The Effects of Study Abroad on Second Language Identities and Language Learning

Yurtdışı Eğitimin İkinci Dil Kimliği ve Dil Öğrenimi Üzerindeki Etkileri

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Abstract

There are numerous studies on the improvement of language proficiency and adaptability to different cultures through study abroad. However, there is a paucity of research on study abroad of Japanese students per se, not to mention the fact that there are even fewer studies on identities that are formed through one's second language use, which is called second language identity and language learning in study abroad contexts. Based on a narrative inquiry of three Japanese students who participated in three or four-week study-abroad programs, this paper examines the construction of second language identity and language learning. A narrative approach has shown to be an ideal tool for revealing the complexity of human behavior since it is human-centered, and it analyses participants' identity construction through oral accounts of their experiences. Data was collected through one-on-one and semi-structured interviews, in which the participants were asked to describe their study abroad experience. After collecting their statements, content analysis was conducted. The findings reveal that all participants constructed their second language identities. They become active in learning and using English by the interaction with local people and through self-enlightenment that was generated by finding a person they admire, and this impact has lasted well since they returned home. Moreover, the study shows that when there are no inequitable relations of power in social interaction, language learners can favorably construct their second language identities that they want to project. As a result, they become aware of linguistic analysis or pragmatics at the same time.

Keywords: Study abroad; Second language identity; Language learning

Öz

Alanyazında, yurtdışı eğitim programları aracılığıyla dilde yeterlilik kazanmaya ve farklı kültürlere uyum sağlamaya yönelik bir çok çalışma bulunmaktadır. Ancak, alanyazında ikinci dil kullanımı yoluyla öğrenenlerin kimlik gelişimlerine, yani ikinci dil kimliklerine ve yurtdışı eğitim bağlamında dil öğrenimlerine herhangi bir vurguda bulunulmamaktadır. Yurtdışı eğitim programlarına üç veya dört haftalık bir süre ile katılmış olan üç Japon öğrenciden sözel olarak alınan nitel verilere dayanan bu çalışmada, dil öğrenimi ve ikinci dil kimliğinin yapısı incelemektedir. Çalışma insan merkezli bir çalışmadır. Bu nedenle çalışmada, insan davranışlarının karmaşıklığını ortaya koyabilmek için en uygun yol olduğu düşünülen sözel bir yaklaşım uygulanmıştır. Bu sayede, deneyimlere ilişkin sözel veriler aracılığıyla katılımcıların kimlik yapıları çözümlenmiştir. Araştırmanın verileri, katılımcılardan yurtdışı eğitim deneyimlerini betimlemelerinin istendiği birebir ve yarı-yapılandırılmış görüşmelerden elde edilmiştir. Katılımcılardan elde edilen tüm ifadeler içerik analizine tabii tutulmuştur. Katılımcıların İngilizceyi öğrenmede ve kullanmada etkin bir rol almaya başladıkları görülmüş ve bu etkinin ülkelerine/evlerine dönmelerinden sonra da devam ettiği gözlemlenmiştir. Bu süreçte öğrenenlerin, hayran oldukları insanlarla karşılaşmaları sonucunda

oluşturdukları öz-aydınlanmadan ve yerel halk ile olan etkileşimlerden yararlandıkları görülmüştür. Buna ek olarak çalışma, sosyal etkileşimde adaletsiz güç ilişkileri olmadığında, dil öğrenenlerinin herhangi bir çekince veya kaygı hissetmeden dili öğrenebildikleri ve ikinci dil kimliklerini olumlu bir biçimde yapılandırabildiklerini göstermiştir. Bunun bir sonucu olarak katılımcılar dilbilimsel çözümleme ve bağlamsal dilbilim konusunda farkındalık geliştirebilmişlerdir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: *Yurtdışı eğitim; ikinci dil kimliği; dil öğrenimi*

Introduction

"If I were French, then the clerk would not have treated me in this manner. This is because many Americans find the French people's English accents cute and attractive. I felt as if I was being treated like a child." (Yuki, 4/9/2012)

"When I say something in English to a native English speaker, I find myself speaking straightforwardly and even aggressively without hesitation. However, I would not do the same when speaking in Japanese." (Mieko, 16/11/2012)

In these aforementioned quotes, two students who studied abroad described their feelings as they used English in their host country. In the first quote, owing to her lack of English proficiency, she felt humiliated by the sales clerk who did not (or pretended not to) understand what she said and asked her again with a noticeable frown. In the second quote, my former classmate, who studied in New York as a graduate student, reflected on her belief that native English speakers neither appreciate "wishy-washy" speaking nor use euphemisms like many Japanese do on a daily basis, which influenced her change in identity when using English.

Recently, under the guise of globalization, travel agencies and universities as well as the Japanese government have been encouraging students to study abroad by promoting the benefits of study-abroad programs in terms of L2 proficiency and personal competence. Such promotion has been supported by numerous studies that have focused on the enhancement of language proficiency through study-abroad programs, in which participants are expected to use a second language on a daily basis (DuFon & Churchill, 2006; Kinginger, 2009; Magnan & Back, 2007). In addition, various studies have also examined attitudes such as intercultural communication and international awareness (Blackstone, 1997; Elmuti, Tück & Kemper, 2008; Erwin & Coleman, 1998; Kitsantas & Meyers, 2001; Shaftel, Shagtel & Ahluwalia, 2007). However, what is notably absent from all of these studies is any attention to learners' perception of using the language as a foreigner during their time abroad. Perhaps, it is still commonly believed that "one of the best ways to learn a foreign or second language is to develop friendships with native speakers and to communicate with them using that language" (Kurata, 2011, p.6). This statement seems overly optimistic and convenient, as if there were no mental obstacles to learning a language when exposed to the new environment. Conversely, many teachers tend to characterize inactive and taciturn students in class as having an inadequacy of their communication and social skills without realizing the fact that such students often reveal a more outspoken and assertive character once they leave Japan.Therefore, this study examines how the learning and use of a second language intersect with a person's identity, which is best described as second language identity (Block, 2007; Norton, 2000; Wolf, 2006) through short-term study abroad.

There are many different "identities" depending on social contexts, such as cultural identity, ethnic identity, gender identity, group identity, occupational identity, spiritual identity, and so on. As an identity regarding second language acquisition, Kanno (1996) examined Japanese returnee's identities in

transition. Her participants were educated in English speaking countries when they were young due to their parents' job and once returning to Japan, they managed to adjust to Japanese society at the first stage but gradually got the feeling of awkwardness in it. The complex construction of identity arose in this manner. Wolf (2006, p.17) argues that "language is the very foundation upon which the concept of 'self' is based: in and through language, we present ourselves as subjects. Subjectivity is 'the speaker's ability to present himself as subject distinct from 'the other' as object but always the other's potential subject to whom 'I' says 'you' and who says 'you' to 'I'." He examined how French language learners express their subjectivity in a foreign language and found out that they could not avoid expressing subjectivities by using French pronouns, certain tenses, reported speech, and argumentative discourses. From this perspective, second language use helps to create a new identity that differs from that of the learner's first language.

However, my study sheds light on the socially sensitive perspective of identity in which Norton (2000, p.2) shows "how language learners position themselves and are positioned by others depending on where they are, who they are with, and what they are doing". In addition, this study elucidates the construction of second language identity or what Block (2007) calls "the emergence of target language (TL)-mediated subject positions," which are personal identities constructed through one's second language use. He (2007) also examines three contexts in regard to language learning: migration, foreign language classroom, and study abroad. He claims that the experience of migration is often "one in which critical experiences, leading to the emergence of new subject positions, are likely to occur" (p.109), while the prospects for the emergence of new subject positions in foreign language classrooms is "minimal to non-existent" (p.137). Concerning the study-abroad context, he calls for additional research to reveal the full potential ofstudy-abroad experiences as "contexts replete with emerging TL-mediated subjectpositions" (p.185) based on the viewpoint of constructing second language identity.

Therefore, this study addresses three main questions: (1) What is the impact of a three-week study-abroad program on Japanese university students' overall construction of second language identity? (2) Does this impact last? and (3) What is the relationship between Japanese students' second language identity and language learning opportunities?

This study is influenced by a poststructuralist framework. Based on this perspective, language is unstable, and identities are multiple, contradictory, and subject to change across various settings and interactions. Namely, poststructuralists often "investigate extrinsic conditions—the social intentions of language users—in their critical analyses of texts" (Morgan, 2007, p.952) and they conceptualize the determination of subjectivity as partial or incomplete in that discourses also create possibilities for autonomy and resistance (Norton & Toohey, 2001; Pavlenko, 2002; Price, 1999, as quoted in Morgan, 2007). In addition, poststructuralists argue that power relationships are always implicated when particular language/identity correlations are formalized. At this point, the study of Norton (2000) comes to prominence in which she stated:

> Power does not operate only at the macro level of powerful institutions such as the legal system, the education system, and the social welfare system, but also at the micro level of everyday social encounters between people with differential access to symbolic (e.g., language, education, and friendship) and material (e.g., capital goods, real estate, and money) resources—encounters which are inevitablyproduced within language. (p. 7)

Furthermore, Norton (2007) also stated that the "relations of power can serve to enable or constrain the range of identities, which language learners can negotiate in their classrooms and communities" (p. 9).

Review of Related Literature

Study-abroad research regarding identity has heretofore emphasized the impact of identity factors such as extroverted/introverted nature or gender on language learning opportunities (Kinginger, 2008; Polanyi, 1995; Siegal, 1996; Twombly, 1995). Also, there are some studies that connect second language use with social and personal identity in a study-abroad context. Skarin's (2001) study reveals that the construct of participants' identities in their new communities was affected in different ways by their personal histories, ideologies, and the communities whence they came, in addition to their position within their new communities. Jackson's (2008) ethnographic study of a group of university students from Hong Kong who participated in a five-week program in England shows "the development of bilingual (multilingual) and bicultural (multicultural) identities across time and space" (p. 2). In Kinginger's (2004) study of a working-class American student who studied in France, the development of personal identity is inferred by the statement that she was no longer a "drifter," but a graduate student in French "focusing on her aspirations to become a language educator and to help others as they struggle with a new language" (p.240). Block's (2006) discourse analysis investigates identity issues arising from "reverse culture shock" and "being bilingual and bicultural" among five Japanese female graduate students in London during and after the program, while Piller and Takahashi's (2006) ethnographic discourse analysis examines five Japanese females and their desire to learn English in Australia. In the latter study, the participants' narratives are described in relation to identity, which shows that "successful identity transformation" (p.70) is related to the extent to which the participants had formed a relationship with native speakers.

All of these studies, which focus on outcomes associating second language competence with personal and social identity, provide some evidence regarding the construction of second language identities through study-abroad programs. However, it may not be true of the emergence of new subject positions that Block (2007) describes. Finally very recent study by Benson, Barkhuizen, Bodycott and Brown (2012) thoroughly explores this area in a systematic way. They investigated the development of second language identities, using nine Hong Kong pre-service teacher education students participating in six and thirteen week English-language immersion programs in different English-speaking countries. Their study reveals that study abroad programs have some impact on second language identities. Their participants became self-confident in using the second language, and their self-concept also developed from learners to users of the second language. Yet, their study does not consider the Norton's (2000) cautions: 'how inequitable relations of power limit the opportunities second language learners have to practice the target language outside the classroom' and 'affective factors are frequently socially constructed in inequitable relations of power, changing over time and space, and possibly coexisting in contradictory ways in a single individual' (p.5). Hence, this study focuses not only on the construction of second language identity but also on how social interaction influences on participants' language learning.

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Method

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Since this study reveals the construction of students' second language identities, a narrative approach was used on the basis of self-reflective statements from the students after the completion of the study-abroad program. A narrative approach is shown to be an ideal tool for revealing the complexity of human behavior since it is human-centered, and it situates itself in practice and explores the perspectives of the participants (Lyons & LaBoskey, 2002; Webster & Mertova, 2007). Although some consider narrative inquiry as "easy" research and "just telling stories", it is much more than the telling of stories. Education and educational studies are a form of experience (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Narrative inquiry is the best way of representing and understanding experiences that are difficult to observe directly and are

best understood from the perspectives of those who experience them. Furthermore, it analyzes learners' identity construction through oral or written accounts of their experiences when learning a foreign language (Miyahara, 2009).Because the construction of second language identity and language learning in study abroad context can not be observed directly, narratives play a important role in this study.However, there was a key ethical concern in this study. The research participants were my former students. Although there was no longer a mentoring relationship with them, there was still a need to be careful when dealing with them, so as not to give them a sense of being forced to participate. Thus, after being advised about their role as participants, they were provided with a contract requesting their consent, in which it is clearly stated that information gained from them is used only for this study, and that they will remain anonymous to protect their privacy.

Data was collected through one-on-one and semi-structured interviews in which the participants were asked to describe their study-abroad experience. The quoted extracts were then translated from Japanese into English. Although they were aware that the study was about second language identity, the word "identity" was not emphasized during the interviews.

After collecting the statements, participants' responses were transcribed, and their narratives were repeatedly examined to identify statements related to construction or change, which were then categorized under two headings: target language (TL)-mediated changes in the attitude toward learning and using English and TL-mediated self-enlightenment. Content analysis was utilized in this study. Moreover, all of the interactions with the participants were in Japanese, suggesting that translation was necessary to transform the data into research text. It is said that a successful Japanese–English translator must sacrifice 60% of the original meaning in order to communicate the most essential 40%, while an attempt to communicate every aspect has an opposite effect. Therefore, this study focuses on thematic issues during translation.

Furthermore, translation is based on interpretation, which is influenced by the interpreter's "experienced knowledge" (Hunt, 1992, quoted in Kanno, 1996, p. 83). More specifically, translators bring their life experiences into their translations (Esther Enns-Connolly, 1986, quoted in Kanno, 1996, p. 84). As a graduate student in New York, I drew upon my personal experiences, which included both advantages and disadvantages. The advantage was that subtle nuances and meanings were understood, which could only be achieved by experience in a study-abroad program. At the same time, the disadvantage was the danger of reading too much into their stories. Therefore, in order to make this translation accountable, the narratives (written in English) were shared with the participants to confirm the information and receive valuable feedback regarding the content.

The participants in this study consisted of three undergraduate students (non English-related majors) who participated in two different study-abroad programs organized by the same institution in Tokyo, Japan. Two of the participants spent a three-week study tour in the United Kingdom and attended credit-bearing courses (in English and content-based courses) at Pembroke College, Cambridge University. As for their previous overseas experiences, one of them, a female student named Rie, had been to nine different countries as a tourist, while the other student, a male named Masato, lived in the United States for four years (ages 7 to 11) and attended a Japanese school. Since that time, Masato had never left Japan. Conversely, the remaining participant, a female student named Akiko, studied in New Zealand, stayed in homestays and attended only English classes in the English Language Academy at Auckland University. Previously, she had traveled to two countries as a tourist with her parents. Table 1 summarizes the information of each participant in regard to their majors, study-abroad destinations, durations, and previous experiences in foreign travel.

Table 1
Study Participants

Participants	Sex	Destination	Major	Duration	Previous Overseas Experience
Rie	F	United Kingdom	Economics	3 weeks	Traveled to nine countries and most of the trips were with her mother.
Masato	M	United Kingdom	Law	3 weeks	Lived in the United States for 4 years (from 7 to 11 years of age) and attended a Japanese school.
Akiko	F	New Zealand	Law	4 weeks	Traveled to two countries, both with her parents.

Findings and Discussion

Target-language-mediated changes in the attitude toward learning and using English

Unlike the first quote mentioned earlier, all of the participants had positive experiences when using English, and the local people in their host countries were extremely kind and friendly. Although all of the participants reported little or no improvement in their English language proficiency, their attitudes toward learning and applying English changed after they used the language in actual practice. According to Masato,

> *I couldn't understand any of the local people's English except for my English teachers'. But when I looked perplexed, they kindly paraphrased their comments. This made me realize that I do not have to be ashamed of my lack of proficiency and I decided to become more active. To be honest, I used to be intimidated by native English speakers because I felt embarrassed by not being able to speak their language. However, after realizing that the local people were actually trying to understand what I was saying, my enthusiasm for communicating with them surpassed my feelings of embarrassment. (6/10/2013)*

Likewise, Rie had a similar experience:

> *The local people were very friendly, and they spoke to me everywhere including the musical theater, the Harry Potter Museum, and the coffee shop. They asked where I was from, what I was doing, and wished me good luck. Since I had a good impression of the local people, I actively asked them (even in my poor English) without hesitation and worry. Therefore, despite the fact that I was asked to repeat myself due to my poor pronunciation, I didn't mind it at all. (6/8/2013)*

Akiko, who spent time in New Zealand, discovered her own theory regarding communication through the actual use of English:

> *We do not have to be perfect when speaking since we can still communicate. So, I had no problem talking to the local people even though I still had some problems understanding what they were saying [laughing]. (6/15/2013)*

These experiences stated above are those from outside of the classroom in which all participants actively began using English. In this respect, unlike the adult immigrants in Norton's (2000) study who were frequently subject to discrimination, these participants had a favorable outcome from social interaction. Therefore, they never experienced "inequitable relations of power" (p.5). Instead, they were more willing to use the target language, which never occurred when they were in Japan. In general, in Japan, even if people like Masato wish to communicate with native English speakers, they fear being considered as "show-offs," and this prevailing idea can impede their initiative to speak English in Japan. However, all of the participants in this study felt encouraged by their exposure to open and friendly local people. Viewed from this perspective, they preferably constructed their second language identity.

At the same time, their experiences in the classroom are interesting. All of the participants joined a study-abroad program organized by their university, which meant that they had to follow the university-based program, and their classmates were only Japanese students from their university. Therefore, the class environment was almost exactly the same as if they had taken it in Japan, except for the fact that they used English all of the time. In Pembroke College, two of the participants were assigned to a top-level class in which half of the students were highly proficient in English since they were so-called "returnees" who had spent a number of years in an English-speaking country because of various reasons. The two participants were not returnees, although Masato spent four years in the United States when he was younger. Since he attended a Japanese school instead of a local school, he had learned English in the same manner as regular Japanese students. According to Masato,

> *I knew that their educational backgrounds were different from mine, but in my mind, I always compared myself with them because they were also native speakers of Japanese. Therefore, I had a strong rivalry with them, which prevented me from speaking because I did not want to feel embarrassed due to my poor English. (6/10/2013)*

On the other hand, Rie considered the students as scaffolding:

> *For me, they were sort of good teachers since they picked up what I meant in English and read between the lines regarding what I said. So, it was relaxing for me to speak to them. But when speaking to the native English teachers, I felt somewhat nervous because I thought they might not get used to English spoken by a Japanese student with such English skills. (6/8/2013)*

In Masato's contact with the native English teachers, he had an active attitude toward them since this was his only opportunity to use English in class. However, one day, he had a bitter experience when he was asked to interview a teacher in front of the class, and she cast doubtful eyes upon him. At that moment, he realized the importance of carefully and appropriately using English:

> *Anyway, I just spoke to them without carefully thinking about grammar or accurate word choice because I believed that it was more important to speak under any situation. However, I found that this did not work because I was unable to make myself understood. After this experience, I realized that I needed to study more grammar and learn how to convey meaning in the most accurate and appropriate way, which is crucial for effective communication. I became aware of these aspects in conversation, and if I had not studied abroad, I would have never discovered these things. (6/10/2013)*

In many studies concerning study-abroad programs, the majority of the participants, especially Asian students who studied in English-speaking countries found that correct grammar and written English were not as important as articulating thought in spoken English. The participants in Benson, Barkhuizen,

Bodycott and Brown study (2012) also discovered this. However, Masato rediscovered the significance of learning grammar and developing pragmatic competence. This may have had an impact on his second language identity. The concept of using grammar correctly and speaking appropriately in various social situations also affected his desired identity. From this perspective, language competence, including pragmatic competence, is an indispensable element for the projection of identities in a second language. In addition, the identity that he wanted to project is based on the degree of acquisition and the correct use of grammar and pragmatic competence.

Akiko's case was somewhat different from those of the other two students. In the first two weeks of her study in New Zealand, her learning environment in school consisted of Japanese students who were not only from her university but also from various universities in others parts of Japan. Although the teachers were native English speakers, and the students were required to use English in class, the students frequently used Japanese. She mentioned that some high-ranked university students attempted to use English, but the other lower-ranked students did not. She felt disappointed to find out that this learning environment did not differ from the English classes she had previously taken in Japan. However, during the last two weeks, the class environment changed in which the Japanese students and other international students were mixed, and she received more opportunities to practice English. More specifically, she established a close relationship with a Thai female student since both of their English proficiency levels were relatively the same. Therefore, she spoke to her without any stress or strain. Akiko also realized an interesting fact when speaking to her teachers:

> Native English teachers teaching in universities in Japan can more or less understand the Japanese language, so when I was unable to put someJapanese sentences into English, I easily gave up and used Japanese, which was allowed. This approach spoiled me because I quickly realized that this did not work here because all of the English teachers were not accustomed to English spoken by Japanese students. But I did not get nervous because they still attempted to understand my English and gave me their full attention when I spoke to them. (6/15/2013)

In this case, Akiko was quite comfortable using English despite her paucity of English proficiency, thanks to her encounter with a certain student at the same proficiency level and wonderful teachers with good patience.She also described her struggle recalling the vocabulary that she had learned in the past:

> I was not necessarily interested in learning English, but I studied out of duty in order to pass the university entrance exams. So, when I memorized vocabulary, I never paid attention to how they were used and how they were pronounced. I always ignored the contexts regarding vocabulary and focused only on rote memorization in a way that I could immediately translate English into Japanese as soon as I saw English sentences without giving any thought to the structure and vocabulary, because I realized I could attain a good score with this method as well. As you know, the English tests conducted in Japanese high schools still have questions related to translation of English to Japanese. On top of that, these sentences were from the textbooks that we had already learned in class, and were therefore familiar to us. Hence, I just tried to memorize Japanese translation. However, I found this method to be ineffective since the vocabulary that I had memorized in the past barely came to mind. Therefore, I changed my approach toward memorizing vocabulary so that I can use it effectively in a conversation. I have started to memorize vocabulary by listening to a CD. (6/15/2013)

From the three students' perspectives, the two study-abroad programs evidently had some positive impact on their construction of second language identities both inside and outside of the classroom,

which was different from Block's (2007) statement in which the emergence of new subject positions in the foreign language learning classroom was "minimal to non-existent." In addition, they not only changed their attitudes toward learning and using English, but such feelings were maintained even after their return to Japan.

Target-language-mediated self-enlightenment: Akogare [yearning] in Japanese

Many studies regarding study-abroad programs have reported self-enlightenment as an outcome that seems to be unrelated to second language learning or application. In fact, like many participants in such studies, the participants in this study also reported the following outcomes: self-confidence, personal growth, increased curiosity about different cultures, autonomy, and maturity. When they spoke about these outcomes, they hardly mentioned the use of language. Given that these outcomes are common among students who study abroad, one question arises: To what extent are these outcomes mediated through the use of English?

In regard to the participants of this study who attended Cambridge University, they coincidentally reported the same aspect about the program assistants (PAs) in their classes. In this case, the PAs were Cambridge undergraduate students who were always available to assist the class. One day, when the teacher canceled class because of illness, the PAs substituted for the teacher. Both Rie and Masato were impressed with the PAs' excellent communication skills and considerable knowledge. According to Rie,

> *The study-abroad experience transformed me, especially when I met the PAs. They were super brilliant in that they not only had rich knowledge but they also expressed their own opinions, which made me feel embarrassed because I attended school solely for fun and being with friends. I did not have a sense of learning. So I was unable to answer anything when I was asked, "What do you think"? But now I believe that chatting with my friends at school is a waste of time. Now, I am learning not through a sense of duty but from the desire to enjoy learning. (6/8/2013)*

After being prompted for specific examples, she explained

> *I have started to choose classes conducted by native English teachers and sit in the front row since coming back to Japan. I used to care about others' eyes and avoided taking native English teachers' classes because I was afraid of being considered as a "show-off" by my friends, but now I don't care about how I appear, and even thinking about this is a waste of time. Rather, I want to enhance myself and become a sophisticated person like the Cambridge students. (6/8/2013)*

Her *akogare* for the Cambridge students' brilliance inspired her to develop her identity. Likewise, Masato also expressed his desire to enhance himself after communicating with the PAs. He specifically admired the PAs' knowledge regarding their home history: "I, of course, got highly motivated to learn English, but at the same time, I wanted to study Japanese history and culture more and explain them in English" (6/10/2013). In addition, his encounter with the PAs increased his motivation to study not only English but other subjects as well. He expressed his feelings as follows: "I decided to become more aggressive toward learning, especially after meeting and talking to them" (6/10/2013). In fact, after making this solid determination, he started to raise his hand and ask questions in class during his stay and after returning to classes in Japan.

On the contrary, in Akiko's case, she did not encounter such influential role models, but she admired the Chinese students' talent in speaking without hesitance even though their grammatical competence

was quite low. She had a sort of *akogare* to become more like them. According to Akiko,

> *I had already known that communication can be achieved without perfect English knowledge and skills. I reaffirmed this through the Chinese students' attitudes toward using English. When I saw their eagerness to take advantage of the opportunities to speak English, I was stimulated as well as jealous of their impudence. I only studied English not out of a desire to learn it but to simply pass the entrance exams. So, I had good knowledge of grammar and reading skills.* [*] *I noticed that the size of one's vocabulary is more crucial for effective communication rather than perfect grammar because uttering several words, regardless of their order, enables those to understand what I am trying to say. (6/15/2013)*

In addition to her observation of the Chinese students, she was convinced of the necessity of vocabulary through communication with the children in her host family. Because of her lack of English proficiency, she was unable to converse with them, but she somehow managed using an electronic dictionary. However, she found herself less stressed even in this circumstance than when she was in Japan. The experience of staying with a host family gave her a different meaning of *akogare.* In addition, her host family mother was always busy with work and away most of the time, which brought her a feeling of freedom since her parents (especially her father) were strict disciplinarians. She realized that this noninterference was exactly what she had been yearning for all of the time:

> *I realized how wonderful it was to feel free from my father's annoying interference. Even though I was unable to speak English with the family, I could still convey what I wanted to say as long as I had my dictionary. This experience influenced my desire to visit many places alone and use English in the future in order to escape my parents' restraints and enjoy freedom. Now I try to memorize vocabulary that is useful for communication. (6/15/2013)*

In this case, it seems that Akiko's desire to travel or study abroad stems from her frustration against her parents' interferences. However, it is interesting to note that she did not think of this change as independence from her parents. She confirmed that she could survive even with her poor English skills in New Zealand, but she was not satisfied with the status quo. Instead, she showed enthusiasm for studying vocabulary in a meaningful context so that she could accomplish her goals.

Discussion

The study mainly examined the construction of second language identity in the context of study abroad through an analysis of data in which students described their short-term study-abroad experiences. The findings revealed that all of the participants constructed new target language subject positions, they became more active in both speaking and learning (which had not been previously seen in Japan), and the impact lasted well after they returned home. Moreover, when there were no "inequitable relations of power" in social interaction, language learners favorably constructed their second language identities that he/she wanted to project, which enabled them to become aware of linguistic analysis or pragmatics. Furthermore, as seen in Rie and Akiko's cases, overall participants' confidence in projecting identities as competent English-speaking individuals and overcoming certain difficulties in communication were

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[*]In general, in Japan, entrance exams for universities are based on grammar and reading.

revealed. At the same time, Masato was hesitant to speak to Japanese returnees in class due to his self-depreciation. From this perspective, what Norton (2000) pointed out is true: "Relations of power can serve to enable or constrain the range of identities, which language learners can negotiate in their classrooms and communities" (p. 9). In short, second language identities and language learning opportunities are closely related.

Finally, this study presented the findings of a small-scale pilot study, which focused only on the impact of short-term study abroad. All of the participants enjoyed their study-abroad experience despite the fact that their English proficiency was insufficient for academic contexts. Perhaps, this inadequacy was due to the short duration of their stay, which did not allow them to become challenged as a resident. That is, they were simply tourists who were welcomed by their host country and school. This raises the question of whether there might be a difference in the construction of second language identity if one stays for a longer period of time. It is assumed that a longer duration of study abroad may be a more intense experience in terms of opportunities for second language identity than a shorter visit. In this case, as Norton mentions, it could be more possible for participants to encounter power relationships at the micro level of everyday social encounters between people, influencing their construction of second language identities. In addition, Wenger's (1998) notion that learning is the transformation of identity by participating in a community of practice will be more emphasized. The current literature suggests that there is the need for additional research regarding study abroad during longer periods of time.

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GENİŞLETİLMİŞ ÖZ

Son zamanlarda, sadece seyahat acentaları ve yayın evleri değil aynı zamanda üniversiteler de ikinci dil yeterliliği ve bireysel yetiler geliştirme gibi yararlı çıktılarını öne sürerek yurtdışında eğitim alma konusunda öğrencileri cesaretlendirmektedirler. Alanyazında, katılımcıların ikini bir dil kullanmalarının ve kültürlerarası yeterlilikler ve küresel farkındalık kazanmalarının öngörüldüğü yurtdışı eğitim programları aracılığıyla dil yeterliliği kazanımına yönelik birçok çalışma bulunmaktadır. Bu çalışmaların sonuçlarının, üniversitelerin öğrencileri yurtdışı eğitim konusunda cesaretlendirdiğine ilişkin bulguları destekler nitelikte olduğu görülmektedir. Ancak, bu çalışmalar incelendiğinde dikkati çekecek bir şekilde eksik olan bir noktanın bulunduğu gözlemlenmektedir. Çalışmalarda, ikinci dil kullanımı yoluyla öğrenenlerin kimlik gelişimlerine, yani ikinci dil kimliklerine ve yurtdışı eğitim bağlamında dil öğrenimlerine herhangi bir vurguda bulunulmamaktadır. Muhtemelen, yabancı veya ikinci bir dil öğreniminin en iyi yolunun, o dili anadili olarak konuşan kişilerle arkadaşlıklar geliştirmenin ve onlarla bu dil aracılığıyla iletişime geçmek olduğuna inanılmaktadır. Bu ifade fazlaca iyimser ve uygun görünmekte ve bir dil öğreniminde yeni bir ortama maruz kalındığında herhangi bir zihinsel engelle karşı karşıya kalınmayacağını varsaymaktadır. Buna karşılık, birçok öğretmen iletişim ve sosyal becerilerde yetersizlik gösteren öğrencileri pasif ve sessiz olarak tanımlamaktadırlar. Ancak, bu noktada öğretmenler, bu tarz öğrencilerin Japonya'dan ayrıldıklarında genellikle daha açık sözlü ve özgüvenli bir karakter sergilediklerine ilişkin gerçeği farkına varmamaktadırlar. Bu nedenle, yurtdışı eğitim programlarına üç veya dört haftalık bir süre ile katılmış olan üç Japon öğrenciden sözel olarak alınan nitel verilere dayanan bu çalışma, ikinci dil kimliği ve dil öğreniminin yapısını post-yapısalcı bir çerçevede incelemektedir. Post-yapısalcı bakış açısıyla, dil değişendir; kimlikler ise çok yönlü, çelişkili ve birçok farklı duruma ve etkileşime göre değişir. Buna ek olarak, post-yapısalcılar belirli bir dil/kimlik bağıntısı oluşturulduğunda, güç ilişkinlerinin her zaman karıştırıldığını tartışmaktadırlar. Çalışmanın amacı, öğrencilerin kimliklerindeki değişimleri gözler önüne sermektir. Bu nedenle çalışmada, insan davranışlarının karmaşıklığını ortaya koyabilmek için en uygun yol olduğu düşünülen sözel bir yaklaşım uygulanmıştır. Bu sayede, deneyimlere ilişkin sözel veriler aracılığıyla katılımcıların kimlik yapıları çözümlenmiştir.

Araştırmanın verileri, katılımcılardan yurtdışı eğitim deneyimlerini betimlemelerinin istendiği birebir ve yarı-yapılandırılmış görüşmelerden elde edilmiştir. İlk olarak katılımcıların ifadeleri, Japonca'dan İngilizce'ye çevrilmiştir. Katılımcılardan elde edilen tüm ifadeler çevrildikten ve bir araya getirildikten sonra, ifadeler yazıya aktarılarak kaydedilmiştir. Daha sonra katılımcıların anlatıları, yapı veya değişimle ilgili olan ifadeleri betimlemek amacıyla tekrar tekrar incelenmiş ve iki ana başlık altında kategorize edilmiştir: hedef dil (HD)-odaklı gelişim ve HD-odaklı öz-aydınlanma. Çalışmada, katılımcıların deneyimlerini *nasıl* betimledikleri üzerine odaklandığından dolayı içerik analizi işe koşulmuştur.

Araştırmanın bulguları, tüm katılımcıların ikinci il kimliklerini olumlu bir şekilde yapılandırdıklarını göstermiştir. İlk olarak, tüm katılımcılar İngilizce dil yeterliliklerinde az bir gelişim olduğunu ya da hiç gelişim olmadığını söylemelerine rağmen, İngilizce'yi öğrenme ve kullanma davranışları, dili gerçek uygulamada kullanmalarının ardından değişmiştir. Katılımcılar, yerel halkın kendilerine karşı olan açık ve arkadaşça davranışlarının karşısında cesaretlenmiş ve İngilizce'yi kullanma konusunda isteklenmişlerdir. Katılımcıların bu cesaretleri ve isteklilikleri, kişiler Japonya'dayken hiç ortaya çıkmamıştır. Bunun nedeni, katılımcıların kötü telaffuzlarından dolayı utanmaları veya anadili İngilizce olan öğretmenlerle konuşmaya çalıştıklarında diğerleri tarafından "hava atıyormuş" gibi görünmelerinden çekinmeleridir. Çok kuvvetli bir biçimde olumlu olarak kazanılan deneyimler, öğrencilerin ülkelerine/evlerine dönmelerinden sonra da devam ettiği görülmüştür. Buna ek olarak, tüm katılımcıların geliştirmeyi planladıkları ikinci dil kimliklerini uygun bir şekilde yapılandırabildiklerini gözlemlenmiştir. Bu yapılandırma sürecinde öğrenenler, hayran oldukları insanlarla karşılaşmaları sonucunda oluşturdukları öz-aydınlanmadan yararlanmışlardır. Aynı zamanda, katılımcılar kendilerini özlem duydukları koşullara yerleştirdiklerinde, dilbilimsel çözümleme ve bağlamsal dilbilim konusunda farkındalık geliştirebilmişlerdir. Genel olarak çalışma, sosyal etkileşimde

adaletsiz güç ilişkileri olmadığında, dil öğrenenlerinin herhangi bir çekince veya kaygı hissetmeden dili öğrenebildikleri ve ikinci dil kimliklerini olumlu bir biçimde yapılandırabildiklerini göstermiştir.