

# Using Media to Promote the Self-Regulated Learning of a Language: The experience of students studying abroad

Miho MIYASHIRO  
*Meisei University*  
avantistokai@gmail.com

Yuuka IZAWA  
*Meisei University*  
19970808yuuka@gmail.com

Ayane OYAMA  
*Meisei University*  
ayane.pyjz7178@gmail.com

Chisato OTA  
*Meisei University*  
chi.smile.1024@gmail.com

Takayuki KONNO  
*Meisei University*  
konno@t-konno.net

**Abstract:** Recently, universities in Japan have been actively promoting study abroad programs. However, many students who study abroad end their foreign language study once they arrive back home. On the other hand, some continue to learn using various media. The purpose of this research was to clarify how students retain their motivation as a self-regulated learner of a foreign language, with particular focus on their media usage. An online questionnaire survey using free descriptions was administered to fifteen undergraduate students who had been studying abroad for less than one year. The data were organized using the KJ method (Kawakita, 1967), a recognized method for organizing and stringing together stored information for analysis. The authors identified five important language-learning factors and outlined two future directions.

**Keywords:** Study Abroad, Self-Regulated Learning, Undergraduate students, KJ method

## INTRODUCTION

Universities in Japan have begun to emphasize globalization (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology: MEXT, 2014). As citizens of the world, we as a people will need to think from a global perspective and develop the ability to communicate in languages other than our own. In the field of education, the environment of foreign language learning in Japan has been undergoing changes. This research focused on identifying appropriate ways to motivate and improve foreign language learning for students who may study abroad. Prior research has found there is a difference in unconscious motivation for students having a study abroad experience (Oshiro 2016).

The ability to communicate in a foreign language—specifically, English—is widely recognized today as an essential element in Japan’s globalization (MEXT 2014). The purpose of this research was to examine “studying abroad” as one of the ways to learn foreign languages. Moreover, studying abroad may have beneficial effects for students once they begin their career. Although the motivation arising from studying abroad appears to lead to the continuation of foreign language learning and to support career formation, studies so far have not shown the specific processes by which these

results are connected to such motivation. One would expect that, in some cases, the motivation that arises from studying abroad does not lead to such results. This research focuses on “the processes of strategy”. Accordingly, this research sought to reveal “the way” to make studying abroad valuable.

University students utilize various media in their daily life. This research examines media as a factor in the learning continuum. Here, media is defined as the means by which individuals communicate with one another, particularly social networking (Nakahashi 2014).

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Self-Regulated Learning has been shown as one of the elements involved in the continuation of study (Shindo 2003). Self-Regulated Learning in this study implies that learners take part in a self-learning process that involves three elements: motivation, study strategy and metacognition (Ito 2008). Study strategy is an intentional control (Hayamizu 2008). If learners adopt a study strategy to accomplish a specific academic goal, their level of accomplishment improves and they spontaneously achieve metacognition. This metacognition then serves as motivation for further learning. It is believed that learners continue to apply their study strategy with the

aim of acquiring knowledge and technology (Zimmerman 1989).

This research clarifies how students sustain their motivation for language learning after returning to Japan from overseas study.

## RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this research is to clarify a continuation factor for language study learning after one studies abroad and to establish its relationship to media from the theoretical framework of self-regulated learning. In addition, this research focuses on a continuation factor for language study learning and relationship with media.

There are potentially two significant implications for this research. Firstly, if we can establish how certain students sustain their motivation, we may be able to help future students who study abroad to maintain their motivation for language learning after returning back to Japan.

Although the positive effects of studying abroad have been reported in a number of studies, the number of Japanese students studying overseas in recent years in Japan has been decreasing. The decline has been attributed to economic pressures, finding employment, and limited English skills (International Education Research Consortium 2016).

It is pursuit of motivation for language learning after returning to Japan. This is another significance of our research.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this research, we used a free description-type questionnaire in an online form. The data were in using the KJ method. That is, we assembled and analyzed the information from a variety of angles. The data set produced by the questionnaire was analyzed in six phases.

The data were collected from Apr 28th to May 7th 2018. The target group was composed of fifteen university students (six men, nine women). Selection of the students was based on the following criteria: (1) they had studied abroad, (2) they were to be undergraduate students in Tokyo, who were known by the authors.

## FINDING AND DISCUSSION

As a result of the analysis, the following were found:

1.Learners who set a goal of English proficiency study English iteratively, focusing on what skill(s) they want to strengthen skill by attending an English conversation school.

2.Learners who study with other people using SNS tools develop self-research learning, and continue studying after returning to Japan.

3.Learners can increase their metacognition by having a goal, by studying using an SNS tool, and attending an English conversation school before they studying abroad.

4.There are various kinds of academic motivations and stages of foresight. Learners whose purpose is to acquire language ability and improvement it has experienced focusing attention as metacognition.

5.Regardless of media type, it is necessary to set up an environment that allows learners to obtain feedback anytime, using a suitable device, in order to continue their self-efficacy. This matches the knowledge argued by Ito and Shindo.

## CONCLUSION

The purpose of this research was to clarify how students sustain their motivation to continue their language study as self-regulated learners, with a particular focus on the media usage. We used a free description-type questionnaire in an online form and analyzed the data using the KJ method. As for future research directions, the size of the research target group needs to be increased and a follow-up study of students returning to Japan after studying abroad is needed to confirm the legitimacy of our findings.

## REFERENCES

- Hayamizu, T.(2008) Psychology of the self-formation, Autonomous incentive, Kaneko Shuppan, Tokyo.
- International education study consortium (2016) Working papers about a long-term impact of the global personnel training and studying abroad. <http://recsie.or.jp/project/gj5000/> (accessed 2018.6.12)
- Ito, T. (2008) Stratagem to bring up power to learn by oneself' From the viewpoint of self-adjustment learning. [https://berd.benesse.jp/berd/center/open/berd/2008/07/pdf/13berd\\_03.pdf](https://berd.benesse.jp/berd/center/open/berd/2008/07/pdf/13berd_03.pdf). (accessed 2018.07.19)
- Ito, T. and Shindo, T. (2003) An Examination of the Causal Model for the Relationships among Self-Efficacy, Anxiety, Self-Regulated Learning Strategies, and Persistence in Learning: Focused on Cognitive and Motivational aspects of Self-Regulated Learning Strategies, Japanese education Japan Federation of Engineering Societies article magazine, 27(4):377-385
- Kawakita, J. (1967) Idea method- for creativity development. Chuokoron-Shinsha public company, Tokyo, Japan
- MEXT. (2014) About the present conditions to surround the study abroad of the youth <http://www.cas.go.jp/jp/seisaku/ryuugaku/dai2/sankou2.pdf>. (accessed 2018.07.19)
- Nakahashi, Y. (2014) Media Literacy. Hokuju Shuppan, Tokyo.

- Oshiro, N. (2016) A Study of English Major University Students in English Learning Outcome, Behavior and Attitudes: Comparative Analysis Based on Gender Differences, Starting Time of Learning English, English Proficiency and Experiences of Studying Abroad, Okinawa Christian University Review, 12: 1-14
- Zimmerman, B.J. (1989) A social cognitive view of self-regulated academic learning. J. Educ. Psychol., 81: 329-339