (72%)	12 (41%)	7 (29%)	5 (24%)	2 (18%)	3 (12%)	2 (6%)	0 (0%)	44 (25%)
Predominantly English	5 (28%)	17 (59%)	17 (71%)	16 (73%)	8 (73%)	8 (31%)	4 (11%)	11 (100%)	86 (49%)
Predominantly other language	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	15 (58%)	2 (6%)	0 (0%)	17 (10%)
Mixed	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (9%)	0 (0%)	28 (78%)	0 (0%)	29 (16%)

Compared to patterns of language selection with NSs of Japanese (cf. Table 15), patterns of language selection between Japanese learners were much more complex. Not only did they differ from informant to informant, but also between each informant and their individual network members. Table 18 below also indicates the questionnaire respondents reported using all four language varieties.

Table 18 Questionnaire respondents' patterns of language use with NNSs during study abroad

Language Variety	Number of contacts used with	Percentage of overall network used with
Predominantly Japanese	17	9%
Predominantly English	119	66%
Predominantly Other	10	6%
Mixed	34	19%

Overall, however, both the focal informants and questionnaire respondents indicated that there was considerably more use of the Predominantly English and Other language varieties with NNSs compared to with NSs. The factors influencing these patterns of selection are discussed in Sections 6.3.1 to 6.3.4 below.

6.3.1. Participant-related factors

The informants identified four key participant-related factors that influenced their language selection with NNSs during study abroad: the informants' and their social network members' proficiency in English, Japanese, and/or other language(s), preference to use L1 with other L1 speakers, informants' and/or their social network members' investment in their L2(s), informants' investment in their relationships, and history of linguistic interaction.

As with patterns of language use with NSs, the overarching factor influencing their language selection was whether or not their peers had some degree of proficiency in English or languages other than Japanese that the informants themselves spoke. Congruent with the findings of previous studies (Kato & Tanibe 1997; Murakami 1997; Freed, Segalowitz & Dewey 2004; Pearson-Evans 2006; Tanaka 2007; Amuzie & Winke 2009), there was an overwhelming selection of L1 English/other language over L2 Japanese with other native or near-native L1 speakers. Sophie's comment sums up the common view: 'when you're with people from your own country or a country that predominantly uses English, you slip into English patterns'. Mirroring the comments of one of the informants in Ikeda and Bysouth's (2013:40) study, she also explained that although most students on her program could speak

at least minimal English, their Japanese levels varied from complete beginners to highly advanced. This meant that speaking English was a lot easier, especially when she wanted to 'get a lot of things out quickly'. Similarly, QR67 also indicated that foreign students' 'varying Japanese language ability' was a contributing factor to their frequent English use.

As stated by Stapa, Musaev, Hieda and Amzah (2013:9) speakers have a tendency to prefer their L1 in bilingual situations due to familiarity and fluency in the language, which results in greater convenience and ease of interaction. Carla, for example, explained her 'reluctance' to use Japanese as follows:

> I didn't want to be laughed at. I want to be able to easily make myself be understood and the only way I could make myself be understood is to speak the language that I knew best (Carla, Initial Interview).

Similarly, QR25 commented that 'other international students were not wanting to use [Japanese] often'. These comments reflect Pellegrino's (2005:2) argument that 'learners often reject or reduce their interaction in the second language in order to maintain and protect an ideal self-image'.

As Coleman (2009:192) has argued, English is often the most easily accessible lingua franca among groups of study abroad students, which makes it harder for L1 English speakers to engage in TL interaction. QR26, for example, commented that 'as everyone can speak English it was sometimes difficult to switch to Japanese', and QR10 that 'with English speakers it's hard to avoid English'. Oscar, Marie and Phoebe also commented on the dominance of English as an international language amongst the students at their residences. Phoebe stated:

> Because everyone in my dorm is either an English NS or understands English fluently, a lot of English is used. So I was a bit disappointed about how little I get to use [Japanese] in the dorm (Phoebe, Initial Interview).

Regardless of this desire to speak Japanese, however, Phoebe felt 'weird' and Alex and Marie felt 'awkward' if using Japanese with native English speakers. Marie commented:

> With non-Asians I have a lot of difficulties using an Asian language to communicate, unless there's no other option I'll do it. But otherwise … unless they have a very very good level of Japanese I don't like doing it (Marie, Initial Interview).

This reflects the findings of Jackson (2008), whose Hong Kong sojourners in England felt uncomfortable using English with other L1 Cantonese speakers when it was not absolutely required (i.e. in informal, out-of-class contexts). Jackson's informants believed that those who did use L2 English together were 'showing off' and risked being 'outgrouped' by their peers, providing evidence of the strategic use of language to demonstrate one's group affiliation (e.g. Zuengler 1988).

Although the majority of Angela's interaction with other native English speakers was in English, when it did occur in Japanese, she did not appear as uncomfortable as Marie. She explained:

> If I'm speaking with a non-native Japanese speaker, whose native language is English, and they're at quite a high level, I might listen more than I speak. Because I might be a little bit behind on the subject, or it's a subject that's new to me with vocab I don't know. But then I might ask them 'what does that mean?' You can learn Japanese through that situation, if you don't understand something then ask questions (Angela, Initial Interview).

While such occasions were rare for Angela, the above quote indicates that speaking in Japanese with other native English speakers was also beneficial for her Japanese learning, reflecting the experiences of participants in studies conducted by Magnan and Back (2007) and Allen (2010).

As mentioned in Chapter 5, Oscar drew upon his Spanish heritage and pretended he was unable to speak English at the outset of his program in order to increase his opportunities for Japanese interaction. After about a month, however, he forewent the 'masquerade' and

started speaking in English with his study abroad peers in order to enhance his relationships with them. This indicates another participant-related factor, that of investment in relationships. Furthermore, in contrast to Angela, Oscar commented that he did not find L2 Japanese interaction with his study abroad peers to be facilitative of language acquisition.

Jane was the only informant who claimed to use the Predominantly Japanese or the Mixed variety with several other native English speakers for the entirety of her program. As will be seen in section 6.3.2, this may have been related to the fact that there were monolingual Japanese people residing in her dormitory. Jane mentioned that the people with whom she used the Predominantly English variety were primarily those who had a comparably lower Japanese ability, and 'had trouble stringing sentences together [in Japanese]'. With these peers, Jane commented that it was 'faster' and 'easier' to talk in English as opposed to Japanese, supporting Grosjean's (2010:45) argument that 'one usually attempts to use the language that will be the most successful for communication'.

A number of informants also chose English over Japanese in order to better express themselves and have more in-depth conversations that they couldn't yet achieve in Japanese. Jane, for example, explained:

> Laura was sort of my "in-depth" person. Because I couldn't talk in-depth in Japanese. So we spoke mostly in English because we could talk about more than what we were going to have for dinner sort of thing (Jane, Initial Interview).

This also accords with previous studies that have found that use of the L1 may enhance study abroad students' ability to disclose their emotions (Campbell 2011), and provides a means to express their foreigner identity and 'be themselves' in a more relaxed manner (Pearson-Evans 2006; Jackson 2008). Each of these factors is also associated with investment in relationships.

Although English was not Marie's native language, she was of a near-native level, and mentioned that she could 'stick to English fairly easily' when surrounded by NSs of English. While she claimed to use the Predominantly English variety with her British peers, she mentioned that 'most of them could speak French too, so it was a good combination'. Similarly, many of the questionnaire respondents whose L1 was not English also claimed to use the Predominantly English or Mixed varieties with other NNSs.

Although this section has thus far focused on the predominant pattern of English use, comments about Japanese being the 'common language' with some study abroad peers were also numerous. Sophie, for example, explained that 'if you are by yourself with people from other countries that your common language is Japanese, in MOST circumstances you're more likely to speak Japanese'. Phoebe also stated that 'there are some students from Taiwan and Vietnam and Thailand where we converse JUST in Japanese because that's the common language, so I was glad about that'. Similarly, QR19 commented: 'we had many foreign students whose level of English was not very high and who preferred using Japanese. So for example I spoke Japanese with the girls from Egypt and Korea'. Angela also claimed to use Japanese with students from China, Russia, and Taiwan, and Marie with students from China and Korea. Indeed, Ikeda and Bysouth (2013) have also found that for exchange students in Japan, Japanese is the lingua franca used with other international students with whom no other common language is shared.

Importantly, QR54 commented that she felt more confident using Japanese with Chinese living in Japan than with native Japanese. She explained that this was because

> [T]hey weren't NSs picking up and every little mistake. It was all about communication and not about grammatically correct sentences. It gave me a lot of confidence to communicate in Japanese.

Tanaka (2007) has also observed that it was easier for Japanese students studying abroad in New Zealand to establish regular interactive relationships with other NNSs compared to NSs due to a similar level of L2 proficiency.

In addition to Japanese, Alex also had some knowledge of both Chinese and Korean, and claimed to use these languages with students from the respective countries. He claimed that with his Chinese friends they communicated entirely in Chinese for the first three months, however, that 'as they got more proficient in Japanese, and my Chinese got worse, we would use Japanese more, like only Japanese'. Alex appeared to exhibit great investment in his second language usage, stating that 'I don't really like to use English towards people who speak a language that I can use myself, because I can use that'. Moreover, it was previously mentioned that he expressed his firm belief about being proactive in using Japanese, and that he tried to avoid English speakers in order to force himself to use Japanese.

A number of questionnaire respondents also indicated that their own of others' investment in L2 Japanese influenced their language selection. QR19 commented: 'We had many students who actively wanted to avoid English, so that also contributed'. Similarly, QR23 explained:

> There weren't many Americans in my program, and everyone was really into Japanese study (we were *nikkensei* [Japanese government scholarship students]), so I think we all made active attempts to kind of bar English.

On the other hand, QR13 indicated that she used 'equal parts Japanese and English' with her friend April, 'since she wanted to really work on her Japanese while she was there'. In other words, it was not necessarily QR13's investment in the L2, but that of her friends' that influenced their language use patterns. Nevertheless, these findings reflect those of Ikeda and Bysouth (2013), who also observed that some international students in Japan to prefer

to speak exclusively Japanese, often because they believe this would increase their proficiency.

In the current study, Phoebe also exhibited investment in her Japanese usage, claiming that even though one of her study abroad peers, Sayaka[10], had fluent L2 knowledge of English, she preferred to use Japanese with her. She explained:

> I just prefer speaking Japanese to her, because I don't speak Taiwanese. So I don't speak English to her even though she understands it. Like we're studying Japanese so I feel like I might as well use Japanese. And also that relationship was established in Japanese (Phoebe, Initial Interview).

When asked why her relationship with Sayaka was established in Japanese and not English despite her high English proficiency, Phoebe explained that when she first arrived at the dormitory, she observed that everyone was speaking Japanese with Sayaka and a few others, including Hiro[11] and Binh. Phoebe therefore realised that 'they were the people who spoke Japanese all the time in the dorm, so… [I] started speaking Japanese to them because that's what everyone was doing'. In other words, Phoebe's language selection with Sayaka appeared to be influenced by the participant-related factors of 'history of linguistic interaction', as well 'investment in the L2'.

Jane also provided an interesting example of the impact of 'history of linguistic interaction' and 'composition of the group' on language selection with two of her Australia peers, Laura and Lilly. She mentioned that although she primarily used English with Laura, if interacting with Lilly, the conversation would be in Japanese. Jane explained that this was

> Only because Lilly and Elise, who was the French student, were pretty much attached at the hip. And Elise doesn't speak English very well. So [Laura and I] were very accustomed to talking to Lilly in Japanese because Elise was usually present. So even if Elise wasn't present, if Lilly was there it was mostly Japanese (Jane, Initial Interview).

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[10] Note that this student adopted a Japanese name whilst in Japan as her Taiwanese name was too difficult for others to pronounce.
[11] As with Sayaka, this Thai student also adopted a Japanese name.

Jane's comment above also indicates the influence of composition of the group on patterns of language selection, which is further discussed in section 6.3.2 below as a situation-related factor.

6.3.2. Situation-related factors

The informants identified five key situational factors that influenced their language selection with NNSs during study abroad: composition of the group, presence of monolingual speakers, location or setting of interaction, fatigue or lack of time, and program requirements. Firstly, Oscar summed up the commonly expressed influence of the composition of the group on language selection as follows:

> With most of the foreign students - the only time we speak Japanese is because we are surrounded by Japanese people. Or because we are in a group, which was actually pretty rare. Most of the people will speak English no matter where they are from. But sometimes some people don't speak English so then we would speak Japanese (Oscar, Initial Interview).

In other words, Japanese was used with NNSs when monolingual Japanese or non-English speaking foreigners were present. Sophie also mentioned that 'when all students and all staff are present… that's the main factor that drives everyone to speak Japanese'. Japanese was therefore the dominant language during the group trips organised by her language institute, as well as for completing group projects and speeches after each trip. Sophie explained that the teachers chose the groups, and that Japanese was used within them in order to not isolate anyone.

Each of the other focal informants and a number of questionnaire respondents also mentioned that the key time they would use Japanese with other L1 speakers was if they were engaged in group interaction with Japanese people. QR75, for example, commented that with his NNS friend Lance, he would use 95% English but Japanese when a non-English speaking third party was present'. Similarly, Jane mentioned that her interaction with Danika, a Canadian peer, was '50/50 split' depending upon who else was present at the

time of interaction. If it was a Japanese person, they would use Japanese, but if it was an English-speaker, they would use English. As mentioned in Section 6.3.1, the fact that Jane claimed to use considerably more Japanese with other native English speakers was also influenced by the presence of monolingual Japanese in her dormitory, deeming Japanese the common language in frequent group socialisation.

Phoebe also claimed to use Japanese in group interaction, and explained her motivation behind doing so as follows:

> We'll speak in Japanese together just because it's the common language and it would probably feel a bit alienating if we spoke in English because it seems very like 'we're speaking English and then I'll speak Japanese to you', so it feels more close that way (Phoebe, Initial Interview).

Interestingly, however, she also indicated that her individual language choice in group situations was influenced by the perceived level of her NNS peers' Japanese proficiency. While she would use Japanese with those who held higher proficiency levels, she explained that students in the lower level Japanese classes would sometimes struggle following the Japanese conversations. Grosjean (2010:46) explains that this type of situation usually results in one of two outcomes: the person who has not sufficiently mastered the language of the conversation 'wander off' feeling excluded from the conversation, or, they stay, because 'the others will integrate her, even if it means having someone translate the major points of what is being said'. Phoebe's case resulted in the latter, because she would use English with them as 'a helping out type of thing' when they could not follow the conversation.

In her interaction journal completed during study abroad, Phoebe also provided an interesting example of language negotiation that occurred between herself, her native English-speaker friends Josie and Dave, and her Taiwanese friend Sayaka. She detailed a

one-hour interaction that occurred over eating Ramen, and claimed to use half-Japanese and half-English. In the subsequent interview, she explained:

> Because Sayaka's English comprehension skills were so good, there'd be times when we would speak a sentence to her in English because we didn't know the Japanese. She had N1 Japanese[12] and her English was, her understanding was the same kind of level. So we'd often speak English as a group, and then like in that situation, Sayaka was next to me and the other two were there, so if I spoke to Sayaka I'd use Japanese, and I'd speak to them, as a group in English, because she could understand (Phoebe, Interview 2).

Furthermore, Phoebe also explained that non-reciprocal language use between Sayaka and Dave was common, because his grammar was not as advanced as her English comprehension. Phoebe stated that 'they'd both understand each other, but just speak in opposite languages. So that kind of thing happened a lot. We'd speak to Sayaka in English, and she'd respond in Japanese'. As previously mentioned, however, Phoebe maintained that if it were just herself and Sayaka, they would only use Japanese. Similarly, Marie claimed that with Yuka, a half Japanese-half Romanian who grew up in France, she would use French during individual interaction, but English when there were other English speakers present, and Japanese if other NSs were present. Each of these examples also indicates the complexity of language selection, in that it not only depends upon situational factors such as how many NSs and NNSs are present, but concurrently on a number of previously-discussed participant-related factors such as proficiency and/or investment in the L2 as well.

As Sophie's initial interview, interaction journal and subsequent interview were undertaken while she was in Japan on her study abroad program, her data provides several other concrete and interesting examples of situational factors influencing Japanese use with native or native-like speakers of English, particularly in regards to location/setting of interaction. The first episode Sophie documented was when she and her friends went for a walk after finishing their final research presentations. In her journal she wrote that they used Japanese

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[12] N1 is the highest level of the previously mentioned Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT).

and English to discuss their plans for the night and weekend ahead. In the subsequent interview, she explained:

> We find a lot that after big events like *happyōkai* (presentations) and interview or discussion class, we will always speak Japanese for like the first hour of meeting up, and then we'll get tired or lazy, and break into English again. So you'll have a point where you exit class and your Japanese proficiency is really high, but then you get tired and it gradually goes down into English mode (Sophie, Interview 2).

It therefore appears that intensive exposure to Japanese may be facilitative of Japanese usage for a short period afterwards, but that fatigue may trigger the return to English. Indeed, as Grosjean (2010:132) has explained, 'when bilinguals are tired… they naturally revert to the language in which they express their emotions, be it their first or second language'. This claim is also congruent with Kurata's (2007) findings, where her participants' often chose their L1 over Japanese due to fatigue or lack of time.

The next entry in Sophie's journal was on the same night, where she and the same group of friends went to Karaoke and sang songs and spoke in Japanese, which Sophie found 'very strange'. Although she was accustomed to using the Predominantly English variety with this group, she mentioned that whenever they 'got drunk', they often wanted to speak in Japanese, indicating the possible influence that alcohol consumption has on patterns of language use, a factor that was also mentioned by QR74. Although Sophie was accustomed to small talk with this group in Japanese, such as 'what are you looking forward to?' or 'what's happening back home?', during this interaction, one of the key topics of discussion was relationships. In the follow-up interview, Sophie explained that this event was

> [O]ne of the moments of my Japanese where I was like 'wow I can talk about relationships in Japanese?' Like at uni[versity] they never teach you how to speak about relationships, it's always about the government or trade or something like that. And then here we are doing REAL Japanese for a REAL situation. So yeah, it was really cool (Sophie, Interview 2).

It is clear that Sophie was impressed with herself for being able to discuss relationships in Japanese, which potentially increased her motivation concerning Japanese language use.

Another significant episode of interaction Sophie noted in her interaction journal occurred when she and yet the same group of friends went shopping one afternoon. She mentioned that while they were shopping they used the Predominantly English variety, but then used the Predominantly Japanese variety during the one-hour train trip home. When asked what impacted language choice here, Sophie explained that when shopping, it was very lively with considerable background noise. In other words, it was a location or setting where it was easy to 'hide' the use of English. Japanese trains, on the other hand, are significantly quiet, and she mentioned that in such a setting:

> You want to appear as though you're trying your best to assimilate into the Japanese culture. I think a bunch of really loud English-speaking students on the train is a whole lot like, 'oh no they're a bit dangerous and loud and foreign' (Sophie, Interview 2).

As Grosjean (1982:138) has previously suggested, 'bilinguals speaking among themselves may choose a particular language so as not to stand out from the people around them'. Sophie's comment also suggests a high level of integrative motivation, where by using Japanese, she and her friends wanted to appear as though they were trying hard to assimilate, and to differentiate themselves from other foreigners who were 'all touristy and things like that'. In other words, the decision to use Japanese on the train was also influenced by a participant-related factor, that of investment in the L2.

In final regards to situation-related factors, QR13 raised an important issue concerning program design and patterns of language use. She commented:

> We were required to speak Japanese at all times as part of our program. However, I would estimate that this did not endure beyond two or three weeks. It was frustrating for us as native English speakers to not understand each other, and it was especially hard since some of the students were only beginning learners of Japanese. I found that I spoke plenty of Japanese to my roommate and to other people, including my teachers, store clerks, police officers, subjects I was interviewing for my independent research project, and so on. So I did not feel that I was shortchanging myself or depriving myself of experience by speaking English with my fellow international students.

In other words, QR13 believed that although the program requirement to exclusively use

Japanese influenced her language selection at the beginning of her study abroad period, in the long-term, the participant-related factors of language proficiency, and quite likely investment in relationships, took precedence. While such a requirement may be beneficial in programs where all learners are of a higher proficiency, it appears that this was not the case in QR13's experience. Perhaps a requirement to use the TL for a minimum of two hours a day would be more achievable and helpful, as was the case in the programs in the study of Dewey et al. (2013).

6.3.3. Discourse content-related factors

The informants indicated two key discourse-related factors influencing their language use with NNSs during study abroad: topic of discourse and common L2 words. With regards to topic of discourse, Phoebe and Sophie mentioned various topics that influenced a switch to Japanese with NNSs with whom they usually used the Predominantly English variety. Phoebe claimed to use Japanese with other native English speakers 'when it tends to be based around study, or just very leisurely things'. Mirroring the findings of Kurata (2011), Sophie mentioned that she would sometimes use Japanese when 'speaking about characteristic Japanese things: Japanese culture, Japanese music, those sorts of things'. This can be defined as 'cultural specificity', where, as stated by Grosjean (2010:53), 'certain notions or concepts are simply better expressed in the other language'. Similarly, Marie also indicated she would sometimes switch from English or Japanese to French when talking about topics such as French wine.

In terms of the second discourse content-related factor, Sophie explained:

> Words that we find we use a lot more in Japanese, like *shashin* (photo), because wherever we go we always want to take a photo, *daijyōbu* (okay), *genki* (well, lively) and just like *eki* (station), and if there were like 100 most frequently used words in Japanese, we'd say the sentence in English and insert those ones (Sophie, Interview 2).

This comment indicates that Sophie and her network members engaged in 'insertion' type

code switching, where English served as the base language and constituents of Japanese were inserted for certain words or expressions (cf. Muysken 2000:60-61). Similarly, QR7 and QR9 both mentioned that with one of their NNS friends they would use most English with 'Japanese slang thrown in', while QR13 stated that 'most of the international students… sprinkled in a lot of Japanese words and phrases' into their English. Some informants, such as QR27, called such language use 'Japlish'.

Li (1998) and Jackson (2008) have also observed similar phenomena, where Hong Kong speakers of English insert isolated English lexicon into predominantly Cantonese discourse. Jackson found that this assisted her informants in better expressing their ideas, and served as an identity and group membership marker, as well as a status symbol (p. 201-2). Additionally, Auer (2005), McKay (2005) and Myers-Scotton (1993, 2005) have also found that insertion-type code switching may be utilised by L2 speakers to increase or decrease intergroup distance or affiliation. In the case of the informants highlighted above, it appears that by code-mixing Japanese and English with their English-speaking peers, they were expressing their affiliation with Japan, and their L2 Japanese identity. Such patterns of language use also allow learners of lower L2 proficiency to creatively utilise the vocabulary they do know, and display their investment in the L2 to some degree.

6.3.4. Interactional function-related factors

Although only one informant, QR56, mentioned any interactional function-related factors influencing language selection with NNSs during study abroad, her comment is of importance. She stated: 'I also liked speaking English knowing that not many Japanese NSs would understand'. Indeed, Grosjean (1982; 2010) has also identified the act of excluding someone as an interactional function-related factor influencing language selection, though warns that such a decision 'can backfire and create an embarrassing situation' (2010:47). One could also suggest that perhaps QR56's use of English in the presence of NSs was a

marker of his identity as a foreigner; however, unfortunately his questionnaire data did not include any such comments.

6.4. Summary

This chapter has explored the informants' various language use patterns during study abroad. In the majority of cases, the Predominantly Japanese variety tended to be used more frequently with Japanese NSs and international students who did not have a functional fluency in English or other L1, whereas the Predominantly English or Other language varieties tended to be used more frequently with everyone else. Importantly, it was found that the choice of one language over another was not always constant, and depended upon a multitude of different and often interrelated factors. These were classified in terms of Grosjean's (1982, 2010) framework, and are summarised in Table 19 below. As not all of these factors were found to influence language choice with both NSs and NNSs, those influential with only one or the other are indicated in parentheses.

Table 19 Factors influencing patterns of language choice during study abroad

Participants	*Situation*
- Learners' and their social network members' proficiency in English, Japanese, and/or other language(s) -Investment in relationships (NNSs only) -Investment in L2 by learners and their social network participants -Preference to use L1 with other L1 speakers (NNSs only) -Preference of interlocutor (NSs only) -History of linguistic interaction -Prior experiences abroad (NSs only) -Ethnic appearance (NSs only) -Desire to appear assimilated (NNSs only)	-Location/setting -Presence of monolingual speakers -Composition of group -Fatigue or lack of time (NNSs only) -Program requirement
	Function of interaction -To exclude someone (NNSs only) -Providing/requesting L2 assistance (NSs only)
Content of discourse -Topics -Common L2 words	*Channel of interaction* -Written (NSs only) -Spoken (NSs only)

In terms of participant-related factors, the overarching influential factor appeared to be perceived proficiency of the informants' and their network members' shared language. Other key participant-related factors identified by multiple focal informants were investment in relationships (in terms of self-disclosure), investment in the L2, preference to use the L1 with other L1 speakers, preference of interlocutor, history of interaction, and previous experience abroad. With regards to situation-related factors, it was found that interactions that occurred immediately before or after class, or involved alcohol consumption contributed to greater Japanese use with other learners; however, fatigue or lack of time could also result in a return to English. The composition of the group was also influential in group interaction, where the dominance of English speakers would result in greater English usage. On the other hand, presence of monolingual Japanese in dormitory or club settings, for example, was found to encourage greater Japanese use by the informants.

Compared to participant-related and situation-related factors influencing language choice, only a smaller number of interactional function-related and discourse content-related factors were identified. With regards to function of interaction, it was found that the acts of exclusion, and requesting or providing L2 assistance impacted language choice. In terms of discourse-content related factors, several of the informants identified the fact that the topic of discourse influenced language choice with both NSs and NNSs. In addition, a number of informants also claimed that they and their non-native peers would often code-switch to Japanese when using common Japanese phrases or words, including slang. This was not only related to discourse, but was also a means of expressing their identity and investment in relation to the L2.

Importantly, this chapter also identified an additional category of factors influencing language selection, namely channel of interaction. A number of informants indicated that

although they used Predominantly Japanese when speaking with NSs, they would at times switch to English for written modes of communication. This was influenced by (i) informants' preference, (ii) network members' desire to practice their L2, and (iii) informants' and/or network members' L2 proficiency.

In sum, these first three analysis chapters have shown that although each of the informants had unique study abroad experiences, there were areas of commonality with regards to the nature of their networks and interaction, their patterns of language use, and the factors influencing each of these. Chapters 7, 8, and 9 will now examine the informants' experiences post-study abroad, with a focus on ongoing engagement with Japan, social networks, and patterns of language use and selection.

7. STUDY ABROAD COMPLETION AND ONGOING LIFE TRAJECTORIES

And because I've now been to Japan, I'm more interested in keeping up a Japan connection – Angela, 15 years post-study abroad

7.1. Introduction

The above quote from Angela provides a concise starting point for the latter three analysis chapters of this thesis, which focus on the informants' post-study abroad experiences. This chapter examines the informants' ongoing engagement with Japan and Japanese speakers throughout their life trajectories. Section 7.2 provides an overview of the impact of study abroad experiences on ongoing engagement with Japan and Japanese speakers. Section 7.3 then examines networks in the initial post-study abroad period, and Section 7.4 focuses on the informants' life trajectories after study abroad completion. Sections 7.3 and 7.4 also identify some of the factors influencing ongoing interaction and networks with Japanese speakers, discussed in relation to key stages of the informants' life trajectories, including immediate post-study abroad period, ongoing studies, working life, and family life. Factors identified as common to all stages of the informants' life trajectories are then discussed in the following chapter in a more systematic way. In both of these chapters, influential factors are classified according to Fehr's (1996; 2000) previously introduced framework of factors influencing friendships.

7.2. Looking back, moving forward

As seen in the chapters above, the informants in this research had differing study abroad experiences, particularly with regards to degree of interaction with NSs and opportunities for TL use. This section aims to provide an overview of how differences in study abroad experiences impacted ongoing engagement with Japan and Japanese speakers once the informants completed their programs and were dislocated from Japan.

Importantly, each of the informants exhibited an ongoing interest in Japan, which was often intensified by their study abroad experiences. The view of most of the informants is well summed up by a comment by Angela, stating: 'I think there is a special place for Japanese people in my heart because of that one year'. In the vast majority of cases, study abroad appeared to induce explorations of identity, of future goals, and of the place for Japanese in the informants' lives. QR74, for example, commented: 'studying in Japan GREATLY affected my life in almost all ways'. Similarly, QR68 stated: 'studying in Japan and the networks I created there have greatly helped me later in both my personal and professional life'. Indeed, previous scholarship has shown that study abroad often results in the incorporation of the host culture into program participants' identities, as well as an ongoing desire to maintain a connection with the host culture as a significant life component (e.g. Fridhandler 2006). As will be further illustrated in the sections below, while the majority of informants incorporated Japan and Japanese speakers into their lives post-study abroad, the degree to which they did was often associated with their study abroad experiences.

Firstly, it was found that those informants who effectively established networks with NSs and had plentiful opportunities to use the TL during study abroad often continued to create opportunities for interaction, network development/maintenance and TL use once returning to their home countries. In particular, Jane, Oscar, Marie, Angela and a number of questionnaire respondents who actively went out of their way to establish networks with NSs during study abroad also enthusiastically engaged in Japan-related clubs, associations or groups once they returned to their home universities. Importantly, Angela explained that socialising and establishing friendships with NSs in Australia was her 'chance to give back the same amount of hospitality that people showed [her] in that one year [of study abroad]'.

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Although Phoebe was overwhelmingly satisfied with the networks she established during study abroad, it was shown in Chapter 5 that, unlike the informants above, she primarily relied upon 'required meeting contexts' provided by her study abroad program structure to bring her into contact with NSs. As will be further discussed in Section 7.4.1, this behaviour continued in the post-study abroad period, where she did not appear to be proactive in seeking out opportunities to meet and interact with TL speakers, and as such, had not yet established any further NS contacts since returning to Australia.

Secondly, it was found that informants who mentioned being unsatisfied with their interactions and/or degree of network development with NSs during study abroad went in one of two directions. The first of these was a 'turning of the page' on engagement with Japanese language and its speakers. In particular, Carla, QR46 and QR66 each indicated that after study abroad completion they rarely interacted with NSs or used the TL for communicative purposes, and that they had no reason or real desire to do so. It appeared likely that their difficulties in establishing rewarding relationships with NSs during study abroad not only resulted in little to no maintenance of NS networks from this period, but possibly also transferred to a lack of motivation to seek out further relationships after returning home.

In contrast to these informants' experiences, Sophie and QR67 both recognised the importance of the little interaction they had achieved with NSs during study abroad, and appeared to reflect upon this paucity of interaction to establish strategies for enhancing their interaction and social networks with TL speakers after returning home. QR67 stated that during study abroad he regrettably limited 'the growth of [his] Japanese language abilities by not having regular conversation partners'. Thus, once he returned to Germany, he actively sought out Japanese friends and conversation partners at his university, which he

believed 'was the best opportunity to sustain language ability'. As will be discussed in Section 8.2.2, once returning to Australia, Sophie also attended Japan-related events with the goal of establishing NS friends with whom to use Japanese. More detailed discussion of the informants' networks in the first few months post-study abroad is presented in the following section.

7.3. Networks in the initial post-study abroad period

In this section, a discussion of maintenance and development of TL-speaking networks in the immediate post-study abroad period is presented, based upon the informants' accounts of the first few months after study abroad program completion. In order to enhance the reliability of the immediate post-study abroad recollections, the discussion is primarily based around the focal informants who completed study abroad programs during 2012, and who had returned home no more than 9 months prior to their commencement in this study (cf. Table 8 in Section 3.5.2 for overview of focal informants' post-study abroad backgrounds). From here on, this group of focal informants, namely Sophie, Jane, Oscar and Phoebe, will be referred to as the 'short-term focal informants'. When relevant, retrospective accounts of the immediate post-study abroad period from the remaining 'longer-term' focal informants and questionnaire respondents are also drawn upon.

7.3.1. Overview of post-study abroad networks

Personal experience and observation suggests that for any study abroad student, the process of returning home after program completion is usually characterised by a rekindling of relationships back home, as well as at least some degree of interaction with networks established abroad. Indeed, this was the case for the short-term focal informants in the present study. For example, having been back in Australia for one-week (after traveling through Asia for a month after completion of her study abroad program), Phoebe commented that she was 'busy catching up with people [in Australia]', but at the same time

had been keeping in regular contact with her closer NS and NNS network members maintained from her study abroad period. Similarly, Oscar recalled that in the 'few months or so' immediately post-study abroad, he was having at least weekly interaction with his pre-study abroad NS and NNS network members who were still currently in Australia, and had also been in contact with his closer NS and NNS network members from during study abroad at least three or four times, and still had weekly contact with one of them.

Figure 10 below presents the short-term focal informants' network composition in the immediate post-study abroad period. In addition to NS and NNS network members maintained from prior to, and during study abroad, it also indicates new contacts established in the initial few months post-study abroad. As the focal informants completed interviews at varying post-study abroad periods, the time elapsed since program completion is included in the figure. For Sophie, Oscar, and Jane, this data was obtained from their first post-study abroad interview. As Phoebe had only been back in Australia for one week at the time of her first post-study abroad interview, however, her second interview, completed 7-months post-study abroad, proved more beneficial for measuring active interaction and network maintenance.

Figure 10 Short-term focal informants' network composition in immediate post-study abroad period
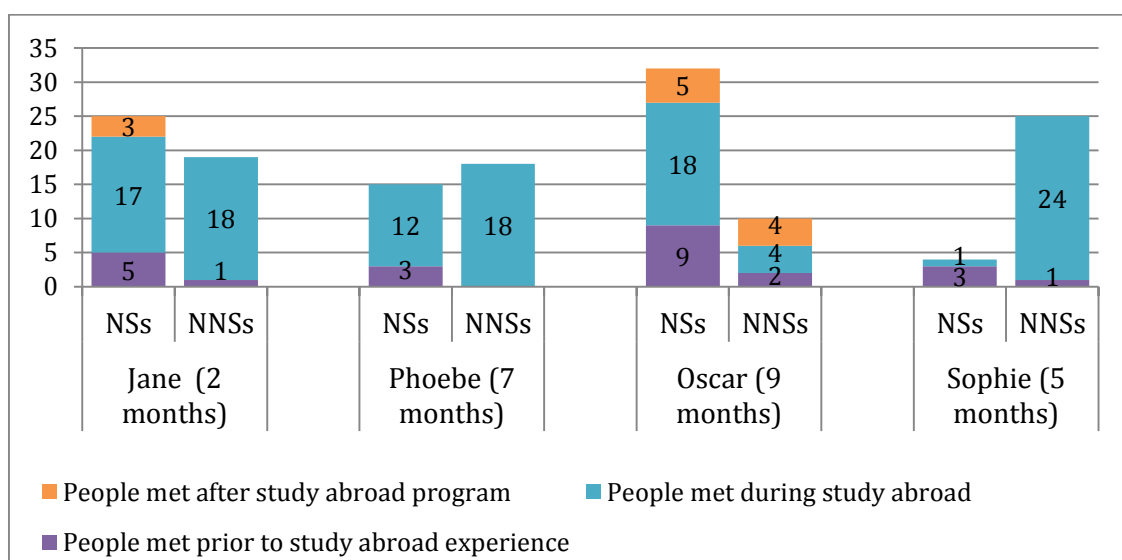
While the focus of this section is on post-study abroad networks, it is first necessary to comment on networks established pre-study abroad. Although the short-term informants mentioned a considerable number of pre-study abroad friends who were also learners of Japanese, with the vast majority of these individuals, Japanese was only used in class or occasionally if discussing homework. Thus, they are not included in Figure 10 above, where the focus is on Japanese *speakers*. As can be seen above, Sophie, Jane and Oscar have one or two of such NNSs whom they met prior to study abroad, and including Phoebe, they each maintain contact with three to nine NSs from this same period.

The vast majority of these pre-study abroad network members were initially met in the Australian university context, through classes or Japan-related clubs. Additional meeting contexts included high school, through family friends, or in Phoebe's case, a high school exchange trip to Japan. While all of the pre-study abroad NNSs were currently residing in Australia, six of Oscar's NS contacts, five of Jane's, and two of Phoebe's pre-study abroad NS contacts had returned to (or still remained in) Japan since the short-term informants completed their study abroad programs. Hence, post-study abroad interaction with such network members was via long-distance, and primarily online.

In Figure 10 above, it can be seen that with the exception of Sophie's NS network, the number of NS and NNS network members maintained from study abroad significantly outnumbered the number of network members maintained from the pre-study abroad period. Although the degree of NS and NNS network expansion varied from informant to informant, the findings affirm the importance of study abroad for fostering ongoing contact between Japanese learners and other TL speakers. In particular, Jane stated: 'I have more Japanese friends, so there's more opportunities to use [Japanese]'. Of the questionnaire respondents,

the vast majority indicated that that study abroad greatly (n=34) or somewhat (n=20) impacted their social networks, while only three indicated that it did not have any impact.

Referring back to Figure 10, it was shown that in addition to network maintenance, at the time of their first post-study abroad interview, Jane and Oscar, who had been back in Australia for two months and nine months respectively, also indicated that they had managed to establish new TL-speaking contacts in the first few months after their program completion. Each of these contacts was formed in the university setting: Jane established relationships with two NSs through a visitor session[13] in her Japanese language class and one at a Japan-related club, whilst Oscar met two NSs in his Chinese language class, and five NSs and four NNSs at Japan-related clubs. Although their networks did not expand as much as expected, as will be further discussed in Section 7.4.1, classes and Japan-related activities were identified as environmental factors that considerably promoted interaction and network development with TL speakers both in the initial and ongoing post-study abroad period.

In contrast to Oscar and Jane, interviews with Sophie and Phoebe at five and seven months post-study abroad, respectively, indicated that they had not yet established any new TL-speaking network members, but that they desired to do so. For these focal informants, and many of the questionnaire respondents, there appeared to be a stronger focus on maintenance as opposed to development of TL-speaking networks in the initial post-study abroad period, where this lack of development often related to the situational factor of availability. Although this will be further discussed in Section 7.4.1, when examination of networks throughout the life stage of ongoing studies is presented, Sections 7.3.2 and 7.3.3

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[13] In a visitor session, NSs of the TL are invited by the teacher(s) to 'visit' the language class and interact with the students using the TL.

below will firstly provide a more in-depth analysis of the informants' network maintenance in the initial post-study abroad period, as well as factors influencing this.

7.3.2. Initial maintenance of study abroad networks

As mentioned in Chapter 2, although previous research (McMillan & Opem 2004; Dwyer 2004; Nunan 2006; Coleman & Chafer 2010, 2011) has found that a significant number of study abroad alumni have maintained contact with both study abroad peers and host national contacts established while abroad, there does not yet appear to be any research that has investigated what degree of their network they actually maintained. By examining the short-term focal informants' social networks both during and post-study abroad, it was possible to calculate what percentage of their network they had maintained contact with after completion of their study abroad program. This data is presented in Figure 11 below, which also includes the time elapsed since program completion.

Figure 11 Focal informants' study abroad network maintenance: short-term
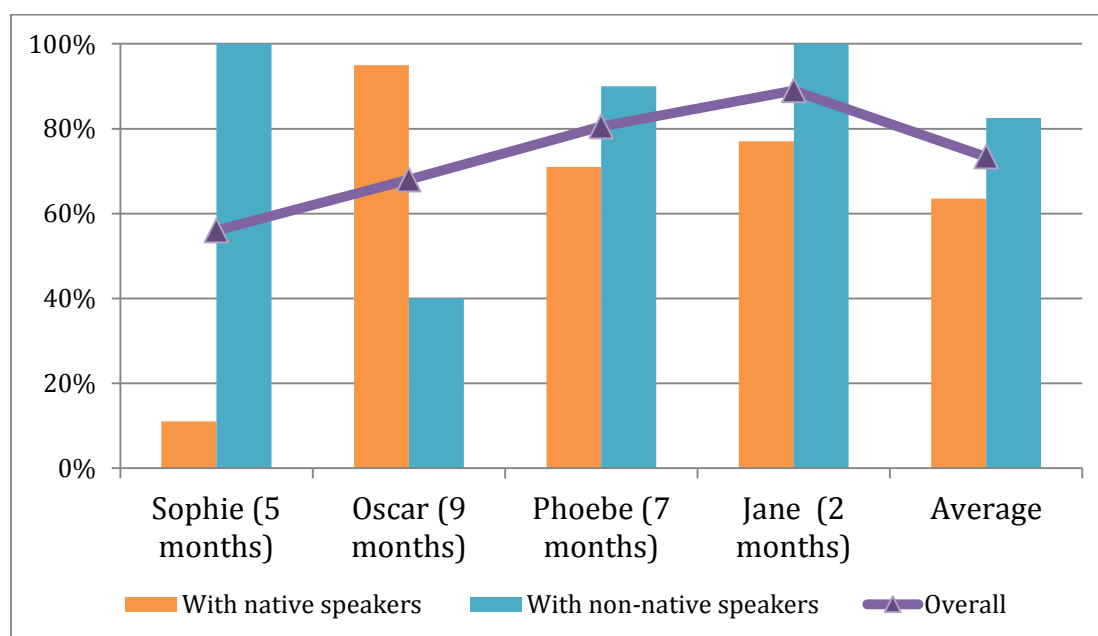
As can be seen, the short-term focal informants each claimed to have maintained contact with more than 50% of their overall Japanese-speaking networks established during study abroad, with NS network maintenance ranging from 11% to 95%, and NNS network

maintenance ranging from 40% to 100%. Perhaps one of the most striking findings here is Sophie's considerably lower maintenance of NS networks established during study abroad.

Although studying at a language institute did not greatly contribute to Sophie's NS network, her Japanese-speaking NNS network went from a size of one to 25 as a result of study abroad, and of all the focal informants, she is still in contact with the largest number of study abroad peers. Compared to Sophie, the three other focal informants maintained contact with a significantly larger percentage of their NS networks established while abroad (cf. Figure 11), and Figure 10 also showed that this was with a larger number of network members. Although factors influencing this maintenance will be further discussed in Section 7.3.3 below, this finding suggests that while a six-week study abroad program at a language institute may have a positive impact on international networks, participation in a one or two semester program at a Japanese university is potentially better at fostering enduring NS networks, as was found in Dwyer (2004).

The vast majority of longer-term focal informants – that is, those who had completed study abroad at least four years prior to their participation in this study – also indicated that they maintained contact with a considerable percentage of their networks established during study abroad. Angela, for example, commented that study abroad 'helped me make lots of different Japanese friends. I'm also friends with all these people all around the world. I wouldn't have had that exposure if I hadn't gone'. In contrast, Alex only claimed to maintain contact with one NS and two NNS network members established during study abroad, and while Carla is still in contact with 14 NNSs (albeit not using Japanese with them for communication purposes), she has not maintained contact with any NSs she met during her study abroad experience. Factors influencing degree of network maintenance in the initial post-study abroad period are discussed below.

7.3.3. Factors influencing initial maintenance of study abroad networks

While the informants identified a multitude of factors influencing patterns of network maintenance post-study abroad, this section focuses specifically on initial network maintenance, when informants first returned to their home countries at time of program completion. The focal informants and questionnaire respondents identified two key factors. The first is a dyadic factor, namely closeness of relationship during study abroad, and the second is a technological factor, use of common technology.

Closeness of relationship during study abroad

Not unsurprisingly, each of the focal informants indicated that the closer the relationship they developed while on study abroad, the more likely they were to have stayed in contact. The commonly expressed experience is well summed up by Phoebe's comment, where she stated: 'The people I was closer with and had stronger bonds with in Japan… I have kept, and wanted to keep, solid contact with'.

The impact of closeness of relationship was particularly pronounced in Sophie's and Carla's cases, where they both claimed to have difficulties establishing meaningful relationships with NSs during their study abroad period, which led to a lack of maintenance upon returning to their home countries. Interestingly, Sophie explained that although she is connected on Facebook with the five NS contacts she established during her six-week study abroad program, she has only had active contact with two of them since leaving Japan. Thus, she commented that she would not include the three others in her current (active) social network. Similarly, although Carla mentioned having her buddy's email address saved in her gmail contact list, she claimed that she'd 'never actually been brave enough to contact her and say "hey"'. For these two informants, therefore, the experience of studying

abroad did not greatly contribute to their NS networks in terms of size or ongoing opportunities for TL use.

In contrast, when it came to NNS study abroad peers, both Sophie and Carla claimed to establish close and rewarding friendships, and to still be in contact with the vast majority, if not all of them. As previously mentioned, the size of Sophie's Japanese-speaking NNS network significantly increased as a result of study abroad. As Sakeda (2013) has found, interaction with other learners of Japanese may be just as important as interaction with NSs: it offers opportunities to discuss the language and culture beyond the classroom confines and share intercultural experiences, which may incidentally have a positive influence on their L2 selves and motivation towards studying and/or using the L2. Indeed, as will be shown in Chapter 9, Sophie continued to use Japanese with, and gain Japanese-related support from her NNS networks established during study abroad. In contrast, although the size of Carla's NNS network doubled, she claimed that she does not ever use Japanese with them for communicational purposes.

In addition to the focal informants' above-mentioned accounts, 41 instances of the impact of 'closeness of relationship' on network maintenance were coded from the questionnaire respondents' comments concerning current relationships with the three most significant NS and NNS contacts they established while on study abroad. For example, when explaining why certain relationships had endured, QR36 commented that 'we became so close that it would be weird not to keep in contact', and QR63 stated that one of his NNS contacts was 'too good a friend to lose contact with'. On the other hand, some questionnaire respondents also commented on how a lack of closeness resulted in dissolution of relationships after study abroad completion. QR39, for example, mentioned that he did not maintain contact with one of his NS contacts from during study abroad because their relationship 'just wasn't

close enough'. Similarly, QR53 mentioned that although she is connected with a previous co-resident from her dormitory on Facebook, they do not have any interaction because 'the connection just wasn't as strong as with the other two, maybe because we became friends by association more than anything else'.

Use of common technology

Although numerous studies have found that geographic distance is an environmental factor that can be detrimental to relational maintenance (e.g. Johnson et al. 2003, 2004), the informants in this study attest to the fact that the impact of geographic distance has been significantly lessened by increased mobility and access to numerous communication channels, as also found in previous studies (e.g. Blieszner & Adams 1992; Wood 1995; Ryan, Sales, Tilki & Siara 2008). As stated by Ryan et al. (2008:686), 'new technology facilitates the continuity of transnational networks', and increases the ability to maintain close and regular links with geographically dispersed networks. Indeed, as mentioned above, the other most frequently cited factor influencing initial maintenance post-study abroad was a technological factor, the use of common technology. In order for a relationship to continue over distance, access to a shared means of communication is required, and use of mediated communication is considered an important relational maintenance strategy (Canary & Stafford 1994).

The cross-sectional nature of this research meant that the impact of changes in technology was reflected in the informants' accounts of their more immediate post-study abroad experiences. Having completed her study abroad program at a time when email was only just starting to be used (1998), Angela indicated that in the initial post-study abroad period, she relied on letters to maintain contact with NSs, and letters or email with NNS contacts if they had email access. Concerning network maintenance with NSs, she explained that

'internet wasn't yet in Japanese, it was all in English at that stage. Japan hadn't started to develop Japanese websites. So it was difficult to email'.

In addition to email, one of the other most significant advances in technology in regards to this research was the worldwide introduction of Facebook in 2006. While it is currently the most commonly utilised means of interaction amongst the informants in the current study, 12 of the questionnaire respondents who completed study abroad prior to 2006 mentioned currently interacting with one or more network members maintained from study abroad via exclusively 'traditional' forms of interaction, namely letters, email, and/or telephone. While the questionnaire did not elicit any data concerning initial means of contact, we can assume that even for the respondents who claimed to currently interact exclusively via Facebook, at least until 2006, they would have relied on the aforementioned traditional channels of communication. In contrast to Angela and the above-mentioned questionnaire respondents, the remaining focal informants and questionnaire respondents completed study abroad after the worldwide-spread of Facebook, and also had access to a wide range of other ICTs. Reflecting the findings of Shiri (2015), social media (e.g. Facebook) and other technologies such as email and Skype were the primary means of network maintenance after study abroad completion.

With the exception of Alex, each of the other focal informants had Facebook accounts while they were in Japan, and Marie, Jane, and Phoebe each mentioned that the primary reason they had lost contact with some of their network members post-study abroad was because they did not have Facebook. QR67 also commented: 'As most Japanese friends are not connected to the same social media, contact has remained difficult'. Similarly, Alex explained that because he did not use Facebook at the time of his program completion, and did not obtain many of his study abroad network members' email addresses, he failed to

stay in contact with the vast majority of them in the initial post-study abroad period. This is in stark contrast to Oscar's reported behaviour, where he stated that 'before we left we made sure we [NS club members] all had everybody else's contact details. Most of them are on Facebook but those who weren't, we gave each other emails'. Although Alex's interaction with his study abroad networks had already significantly decreased while he was in Japan (cf. Chapter 4), these findings support Adams' (1998) argument that while communication technologies have increased the ability to contact long-distance friends, they are only beneficial if individuals take advantage of them.

Consistent with the findings of Ellison et al. (2007) and Lewis and West (2009), the focal informants who did use Facebook indicated that it was the most convenient and easiest way to maintain contact with both NS and NNS networks they had established while on study abroad. Phoebe, for example, observed that in order to maintain contact, 'everyone just uses Facebook mostly. It seems to be the most immediate and frequently checked sort of thing'. This was also reflected in comments from the questionnaire respondents: QR33, for example, stated that 'Facebook makes staying in contact easy!'

On the other hand, some study abroad network members' infrequent Facebook usage was a primary reason for discontinued contact once the informants completed their study abroad programs. Phoebe, for example, observed that her NS contacts either use Facebook 'a LOT or they don't use it at all'. Similarly, Oscar mentioned that although several of his NS contacts established during study abroad created an account specifically for the purpose of keeping in contact with him when he returned to Australia, 'they barely use it'. Rather, he found that his network members engaged with Twitter on a more frequent basis. In support of this, an International Communications Market Report by OfCom (2013:227) indicated that in August 2013, Twitter was more popular in Japan than Facebook, reaching 27% vs

24% of Japanese Internet users. In Australia, on the other hand, Facebook was far more popular than Twitter (59% vs 9%). Thus, it is possible that the misalignment of preferred SNS provider poses a cultural barrier to ongoing interaction with NS network members.

In addition to individual contact on Facebook, Sophie, Phoebe and Jane mentioned that they were members of Facebook 'groups' that were established while they were in Japan. These groups connected each of their study abroad program participants, as well as buddies in Phoebe's and Jane's cases, and were still being actively used after study abroad program completion. Such groups therefore appear to be an effective way of maintaining contact with a large number of people.

Although Sophie was also a member of a smaller Facebook Group for her 'clubbing friends' established in Japan, she explained:

> When we went back to our respective countries, we abandoned the Facebook Group and turned to WhatsApp, because everyone has access to their phones and WhatsApp every day, every hour, every minute. So that made it much easier (Sophie, Interview 3).

According to the WhatsApp website (www.whatsapp.com), 'WhatsApp Messenger is a cross-platform mobile messaging app which allows you to exchange messages without having to pay for SMS'. Additionally, users can create groups and send each other unlimited images and media messages. Sophie made particular use of 'group chat' with her 'clubbing friends', as did Jane with friends from the *Kaikan* (residence) on Line, another smartphone Instant Messaging (IM) app. Similar to Sophie, Jane claimed that Line was her every day and preferred means of contact, because messages came directly to her phone like text messages, she explained that she did not have to go out of her way to keep in contact like she did with friends who did not use Line. Furthermore, when discussing people she had lost contact with, Jane mentioned: 'It's not that I wouldn't talk to them, it's just that they don't really use Facebook and I don't have them on Line'. In other words, the process of

network maintenance was significantly aided by utilisation of the aforementioned forms of ICT, whether it was SNSs such as Facebook or IM Apps such as WhatsApp or Line.

Evidently, whereas study abroad students of the past may have only maintained contact with closer contacts due to the costs of postage and international phone calls, ICTs such as SNSs and IM apps provide an easy and cost- and time-efficient means of maintaining contact with a significantly larger number of people (e.g. Lewis & West 2009). An important theme that arose in the data analysis concerning Facebook usage in particular, however, was that that although being 'Facebook Friends' technically provides a means of network maintenance, the degree to which it is utilised for active interaction significantly differs between informants and their network members. Although this phenomenon will be further discussed in Section 8.5, it should be noted that a correlation between frequency of interaction and closeness of relationship was observed.

In sum, sections 7.3.1 and 7.3.3 above have discussed the various patterns of initial post-study abroad network maintenance and the key influential factors. Although common technology provided a means for ongoing relational maintenance with a considerable number of network members established during study abroad, whether or not interaction arose initially depended upon closeness of the relationship. The remainder of this chapter now provides a discussion of the informants' life trajectories and ongoing engagement with Japan and Japanese speakers.

7.4. Maintaining the Japan connection

As previous scholarship has shown, the hybrid nature of study abroad students' lives and identities means that their future life trajectories may go in multiple directions (Marotta 2008). Furthermore, it has also been found that as individuals move through various contexts and life stages, they are presented with different meeting opportunities that

influence the types of potential network members they come across (cf. Fischer 1982; Marsden 1990; Feld & Carter 1998; Bidart & Lavenu 2005). In other words, individual's social networks reflect their changing life circumstances, and subsequent needs and goals of social contact (Lang 2001). To this effect, Oscar commented that 'friendships are very much about where my life is at at the moment', and Alex believed that interaction is significantly influenced by 'the flow of life'.

The sections below thus provide an overview of the informants' life trajectories post-study abroad, focusing on the impact of study abroad on significant life events, and ongoing interaction and networks with Japanese speakers throughout key life stages. Section 7.4.1 focuses on continuation of studies, Section 7.4.2 on establishing a career path, and Section 7.4.3 on romantic relationships and family life. While these sections introduce factors that influenced the informants' interaction, network maintenance and development with Japanese speakers at specific life stages, as previously mentioned, factors found to be influential across all stages of the life trajectory will be discussed more systematically in the following chapter.

7.4.1. Continuation of studies and university life

In this section, discussion of informants' continuation of studies and university life is separated into three key sections: (i) the impact of study abroad on continuation of studies, (ii) continuation of studies and engagement with TL-speaking networks, and (iii) participation in subsequent study abroad programs.

Impact of study abroad on continuation of studies

Reflecting the findings of previous studies (McMillan & Opem 2004; Nunan 2006; Paige et al. 2009), it appeared that in general, studying abroad in Japan had a significant impact on both the questionnaire respondents' and focal informants' decisions concerning future studies. While the decision to study abroad itself may indicate a prior commitment to continuing with study, 26 questionnaire respondents indicated that it greatly impacted future academic choices, and a further 26 indicated that it had somewhat of an impact. On the contrary, only five indicated that it had no impact, and of these, four did not continue with any formal Japanese studies post-study abroad. With specific regard to subsequent language study, 28 respondents indicated that study abroad had a great impact, 25 indicated that it had somewhat of an impact, and four indicated that it had no impact. Of these four, two continued with Japanese studies post-study abroad, which suggests that they already had intentions to continue with Japanese study before their study abroad experience.

Of the focal informants, all but Carla and Oscar continued with their Japanese language studies post-study abroad. Although they mentioned a desire to continue with their studies, they both explained that due to various degree requirements, they were unable to do so. For Phoebe, study abroad 'rekindled [her] love for Japanese', and sparked a desire to maintain the language through both formal and informal study. Similarly, Sophie stated that study abroad 'had a big impact on study, not just Japanese but future science as well'. She believed that her study abroad experience, and in particular a field trip to a Japanese food factory, had 'pushed' her into thinking about doing Honours and future work in science translation. From this comment, it is evident that Sophie envisaged herself using Japanese in the future, and that study abroad had strengthened the link between Japanese and the educational and career domains of her possible self-concept (cf. Markus & Nurius 1986). Although the other focal informants did not explicitly mention the impact of study abroad on their further studies, the fact that Angela continued on to do Honours, and Marie

proceeded to Masters and Alex to a PhD in Japan-related fields clearly indicates their ongoing interest in Japan and Japanese studies. As discussed in the following chapter, this ongoing interest in Japan was an important personal factor influencing ongoing maintenance and development of TL-speaking networks.

Continuation of studies and engagement with TL-speaking networks

As one might assume, continuation of studies, and in particular, of Japanese studies, appeared to have a positive relationship with ongoing interaction and networks with Japanese speakers post-study abroad. In terms of network maintenance, it was found that continuation of studies provided an important shared activity, which facilitated interaction with NNS study abroad peers. In particular, Facebook was sometimes used as a means for sharing content related to Japanese language learning. For example, Sophie explained that in her previously mentioned study abroad Facebook Group, 'off and on people post videos, tips for studying, [and] good resources they find'. Phoebe also explained that she would occasionally discuss new content she had learned in Japanese class with her friend Josie maintained from study abroad. This provision of mutual support can also be considered a dyadic factor influencing relational maintenance, and is discussed in further detail in Section 8.3 of the following chapter.

In further regards to network maintenance, it was found that throughout the duration of ongoing studies, availability in terms of time and energy, classified by Fehr (2000) as a situational factor, influenced degree of interaction with networks established during study abroad. For example, five questionnaire respondents who were currently students mentioned that general busyness was a primary factor influencing a lack of sociability with their three most important contacts established during study abroad. Oscar also explained that contact with his networks in Japan was much less frequent during semester because he did not have

time to initiate conversations. Rather, it was during holiday periods that he would 'make time and…start messaging people [in Japan] with "Hi, how are you? How's it been?" Reflecting the findings of Kurata (2007), therefore, commitment to study and lack of time can negatively impact availability for interaction with contacts residing abroad during semester. In contrast to Oscar, however, Phoebe claimed to be more available to her networks residing abroad during semester compared to during holidays. She explained: 'Mid-semester, when it's just like steadily busy, it's like "I don't really want to do that assignment, I'll just jump on Facebook and talk to someone", that sort of thing'. On the other hand, holidays were an opportunity to 'get out of the house more' and 'go do stuff'.

With the exception of Carla and Sophie, each of the focal informants and a number of questionnaire respondents also mentioned that Japanese and/or other classes provided an environment conducive to the development of new NS and/or NNS networks. Interaction before, during, and after class appeared to be frequent, and other social activities were also reported. On the other hand, Oscar and Phoebe also mentioned that discontinuation of classes together could lead to less frequent interaction, and subsequent weakening of emotional closeness. Although Oscar and Phoebe still claimed to be enacting such relationships (albeit only occasionally), as Mollenhorst, Volker and Flap (2014) have found, when previously forced interactions in a shared context (such as class) cease, relationships are likely to be discontinued. Thus, in order to gain further opportunities for interaction with Japanese speakers, Oscar, along with many of the other informants, engaged in Japan-related extra-curricular activities, a kind of targeted socialisation.

According to Sias et al. (2008:9), targeted socialisation refers to 'socialising opportunities targeted toward either specific cultural groups or intercultural gatherings'. In other words, it is related to motivation for contact with TL-speakers, a personal factor influencing both

development and maintenance of networks. Indeed, Sias et al. (2008) found that targeted socialisation was an important factor influencing the development of intercultural friendships. In particular, they found that participating in structured intergroup activities could increase the likelihood of friendship formation. This was also the case in the present study, where Japan-related activities were identified as an environmental factor that considerably promotes interaction and network development with speakers of Japanese. This was significantly aided by the university context, which, according to Bidart and Lavenu (2005:371), supports 'open' forms of sociability that 'favour group life, and the growth of friendship networks'.

As mentioned in Section 7.2, informants who actively engaged in targeted socialisation post-study abroad were often those who had actively sought out relationships with NSs during study abroad. In other words, they transferred this strategy to their post-study abroad contexts. In particular, Alex, Angela, and a number of questionnaire respondents indicated that after returning to their home universities, they each signed up for Language Exchange programs,[14] and established a number of NS contacts, some of whom with they are still in contact. Oscar and Jane were also currently members of Japan-related clubs at university, and Angela had also been a member in 1999, prior to her graduation. These clubs naturally drew together large numbers of Japanese speakers and provided a 'required meeting context' to facilitate ongoing interaction.

Similarly, six of the questionnaire respondents also commented that participation in Japan-related clubs or societies (e.g. Japan Club, Language Club, Kendo Club, reading group, theatre group) offered opportunities for interaction, friendship development, and TL use

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[14] A Language Exchange program introduces local students and international students to one another for the purpose of promoting opportunities for reciprocal L2 practice. Usually, the two students are native speakers of the language their 'partner' is learning (Masuda 2007).

after returning from study abroad. QR23, for example, explained that she 'made effort to hang out with Japanese people', and to 'be in environments where [she] had no choice or it was a definite advantage to speak Japanese'. Participation in these various forms of targeted socialisation appeared to have dual goals: to practice or use Japanese language, and for interpersonal interaction with NSs. As will be seen in Section 8.2 of the following chapter, these goals were related to ongoing interest in Japan and investment in the Japanese language, both of which were identified as personal factors influencing ongoing engagement with TL-speaking networks throughout all stages of the informants' life trajectories.

The findings above also reflect that of Kudo and Simkin's (2003), in that shared activities or tasks are an important element of close friendship. In the present study, Oscar explained that if he has not seen someone on a regular basis, he is less likely to make the time to catch up, because he is 'too busy to try and keep up ALL my friendships at the same level [of closeness]'. On the other hand, he also believed that it is lack of regular contact that 'brings down the friendship level because you don't know what's going on [with them] lately'. In other words, while it was seen in sections 7.3.1 and 7.3.3 that closeness of relationship affects frequency of interaction, frequency of interaction is also a situational factor that may affect closeness of relationship, indicating a two-way correlation.

In addition to targeted socialisation within the university, several of the focal informants and questionnaire respondents also mentioned attending Japan-related associations and events outside of university. For example, when Marie was completing her Masters course, she actively participated in a Japanese Language Group, as well as two Japanese University Alumni Groups that were held in Melbourne. As will be discussed in Section 8.2.2, Sophie also immersed herself in Japan-related places and events available to her in Melbourne. Importantly, she mentioned that although people at these activities 'may not be able to

speak Japanese, [these] things could kind of quench a certain area and hold onto that [connection with Japan]'.

In contrast, several other informants mentioned that although they desired to engage in targeted socialisation and further develop their Japanese-speaking networks, opportunities to do so were negatively impacted by the previously mentioned situational-factor of 'availability'. Phoebe, for example, explained that although she was interested in joining a Japanese conversation group, 'the uni[versity] study schedule tends to make it just a little bit difficult to actually have the time to meet up with people, to go out of your way to meet up with people who speak Japanese'. Alex also commented that 'The PhD has had a HUGE influence I think. Not just in terms of Japanese interaction, but in terms of any interaction at all with anybody'. Similarly, QR17 wrote: 'I am in a PhD program, and although I would love to continue with my Japanese, I am simply too busy to add any more activities to my schedule'. Although conducted approximately 30 years ago, Hays' study (1984; 1985) also found that university students' availability in terms of schedules and the convenience of getting together was correlated with friendship development. As one might assume, the above cases also indicate a relationship between lack of availability, socialisation, and potential network development.

Fehr (1996:175) has also stated that if resources are already 'committed to existing friends, it is less likely that new friendships will be sought out'. Perhaps this is one of the reasons why the informants who completed study abroad within two years prior to data collection appeared to have more of a focus on network maintenance than network development, especially with NSs. They were less 'available' for new Japanese-speaking relationships because they were still maintaining considerable interaction with network members established either prior to or during study abroad. Marie, Angela, and a number of the

questionnaire respondents did, however, indicate that given time, changing contexts, and continued desire for interaction with Japanese speakers, networks developed post-study abroad are likely to eventually outweigh those maintained from prior to or during study abroad.

Participation in subsequent study abroad programs

As part of their ongoing studies, a number of the focal informants and questionnaire respondents also participated in additional study abroad programs, either to Japan or to other countries. Of the questionnaire respondents, six were currently graduate students in Japan, two had completed graduate programs in Japan, and two had returned to Japan for fieldwork as part of overseas-based PhD programs. While these 10 respondents did not specifically state that their initial study abroad programs influenced their decision to participate in subsequent study abroad, the majority (7/10) indicated that it did greatly or somewhat impact their future academic choices. Furthermore, five of them mentioned that the act of returning to Japan for a graduate program or fieldwork was a significant factor impacting their interaction, network maintenance and further network development with both NSs and NNSs. QR32, for example, commented: 'when I moved to Japan for my fieldwork, my community of Japanese speakers, both native and non-native, expanded hugely'. Similarly, QR19 commented: 'My PhD research included a one-year stay in Tokyo during which I met more Japanese persons than I could have ever imagined (and I'm still in contact with many of them)'. Reflecting the findings of previous studies (e.g. McMillan & Opem 2004; Nunan 2006), it was therefore also evident that a study abroad experience may result in repeated visits to the host country, and my findings above also indicate that subsequent visits to the host country continue to positively influence learners' networks with TL speakers. Geographic mobility was a situational factor found to influence network across all life phases, and is discussed in further detail in Section 8.4.2 of the following chapter.

Of the focal informants, Marie returned to Japan for a one-year intensive Japanese course a year after her initial university-level study abroad program completion, Sophie went on a one-semester exchange to Malaysia, and Oscar had been accepted to go on exchange to China and was in the process of applying for an internship in France. It was apparent that each of these informants in particular not only had a desire to engage with Japan throughout the continuation of their studies, but more generally, with other cultures. For example, prior to her study abroad program in Malaysia, Sophie commented:

> I'm interested to see how motivated I am when I get back from Malaysia, whether I'm still equally interested in Japan, or maybe branched out into other areas of Asia and my love of food science. Because I'll be doing a lot of related subjects over there that aren't offered at [my Australian university]. I'm really looking forward to it, just branching out in Asia and looking at other parts that I haven't really immersed myself in (Sophie, Interview 3).

Furthermore, both Marie and Oscar also indicated that their decision to go on a subsequent study abroad program was influenced not only by their initial study abroad to Japan, but also by the importance they both place on social interaction with TL speakers having experienced learning English through immersion in Australia.

7.4.2. Establishing a career path and life in the workforce

In this section, discussion of informants' career paths is separated into three key sections: (i) current students' career goals and preparation to enter the workforce, (ii) current professionals' career trajectories, and (iii) workplace environment and connection with Japan.

<u>Career goals and preparing to enter the workforce</u>

Although 92 of the 126 questionnaire respondents and all but two of the focal informants (Marie and Angela) were still students at the completion of data collection, comments concerning future career goals and the impact of study abroad were plentiful. The process of

career renegotiation after returning from study abroad has also been commented on in a number of previous studies (e.g. Arthur 2003; Fridhandler 2006; Mistretta 2008). Of the questionnaire respondents, 15 indicated that their subsequent career choices were 'greatly' impacted by study abroad, and a further 11 indicated that they were 'somewhat impacted'. QR31, who is currently a PhD student in Japan, commented:

> Although I had little-to-no connection with Japanese language or culture before studying abroad in Japan, my time in Japan (and subsequent time in American Zen temples descended from Japanese lineages) had an enormous impact on my life and choices to enter post-graduate study and career centered on Japanese religion.

In contrast, nine questionnaire respondents indicated that their subsequent career choices were 'not at all' impacted by study abroad. While the data was not obtained in the current study, it would have been interesting to know whether these respondents held Japan-related career goals or not, because, as Mistretta (2008) has found, the decision to go on study abroad itself may be determined by pre-existing professional goals. In other words, although they indicated that study abroad did not have an impact on their (envisaged) subsequent careers, it is possible that their career goals were firmly grounded pre-study abroad, and potentially in Japan-related fields.

Although this is just speculation for the questionnaire respondents, in line with the findings of Forsey et al. (2012), both Sophie and Phoebe indicated that their experiences abroad helped clarify their career goals. For example, in her final interview, Phoebe mentioned that she was considering applying for the Japan Exchange and Teaching Program[15] when she graduated. She explained:

> I'd thought about JET before - before going on Exchange…. [but] I always figured I'd make my decision after I got back…. So I went there and I realised that I loved living in the country… I'd say the actual experience of doing it and coming back and talking with people who have been on JET or who are preparing for JET and lots of

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[15] The Japan Exchange and Teaching Program (JET) is a Japanese government initiative that brings graduates to Japan as Assistant (English) Language Teachers or Sports Education Advisors in local schools, or as Coordinators for International Relations in local governments and boards of Education (http://www.jetprogramme.org/).

other Exchange students who are doing JET at the moment. This has kind of influenced me. Peer pressure *whispered* (Phoebe, Final Interview).

In other words, it appears that Phoebe's peer group, especially those met in Japan, potentially influenced, or reinforced, her future self-concept. Phoebe further indicated that if she were not successful with JET, she would also like to be involved in translation or diplomacy, indicating that the career domain of her hoped-for self clearly involved Japanese.

Similarly, Sophie, Oscar, and Alex also desired to work in Japan-related fields. Both Sophie and Oscar desired a career that linked their two passions: food science and Japanese for Sophie, and actuary consulting and Japanese for Oscar. Alternatively, Sophie was also keeping her 'options open for JET', and Oscar also thought that it would 'be a great thing if [he] could become an ambassador for Australia in Japan'. Alex's career goal, on the other hand, was in Japanese translation, the field in which he had recently commenced a PhD. He explained:

> [Japanese] is one of the major pillars of my academic career, it's what I'm looking at doing… Obviously because I'm in translation studies I'm focussing on Japanese now, predominantly Japanese. So it's really important that I maintain my Japanese ability (Alex, Final Interview).

However, as will be further discussed in the chapters to follow, Alex only had seldom interaction with his (significantly small) Japanese-speaking network post-study abroad. Rather, his primary means of investing in his language maintenance was to consistently draw upon online resources such as YouTube and Japanese newspapers. In contrast, Oscar in particular demonstrated a relationship between his career goals and Japanese-speaking networks. More specifically, he mentioned that he had recently 'been trying to do things to help [his] professional career one day', such as going to lunches for young actuaries, connecting with people from 'the industry' on Linked-In, and attending Japanese conferences.

Although Oscar and Alex did not specifically comment on the impact of study abroad on their career goals, the findings above indicate that Phoebe, Sophie, Oscar and Alex each envisage themselves using Japanese in their future careers, and that there is an evident link between Japanese and the career domain of their hoped-for selves. While the desire to keep an association with Japanese was found to inspire career goals, career goals could also influence the study of Japanese, indicating a two-way relationship. As will be further discussed in Section 8.2.2, future intentions concerning Japanese language can also be considered a personal factor influencing interaction and network development with Japanese speakers.

In contrast to the informants above, Carla had no desire to return to Japan for work or to incorporate Japanese language into her career. Although she had recently enjoyed an 11-day trip to Japan and 'love[s] the city [Tokyo] and all the things you can do there', she commented on the prospect of living and working there as follows:

> C: [During my recent trip to Japan] people would say, "You should try it. You should come and work here when you finish your PhD". And I was like "not on your life". There is no way. I know I will go back to Japan many, many times in the future. The National Diet Library is Ah-mazing... But there's no way that I would live there, EVER. There's no way that I would even think of applying for a job there.
>
> Int: And why is that?
>
> C: It was SO isolating… you are ALWAYS foreign. You are ALWAYS stared at (Carla, Initial Interview).

As discussed in Chapter 4, Carla was the only informant who had an overwhelmingly negative study abroad experience, and this clearly impacted upon her life trajectory and future self-concept. Although her career path is still uncertain, it is evident that there is no connection between her career domain of future self and Japan or Japanese language. This will be discussed further in Section 8.2 of the following chapter, when personal factors influencing ongoing interaction and networks are explored.

<u>Career trajectory</u>

Of the 32 questionnaire respondents who listed a current profession other than 'student', 10 indicated that their subsequent careers were 'greatly' impacted by study abroad, nine indicated that they were 'somewhat' impacted, and four indicated that they were 'not at all' impacted. Importantly, of the 10 respondents who believed study abroad had a great impact, all but one of them was currently or had previously worked in a Japan-related job, and five were currently working in Japan. QR24, who is currently working in Japan as an Assistant Language Teacher in the JET Program, commented: 'Study abroad convinced me I wanted to come back'.

Highlighting the importance of study abroad networks in particular, QR12 indicated that that her host sister introduced her to a Japanese company, for which she 'ended up working in their NY and LA offices'. In contrast, the three respondents who indicated that study abroad had no impact at all were all currently working in non-Japan related jobs in countries outside of Japan. These results reflect those of the 2002 IES Alumni study (cf. Section 2.3.2), which found that study abroad influenced the career choices of almost two thirds of the respondents, and that half of the respondents established globally oriented careers (Norris & Gillespie 2009). A more comprehensive overview of the questionnaire respondents' current professions (excluding students) and their locations is provided in Figure 12 below.

Figure 12 Questionnaire respondents' current professions and their location
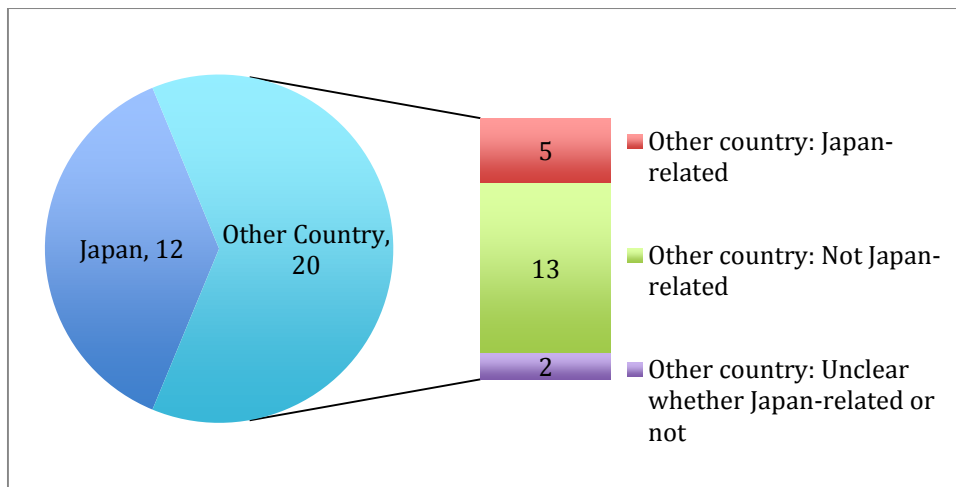
In terms of location, 12 of the respondents are currently working in Japan, and 20 are currently working elsewhere (in the majority of instances, in their home country). Of the 20 currently working elsewhere, five are working in Japan-related jobs, 13 are working in non-Japan-related jobs, and two were working as teachers, though it was unclear whether they taught subjects related to Japan or not. Nine of the 12 respondents currently working in Japan are employed as instructors or teachers, though one is a translator, one an engineer, and one a computer programmer.

As previously mentioned, Marie and Angela were the only focal informants who held full time jobs throughout the period of the data collection. In her initial interview, Marie mentioned her plans to move to Japan for work the following year. When asked if she had already organised a job, she explained as follows:

> Not yet, but I'm not stressed about it because I know so many people working there and working here [in Australia], contacts of contacts. That'll be fine, and also the fact that I did interpreting and translation, plus I speak a few languages, I'm sure I'll find a job easily (Marie, Initial Interview).

Like Oscar, it was evident that Marie had an intended strategy to draw upon her social networks to assist her in finding work. Indeed, by both drawing upon her existing network and further expanding it to include members of Japanese businesses in Australia, she was successful in acquiring a job in a Japanese company 'without looking for it' a few months

later, which she then commenced in April 2013. Angela, on the other hand, had been working in Law since her graduation in 2000, and recalled that the jobs she had previously applied for 'never required Japanese, and never led [her] to use Japanese in the job situation'. Although a full time PhD student, Alex also had a part-time job in Japanese translation, and in her final interview, Sophie mentioned that she would be teaching Japanese at an upcoming Summer School for high school students. The following section will now discuss the relationship between the workplace environment and development/maintenance of TL-speaking networks.

Workplace environment and TL-speaking networks

As Bidart and Lavenu (2005) have found, entry into the workforce can either 'open up' or 'close' individuals' social world: working life may cause a network to radically diminish, or, it may open new opportunities for personal relationships. In the current study, the workplace was identified as an important environmental factor influencing interaction and network development with TL speakers. Work in Japan-related fields tended to promote network development with Japanese speakers, whereas work in non-Japan-related fields did not.

In her third interview in May 2013, Marie commented on the impact of her new job in Japan on her network expansion: 'all my new contacts since January are from the company, and [the CEO's] family'. Similarly, five of the questionnaire respondents also indicated that working in Japan was a key event influencing their post-study abroad social interactions. Importantly, QR39 also indicated that relationships initially established while working in Japan might still be of importance several years after leaving the Japanese work environment. Currently a PhD student in Australia, QR39 commented that 'JET had the biggest effect on expanding my Japanese-speaking social interactions, par none.

Postgraduate study has also increased it, but the three years on JET have [sic] the largest effect'.

For informants working in countries other than Japan, however, the workplace offered significantly different experiences in terms of interaction and network development with Japanese speakers. Firstly, questionnaire respondents working in Japan-related jobs in countries other than Japan (n=5), such as in education, translation or Japanese martial arts, accessed considerable opportunities for Japanese language use and relationship development with Japanese-speaking colleagues, both NSs and NNSs. Each of them indicated that their jobs were a key factor influencing their social interaction with Japanese speakers. QR77, for example, works at a Graduate Summer School Camp in Hawaii, and each of the five most important post-study abroad NS/NNS contacts she listed were all established at this workplace. Importantly, however, she commented that interaction with the three NNSs and one NS who were still currently employed there predominantly occurred during the summer when the camp was held. Although QR16 indicated that she currently works in a non-Japan-related job (academic administration), she also commented that she previously worked at an American Japanese Consulate, which had 'increased [her] interaction with Japanese speakers because [she] was more aware of the community'.

Although working in Japan-related fields clearly has a positive relationship with opportunities for interaction and network development with Japanese speakers, as was discussed at the beginning of this section, the majority (13/20) of questionnaire respondents working in countries other than Japan currently have non-Japan-related jobs. These included careers in engineering, hospitality, IT, and creative arts. Importantly, only two of these informants, QR60 and QR59, included network members established post-study abroad in their three most important NS/NNSs post-study abroad. Rather, there was a focus on

maintenance with network members established during study abroad. Furthermore, QR60 was the only one who listed a post-study abroad NS contact initially met at work. She commented that a NS employee was one of her three most important post-study abroad NS contacts, and that 'I occasionally use Japanese at work because we get many Japanese guests, but not often do I have a full blown conversation with them'. Her other two most important post-study abroad NSs were both maintained from study abroad, once again highlighting the importance of study abroad for establishing ongoing networks with NSs, particularly for individuals who follow non-Japan related career trajectories.

Although QR59, currently a waiter, did not mention using any Japanese at work or establishing any Japanese-speaking contacts there, he provides an important case because he is the only questionnaire respondent working in a non-Japan-related job that mentioned actively seeking out Japanese-speaking networks post-study abroad. He commented on his current opportunities for Japanese language use as follows:

> Yes [I have opportunities to use Japanese], through Japanese friends I have met in Melbourne through speaking clubs and social gatherings. I also signed up to an online language exchange site and meet people there and chat through Skype. I have made friends through Facebook who live in Japan who I speak Japanese to. I use a lot of computer to speak with people.

Previous studies (e.g. Bidart & Lavenu 2005) have found that after completing university, individuals' social networks tend to be focused around work and leisure activities, and eventually, family life. In the instance of QR59, it appears that his Japanese-speaking networks were focused around leisure activities. Of the focal informants, the same was observed for Angela, where although she did not follow a Japan-related career path, she has consistently been involved in a number of different Japan-related associations throughout most of her working life. It was evident from her interviews that they have offered ample opportunities for interaction and network development with Japanese speakers, and the majority of interactions Angela detailed in her three interaction journals were with people

she had met at such associations. Having been a member of one particular association, Association J, for more than a decade, Angela recalled that she initially joined because she 'wanted to continue with Japanese'.

Angela also commented that her regular (at least monthly) participation in Association J's events is 'the reason why I've made new friends really'. Indeed, examination of Angela's current Japanese-speaking network indicated that people met at Association J account for the largest portion of both NSs and NNSs in her network. While some of these network members are still in Australia and Angela continues to interact with them in person at various events (as well as on Facebook), she explained that others have since returned to Japan, and thus she interacts with them 'only on Facebook'. As with QR59, these contacts established through extracurricular activities also serve Angela's primary opportunities for ongoing Japanese use, despite not working in a Japan-related job.

7.4.3. Romantic relationships and family life

The final category of life event discussed by several informants was that concerning romantic relationships and family life. Of the focal informants, Alex is the only one who is currently married, and although his wife is not a Japanese speaker, it is important to mention that she is the same Korean woman he dated during his study abroad program (as noted in section 4.2, she was actually met on Skype and was not living in Japan when they first met). Although none of the questionnaire respondents mentioned currently being in a relationship with someone they met during study abroad, two did mention that they had attempted a long-distance relationship with a NNS met during study abroad though had subsequently broken up, as did another with a NS partner. Several previous studies have, however, also found that a number of their participants met their spouse while studying abroad (Wallace 1999; Dwyer & Peters 2004; Nunan 2006).

It can be assumed that intimate relationships with others who are speakers of Japanese will likely result in an ongoing connection with Japan and its language and culture (cf. Fridhandler 2006). Indeed, when commenting on significant events that had positively influenced their frequency of interaction with Japanese speakers post-study abroad, three questionnaire respondents gave the response of having a Japanese partner, and a further two mentioned getting married to a Japanese partner. In support of this, Oscar's interaction journal data indicated that the majority of his interactions at all three intervals were with his NS girlfriend, regardless of whether she was located in Australia or Japan at the time of journal completion. On the other hand, romantic relationships with individuals who were not speakers of Japanese possibly had a more negative impact on engagement with Japanese speakers.

As discussed in Chapter 4, it was when Alex met his wife to be that his interaction with other Japanese-speaking network members significantly decreased, and in some cases ceased altogether. Although it can only be speculated that the outcome may have been different if his wife was a Japanese-speaker, Alex did indicate that the life events of marriage and having children had a negative impact on his interaction and 'availability' for relationships with both Japanese speakers and non-Japanese speakers alike. In addition to being married, Alex was also the only focal informant who currently had any children, and described himself as a 'family person' who liked to spend the majority of his spare time with his wife and two young children. Over the duration of the data collection, Alex's interaction with Japanese-speakers became less and less frequent, and his final interaction journal remained empty, as he had not had any social interaction with Japanese speakers that week. In the following interview, he explained:

> If I was just doing my PhD thesis I would probably still have time to meet people but because I have family responsibilities as well, it's REALLY hard to try and meet up with anyone. It's either helping out at home or doing research (Alex, Final Interview).

Similarly, QR16 also commented that having children decreased her interaction because she 'had less time for everything'. On the other hand, she further explained that 'putting [her] son in Japanese Saturday school increased [her] interaction, as [she] was again part of the local Japanese community'. Thus, as Kinginger (2013) has also found, although the presence of young children may constrain previous forms of sociability, it can also facilitate it by bringing them into contact with others in similar situations. Similarly, Lybeck (2002) has also indicated that having a baby and becoming part of a parental support group may assist integration into TL networks.

The questionnaire data also indicated three instances where a respondent's network member having children negatively influenced their frequency of interaction. In a similar vein, Angela commented:

> There's a whole group of girls from uni[versity] that I studied Law with that I see less of because some of them had babies and are doing their own thing… So I think that being in a different life stage can make a difference in terms of how frequently we keep in contact (Angela, Final Interview).

Interestingly, Angela's words almost mirrored those of an informant in Bidart and Lavenu's (2005) study, who mentioned losing contact with some of her friends because 'they're all married with children, they went their own way' (p. 366). Moreover, these finding are also in line with those of Carbery and Buhrmester (1998), who found that as young partners got married and had children, they gradually relied less on friends for companionship, intimacy, and support, and instead secured this from their spouses and children. In sum, this section has thus shown that romantic relationships, marriage, and/or birth of children are important personal factors influencing interaction and social networks with TL speakers.

7.5. Summary

This chapter has provided a discussion of the informants' ongoing engagement with Japan and Japanese speakers throughout their life trajectories, as well as the impact of study abroad on such engagement and key life events. In regards to network maintenance in the initial post-study abroad period, a particularly important finding was that all of the informants – including those who completed study abroad several decades ago – still maintain contact with at least some of their network members established during study abroad. Two key factors influencing network maintenance in this period were identified: closeness of relationship during study abroad and use of common technology.

Another key finding was that each of the informants exhibited an ongoing interest in Japan, which was often intensified by their study abroad experiences. In the majority of cases, this personal factor resulted in maintenance of former TL-speaking networks as well as engagement with new ones throughout the informants' life trajectories, such as through continued studies, Japan-related professions, and family life. An evident link between Japanese and the educational, career, and interpersonal domains of the informants' current and possible self-concepts was also identified. In contrast, it was found that a less positive study abroad experience could lead to reduced desire to engage with Japan, Japanese language and its speakers, and the exclusion of Japan-related aspects of future self-concepts. While this chapter discussed a number of factors influencing interaction and social networks with TL speakers at key stages of the life trajectory, the following chapter will now draw these together in a more systematic way, and examine those identified as common to all life stages.

8. FACTORS INFLUENCING INTERACTION AND NETWORK DEVELOPMENT/ MAINTENANCE POST-STUDY ABROAD

Because of going on exchange, and post that, my Japanese network,
and Japanese-speaking people, have just gone through the roof
– Angela, 15 years post-study abroad

8.1. Introduction

As indicated in the previous chapter, and in the above quote from Angela, study abroad can have a positive impact on both relational maintenance and development with host nationals and other TL speakers. This chapter further examines the factors that influenced the informants' interaction and network development and maintenance with Japanese speakers post-study abroad. While the preceding chapter highlighted a number of factors influential at key stages of the informants' life trajectories, namely, the immediate post-study abroad period, ongoing studies, working life, and family life, this chapter focuses on factors identified as common to all life phases. It systematically discusses these common factors, and brings together the previously identified factors, through use of Fehr's (1996; 2000) framework. Section 8.2 focuses on personal factors, Section 8.3 on dyadic factors and Section 8.4 on environmental and situational factors. Furthermore, as previously mentioned, the necessity for an additional category, technological factors, was also recognised, and is discussed in Section 8.5.

8.2. Personal factors

As evident throughout the entirety of this thesis, all of the informants in this study are unique individuals who engage with other speakers of Japanese in various ways. As Lang (2004:341) states, 'from birth to death individuals are active agents, who co-regulate the structure, function, and quality of their social worlds in accordance with their age-specific needs and resources'. Thus, it is not surprising that a multitude of personal factors influenced the informants' post-study abroad interaction, network development, and

network maintenance. In the previous chapter, the personal factors of dis/continuation of Japanese studies, romantic relationships, and parental status were discussed in relation to specific life stages. Additionally, the importance of ongoing interest in Japan and future intentions and investment in Japanese language was also highlighted. These two personal factors were found to influence both network development and maintenance throughout all stages of the informants' life trajectories, and are discussed in further detail below.

8.2.1. Ongoing interest in Japan and/or other cultures

As shown in Chapter 7 each of the informants in this study exhibited an ongoing interest in Japan, often intensified by their study abroad experiences. A number of informants also expressed their 'love' for Japan, and a longing to return in the future, either for work or recreation. Although Carla's less-positive study abroad experience, particularly concerning interactions with NSs, resulted in a 'turning of the page' in her Japanese language experience, in the vast majority of cases, ongoing interest in Japan led to continued engagement with Japanese speakers throughout all life stages. In particular, Marie mentioned that 'If I look at my friends in general, most of my friends are interested in Japan and Japanese culture'.

As previously discussed in Section 7.4.1, many of the informants engaged in Japan-related activities such as clubs, associations, and seminars, after returning from study abroad. It can be assumed that participation in such activities is linked to an ongoing interest in Japan, and a desire to interact with others who share similar interests. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Angela commented: 'Because I've now been to Japan, I'm more interested in keeping up a Japan connection'. For Angela, this 'Japan connection' has been maintained for the past 15 years through language exchange, self-study, participation in Japanese associations and cultural events, trips to Japan, and through interacting with the Japanese-speaking social networks she has established over the years. Similarly, each of the focal

informants and numerous questionnaire respondents also exhibited an ongoing interest in Japan through reported engagement with their social networks, Japanese popular culture (e.g. manga comics, anime cartoons, YouTube, music), subsequent trips to Japan, and so on.

It is also important to note that in addition to an ongoing interest in Japan, the majority of informants also exhibited a more general international and intercultural outlook. In particular, 46 of the questionnaire respondents indicated that study abroad greatly impacted their world outlook or interest in other countries/cultures, and a further 11 indicated that this aspect was somewhat impacted by their study abroad experience. Similarly, the majority of focal informants also mentioned that their experiences abroad positively impacted their international outlook and knowledge of and interest in other cultures. Although the informants did not explicitly mention a relationship between their world outlook and social networks, their ongoing interaction with NNSs from a wide-range of cultural backgrounds suggests that there was likely a correlation. Ongoing interest in Japan in particular was also evident in the informants' future intentions and investment in Japanese language, which is discussed below.

8.2.2. Future intentions and investment in Japanese language

Post-study abroad, all of the focal informants, except Carla, exhibited ongoing investment (cf. Norton 2000) in their Japanese language study and use, which was related to their future intentions concerning Japan and/or Japanese. As discussed in the previous chapter, study abroad impacted the majority of informants' decisions concerning future study directions, subsequent Japanese study, and career trajectories. The focal informants in particular, however, highlighted not only the impact of study abroad on their future intentions, but also the impact of future intentions and investment in Japanese on networks with Japanese speakers.

As mentioned in Section 7.4.1, Angela, Alex, and a number of the questionnaire respondents participated in Language Exchange when they returned to their home universities after study abroad. Importantly, Angela mentioned that she has continued to independently seek out Language Exchange partners since she graduated in 2000, as a means to 'keep in touch' and 'not forget' her Japanese. No longer studying or working in Japan-related fields, Angela explained:

> It gets harder and harder to keep up, but I don't want to do nothing and let it all go, it'd be such a waste, because I've managed to sort of do what I can to keep up some level of Japanese until now. So I think I just want to keep working at it [through self-study] and doing language exchange (Angela, Interview 3).

In other words, her feared possible self-concept as someone who can no longer speak Japanese motivates her to engage in ongoing self-study and Language Exchange so as to maintain her language.

Angela also commented on the complex link between investment in Japanese language, interpersonal engagement, and cross-cultural communication as follows:

> If you went and saw your friends in Japan again and you couldn't communicate with them you'd just feel so sad…by being able to speak better you can improve your friendships with your Japanese friends…if you can't understand their language then you sort of can't really understand them sort of thing, so you can't become closer friends (Angela, Interview 3).

This excerpt suggests that Angela's future Japanese self-concept was grounded in the interpersonal domain, where she aspired for ongoing interaction with her Japanese friends. Furthermore, she also mentioned that 'you also need to understand the culture or you will never get the language or how they might say something'. Angela, as well as a number of other informants, indicated an important two-way relationship: while Japanese speakers are a significant source of linguistic and cultural learning (and are often sought out for this reason), knowledge of both Japanese language and culture can also be considered a personal factor influencing relational development with NSs.

Similar to Angela, both Sophie and Marie specifically indicated that using Japanese was important to them because they had studied it for such a long period, and because it had become a strong part of their (L2) self-concept. Marie, for example, commented: 'I mean I'm French, but inside I think I'm kind of Japanese too'. The comments above reflect what Leung, Harris and Rampton (1997:555) have termed 'language affiliation': the attachment and identification one feels to a language they know. As Benson et al. (2013:81) explain, 'those who affiliate closely with a second language conceptualise it as part of themselves… Affiliation is thus a matter of linguistic self-concept and second language identity'. Although many of the informants in the current study appeared to have a close affiliation with the L2, they did not explicitly indicate that this was a result of their study abroad experiences, as found in the study by Benson et al. (2013:81).

In further regards to future self-concept, Sophie indicated in her interview approximately one year post-study abroad that her feared self-concept influenced her decision to increase her interaction with Japanese language and culture:

> I started realising that I wasn't learning Japanese every day and I wasn't USING the language. It made me really worried that every day is just another day that the language is slipping and it forced me more to immerse myself in the cultural things that are available to me here in Melbourne (Sophie, Interview 3).

Sophie indicated that she dined at Japanese restaurants, attended Japanese festivals, and also Japan-related conferences. These activities were both an investment in her Japanese language, as well as a means of network maintenance and development. For example, she mentioned that she specifically attended a 'Japanese conference for undergraduate students' because she was 'interested in making some more Japanese friends… to practice [her] Japanese'. She believed this was a successful strategy, because she managed to meet and establish ongoing relationships with two NSs. In her final interview, however, she mentioned that although she had been 'catching up with them quite often' both in person

and on Facebook, they only offered minimal opportunities for Japanese use, because 'they want[ed her] to speak in English for practice'.

Finally, as previously mentioned, Carla was the only focal informant who no longer invested in their Japanese language post-study abroad. Although she had envisaged herself as becoming a competent and fluent speaker of Japanese as a result of studying abroad, she was disappointed in her achievements, and felt as though she had 'wasted the opportunity that [she] was given'. Currently, although she wished that she did 'have the opportunity to, or have the ability to use [Japanese]', she commented that 'it would take SO much for me to get up to a level where I can use it that I'm unwilling to put effort in at this stage'. From a possible future selves perspective, Oyserman and James (2009:373) explain that discrepancies between current and future selves may arise when subjective affective experience such as difficulty 'is interpreted as meaning that the possible self is too hard to attain or that enough effort has already been expended'. This appears to have been the result of Carla's experiences, which meant that she did 'not really' have any desire to use Japanese in the future.

Carla was also the only focal informant who did not claim to currently have, or envisage having, any interaction with NSs. She explained that although she wished she did have Japanese friends with whom she could speak in Japanese with, 'for me it's just that the effort to do so is not worth the outlay. It would be too difficult to do so. It would be too exhausting and stressful'. Thus, Carla explained that her Japanese language use was primarily linked to 'be[ing] able to buy things and survive' if in Japan in the future. In other words, she only had a weak affiliation to the TL, and, as with one of the informants' in Benson et al.'s (2013) study, only viewed it as a tool for necessary communication.

Carla's experiences are also comparable to those of an informant in Coleman and Chafer's (2011) study, Fred, who also reflected negatively on his study abroad experience in Senegal, Africa. Much like Fred, Carla has also ceased contact with all NSs met during study abroad, and, as explained in Section 7.2, appears to have 'turned the page' on her study abroad experience, and Japanese studies in general. Similarly, QR66 commented: 'If I saw a purpose for improving my Japanese (i.e. a use in the near future career wise or socially), then I would pursue meeting other Japanese students for conversation exchange'. However, like Carla, she currently did not have any interaction with NSs or opportunities for TL use.

8.3. Dyadic factors

The focal informants and questionnaire respondents identified five key dyadic factors influencing their social networks and patterns of interaction post-study abroad: closeness of relationship during study abroad, similarity and shared interests, relational equity, provision of support, and shared networks. Some of these were alluded to in the previous chapter, and each of them is discussed in detail below.

8.3.1. Closeness of relationship during study abroad

As discussed in section 7.3.3, closeness of relationship during study abroad was a key dyadic factor influencing network maintenance in the initial post-study abroad period. Similarly, this factor also impacted ongoing interaction and subsequent network maintenance in the longer-term as well. Phoebe's comment summed up the commonly expressed view:

> If we get along really well then it makes keeping in contact and the kind of contact, and the engagement IN the contact a lot more interesting… I think if I don't tend to click with them quite as well I try to keep it up but it just kind of naturally diffuses a bit (Phoebe, Final Interview).

Longitudinal interviews with the focal informants did, however, also indicate that even with their closest contacts, frequency of interaction tended to lessen through time. For example

Phoebe indicated that although she and Hiroe [16] 'were quite close over there [in Japan]…time and distance makes the contact less frequent'. These findings are consistent with Cummings et al.'s (2006) study, which found that although American students contacted their closest friends more frequently than less-close friends when they moved from home to college (thus becoming geographically distant), frequency of interaction reduced through time.

Importantly, although further studies (e.g. Rawlins 1994; Johnson, Wuttebberg et al. 2004) have also found that increased distal proximity may lead to a decrease in both frequency of interaction and closeness of friendship, many of the informants in the current study indicated that they still felt particularly close to network members established during study abroad, despite infrequent interaction. QR58, for example, explained that even though interaction with one of her most important NSs from study abroad was 'not frequent' five years post-study abroad, 'she is special to me, and I will never want to let go of that'. Similarly, 15 years post-study abroad Angela mentioned that her home visit mother, Tomoe, remained one of her closest Japanese-speaking network members. She explained that even though they 'might not contact each other much…[she is] a really important person'.

This 'specialness' or 'importance' of networks formed during study abroad may be related to the fact that studying abroad often represents a 'critical experience' in language learners' lives (Benson et al. 2013:9). The new social relationships formed within this critical experience likely contribute to changes in identity, especially considering the fact that study abroad usually occurs during students' years of emerging adulthood – a time where explorations of identity are plentiful (cf. Arnett 2014). Thus, the relationships formed may be considered an important link to a period that was significant to them, enhancing desire

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[16] NNS who adopted Japanese name in Japan.

for maintenance even decades after study abroad program completion.

8.3.2. Similarity and shared interests

Another dyadic factor related to closeness of relationship is that of similarity and shared interests. As discussed in Chapter 4, the informants were more likely to establish relationships during study abroad with people they found more similar to themselves, whether in terms of personality, interests, or language(s). This is in line with the similarity attraction perspective (Byrne 1971), which has received considerable attention in intergroup-interpersonal attraction research. Ongoing similarity and shared interests are not only important in establishing relationships, but also for relational maintenance (Fehr 2000; 2006).

Indeed, in regards to study abroad network maintenance, QR53 mentioned that she and one of her NNS contacts from during study abroad will have a 'lifelong bond [because] we just have so much in common'. In contrast, several informants also indicated that some relationships lapsed post study abroad due to a lack of common interests or activities after program completion. QR74, for example, stated that with Mel, a NNS network member during study abroad, 'living in Japan brought us together, but after returning home it was apparent that we would not naturally become friends because of differing personalities, etc'. Similarly, QR37 commented that with Yuji, a NS network member established during study abroad:

> I think coming home has made us both realise that we are fundamentally very different people and the only thing we had in common before was living together, knowing the same people and living in Japan. All of which are now not the same.

A number of previous studies (Matthews 1986; Rawlins 1994; Wiseman 1986; Johnson et al. 2004) have also found that no longer having commonalities with friends is a primary reason for friendship dissolution.

In addition to the importance of similarity and shared interests for relational maintenance, several of the informants also mentioned its significance in regards to further network development post-study abroad. Indeed, the importance of these factors for relational development has also been identified in a number of previous studies (e.g. Gareis 2000; Kudo & Simkin 2003; Dunne 2009). In the current study, Marie clearly expressed the importance of homophily, especially in terms of age, as an important predictor of whether or not professional relationships with NSs may eventuate into closer friendships. Similarly, Angela also mentioned that although she had had 'so many' Language Exchange partners since study abroad completion, 'some of them I just didn't gel with so we didn't keep in contact. Others I've gelled with and we stayed in contact'. Several of the questionnaire respondents also indicated that relationships they established post-study abroad are important because they share common interests, activities, and/or personalities.

8.3.3. Relational equity

The third dyadic factor identified by a number of informants was that of relational equity. According to equity theory (cf. Dainton et al. 2003), for a relationship to continue over time, a balance of inputs and outputs, or rewards and costs, is essential. Equity theorists see fairness as a central component of relational maintenance, and argue that if relationships are perceived as inequitable, they are less likely to be maintained. Whereas informants in the current study indicated that equal commitment to maintaining contact or offering various forms of support positively reinforced maintenance of networks, they also indicated that network members' lack of contribution to the relationship led to relational weakening and potential dissolution. This was well summed-up in a comment by Angela, stating: 'I've sort of found that if they don't make an effort then it's hard to stay in contact. But if they really want to stay in contact then it's easy to keep up with them'.

Throughout each of her interviews, Angela continuously referred back to her 'Christmas

letter' and its importance to the maintenance of her networks (cf. Canary & Stafford 1994; Dindia et al. 2004). For 22 of her contacts established during study abroad, she explained that it was often 'the ONE time they might hear about me and what I've done for the year… [and] they'll respond to me with their update and say thank you with a *nengajō* (New Year's card)'. In regards to relational equity, she further stated:

> Sometimes I might not get something back. And if that continues to happen for a couple of years then I'll stop writing them a letter. So there's a couple of people like that I think… I thought 'well I'm not hearing from you I don't even know if you receive or even like my letters so I won't send any more' (Angela, Interview 2).

Similarly, Jane, Oscar, Marie, and three of the questionnaire respondents also indicated that relationships had weakened or dissolved because their network members had not responded to letters, emails, or Facebook messages.

In further regards to relational equity, Alex indicated that his relationship with post-study abroad contact Minjun could be considered inequitable. He stated:

> [He contacts me] if there's something that he wants, something that he needs. He'll never initiate contact because he wants to be like '*genki* (are you well)'? Not in that way. He doesn't even say hello… he'll just be like 'Alex, I have a question', that sort of way. It's very abrupt (Alex, Interview 2).

Although Alex also commented that Minjun is 'not very interested in [his] personal issues', and that his wife thought he was 'using' him for help, he believed the relationship worthy of maintenance because he found Minjun 'an interesting person'. Alex further explained:

> He's the only native Japanese and Korean speaker that I know. And he's good at English as well, and studied Chinese. So he's the only sort of person that I know who… [can] talk about both Japanese and Korean on a really sort of deeper level. And if that means helping him out sort of every now and then, if I'm busy then I'll just turn him down (Alex, Interview 2).

In other words, although Alex's costs outweighed his rewards in his friendship with Minjun, he enjoyed their linguistic similarity, an above-mentioned dyadic factor influencing relational maintenance. Additionally, Alex also explained that requesting support was not

entirely one-directional, because occasionally Alex also obtained assistance from Minjun with Japanese translations or other linguistic queries. Indeed, while provision of support is an important outcome of social networks, several of the informants also identified it as another dyadic factor influencing network maintenance.

8.3.4. Provision of support

Both provision and seeking of support have been identified as a component of openness, an important relational maintenance strategy (Canary & Stafford 1994). Phoebe, Jane, Angela, and four of the questionnaire respondents commented that providing their NS contacts established during study abroad English assistance, or opportunities for English practice, also helped their relationships endure. In return, they too often received assistance with their Japanese, ensuring that relationships remained equitable. This is exemplified in a comment by QR10, who stated that her relationship with study abroad NS network member Satoshi endured because 'he was a very close friend. He was always very helpful and supportive of my Japanese learning and I help him with English'. Similarly, QR22 indicated that relationships with two of her NS network members from study abroad had endured because they were 'supportive of [her] thesis'. The various ways in which the informants received language support in particular from their social networks post-study abroad will be further discussed in the following chapter.

8.3.5. Shared networks

The final dyadic factor discussed by several of the informants was shared networks, that is, having mutual friends. QR39, for example, commented that his relationship with one of his NNS friends from study abroad endured because 'We've known each other for about 3.5 years in total and have a massive number of mutual friends, so a relationship like that doesn't disappear easily, even though we were never extremely close'. On the other hand, QR4 mentioned that although she had maintained infrequent contact with one of her NNS

network members this was mainly because he had been dating one of her friends. She explained that 'now they aren't together anymore, and I was friends with him through her, so the relationship has stagnated'.

When it came to relationships in close proximity, Oscar importantly mentioned that he was likely to have more frequent interaction with people with whom he shared networks. He explained that 'even though Nathan's working I do see him a bit more because he's friends of friends as well as just my friend'. He then directly contrasted this to his interaction with Stan, who is 'mostly just [his] friend, instead of friends of friends'. Oscar explained that a recent lack of interaction with Stan was because 'he's sort of stopped being friends with a lot of the Japanese Club people. It's not me, but more him that's pulled apart from everyone'. These findings are in line with those of Sudweeks et al. (1990), in that shared networks may be influential in both the initiation and ongoing development of relationships. On the other hand, a loss of mutual friendship may also see a decline in frequency of interaction, or even dissolution of relationships that no longer share a common link.

In sum, Section 8.3 above has shown that closer, more similar, equal and supportive relationships that have mutual friends are more likely to be maintained through time. While study abroad may result in the establishment of particularly close relationships, removal of shared contexts post-study abroad may also lead to recognition of dissimilarity with some network members, which potentially results in relational dissolution. Shared context is related to environmental and situational factors, which are discussed in Section 8.4 below.

8.4. Environmental and situational factors

In Chapter 7, three key environmental factors influencing network development and/or maintenance were identified: Japanese and/or other classes, workplace environment and Japan-related extracurricular activities. The first two of these factors were specific to the life

stages of ongoing studies and working life, respectively. However, it was shown that while Japan-related extracurricular activities were prominent in the life stage of ongoing studies, some informants, such as Angela, continued to engage in them once they graduated and commenced working life. Additionally, it was also shown in Chapter 7 that the situational factor of availability influenced both network maintenance and development throughout all life stages. This was related to the informants' and/or their network members' commitment to existing relationships, studies, work, romantic partners and/or children. In this section, two additional environmental/situational factors identified as influential throughout all life stages are discussed: geographical proximity, and geographic mobility and opportunities to meet again.

8.4.1. Geographical proximity

Although to varying degrees, each of the focal informants and numerous questionnaire respondents supported the argument of traditional friendship theories – that close geographical proximity is supportive of personal relationship development and maintenance, whereas a loss of proximity or shared meeting contexts due to changing personal circumstances can result in reduced interaction and potential relationship dissolution, or at least dormancy (Fehr 1999:271; Cummings et al. 2006:265-266). In general, the informants indicated that physical separation, time difference, and lack of face-to-face contact tended to lead to gradual lessening of interaction as time progressed post-study abroad. Sophie explicitly mentioned that 'proximity is one of the main factors that contribute to communication throughout our group'. She explained that because the participants in her study abroad program had 'come from so many different parts of Asia, we knew that we'd stay in really close contact with the people in our immediate network, from our own countries'. Similarly, Phoebe reflected on her current patterns of interaction with network members as follows:

> Living in different countries you really have to go out of your way to contact

someone and take the time to do it- and it is quite time consuming. It's often hard to find the time to do that but if you are there in person, you might just be passing by and be like "Hey! What's up? Let's chat because we're right here in the SAME spot" (Phoebe, Interview 4).

Marie also indicated that proximity was the major factor influencing her frequency of interaction, commenting that she has more contact with those around her, and that: 'if I'm not in Japan I don't make that much effort to be in touch with people [in Japan]. It's only like when I go'. The impact of geographical proximity was evident in her interaction journals and subsequent interviews, where interaction primarily focused around the country in which they were completed: Australia (Journal 1), France (Journal 2), and Japan (Journal 3). However, as Marie completed Journal 2 in between the training for, and subsequent commencement of her job in Japan, this journal also exhibited a high number of online interactions with NSs in Japan. These journals highlighted not only the impact of geographic proximity, but also the related factors of geographic mobility and opportunities to meet again, on frequency of interaction. This is further discussed below.

8.4.2. Geographic mobility and opportunities to meet again

Although previous studies (Rawlins 1994; Becker et al. 2009) have indicated that friendships separated by distance may go through periods of interactional dormancy, Marie, Angela, Jane, Oscar, Sophie, and six of the questionnaire respondents each commented that tangible plans and subsequent opportunities to meet up with long-distance network members again in the future led to a resurgence and/or increased online interaction and subsequent maintenance of some relationships. Sophie, for example, indicated that news of her travel to Malaysia and Japan had re-initiated Facebook interaction with several of her network members established during her study abroad period. She observed that 'because they knew that I'd be closer to them, they sparked the conversation'. Similarly, QR35 stated that because one of her Japanese contacts is coming to her university on exchange the following year, they were 'making an effort to keep in contact'.

Both Phoebe and Sophie mentioned meeting up with several of their NNS contacts from study abroad over the period of data collection, and believed this positively influenced their closeness of friendship. In particular, Phoebe stated that Josie's visit to Australia on her way to New Zealand from Japan 'rekindled' the closeness of their relationship. Marie, Carla and Angela further supported this belief, having visited NS and NNS network members in Japan and/or other countries numerous times since study abroad program completion. This data therefore provides important evidence for a non-linear conceptualisation of relationships (cf. Stafford 2005; Ryan et al. 2008; Johnson 2011), in that relationships may fluctuate in terms of development and deterioration, or varying degrees of emotional closeness.

Finally, while the above cases indicate that global mobility and opportunities to meet again may enhance frequency of interaction and closeness of friendship, they also highlight how CMC may play an important role in organising offline contact between Japanese learners and their social network members (Pasfield-Neofitou 2012). The role of technological factors is further discussed in section 8.5 below.

8.5. Technological factors

As previously mentioned, in addition to Fehr's (1996, 2000) typology of environmental, situational, personal, and dyadic factors influencing network development and maintenance, analysis of both the informants' data and relevant literature indicates the necessity for an additional categorical factor: technological factors. Although technology can be considered a major part of one's environment, it is believed that the findings discussed below deem it important enough to have its own category. In this section, three key technological factors identified by the informants as influential throughout all life stages are discussed: common technology/means of interaction, frequency and type of use/exposure, and features of technology that facilitate interaction.

8.5.1. Common technology/means of interaction

As discussed in section 7.3.3 of the previous chapter, the availability of a shared technology was the most commonly cited factor influencing network maintenance in the initial post-study abroad period. As expected, it was also found that ICTs such as Facebook, Twitter, Line and WhatsApp continued to offer a means of interaction and relational maintenance throughout all life stages. As previous mentioned, however, it was Facebook that was the most commonly used means of ongoing interaction. Angela and Marie specifically highlighted the advantage of Facebook over other forms of interaction for relational maintenance. For example, Angela indicated that her NNS network members' frequent change of residence meant that it was difficult to keep track of addresses to which she would send her previously discussed Christmas letter. Thus, she stated that 'it's easier to keep in contact with them on Facebook'.

Indeed, Angela mentioned three instances of ceased contact due to changes in postal address, and Marie also mentioned that she had lost contact with one of her NS contacts for a few years because he failed to provide her with his new email address when he changed mobile phones[17]. Importantly, however, both Marie and Angela also mentioned several instances of relational reconnection when network members started using Facebook, a phenomenon which has also been reported in a number of recent studies (Madden & Smith 2010; Ramirez & Bryant 2014). Angela stated: 'I thought I'd lost contact with my buddy [from study abroad], but then she found me on Facebook so I'm so happy'.

Although these instances clearly highlight the advantage of Facebook for rekindling otherwise potentially lost relationships, Alex indicated this was not always the outcome. In

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[17] Messaging on mobile phones in Japan utilises a mobile phone specific email address, as opposed to a phone number.

regards to several of the NNS contacts he established during study abroad, he stated: 'I actually tried finding these people on Facebook. I really wanted to add them but I couldn't find them'. Consistent with the other focal informants, Alex believed that Facebook was a 'really important' channel for relational maintenance. He stated: 'I think that Facebook is fabulous. It helps you- it allows you to interact with people. And especially for people with limited time it's really good'. As will be seen below, however, frequency and type of use and/or exposure varied between each of the informants and their network members, which evidently impacted patterns of network maintenance.

8.5.2. Frequency and channel of interaction

Although the informants engaged in a range of different channels of interaction, it was evident that ICTs, such as those discussed above, were by far the most frequently used. This is clearly displayed in Figure 13 below, which shows that the questionnaire respondents' two most frequent forms of interaction with both NSs and NNSs were reading or liking of Facebook activity, followed by comments on Facebook statuses, photos, or other posts.

Figure 13 Questionnaire respondents' channels and frequency of interaction: post-study abroad

Q33/39. How often do you use each of the following means of communication with people from your Japanese speaking network?

0= N/A, 1= rarely, 2= a few times a year, 3= once a month, 4= a few times a month, 5= once a week, 6= several times a week, 7= daily

Response rate: NSs=60 (48%), NNSs= 53 (42%)
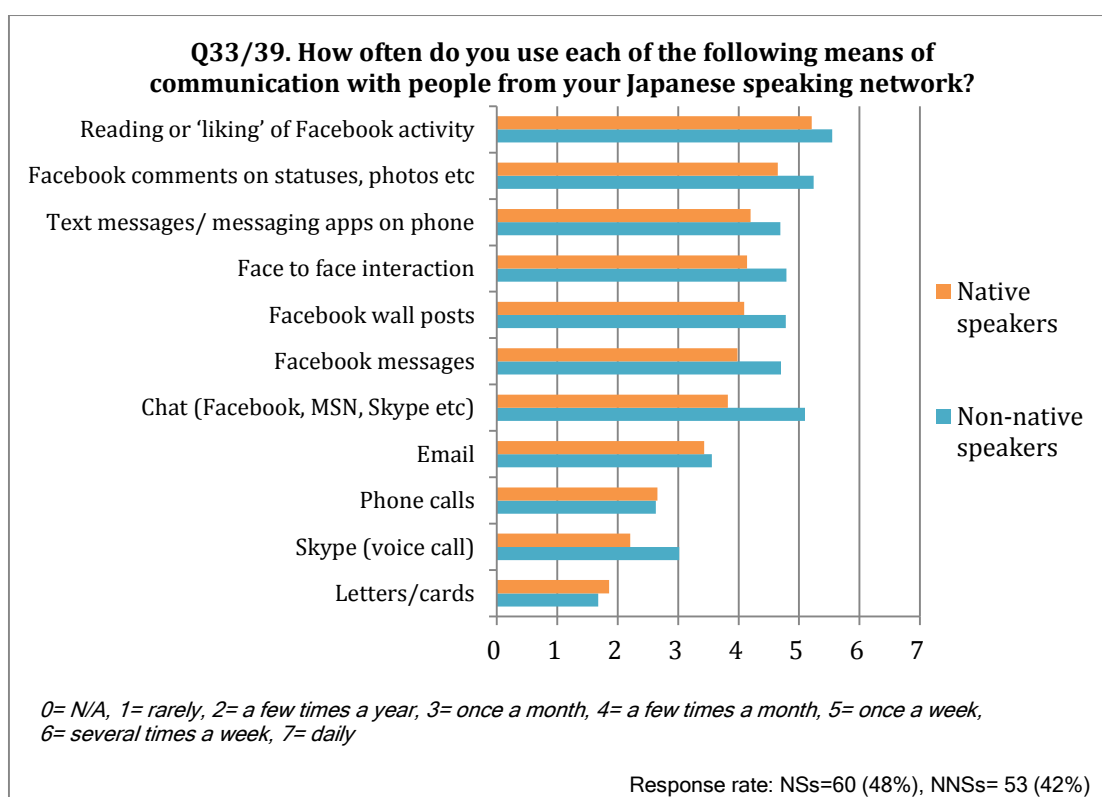
Figure 13 above also shows that reading or liking of Facebook activity was the only channel in which respondents engaged in with both NSs and NNSs at least once a week. With the exception of face-to-face interaction, each of the remaining channels that were utilised by the questionnaire respondents at least once a month or more with both NSs and NNSs were ICTs, once again highlighting their importance for relational maintenance.

Similar trends were also observed in the focal informants' data, where they had reported on their frequency and channel of interaction with their network members during each interview. Although Facebook was the most common and frequently utilised channel, as with the focal informants, a particularly interesting finding concerned the type of interaction that occurred. Although they claimed to simultaneously utilise multiple functions including private messages, wall posts, and commenting on and/or liking posts, importantly, it was found that with network members established during study abroad, the frequency of 'active' forms of interaction such as messages and wall posts gradually decreased through time. In contrast, irrespective of time elapsed since study abroad completion, they mentioned still

reading or 'liking' things they would see 'pop up' on Facebook. This reflects the findings of a number of recent studies (Schneider, Feldmann, Krishnamurthy & Willinger 2009; Benevenuto, Rodrigues, Cha & Almeida 2009; Burke, Kraut & Marlow 2011; Metzger, Wilson, Pure & Zhao 2012; Jiang et al. 2013), which revealed that passive or latent interactions such as online "lurking"[18] are far more common than visible interactions such as wall posts or comments.

The short-term focal informants' interaction journals and post-study abroad interviews clearly showed a gradual shift in Facebook contact with networks established during study abroad from 'active' interaction, to less time-consuming and more passive 'liking' or reading of posts. For example, one-month post-study abroad, Phoebe mentioned that she had been sending two of her closest study abroad network members, Sayaka (NNS) and Eri (NS), Facebook messages at least weekly since study abroad completion. Then, during her next interview five months later, she commented that interaction was 'mostly just kind of liking things, every now and then I might be like '*yosasō* [that looks good]' kind of individual words and things like that'. In her final interview a further six months later (approximately one year post-study abroad), interaction had further reduced to around once every three months, with 'no messages or anything'. She stated: 'we get lots of "likes" and little emojis[19] going 'yay' and just little things like that, but not that much contact actually'.

Vitak (2014b:24) has suggested that high frequency of Facebook 'liking' may be due to the 'low cost in both time and cognition associated with clicking the Like button on a Friend's status, link, video, or photo'. Although Phoebe did not consider 'liking' to be 'interaction

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[18] Reading posts and not contributing a response.

[19] Originating in Japan 'emoji' literally means 'picture letter' in Japanese. Emoji keyboards have now been incorporated into various Apple and Windows platforms, and the term has become widespread, recently entering the Oxford English Dictionary (in early 2015).

per se' perhaps because she did not 'say something back', Alex reflected on the function of 'liking' as follows:

> Even if you like someone's comment, they might not reply or like your photos back but you still feel as though you are interacting with them…If I'm on the receiving end then it's like "Oh, someone's read my comment". And they've spent like two minutes of their life or whatever to look at something that I've said and they've engaged, they've shown interest. So it makes me feel good (Alex, Final Interview).

He further commented that 'liking' someone's photo 'allowed' him to offer sentiments that he could not achieve in 'real life' due to distance, and was 'the next best thing' to doing so in person.

Although 'liking' cannot be considered a form linguistic output, reading of posts prior to liking them does serve as a form of linguistic input, thus providing opportunities to practice reading skills. QR33 commented: 'I think reading Facebook statuses has increased my speed at reading short Japanese texts'. Other researchers have also suggested that 'liking' serves as a form of 'social grooming' (Vitak 2014a) and social support (Vitak & Ellison 2013), both important elements of relational maintenance. Tong and Walther (2011:105) have also noted that liking is resonant of the exchange of 'virtual tokens' between ties, and suggest that it is somewhat comparable to engaging in a shared activity, another important component of relational maintenance (Dindia & Baxter 1987; Canary & Stafford 1994).

Degree of Facebook 'liking', or other forms of Facebook interaction in general, was also affected by network members' degree of Facebook usage. Angela explained:

> There are some [contacts] that I call 'high power' users of Facebook. And they post up so much stuff. I'll read all of it, but I might not respond to some. But because I'm reading more of their stuff, there's a higher chance I'll respond to it (Angela, Interview 2).

Similarly, QR19 commented that although one of her most important NS contacts from study abroad 'used to be very busy in her job… now she's posting more on her life on

Facebook, which makes it easier for me to stay in contact'. In other words, a higher degree of Facebook use might be correlated with frequency and ease of relational maintenance. In contrast, a number of informants also indicated that network members' inactivity on Facebook could also lead to a significant reduction, if not dormancy of interaction. For example, QR46 commented that she only has Facebook interaction with two of her most important study abroad NNS network members because they are 'not on Facebook much'. Phoebe also stated in her final interview that she had not had any interaction in the past six months with nine of her NS contacts and five of her NNSs maintained from study abroad, primarily because they did not have an online (Facebook) presence. Therefore, just as frequency of in-person exposure is factor influencing friendship formation (Fehr 1996), frequency of online exposure also influences incidental ongoing contact and subsequent friendship maintenance.

In final regards to channel and frequency of interaction, it was discussed in Section 8.4.2 that ICTs may play an important role in organising offline contact. Interestingly, Angela also observed the opposite, in that face-to-face interaction may result in subsequent Facebook interaction. She detailed four such cases in her interaction journals, and explained that often after meeting up with a friend or after an event, she would upload photos onto Facebook that consequently received numerous comments. Similarly, she also detailed an interaction where she commented on her network members' photos after they had gone on a day trip together. Furthermore, Angela also noticed that the people who interacted with her most frequently on Facebook were those from Association J, who she saw on a regular basis at organised events. On the other hand, she found that network members she did not see as often, particularly those overseas, did not interact with her on Facebook as much. Although Angela was the only informant who commented on such behaviour, it does suggest a possible correlation between frequency of in-person and Facebook interaction. As will be

seen below, the informants also identified a variety of features of technology (in particular, Facebook) that facilitate interaction.

8.5.3. Features of technology that facilitate interaction

Although the informants indicated a gradual decline in the quantity and arguably quality of maintained relationships, they also highlighted how various features of Facebook facilitate interaction, at times with Friends who had remained dormant for significant periods of time. The first of these is the "Newsfeed", which provides automatic updates about Friends' activities including status updates, photos, links, and public interactions between friends of Friends (Burke, Kraut & Marlow 2011:573). Alex summed up the commonly expressed view, stating that 'If I see something that's interesting then I'll usually comment on it'. In other words, the Newsfeed offers a rich environment to share content and interact about shared interests (Vitak 2014b), and can also 'catalyse conversation and provide context for discussion, online and offline' (Burke, Kraut & Marlow 2011:578).

As observed in previous studies (Lewis & West 2009; Vitak 2014b), updates appearing in the Newsfeed may also provide a form of passive engagement, which is a low-cost means of staying informed about one's network members' lives without necessarily making any direct contact. This is exemplified in a comment by Marie, stating: 'even if I don't contact them I can see what they're doing, see their pictures and stuff … even if you don't talk with them you think of them'. As discussed above, passive consumption is one of the most frequent behaviours on Facebook (cf. Burke et al. 2011), and other research has also found that consumption of Friends' life events and mundane everyday news is important to relational maintenance (Rabby 2007; Vitak & Ellison 2013; Vitak 2014b).

Another feature enhancing interaction on Facebook was the 'birthday reminder', which provides users a notification whenever it is a Friend's birthday. Oscar, for example,

mentioned that 'on my birthday especially, a lot of Japanese people said "happy birthday" and stuff. Some of them were private messages and some were just small comments'. Furthermore, he commented that birthday messages he sent his network members would 'spark up a conversation'. Reflecting the findings of Viswanath et al. (2009), therefore, this feature possibly initiates interaction that may not otherwise occur, and at times, may be the only directed interaction between two Friends. Moreover, Vitak (2014b) also states that sending birthday wishes is indicative of social grooming.

The final feature of Facebook found to influence interaction was the 'seen by' function, which was introduced by Facebook during the period of data collection. Introduced to Facebook groups, messages, and chat in 2012, this function acts as a 'read receipt', allowing users to view a list of people who have seen each post in a group or message/chat thread (Downey 2012). Sophie was the only informant who mentioned this function, explaining:

> When Facebook introduced the 'seen' function, it increased the participation [in our Study Abroad Facebook Group], because it showed that people had actually seen the post, and therefore you couldn't ignore it (Sophie, Interview 5).

Importantly, Sophie believed that her peers were therefore more likely to comment on posts in order to avoid appearing as insensitive or disengaged from the group.

In sum, this section has provided important evidence concerning the impact of technology on the informants' ongoing interaction and network maintenance post-study abroad. Thus, there is a definite need to include 'technology-related factors' into future typologies of factors influencing relational maintenance. As will be seen in the following chapter, technology also plays an important role in patterns of language selection.

8.6. Summary
Through use of Fehr's (1996; 2000) framework, this chapter has systematically drawn

together factors discussed in Chapter 7 as influencing the informants' interaction and network maintenance/development at specific life stages, and examined those identified as influential across all phases of the informants' post-study abroad life trajectories. A summary of these factors is provided in Table 20 below.

Table 20 Factors influencing interaction and networks with Japanese speakers post-study abroad

Environmental factors Geographical proximity Dis/continuation of Japanese study Workplace environment Japan-related extra-curricular activities (clubs/associations, language exchange)	***Personal factors*** Ongoing interest in Japan and/or other cultures Investment in Japanese language Future intentions concerning Japanese language Relationship and/or parental status
Situational factors Frequency of exposure Geographical mobility Availability Probability of future interaction	***Dyadic factors*** Closeness of relationship during study abroad Personal similarity Relationship equity Provision of support Shared networks
Technological factors Common technology/means of interaction Frequency and type of use/exposure Features of technology that facilitate interaction	

Of particular importance was the identification of the necessity to expand Fehr's framework to include a fifth category influencing interaction and networks: technological factors. More specifically, it was found that common technology/means of interaction, frequency and type of use/exposure, and features of technology were particularly influential to both initial as well as longer-term relational maintenance. Additionally, the environmental factor of geographic proximity, the situational factors of geographical mobility, frequency of exposure, and availability, and the dyadic factors of closeness of relationship during study abroad, relationship equity, provision of support, and shared networks were also identified as important factors influencing ongoing interaction and network maintenance.

The factors found to influence further network development with TL speakers post-study abroad had some degree of overlap with those influencing networks during study abroad. In particular, engagement in environments where other TL speakers were present, such as at Japan-related extracurricular activities or at work, facilitated contact with both NSs and NNSs. Such engagement was especially found to be influenced by three interrelated personal factors: ongoing interest in Japan, investment in Japanese language, and future intentions concerning Japanese language. The following chapter will now examine the patterns of language use within post-study abroad networks, and factors influencing their selection.

9. PATTERNS OF LANGUAGE USE POST-STUDY ABROAD AND FACTORS INFLUENCING THEM

Before I went to Japan, and while I was in Japan I would try to use Japanese because I was trying to practise. But now it's at the level where I don't take notice if I use Japanese or English. I don't care so much anymore now that I'm comfortable with it. That's a big difference – Oscar, 8 months post-study abroad

9.1. Introduction

In Chapters 7 and 8, examination of the informants' post-study abroad social interaction and networks with TL speakers was presented. This final analysis chapter will now more closely explore the linguistic interaction occurring within these networks, particularly concerning patterns of language use and selection. Firstly, the comment above not only highlights several important characteristics of Oscar's post-study abroad language use, but also supports the notion that once a second language is well established, language choice usually becomes an unconscious process. As stated by Grosjean (1982:145), bilinguals will rarely ask themselves "Which language should I be using?" Rather, language choice is a rapid and automatic decision and, as will be highlighted throughout the remainder of this chapter, involves a multitude of interrelated factors.

Oscar's comment above also highlights the potential impact of study abroad on students' L2 identity, and supports Norton and Toohey's (2002) argument that an individual's drive to use the L2 can change as they become more proficient in the language. Post-study abroad, Oscar had transformed from a Japanese learner who had primarily used the language to gain practice, to a Japanese user who predominantly used the language to socialise in a community where bilingual speech was normal (cf. Benson et al. 2013:80). This also reflects Jackson's (2008) observation that experiences during study abroad may result in changing perspectives of the L2, such as from a tool for academic success to a 'living language' that is used for practical purposes.

Oscar's experience was far from unique; as seen in Chapter 7, many of the informants indicated that their time abroad impacted their L2 identity in various ways. In terms of language proficiency, the vast majority of focal informants indicated that constant exposure to and use of Japanese language during study abroad led to enhanced speaking and listening skills, as well as increased confidence in their Japanese abilities. Consistent with previous studies (Kurata 2002, 2004; Campbell 2011), they also claimed to use more Japanese post-compared to pre-study abroad, and often related this to the factors above. As with Oscar, the majority of other focal informants also indicated a significant increase in their use of Japanese as a communicational tool compared to pre-study abroad, where it had primarily been used for practice or when discussing classroom content or homework.

The overwhelming majority (>90%) of questionnaire respondents also indicated that interaction while abroad greatly contributed to their Japanese listening, speaking, and informal language skills, which potentially impacted their language use after returning home. QR54, for example, stated:

> Being abroad definitely helps with colloquial Japanese. I think it is better to sound like a natural Japanese speaker rather than a Japanese text book and studying abroad in Japan really helps with that when interacting with people of your same age.

As previously mentioned, the focal informants also claimed to encounter and subsequently acquire various forms of informal language through social interaction during study abroad, such as onomatopoeia, local dialects, gendered speech, slang and sentence final particles.

Although study abroad experiences evidently impact students' perception of their Japanese communicative competence and desire to use the language, it goes without question that their patterns of language use within their Japanese-speaking networks continue to be influenced by a multitude of factors in the post-study abroad setting, just as they were during study abroad. The remainder of this chapter therefore examines the patterns of

language use that existed in the focal informants' and questionnaire respondents' social networks after they completed their study abroad programs, as well as the factors that influenced language selection. It should be noted that because Carla did not claim to ever use Japanese for a communicative purpose post-study abroad, no reference is made to her in this chapter. Section 9.2 focuses on language use with NSs of Japanese, and Section 9.3 discusses language use with NNSs of Japanese.

9.2. Language use with native Japanese speakers

The focal informants' patterns of language use with each of their network members were deduced from their series of interviews and interaction journals, and are presented in Table 21 below. The table includes the number of network members with whom each language variety was reportedly used, the percentage of each informants' network with which they used each variety with, as well as an average calculation of the language use patterns in their overall network. Note that this table accounts for network members both in Australia and overseas, where interaction occurred via a range of channels.

Table 21 Focal informants' patterns of language use with native Japanese speakers post-study abroad

Language variety	Marie	Oscar	Jane	Phoebe	Angela	Alex	Sophie	Overall network
Predominantly Japanese	51 (76%)	18 (69%)	17 (68%)	8 (53%)	10 (25%)	2 (66%)	1 (25%)	107 (59%)
Predominantly English	4 (6%)	1 (4%)	3 (12%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (25%)	9 (5%)
Predominantly other language	3 (4%)	1 (4%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4 (2%)
Mixed	9 (13%)	6 (23%)	5 (20%)	7 (47%)	30 (75%)	1 (34%)	2 (50%)	60 (34%)

Comparing Table 21 above to Table 15 in Chapter 6 in regards to the focal informants' language use during study abroad, a significant difference in language use patterns can be observed. Although it was reported that the Predominantly Japanese variety was employed

with the vast majority (if not all) network members during study abroad, in the post-study abroad context, patterns of language selection are much more varied. Nevertheless, either Predominantly Japanese or the Mixed varieties were the most common selections, while the choice of Predominantly English or Other variety was relatively rare.

Table 22 below also shows a similar trend in the language use patterns of the questionnaire respondents, where data was drawn from their reported language use with their most important NS contacts from study abroad with whom they maintained contact, as well as with their three most important NS contacts post-study abroad.

Table 22 Questionnaire respondents' patterns of language use with native Japanese speakers post-study abroad

Language Variety	Number of contacts used with	Percentage of overall network used with
Predominantly Japanese	93	49%
Predominantly English	39	20%
Predominantly Other	10	5%
Mixed	49	26%

In particular, it can be seen that the Predominantly Japanese variety was reportedly used with approximately half of the respondents' contacts, and the Mixed variety with just over a quarter. The significantly larger percentage of Predominantly English use reported by questionnaire respondents (20%) compared to focal informants (5% average) is likely related to the fact that while it was decided to restrict analysis of focal informants' post-study abroad networks to those with whom Japanese was used for a communicative purpose, the nature of the questionnaire respondents' data meant that such a differentiation could not be undertaken (i.e. the data presented in Table 22 above likely includes contacts with whom Japanese was not used for communicative purposes). While this is a limitation in making direct comparisons with the focal informants' data, the exclusion of such contacts would still result in the same trend, in that the Predominantly Japanese and Mixed Varieties were the most commonly reported languages.

In the sections below, Grosjean's (1982) factors influencing language choice in bilingual settings will once again be drawn upon to discuss the factors influencing the informants' patterns of language selection: participant, situation, content of discourse, and function of interaction. As with Chapter 6, an additional category of 'channel of interaction' has also been employed. While many of the factors below were highlighted in the preceding chapter, others were more specific to post-study abroad contexts.

9.2.1. Participant-related factors

The informants identified six key participant-related factors that influenced their language selection with NSs post-study abroad: informants' and their social network members' proficiency in English, Japanese, and/or other language(s), history of linguistic interaction, investment in L2 by informants and their social network members, identity in relation to the L2(s), and awareness or sensitivity to interlocutors' L2 identities.

In general, network members established in Japan tended to have less knowledge of English than network members established in Australia, which resulted in a stronger tendency to use the Predominantly Japanese variety with network members located in Japan. QR33, for example, stated that she uses 'exclusively Japanese' with her choir *sempai* (senior) maintained from study abroad, because 'she can't speak English'. Similarly, during her third interview when she had just completed training in Japan for her new job, Marie highlighted the connection between language proficiency, ease of communication, and language selection as follows:

I NEVER used English with the other [NS] trainees. I don't want to. They asked me to, but I had. to. speak. like. this. very very slowly, very simple words. They couldn't understand English. So it was actually very challenging for me, because in Australia with my Japanese friends I became lazy you know, I'd be speaking Japanese but sometimes using an English word in the sentence. But this time I had to think really hard what to say, and the vocab, and things like that. It was good (Marie, Interview 3).

During her next interview four months later, she confirmed that the vast majority of

interaction with the trainees continued to be in Japanese, with the exception of a few emails she received when she was back in France.

Indeed, the language in which the relationship was established was also found to be influential in determining language selection, and in most cases continued through time. This can be categorised under Grosjean's (2010:45) factor of 'language history', for which he explains that individuals tend to develop an "agreed upon" language that becomes the language of communication from then on (even if it has never been discussed). This is effectively reflected in Phoebe's comment, where she stated that 'if Japanese was the language that we established our relationship in then generally I'll always use Japanese. But that is mainly for people I met in Japan'. On the other hand, she explained that because she and Kae, whom she met in Australia, 'established [their] relationship to begin with in English, [they] mainly speak in English'. Similarly, analysis of the questionnaire data also indicated that when relationships were maintained from study abroad, the dyads generally continued to use the same language. Of the 17 instances of language shift that were reported, the majority (12/17) resulted in increased Japanese use.

QR28 was the only respondent who provided a reason for the language shift, stating that it was because her host mother's 'English worsened and my Japanese got better'. Although the majority of QR28 and her host mother's interaction during study abroad was spoken, in the post-study abroad context it is primarily via Facebook messages, which makes one consider whether a change in channel of interaction may have also been influential. While none of the respondents specifically stated that a change in channel of interaction influenced a shift in language use, QR8 indicated that although she and her friend Tsubasa 'spoke' to each other in Japanese during study abroad, they currently exchange Facebook and Line messages (both written channels) in English, and QR72 commented that although she

'conversed' with her NS friend Yasu in Japanese during study abroad, they currently exchange emails in English, but use Japanese if they ever meet face-to-face. Similarly, QR16's shift from Predominantly Japanese to the Predominantly English variety also correlated to a change from primarily spoken to written channels, and this appeared to be a common trend amongst the other respondents as well. The impact of channel of interaction on language selection will be further discussed in section 9.2.3.

Both Phoebe and Jane also mentioned a shift in some of their network members' language use, observing that when they went on study abroad to America, they started to use more English. Although Phoebe commented that she tended to reply to English Facebook posts in Japanese 'to keep in line' with her pre-established language choice while in Japan, Jane claimed to reply in whichever language she was addressed. Jane's contacts, however, were her English students when she was in Japan, so she was already accustomed to using English with them within the classroom, as well as outside of class when they were 'feeling eager' to practice. It is therefore possible that their previous role-relation of teacher-student influenced ongoing patterns of language selection, where Jane's use of English was associated with an identity as English teacher.

Similarly, although Oscar had interacted with his NS contacts in the predominantly Japanese variety during study abroad, he did not mind reciprocating their choice to use English for Facebook messages in order to help them improve their L2. On the other hand, Angela mentioned that although she had used the predominantly Japanese variety with her Korean friend Yun-seo during study abroad, 15 years later the situation has changed because Yun-seo has moved to the same Australian city as Angela, and Angela is now learning Korean. Angela explained that currently when they interact, 'I'll try and speak Korean first, but if I can't because my Korean is very low level then we'll go to Japanese,

because that's still easier than English'. It is therefore evident that in addition to the informants' and their network member's language proficiency and history of linguistic interaction, desire to use their L2(s) in order to gain practice, or investment in their L2, also plays an important role in patterns of language selection.

The focal informants' and their network member's investment in their respective L2s resulted in interesting patterns of language negotiation. As previously shown in Tables 21 and 22, use of the Mixed variety was significant in the post-study abroad context for both focal informants and questionnaire respondents. The majority of the contacts with whom the Predominantly English or Mixed varieties of speech were used were initially met outside of Japan, or had resided overseas at some stage throughout their life and were eager to practise or use English as an L2. QR2, who is currently working in Japan as an assistant English teacher, explained that because one of her co-worker/friends 'has lived for some time outside of Japan, she's very good at English and is excited to have someone to practice with. In return she helps me study Japanese'. Similarly, Marie mentioned that because several of her NS colleagues in Japan want to practice English, mixed language use 'just happens'. Although Marie claimed to use a greater degree of Japanese than English with these bilingual colleagues in Japan, she explained that back in Australia, some of her NS contacts just 'love' speaking English, and that their persistence in using the language had resulted in greater English use.

Interestingly, Phoebe mentioned that in the event that any of her NS network members posted on Facebook in English, the language of her reply 'depended who it was'. She further explained:

> If they were someone that I knew often they would want to practise their English then I'd post in English. If it was someone that would often speak in Japanese, then I would post in Japanese (Phoebe, Final Interview).

Here it is possible that a number of factors influencing language use are coming into play: language history, investment in the L2 (both Phoebe's and her network members'), and also awareness or sensitivity to interlocutors' L2 identities. This last factor was also identified in Kurata's (2007, 2008, 2010) research, and is well exemplified in the patterns of language use between Phoebe and her network member Eri, who she had maintained contact with since her study abroad period. Phoebe stated that even though Eri was eager to practise English, 'she knows we want to practise Japanese, so she uses Japanese with us'. Thus, it appears that Eri may have put her identity as an L2 English speaker on hold in order to respect Phoebe's identity as an L2 Japanese speaker.

As researchers have previously argued, it is through language that individuals negotiate a sense of self and express their personal and social identities (Norton 1995:13; Cheshire 2002:19). Using Phoebe's above statements, it seems that while she asserts her identity as a Japanese user by using Japanese in a non-reciprocal manner to English posts in some instances, she is also aware of some of her NS network members' L2 English identities, which led to English responses in other instances. It could therefore be suggested that just as the informants in this study held identities as Japanese users as well as English experts or language practice partners, many of their NS network members held identities as users of L2 English in addition to Japanese expert or language practice partner. Thus, the assertion of these multiple identities was apparent in both the desire to use and/or provide opportunities for use or practise of their respective L2(s).

This can be further demonstrated by Angela's comment on language use in Australia as follows:

> I think the language you use is really dependent on who you are talking to and what they might answer you back in. Like you might use a lot of Japanese and then they answer in English and then you sort of end up talking in English… It's a bit pointless if they only answer you back in English (Interview 4).

Similarly, Oscar also indicated that in spoken discourse, replying to his network members 'in the same language [is] quite common'.

Grosjean (1982:142) has suggested non-reciprocal language use indexes a lack of group solidarity, which may lead to embarrassment or even anger between bilinguals. Thus, Li Wei (2013:369) has indicated that this pattern of language use in spontaneous spoken discourse is not usually sustainable, and that 'after a short run of divergent language choices, one participant usually accepts the other's language, and the exchange continues with an agreed language as the language-of-interaction.'

Importantly, however, it appears that this may not be the case when it comes to written discourse, as Phoebe claimed that she will write emails to her pre-study abroad contact Aika in the Predominantly Japanese variety, while Aika will write emails to her in the Predominantly English variety. Phoebe commented that they share an 'understanding that we both want to practice the language that we're learning', and thus provided each other with language support along the way. Kurata (2007) also identified a case of non-reciprocal written language use between a Japanese learner and two of her Japanese friends in Japan, and together, these examples contrast with Grosjean's above claim, and provide evidence that when it comes to written forms of interaction, non-reciprocal language use may be considered comfortable and even natural in bilingual networks. This issue will be further discussed in Section 9.2.3 concerning channels of interaction.

9.2.2. Situation-related factors

The informants identified three key situational factors that influenced their language selection with NSs: location or setting of interaction, presence of monolinguals, and fatigue or laziness. In terms of location, it was mentioned in Chapter 6 that Japanese became Jane's 'de facto language' when in Japan. After an initial adjustment period post-study abroad,

however, English became her 'main language again'. As discussed in the previous section, the opposite shift in base language from Japanese to English was also observed with a number of Phoebe and Jane's NS network members when they went on study abroad to America. Interestingly, however, Phoebe commented on these network members' language use in her final interview as follows:

> If they've gone back to Japan then I've noticed that they have kind of drifted back into Japanese… I guess kind of like what- most of us went to Japan then we'd come home and do Japanese kind of things but we were slowly kind of drifting out of that, gradually. Yeah so they did the same thing (Phoebe, Final Interview).

Although we can only guess the reasoning behind their shift in language use, I suggest that one of the reasons would be the fact that geographical relocation also meant a change in the dominant language of interaction around them. In the Australian context, therefore, it is not surprising that each of the informants claimed to use either the Mixed or Predominantly English varieties of language with one or more NS network members established in this setting.

This relates to another situation-related factor: the presence of monolinguals. In the Australian setting, the informants indicated that a switch in language of interaction from Japanese to English in the presence of non-Japanese speakers was the norm. To that effect, Sophie claimed that although she always used Japanese when it was just herself and her Japanese family friends, if her own family (who do not speak Japanese) were also present, they would switch to English.

Similarly, Phoebe stated that she and her friend Kae 'mostly meet up when my other school friends are there as well, so we don't speak Japanese together in front of them, because we want to include them'. Oscar stated that although he used predominantly Japanese for everyday conversation with the NSs in his Japanese Club Committee, all club proceedings

were conducted in English because 'otherwise it's unfair'. Jane, on the other hand, primarily interacted with Japanese Club members at club events, and claimed that this was conducted predominantly in English due to the presence of non-Japanese speakers.

While the above finding is in accordance to that of Kurata's (2007) study, a number of the focal informants also made interesting observations about the type of language use on Facebook, in particular, concerning the presence of monolinguals, or non-speakers of Japanese. Phoebe, for example, mentioned that she rarely posts things exclusively in Japanese on Facebook because she 'didn't want to be too alienating' to non-Japanese-speaking Facebook friends. This behaviour can be linked to Bakhtin's (1986) concept of 'addressivity', which refers to the ways in which individuals' utterances are shaped by the communicative expectations of the (imagined) addressee. In the case of SNS communication, Seargeant, Tagg and Ngampramuan (2012:515) reason that

> The imagined audience for postings – i.e. the possible readership from the group of Friends that an individual has – is likely to influence the style (including language choice) of the initial utterance, and that subsequent utterances within a conversation may also be addressed both to those already participating, and to those who may be reading but not directly interacting with the postings.

In addition to her own language use on Facebook, Phoebe also observed that her study abroad peers tended to post in English and Japanese 'because obviously half the people we met were Japanese, and if it's mostly directed towards Japanese people then you might comment in Japanese'. Similarly, both Angela and Alex commented that they simultaneously post in a mixture of English, Japanese and Korean on Facebook. This behaviour of repeating, or reiterating the message in a different language, has been identified by Gumperz (1982) and Saville-Troike (2003) as a discourse function of code switching. Although they claim that reiteration may be employed as a clarification strategy, or, to increase the utterance's perlocutionary effect, it seems that the informants in this study primarily utilised it to avoid excluding non-speakers of a particular language.

The relationship between addressivity and inclusion was further highlighted by Alex, who indicated that although he tended to mainly post in Korean, if there was an issue he really wanted to share with his Japanese friends as well, he would 'work something [he] put up in Korean into Japanese as well'. Angela, on the other hand, indicated that an additional function of posting in multiple languages was to provide NS Facebook Friends with an opportunity for L2 English practice. The provision of L2 assistance was also identified as an interactional function-related factor influencing language selection, and will be further discussed in Section 9.2.5.

The third and final situation-related factor identified by several of the informants was fatigue and/or laziness. Reflecting a pattern identified in the informants' language use during study abroad, QR45, who is an Australian with Chinese heritage (Cantonese is her L1), mentioned that although she predominantly uses Japanese with her NS boyfriend post-study abroad, she occasionally uses English when she is 'too tired/not in the mood to use Japanese'. Of the focal informants, both Marie and Angela indicated that they would sometimes use English with NS network members because they were 'lazy' or 'slack'. Reflecting the findings of Kurata (2007), fatigue and lack of time was found to be particularly influential when it came to language choice in written channels – English was simply the easier option. The impact of channel of interaction on language selection with NSs post-study abroad is discussed below.

9.2.3. Channel of interaction

The informants identified two key channel of interaction-related factors influencing their language use with NSs post-study abroad: whether the channel was spoken or written, and features of various channels. Firstly, Marie and several of the questionnaire respondents indicated that while they used Japanese for spoken interaction (in person or on Skype), they used English when communicating via written channels.

In Marie's case, she stated:

> [W]ith my phone, I don't like it [typing in Japanese], I REALLY dislike it. It's like 'oh shit I wrote the wrong kanji now I have to write it again' you know, so [I use] English. And most of my friends can actually read English and understand it so even if, like most of them reply in Japanese actually because it's quicker for them as well. And then I'll send back in English… I prefer to use English when I write, it's just quicker, it's more convenient (Marie, Final Interview).

This preference for using English in written channels was possibly related to the complexity of Japanese language, and linguistic distance from English (or French). As Ohara-Hirano (2012:43) explains, the fact that Japanese uses three different scripts, *kanji, hiragana,* and *katakana*[20], can pose significant difficulties for L2 Japanese learners, especially for those who are not accustomed to using Chinese characters.

In addition to explaining Marie's preference for using English in written channels, and her Japanese network member' preference for Japanese, the excerpt above also adds further evidence to the argument that non-reciprocal language use in written channels is considered normal among some bilingual networks, as discussed in Section 9.2.1.

Both Oscar and QR45 also mentioned instances of differential language use depending upon channel of interaction. However, they were in contrast to Marie's (i.e. English for spoken discourse and Japanese for written discourse). In Oscar's case, he explained that with his pre-study abroad contacts Mihoko and Satsuki (initially met in Australia) he would usually SMS or write Facebook messages in Japanese, but that 'communication in-person was English unless there were other people around'. Although Oscar himself was unsure as to the reason behind this behaviour, a possible explanation is that these two network members were maintained from pre-study abroad, a period when Oscar was less confident in his

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[20] *Kanji* are logographic characters adopted from Chinese, which represent both phonetics and meaning. They are mostly used for words of native Japanese origin, including nouns and the stems of verbs and adjectives. *Hiragana* and *katakana,* on the other hand, are both phonetic syllabaries. While *hiragana* is used for native Japanese words not covered by *kanji* as well as for grammatical elements, *katakana* is normally used for writing foreign words and names, onomatopoeia, and sometimes for emphasis.

Japanese, and thus less likely to use it when speaking for communicative purposes. Moreover, at this stage they were both still attending the same university as Oscar, and their interaction was primarily face-to-face.

At the time of Oscar's final interview, however, Mihoko had returned to Japan and Satsuki had moved to another town, which resulted in a switch to primarily written channels of discourse. Thus, although it appears that they may have had an "agreed upon" language (cf. Grosjean 2010:45) of English for spoken discourse that was carried on from pre-study abroad, it is possible that Oscar saw the addition of a new channel of (written) discourse as an opportunity to introduce Japanese to their one-to-one language history post-study abroad.

Further concerning the impact of channel of interaction, Oscar made an interesting observation about his language use with his girlfriend Seiko when communicating via SMS on his phone. He stated:

> It's annoying to have to switch between 2 languages... So if I start up a message and it's already in English, I might type in English, but if it's in Japanese I might type in Japanese…You only change if there's a specific person or specific purpose (Oscar, Interview 2).

Additionally, he also mentioned that he would always send SMS to his pre-study abroad friend Osamu in English 'because I don't think he CAN type Japanese on his phone'. On a somewhat related note, Marie also mentioned an episode where although she had wanted to respond to a Japanese email in Japanese, Japanese language was not installed on the computer she was using, and thus she wrote in English.

In sum, this section has discussed three main points concerning the impact of channel of interaction on language selection. Firstly, several cases of differential use of languages according to channels were highlighted. The predominant pattern was Japanese for spoken discourse, and English for written discourse, possibly related to the complexity of Japanese

written language. Secondly, it was also shown that sustained use of non-reciprocal language in written channels appeared natural to the informants and their network members. On the one hand, the respective L1s (or stronger L2) may have been selected to enhance communication efficiency. On the other hand, some dyads used their respective L2s, in association with a desire for L2 practice. Finally, it was also shown that features of various channels, such as the installation of language software or the capacity to switch between languages, may also impact patterns of language selection.

9.2.4. Discourse content-related factors

The informants indicated two key discourse-related factors influencing their language use with NNSs post-study abroad: topic of discourse, and common L2 words. Firstly, the informants supported Grosjean's (2010:46) assertion that 'some topics are simply better dealt with in one language than another, and [that] bilinguals speaking among themselves may well change base languages when they change topics'. Oscar, for example, claimed that although he usually interacted with his current girlfriend (who is a Japanese international student attending the same Australian university) in the Predominantly Japanese variety, 'when she's speaking about her study and things like that, she'll use English – definitely'. He continued, explaining:

> Because she studies in Australia there are some things that she can't say in Japanese because, what do you say, *senmon kotoba* (sic) (technical language), the words on a specific topic or whatever, she probably doesn't know the words in Japanese either. She didn't study that in Japan (Oscar, Initial Interview).

Likewise, Marie explained that because her NS friend and colleague Harry grew up in America, he 'doesn't like to do business in Japanese'. She speculated that because 'he's been overseas doing business in English I guess his business language is English'. This very same sentiment was also expressed by an informant in Grosjean's (1982:141) study.

Marie also mentioned that her own discourse in the Japanese work environment was limited due to the speciality of the company. In her second interaction journal, she detailed an email that she had wrote to the CEO of a Japanese Company in Australia, where she had used the Mixed Variety of language to inform him that she had acquired a job in Japan. In her subsequent interview, she explained her language use as follows:

> It was a long email I wrote, half was in Japanese with the fancy greeting in Japanese and stuff, but then when I started to be very precise about what I was doing I wrote in English… because I didn't know how to say, I didn't know how to call my job in Japanese. In English it's got a fancy name, executive assistant and global business strategy planner, so I was like, you know, that's the fancy name that they gave me. And I just wanted to express how grateful I was. Because you know the CEO tried to help me get a job at [his company], so I wanted to show my gratitude, but I didn't know how to do that in Japanese. Like I know how to do it, but I feel more confident doing it in English (Marie, Interview 3).

In her following interview four months later, she also indicated that she was feeling 'limited in my conversations at work, having to talk about the products and stuff'. She explained: 'I just don't have the vocab yet, it's too technical you know. LED lights, relays and stuff, I can't talk about that shit in Japanese'. Thus, Marie has highlighted an important relationship between the participant-related factors of language proficiency and confidence, topic of discourse, and language selection.

Similarly, of the questionnaire respondents, QR34 mentioned that although she predominantly used Japanese with her NS contacts, they would use English for 'education/translation purposes', or 'cultural references', though unfortunately she didn't offer any examples. These instances provided by the informants all reflect the experience of Grosjean, who noted that he himself is more likely to use L2 English as opposed L1 French when discussing cognitive psychology, or statistics, because he has greater vocabulary knowledge of these fields in English (Grosjean 2010:31-47). He further explains that 'if a language is never used for a particular purpose, it will not develop the linguistic properties needed for that purpose', such as specialised vocabulary and stylistic variety (Grosjean

2008:24).

In addition to topic of discourse, many of the informants indicated that they engaged in 'insertion' type code switching (cf. Muysken 2000:60-61), previously discussed in Chapter 6. For example, Sophie commented that although she and her two NS contacts established post-study abroad usually spoke in the Predominantly English variety, they 'often code switch a lot', usually for 'commonly used nouns' such as '*eki*- station'. Sophie herself had realised that this was characteristic of her language use with her 'clubbing group' of NNS friends while in Japan (cf. Section 6.3.3), and 'thought that [it] was really interesting' that the same patterns of code switching appeared with her NS contacts in Australia. Similarly, in Angela's second interaction journal, she detailed a text message interaction with her language exchange partner Yuri that was 'mainly English, and little things like *arigatō* (thank you) were in Japanese, or *oyasumi* (good night) from her end'.

Of the questionnaire respondents, QR62 also mentioned that she continues to use 'English with a few Japanese words' with her assigned buddy from study abroad, though she did not provide any further details concerning the type of discourse. Each of the above comments, however, all suggest the idea of 'in-group' language and identity marking, which was further elaborated by Alex when he was discussing the function of code switching with his ethnically Korean Japanese-NS contact Minjun:

> Even if we have a conversation that's completely in Korean, we'll often end in Japanese, or the other way around. I don't know why, but it just feels to me, like it's almost an acknowledgment that we know those other languages as well, and we WANT to use it, to identify ourselves as being in that group (Alex, Interview 2).

As a number of other researchers (Myers-Scotton 1993; Auer 2005; McKay 2005; Jackson 2008; Grosjean 2010) have observed, by switching between Japanese, English, and/or other languages, it is possible that the informants are marking their group membership and dual (or multiple) identities of the cultures that the languages they use index (cf. Section 9.2.1).

9.2.5. Interactional function-related factors

The informants identified five interactional-function related factors influencing their language use with NSs post-study abroad: to exclude someone, to request or provide clarification, to provide language assistance, to joke, and, to quote someone.

Similar to informants in Grosjean's (1982; 2010) studies, Marie mentioned switching to English with some of her NS network members in order to exclude others. When talking about her interaction with her closer NS post-study abroad colleagues/friends in Japan, she commented:

> When it's just the four of us we can have a very good talk in Japanese. But when there's people around us, we might switch to English, you know say if we're talking about sex, I don't think it's necessarily appropriate. So, a lot of people don't really understand English either, so we just switch to that depending upon what we're talking about I guess (Marie, Final Interview).

In other words, Marie may use English in order to conceal discussion of 'taboo topics', supporting Saville-Troike's (2003:57) claim that code switching may be employed to exclude other listeners within earshot if the comment is only intended for a limited audience.

In his studies, Grosjean (1982; 2010) also identified that bilinguals sometimes select a certain language to make a request. Although the informants in this study did not mention selecting a certain language to make general requests, they did identify that code switching sometimes occurred in order to request for or provide clarification when negotiating meaning. Interestingly, although it was found that the informants themselves were likely to code switch to English to request language assistance during study abroad, the opposite was found for the post-study abroad period. QR33, for example, mentioned that she uses a mix of English and Japanese with her Choir *sempai* (senior) from study abroad, because 'his English is very 'Japanese' so sometimes I have to clarify the meaning!' (i.e. she most likely code switched to Japanese to clarify his English).

On a related note, Phoebe mentioned that although she and her friend Kae predominantly converse in English, if Kae 'get[s] stuck on an English phrase', she might suggest Kae 'try it in Japanese', after which she would provide her with the English equivalent. These examples thus show the relationship between the interactional function-related factor of code switching to request assistance, and the participant-related factor of language proficiency. Similarly, Jane, Sophie, Oscar, Angela, and several of the questionnaire respondents also mentioned that they would sometimes use English with some of their NS network members in Australia and/or Japan in order to provide them with L2 practice or assistance.

Finally, Marie identified two additional interactional function-related factors that were not included in Grosjean's (1982; 2010) framework. The first of these was the function of joking, where she simply stated: 'I might use Japanese for a joke or something'. Although she unfortunately did not provide any examples, her comment does support Saville-Troike (2003:56) claim that code switching may be 'used for a humorous effect'. The second factor that she identified was code switching in order to quote someone. In her second interaction journal, she had detailed a Skype conversation with a NS friend where they used French and Japanese. When asked to elaborate on the conversation, Marie explained that French was the base language, and that her friend code switched to Japanese in order to talk about a recent activity with another Japanese girl. Specifically, Marie recalled that Japanese was employed to 'explain something about the situation, and [to] repeat something that she heard or something like that'. As mentioned in Section 6.2.5, the function of quoting someone has also been identified as a factor influencing code switching by a number of researchers (e.g. Gumperz 1982; Saville-Troike 2003).

9.3. Language use with non-native Japanese speakers

The latter part of this chapter will now discuss the informants' patterns of language use and selection with other NNSs of Japanese in the post-study abroad context. Firstly, Table 23 below presents the number of network members (and overall network percentage) that the focal informants claimed to use each language variety with at the time of their final interviews.

Table 23 Focal informants' patterns of language use with non-native Japanese speakers post-study abroad

Language variety	Sophie	Jane	Marie	Phoebe	Angela	Oscar	Alex	Overall Network
Predominantly Japanese	19 (76%)	12 (63%)	4 (33%)	4 (14%)	1 (5%)	0 (0%)	1 (50%)	41 (35%)
Predominantly English	5 (20%)	5 (26%)	2 (17%)	24 (86%)	12 (67%)	6 (60%)	0 (0%)	54 (47%)
Predominantly other language	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Mixed	1 (4%)	2 (11%)	6 (50%)	0 (0%)	5 (28%)	4 (40%)	1 (50%)	19 (17%)

Comparing Table 23 above to Table 21 in Section 9.2, it can be seen that with the exception of Sophie, the focal informants utilised the Predominantly Japanese variety with far fewer NNSs than NSs in the post-study abroad context. Sophie was the only focal informant who exhibited an increase in use of the Predominantly Japanese variety with NNSs post-study abroad: not only did she claim to use it with the largest number of contacts and percentage of her post-study abroad NNS network, but she was also the only focal informant who claimed to use the Predominantly Japanese variety with a larger percentage of her NNS network than her NS network. Although factors influencing language selection are discussed in detail in the following sections, this anomaly is likely due to the fact that her interaction was primarily via comments in their study abroad Facebook Group (i.e. little to no individual or private contact), which was, as a whole, primarily conducted in Japanese.

Reflecting the general trend in the focal informants' post-study abroad language use, data provided by the questionnaire respondents also indicated that the Predominantly Japanese variety was used with significantly less NNSs compared to NSs. Table 24 below shows that they reportedly utilised this variety with less than 10 percent of their combined network members post-study abroad, whereas the Predominantly English variety was used with just under 70 percent.

Table 24 Questionnaire respondents' patterns of language use with non-native Japanese speakers post-study abroad

Language Variety	Number of contacts used with	Percentage of overall network used with
Predominantly Japanese	16	9%
Predominantly English	126	69%
Predominantly Other	16	9%
Mixed	24	13%

As mentioned in section 9.2, although analysis of the focal informants' data on language usage was limited to network members with whom Japanese was used for a communicative purpose, it was impossible to do so for the questionnaire respondents' data. However, this limitation aside, Table 24 importantly indicates that post-study abroad, questionnaire respondents also continued to use the Predominantly Japanese and Mixed varieties with other NNSs. As with Section 9.2, the remainder of this section will be used to discuss the factors influencing the informants' language selection with their NNS network members in the post-study abroad context.

9.3.1. Participant-related factors

The participant-related factors influencing the informants' language selection with NNSs post-study abroad had considerable overlap with those discussed in Section 9.2.1 concerning language use with NS contacts. In particular, four key factors were identified: informants' and their social network members' proficiency in English, Japanese, and/or

other language(s), history of linguistic interaction, investment in L2 by informants and their social network members, and preference of interlocutor.

Consistent with the findings discussed in in Section 9.2.1, it was found that the informants tended to use a larger degree of Japanese with contacts they had established in Japan compared to those they had established in their own countries. Of noteworthy importance is the finding that all of the NNS network members with whom the focal informants claimed to use Predominantly Japanese were established during study abroad, and did not share the same L1. As discussed in Chapter 6, the focal informants often felt 'strange' or 'weird' conversing in Japanese with other NSs of English during study abroad, and this sentiment followed through to the post-study abroad context as well. Alex, for example, commented: 'even though I'm happy to use [Japanese] suffixes and things, when communicating with non-Japanese speakers, actually using Japanese, it seems awkward'. As shown in Table 23 above, neither Oscar nor Angela claimed to use Predominantly Japanese with any of their NNS network members post-study abroad. Unlike the other informants, however, their NNS networks were composed entirely of native or near-native speakers of English.

On the other hand, Phoebe explained that she continues to use Japanese with her Thai friend Hiroe[21], because Japanese 'was the common language for her and all the other exchange students'. Similarly, Jane commented that her *Kaikan* (residence) 'Line group is pretty much Japanese, [because] that's the only language we all speak', and Sophie also mentioned that in the Facebook Group for all members of the study abroad program in which she participated in, they use predominantly Japanese because that was the common language. In other words, the experience of study abroad provided the informants with opportunities to meet, befriend, and continue interacting with NNSs of differing L1 backgrounds (often in

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[21] As previously explained, this contact adopted a Japanese name when in Japan.

conjunction with little to no English proficiency), who they may not have had the opportunity to meet in their home contexts. These examples above support two of Grosjean's (1982; 2010) factors influencing language choice: language proficiency, and language history.

The factor of language history, and more specifically location of relationship establishment, was further discussed by Sophie after she completed her second interaction journal. She mentioned that when her Australian friend Jill (who she met during study abroad) came to visit from interstate, they 'fell back into the same pattern, of speaking English with a bit of Japanese thrown in, and speaking Japanese with a bit of English thrown in'. Interestingly, however, Sophie mentioned that when they met up with one of her old classmates, Tash (who Jill was meeting for the first time), they all spoke in English, 'despite the fact that Tash can speak quite good Japanese'. Sophie reflected on the situation:

> And that was because we'd never been in the situation together where we were code switching, or speaking both Japanese and English together was normal. So it wasn't our usual type thing. So I think it shows that maybe, you revert to older patterns that have been ingrained a lot during your time in Japan (Sophie, Interview 3).

Similarly, Alex also reflected on how his language history with his NNS research supervisor influenced language selection as follows:

> If she wrote an email to me and it was in Japanese, then I would DEFINITELY reply in Japanese. If we went to class and she was using Japanese, I'd definitely use Japanese. But because all contact had been in English, and she didn't initiate any contact in Japanese, I always chose to address her in English (Alex, Interview 2).

In addition to language history, however, it is also possible that power relations also influenced Alex's language selection, given that this relationship was as supervisor and student (cf. Grosjean 1982).

As with NS contacts, it was found that although patterns of language use generally continued through time, there were a few exceptions. Four of the questionnaire respondents,

for example, indicated that Japanese was no longer used post-study abroad, replaced by the Predominantly English or Other Language varieties. This finding therefore contrasts with the previously discussed pattern of increased Japanese use with NSs maintained from study abroad. Although the focal informants' language use with NNS contacts maintained from study abroad was relatively consistent, Jane noticed a shift in language use with one of her network members, Elise, who was planning on coming to Australia on exchange at the time of Jane's second interview. Jane commented:

> It's been quite interesting just the past couple of weeks on Skype, it's pretty much English between her and I now, where as it used to be Japanese. It's because she's working REALLY hard to get her English better (Jane, Interview 2).

This comment also highlights the fact that not only NSs, but also NNSs had a desire to use their L2(s) with the informants in order to gain practice. This investment in their L2 evidently played an important role in patterns of language selection. Jane further mentioned that one of the primary reasons English would 'pop up' in their *Kaikan* (Residence) Group Line conversations was if one of the NNSs of English 'wanted to practice or throw it in there'. Similarly, although Sophie claimed that interaction in her WhatsApp 'Clubbing Group' was a 50/50 mix of Japanese and English for at least the first five months post-study abroad, during her interview 11 months post-study abroad, she mentioned that the language had switched to English. She explained:

> Mainly it's because the Thai girl in that group had trouble with English, but is now taking an English course. So she really wants to practice her English, so instead of speaking Japanese we allow her to kind of practice, just speak English (Sophie, Interview 5).

While the provision of English practice was therefore a factor influencing language use with NNS contacts established during study abroad, consistent with Kurata's (2007) findings, either the informants' or their network members' investment in Japanese and related desire to use it was also an influential factor with NNS contacts both at home and abroad. Approximately six months post-study abroad, Phoebe noticed that several of the NNS

contacts she established in Japan had a 'resurgence' of wanting to use Japanese all the time, which was reflected in their Facebook posts. On the other hand, she mentioned that she and Jenny, a pre-study abroad contact in Australia, would sometimes speak Japanese together because they 'want[ed] to practice'. Importantly, she commented that she feels 'very comfortable' in doing so, 'because we both know what we want to get out of it and… we know where the other one is at'. A similar sentiment was also found in Kurata's (2007) study, where one of her informants claimed that while conversing with other NNSs who had a higher Japanese proficiency could be embarrassing, using the L2 with others of a similar proficiency was easy.

In addition to practicing with Jenny, Phoebe also mentioned that the friends she established through Jenny also had a 'really big 'let's practice Japanese, *ganbatte* (do your best)' kind of feeling. So they use it a lot- not ALL the time, but if we're hanging out it'll definitely be used at some point'. On a similar note, QR45 stated that two of her NNS family friends residing in Australia were important people in her Japanese-speaking network because 'we practice Japanese together all the time'.

Finally, Oscar also indicated that preference of interlocutor was a factor influencing his language selection with NNS contacts maintained from study abroad. He explained that although he predominantly uses English with other NSs of English when he himself initiates interaction, he will respond to Facebook posts in the same language that his network members use.

9.3.2. Situation-related factors

Similar to the findings outlined in Section 9.2.2, three situation-related factors influencing language use with NNSs post-study abroad were identified: location or setting of interaction, composition of the group, and presence of monolinguals. As discussed in the

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previous section, either the informants' or their NS network members' relocation from Japan to a country where English is the dominant language had a significant impact on patterns of language use with NSs. This also held true for language use with NNS. Sophie, for example, commented that Japanese use with her NNS contacts from study abroad is 'less now that we're not immersed in the country'. As one might expect, the return to an English dominant society also had an effect on the group dynamics the focal informants encountered in the post-study abroad context, and subsequent patterns of language use.

For example, whereas participation in university clubs in Japan offered abundant opportunities for Japanese use, in the Australian context, Oscar mentioned that at the Anime club he would usually initiate interaction with NNSs in English because 'most of the people don't speak Japanese'. On the other hand, he also commented that language selection within his immediate social network 'depend[s] on the people around us' – if there were NSs around then he was more likely to speak Japanese with other NNSs. Similarly, Angela also mentioned that when she was a member of her university's Japan Club, she 'just used English' with the other Australians, 'only Japanese if there were some Japanese people there'.

Thus far, 'location or setting of interaction' has referred to the physical location of the informants and their network members in Australia, Japan, or elsewhere. As discussed in the previous chapters, however, the informants frequently interacted with their network members via online channels. Thus, I suggest that 'cyberspace' also constitutes an important sub-category of this factor, because online interaction provided the most opportunities for Japanese use for many of the informants. As will be seen in the following section, the specific channel of interaction was also found to influence patterns of language use.

9.3.3. Channel of interaction

Comments concerning the impact of channel of interaction on language use with NNS were significantly fewer than those concerning its impact with NSs. QR36 was the only questionnaire respondent who mentioned this factor, commenting that she uses English when writing via email or chat, and Japanese when speaking over Skype with her NNS contact Jamie with whom she had maintained contact from study abroad. Interestingly, Sophie also mentioned that although she would primarily use English with her 'clubbing group' from during study abroad when they interacted in person, on WhatsApp, or in their

'little sectioned off group' on Facebook, if they were to interact in the larger group on Facebook for all study abroad peers, they would use Japanese. This can also relate back to Bakhtin's (1986) concept of addressivity discussed in Section 9.2.2, in that the imagined audience for such postings was a group of peers whose common language was Japanese. Sophie herself found it interesting that she and her 'clubbing group' would use Japanese in the larger Facebook Group 'despite the fact that it's the same technology'. She further indicated that it was not specifically the channel of interaction that determined the language selection, but how 'comfortable' they felt using each language in the two different groups. Evidently, this was also related to the composition of the members of the Facebook Groups in terms of their English language proficiency.

9.3.4. Discourse content-related factors

The discourse content-related factors influencing the informants' language selection with

NNSs also have considerable overlap with those identified in Section 9.2.4 concerning

language use with NSs. In particular, three key factors were identified: topic of discourse,

common L2/cultural specific words, and length of discourse.

In regards to topic of discourse, Oscar explained that with his friend Nathan 'if we are

discussing a Japanese company or Exchange, we will definitely speak in Japanese because

we are used to using the vocab for those things'. On the other hand, he mentioned that

conversation concerning commerce or economics was always conducted in English. Sophie

also indicated that with her 'Clubbing Group' on WhatsApp, 'the things that sparked code

switching [into Japanese] were when we talked about characteristic Japanese things, like

JET[22], JLPT[23], going abroad, Japan'. Similarly, Phoebe mentioned that when Skyping with

her friend Josie who she met during study abroad, they would predominantly use English,

but 'use little Japanese phrases here and there' when reminiscing about times in Japan

together, or when discussing new vocabulary they had recently acquired. More specifically,

she mentioned that 'every now and then we might use a Japanese word like *mendokusai* (it's

too troublesome) or *natsukashii* (nostalgic)[24] and things like that, words that are better in

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[22] JET= Japan Exchange and Teaching Program
[23] JLPT= Japanese Language Proficiency Test
[24] The Japanese adjective '*natsukashii*' literally means nostalgic, however, Murakami (2006:77) explains that the use of '*natsukashii*' usually produces a strong emotional response between the

Japanese than they are in English'. This supports Appel & Muysken (1997:118) statement that sometimes a specific word from one language may be 'semantically more appropriate for a given concept'.

In further regards to topic of discourse, Marie indicted that although she primarily used English with her Danish friend Hendrik, sometimes they would use Japanese or French 'depending on what [they] talk about', and QR54 commented that she sometimes switches from Japanese to English 'when talking about complex issues' with her best friend Emily, though neither of them provided any examples.

In addition to topic of discourse, Sophie indicated that length of discourse also influenced her language choice. She explained that because 'WhatsApp functions like a quick chat system', you do not necessarily say long sentences, but often just a few words. The shorter nature of the discourse encouraged Japanese use within the group, particularly when using the 'top 100 Japanese words, '*aisatsu*' (greetings), or 'supporting words, "*gambarimashō*" and things like that'. On the other hand, she mentioned that she and the other WhatsApp group members would likely use English 'if we were to say something more than one or two sentences'.

9.3.5. Interactional function-related factors

Comments concerning the impact of interactional function-related factors on language selection with NNSs were scarcer than with NSs. In fact, Alex was the only informant who identified any such factors, namely, expressing gratitude, and requesting something. In his first interaction journal, Alex mentioned writing an email in order to thank "Michael sensei" (lit. teacher Michael) for agreeing to be his co-supervisor. Although Alex claimed that the majority of his email was in English, he mentioned using the formulaic Japanese phrase

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subject and the object in that they are so nostalgic that they are reminded of something from the past. A more suitable translation would thus be 'that brings back memories'.

'*makoto ni kōei ni zonjimasu*' [I think of it as an utmost honor, Alex's translation] in order to express his gratitude. Alex believed that the English translation 'sounds a bit awkward. So I didn't want to say it in English but I really wanted to convey that feeling'. This episode of Alex's therefore supports Saville-Troike's (2003:56) claim that code switching may occur because 'formulaic expressions in one language cannot be satisfactorily translated into the second'.

In further support of this notion, Alex also explained in his third interview that he would often code switch to Japanese with his NNS research supervisors when 'asking for favours':

> you know like *yoroshiku onegaishimasu* or *yoroshiku onegai itashimasu, nani tozo mōshimasu*[25]*,* there aren't really any clear equivalents in English, so you could make a longer sentence and you could say like, "I would really appreciate it if you could perhaps...." But this is more, because it's shorter, I don't know it just feels more - correct to use the Japanese expression there. It feels more formal. Especially because Japanese has so many levels [of politeness]. Like in English maybe I could add all these different adjectives and things like that to make the sentence seem more formal. But it wouldn't have that visual appeal as the Japanese does from the very moment that you see it with '*nani tozo*' being very polite. I just feel that it gets across better (Alex, Interview 3).

In his final interview, Alex once again commented on using Japanese phrases similar to those above when he requested a letter of reference from his supervisors. In addition to selecting Japanese for added formality and politeness, he commented that he could better express himself in Japanese when requesting something in 'difficult situations where you find yourself lost for words. Like 'how do I ask a person to do this for me?' Although he believed there were ways you could achieve it in English, he thought it would 'probably sound a bit silly… [and] archaic. Whereas if you do it in Japanese, it's fine'. Thus, Alex's experiences not only provide evidence for Grosjean's (1982; 2010) interactional function-related factor of requesting something, but also support Saville-Troike's (2003) notion that code switching may be utilised as a means to soften a request.

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[25] These phrases are usually translated as 'I hope you will take good care of this', 'your cooperation is greatly appreciated', 'thank you in advance'.

9.4. Summary

This final analysis chapter has examined the informants' patterns of L1/L2 within their post-study abroad networks, as well as the factors that influenced language selection. Importantly, it was identified that many of the informants' network members – whether established during or post-study abroad – provided important opportunities for ongoing TL use, learning, and/or maintenance. The factors influencing patterns of language selection are summarised in Table 25 below, classified according to Grosjean's (1982; 2010) framework. As not all factors were found to influence language choice with both NSs and NNSs, those factors considered influential with only one or the other are indicated in parentheses.

Table 25 Factors influencing language choice post-study abroad

Participants Learners' and their social network members' proficiency in English, Japanese, and/or other language(s) Investment in L2 by learners and their social network participants Identity in relation to the L2(s) History of linguistic interaction	*Function of interaction* To exclude someone (NSs only) Assistance to an L2 learner To express gratitude To request something (NNSs only) To provide or request clarification (NS only) To make a joke (NSs only) To quote someone (NSs only)
Situation Location/setting of interaction Presence of monolingual speakers Composition of the group Fatigue (NSs only)	*Content of discourse* Topics Common/culturally specific L2 words Length of discourse (NNSs only)
	Channel of interaction Written Spoken

Although there was considerable overlap with the factors discussed in Chapter 5 concerning language use during study abroad, a number of additional factors in the post-study abroad

context were also identified. In particular, these were the participant-related factor of 'dis/continuation of study', content of discourse-related factors of 'common/culturally specific L2 words' and 'length of discourse', and function of interaction-related factors 'to express gratitude', 'to provide or request clarification', 'to make a joke', and 'to quote someone'. It is possible, however, that identification of a greater number of factors post-compared to during study abroad was influenced by the research methodology. As the vast majority of data was collected after program completion, it is possible that this resulted in more detailed recollections of language use post- compared to during study abroad.

There was also a clear differentiation in language use patterns with network members met in Japan compared to those met elsewhere either pre- or post-study abroad, which can be explained in terms of two interrelated participant-related factors: 'history of linguistic interaction', and relative proficiency in English or Japanese. In particular, there was a stronger tendency to use Japanese with both NSs and NNSs who were maintained from study abroad. Many of these relationships were initially established in Japanese, as this was the stronger, or sometimes only, common language. In contrast, there tended to be greater use of the English, Mixed, or Other language varieties with network members established outside of Japan, related to network members' higher proficiency in English/other language, as well as a number of other participant-related and situation-related factors identified above.

In further terms of situation-related factors, it was found that the relocation of network members to different countries with different dominant languages after the informants completed their study abroad programs was an important component of location/setting of interaction, as was the concept of cyberspace as a location of interaction. Finally, under the additional category of 'channel of interaction', the impact of spoken versus written channels on patterns of language use was also identified. Although there tended to be a preference for

the L1/stronger language in written discourse and L2 in spoken discourse, instances of the opposite pattern were also observed. The significance of these findings, and those of the previous chapters, is discussed in the following chapter.

10. CONCLUSION

In contrast to previous research that has tended to focus on either the study abroad period or the outcomes of study abroad, the current study adopted a semi-longitudinal and cross-sectional perspective to examine L2 Japanese language learners' experiences abroad, and the impact of these on their future life trajectories and ongoing interaction with Japanese speakers after program completion. In doing so, it has provided valuable insight into the nature of Japanese language learners' informal interaction and social networks, as well as compelling evidence of the benefits of study abroad for promoting ongoing engagement with TL speakers. In order to achieve this, data from interaction journals and a series of interviews with eight focal informants, coupled with questionnaire data from 126 respondents, was analysed.

The research questions outlined in Chapter 1 were addressed in Chapters 4 to 9. Chapters 4, 5 and 6 responded to research question 1, respectively examining the nature of social networks during study abroad, factors influencing their development, and the patterns of language use and selection occurring within them. Chapters 7, 8 and 9 then responded to research question 2, focusing on the informants' engagement with Japan, its language and its speakers after study abroad completion, as well as the significance of their study abroad experiences. More specifically, Chapters 7 and 8 explored post-study abroad life trajectories and ongoing engagement with Japan and Japanese-speaking speaking networks, as well as the factors influencing this. Chapter 9 then described the patterns of language use within these networks and factors influencing language selection.

As noted by Coleman (2013:36), from the sum of individual experiences, we can deduce typical, prevalent features. Therefore, although considerable variation and uniqueness existed in the informants' data, by primarily focusing on commonalities, this thesis has

endeavored to provide a broad understanding of the experience of studying abroad and then returning home. This final chapter summarises the major findings, highlights their contribution to the field, and discusses the limitations of the study and directions for further research.

10.1. Summary of major Findings

In this section, a summary of the major findings discussed in Chapters 4 to 9 is presented. As with the analysis chapters, findings are summarised in the order of experiences during study abroad, followed by those post-study abroad.

10.1.1. Establishing social networks during study abroad

Although many of the previously conducted network studies in Japan have limited the number of elicited network members to 10 or less (e.g. Tanaka et al. 1994; Tanaka 2000; Nakamura 2001; Murakami 2005), the current study employed no such restrictions. This approach, combined with more detailed network analysis utilising Boissevain's (1974) criteria for network analysis, enabled a more comprehensive understanding of the structural and interactional characteristics of the informants' TL-speaking networks.

It was found that although study abroad increased opportunities for interaction and network development with TL speakers, there was considerable variation in the informants' experiences. In the majority of cases, NNS networks predominated, though each of the informants also established NS networks. The size of these networks ranged from one to more than 50 contacts, established both within and outside the informants' educational institutions, and they exhibited highly dense 'clusters' formed around key activity fields such as residence, class and clubs activities. Informants appeared to establish a range of both multiplex and uniplex relationships with individuals, with whom frequency of interaction varied from every day to occasional. This study also found that the informants'

network members were an important resource for Japanese language support, and expanded upon previous studies by conducting an in-depth examination of patterns of language use within the informants' networks.

In addition to a qualitative examination of the informants' networks, this study also provided an enhanced understanding of the contexts and strategies Japanese learners utilise to interact and establish social networks with other Japanese speakers during study abroad in Japan. In particular, this is the first known study to employ Fehr's (1996; 2000) framework of environmental, situational, individual, and dyadic factors to systematically investigate language learners' patterns of interaction and network development.

In terms of environmental and situational factors, it was found that integrated learning and residential environments were more facilitative of network development with NSs than segregated environments. A particularly important finding was that the appointment of NS 'advisors' in integrated dormitories was especially beneficial for enhancing intercultural integration and network development. Similarly, the finding that integrated classes concerning intercultural communication and/or taught in English are likely to attract a larger degree of students interested in establishing networks with international students was also of significant importance.

Although many pre-set environmental factors such as residence, class type, availability of buddy/tutor systems, and duration of program were controlled by the educational institutes' authorities, numerous informants also made active choices to participate in clubs/associations (either within or outside the educational institute), homestay or home visit programs, and/or part-time work, which also resulted in enhanced opportunities for contact and potential expansion of NS networks. On the other hand, informants who did not

have access to or did not engage with these environmental resources tended to have significantly less interaction with NSs, and more with NNSs.

This was particularly pronounced in the case of informants who completed short-term programs of four months or less, where shorter duration limited opportunities for both interaction and development of more meaningful relationships with NSs. Although several informants specifically indicated that this was related to a lack of the environmental resources mentioned above (e.g. integrated residence and class), it is also possible that NSs were less likely to invest in establishing relationships that they knew would be transitory in nature.

Indeed, another key situational factor identified was the informants' and/or others' degree of availability for new relationships and network expansion. Specifically, the dominance of NNSs compared to NSs in the vast majority of the informants' networks was likely influenced by the fact that NSs already had pre-existing networks and commitments, whereas study abroad peers generally did not. However, an active strategy of engagement with NS could reverse or minimise this trend. For example, it was found that due to the success of Oscar's NS engagement strategies, such as immediately joining clubs, he quickly became unavailable for frequent engagement with his study abroad peers, because his free time was committed to club activities. Availability was therefore related to a number of personal factors, including informants' and/or others' general life priorities, romantic relationship status, and, of course, the limited capacity individuals have to establish and maintain networks.

It was found that the interrelated personal factors of investment in Japanese language, motivation for contact, self-perceived language competence, and prior experience learning

additional languages through informal interaction influenced both the degree of network expansion, as well as quality of the relationships. In particular, many informants demonstrated awareness of the pitfalls of exclusive interaction with exchange students with whom the L1 was frequently used, and thus prioritised establishing networks with NSs. This often resulted in agentic behavior, such as actively joining university clubs, engaging in extra-curricular activities outside of the educational institute, or even going so far as to avoid other exchange students.

With final regard to personal factors, a small number of informants also indicated that with NSs in particular, ethnicity and physical appearance influenced their interaction and network development. More specifically, they suggested that Caucasian students in Japan perhaps experience greater interaction with local Japanese than Asian students do. This interaction, however, was sometimes superficial and did not eventuate to more meaningful friendships.

Related to ethnicity was the dyadic factor of 'cultural similarity/difference', which played a role in interaction and relationship development not so much with NSs, but with NNS peers. In particular, this study found that separation of study abroad students into cultural groups was common. While this provided a sense of solidarity for Sophie, Alex experienced the opposite, in that he felt somewhat excluded as the only student from Oceania, and found it difficult to get along with the other students. This was, however, also related to an additional dyadic factor: personal similarity. Several informants indicated that in order for relationships to move beyond the superficial level, individual similarity in terms of personality and shared interests was important with both NSs and NNSs.

10.1.2. Patterns of language use and selection during study abroad

Although a considerable number of studies have investigated learners' degree of L1/L2 use during study abroad, insight into the reasons behind language use patterns is often lacking. The present study thus makes a major contribution towards an understanding of the patterns of language use that occur within learners' social networks during study abroad in Japan. Drawing upon Nishimura's (1992) categories of bilingual speech, it was found that the informants utilised four language varieties during study abroad in Japan: Predominantly Japanese, Predominantly English, Other, or Mixed varieties. By employing Grosjean's (1982; 2010) framework of factors influencing language selection, it was found that these patterns were influenced by a variety of participant, situation, content of discourse, and function of interaction-related factors.

A particularly important finding was that the informants claimed to use the Predominantly Japanese variety with the vast majority of their NS network members. This was influenced by a number of participant-related factors, including investment in their L2 and motivation to use it in out-of-class contexts, as well as the situational-related factor of being in an environment where Japanese is the default language. A few cases of Predominantly English or Other language use were also evident, primarily with NSs who had themselves been abroad, or were seeking out opportunities to use their L2(s). Although informants did not mention that self-perceived Japanese proficiency or L2 confidence influenced their language selection with NSs, they did indicate that it influenced their overall frequency of Japanese use.

Interestingly, based upon her observations with her home visit mother, Angela's case suggested that learners' ethnicity (a participant-related factor) may play a role in NSs' language selection, or at least that it did in the late 1990s. In particular, she perceived that her Asian appearance potentially heightened her home visit mother's perception of her

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Japanese proficiency, so that when interacting with Angela, she used a greater degree of Japanese and more complex structures than she did when interacting with other non-Asian background students. Siegal (1996) has also noted the impact of ethnicity on NSs' language use with NNSs in the 1990s; however, it would be interesting for further research to examine whether the effect is still strong after the greater internationalisation of Japan in recent years.

Compared to language use with NSs, the negotiation process with NNSs was found to be much more complex. A major determinant was, however, network members' country of origin: the trend was for greater use of English with students of Western origin, and Japanese with students of Asian origin (a participant-related factor). As one would assume, this was also related to the participant-related factors of informants' and their network members' perceived proficiency and related confidence in Japanese, English, and/or other languages. Although there was considerable use of the L1 (primarily English) among study abroad peers, an important finding was that the Predominantly Japanese variety was also employed with some NNS network members, and that Japanese was also used in the context of group interaction where both NSs and NNSs were present (a situation-related factor).

In particular, although there is a sociolinguistic norm that individuals will normally speak their L1 among themselves, both Jane and Oscar highlighted instances of Predominantly Japanese use with study abroad peers who shared the same L1. This was influenced by a number of participant-related factors, such as investment in the L2, and history of linguistic interaction. Jane's case illustrated the nexus of a number of factors, where Japanese use with other L1 speakers appeared to result of a situation-related factor, that of living in an integrated dormitory. It was found that the presence of monolinguals in a shared living environment influenced the dominant group or common language, which then seemed to be

applied to individual conversations as well, because Japanese had been established as the language of interaction. In other words, it was also related to their history of interaction, a participant-related factor.

Each of the focal informants and a number of the questionnaire respondents also demonstrated diversions from predominant language use patterns with both NS and NNS network members. These occurred in response to the participant-related factor of identity; situation related-factors at the time of each individual interaction, such as the location/setting of interaction, composition of the group, and fatigue or lack of time; content of discourse-related factors, such as topics or use of commonly occurring or culturally specific L2 words; as well as the function of interaction-related factor of providing or requesting L2 assistance.

10.1.3. Post-study abroad life trajectories and ongoing engagement with Japan

Although study abroad was just one component of the informants' lives, they perceived it as a seminal event during their developmental years that often had a life-long impact. Another major finding of the present study was therefore the ways in which study abroad influenced the informants' ongoing life trajectories and engagement with Japan. Although previous studies have investigated the impact of study abroad on various aspects of personal, professional, and intercultural development, this is the first known study to focus on such aspects in specific regards to learners of Japanese language.

Vitally, it appeared that in most cases the experience of studying abroad in Japan (re)ignited or strengthened a passion for and identity with Japan, which was then maintained or built on throughout various life stages. In particular, numerous informants incorporated the target language and culture into their postgraduate study or career trajectories, and it was evident that study abroad strengthened the link between Japanese and the educational, career, and/or

interpersonal domains of their future self-concepts (Markus & Nurius 1986). Often this was coupled with repeated visits to Japan, and evidently resulted in ongoing engagement with the host country. Several informants also demonstrated how they negotiated a place for Japanese alongside other passions in life. For Sophie and Oscar, this meant seeking out careers that combined Japanese with their other chosen professional fields of science and actuary consultancy respectively. On the other hand, Angela highlighted that even study abroad returnees who do not pursue a Japan-related career may still continue to engage with Japan in the interpersonal domain through targeted socialisation.

While the focus of this thesis is on ongoing engagement with Japan and Japanese speakers, in terms of the wider implications of study abroad, a positive impact on the informants' international and intercultural outlook was also observed. While each of the informants maintained culturally diverse networks with NNSs, numerous informants had also travelled to other countries, and Sophie and Oscar also mentioned participating in additional study abroad programs in Malaysia and China respectively.

10.1.4. Post-study abroad networks and factors influencing their maintenance and development

One of the major contributions of the current research is that it is the first known study to conduct an in-depth, qualitative investigation into the patterns of post-study abroad network maintenance, and the factors influencing both network maintenance and development post-study abroad. Although likely influenced by the voluntary nature of participation in this study, the finding that all informants, including those who completed their study abroad programs several decades ago, still maintain contact with network members established during study abroad was of particular importance. Although individual variation in post-study abroad network size and composition was considerable, a number of common factors influencing interaction and subsequent networks with Japanese speakers were identified,

and classified in terms of Fehr's (1996; 2000) framework of friendship development. Importantly, analysis of post-study abroad interaction and networks, as well as recent literature, indicated the necessity to expand her original framework to include a fifth category: technological factors.

In general, network maintenance in the initial post-study abroad period was influenced by two key factors. The first of these was a dyadic factor: informants claimed to initially maintain contact with the closer network members they established while abroad, though generally not with those with whom they had more superficial relationships. The other key factor influencing initial maintenance was a technological factor. In order to maintain contact, common technology or other means of communication are essential. In particular, informants highlighted the impact of ICTs on the degree of i) initial post-study abroad maintenance, and ii) ongoing interaction. Informants who completed their study abroad programs prior to the widespread use of Facebook – or for longer-term returnees, the Internet – were currently in contact with significantly fewer study abroad network members. Although the passing of time also played a role in decreased interaction and network attrition, importantly, several of the informants believed that if they had 'had Facebook' at the time of study abroad completion, they would have maintained contact with a larger number of study abroad network members.

Another major finding of this study was that for the majority of informants who completed study abroad within two years of data collection, the largest portion of their Japanese-speaking networks was composed of contacts established during study abroad. For these informants, there also appeared to be a stronger focus on network maintenance as opposed to development, where they continued to draw upon the valuable linguistic affordances provided by their networks developed during study abroad. In the majority of cases, the

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informants did not have easy access to NSs in their normal Australian environments, and thus their networks did not expand as much as initially anticipated. Although some of these informants drew upon the environmental affordances of the university setting, such as Japan-related clubs and seminars, to further expand their Japanese-speaking networks, the study suggests that their lack of post-study abroad network development was due to various personal factors such as discontinuation of Japanese study, or prioritisation of other commitments and associated lack of availability (a situational factor). However, the majority of informants' current networks in Japan are considerably larger than pre-study abroad, which is one of the most significant findings of this study.

Vitally, it was also found that the informants' degree of desire for ongoing interaction and network development with NSs was often associated with their study abroad experiences. In particular, informants who had positive experiences often continued to pursue opportunities for interaction and expansion of their NS networks once returning home. On the other hand, dissatisfaction with interactions and/or degree of network development with NSs during study abroad, although rare, appeared to result in one of two outcomes. While some informants reflected upon their study abroad experiences and established strategies to increase their interaction and social networks with NSs, others exhibited disengagement with the TL and a lack of desire to engage with NS after returning home.

The majority of focal informants, and many questionnaire respondents, also indicated that life events such as dis/continuation of study, entering the work force, and/or starting a family significantly influenced longer-term patterns of interaction and network maintenance/development. Each of these phases presented various environmental and situational constraints or affordances for network development/maintenance, which, combined with personal and dyadic factors, influenced the evolution of the informants'

networks throughout time. Some of the key factors identified were distal proximity, geographical mobility, own and/or other's availability, ongoing interest in Japan and Japanese language, and frequency of exposure (either in person or online). A key finding concerning distal proximity and geographical mobility in particular was the identification of a positive relationship between repeated trips to Japan and ongoing maintenance and development of Japanese-speaking networks.

The fact that a number of informants related their patterns of interaction and network development and maintenance not only to past or present circumstances, but also to future goals, was another significant finding of this study. As mentioned above, it was revealed that many of the informants incorporated Japan-related aspects into one or more of the interpersonal, educational, extra-curricular and career domains of their possible self-concepts, often triggered by the study abroad experience. While some of these self-concepts were positive hoped-for selves, such as the vision of oneself working in Japan, others were negative feared selves, such as the vision of becoming someone who can no longer communicate in Japanese. Importantly, it was found that the informants' effort to attain their positive and/or avoid their negative selves influenced their degree of desire to keep up their engagement with Japanese people, language, and/or culture.

10.1.5. Patterns of language use and negotiation post-study abroad

This study found that positive study abroad experiences led to perceived increases in linguistic, sociolinguistic, and cultural competence, as well as higher personal and TL confidence. These factors may have contributed to more effective and extensive Japanese interaction post-study abroad, where it was found that interaction within social networks provided an important means to maintain and/or improve Japanese language. Compared to pre-study abroad, the vast majority of informants reported greater out-of-class Japanese use, with a wider variety of NS and NNS network members and over a larger number of

channels. An important shift in Japanese language use was also reported. Pre-study abroad it had been focused around school/homework, whereas post-study abroad it was being utilised as a medium of communication. This also corresponded to a shift in L2 identity, from Japanese learner to Japanese user. On the other hand, there was also evidence that a negative study abroad experience, while rare among the informants, did not lead to continued or expanded use of Japanese.

In regards to language selection, a salient trend was for greater Japanese use with network members maintained from study abroad compared to those established outside of Japan, either prior to or post-study abroad. Although this was influenced by a number of interconnected participant-related and situation-related factors, the most significant factors appeared to be history of linguistic interaction, and location/setting of interaction. In relation to this second factor, a number of interesting findings were made concerning channel of interaction. Given the prominence of online interaction in the current study – and since the original conception of Grosjean's (1982) framework in general – this study suggests that his framework ought to be expanded to include factors related to channel of interaction as a fifth category influencing bilingual language use.

In particular, the identification of the impact of spoken versus written channels on patterns of language use was a major finding, especially considering the apparent lack of research into this phenomenon. More specifically, there tended to be a preference for the L1 or stronger language in written discourse in order to aid faster and easier communication, even with network members with whom the Predominantly Japanese or Mixed varieties of language were usually used in spoken interaction. Several informants also demonstrated that non-reciprocal language use in written contexts is a natural and comfortable component of their bilingual networks, contrasting with previous literature that finds the opposite to be

true (e.g. Grosjean 1982; Li Wei 2013). In some instances in this study, both interlocutors reportedly used their L1s for those reasons mentioned above, whereas in others, they used their L2s in order to gain opportunities for L2 use and potential feedback.

The present study has also contributed to the underdeveloped research area of changing patterns of language selection through time. Numerous examples highlighted the dynamic process of language selection during and then after study abroad and how this was influenced by a multitude of interrelated factors including context of interaction, interlocutor's identity in regards to the L2, and, as seen above, channel of interaction. As with patterns of network maintenance and development, dynamic patterns of language selection were also related to various life transitions and their resulting changes in social and personal circumstances for both informants and their network members.

10.1.6. The role of ICT in post-study abroad contexts

A theme that became increasingly salient throughout the process of data collection and analysis was the role of ICTs in post-study abroad contexts. As was shown in Chapter 8, the most common and frequently utilised means of interaction with both NSs and NNSs post-study abroad was Facebook. Additionally, a number of informants also used smart phone IM apps (Line and WhatsApp), Skype, and Twitter with members of their Japanese-speaking networks. Although previous studies have found that language learners are utilising SNSs and other CMC technologies to maintain networks after study abroad completion, this is the first known study that has actually addressed *how* they are maintaining these relationships through such online platforms.

In particular, for informants who completed study abroad programs in the Facebook Era (post-2006), Facebook had a significant influence on the degree of initial network maintenance, specifically because they were already Facebook Friends with many of their

study abroad network members before they left Japan. On the other hand, informants who completed study abroad prior to the development of Facebook indicated that Facebook not only offered a new, cheaper, and more convenient means of interaction with network members who had previously been maintained by 'traditional' methods such as letters, but also presented a platform to search for and potentially 'reactivate' ties with whom they had previously fallen out of contact. Therefore, Facebook affords i) a means to keep in contact with network members they no longer frequently see in person, and ii) the ability to re-establish lost contacts. Moreover, the present study found that Facebook significantly reduced the temporal and spatial constraints to interaction when network members were no longer in close proximity, potentially postponing the 'natural decline' that is witnessed in many long-distance relationships.

Another major contribution of this study concerns the ways in which the informants were utilising Facebook for network maintenance. It was found that the most frequent forms of engagement were via passive behaviours, such as viewing the Newsfeed, or through the reactive behavior of "liking". Although passive consumption is not typically considered a form of interaction, other researchers (e.g. Vitak 2014a, 2014b; Tong & Walther 2011) have argued that it may serve as a form of relationship maintenance similar to the passive strategies considered in Uncertainty Reduction Theory (Berger & Calabrese 1975), assisting individuals to gain more information about others.

The informants in the present study indicated that the Newsfeed provided a means to stay updated about the everyday, mundane activities of their network members. Although this passive consumption in itself is an important maintenance strategy, the informants also indicated that updates appearing in the Newsfeed could initiate topics of conversation that may not have otherwise occurred, potentially with network members with whom the

informants had experienced a period of interactional dormancy. In other words, Facebook facilitated incidental ongoing contact that likely would not have occurred through more traditional channels, such as letters or email, where considerably more effort must be made to make contact.

In a similar vein, although the extent to which Facebook 'liking' constitutes interaction still remains a question, the present study found that, at least in the case of Alex, the act of pressing the Like button signals social support and engagement with the other person's life. As discussed, acts such as these can be considered as a form of 'social grooming', where the cost in time and effort to implement them indicates investment in the relationship.

Of particular importance to the field of SLA research was the finding that networks maintained on Facebook provided enhanced opportunities for continued Japanese use and learning as part of the informants' every-day, ordinary lives. The present study found that even several years (or decades) after study abroad completion, Facebook posts by study abroad network members, as well as those established post-study abroad, offered significant opportunities for Japanese reading input and writing output, as well as for observation of NS's online language conventions, which, in Japanese, differ significantly to spoken discourse. Furthermore, although the degree to which connections with dormant ties on Facebook should be considered as network maintenance per se is questionable (and thus informants in the current study were required to have had contact in the past two years), the fact that individuals are still able to read posts by such contacts, as well as related comments from *their* Friends with whom they will probably never have a direct connection, is of relevance to SLA research.

In addition to language input and output, Facebook networks also provided a variety of

opportunities for mediated language assistance via chat, messages, and/or Facebook Groups. Finally, this study (e.g. Phoebe and Sophie) also demonstrated how Facebook Groups could provide enhanced social support for language learners who may be in either close or distant proximity from one another.

10.2. Contribution of the study

As the findings above indicate, the current study has made a significant contribution to the fields of study abroad, language learning, and social network research. In this section, I firstly discuss the significance of study abroad for promoting ongoing engagement with the TL country and speakers. This is then followed by a discussion of the implications of the findings for (i) study abroad programs and future program participants, and (ii) theories and future research.

10.2.1. The significance of study abroad for promoting ongoing engagement with the target language country and speakers

By employing a cross-sectional and semi-longitudinal perspective, this study is the first of its kind to examine learners' experiences both during and after study abroad. As such, it has provided valuable insight into the impact of study abroad on learners' ongoing engagement with the TL country and speakers, a field that, until now, has remained significantly underdeveloped. The findings above indicate that for the informants of this study, who generally had successful study abroad experiences, study abroad was a seminal event that invoked desire for an ongoing 'Japan connection', whether in personal, educational, and/or professional domains.

From a social network and language use perspective, the present study highlights the importance of study abroad for the establishment of large and diverse networks with whom learners use the TL for communicative purposes. As the findings above demonstrate, these

networks not only offered important opportunities for TL use during study abroad, but also continued to offer opportunities for TL use, learning and/or maintenance after program completion.

The current study found that maintenance of networks established during study abroad was influenced by a range of personal, environmental, situational, dyadic and technological factors. The illumination of these processes, as well as those relating to further post-study abroad network development and language use, was a major contribution of the present study. Thus, it is hoped that this study has helped pave the way for future research seeking a deeper understanding of the ways in which study abroad students continue to engage with the TL country and TL speakers after program completion and throughout their life trajectories.

10.2.2. Implications for study abroad programs and future program participants

One of the original motivations that triggered the commencement of this research was to search for the most beneficial ways to assist study abroad students in establishing social networks and opportunities for L2 use with TL speakers, and in particular, those that will be maintained once they return to their home countries. This may be of particular interest to study abroad administrators, coordinators, and future program participants. Although students in the same program will inevitably have different experiences, the informants in this study highlighted a number of factors that are most facilitative of promoting sojourner-host contact and enhanced TL use.

Firstly, for 'mixing' to occur, intercultural contact ought to be formally structured within study abroad programs. Based upon the findings discussed in Chapters 4 and 5, this could be achieved through the following avenues: integrated residence, whether in a homestay, dormitory, or apartment; compulsory integrated classes with local students; incorporation of

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buddy or tutor programs; participation in clubs or circles; and, participation in other extra-curricular activities outside of the university/language institute setting. However, the provision of such avenues for interaction alone is not enough; for them to be successful learners must take advantage of them and assume responsibility for their own behaviour and interactions. In order to facilitate this, pre-departure or in-country orientations should emphasise to students the importance of establishing strategies to enhance their opportunities for engagement with NSs, and facilitate discussion of such strategies.

Furthermore, it may be beneficial for study abroad programs to assign students projects that require interaction with NSs, such as interviews or other 'hands on' research tasks. The fact that none of the 134 informants in this study mentioned such a requirement suggests that the implementation of this strategy could be something new for study abroad programs in Japan. One potential way to include such an activity would be to make at least one integrated class per semester compulsory, and that this class have sojourner-host student paired research projects or other tasks that send them out into the 'real world'.

Secondly, although this study found that NNSs, particularly those with a different L1, could provide important opportunities for TL use and learning, it also found that within the study abroad student community, there was a naturally tendency for students to congregate in groups of conational or same L1 peers. Thus, another suggestion to increase TL use while abroad (and potentially after returning home) is to better facilitate interaction between differing L1 peer groups in ways such as paired tasks/assignments in language classes and assigning dormitory/apartment rooms in close proximity to students of differing language backgrounds.

However, given the prominence of English as a lingua franca, it is acknowledged that promotion of out-of-class TL use may still prove a challenge. Thus, it is necessary for individuals to take responsibility for, and make a concerted effort to, create their own opportunities for TL use. It is therefore suggested that future study abroad students also be encouraged to establish clear goals, and strategies to achieve them, before arriving in the host country. This is of particular importance to students who will be placed in more culturally segregated environments such as international student-specific dormitories and classes, which promote grouping of international students.

Finally, this research also makes a number of suggestions to enhance prospects of network maintenance post-study abroad. As mentioned above, after program completion it is the closer relationships that are most likely to be maintained both initially and in the longer-term. The findings suggest that in order to establish such relationships, students should be encouraged to seek out individuals with similar interests through clubs or other social activities, so as to promote topics of ongoing interaction once they no longer share the same environmental and/or situational context. Furthermore, the creation of Facebook Groups with networks formed while abroad not only provides a channel for maintenance of a large number of relationships, but the inclusion of individuals with whom the TL is the common language also enhances the potential for ongoing TK use. Additionally, such Groups may also function as a forum for sharing and/or discussion of target country and TL-related content. As such, this research recommends that all study abroad students join/establish Facebook (or other online) Groups with the networks they establish during study abroad prior to their departure home.

10.2.3. Implications for researchers

In addition to contributing to the growing body of study abroad literature, the present study has also raised some important implications for theories and future research concerning

analysis of social networks and language selection in the age of ICTs. Firstly, as noted by Walther and Parks (2002:549) more than a decade ago, 'modern relationships may have outgrown our theories about them'. Indeed, the current study indicates that the question of what constitutes both interaction and network maintenance in online or other computer-mediated domains needs further attention. In particular, we need to consider to what degree simply being connected on SNS such as Facebook classifies as maintained contact. As Hendrick (2004:120) has claimed 'it is not enough for human beings to connect with one another; they must also maintain that connection'.

The present study found that although Facebook positively impacted the potential for ongoing interaction and initial network maintenance, with time, some of the Facebook Friendships have become passive in nature, and decreasing interaction suggests that others may be moving in the same direction. While the concept of relational dormancy has been highlighted in a number of earlier studies (e.g. Rawlins 1994; Stafford 2005; Becker et al. 2009), the phenomenon of passive ties differs in that in the Facebook domain, posts in the Newsfeed from passive ties offer the possibility to 'keep tabs' on Friends, and may also provide opportunities for L2 input. Suggestions on how future research may draw upon these findings are given in section 10.3.

The second key implication this study has for theory concerns patterns of language selection. Vitally, channel of interaction was found to play such an important role that it was delineated as an additional category for Grosjean's (1982; 2010) framework. Although Kurata (2007) has previously discussed this as a situation-related factor influencing language selection, given the multitude of channels that the informants in the present study utilised, and the various ways that different channels impacted language selection, I argue that 'channel of interaction' warrants its own category. In the current age of polymedia (cf.

Madianou & Miller 2013), this is another fertile area for further investigation, and future studies should also examine whether the utilisation of different written and spoken channels influences language choice (including non-reciprocal use) of learners of other languages, or whether this finding is a result of the complexity of the Japanese writing system and its linguistic distance to English.

10.3.   Limitations of the study and directions for future research

As this study has demonstrated, the examination of language learners' patterns of social interaction and networks with TL speakers during and then after study abroad offers a rich area for analysis. While the findings of this study are considered to be a significant contribution to the field, generalisations to the wider language learning community need to be treated with caution. Further research is needed to investigate the experiences of larger groups of informants, and of learners of a variety of different languages. Although beyond the scope of this study, the significant degree of individual variation in the informants' networks also suggests the need for further studies to consider the impact of learner characteristics such as TL proficiency, motivation, attitudes, and willingness to communicate.

Methodologically, the data obtained from interviews, interaction journals, and questionnaire responses was invaluable, and resulted in numerous unique findings. Importantly, several of the informants expressed gratitude for the opportunity to participate in the research, and highlighted the benefits they received from doing so. For example, Angela stated: 'I feel like I've learnt a lot from this experience as well. It made me think about things that I don't normally think about'. Sophie, on the other hand, commented that 'the interaction journal made me realise how little I spoke in Japanese over here [in Malaysia]. It was such a shock'. In other words, completion of the interaction journals proved beneficial in monitoring her own degree of L2 use.

Although there were numerous benefits of the methodology employed, one limitation is that the informant sample is subject to 'survivor bias', in that the majority of informants continued to associate themselves with Japan and/or Japanese in various ways. While measures outlined in Chapter 3 were taken to recruit a wide variety of informants, study abroad alumni may no-longer associate themselves with Japan-related associations or study abroad alumni groups. Furthermore, the willingness to participate in this research itself may pre-indicate a positive study abroad experience and/or maintenance with study abroad networks. Thus, interpretation of this study's findings must take this bias into account.

In particular, the vast majority of findings of this study should be interpreted as indicative of the benefits of positive study abroad experiences, and of the experience of those whose study abroad experience impacts their ongoing engagement with Japan and interest in the language more strongly. As such, they should be considered not necessarily as representative of 'the norm', but rather as indicative of possible trajectories and experiences at the positive end of the post-study abroad spectrum. Future studies could address this limitation of survivor bias by investigating whole cohorts of study abroad students (if they exist), and by preferably gaining their consent to participate in the research prior to or during their study abroad program.

Another limitation of this study concerns the nature of the data collected, where findings were based on informants' personal representations of their experiences rather than on firsthand observation. As informants' memories, and their reporting of them, may be selective, reliance on self-report data cannot be considered completely accurate or reliable. Hence, the findings of this study must be interpreted with this in mind. Although this research was semi-longitudinal and cross-sectional in nature, a true longitudinal study with

data collection conducted prior to, during, immediately after, and then every subsequent five years after program completion would offer a fascinating project if resources and practicality permitted. Although the informants' memories and narratives appeared to be vivid and intact in the present study, conducting this research in such a way could offer a clearer understanding of the short-term and long-term effects of study abroad.

Additionally, triangulation of diverse types of data would further enhance the development of rich case studies. For example, collection of samples of naturally occurring interaction discourse, whether in-person or online, would significantly aid examination of language use-patterns, at both the macro and micro level. While this was an intention of the present study, unfortunately it was met with very little success: although the informants themselves appeared willing to help, unfortunately receiving consent from the informants' network members to use their interactional data proved more difficult to obtain than originally anticipated. Collection of diary entries may have also provided greater insight into the thoughts and processes behind informants' interaction and social networks.

Although the current study has highlighted some of the ways in which the informants utilised ICTs to maintain their social networks, the novel nature of the interactions that take place also warrant further consideration. In particular, there is a need to further gauge the degree of reactive interaction, such as commenting on or liking of posts, and further categorise network members as either active or passive ties (cf. Li Wei, Milroy & Ching 1992; Daming, Xiaomei & Li Wei 2008). The findings of the present study also indicate that, as Vitak (2014b:25) has argued:

> It is essential that researchers acknowledge the affordances of technology and consider how individuals may be using specific features of technology… to manage both close connections as well as ties that may have otherwise faded away without technology.

In conclusion, this research has reinforced the importance of study abroad for language learners, highlighting the role it plays in fostering opportunities for interaction and L2 use with TL speakers not only during study abroad, but onwards throughout their life trajectories. It is hoped that this research will provide a basis for further studies in the important field of research concerning both study abroad and post-study abroad experiences.

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Appendix 1: Explanatory Statement for focal informants

13 June 2012

Explanatory Statement

Title: Impact of Study Abroad on Japanese language learners' social networks

This information sheet is for you to keep.

My name is Rikki Campbell and I am conducting a research project with Dr Robyn Spence-Brown and Dr Naomi Kurata from the School of Languages, Cultures and Linguistics towards a Doctor of Philosophy at Monash University. This means that I will be writing a thesis which is the equivalent of 80, 000 to 100, 000 words.

Your contact details were obtained when you emailed me indicating your interest in this research. I am seeking to recruit Japanese language learners who will soon commence, are currently participating in, or have formerly participated in a university-level study abroad program in Japan.

The aim of this study is to gain an in-depth understanding of how the study abroad experience impacts Japanese language students' out-of-class interaction and social networks with Japanese speakers. This research will give participants an opportunity to discuss and reflect upon their study abroad experiences, and it is hoped that the findings will have implications for language programs in both Japan and Australia.

The study involves the completion of a brief study background questionnaire and semi-structured interview, as well as three one-week journals recording details of who you interact with in Japanese and subsequent interviews to discuss this. The background questionnaire should take approximately five minutes to complete, and the semi-structured interview approximately one hour. Each one-week interaction journal should take approximately forty minutes, and subsequent interviews will take approximately thirty minutes to one hour. In total, the research will therefore require roughly six hours of your time spread out over the duration of approximately one year.

The potential level of inconvenience of this research is expected to be low, consisting of the completion of the tasks outlined above. Please note that you do not have to answer any or all of the questions if you feel that they are too intrusive. If you feel uneasy during your participation, you may cease your interview at any time. Being in this study is voluntary and you are under no obligation to consent to participation. If you do consent to participate, you may withdraw from further participation at any stage but you will only be able to withdraw data prior to the publication of a report of the project.

I understand the personal nature of the data to be collected for this study. I can assure you that the data will only be used by the researcher and supervisors, and that your real name will not be used in reports of any kind. The data will be de-identified when transcribed, through the use of pseudonyms, therefore remaining anonymous to protect your privacy.

Data collected will be stored in accordance with Monash University regulations, kept on University premises, in a locked filing cabinet for 5 years. A report of the study may be submitted for publication or presented at a conference, but individual participants will remain anonymous.

If you would like to be informed of the aggregate research finding, please ███████ ██████████████████████████████████ The findings are accessible for one year.

If you would like to contact the researchers about any aspect of this study, please contact the Chief Investigator:	If you have a complaint concerning the manner in which this research <CF12/1256 - 2012000645> is being conducted, please contact:
Dr Robyn Spence-Brown ████████████████████	Executive Officer, Human Research Ethics Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee (MUHREC) Building 3e Room 111 Research Office Monash University VIC 3800 █████████████ ████████████████

Thank you.

Rikki Campbell

Appendix 2: Consent form for focal informants

MONASH University

Consent Form
Title: Impact of Study Abroad on Japanese language learners' Social Networks

> NOTE: This consent form will remain with the Monash University researcher for their records

I agree to take part in the Monash University research project specified above. I have had the project explained to me, and I have read the Explanatory Statement, which I keep for my records. I understand that agreeing to take part means that:

I agree to complete a questionnaire asking me about background information

I agree to be interviewed by the researcher

I agree to allow the interviews to be audio-recorded

I agree to complete the interaction journals

YES NO

I understand that my participation is voluntary, and that I can withdraw at any stage of the project without being penalised or disadvantaged in any way. However, I also understand that if I wish to withdraw any data, I must do so before the researcher publishes a report of the project.

I understand that any data that the researcher extracts from the interview and questionnaire for use in reports or published findings will not, contain real names, and identifying characteristics will be limited as much as possible.

I understand that any information I provide is confidential, and that the researchers will make every effort to ensure that my privacy and anonymity is protected. However, I also understand that it is not possible to guarantee that someone who knows my situation intimately would not be able to guess my identity, even when names and some identifying details are changed.

I understand that data as listed above will be kept in a secure storage and accessible to the research team. I also understand that the data will be destroyed after a 5 year period unless I consent to it being used in future research.

Participant's name

Signature

Appendix 3: Summary of data collected from focal informants

The various types of data collected from each of the focal informants is provided in Table 26 below.

Table 26 Data collected for each focal informant

Informant	Background questionnaire	Initial interview	Interaction journal	Subsequent interviews
Sophie	Jul 2012	Jul 2012 (83 mins)	1. Jul 2012 2. Dec 2012 3. Jun 2013	1. Jul 2012 (60 mins) 2. Dec 2012 (60 mins; 14 mins) 3. Jun 2013 (31 mins)
Phoebe	Jul 2012	Jul 2012 (105 mins)	1. Aug 2012 2. Feb 2013 3. Aug 2013	1. Sept 2012 (34 mins) 2. Feb 2013 (121 mins) 3. Aug 2013 (54 mins)
Alex	Sept 2012	Sept 2012 (135 mins)	1. Feb 2013 2. Jun 2013	1. Feb 2013 (90 mins) 2. Jul 2013 (39 mins) 3. Nov 2013 (53 mins)
Jane	Sept 2012	Sept 2012 (90 mins)	1. Dec 2012	1. Dec 2012 (55 mins)
Angela	Oct 2012	Nov 2012 (150 mins)	1. Dec 2012 2. Feb 2013 3. May 2013	1. Dec 2012 (90 mins) 2. Mar 2013 (72 mins) 3. May 2013 (120 mins)
Marie	Dec 2012	Dec 2012 (104 mins)	1. Jan 2013 2. May 2013 3. Sept 2013	1. Jan 2013 (102 mins) 2. May 2013 (112 mins) 3. Sept 2013 (47 mins)
Carla	Mar 2013	Mar 2013 (79 mins)	nil	nil
Oscar	Mar 2013	Mar 2013 (93 mins)	1. Mar 2013 2. Jul 2013 3. Sept 2013	1. Mar 2013 (35 mins) 2. Jul 2013 (52 mins) 3. Sept 2013 (55 mins)

Appendix 4: Background questionnaire for focal informants

1. *Please describe about yourself:*
Age: Sex: Nationality:
Duration of residence in Australia: Language(s) spoken at home:
Current Place of Residence:

2. *Please provide details about your formal Japanese language study to date, including year, level and place of study.*
e.g.   *2007-2008, Melbourne High School, VCE Japanese*
          2009, Monash University, Japanese 3 & 4
          2010, Study Abroad Program (1 year) at Tokyo University

3. *Please provide information about any trips you have made to Japan, including when, for how long and for what purpose. If you will commence a study abroad program in the near future, please also include it here.*
e.g.   *2007, 2 week holiday in Hokkaido with my family*
          2010, Summer Intensive School (14 weeks) at Kanazawa University

4. *Do you have any Japanese friends or acquaintances in Australia?* ☐Yes   ☐No

5. *On average, how often do you have contact with your closest Japanese friend in Australia?*
    ☐more than once a week   ☐once a week   ☐2 or 3 times a month
    ☐once a month   ☐ several times a year   ☐rarely

6. *Do you have any Japanese friends or acquaintances in Japan?* ☐Yes   ☐No

7. *On average, how often do you have contact with your closest Japanese friend in Japan?*
    ☐more than once a week   ☐once a week   ☐2 or 3 times a month
    ☐once a month   ☐ several times a year   ☐rarely

Thank you very much for your cooperation ☺

Appendix 5: Sample initial interview for informants currently on study abroad

1. Pre- study abroad
   - Go over background questionnaire, any other experience of living/studying abroad.
   - Prior to your departure for Japan, you mentioned that you were taking Japanese X. How did you perceive your Japanese at that time?
   - Did you have any Japanese friends or acquaintances outside of class in Aus/Japan? If so, I'd like for us to go through and complete this table for each of them (obtain names, how met, frequency/duration contact, means of interaction, activities, language used, relationship with other network members)
   - Were there any other people you would use Japanese language with outside of class? (fill in table)
   - What were your thoughts on interacting in Japanese outside of class at this time? Amount?
   - Why did you decide to go on study abroad?
   - Did you have any pre-departure expectations for your time in Japan? (How about in terms of Japanese use and friendship development?)

2. Study Abroad
   - What are your living arrangements?
     - ➤ Who do you socialise with there? (fill in table)
     - ➤ What language do you use? Under what circumstances?
   - What classes are you taking? Integrated or with other international students? Language used?
     - ➤ Do you have any interaction with your classmates/teachers outside normal class hours eg group assignments/study, homework enquiries?
   - What do you usually do in your spare time and with whom? Weekends?
   - Are you involved in any university-affiliated clubs/circles?
     - ➤ number of club members, members' backgrounds, language used in the club, activities, frequency of participation?
     - ➤ Would you say that you became closer to, or even friends with any of these people? (fill in table)
     - ➤ Do you meet up with any of the club members outside of club events?
   - Do you have any other Japanese friends/acquaintances[26] outside of university? (fill in table)
   - How about international friends/acquaintances? (fill in table)
   - Is there anyone else you have contact with that we haven't yet discussed? (fill in table)
   - Out of all of these people (show table), are there any in particular that you feel closest too? Why? Can you think of any reasons why you don't feel as close to the others?
   - Have you noticed any differences between friendships with local Japanese and other international students? E.g. in terms of quality, activities, content of interaction
   - Are you satisfied with the relationships you managed to establish with local Japanese whilst abroad?

---

[26] Someone you know by name, can contact by phone, mail, or internet, and have had contact with in the past two years.

- ➢ If yes, what contributed to the success?
- ➢ If no, why?
- Do you think there are any specific factors that help foster interaction and relationships with Japanese? How about with other international students whilst abroad?
- And how about factors that might negatively impact this interaction and relationship development?
- How did you feel about using Japanese at the beginning of your program? How do you feel about using it now?
- How do you feel about the amount of Japanese language you got to use outside the classroom during study abroad?
  - ➢ Where have you found the most opportunities for interacting in Japanese?
- Do you think you have gained any benefits through interaction with native Japanese speakers? How about with non-native speakers?
- Do you feel that your Japanese has improved over the course of your program? How can you tell? In what skills?

- So far, would you say that your time here in Japan has met up to your expectations? Why/why not?
- Is there anything you would change about your study abroad experience?
- Are there any tips or recommendations that you would give to future study abroad students?
- Do you have any further comments you'd like to add about your time in Japan, and in particular in terms of your social interaction and language use?

Appendix 6: Sample initial interview for informants already returned from study abroad

1. Pre-study abroad
    *   Go over background questionnaire, any other experience of living/studying abroad.
    *   Prior to your departure for Japan, you mentioned that you were taking Japanese X. How did you perceive your Japanese at that time?
    *   Did you have any Japanese friends or acquaintances outside of class in Aus/Japan? If so, I'd like for us to go through and complete this table for each of them (obtain names, how met, frequency/duration contact, means of interaction, activities, language used, relationship with other network members)
    *   Were there any other people you would use Japanese language with outside of class? (fill in table)
    *   What were your thoughts on interacting in Japanese outside of class at this time? Amount?
    *   Why did you decide to go on study abroad?
    *   Did you have any pre-departure expectations for your time in Japan? (How about in terms of Japanese use and friendship development?)

2. Study Abroad
    *   What were your living arrangements?
        ➢ Who did you socialise with there? (fill in table)
        ➢ What language did you use? Under what circumstances?
    *   What classes did you take? Integrated or with other international students? Language used?
        ➢ Did you have any interaction with your classmates/teachers outside normal class hours eg group assignments/study, homework enquiries?
    *   What did you usually do in your spare time and with whom? Weekends?
    *   Were you involved in any university-affiliated clubs/circles?
        ➢ Number of club members, members' backgrounds, language used in the club, activities, frequency of participation?
        ➢ Would you say that you became closer to, or even friends with any of these people? (fill in table)
        ➢ Did you meet up with any of the club members outside of club events?
    *   Did you have any other Japanese friends/acquaintances[27] outside of university? (fill in table)
    *   How about international friends/acquaintances? (fill in table)
    *   Is there anyone else you had contact with that we haven't yet discussed? (fill in table)
    *   Out of all of these people (show table), are there any in particular that you felt closest to? Why? Can you think of any reasons why you didn't feel as close to the others?
    *   Did you notice any differences between friendships with local Japanese and other international students? E.g. in terms of quality, activities, content of interaction
    *   Were you satisfied with the relationships you managed to establish with local Japanese whilst abroad?
        ➢ If yes, what contributed to the success?

---

[27] Someone you know by name, can contact by phone, mail, or internet, and have had contact with in the past two years.

        ➢   If no, why?
- Do you think there are any specific factors that help foster interaction and relationships with Japanese whilst abroad? How about with other international students?
- And how about factors that might negatively impact this interaction and relationship development?
- Do you remember how you felt about using Japanese at the beginning of your program? How about at the end?
- How did you feel about the amount of Japanese language you got to use outside the classroom during study abroad?
  - ➢ Where did you find the most opportunities for interacting in Japanese?
- Do you think you gained any benefits through interaction with native Japanese speakers whilst abroad? How about with non-native speakers?
- Do you feel that your Japanese improved over the course of your program? How can you tell? In what skills?

3. Study Abroad evaluation
   - What were the most important aspects of study abroad for you? Why?
   - Would you say that your time in Japan met up to your expectations? Why/why not?
   - What was your overall evaluation of your study abroad experience?
   - Can you tell me what the best aspects were about it? How about the worst?
   - Are there any areas in which you think study abroad has impacted your life?
   - Is there anything you would change about your study abroad experience?
   - What recommendations would you give to future study abroad students?

4. Post-study abroad
   - Now that you're back in Australia, who do you interact with in Japanese? (fill out table)
   - Do you still keep in contact with any of your friends/acquaintances you made whilst on study abroad? (fill out table) What influenced this (lack of) maintenance?
   - Do you have any other Japanese-speaking friends/acquaintances overseas? (fill out table)
   - What are the main opportunities you have for speaking Japanese in Australia?
   - Are you satisfied with the amount of Japanese you get to use outside the classroom here in Australia?
   - Is there anything that you think inhibits your Japanese usage outside of class?
   - Comparing your interaction in Japanese now to your interaction before you went on study abroad, do you notice any differences?
   - Are there any particular factors relating to your study abroad experience that may have influenced these changes?
   - If you had to give advice to a Japanese learner who has just moved to your city and wants to make Japanese friends and use Japanese outside of class, what would you suggest to them? Do you follow this advice yourself?
   - What factors do you think influence your degree of network development/maintenance?
   - Do you have any further comments on how the study abroad experience may have impacted your Japanese interaction and social networks after you returned to Australia?

Name	Where/how you first met	Frequency of contact	Duration of contact	Activities together (including means of interaction)	Language used	Notes

Appendix 7: Interaction journal

Interaction Journal

Name:

Date:

Time	Place	With who?	Type of interaction	Language(s) I used	Language(s) they used	Topics discussed
e.g. 8:30-9am	*Campus cafe*	*Takeshi & Mika*	☐ In person ☐ Online chat ☐ Email/Facebook message ☐ Facebook wall post ☐ Other (　　)	☐ Japanese ☐ English ☐ Japanese and English ☐ Other (　)	☐ Japanese ☐ English ☐ Japanese and English ☐ Other (　)	*Next weeks' assignment and plans for the weekend*
			☐ In person ☐ Online chat ☐ Email/Facebook message ☐ Facebook wall post ☐ Other (　　)	☐ Japanese ☐ English ☐ Japanese and English ☐ Other (　)	☐ Japanese ☐ English ☐ Japanese and English ☐ Other (　)	
			☐ In person ☐ Online chat ☐ Email/Facebook message ☐ Facebook wall post ☐ Other (　　)	☐ Japanese ☐ English ☐ Japanese and English ☐ Other (　)	☐ Japanese ☐ English ☐ Japanese and English ☐ Other (　)	
			☐ In person ☐ Online chat ☐ Email/Facebook message ☐ Facebook wall post ☐ Other (　　)	☐ Japanese ☐ English ☐ Japanese and English ☐ Other (　)	☐ Japanese ☐ English ☐ Japanese and English ☐ Other (　)	

Appendix 8: Subsequent interviews

General guidelines for stimulated recall section

- How was it that you came to meet up with A on this day? (eg arranged by email/ran into each other at university)
- You wrote that you did X together, could you recount this interaction for me in more detail?
- Did you notice anything in terms of your language usage? How about A's language usage?
- Since our last interview, how often have you have contact with A?
- What sorts of things do you do together?
- Overall, were you satisfied with the quality of interaction achieved during this past week? Do any particular interactions stand out to you for positive/negative reason?
- And how do you feel about the quantity of interaction achieved during this past week?

Guidelines for questions following stimulated recall section

- Have you become acquainted with any other Japanese people since our last interview? (fill in table- names, how met, relationship with other network members)
- How about with any other non-native Japanese speakers? (fill in table- names, how met, relationship with other network members)

(Referring back to list of network members from last interview, as well as new network members)
- When did you last have contact with A?
- What did you to together and for how long? Was anyone else present?
- Do you remember what sort of things you talked about?
- Did you notice anything in terms of your or A's language use?
- Do you remember what language you used?
- How about the language that A used?
- Were you aware of any factors that influenced language choice?
- Since our last interview, how often have you had contact with A?
- What sorts of things do you do together?

Appendix 9: Online Questionnaire

Part One: Background information

1   Please answer the following:
    1.1   Age
    1.2   Sex
    1.3   Nationality
    1.4   Native language
    1.5   Other languages spoken
    1.6   Language(s) spoken at home and with whom
    1.7   Current city of residence
    1.8   Current occupation

Part Two: Study abroad

2   In what year did you complete your university-level study abroad program in Japan?
3   How long did your program last?
4   Where did you study?

☐ Private University
☐ Public University
☐ Language Institute
☐ Other (Please specify:)

5   Please select which situation(s) best describes your living arrangement during your study abroad period:

☐ I lived with a host family
☐ I lived in an international student dormitory
☐ I lived in a student dormitory for both local and international students
☐ I lived alone
☐ I lived in an apartment with local Japanese
☐ I lived in an apartment with other foreigners
☐ I lived in an apartment with local Japanese and other foreigners
☐ Other (Please specify:)

6   Please select which situation best describes the classes you enrolled in during your study abroad period (check multiple if applicable):

☐ Japanese language classes with other international students
☐ Other classes taught in Japanese with other international students
☐ Other classes taught in English with other international students
☐ Other classes taught in both English and Japanese with other international students
☐ Other classes taught in Japanese with international and local students
☐ Other classes taught in English with international and local students
☐ Other classes taught in both English and Japanese with international and local students
☐ Other (Please specify:)

7   During your study abroad period, who were the three most significant native Japanese speakers that you were in contact with outside of class? What type of relationship did you have (e.g. host brother, classmate) and how did you originally meet them? What sort of things did you do together, and why were they important to you? To what extent, if any, did you interact with them in Japanese? Please fill in the table below. An example has also been provided.

	Example
Name (pseudonym or initials)	*NS*
Type of relationship	• *Buddy and close friend*
How met	• *Assigned buddy, met me when I arrived at the dorm.*
Activities together	• *Assisted set up of phone and bank accounts* • *Lunch together once a week* • *Sometimes helped me with homework* • *Went to parties together on weekends*
Why important	• *First Japanese friend* • *Went out of his way to help me setting in, and introduced me to his friends* • *Helpful with questions concerning Japanese language*
Language use	• *Primarily Japanese* • *Occasional English words when I struggled with particular Japanese words*

	Native speaker 1	Native speaker 2	Native speaker 3
Name (or initials)			
How met			
Activities together			
Why important			
Language use			

8   Are you still in contact with any of these people? If so, how frequently, by what means, and in what language? Moreover, why do you think your relationships did/did not endure? Please fill in the table below. An example has also been provided.

	Example (NS)
Current frequency of contact	*Once every three months (more for liking of Facebook posts).*
Current means of contact	*Skype calls, Facebook messages, Facebook 'liking' of posts.*
Current language use	• *Skype= both use Japanese* • *Writing= he uses English, I use Japanese so both get practice*
Why relationship has/has not endured	• *Was quite a close friend.* • *Would have been strange to just cut contact after I came back.*

	Native speaker 1	Native speaker 2	Native speaker 3
Frequency of contact			
Means of contact			
Language use			
Why relationship did/did not endure			

9   Thinking back to your time in Japan, please give an estimate of how many other native Japanese speakers you interacted with for social reasons. Please only include people you knew by name, and could contact by phone, email, or Internet.

        □1-5   □6-10   □10-15   □15-20 □20-25 □25-30
        □30-35   □35-40   □40-45   □45-50 □More than 50

10   During your study abroad period, who were the three most significant non-native Japanese speakers that you were in contact with outside of class? What type of relationship did you have (e.g. flatmate, close friend) and how did you originally meet them? What sort of things did you do together, and why were they important to you? To what extent, if any, did you interact with them in Japanese? Please fill in the table below.

	Non-native speaker 1	Non-native speaker 2	Non-native speaker 3
Name (pseudonym or initials)			
Type of relationship			
How met			
Activities together			
Why important			
Language use			

11   Are you still in contact with these people? If so, how frequently, by what means, and in what language? Moreover, why do you think your relationships did/did not endure? Please fill in the table below.

	Non-native speaker 1	Non-native speaker 2	Non-native speaker 3
Frequency of contact			
Means of contact			
Language use			
Why relationship did/did not endure			

12   Thinking back to your time in Japan, please give an estimate of how many other non-native Japanese speakers you interacted with for social reasons. Please only include people you knew by name, and could contact by phone, email, or Internet.

        □1-5   □6-10   □10-15   □15-20 □20-25 □25-30
        □30-35   □35-40   □40-45   □45-50 □More than 50

13 On the following scale, please indicate how often you used Japanese in the following contexts whilst abroad. This concerns interaction with other speakers of Japanese, both native and non-native.

	All of the time	Most of the time	Sometimes	Infrequently	Never	N/A
Residence						
Work						
Classes other than Japanese language class						
Club Activities						
Social life						
On-line/phone interaction						

14 How did you feel about the amount of Japanese you used outside of class whilst abroad? Please discuss any factors you think may have contributed to this.

15 To what extent did you find social interaction during study abroad contributed to learning in the following areas?

	Greatly contributed	Somewhat contributed	Didn't really contribute	Negatively influenced
Japanese listening skills				
Japanese speaking skills				
Japanese reading skills				
Japanese writing skills				
Japanese vocabulary				
Formal Japanese language				
Informal Japanese language				
Intercultural communication skills				
Other (please specify)				

16 Do you have any additional comments concerning your network development and interaction with native and non-native speakers of Japanese whilst on study abroad? (e.g. factors that influenced network development, satisfaction with friendships developed, patterns of language use and learning)

Part Three: Life post- study abroad

17   After completing your study abroad program, did you continue with any formal
     Japanese study?
     ☐ No
     ☐ Yes, (please specify year, level/class type etc   )

18   Do you currently have any opportunities to use Japanese? (e.g. speaking with
     coworkers or at Japanese club, through online interaction, reading *manga* etc). Please
     explain.

19   To what extent, if any, do you think these instances lead to opportunities for language
     learning or maintenance? Please explain.

20   If you currently have any interaction with native Japanese speakers either in person or
     on-line, who are the three most significant, what type or relationship do you have, and
     when and where did you meet them (they may be the same people that you previously
     mentioned)? What sort of things do you do together, and why are they important to
     you? What language(s) do you usually use, and in what situations? Please fill in the
     table below.

	Native speaker 3	Native speaker 4	Native speaker 5
Name (pseudonym or initials)			
Current country of residence			
Type of relationship			
When and where initially met			
Current activities together			
Why important			
Current language use			

21   Please give an estimate of how many other native Japanese speakers you currently
     interact with for social reasons. Please only include people you know by name, and can
     contact by phone, email, or Internet.
     ☐1-5   ☐6-10   ☐10-15   ☐15-20   ☐20-25   ☐25-30
     ☐30-35   ☐35-40   ☐40-45   ☐45-50   ☐More than 50

22   Of your current **native Japanese speaker** contacts, please estimate what percentage fall
     into the following categories:
     a) People you met prior to your study abroad experience   __%
     b) People you met during study abroad   __%
     c) People you met after completing your study abroad program   __%

23 How often do you use each of the following means of communication with people from your **native Japanese speaker** network?

	Daily	Several times a week	Once a week	A few times a month	Once a month	A few times a year	Rarely	N/A
Face to face								
Email								
Phone calls								
Text messages/ messaging apps on phone								
Skype (voice call)								
Chat (Facebook, MSN, Skype etc)								
Facebook messages								
Facebook wall posts								
Facebook comments on statuses, photos etc								
Reading or 'liking' of Facebook activity								
Letters/cards								
Other (please specify:)								

24 If you currently have any interaction with non-native Japanese speakers either in person or on-line, who are the three most significant, why type of relationship do you have, and when and where did you meet them (they may be the same people that you previously mentioned)? What sort of things do you do together, and why are they important to you? What language(s) do you usually use, and in what situations? Please fill in the table below.

	Non-native speaker 4	Non-native speaker 5	Non-native speaker 6
Name (pseudonym or initials)			
Current country of residence			
Type of relationship			
When and where initially met			
Current activities together			
Why important			
Current language use			

25 Please give an estimate of how many other non-native Japanese speakers you currently interact with for social reasons. Please only include people you know by name, and could contact by phone, email, or Internet.

    ☐1-5   ☐6-10   ☐10-15   ☐15-20 ☐20-25 ☐25-30

    ☐30-35   ☐35-40   ☐40-45   ☐45-50 ☐More than 50

26 Of your current **non-native Japanese speaker** contacts, please estimate what percentage fall into the following categories:

a) People you met prior to your study abroad experience   __%
b) People you met during study abroad   __%
c) People you met after completing your study abroad program   __%

27 How often do you use each of the following means of communication with people from your **non-native Japanese speaker** network?

	Daily	Several times a week	Once a week	A few times a month	Once a month	A few times a year	Rarely	N/A
Face to face								
Email								
Phone calls								
Text messages/ messaging apps on phone								
Skype (voice call)								
Chat (Facebook, MSN, Skype etc)								
Facebook messages								
Facebook wall posts								
Facebook comments on statuses, photos etc								
Reading or 'liking' of Facebook activity								
Letters/cards								
Other (please specify:)								

28 Have there been any significant events throughout your life that have impacted your degree of social interaction with other Japanese speakers? (e.g. commenced postgraduate study, had a Japanese partner, worked at a Japanese restaurant, traveled to Japan again, etc.)? If yes, please provide details.

29 Please indicate to what degree you believe studying abroad impacted the following aspects of your life, and include any comments, if you have any.

	Greatly	Somewhat	Not at all
Personal development			
Future academic choices			
Decisions concerning subsequent language study			
Subsequent career choices			
Professional development			
Subsequent travel			
Social networks			
Intercultural communication skills			
World outlook or interest in other countries/cultures			

30 Any comments on the above aspects, or other areas study abroad may have impacted?

Thank you once again for your contribution to this research!
Finally, if you know any other people who have also studied abroad in Japan, it would be of great assistance if you could please pass the link to this questionnaire on to them as well.