



MONASH University

The impact of study abroad on Japanese language learners' out-of- class interaction and social networks

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Research Background

- Research interest stemmed from personal experience as Japanese learner
- Part of a larger doctoral project examining pre-, during, and post- study abroad networks and social interaction with both native and non-native Japanese speakers
- Currently 1.5 years into doctoral candidacy

Research Questions

- 1) What is the nature of Japanese language learners' networks with native Japanese speakers post- study abroad?
- 2) What factors influence the nature of learners' networks and interaction with native Japanese speakers post- study abroad?
- 3) What are the patterns of language usage within these networks and what factors influence them?

Research Design

- Six Japanese language learner informants
 - Background questionnaire
 - Semi-structured interview
 - Interaction journal and follow-up interviews
 - [Samples of naturally occurring interaction]
- Conceptual framework:
 - Boissevain's (1974) criteria for network analysis
 - Grosjean's (1982) factors influencing language choice
 - Takai's (1990) factors influencing intercultural contact

Informant background pre-SA

Informant	Ethnicity and other languages spoken at home	Approximate length of formal Japanese study prior to university study abroad	Approximate level of formal Japanese study prior to study abroad	Length and purpose of trips to Japan prior to study abroad
Angela (F)	Australian born Chinese. Speaks English with parents and siblings	Three years at Australian high school, and two and a half years at university	CEFR B1 JLPT N4 (Japanese 5)	Nil
Alex (M)	Caucasian New Zealander, speaks English (with son and daughter), Polish (with parents) and Korean (with wife) at home	Two years at New Zealand high school and one and a half years at New Zealand university	CEFR B1 JLPT N2 (Japanese 8)	Nil
Marie (F)	French, speaks French and English at home	One year high school exchange in Japan and one year at university	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
Sophie (F)	Caucasian Australian, speaks English at home	All of elementary and high school, and two and a half years at Australian university	CEFR B2 JLPT N2 (Japanese 9)	2006 Two week high school tour (homestay)
Phoebe (F)	Caucasian Australian, speaks English at home	All of high school and one and two years at Australian university	CEFR B1 JLPT N2 (Japanese 8)	2007 Five week high school exchange (homestay) 2011 One week holiday
Jane (F)	Caucasian Australian, speaks English at home	Two and a half years at Australian university	CEFR B1 JLPT N4 (Japanese 5)	2011 Two weeks, program was meant to commence but was cancelled in wake of Tohoku Disaster

Informant background post-SA

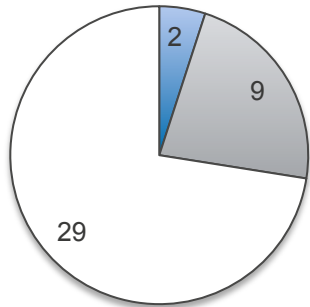
Informant	Details of study abroad program in Japan	Time since SA program completion	Subsequent Japanese studies	Subsequent trips to Japan	Current occupation
Angela (F)	One year 1997-1998 (3rd year of university) at University in Chiba	14.5 years	1999 Honors in Japanese studies	1999 Research Trip (one week) 2003 Holiday (three weeks) 2006 Holiday (one week) 2007 Holiday (one week) 2010 Holiday (one week)	Working in law firm in Australia
Alex (M)	One year 2007-2008 (2nd year of university) as research scholar at University in Hiroshima	4.5 years	2011-12 Honors in Japanese/Korean 2013 Applying for Phd in Japanese translation	Nil	Applying for Phd in Japanese translation at Australian university
Marie (F)	One year 2008 (2nd year of university) at University in Tokyo	4 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 in Tokyo (one year)	Returned to France, looking for job in Japan
Sophie (F)	Six weeks June-July 2012 (2nd year of university) at Language Institute in Kansai	9 months	Semester 2, 2012 Japanese 10	Nil	Full time undergraduate student at Australian university
Phoebe (F)	One semester 2012 (3rd year of university) at University in Tokyo	8 months	Semester 1, 2013 Japanese 11	Nil	Full time undergraduate student at Australian university
Jane (F)	One year 2011-2012 (3rd year of university) at private university in Tokyo	8 months	Semester 2, 2012 Japanese 8	Nil	Full time undergraduate student at Australian university



PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

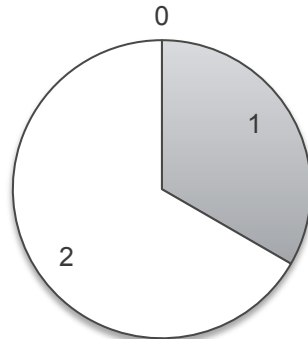
Current networks with native Japanese-speakers

14.5 years
Angela



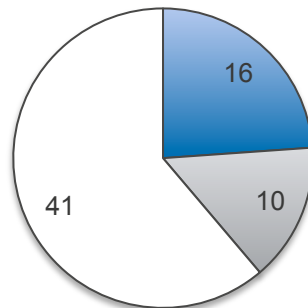
Percentage of SA network maintained = 43%

4-5 years
Alex



Percentage of SA network maintained = 8%

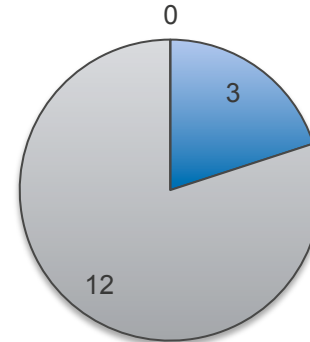
Marie



Percentage of SA network maintained = 91%

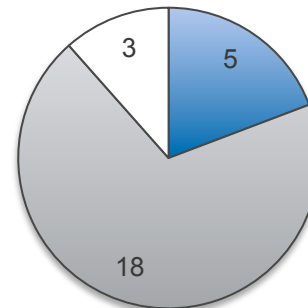
8-9 months

Phoebe



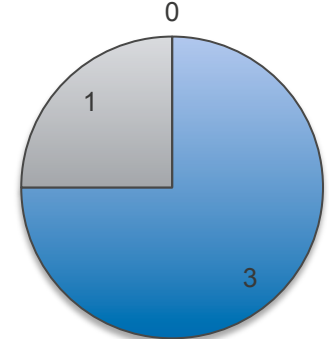
Percentage of SA network maintained = 71%

Jane



Percentage of SA network maintained = 82%

Sophie



Percentage of SA network maintained = 13%

- Pre-SA
- SA
- Post-SA

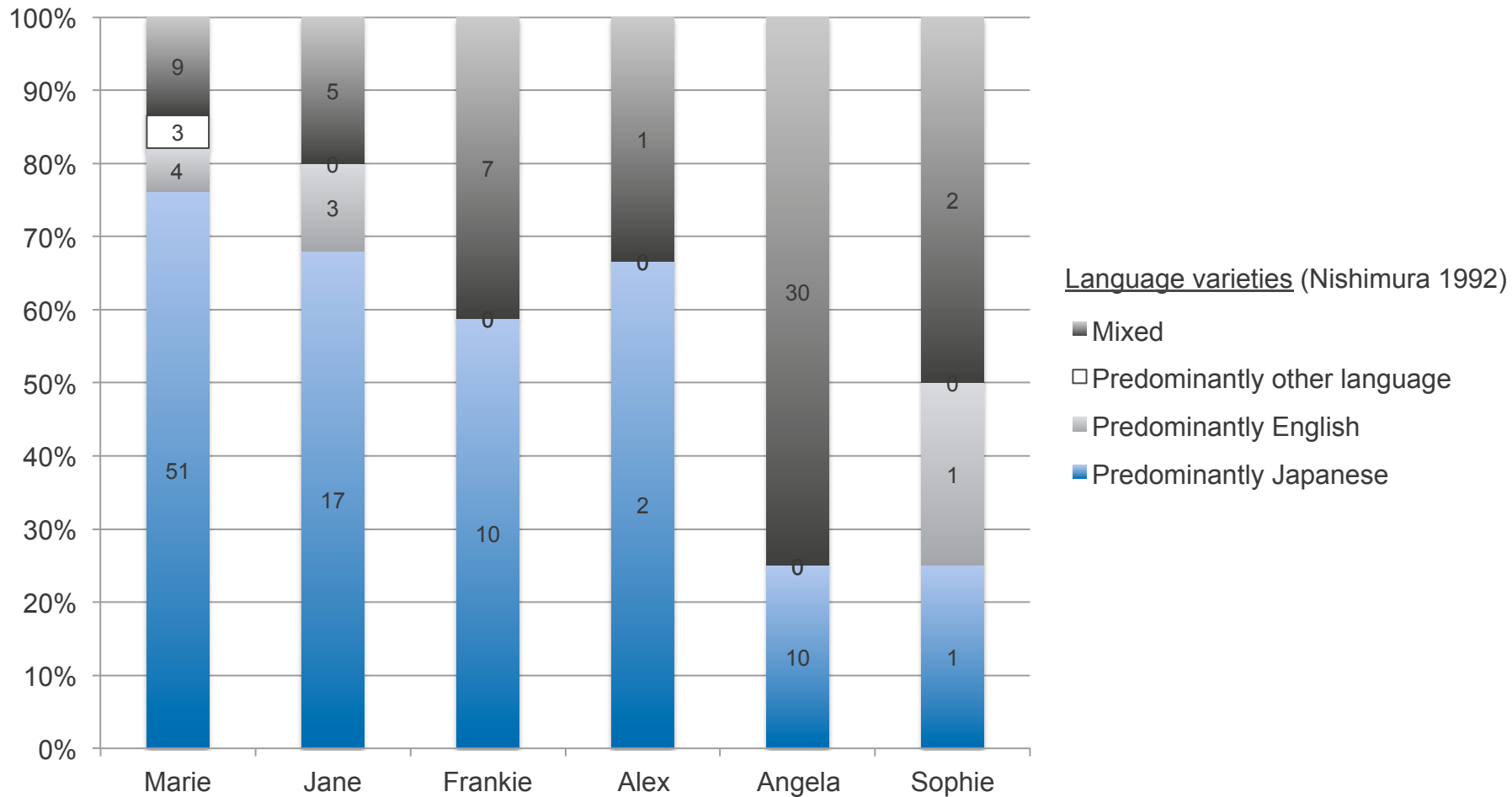
Factors influencing maintenance of networks

- Common technology: email, Facebook, messaging apps
- Further travel/opportunities to meet up
- Other commitments (family, work, study etc.)
- Closeness of relationship developed
- Passing of time

Development of new networks

- Key domains for network development:
 - Japanese class
 - Japanese university alumni associations
 - University’s “Japan Club”
 - Other social groups/societies outside of university
 - Language exchange
 - Through friends
 - Subsequent trips to Japan (Marie)
- Factors influencing degree of network expansion
 - Desire to “keep up” Japanese use and proficiency
 - Other priorities (study, work, family etc)
 - Distal proximity to social events

Current patterns of language use with NSs



Factors impacting language selection (1)

Grosjean (1982): participant, situation, discourse content, function

- Participant-related factors
 - Network members' knowledge of English (or French)
 - Own or others' insistence in using L2
 - Language that relationship was established in

- Situation-related factors
 - Location/setting
 - Dominant language
 - Presence of monolinguals
 - Channel of interaction

Factors impacting language selection (2)

- Discourse content-related factors
 - Common L2 phrases/words
 - Topics

- Interactional function-related factors
 - To include/exclude someone
 - To clarify L2 vocabulary/grammar

Opportunities for learning within networks

- Significantly increased opportunities for Japanese use post- study abroad
- Language exposure on Facebook
 - Reading input and writing output
 - Observation of natural NS-NS discourse
- Mediated language assistance
 - Utilisation of Facebook chat
 - Language exchange

Network analysis and SNSs

- Facebook provides enhanced opportunities for network maintenance, L2 exposure, use and learning
- Incorporating Facebook usage into current frameworks for network analysis
 - Does simply being connected on Facebook classify as maintained contact?
 - To what extent does reading or ‘liking’ of posts constitute interaction?
 - Active/passive or reactive
 - Emotional closeness (strong/weak ties)



Thank you for your time!

Any questions, comments or feedback
welcome

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