

A RETROSPECTIVE STUDY OF THE IMPACT OF AN INTERNATIONAL
EXCHANGE PROGRAM: AN EVALUATION OF CHANGING ATTITUDES
TOWARD INTERNATIONALISATION AND GLOBAL AWARENESS

by

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Abstract

I explored the impact of the UBC-Ritsumeikan Academic Exchange Program in which 100 Japanese university students attend a Canadian university for 8 months. It is a sheltered immersion program during which the students come to Vancouver to study and live in an integrated academic and sheltered social environment. The research questions addressed in this study were: 1) How do the students think they learned English and what do they do to maintain it in Japan? 2) What do the students think they learned and became during the sojourn? 3) How do the students think these changes have affected their lives in Japan after the sojourn? 4) What do the students think about the program and how do the students think the program can be improved? Primary data sources included my autobiography about my international Ritsumeikan exchange experiences as well as extensive interviews of students. My findings were that the students believed they had become more international, independent, flexible, open-minded, and multicultural. The students learned Canadian culture as well as English, the relativity of culture, and humanity.

The interviews found that what students learn in this exchange program is so profound that the study can encourage more people to participate in such programs. Travelling abroad to live and study itself is very stressful. Only one academic year is too short for the students to become acculturated to the new environment. The students have to return to their home countries just as they are getting used to their new environment. By identifying what kinds of stress the students encounter, the programs can be improved to help reduce it, the study can help students learn better and make the most of the programs as well. I also scrutinised how educators can facilitate such programs in the traditional classrooms using the example of a new university called Asia Pacific University (APU). Furthermore, by exploring how the students deal with the re-entry process in Japan, we can understand the students' newly constructed identity and international perspectives which are important in this shrinking global village.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The world is shrinking due to technological advances in transportation and media; therefore, more people in the world are likely to become sojourners. It is especially important for young generations, such as university students, to go abroad for a certain period of time and study intercultural communication. There are 180 international exchange programs in existence at the University of British Columbia (UBC) in Vancouver, Canada. The number of these programs in the world is beyond imagination. Those exchange programs range from one academic term to a number of academic years; the most common international exchange programs are for one academic year.

I participated in one of the programs at UBC in 1993. The program is called UBC-Ritsumeikan Academic Exchange Program but the students and the teachers refer to it as the Rits Program. The primary goals are language acquisition, intercultural communication, and understanding and acceptance of different cultures.

My study sought to explore the students' opinions about such learning experiences. Since I was a student in the Rits Program and have been involved with other international exchange programs, I have certain biased perceptions about how the students change and what the students learn as a result of exchange programs.

This thesis consists of five chapters. In chapter 1, I will describe the Rits Program, depict my biases with an autobiography, and portray how I reached my thesis interest. In chapter 2, I will explain my methodology. In chapter 3, I will illustrate the result of the interviews I conducted. In chapter 4, I will introduce other studies concerning my study, and relate them to my findings and research questions. In chapter 5, I will recommend ways to improve the Rits Program, discuss how learning experiences abroad can be facilitated in regular classes, and conclude with recommendations for future research.

Overview of the Developing of Ritsumeikan Program

In this section, I will describe the Ritsumeikan Program. Each year, UBC invites 100 university students who are enrolled in the second year or higher at Ritsumeikan University in Kyoto, Japan. Its purpose is "to further intercultural understanding among participants through their involvement in a jointly developed, residential programme of

academic, sociocultural and linguistic study" (UBC Ritsumeikan Academic Exchange Programme, p. 1).

The program started in 1991; the first group of students who participated in the program are known as Year 1. Therefore, the students who are currently participating in 1998 are Year 8 students. I participated in the program as a Year 3 student while it was still in a trial period for both Ritsumeikan University and UBC. It has improved with each year and I continue to see the difference and improvement now in 1998.

The Rits Program has a duration of 8 months from September to April. The students study and live in an integrated academic and sheltered social environment, rather than study English as a Second Language (ESL), but study as Canadian students in order to master the content. The criteria of the students to participate in the program is to score a minimum of 530 in the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). The program chooses the top one hundred of all the students that apply, and conducts interviews to get an insight into the students' objectives, willingness to work, and expectations. The selected students then take an academic writing course in which the students write an academic paper in English for the first time, and an intensive TOEFL course in which they try to improve their previous TOEFL score. The reason that the students work hard to gain a high score in TOEFL is because the students with 580 or above in TOEFL could take regular courses at UBC in the second semester. In the first semester, everyone has to take courses that are particularly designed for the Rits students such as intercultural communications, Canadian studies, and Pacific Rim studies.

When I was a student in Year 3, all the students had to live in a residence called Ritsumeikan House that had been specifically built for the program. Since its completion, it has been known as Rits House to the staff and students. Rits House is made up of student residences, a laundry room, several classrooms, the Rits Program office, the teachers' rooms and the multi-media lab known as Rits Lab. Basically, two Japanese students and two Canadian students shared a quad which consisted of a kitchen, a living room, four bedrooms, one toilet, and one bathroom with a toilet. The Japanese students' life is centred in the Rits House where many of the courses are taken, and many of the students reside.

The program, however, has been continuously improving since the trial period. For

instance, in the Year 6, the students could live in two residences: Rits House and Totem Park residence. Currently, in the Year 8, the program added one more residence, and the students can live in one of three residences on campus with Canadian students. The students, now, participate in various activities such as the sports club, social events and volunteer activities on or off campus. Furthermore, some Rits students may come to Vancouver at the end of July to take ESL courses in summer school and stay with local home-stay families. In the Year 3, such programs did not exist and every student came to Vancouver at the end of August, and started the program then.

The quality of the students in the Rits Program has been changing as well. More students are accustomed to computers and more speak better English. There are more students with previous experiences abroad for a length of time. The students are more motivated and study harder. That might be due to the programs' new pre-departure orientation which includes a description of Vancouver, campus life, and about the study. In the orientation, previous alumni share their experiences in the program. The program coordinator also goes to Japan and explains the students how hard they have to study in Canada. Hence, there are more students who are motivated or at least know how hard they will have to study at UBC.

The Importance of Autobiography in Identifying Biases

In this section, I will introduce my educated views on Japanese culture, explain my language learning experiences abroad, describe my experiences in the Rits Program, and portray how I reached my thesis interest. This section helps readers to understand the cultural differences, acculturation process, re-entry process, and obstacles in study abroad context. It further provides a particular context in this international program, and makes both myself and the reader aware of my biases as a researcher due to my unique experiences and life-style. "Reflexivity suggests that the orientations of the researchers will be shaped by their socio-historical locations, including the values and interests" (Atkinson & Hammersley, 1995, p. 16).

Japanese Cultural Background - Childhood

I was born and raised in Japan by my Japanese parents who had never been outside of Japan until after I started living in Canada. I only spoke Japanese, as other Japanese

children did, and only knew how to recite the English alphabet because of the ABC song from Sesame Street. I would say that I was a typical Japanese girl in the way that I had had no connections to foreign languages or cultures.

However, I had always wondered about my role as a female. I did not understand why I had to do certain things based on my gender. I often wondered who devised this particular system while knowing that I could not escape from it. For example, my mother worked, therefore, my sister and I had to do all the chores around the house. My father used to say to us, "because you are women, you have to do all the chores. It's good for your future." I hated the idea and wondered whether or not he would have said the same if he had had a son. I always wanted to be free from the system and the pressures caused by my gender.

Encounter with an American Girl - Junior High School

I did not go to a regular juku which is a cram school that many children went to after school. However, I went to a juku only for English because my classmate's mother was the teacher at a juku school. She had gone to a university in the USA and my friend was born in Chicago. Her husband was a Japanese doctor and they always had guests from the USA. The juku class was based on the preparation for junior high school English class which was centred around the grammar. In Japan, English education starts in junior high school and it was mostly based on the grammar. All the teachers are Japanese who cannot even speak English. Therefore, it was fortunate to have this friend's mother as a teacher once a week after school because she could speak English and her pronunciation sounded authentic American.

One hot day in summer when I was 13 years old, I went to the class as usual. The teacher said that there was a guest that day. She then brought a blond-haired, blue-eyed, American girl to the classroom. Her name was Jane, 16 years old, and she was visiting the teacher from California. She was home-staying there for two weeks and looked a little nervous in the class because she could not speak Japanese. Since I was the best student in the class, the teacher asked me to say hello to her. I was shocked because I had never spoken in English to anyone. The only times I had even uttered English was when I was repeating after the teacher. I had to think for a while what to say. I translated the Japanese

greeting and said "nice to meet you" with a shy voice. She said the same with a smile and shook my hand. It was my first time to shake hands with someone as a greeting. I must have bowed a little because she bowed back a little. I cannot forget the heartbeats and the excitement I felt. I wanted to share more with her but it was all I could say. However, I was happy and it made me want to go to the USA, especially California.

First Time Abroad

Since the encounter with Jane, I had been thinking about going to California. One day, I opened the mail box and there was a brochure about a summer home-stay program in California. I talked to my mother and she talked to my father about it. My father was so strict all the time, I did not know how to talk to him about it so my mother did instead. They told me that it was okay because they knew how much I liked English among all the subjects in high school. My grades with English had always been A+ since junior high school and I was confident with English.

I was 16 years old and it was the first summer holiday in high school. My home-stay family was a Caucasian couple whose children were already independent. Another Japanese girl stayed with the same family as well and I shared a bedroom with her. They had had some exchange students from Japan staying with them previously and were a little familiar with Japanese people. The host father was a fishing guide and used to be in the navy. He had been to Japan in the 60's and said a few words in Japanese which made us laugh. He had a fishing boat on a trailer attached to his truck, had dark tanned arms with a white tan line from his watch and everything about him was very Californian. The home-stay mother was a babysitter; she treated us like her own children and kissed us good-night every evening. The other Japanese girl did not like the kiss so she just gave her a kiss on the cheek. I, on the other hand, wanted to be like the Americans that I had seen in the movies, so I kissed her lips like she did to me.

Everything was just new, fresh and fun. Although I only met Caucasian people, I saw various kinds of people in California, including Mexican and African Americans. I thought the USA was a small version of the world, and all kinds of people co-existed in the same country. I was exhilarated to see different kinds of people in one country speaking the same language to each other. Japan seemed very homogeneous and boring. Everyone in

California also seemed to be smiling all the time and I thought Japanese people worked too hard and did not smile like Californians. I wanted to talk to the next-door neighbour surfer boy who was the same age as me, but I did not know what to say. I realised that the English I had learned in Japan was very limited and I did not know how to communicate in English at all. All I could say was hi and smile. I must have been like a Japanese doll who was shy and quiet without a personality.

Although I was the best speaker of English in the group and the most adaptable person, I was not satisfied with myself. I felt like a pet that was cute but stupid. I had an urge to speak English and communicate with the nice host family like I could do in Japanese. I was only familiar with written and formal forms of English as opposed to communicative oral forms. I realised that I did not know how to respond to certain questions such as "what's up?" or "how's it going?" I also realised that English in Japan is misused. Japanese language includes words called "loan words." They are words borrowed from foreign words such as soup, spoon, and pen. They come from many different languages but are pronounced in a Japanese way. When I was talking about the American singer Madonna, I said it in a Japanese way. Nobody understood me and I did not know how to say it in English. People finally understood me when I wrote it down.

Little by little, I became Americanised. At first I was surprised to see that the teenagers looked so much older and so I too started wearing a bit of make up. I got a sun tan and looked a little Californian. I began wearing nail polish and ear rings as well as very casual clothes. I got better at hugging. At first, I was surprised to see all the pictures of the family members, especially the children's pictures on the walls and on the tables but, I got used to them. I was also surprised that my host mother carried the pictures of her children in her wallet and showed them to lots of people including some cashiers at a super market. I was surprised that everyone said hi to each other like friends and people even had small conversations with cashiers. I found it very nice and casual. In Japan, cashiers or anyone in the service industry act very politely and usually do not show their personalities.

The one month flew by. By the time I got used to the casual life-style such as sitting with my feet on the table, hugging, and kissing, and after I began to understand more of what people were saying, we had to go back to Japan. Although I felt that I was treated

differently because I could not speak English, I met lots of nice people that I wished that I could have talked to. I decided that I would be communicating with them like I could do in Japanese the next time I could visit San Diego. I then decided to attend a one-year-exchange program. I no longer had any faith in the Japanese English education system and believed that I had to immerse myself in an English speaking country in order to completely acquire the language.

Ten Months in New Jersey

In 1989, one year after my summer in San Diego, I attended a 10-month-sojourn program. I stayed with a home-stay family and attended a high school in their neighbourhood. The home-stay family in New Jersey was very different from the one in San Diego. It was a single mother family and they had never had any exchange students. She had a 13-year-old son who was jealous of his mother's attention to me. It seemed they did not have much money and I sometimes felt very bad and uncomfortable. Their neighbourhood was in a countryside; it was one hour by car from Philadelphia. The house was in the forest and there was no transportation system or stores. It was always gloomy and I felt that the home-stay family was unhappy and mean to me because of the weather. I felt like a prisoner. Nobody was home when I got home and I had nobody to talk to or share my feelings with. Of course, there was nothing Japanese at all. I started gaining weight due to the stress.

The American high school was very homogeneous and suburban. There were only a few African and Asian students out of 1500 students and they were born in the USA. Of course, there were no ESL classes and the students were very conservative. The school had some European exchange students, however, I felt that I was treated differently from them by other students due to my race and English skill. Some teachers were nice but I was lonely. I imitated their American English and sat like them, chewed gum like them, and walked like them to be accepted. Nobody cared how I felt. Nobody was interested in me as Japanese. Nobody was international. I wished that I had been able to play musical instruments so I could impress people and make friends. I wished that there had been students who were interested in Japan and that they would have wanted to talk to me.

I had to take courses with less English such as art, choir, algebra and geometry. I

was an honour roll student in all the courses, especially algebra and geometry. With those courses, I still had to be able to listen to, understand, speak and write in English. I often went to see the teachers during the break time or I wrote down the words that I did not understand in the class, and I studied them at home. I even watched TV with my dictionary and looked up the words all the time. Therefore, I would say that I learned English all by myself with the help of the environment. I was desperate to speak English because I wanted to be accepted as a human being, not as an alien.

There was a coordinator for the exchange program. I was supposed to talk to her and she was supposed to consult with me. However, she was a friend of my home-stay family and was not on my side. She told me if I wanted to change the home-stay family, I had to go back to Japan. It did not make sense to me at all. My parents were paying lots of money and she was working for the exchange program organisation, but she was not helping me at all. She also told me to clean up the house and cook for them. Nobody listened to me and/or cared about me. I missed Japanese food and the convenience such as a public transportation system and stores. I appreciated my parents, Japanese culture and the language that I was used to. I had been criticising Japan until then, but I learned to look at Japan more objectively and started seeing both positive and negative sides.

I thought about how foreigners would feel in Japan as well. I thought they were treated differently and it would make them uncomfortable. I thought no matter how much I imitate the American high school students, I could not be American. I thought about Koreans in Japan who were treated differently in both Japan and Korea. I also learned the stereotypes of Japan. Every time I said that I was from Japan, people said Karate and Ninja. Some people said, "I like Bruce Lee. He is a great Japanese" or "Tokyo is the capital of China." I learned not to be ignorant about other cultures and respect other cultures.

Return to San Diego

On the way back to Japan from New Jersey, I stopped by in San Diego to see the old home-stay family. It was so nice to see them and wished that I had stayed with them for ten months. They could not believe how my English had improved. I actually had a normal conversation and we understood each other completely. I even thought that people in California spoke a little more slowly than people in New Jersey.

I made friends with their daughter who had not even talked to me the last time because of my poor English. She kept complimenting me about my English and even told me about her problems. That is what I wanted and I accomplished it. The funny thing was that the next-door neighbour surfer came to talk to me and we actually had a deep conversation. I made friends with all the neighbours and discovered some people's personalities that I could not have known without the language.

Re-entry Process I

I was so happy to be home. Everything seemed fresh and new. Even my parents seemed different. Since I had gained 20 pounds, I looked like a balloon and everyone noticed me in high school. I was always smiling and lots of people talked to me because I looked friendlier. Some guys made fun of my weight but they told me they could have not talked to me before I went to the USA because I looked snobbish. I also had forgotten Japanese language a little. I had not written or spoken Japanese for a long time and I had some accent in Japanese. Lots of friends thought my accent was strange but cute.

I had become very optimistic and laid back. I did not feel much stress about life in general because I had felt the worst and loneliest in New Jersey. I was very independent and strong. However, I felt that I had to adjust to the Japanese life-style all over again. First, I thought I had to lose weight; I lost a little weight during the summer holiday.

Upon being back in home again, what surprised me was the rapid change in the trends in Japan. The fashion was different, there was new vocabulary, and the technology was different. Even my family bath tub was renovated and changed to a new, healthy type of bath that was supposed to be like a hot spring at home. I appreciated the Japanese bath, especially the hot spring type.

The most stressful moment was when I wore different shoes to my Japanese high school. I was used to wearing make up, ear rings, and nail polish and wearing whatever clothes I wanted to in the American high school. In Japan, I had to wear the school uniform without any make up, nail polish or any ear rings. In my school, socks and shoes had to be white. One day, my white shoes were wet so I wore brown ones to school. When I was about to go home, my shoes were gone from my shoe box (In Japan, even in school, people take off their shoes and change to inside-the-school shoes). I had to go home with

shoes for the inside. It turned out the next day that one teacher took them away because I was breaking the school rule. I was very upset. In Japanese schools, the students have to always follow the rules, and cannot make any flexible decisions depending on the situation. I could not take it and thought that the teacher was invading my privacy but I had to change my attitude on the surface in order to co-exist with the teacher.

I thought it was ironic that young Japanese business men were criticised for being passive and indecisive while it was the Japanese education system that was creating these qualities in youth. Japanese students are not given the rights to “think” or “choose” in a democratic way. Japanese students do not articulate their opinions, and instead they wait for other people to tell them what to do so they will not get in trouble. I thought unless the Japanese education system changes and allows the students to think for themselves and become more creative, there will be no progress in the society. I wanted to say to the teacher who stole my shoes that every student is unique and he should respect each student as a human being.

Ritsumeikan University

When I returned to my Japanese high school, I skipped a year and proceeded to the third year of high school. English classes seemed very easy and slow, and other subjects were very difficult. In 1991, I succeeded in the entrance examination of Ritsumeikan University. I soon took up residence in Kyoto, and quickly made friends with kikoku-shijo who were returnees from foreign countries. They had lived in foreign countries such as the USA, Canada, and England for two to six years due to their parents' occupations. We had similar experiences and perceptions. We sometimes spoke English to each other. We were more Westernised and kissing was not a surprising thing. We often discussed the cultural differences between Japan and the West. Our group was a little different from other people in the university.

I also made friends with gai-jin which means foreigners, whenever I could. One day, I talked to some Caucasian exchange students who were speaking American English behind me in the line at a cafeteria. I maintained my English by not hesitating to talk to gai-jin and also by watching Hollywood movies. As well, I remember talking to myself in English all the time quite unconsciously.

I would say I was more Americanised than bicultural. I could not speak kei-go which is a strict honorific language to senpai who are in the higher grades at school (senior) as a kohai who are in the lower grades at school (junior). I was used to the casual relationship between people in the USA. In Japan, younger people are supposed to respect older people and use kei-go. In the USA, younger people and older people did not matter as much. The students even talked to the teachers very casually there and I thought it was the way it should be in Japan too because it seemed that the students and the teachers were respecting each other as human beings. I hated the Japanese hierarchy system according to everyone's age. Kei-go creates walls between people, and younger people and older people cannot get out of the hierarchy system and become friends even when their age difference is only a few years. Some female senpai did not like me because I was too casual for them. It was very stressful and I wished it would change so I would be able to be friends with older people more easily.

Participation in the Rits Program

In the second year of university, some of my friends attended the Rits Program. They wrote me letters from Vancouver and recommended that I attend it the following year. Hence, I went to Canada the next year to be in Year 3 of the program.

I was in a unique situation from the beginning. First, because some Japanese students had decided not to attend the Rits Program at the last minute, I had three Canadian roommates instead of the regular two Canadian and one Japanese. Secondly, I was considered to be older because most of the students were in the second year but I was in the third year (I was their senpai). Thirdly, I had not known any Japanese students before I came to Canada while others had been friends in Japan.

Although I was a little different from other Japanese students, I was not worried. When I came to Vancouver for the first time, I felt comfortable because the program was for Japanese students. Vancouver was a beautiful city with a decent transportation system. I was surprised to see so many Asian people and Japanese people and I was delighted to be able to enjoy Japanese restaurants, Japanese TV shows through the multicultural channel, and even Japanese video rental shops and food markets. There were also Canadian people who were interested in and familiar with Japan. I was thinking about the difference

between my experiences in Vancouver and New Jersey, and I thought it could be the difference between a cosmopolitan city and a countryside, the USA and Canada, university and high school, the East coast and the West coast, and the year 1989 and the year 1993. Despite the differences, I liked Vancouver. There were various kinds of people and I got the impression that people were trying to respect each other's cultures. I never felt like a minority or discriminated against in Vancouver.

However, I had different kinds of stress that I had to deal with in the Rits Program. First, it was very difficult to live with a roommate that was not interested in Japan. One of the roommates was fanatic about a little noise or dust, and we had to have so many room meetings because of her. She had no interest in Japan and said "sushi seems disgusting and I would never try it." I wanted to be friends with her but she did not (the program has put in a stricter screening process now for Canadian students who want to live in Rits House. The students now have to show genuine interest in Japan or provide other reasons for wanting to live there). There was a tension in our quad because of her negative attitude. Secondly, the amount of the study in the second language was too much. There were classes all day, every day, with too much home work. Japanese university students were not used to it and studying in a second language takes a long time so I wished the program had considered this more. Thirdly, the small Japanese community was too unpleasant. The students had to do everything together in the same building; because of the "groupism" in Japan, I could not breath around the Japanese students. People were nosy and talked about other people all the time, especially somebody like me. I already had the basic conversation skill in English and had lots of Canadian friends. I did not have a Japanese roommate like other people; I was a black sheep in the group. I felt lonely sometimes but I did not want to be one of them at the same time. I was wondering if they were improving their English adequately by hanging out with Japanese people all the time. I wish that we had had more freedom and individual lives.

The stress showed in the beginning of the second semester. I started losing hair. I was taking two UBC regular courses and other courses for Rits students at the same time. It was too much. I could not concentrate. I also gained weight again. There was no counsellor or a person who I thought I could talk to. I felt that everyone was always

judging each other. Rumours began to circulate further making everyone uneasy. Studying in a foreign language was also difficult, living in a foreign country was very hard, and having a strange community around was very awkward.

Although the Japanese community was very stressful, I learned a lesson. I now wish that I had made friends with more Japanese students as well. I wish I had studied with Japanese friends and helped each other. However, I do not have any regrets. I made friends with Canadians and learned new perceptions. They were open to minorities, various kinds of people and cultures because they were studying hard and reading a lot about them. We discussed lots of things such as women's issues and the uniqueness of people, and compared the Canadian and Japanese ways. I met lots of kinds of people that I had never met in Japan such as racially mixed couples, gay people, and different types of Asian people. Education system at the university was democratic, and the teachers and professors respected the students' opinions. I felt comfortable and decided to come back to UBC to study.

Re-entry Process II

It was similar to the last experiences when I came back from New Jersey. I had to lose weight, catch up with trends, and so forth. However, this time, I felt uncomfortable with my friends. Everyone seemed different and cold. I do not know why but I felt like an outsider. They seemed to have changed.

I decided to speak kei-go this time. I was in a small Japanese community in Canada and learned that I should act Japanese among Japanese people. If I did not, Japanese people would not accept me. I became more flexible to be Japanese and became able to change the way according to who I was speaking to. As I changed the way I spoke and acted (bicultural), I felt like two different people with conflicting attitudes and thoughts.

Return to Vancouver

I decided to come back to Vancouver to study at UBC as a graduate student after graduating from Ritsumeikan University. This time, I came as an individual without any sojourn program. I lived outside of campus and bussed to UBC. I could decide which courses to take and when to study. I was treated as a Japanese adult.

In 1996, I worked as a computer lab monitor at the Rits Lab. The Rits students

were already Year 6 and things had been changing as I described in the previous section.

Thesis Interest and Research Questions

Despite the changes in the program, I found that the students were still very stressed and had lots of complaints and wishes. Of course, every student is a unique individual and the program cannot make everyone happy. However, I could perceive the common problems that the students encounter, and I could relate to them thinking back being a student in the program or simply being a student in a foreign country.

I started caring about the students' problems. However, the students also told me more than their problems. They told me about the differences between a homogeneous society; what they were learning in the intercultural communication class; how they could relate the study to their daily life in Canada; and, how their perceptions had been changing since they came to Canada. I then simply wondered what the students were learning in a different kind of society, what kind of stress they had to deal with, and what would be the best environment for the students to learn. I wondered if I could improve the program for the students and help them to learn better.

With my concerns above, I came up with four major research questions:

- 1) How do the students think they learned English and what do they do to maintain it in Japan?
- 2) What do the students think they learned and became during the sojourn?
- 3) How do the students think these changes have affected their lives in Japan after the sojourn?
- 4) What do the students think about the program and how do the students think the program can be improved?

The first question's focus is on language although there are two separate time frames: during the sojourn and after the sojourn. The second question deals with learning other than the language such as culture, education, issues concerning society and the world. It also includes what the students think they realised abroad and how their attitudes toward these issues changed. The third question is to explore the affect of the change after the sojourn. I want to know what new constructed identity affects their daily lives after they return to Japan. The fourth question investigates the students' impression of the program. I

believe that the students know the best way to improve the program for them to learn better.

Biases and the Best Researcher

I believe that I am an appropriate person to conduct this study because I was once a student in the program and have been a student in sojourn programs. I might not be the representative of the students who participated in the Rits Program because I had participated in another sojourn program and could communicate in English better than other students. However, I also went through the difficulty of not being able to speak English and encountering cultural difficulties.

I have my own biases and beliefs because of the experiences abroad. Therefore, I depicted my autobiography above to show my opinions about the program and experiences abroad. I am willing to understand different opinions and perceptions. I believe everyone is unique, therefore the same event is interpreted in different ways according to each person. I also believe that the same person's perceptions toward the same event change depending on the day, their health condition, the weather and so on. Therefore, my goal is to find the commonality or trends, as well as surprising perceptions, about what the students are saying.

CHAPTER 2 : RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURE

Methodological Orientation

In this chapter, I will discuss my methodological orientation in the study. I was very influenced by the two courses that I took on research methodologies: Research Methodologies in Education, and Ethnography and Education. Both courses introduced me to the on-going tension between quantitative and qualitative approaches.

The Quantitative VS. the Qualitative Approaches

There has been tension between social science and natural science, quantitative and qualitative method, subjectivity and objectivity, and emphasis on humanities and arts around ethnography (Atkinson & Hammersley, 1995). Bogdan and Taylor (1975) say that two major philosophical positions have dominated the social sciences: positivism and phenomenology. Atkinson and Hammersley call it “positivism versus naturalism.”

The Positivist Quantitative Research Paradigm

According to Bogdan and Taylor (1975), positivism traces its origins to the social theorists of the nineteenth and early twenty centuries such as Comte and Durkheim. The positivist seeks the objective facts and causes of social phenomena. Subjective states of individuals are not important. “Durkheim advised the social scientists to consider social facts or social phenomena as things that exercise an external and coercive influence on human behaviour” (p. 2). Atkinson and Hammersley (1995) explain ‘positivism’ having a long history in philosophy but it reached its high point in the ‘logical positivism’ of the 1930’s and 40’s. It promoted “the status of experimental and survey research and the quantitative forms of analysis” (p. 3). The assumption of positivism is that physical science, experimental model is used to test a theory. Universal law exists and it can be deducted by studying observable phenomena. Therefore, neutral language is used with standardised procedures of data collection so that measurements are stable across observers and time. It is always compared with the theory that is being tested and variables that are controlled. It attempts to eliminate the effect of the researcher and the study can be replicated by others (reliability). Denzin and Lincoln (1994) compare positivism and postpositivism and claim that “positive science traditions hold to naive and critical realist positions concerning reality and its perception” (p. 5). Positivists insist that there is a reality

out there to be studied and captured, whereas postpositivists rely on multiple methods to understand as much of reality as possible. Postpositivists argue that reality cannot be fully apprehended, only approximated.

The Naturalist Qualitative Research Paradigm

Bogdan and Taylor (1975) argue that 'phenomenological' stems from Weber and "the phenomenologist is concerned with understanding human behaviour from the actor's own frame or reference" (p. 2). They argue that symbolic interactionism and ethnomethodology fall within the phenomenological tradition. The phenomenologist examines how the world is experienced and views what people say and do as a product of how people interpret the world. Therefore, the aim of the phenomenologist is to capture the 'process' of interpretation. In order to grasp the meanings of a person's behaviour, the phenomenologist attempts to put her/himself in the participant's shoes. Montgomery-Whicher (1996) states that phenomenological research begins with the everyday world rather than in conceptualisation, in perception rather than in cognition. Its process is subjectively biased so the descriptive process is inevitably interpretive. Atkinson and Hammersley (1995) claim that qualitative research does not match positivist canons. When criticism, such as subjective impressions of one case cannot provide a foundation for rigorous scientific analysis, was given, "ethnographers developed an alternative view of the proper nature of social research, often termed 'naturalism'" (p. 6). Naturalism proposes that the social world should be studied in its natural state, without any control of variables by the researcher. The assumption here is that reality exists in the empirical world and the researcher should be sensitive to the nature of the setting. Hence, the researcher should respect the nature of the phenomenon under study. The aim is to describe what happens in the setting, how the people interpret and interact with the setting and actions, and the context of the action. It is to construct an account of the culture under study. "Thus, the description of cultures becomes the primary goal" (p. 10). Lawless, Sutlive, and Zamora (1983) state that, "because of the personal presence of humanness, pure scientific objectivity is impossible to obtain. Disciplined subjectivity should be the goal -- a goal made possible only through a clarification of the human variations in fieldwork" (p. xiii). Researchers become participant observers and they, as strangers, immerse themselves in

the setting. The strangers acquire an inside knowledge and a certain objectivity that is not available to culture members. Naturalists view variations in cultural patterns across and within societies. "Ethnography exploits the capacity that any social actor possesses for learning new cultures, and the objectivity to which this process give rise" (Atkinson & Hammersley, 1995, p. 9). Erickson (1986) states that "interpretive" approaches that equate with "ethnographic, qualitative, participant observational, case study, symbolic interactionist, phenomenological, constructivist or interpretive" (cited in LeCompte & Preissle, 1993, p. 23) include use of participant observation. The primary focus is the human meaning in social life.

Influences from Critical Studies: Reflexivity

"Since the mid-1980s, critical theorists, including feminists, neo-Marxists, postmodernists, and poststructuralists, have integrated the methods of cultural anthropology and fieldwork sociology with an activist theory, the tradition underpinning critical ethnography" (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993, p. 23). They question positivism and interpretive (naturalism) in which the researcher can represent some world under study through their interpretation. They question inequality in material life (Marxism and neo-Marxism), inequality with gender (feminism), the content of rules and all existing authority (postmodernism), and the rules in the social sciences (poststructuralism). They attempt to give voice to marginal or silenced groups and try to change the world into a more equitable place for all groups of people. Hence, "researcher joins the researched in an effort to not only understand the world view of the researched, but to assist in changing it in some way" (Sipe & Constable, 1996, p. 154). Their goal is emancipatory (Atkinson & Hammersley, 1995). They criticise both positivism and naturalism due to the lack of reflexivity: social researchers are part of the social world and are always engaging in some kind of politics or values. Lawless et al. (1983) mention that fieldworker's personality, sociocultural background, discipline influence fieldwork. The production of knowledge by researchers has consequences and the findings can shape what political and practical decisions are made. Furthermore, poststructuralists argue that ethnographers reflect the constitution of subjectivities through language rather than capture meanings on the basis of which people act. "Language used by ethnographers in their writing is not a transparent medium allowing

us to see reality through it, but rather a construction that draws on many of the rhetorical used by journalists” (Atkinson & Hammersley, 1995, p. 14). Britzman (1995) criticises that ethnographic promise of a holistic account can never be achieved because of the partiality of language as language can never perfectly convey what is meant by the language user. “Reality” is not waiting to be captured by language; therefore, readers of ethnography should move beyond literal interpretations and not see the real as rigidly stable and representational.

My Research Methodology

My primary purpose of this research is to study what the student sojourners experience and learn in a particular study abroad program. I will examine how the student sojourners change as a result of the exchange program and how they deal with the re-entry process back in Japan. Therefore, I am not interested in the positivist, experimental design. My research is to learn what happens to the students in the natural setting. Hence, I will employ a qualitative methodology, especially concerning the phenomenologists’ view of interpretations. I believe it is important for me to be reflexive of my subjectivity and biases, as depicted in the autobiography, concerning the impact on the study since researchers are the primary instruments of the investigation.

Procedure of the Study

This research is a semi-ethnographic, multiple case study. What I mean by a semi-ethnography is that I am a semi-participant observer in the study. Participant observation is the primary data collection in ethnography. Participant observers watch, listen to, and interact with participants. Observation and interview are interwoven in the field study (Merriam, 1988; Atkinson & Hammersley, 1994, 1995; LeCompte & Preissle, 1993). Since I did not officially observe the students in the particular year of the interviewed students, my study cannot be completely ethnographic. However, I can be both reflective of my biases while comparing my interpretation of the interviews with my own experiences.

Definition of Ethnography

Ethnography is writing about a specific group of people in a specific cultural setting. The word “ethnography” consists of two words: “ethno” meaning race, people, or

cultural group; “graphy” meaning writing or representing in a specific way in a specific field (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993; Britzman, 1995). LeCompte and Preissle define ethnography as “exciting ways to study human beings in their natural settings” (p. 1). Lawless et al. (1983) state that definition of fieldwork is that the act of inquiring into the nature of phenomena by studying them at first hand. The inquiry leads to understanding the field: a society.

Nevertheless, the term ‘ethnography’ has been subject to controversy: for some, it is a philosophical paradigm, and for others, it is a method (Atkinson & Hammersley, 1994). Ethnography is an ambiguous term and represents both process and product (Agar, 1980). LeCompte and Preissle (1993) state that ethnography is both a product that is the book, and a process that is the method of inquiry. Merriam (1988) asserts that ethnography from anthropology is itself a research design to study human society and culture. It is also a set of methods used to collect data and the written record that is the product of using ethnographic techniques. Ethnographic research is an investigative process and a research model that are “described as ethnography, qualitative research, case study research, field research, or anthropological research” (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993, p. 2; Merriam, 1988). Ely, Anzul, Friedman, Garner, and Steinmetz (1991) state that different terms such as naturalistic inquiry, ethnographic methodologies, qualitative research, and interpretive research are used in synonymous ways. Atkinson and Hammersley (1995) declare that ethnographers “participate in people’s daily lives for an extended period of time” (p. 1) to collect data. However, they suggest that all social researchers are participant observers and distinguishing between ethnography and other types of qualitative research is challenging. Hence, ethnography is a basic form of social research. It relates “to the routine ways in which people make sense of the world in everyday life” (p. 2) and this is regarded as both its strength and its weakness.

Assumption and Aim of Ethnography

For ethnography to be both product and process, LeCompte and Preissle (1993) introduce four strategies. First, phenomenological data that represent the world view of the participants and participant constructs are used. Second, empirical and naturalistic strategies such as observation and “sensory accounts of phenomena as they occur in real world

settings" (p. 3) are used, and manipulation of variables in the study should be avoided. Third, ethnographic research is holistic so ethnographers should describe total phenomena that consist of complex interrelationship that affect human behaviour. Finally, ethnography is multimodal or eclectic because it employs a variety of research techniques. They claim that these four strategies are used "by all social science disciplines when mandated by the research goals" (p. 3). They state that ethnography is an analytic reconstruction of human life under study by a researcher and readers envision the cultural scene that was studied by the researcher. "An ethnography is a sociocultural interpretation of the data" (Merriam, 1988, p. 23). Merriam argues that, as reconstructions of participants' symbolic meanings and patterns of social interaction, ethnographies recreate the phenomena for the readers. Bogdan and Taylor (1975) claim that "fieldwork" emerges from the field and it is descriptive and holistic. Agar (1980) argues that the process enables ethnographers to understand some human group and "the name for 'doing ethnography' is fieldwork" (p. 2). He states that experience is the best teacher and learning ethnography by "doing" is important. However, ethnography is not limited to a couple of unstructured ways of recording information. He insists that ethnographic research involves direct personal involvement in the community. It is not hypothesis testing, rather it is an understanding of the group. It involves long-term and diffuse relationships. Atkinson and Hammersley (1994) in Ethnography and Participant Observation state that, in practical terms, ethnography refers to forms of social research that have the following features: (1) an emphasis on exploring the nature of particular social phenomena, rather than testing hypotheses about them; (2) a tendency to work with unstructured data and code them as process; (3) an investigation of a particular case or a small number of cases in detail; and (4) an analysis of data that involves interpretation of the meanings and functions of human actions and the form of the product takes the form of verbal descriptions.

I was a student sojourner myself in the Rits Program; therefore, I am very familiar with the setting. I also was a computer lab monitor in the program, hence I observed some courses, observed how students were using the computers and interacting with each other in the computer lab, encountered and attended some special events as a staff member. However, I did not focus on particular students and did not ask them to keep journals nor

did I follow them around. I did not observe the process of particular students' change within eight months. Therefore, although I did speak to the student sojourners and asked them how they were doing informally, my study is not fully ethnographic. However, since I was observing the students' lives casually and kept comparing them to my own experiences as a student sojourner, and I am studying a particular culture in a natural setting, I would call it a semi-ethnography.

Case Selection

"Once the general problem has been identified, the unit of analysis can be defined" (Merriam, 1988, p. 44). Atkinson and Hammersley (1995) call it "the setting," LeCompte and Preissle (1993) call it "the group," and Merriam (1988) calls it "the case." LeCompte and Preissle state that it is a "selection" process that refers to a general process of focusing and choosing what to study. It involves "what kinds of people, and how many of them can be studied, as well as when, where, and under which circumstances they will be studied" (p. 56).

Atkinson and Hammersley (1995) assert that sometimes the setting comes first and the foreshadowed problems rise from the nature of the setting. Because the research problems develop as the study proceeds, the nature of the setting may still shape the development of the research questions even when a setting is selected on the basis of foreshadowed problems (Stake, 1994).

The case can be an individual, a program, an event, an institution, a concept, a style, a technique, a location, a process, and a group such as a tribe, a village, or an urban scene (Stake, 1994; Merriam, 1988; Atkinson & Hammersley, 1995). The key issue in determining the unit of analysis is to identify the setting or group that would be most appropriate for investigation of the research problem: What it is that the researcher wants to be able to say about the study at the end of the study (Merriam, 1988; Stake, 1994; Atkinson & Hammersley, 1995; LeCompte & Preissle, 1993). The unit of the study is usually one which may include numerous events, participants, or phases of a process. Smith (1978) treats the case as a "bounded system" and Guba and Lincoln (1981) suggest that researchers should articulate how they set limits to her/his inquiry, what rules they used for inclusion and exclusion, and how the inquirer can know what is and is not

relevant (both cited in Merriam, 1988).

In choosing the setting, there are practical and pragmatic considerations. Some settings are not easy to access due to geographical, financial, and/or political reasons (Bogdan & Taylor, 1975; Atkinson & Hammersley, 1995; Merriam, 1988; Stake, 1994). Bogdan and Taylor state that novices tend to choose the most easily accessible sites; "the choice of a setting is often decided by such factors as having a friend who knows the 'gatekeeper' of an organisation" (p. 28). They suggest that the most easily accessible settings are likely to be more visited; therefore, researchers should be careful with how they might respond and how it might affect the study. The present study is also focusing on a particular study abroad program (case) and multiple students (cases); therefore, it is a multiple case study.

Methods of Data Collection

The primary data sources are student interviews and my own experiences and biases which I have outlined in my autobiography about international exchange experiences, especially with the Rits Program. I am interested in how the students think differently as a result of the program and how the experiences abroad affect their lives in Japan. Therefore, I went back to Japan and interviewed the ex-students who had already gone through the re-entry process to Japan. Interviews are conducted in Japanese in order for the students to feel more comfortable. The data are tape-recorded, translated, transcribed, and coded. I focused on Year 6 students of the program and analysed their interviews in detail. Explanations for the kind of interviews I did will be shown in the next section.

Interpretive Method: Interview

An interview is a conversation. However, it is a conversation with a purpose. The researcher conducts it with an intention to obtain a particular kind of information. Interviewing helps the researcher to enter participants' thoughts, and understand how they construct meaning. It helps the researcher to find out people's feelings, thoughts, intentions, and interpretations that cannot be observed (Merriam, 1988; Fontana & Frey, 1994; LeCompte & Preissle, 1993; Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Atkinson & Hammersley, 1994, 1995; Bogdan & Taylor, 1975; Lawless et al., 1983; Ely et al., 1991; Agar, 1980).

According to Denzin and Lincoln (1994), there are three types of interviewing: structured interviewing, group interviews, and unstructured interviewing (cited in Fontana & Frey, 1994). Agar (1980) argues that because it is a conversation, it should be informal, open-ended, and reflexive. Sensitivity and empathy are very important; the researcher has to create a sense of community. Language of the setting should be also used. Spradley's typology (1979) of question content, with an intention of eliciting the information needed include: descriptive questions, structural questions, and contrast questions (cited in LeCompte & Preissle, 1993). However, all types of interviewing and questions are combined to collect data that the researcher wants to obtain (Merriam, 1988).

I had already made sample interview questions beforehand. However, I only made that list to extract the student sojourners' initial answers in order to effectively start the conversation. I assumed some students would be shy and would not keep talking. Therefore, I intended to conduct unstructured interviews with the questions prepared. I believed that I would be able to be flexible depending on students' personalities. Therefore, my research method is between structured and unstructured interview style; I would call it semi-unstructured interviewing.

Sample Interview Questions

I made sample interview questions in accordance with my four research questions. I started the conversation with a broad question concerning the second research question. I will list the questions under the four research questions.

- 1.) How do the students think they learned English and how do they maintain it in Japan?
 - Do you think your English has improved?
 - Where/ how/ with whom/ when did you learn it?
 - Did learning English influence your learning of culture? How?
 - What do you think about English education in Japan? How do you want it to be?
 - Are you trying to maintain your English? How?
- 2.) What do the students think they learned and became during the sojourn?
 - How did the UBC-Ritsumeikan Academic Exchange Program experience influence your life? Did your participation in the program broaden your perspective? How?
 - What do you think about Canada as a multicultural society compared to Japan as a

homogeneous society?

- Are you concerned that you do not know as much as you should about Japanese culture?/

Did you have any experiences in which you did not know something about Japanese culture, history, economics, geography, and politics when your Canadian friends asked you about them?

- Do you have any strong feeling about the different cultural groups in the world?

- What would you think if your Japanese friends were to say something unanticipated?

- What would you do if you saw a foreigner who was in distress on the street?

- What would you do if your boss/ teachers say/ did something inappropriate?

- Would you become upset if your foreign friends criticised Japan?

- Would you marry a foreigner?

3.) How do the students think these changes have affected their lives in Japan after the sojourn?

- Do you feel bicultural? Can you deal with two cultures in different ways?

- Which culture do you feel more comfortable with?

- Do you feel more internationally aware since returning from Canada?

- What do your family and friends say about your change?/ Do they treat you the same way as they did before you went to Canada?

- Did you have any difficulties adjusting to Japanese society again when you returned from Canada?

- What is your reaction now when you have to speak honorific language to older people in Japan?

4.) What do the students think about the program and how do the students think the program can be improved?

- What do you feel was the major benefit of participating in the program?

- Would you recommend the program to other students?

- Have you found a nice job because of the participation of the program?

- What is your advice to the incoming students?

The Research Setting

The interviews were conducted in Japan. This was done to find out how the student

sojourners felt after they returned to Japan, and what kind of adjustments they had to make. I informally e-mailed some of the students to see how they were feeling just after leaving Canada. They said that they were realising how Canadianised they had become and felt somewhat strange back in Japan. However, they could not reflect on the Canadian way of life until they were reintroduced to Japan. The student sojourners left Canada in April and I went to interview them in July. They experienced difficulties (re-entry stress) and began to miss Canada in three months.

I contacted the International Centre there. However, the staff members were not co-operative as they were busy doing other things. I had a difficult time convincing them that I would not use any information in an adverse way. I also asked them if I could use a room at the International Centre in order to help make the students feel more comfortable, this was also where students were getting the information about the UBC-Ritsumeikan Academic Exchange Program. No one was co-operative and I almost gave up. However, the secretary at the Rits office in Canada allowed me to copy the student information list before I had left for Japan. I gained access to some students' telephone numbers and decided to contact them in Japan.

Sampling within the Case

After the "selection" of a general case, a "sampling" process is employed (Merriam, 1988; Atkinson & Hammersley, 1995; LeCompte & Preissle, 1993; Stake, 1994). Sampling is a process to choose a smaller number of sub-types from the case. Therefore, it reduces the size of the group under study, and it involves the specific selection of a research site, time, people and events.

There are two basic types of sampling: probability and nonprobability sampling. Probability sampling "involves extracting from an already well-defined population a subset for study approximating the characteristics of the group from which it was derived" (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993, p. 78). The difference between the two types is that, in probability sampling, one can specify for each element of the population the probability that it will be included in the sample, whereas in nonprobability sampling, estimating the probability is impossible that every element has some chance to be included (Merriam, 1988). Probability sampling is not necessary or available in qualitative research because the

goal of probability sampling is the generalisation from the sample to the population from which it was drawn. Anthropologists have maintained nonprobability sampling methods to solve problems “such as discovering what occurs, the implications of what occurs, and the relationships linking occurrences” rather than to answer questions like ‘how much’ or ‘how often’ (Honigmann, 1982, cited in Merriam, 1988). Nonprobability sampling includes comprehensive selection, quota selection, and network (snowball) selection. I used the network selection due to the reason below.

As mentioned earlier, I had a difficult time gaining access to the list of the students’ address and telephone numbers. Hence, as soon as I arrived at the Ritsumeikan University on July 23, 1997, I put up a notice on the bulletin board outside the International Centre and on the boards at every faculty that I had come to Japan to interview the students. Since it was during the final examination before the summer holiday, there was a good possibility that the students were going to check the bulletin boards. I had already made appointments with some students on the phone for the following day. Some students voluntarily showed up while I was interviewing others or while I was waiting for the students to show up for their scheduled interview. They saw the notice and felt nostalgic. Fortunately, some students phoned others and informed them of my interviews which led to me interviewing 35 students. Therefore, the sampling within the case was done with network (snowball) selection (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993; Merriam, 1988).

My Relationship with the Student Participants

Since I was a computer lab monitor in the program, I had talked to most of them before. Although I was not friends with any of them, the students knew who I was and I recognised their faces, and we felt very close and did not feel as though it was the first time to have a deep conversation regarding their personal experiences and feelings. I reminded them of their Canadian experiences. I felt that I was like an older sister who had gone through the similar experiences and, like a good friend, who understood how they felt. It was a very relaxed atmosphere in the guest room in the International Centre although it was only the two of us. It was strictly private and the students trusted me. I was impressed with how deeply they were thinking about society and themselves. The students did not try to be intelligent or cool; my impression was that they were very sincere and they even realised

what they were feeling by talking to me. Most of the students seemed to want to keep talking but I unfortunately had to stop the conversation after about forty minutes. I kept interviewing students all day for one week.

Ethical Issues Related to the Present Study

Fine (1994) argues that qualitative research with a traditional researcher-subject relationship perpetuates the dichotomy of oppressor-oppressed. The researcher wrote about "self" as voiceless, raceless, classless, and genderless. The researcher wrote about "other" out of context, relationship, meaning, and derived them from their wholeness, their humanness, by imposing a certain (dominant culture) structure on a perceived (local culture) chaos. She discusses how to eliminate the power-over relationship of the objects and subjects (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Fontana & Frey, 1994).

Other ethical concerns are: informed consent (consent received from the subject after s/he has been carefully informed about the research), right to privacy (protecting the identity of the subject), protection from harm (physical, emotional, or any other kind), exploitation, manipulation, consequences for future research, and situational ethics (Fine, 1994; Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Atkinson & Hammersley, 1995). As field workers, we need to exercise common sense and moral responsibility. Because the research is person-to-person, we need to be empathetic. We learn about ourselves by learning about the other. We, as ethnographers and researchers, should not forget that we are human beings and part of the social world. I tried to be very careful about all of the above.

Participants of the Study

I would like to divide the participants in my study into three groups. Group 1 is the student sojourners who had lived abroad for an extended period of time (more than 6 months) before they attended the program. Group 2 is the ones who had been abroad for a short period of time. Group 3 is the ones who had never been abroad before they attended the program. After the student's name (all the names are pseudonyms), I will put his/her gender and age, which year of the university and which faculty he/she is from in Japan (see Table 1, 2, 3 below).

Table 1

Demographics of Participants (Group 1)

Name	Gender	Age	Year of U.	Faculty
Ginji	Male	22	2nd	Policy Science
Junichi	Male	20	2nd	International Relations
Mako	Female	20	2nd	International Relations
Mari	Female	22	3rd	Economics
Yuri	Female	21	2nd	Social Science

Table 2

Demographics of Participants (Group 2)

Name	Gender	Age	Year of U.	Faculty
Miyo	Female	20	2nd	Law
Taizo	Male	20	2nd	Literature
Taka	Male	20	2nd	International Relations
Tomoe	Female	21	2nd	Business Administration
Toshio	Male	20	2nd	Law

Table 3

Demographics of Participants (Group 3)

Name	Gender	Age	Year of U.	Faculty
Akira	Male	20	2nd	Business Administration
Aya	Female	20	2nd	Policy Science
Hana	Female	20	2nd	Literature
Hideyo	Male	20	2nd	International Relations
Hiroyasu	Male	20	2nd	Science and Engineering

Hitomi	Female	20	2nd	Literature
Hitoshi	Male	21	2nd	Law
Ieyasu	Male	22	2nd	Policy Science
Kei	Female	20	2nd	Law
Ken	Male	20	2nd	Law
Kosaku	Male	21	2nd	International Relations
Koyo	Male	20	2nd	Literature
Kozue	Female	21	2nd	Law
Masa	Male	20	2nd	Economics
Nami	Female	20	2nd	Law
Naoe	Female	20	2nd	Policy Science
Noriyo	Female	20	2nd	Policy Science
Rei	Female	20	2nd	International Relations
Tatsuo	Male	21	2nd	Social Science
Tomei	Female	20	2nd	International Relations
Tomoki	Male	20	2nd	Economics
Yae	Female	21	3rd	Social Science
Yohei	Male	20	2nd	Law
Yuka	Female	20	2nd	International Relations
Yukie	Female	20	2nd	International Relations

Note. The appearance of the students is alphabetical.

To summarise, I interviewed 35 students. Of those 35 students, 17 students were males and 18 were females. In terms of age, 25 students were 20 years old, 7 students were 21 years old, and 3 students were 22 years old at the time of the interview in Japan. All of the participants except for 2 in the 3rd year were in the 2nd year of the university when they attended the program in Canada. Only 1 student was from the faculty of Science and Engineering, 8 were from the faculty of Law, 9 were from the faculty of International Relations, 5 were from Policy Sciences, 3 were from Economics, 3 were from Social Sciences, 2 were from Business Administration, and 4 were from the faculty of Literature.

In Year 6, 96 students attended the program. Within that group of students, 36% were male students and the rest were female. 7% of the students were 22 years old, 29% of the students were 21 years old, and the rest (64%) were 20 years old. The majority of the students were in the 2nd year except for 2% who were 4th-year-students and 12% who were 3rd-year-students. 21% of the students were from the faculty of Policy Sciences, 19% were from the faculty of Literature, 18% of the students were from the faculty of International Relations, 14% were from the Social Sciences, 11% were from the faculty of Law, 7% were from Economics, 6% were from Business Administration, and 4% were from the faculty of Science and Engineering. I compared the demographics of the participants in my study and all of Year 6 students (see Table 4 below).

Table 4

Comparison of Demographics of Participants and Year 6 Students

Demographics	35 Participants in my Study	All (96) of Year 6 Students
Gender		
Male	17/35 (49%)	35/96 (36%)
Female	18/35 (51%)	61/96 (64%)
Age		
Twenty	25/35 (71%)	61/96 (64%)
Twenty-one	7/35 (20%)	28/96 (29%)
Twenty-two	3/35 (9%)	7/96 (7%)
Year of University		
Second	33/35 (94%)	83/96 (86%)
Third	2/35 (6%)	11/96 (12%)
Fourth	0/35 (0%)	2/96 (2%)
Faculty at Ritsumeikan University		
Business Administration	2/35 (6%)	7/96 (7%)
Economics	3/35 (9%)	6/96 (6%)
International Relations	9/35 (26%)	17/96 (18%)

Law	8/35 (23%)	11/96 (11%)
Literature	4/35 (11%)	18/96 (19%)
Policy Sciences	5/35 (14%)	20/96 (21%)
Science and Engineering	1/35 (2%)	4/96 (4%)
Social Sciences	3/35 (9%)	13/96 (14%)

Note. The appearance of the faculty is alphabetical.

As seen in the Table 4 above, the students who were interviewed might not exactly represent the whole picture of the group (Year 6) because I interviewed almost the same number of males and females, and the students faculty was not considered. However, I had students from different faculties, age, year of the university, almost the same number of the male and female students; and various previous experiences abroad. Therefore, the data would represent the setting quite well.

Data Analysis Procedure

In ethnography, data collection and data analysis is a simultaneous activity (Merriam, 1988; LeCompte & Preissle, 1993; Atkinson & Hammersley, 1994, 1995; Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Bogdan & Taylor, 1975; Agar, 1980). Informally, it is embodied in the researcher's insights, hunches, and tentative hypotheses and "formally, it starts to take shape in analytic notes and memoranda" (Atkinson & Hammersley, 1995, p. 205). It is an interactive process throughout the study. First, the ethnographer faces a mountain of data and carefully reads it. The researcher looks for: anything that stands out, how the data relates to what s/he expects, inconsistencies among the views of different groups, and patterns (Atkinson & Hammersley, 1994; Merriam, 1988; Bogdan & Taylor, 1975).

Sensitising Concepts

The researcher finds emerging patterns that frequently occurs in the data. Blumer (1954) calls it "sensitising concepts" as an important starting point. It is contrasted with "definitive concepts" and lacks specificity. Sensitising concepts give the user a general sense of reference in approaching empirical text, in terms of one's own experience (cited in Atkinson & Hammersley, 1994; Merriam, 1988). Sensitising concepts are the germ of the analysis and provide a focus of data collection and analysis.

Coding

The researcher begins “coding” with the focus of sensitising concepts. Of course, the process of coding is recurrent in which new categories emerge. The ultimate goal is to reach a stable, systematic coding of all the data. Analytically significant concepts may be added to the initial mundane concepts later. Having acquired concrete and analytic categories, the next task is to start working on those which are central to the study, with a view to clarifying meaning and relations with other categories. Glaser and Strauss (1967)’s ‘constant comparative method’ is one strategy (cited in Atkinson & Hammersley, 1994). Each item of data coded are examined in terms of a particular category and its similarities with and differences to other data, that have been similarly categorised, are noted. Those different categories can be defined clearly and sub-categories can be specified.

Model Building

The third stage is the “model building.” It happens simultaneously with coding. There are three stages: count frequency, distribution, and typicality. Although it is qualitative, frequency is important to see the pattern. Distribution is to compare data between interpretive methods, and to see whether it is evenly distributed. Typicality is to think how typical the data is. The concepts that most frequently happen typify the evidence in both general and extreme senses.

Theoretical Triangulation

Atkinson and Hammersley (1994) state that when models developed by others fit in the study, it can be explored in the data. Nonetheless, realistically, sociological models are rarely sufficiently developed for hypotheses to be derived and tested. However, the researcher does not need to be limited to one theory. The next stage, “theoretical triangulation” (Denzin, 1978) suggests that the ethnographer should approach data with multiple perspectives and hypotheses. The researcher should use all kinds of resources available to make sense of the data (cited in Atkinson & Hammersley, 1994). The researchers should examine how the models, sensitising concepts, and theory all relate to each other, and should find a conceptual model as evidence to represent the study.

Theory Linkage

The last stage is “theory linkage.” This stage of theorising is to make inferences. It

is the speculation about what and how it (the relationship) will happen in the future. Theory linkage is the basic hypothesising and allows the researcher to eliminate rival hypotheses. Hypotheses are links of categories and properties. The researcher uses inductive and deductive processes while the hypotheses are refined, modified, rejected, and confirmed throughout the study (Atkinson & Hammersley, 1994; Merriam, 1988; LeCompte & Preissle, 1993).

My Data Analysis

For my study, I essentially followed the procedure of Strauss and Corbin (1994) to discover the categories and themes. I began by listening to the tapes using a dictation machine foot pedal and translated what the students said. As I translated them, I realised that most of the students said similar things. Hence, I began counting the frequency and looked for the sensitising concepts at the same time. I added some things when the students added something to the same concept or when I felt a little nuance of difference. I kept comparing their opinions to my expectations and jotted it down when they said something I did not expect or something surprising.

Secondly, I coded them with recurrent themes such as the influence of Canadian university students, the students' attitudes toward minorities in Japan, and the students' change perceived by other people (Strauss & Corbin, 1994). I then divided the themes into two groups: everyday life and academic life. However, it did not flow well so I allotted the themes into the research questions. For instance, I put the theme of racism into the research question 2 since it relates to what they learned and became in Canada.

Lastly, I compared the findings from chapter 3 to other people's findings in the literature in chapter 4. As conclusions, in chapter 5, I will suggest the recommendation for the study abroad programs and the application of study abroad experiences in the classrooms in home countries. I will be focusing on how the educators can bring the sojourner experiences such as culture learning, intercultural communication, language learning, and personal growth into a classroom without going to a foreign country.

Validity and Reliability

When conducting research, the researcher always has to consider the "truthworthiness" which is the issue around validity and reliability. Many qualitative

researchers believe that seeking validity and reliability in qualitative research is a mistake because the conventional concepts of validity and reliability are from a positivist world view (Merriam, 1988; LeCompte & Preissle, 1993). I will discuss what they are below.

Internal Validity

“Internal validity deals with the question of how one’s findings match reality” (Merriam, 1988, p.166). According to Merriam, findings do not capture reality. Data do not speak for themselves, and they must be interpreted. A researcher’s findings are always his/her interpretation of the data. A researcher cannot observe a context without disturbing it. The researcher’s mere presence changes the nature of the context. Researchers and readers must realise, when collecting data or reading results, that “words are symbolic representations of reality, but not reality itself” (p.167). She also argues that “there is no universal way of guaranteeing validity; there are only notions of validity (p.167). In order to have internal validity in qualitative case studies, researchers have to describe the setting, researchers’ biases, and subjectivity of the research must be clarified.

Internal validity is claimed to be the strength of qualitative research by many researchers (Merriam, 1988; LeCompte & Preissle, 1993). The researcher’s in-depth involvement in the setting and the participants, intimate ways of collecting data such as interviews, data collected in natural settings, and researcher’s reflection (disciplined subjectivity) uncovers the complexity of human behaviour in a particular context and presents a holistic interpretation of what is happening (Merriam, 1988; Denzin, 1978, cited in LeCompte & Preissle, 1993). Merriam contends that qualitative research “is conducted in natural settings that reflect the reality of life experiences of participants more accurately than do more contrived or laboratory settings” (p. 168).

External Validity

“External validity is concerned with the extent to which the findings of one study can be applied to other situations. That is how generalizable are the results of a research study?” (Merriam, 1988, p. 173; LeCompte & Preissle, 1993). The difficulty of external validity in qualitative case study arises when qualitative researchers think of generalizability in the same way as experimental researchers. Qualitative researchers must address issues differently. Merriam further argues a particular setting is never exactly the same to another.

In other words, LeCompte and Preissle argue that the lack of comparability and translatability reduces the generalizability. Thereupon, they suggest that the researcher should establish comparability and translatability by using what Wolcott (1973) calls the typicality of a phenomenon that is “the extent to which it may be compared and contrasted along relevant dimensions with other phenomena” (p.349). External validity depends on providing a thick description of the context. Describing how typical or atypical the setting is would allow readers or other researchers to make comparisons, and conduct cross-case analysis (Merriam, 1988, p. 173; LeCompte & Preissle, 1993).

Reliability

“Reliability refers to the extent to which studies can be replicated” (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993, p. 332). Reliability in a research design is based on the assumption that there is a single reality which if studied repeatedly will give the same results. It also assumes that if a researcher uses the same methods of a prior study, they can obtain the same results. Since qualitative research occurs in natural settings, replication is only approximated, never achieved. It is the most difficult task for the qualitative research because it deals with natural or unique phenomena. Merriam (1988) contends that the qualitative research deals with human behaviour that is never static. The primary instrument of inquiry is a researcher that is a human being; therefore, the interpretations of what is happening are always different. Replications of a qualitative study never gives the same result and there are always multiple interpretations of the same data (Merriam, 1988; LeCompte & Preissle, 1993). LeCompte and Preissle suggest that the researchers should describe: (1) researcher status position; (2) informant choices that is to identify the informants who provide the data; (3) social situations and conditions within which the data are gathered; (4) analytic constructs and premises that is to identify the assumptions underlying choices of terminologies and methods of analysis; and (5) methods of data collection and analysis. For other people to use the original study as an operating manual by which to replicate the study, the investigator must describe in detail how it was conducted throughout the inquiry.

Interrated Reliability

When I translated the data, two other researchers helped me interpret them. One

was a Japanese female graduate student who had also gone through adaptation process in Canada and readaptation process in Japan. She had lived in Canada for six years and was very familiar with both Japan and Canada. Another was a Canadian male graduate student who had lived in Japan for five years. He was also fluent in Japanese and had gone through an adaptation process in Japan and readaptation process in Canada. After independent analyses of the interviews, we had meetings and discussed our findings to determine if the interpretations matched with each other. I also discussed the result of the interpretation with my supervisor who looked at everyone's interpretation. It is generally called interrater reliability or triangulation by Denzin (1970, cited in Merriam, 1988; LeCompte & Preissle, 1993; Atkinson & Hammersley, 1994, 1995; Bogdan & Taylor, 1975; Agar, 1980). Triangulation helps to control biases that occurs when there is only one observer in the study, and strengthens the reliability of interpretation.

CHAPTER 3: ANALYSIS OF INTERVIEW

In this chapter, I will analyse the result of the interviews in accordance with the four research questions. I tried to make it as simple as possible although many themes overlapped and were repeated in the interviews. For example, in many sections, the theme of friends was present.

Language Development

The first research question was: how do the students think they learned English and how do they maintain it in Japan? The question consists of two time frames: during the sojourn and after the sojourn. In this section, I will only illustrate the first part: how the students learned English during the sojourn. This section focuses on the language development which was one of the main reason for the students to attend the program.

Main Reason for the Sojourn

The number one reason for the students to attend the program was to improve their English. The second reason was to experience life in a foreign country for an extended period of time. Some students even entered Ritsumeikan University because they wanted to attend this particular program. Hana said:

I had always wanted to go to a foreign country for an extended period of time. But my parents didn't allow me to do that in high school. They were worried about me. This program from the Ritsumeikan University made my parents feel safe. They knew that there would be other 100 Japanese students in the program in the protected environment and I wouldn't be alone.

Her parents felt safe because the university was involved. It is different from going to a foreign country individually to attend a school.

Only one student said that he came to relax in Canada. He said that he would not have a chance to stay in a foreign country for a long time after he starts working in a company. He had already lived in a foreign country before the program so his reason was a little different. However, most students wanted to, and expected to, improve their English in Canada and to become able to communicate adequately with foreigners in English.

How the Student Sojourners Learned English

Everyone learned English by speaking with their roommates. For those who lived in the Totem Park Residence, the interlocutor was their floor-mates. Toshio said everything

with his roommates was a learning experience:

Everything was a learning experience with my Canadian roommates. Everything was, of course, in English. Even playing cards was a learning experience.

Since they lived together in the same quad, they spent lots of time together. Sharing the same living quarters was a great experience for learning English and culture. Hitomi always talked to her roommates during dinner and they usually got into discussing their personal feelings. She asked her roommates meanings of words or expressions she did not understand. They explained the meanings kindly and her English improved.

Some students said it was harder for them to speak than to listen or to understand. Therefore, they listened to their roommates' English and used the expressions in the class with Japanese students. In the class, all the students were Japanese and they practised to share their opinions in English in the discussion class. Hiroyasu practised his English in a unique way:

I imitated some Japanese students' English in the class. Those who had lived abroad previously spoke better English than other Japanese students. In the class, that was the best way to practice my English because there were only Japanese students.

Since there were only Japanese students in the class, they had to find a way to make the most of it. The students were supposed to speak English to each other in the class and the Rits Lab. I noticed that some student sojourners were speaking English to each other and others did not in the computer lab. Although it is only my impression, those students who tried to even speak to Japanese students in English outside the class had improved their English better than those who had not.

Based on my experiences both as a student and a lab monitor over three years, I realise how important their language partner was as another source they learned English from. The students had a Canadian language partner who was studying Japanese. They taught them Japanese and learned English from the Canadians. Those Canadians were interested in Japan or were planning to go to Japan. The sojourner felt comfortable because they were also teaching and did not have to feel like a child learning their language. The relationship is reciprocal. In fact, many Canadians who live in the Rits House are usually interested in Japan. It would make it easier for them to understand each other or share their

knowledge, and build a meaningful friendship.

Consequently, the Rits Program offers each student sojourner a buddy. Every year, it looks for a Canadian who would like to be the sojourner's buddy during the sojourn. Most of them are interested in Japan and the situation is similar to the roommates and language partners above. However, my buddy, when I was a student in the program, was very busy and did not contact me at all during the year; I felt very lonely. The program has to be very careful in the selection process since sojourn buddies are a valuable tool students can use to enhance their English skills through direct interaction.

The student sojourners who had not lived in a foreign country previously did not learn English inside the classroom. Rather, the students felt that they learned more English in extra-curricular activities such as volleyball or snow-boarding. They socialised with Canadians who had the same interests, and learned about life outside of campus. Similarly, Yuri's volunteer activities helped her make Canadian friends and strengthen her English:

I was a volunteer at a day care centre. I strengthened my English by talking to different generations such as old people and children. Especially, children spoke very fast without thinking and my listening skill improved.

She learned English by interacting with Canadians in real life situations. She was surrounded by different generations and people who had nothing to do with Japan. It would be a little more difficult for the students who had not had previous experiences abroad. However, these activities are something student sojourners should explore more as they get used to their new environment. I believe that every student is unique and has different interests; curiosity provokes their autonomy.

One of the pastimes some students mentioned was television and radio. Although it was not an interpersonal activity, TV shows provided students with key phrases and idioms of conversational English in sitcoms and academic English in news programs. TV also was a vehicle through which students could be exposed to English that is easier for them to understand. For instance, Taka said news on TV and radio was helpful because the English was very articulate and clear. TV, radio, or even listening to other people's conversation were useful ways the students learned English. I suspect that the students did not mention classes so much because the emphasis in the class was on reading and writing.

Therefore, interacting with Canadians in daily life and being exposed to language through TV and radio were more successful for developing students' conversational English than the classes were.

Nonetheless, some students learned different type of English in the classes. Hideyo learned how to write a good essay. The students had to write many essays during the sojourn. When I was working as a lab monitor at the Rits computer lab, it was always very busy, especially before the deadline for essays. Those who with previous experiences abroad before attending the Rits Program all said that they learned academic English with more vocabulary in the program. They had already been used to a foreign atmosphere and daily life, and were able to speak and communicate in English. Therefore, they learned a higher level of English which they called academic, university level English.

The Students' Feelings toward Language Development

The students felt that living in Canada and being a part of the Rits Program substantially aided their English development. Most of the students felt that their English skills improved, for instance, Miyo's English strengthened more than she thought it would. Kei's listening skills definitely had improved, and most of the students said that their TOEFL score went up. Of those students who were more modest, ambitious, strict or pessimistic, Rei said:

My English didn't improve as much as I expected. However, I can probably say that my English reached the level that I can have a conversation in English. It is not perfect but I can communicate with English speakers without any problems. I know my English is much better than it used to be or better than other Japanese who have never lived abroad.

Those students had a certain image or level that they wanted to reach. However, they do admit that their English had improved and they can communicate in English now. Yuri compared her English from when she was an exchange student in the USA and English from when she was in the program:

When I lived in the USA, my host mother had to call a travel agency for me. I had never called an official place myself. However this time, I called a travel agency and ordered tickets by myself.

She was not sure about her English before but she knows that she can call official places and accomplish something on her own using English now. The students felt that the

program was successful because it enabled them to interact in an English society as responsible adults.

Culture and Language

Another way students learned English was by realising culture's influence in language. The students had always analysed how Canadian people spoke English when they listened to them. Many students realised that speakers have to make a point at the very beginning in English. Hiroyasu said:

In Japanese, people start explaining why or what is happening in speech. For example, if somebody cannot come to see a movie, the person would say, "well, I am very sick" and then "I cannot come to the movie today." But in English, the person would say, "well, I cannot come to the movie today" and then the reason, "because I am sick." English is always conclusion and then reason.

The students contend that it is not possible to translate English to Japanese directly or vice versa because language is always influenced by culture. Nami said, when she speaks to her Japanese friends in English, she speaks it in a Japanese way using direct translation from Japanese. Kozue also used to speak English in a Japanese way with the reason first and the conclusion at the end when she first went to Canada:

I used to translate Japanese to English. It was not possible. It did not make sense to Canadians. When I explained the reason first and made a point later, they asked me what my point was before I got to the point. I learned that I had to say what I wanted to say at first and then explain the detail later.

The students are now aware of the order. The rule also applies to writing. Hiroyasu said:

I can write an essay in both ways. When I write an essay in Japanese, I explain and give the result and my opinion at the end. In English, I start with my opinion and my point, and then explain why. It is same with speech.

In English, people make a statement and explain why using "because." In Japanese, people explain first and connect the point with "...kara." It is already in the language and the students became conscious of it. Hence, ways of explaining are embedded within these cultures' language structure.

Canadian expressions are also more direct and less ambiguous than Japanese expressions. Upon realising this, students can interact with Canadians better. For instance, Koyo became more articulate because the expressions were not so obscure in English and Canadians said yes or no clearly. Hitomi said it was easier for her to express true, honest

feelings in English. They analysed that culture and language were closely interwoven, and they both affected the manner of speech and behaviour.

Feelings toward English Education in Japan

Another theme which emerged about how students learned English was their feelings toward language education in Japan. For instance, many students said that they wished that they had been able to speak English from the beginning of the sojourn. The students criticised the English education in Japan for their inadequate ability. Many students gave very negative comments such as they hate English education in Japan or it is useless. The students said that learners have to learn culture, expressions, and the way to react when studying a language. Rather than too much grammar, communication should be emphasised. The students want to be able to speak and communicate in English. Kei criticised English teachers in Japan for not being able to speak English. Mari suggested that the students should be able to access native newspapers in English to learn what is happening in foreign countries. Some students said that English (language) education should be started at an earlier age. Koyo, who is in the faculty of literature, felt that students should be able to have access to current information in English speaking countries rather than just reading classic literature with old English. Taka said that English teachers should let the students know how fun the language is by teaching communication. Kosaku did not even believe in English education in Japan and said that people have to go to an English speaking country to learn the language.

In contrast, some students were positive toward English education in Japan. They said that grammar is important in learning a language. Therefore, grammar education in Japan is beneficial. Junichi, however, criticised that even grammar is not taught right. Ginji said that some readings in the textbooks are interesting. Nevertheless, Japanese students are very frustrated with English education in Japan. Masa said that private schools are using more communicative-style teachings. He hopes that more schools including public schools, will become more communicative.

Learning Beyond English

Although language development was the main reason the students came to Canada and joined the program, they all realised after that learning English was only as a part of the

sojourn. Tomoki felt the pressure that he had to improve his English at the beginning of the sojourn. However, when he realised that he was learning more than that, he started feeling comfortable and confident. Tomei similarly said:

I think that studying a language is possible in Japan. You can buy books, watch satellite, and listen to English music. What's more important in these experiences is the personal growth. I learned how to deal with people and how to accept different kinds of people objectively.

The students also learned that English is just a part of the medium in communicating.

In summary, I discussed the five themes which emerged concerning language development: (1) main reason for the sojourn, (2) how the students learned English, (3) the students' feelings toward language development, (4) culture and language, and (5) the students' feeling toward English education in Japan. While these themes illustrated the overall language learning, the next section will explore other learning experiences and the students' growth as individuals.

Students' Change during the Sojourn

The second question is: what do the students think they learned and became during the sojourn? It deals with their learning experiences abroad in general. I focus on what the students learned and what they became and/or how they change by living in this foreign milieu for eight months. First of all, I will look at students' change as university students.

Attitudes toward Studying

Overall, most students studied a lot in the program. Some students feel that they should study harder in Japan since they had become a little lazier after they returned to Japanese university. Nami said:

When I think back, I cannot believe how much and how hard I studied in Canada. I did it because I had to and I don't have to do it now. I know I should study harder but it's difficult when you don't have to.

She may have become stricter on herself. Most students learned to be more diligent in Canada and are still studying harder than before they went to Canada. Koyo said that his friends were surprised that he was studying hard in a library. He now finds more time alone to study. Tomoki does not study as much as he used to in Canada, however, he said:

I studied harder in Canada. But I still go to the library and study. The routine of going to the library was added to me when I was in Canada. I have a part-time job

and the life-style in Japan is a little different. However, I still try to study harder than before I went to Canada.

In Canada, he was not allowed to work, and had more time to study. He was immersed in the academic environment and studied harder. Yet, he still has the habit of going to the library to study and the studiousness is now a part of him. The system in the program is also a factor of why they study hard in Canada. The credits that they earn at UBC are transferred to Ritsumeikan University in Japan. Therefore, they are not wasting the credits earned in Canada. They do not want to fail and they study hard despite it being more difficult and time-consuming for them to study in a foreign language such as English.

Influence of Canadian University Students

There was one more reason why the students studied harder during their sojourn. They noticed that Canadian students, such as their roommates at the Rits House, were studying more diligently than students do in Japan. The Canadian students' serious attitudes stimulated the sojourners. However, Taizo also met Canadian students who did not study so hard:

Canadian students studied much harder than Japanese. They were studying all the time. But I also met some Canadian students who didn't study so much. Everyone is different. However, it's true that Canadian students studied harder in general. I was surprised by them at first and they stimulated me.

He emphasised that not every student is the same in Canada or Japan. Some Japanese students study hard too. However, Kozue thought that Canadian students studied hard during the week and partied on the weekends:

Canadian students studied hard during the week and played a lot on the weekends. They knew how to keep the balance and such life-style stimulated me. The Canadian students were enjoying both very much. So I would like to study hard and play hard and keep a good balance.

She realised that Canadian students do not only study. They are also young; they like to party. Their ability to keep the balance between both inspired her. Japanese sojourners admired Canadian students' high amount of energy put forth to study and play.

Canadian students also influenced the Japanese students in terms of future goals. They felt that Canadian students had a reason or motive to study in order to prepare for their future. Canadian students had a clear goal. Hitomi also had a clear goal and her

roommates happened to have the same goal as her:

I have always wanted to be a teacher. My Canadian roommates also wanted to be teachers. They studied hard and I was shocked. They made me realise that I should study harder to become a teacher and I am trying harder now.

Except for students including Hitomi, most students had not even had a future goal before they came to Canada. However, those who without a future goal found what they wanted to do in the future in Canada. It occurred when they learned to look at themselves more objectively. For example, Aya discovered what she liked to do, what she would like to do in the future, and her identity in general objectively. She analysed herself because she was away from home and intimate people. Koyo feels that he is thinking about his future more and wonders if other Japanese university students are the same. Some students had already decided to go to a graduate school in North America because they found it an interesting place to study. Some decided to teach Japanese. By being exposed to Canadian students' strong sense of identity and goals for the future, the students began to look into their identity and to reflect upon themselves more seriously in Canada.

Differences in Education

The student sojourners discovered that Canadian students studied harder toward the future career because the Canadian education system was more student-centred. The students were more active and respected. Tomoki said the autonomous atmosphere motivated him to study harder. He commented that students were given chances to speak up in class in Canada. Now, he wants to speak up in the classes in Japan too and studies more. Toshio said that teachers are always right in Japan. Students cannot oppose the teachers and have to give answers that can be approved by the teachers. Similarly, Ginji said:

I took regular courses at UBC. The professor at UBC was excellent. He helped the students to think critically. Japanese professors impose their opinions on the students and the students have to be passive.

Many students criticised the one-way teaching method and the traditional hierarchy relationship between teachers and students in Japan. They preferred the open, democratic Canadian classroom atmosphere where students can study and share their opinions with both teachers and students. They even stated that Canadian students study hard in order to

be able to discuss their opinions in the classroom. Ginji further continued:

The essay test even has one answer in Japan. North America allows more opinions and the students are more respected. I just took a test and wrote the answer that would most likely please the professor.

Furthermore, Hana analysed that the education is part of that homogeneous process. The education system is tied directly with the culture; the education system influences the culture and vice versa. Japan tends to emphasise the uni-culture and it causes the uni-answer. Hitomi who wants to be a teacher said that she was fortunate to learn a different style of teaching in Canada. The relationship between teachers and students in Canada is like a friendship between human beings. They have mutual respect and listen to each other. Canadian education allows diversity. The student sojourners actively spoke their feelings and ideas in Canada because of the democratic atmosphere. Toshio even asked a teacher to raise his marks on an assignment:

I went to talk to my teacher to raise the mark that she gave me. It was an assignment in which I had to make a web page. I am very familiar with computers and I got into the assignment. I planned and spent lots of time on it. I couldn't believe the mark she gave me. I went to talk to the teacher and she said that she didn't like the colour of the web site. She raised the mark and I was happy. I wouldn't have done that in Japan. I guess I learned to stand up for my rights and what I deserve.

Other students said that every Japanese student spoke up more in the classes in Canada. The teachers and students relationship were equal and it was very comfortable. The comfortableness of the democratic educational environment strengthened students' critical and creative minds.

Expression and Communication

As the students learned to speak up in the class and have a more critical perspective, they became more articulate and interactive in their conversations with others. Rei used to be very passive in Japan but she learned to be active in Canada. Hitoshi explained:

I had to be active in Canada. I learned that I had to initiate the action to get what I want in Canada. Nobody talks to you unless you initiate the conversation. I should not just wait for other people to do something for me.

Similarly, Yuri became able to express her feelings more clearly. I felt that the students were thinking more deeply and acted on their thoughts instead of just thinking.

Many students had become better communicators. They learned how to communicate with people as they interacted with people with different cultural backgrounds and as they lived with both Canadians and Japanese students. They learned more about how different kinds of people react, interact and so forth. Taka learned to change the way of communication depending on the person. Ken learned how to deal with complicating human relations. Some students even overcame their shyness. Hitomi said:

I was very nervous around people in general. I overcame that and became able to speak to foreigners and I am more confident. I can communicate with people more smoothly.

Some students became good listeners. Koyo said:

I used to just talk and never listen to people in Japan. When my Canadian roommates and I were talking, they pointed out that I was not carefully listening to what they were saying. I learned to listen to people and speak about what the interlocutor said.

He realised that communication is both listening and speaking carefully. Respecting each other is very important in communication. He said that communicating in a foreign language entails more attention to what the interlocutor is saying. Hence, the added attention to listening to a foreign language and expressions helped the sojourners to become better communicators.

Another change in the way the students express themselves can be seen when a teacher made a mistake in Japan. Some students were not sure if they would correct teacher's mistakes in Japan although it was easy in Canada due to the democratic atmosphere in the classroom. Nevertheless, many more students would tell the teacher in some way. Those students who could not speak up in the class said that they would tell the teacher after the class. The change is that they would think of some ways to let the teacher know now although they had never thought about it before they went to Canada. For example, Hiroyasu is studying harder to correct a teacher's mistake confidently. Hitoshi already corrected a teacher's mistake in Japan in a very modest way. Taizo used to be passive but he listens to the teacher more carefully now. Being able to correct a teacher's mistake means that the students are actively thinking and attending the class. As the students learned to study and speak up, to value their search for an answer, sojourners became more vocal like Canadian students.

In terms of expressing their opinions, I further asked the students if they would correct a superior's misbehaviour at work. The students had to imagine the situation because they had not worked full time. Interestingly, more male students said that they could not correct it. They were worried about what would happen afterwards. However, many of them said that they would think about some kind of solutions. For example, Toshio would correct superior's misbehaviour in Japan although he would be worried about what would happen afterwards:

I would correct boss's misbehaviour in Japan too. But I would be worried about what would happen afterwards. So I would say or do things more indirectly in Japan. In Canada, I would say things more directly. I wouldn't have said anything before I went to Canada.

Tomoki did correct a superior's behaviour when a girl was sexually harassed at his part-time job in Japan. He was too angry to even use the honorific language. He then thought about the real world. He imagined he would still say something but in a softer way.

On the other hand, many female students said that they would correct a superior's misbehaviour directly. Hitomi cannot believe that other people did not say anything to the superior who was also sexually harassing a female worker at her part-time job. Some students including Hitomi said that they would even speak up for their friends. Miyo who is in the faculty of law would sue the boss. Canada had given her the strength to insist on her opinions and fight for her rights. She also said that lawsuits are very active in Canada; her judicial side was drawn out by Canadian society. Mari had been groped on a train in Japan and was able to confront the groper directly. She could not have done that prior to her sojourn to Canada.

In summary, more women said that they would correct a superior's misbehaviour at work. This is where I discovered the biggest difference between male and female students in the interviews. Male students are more realistic and traditional when it comes to work situations since men are still expected to earn and support their families in Japan. However, many including male students learned to express their feelings more one way or another.

Autonomy

The students also believed that they changed during the sojourn by becoming strong and independent. In Japan, people belong to a group and do things in the group together. In

Canada, people are more independent and do things alone whenever and whatever they want. Nami realised that she is who she is and wants to be who she is. Groupism means concealing an individual. The students realised that they did not want to be one of the group members and be concealed. Many students became able to look for things that they are interested in and act on them. Yuka said that even going to a cafe alone is kind of embarrassing in Japan. People always have to be in a group. Now, she can go to a cafe alone and enjoy herself. Koyo used to have no time alone because he was always with other people. He used to think that he had to be with a group of people; now, he thinks that it is important to have time alone and scrutinise things.

Hence, in Japan, people have to be the same and uniqueness is disliked. Koyo said:

In Japan, everyone has to be the same. Even fashion has to be the same. Everyone goes after the same trend. I now have my own style and am proud of it. I don't want to be the same as everyone else anymore about anything.

Kei also criticised Japanese fashion trends that, although it seems that everyone seeks for individuality and uniqueness, people are just going after the same trend after all. The students now want to be a little different and unique in Japan. Koyo further continued that independency, originality and creativity should be emphasised more in Japan.

In summary, the students found Japanese and Canadian education and quality of the students to be very different. They also learned how these differences influence expressions, attitudes for future goals, and how people represent themselves. Democracy and autonomy were themes which emerged and interwove with culture and society.

Canadian Culture and Society

In this section, I will continue to explore what students learned and how they changed farther in the answers to question 2. I will focus on students' perceptions about Canada in general, Canadian culture, and comparison of it with Japanese and other cultures.

Canada and the USA

One of the themes was comparing Canada and the USA. Many people did not know much about Canada before they arrived in Vancouver. They used to think Canada was a big country above the USA and that it was the same as the USA because English is spoken and

Anglo-Saxon culture is dominant in both countries. Yuri said:

I used to think North America was the same but I know the differences now. Canada is much safer. I would say a city like Vancouver in the USA would be more dangerous. I would live in Canada, but only visit the USA for fun.

The student sojourners kept comparing Canada to the USA because it was a country next to Canada and many students went there during the sojourn. Many students talked about the differences; all but two of them preferred Canada to the USA. Of those two students, Tomoe had been to the USA many times and she preferred it because the people were more energetic there. She liked partying and she did not think that Canadians liked to party as much. Ginji also preferred the USA to Canada. He had lived in the USA when he was in high school:

I think Canada is always struggling with identity. Canadians are always against the USA and that's their identity. Canada is known as a country above a super power and they don't like it.

He was attached to the USA because he had lived there for four years. He especially liked the strong ethnic ties in the USA:

Canada is multicultural and the USA is assimilation. I felt more discriminated against in the USA, but minorities in the USA had stronger identity and coherence because of that. Canadian minorities do not have to stick together to be accepted as much.

Ginji's opinion was quite unique in the program. Many students rather preferred the multiculturalism of Canada. Yuri, who had lived in the USA, preferred the Canadian "mosaic" over the USA's "melting pot." She felt that she could keep her identity as Japanese and still be accepted in Canada. When she was in the USA, she hated the word 'Americanisation' because it sounded like people had to be Americanised to be accepted there. Furthermore, many students felt more discriminated against in the USA when they went there during the sojourn. Apart from the USA, Hana compared England to Canada:

In England, I was treated as a foreigner just like Japanese treat foreigners as outsiders. They were kind but did not accept me as one of them. In Canada, it is easier to live for me because people accept me as part of them.

Canada's government policy is multiculturalism, as opposed to assimilation; the students learned that it made Canada and the USA very different. Multiculturalism made Canada more distinctive.

Multicultural Vancouver

The student sojourners were impressed with how various kinds of ethnic groups existed in Vancouver. The students had been informed that many Asians lived in Vancouver. However, they were surprised to see and meet different kinds of people including Mexicans, East Indians, Iranians, and other ethnic groups. Nami said that there were many authentic restaurants in Vancouver. Mari went to a Hindu temple and thought it was very interesting. The students were very happy to meet those people that they could not easily meet in Japan.

Many students enjoyed communicating with people with different cultural backgrounds in English. Hitoshi said:

I enjoyed communicating with different kinds of people in English. I was not a native speaker and they were not native speakers. But we all spoke English and it was a nice feeling.

They realised that many people in the world speak English and found it very fascinating to be able to communicate with these people using English.

Many students also realised that people in Vancouver respected each other's cultures and differences since it is a multicultural city. Hana said:

As I learned in the Intercultural Communication class, 'mosaic' was emphasised in Canada. Vancouver was especially very mixed and I felt comfortable.

She realised that each culture was preserved as they were because mosaic of cultures was emphasised in Canada instead of assimilation or a melting pot. Kei thought that people in Vancouver seemed to know that no one culture is better than another (relativity of culture). Kozue experienced both differences and similarities among people with different cultural backgrounds. Many other people also realised that no matter how different people's cultural backgrounds are, human beings are the same and/but people can appreciate the differences. Rei found more similarities than differences among people although she expected to find more differences before she came to Vancouver. Koyo analysed the way people in Vancouver judge people:

In Japan, people only judge with personality because there is not a cultural difference. In Canada, people judge each other with their ethnicity first and personality second. It was a double procedure and more interesting.

In Vancouver, the student sojourners felt that not only were there many kinds of people but also they respected each other and co-existed harmoniously.

Homogeneous Society: Japan and Multicultural Society: Canada

I asked every student what they thought about a homogeneous society, i.e. Japan compared to a multicultural society, i.e. Canada. Everyone said that they found multicultural society more interesting. Many (see Appendix) students found Japan boring because it is homogeneous. Yuri felt that, although more problems exist because differences co-exist in multicultural society, it is more interesting because of these differences. Tomoki said that Japan is limited because there are not many interesting things to discover such as different cultures. In Canada, there are more answers than one. He thought that Japan did not have much to offer compared to Canada. Toshio thinks that Japanese people can never understand how it is to live in a multicultural society:

I don't think Japanese people use or understand the term 'multiculturalism' in a true sense because Japan is homogeneous. You have to experience it to know.

He feels that Japanese people do not even know what multiculturalism is. Furthermore, the students analysed Japan in terms of foreigners. Aya said:

Everyone is different and I never felt like a minority in Vancouver. In Japan, people stare at foreigners. Vancouver especially had a lot of Asians, however, they were not stared at.

In Japan, there are not so many foreigners. Although there are many invisible foreigners in Japan, Japanese people do not realise it so much. Hence, Miyo used to think "foreigners" were Caucasians, but she thinks about more kinds of people when she hears the word, "gai-jin" now. Hideyo even contends that Japan is strange because Japan tries to be homogeneous. He realised that the world consists of multiple cultures and that multiculturalism is normal. Many students learned that and they accept different cultures better now because they experienced multiculturalism. However, Kozue thought it was too much to deal with:

In multicultural society, you have to accept different cultures and it is very difficult sometimes. In a homogeneous society like Japan, you don't have to interact with different cultures all the time.

She was used to not worrying about different cultures in Japan. Similarly, some students

made negative comments about multicultural Canada. Tomoe felt that a true multicultural society did not really exist:

I think that multiculturalism does not really exist in Canada. It is ideal but it is not happening in reality. I lived in the Totem Residence and noticed that different races and minorities stuck together. Chinese people ate dinner with Chinese people and Caucasians ate with Caucasians at the cafeteria. People are segregated although it is called a multicultural society.

Taka also thought multiculturalism is great as a policy, but it was not prevailing everywhere. He felt many Caucasians were looking down on Asians. Akira who lived at the Totem Park also said that he felt he was treated a little differently because he was the only Asian on the floor. It was easier for him to speak to Asians because they were more understanding. It seemed that those who lived at the Totem Park felt more discriminated because the residence was not specifically for the Japanese students. Although some students prefer the very authentic environment, it is sometimes very difficult for the students who go abroad for the first time, to try to live in a heterogeneous environment.

In summary, although some students found it difficult to live in a multicultural society, many students found it more interesting than a homogeneous society. They realised that multicultural society is a smaller version of the world.

Restrained Society: Japan and Open Society: Canada

As the students kept comparing Canada (multicultural) and Japan (homogeneous) during the interview, many students analysed Canada as a very open society and Japan as a closed, restrained, and conforming society. Many students felt that people are honest and can better be themselves in Canada. Hitomi said:

People are honest in Canada. They don't wear masks. People can be themselves. I felt comfortable in an honest environment. In Japan, people have to wear masks.

He had been wearing masks in Japan and is used to it. Furthermore, many students noticed that Canadian people are more friendly. Kosaku said:

At the cafeteria in Canada, workers didn't have the service spirit. In Japan, workers are very polite. However, Canadian workers were friendly when I talked to them. They don't have to change their personalities at work so much in Canada.

He realised that Japanese workers change their personality at work for the service spirit. Canadian workers do not do that but they are friendly as a person. Kei said:

Canadians spoke to each other casually although they were strangers. People were friendly in public places such as elevators and buses. Canadian people say hi or 'how are you?' in friendly way.

Many other students criticised Japan being unfriendly toward strangers. Kei was helped by a Canadian person when she was in trouble on the street. The friendliness leads to the kindness toward other people. Therefore, the students noticed strongly that people were not friendly in Japan when they returned. Many students felt more apprehensive even about friends in Japan. Nami said:

I didn't hide my feelings and personality with my Canadian friends. They were always honest and we talked about lots of personal things. It's a little different from Japanese friends. Canadian friends accepted me as who I am.

Canadian people are more open and honest. The students learned the importance of these qualities and, therefore try to become more honest, open, kind, and friendly. They changed their closed, restrained, and conforming attitudes that were prevalent in Japan (homogeneous) because of Canadian (multicultural) influence.

Free from Discrimination/ Humanistic Attitude

Experiences in a multicultural society altered the students' perceptions about discrimination and humanistic attitudes. They learned about different kinds of cultural groups and sub-cultural groups in the world, especially in Canada and Japan. Both the content of the courses and their daily experiences in Canada gave the students opportunities to scrutinise people's attitudes, culture, and discrimination. The first step toward humanistic way of thinking was the Intercultural Communication course.

Intercultural Communication Course

During the interview, the students talked about their in-class activities and assignments. The most influential course was the Intercultural Communication course which introduced the students to different ethnic groups, sub-cultural groups, and discrimination that can occur because of people's identity. The course was refereed by the students the most when they discussed multiculturalism, sub-cultural groups, minorities in Japan and racism. Most of the students liked the course because they could actually relate the study to their Canadian life with which they experience meeting various kinds of people. Koyo liked the course because it introduced him to gay culture:

I am glad that the Intercultural Communication course introduced me to gay culture. I understand them and feel open toward them. That kind of class does not exist in Japan. It was very Canadian.

The course actually brought guests from different cultural groups, showed tapes, and used actual stories written by the members in the group. Koyo had never met an openly gay person in Japan but he met such a person in the class and realised that they were just human beings with a different sexual orientation. Masa and many other students realised that everyone is unique and different cultural groups exist in Japan as well:

As I learned in the Intercultural Communication course, I now know that there are also many kinds of people in Japan. Ethnic Koreans, Chinese, half Japanese, returning students (from overseas), gay people, Ainu, Okinawans, gaijin, buraku-min, disabled people and so on. There is age discrimination, sexism, different religions and beliefs. Everyone is unique and the course made me think about how Japanese people deal with uniqueness.

It was possible for the students to relate the different cultures they learned in the class and their everyday experiences of meeting various kinds of people in Canada. However, in Japan, it is not easy because people tend to hide their own identity.

Different Cultures

In addition to the course above, their experiences of interacting with various kinds of people in Canada gave the students opportunities to expand their worldview in terms of different cultures. For instance, Kosaku talked about looking at a wider perspective:

Before I went to Canada, I only thought about Japanese people. Now, I think about different kinds of people. They are not in a different world anymore. I would like to keep communicating with different kinds of people.

Hitoshi said that, although he used to be only interested in North America, especially the USA, he is more interested in Middle East and Asia now because he had met so many kinds of people and he learned to include them when he thinks about the world.

Foreigners

After discussing different cultures, I asked the students how they feel now toward foreigners in Japan. They are called "gai-jin" and considered outsiders in Japan. Many students used to think that foreigners were very different and used to be even afraid of them. Nami said:

I used to think foreigners in Japan were special. Now, I feel close to foreigners

and talk to them. When I see them, I want to go back to Canada. I even feel that Japan is strange because there are only Japanese. I sometimes wonder if some Japanese are Chinese.

Tomoki said that Japanese people do not have the opportunity to interact with foreigners as much. He told me a story:

The other day, my Canadian friend came to Japan and we were speaking English. A little girl pointed at us and said "gai-jin!!" as if we were something strange. She said "it's English you are speaking!!" and ran away. If there is more interaction with foreigners, Japan will change.

The students used to be like the little girl, yet changed during the sojourn. I asked the students if they would help a foreigner in trouble. Every student, except for one, said that they would help a foreigner. Many of them remembered how they were before they went to Canada, insecure and hesitant towards foreigners. Miyo said:

I work at a restaurant near the Golden temple. Lots of foreigners come and I take orders in English now. I used to hesitate to do that before I went to Canada.

Many other students also told me that they had already helped some foreigners in trouble.

Hiroyasu said:

I actually helped a foreigner at the station. He was asking the direction in English but nobody helped him. So I went and helped him. I would, of course, help foreigners who do not speak English as well. In fact, I would also like to help anyone in trouble.

The reasons for wanting to help troubled foreigners were various. Many students were helped on the street in Vancouver and they would like to return the favour. Tomoki said that Canadian people were helpful in general and learned to be like them. Hana understands how the foreigners feel and she wants to help them now. Yuri's reason was that she was lonely in the USA because she had to ask other people to help her. She would like to help foreigners voluntarily. Nonetheless, the number one reason for wanting to help foreigners was because the sojourners are more confident now and more willing to talk to foreigners.

The students were considerate about what language they would speak to the troubled foreigner. Many students realised that not every foreigner speaks English. Therefore, many of them would like to speak to them in Japanese in Japan. Toshio felt as though he was being used when Canadians spoke Japanese to him. He thought that it was

merely a way for them to maintain it in Canada. He does not want to do the same to foreigners in Japan. Similarly, many students said that they would speak in Japanese first and if it were easier, then change to English. Hana used to think that she had to speak English to a foreigner but she now thinks that they maybe able to speak Japanese. Only one person said that he might not help foreigners who speak neither Japanese nor English. Some students wanted to help foreigners because they can practice their English at the same time. It is killing two birds with one stone. However, these students said that they would also help foreigners who do not speak English.

Racism

Another issue which emerged during the interview about different cultures and foreigners was racism. Many students (see Appendix) are very aware of it and think about it more. Some students experienced discrimination in North America and would never racially discriminate against anybody. Many people are angry toward racism and would get angry at discriminatory slurs. Some students emphasised that they had been very aware of racism; however, many students had become more interested in the issue after they lived in Canada. Hiroyasu said that racism exists everywhere in the world. He believes that everyone is equal and no race is better than the other. He wants to rid the world of it.

I then asked what they thought about racism or minorities in Japan. Many students now know that many kinds of ethnic groups exist in Japan. They notice more foreign languages, signs and attires. Hitoshi realised that Japan is not completely homogeneous:

I used to think that Japan was homogeneous but I don't think so now. I went to an Ainu conference in Vancouver and spoke with them. Historically, Japan did terrible things to minorities.

Although many students realised that there are many other cultures in Japan, some students said that they did not have many chances to meet minorities in Japan. Furthermore, some students admitted that they do not pay attention to such things. After living in Canada, Taka paid more attention to in-group discrimination in Japan:

I think that Japanese people dislike anything different because Japan is homogeneous. So racial discrimination must exist somewhere but I have never encountered it. I notice more discrimination within the same group (Japanese) such as "bullies in schools."

These students were not racist, but they just were not aware of it because they do not meet

minorities in Japan on a regular basis. Due to their exposure to different types of people in Canada, more people were clearly against racism and supportive of minorities in Japan.

Of those students who said they had no chances to meet minorities in Japan, many were understanding toward ethnic minority groups. Nami is more interested now in minorities in Japan. Although she never meets them, she would like to look into minorities in Japan. Yuri said that minorities in Japan are more invisible. These minorities are usually Asians, especially Koreans. Many students mentioned their Korean friends in Japan. They think that their Korean friends are the same as everyone else and should not be discriminated against. Hitomi said:

We are in the fourth year and looking for a job now. My friends and I have found a job already. But my Korean friend has not found a job yet. She is very smart and active. I think being both an ethnic minority and a woman is contributing to that. It's not fair.

Those students who had had Korean friends had previously been aware of racism. Tomoki's parents had made him aware of it:

My parents are from Hokkaido and they have told me about Ainu, Koreans and Chinese prisoners since I was little. I had been aware of it before I went to Canada.

Tomoki further said that other Asians are more looked down upon in Japan. It might be difficult but he wants it to change as part of an international community.

Another reason for some students to be more interested in minorities and racism in Japan was their experiences of meeting many kinds of immigrants in Vancouver. During the interview, they applied the situation in Canada to the one in Japan. Yuri did not know enough about racism before she lived in Canada. Akira thinks that Japanese people are avoiding the issue. Koyo admitted that he used to ignore the issue. They criticised Japanese people's attitudes and said that they are more interested in all kinds of disadvantaged people including disabled people and gay people.

In terms of their changing attitudes toward minorities in Japan, many students further admitted that they used to look at minorities as something different. Kei said:

I used to be too sensitive toward racism. I used to think minorities were different from Japanese and didn't know how to deal with them. But I look at them equally now so I am not too sensitive anymore.

Aya also used to be nervous around non-Japanese because she thought they were different people. She now tries to look at their personalities and treat them as equal human beings. Nami used to look at minorities as outsiders but she now understands how minorities would feel after experiencing being a minority herself. Ken said that people should not be too sensitive around the issue:

I notice that people in Kyoto are too sensitive toward racism such as Koreans and “buraku-min” (lowest class from Edo period) because there are lots of minorities in the city. I think people should not be too sensitive because it is unnatural and superficial.

After the interview, I was certain that the students will contribute to the anti-racism society and peaceful international movement. Mari said that there was a big generation gap between herself and her grandparents in terms of racism. She feels terrible when her grandparents say something racist. Hence, Japan’s attitude toward racism is slowly changing.

Gay Culture

Another matter concerning discrimination was the gay issue. Many students’ perspectives broadened toward gay people. The students were surprised to see gay couples in Vancouver because they had never met them before and had not expected to see their open existence. Hitomi said:

Gay people were holding hands on the street and their existence was everywhere in Vancouver. They were accepted in Vancouver so I became accepting. First, it was very new and shocking to me and I used to stare at them but I don’t anymore.

Male students seemed to take it more personally and said that they do not particularly like gay people. However, they are more open toward them now and do not mind that they exist as long as they do not make sexual advancements toward them. Some students had already seen gay people and had not minded it since then. Tomoki said:

I knew a gay American exchange student in Japan. First, I was surprised but I accepted him for who he was. He was a good friend. Therefore, I had already accepted their existence in Japan.

Some students were more interested in their culture. Taizo felt it is a shame that he only knows very little about gay people. He would like to know more about them and was glad that he had learned about them in the class.

Only one person was strongly against gay people. He said that gay people are

unnatural as human beings. That was a teaching in his religion and he was very religious. However, other students liked the fact that gay people existed openly and were accepted in Vancouver. They understand different people's orientations, beliefs, opinions, and human rights.

Women's Issues

I, further, asked the students what they thought about sexism and women's rights in terms of discrimination. Many more female students had specific ideas and concerns compared to male students. Some students talked about it with their roommates during the sojourn. Kei said:

When I watched news about Japanese sexism when I was in Canada, I couldn't believe it. I want the Japanese system to change. I want companies to look at personalities and abilities in the interviews. Not sex!!

Many students realised that status for women in Canada and Japan was very different. Hiroyasu said that Canadian women were more active than Japanese women. Kozue felt that Canadian women are stronger. Nami thought, although Canadian women are weaker than men too, Japanese women are much more oppressed:

I used to think that the Japanese way was normal. But in Canada, I realised that Japanese women are discriminated against. When I start working, I am sure that I'll experience more.

Some students felt that Japan is very behind in the field of feminism. Mari actually experienced sexism when she was looking for a job. Yuri conducted a study:

I think that women have way more disadvantages in terms of occupations, maternity leave, and so forth in Japan. I feel that marriage is getting better but other things are still behind. I had a survey for a class, and 80% of the women said that they want to continue working after having a baby. However, only 30% of the men said that they want their wives to return to work after a maternity leave. There is a big difference. I think Canada would have a more equal result between men and women. I also remember the comment that the men wrote. One guy wrote with a strong order form, "women, shut up and stay home!!" More men wrote similar things with a softer way such as "I want women to stay home, not work" or "I want the light to be on when I come home from work." Very traditional. But I suppose men change when they go abroad a little. If I had done the same survey with the guys who participated in the program, the result would be different.

As Yuri expected, the male students who had participated the program are more open. For instance, Kosaku would like his wife to keep working if she wants to. Some male students

said that sexist stories make them angry although they had not seen it in reality because they are not in the work force. Kozue thinks men have to change to improve the situation for women and wants Japanese society to change to respect women more in every sense.

Toshio who is a male, law student said:

I am a man but I feel very bad towards women in Japan. My specialty is law. I think divorce rates are higher in Canada. When they divorce, women cannot get much money in Japan. Women are expected to be housewives so they cannot keep their own family name. Women are legally discriminated against in Japan.

Koyo is also very supportive toward women's rights because he met many female students in the program who were very independent and strong. Furthermore, Hideyo thought if women wanted to be respected, they would also have to change. He now dislikes Japanese women who act like little girls and giggle all the time. He thought those "girls" should not act but be more openly themselves.

Uniqueness of People

In conclusion, after discussing various issues of discrimination, many students realised that every individual is unique, including themselves, and different even in the same cultural group such as Japanese. The students used to dislike people who had different opinions, appearances, or anyone who was a little divergent from the mainstream in Japan. Some students had always liked unconventional people but they did not want to show that because they did not want to be considered one of the aberrant people. The students now know that everyone is strange in a sense and different kinds of people and sub-cultural groups exist in Japan too. Taka said that everyone is entitled to his/her opinion and preference. Nobody should be discriminated against because of that. Some students discussed the differences in the various regions of Japan; for example, people in Osaka and Tokyo are different. Uniqueness also exists in different regions of Japan.

Many students' attitudes toward uniqueness changed because of their living in Canada. Canadians were accepting of different opinions, people, and uniqueness in many circumstances. It influenced them and the students accept the differences and listen to diverse viewpoints now. Junichi used to dislike kikoku-shijo (returning students from foreign countries). However, he now accepts them and many other kinds of people. In summary, the students learned to respect varying people and different opinions. They even

find the differences unique and interesting now.

Marriage

The students' attitudes toward international marriage revealed whether or not their attitude toward differences broadened. I asked the students a very personal question: if they would marry a foreigner. Many students said that they would marry whomever they fall in love with. They would not discriminate any nationality or ethnicity when choosing a partner. Some insisted that they had carried the same opinion before they came to Canada. However, Nami used to discriminate against other Asians in terms of marriage, but that changed in Canada. Kosaku was only thinking about marrying a Japanese person before but he now does not know what nationality his partner will be. Toshio also felt this way:

I used to think it was impossible for me to communicate with foreign women, let alone, marry one. But I met lots of mixed couples and Canadians who speak both Japanese and English. I know that I can communicate with foreign women now. I think international marriage is possible.

The women especially were open to marrying a foreigner. Hitomi said that she met younger Canadian guys who were very smart and thoughtful. She now wants to marry someone who thinks about the future and society with broad perspectives. Similarly, Kei would be looking for a man who has different views from her because it is more interesting. Hana would not want to marry a Japanese man because they have certain expectations of women. In contrast, no male students said that they only wanted to marry a foreigner. Hitoshi even said that he would marry only Japanese:

I want to marry a Japanese. I don't think I can handle cultural difference on top of personality. But I don't know for sure. I might change if I met someone who is not Japanese and fall in love with her.

Taka gave a similar comment. He wants to marry a Japanese because he can understand a Japanese person better. Taizo said:

I want to marry Japanese because she speaks Japanese. However, if she speaks Japanese, the ethnicity doesn't matter. I used to only want to marry Japanese. So I changed.

No female students said that the partner had to be Japanese. However, Miyo became open to Japanese males. She used to want to only marry a foreigner. She wanted it to be an international marriage. However, she thinks Japanese people are okay now too. Masa was

the only person who wanted to marry Asian including Japanese. His reason was that he did not like Caucasian women in Canada. They were too strong and not his type. Nevertheless, the students became more open to various ethnicities in terms of marriage, and some now see the possibility of an international marriage where they had not previously.

Some students were concerned about their family's reaction to an international marriage. For instance, Tomoe thought that her mother would be okay with her marrying a Caucasian person but not a black person or other Asian. Mari was sure that her grandparents would oppose a marriage to a non-Japanese. Taka thought that his relatives might also mind his marrying a non-Japanese. However, some students specifically said that they did not think their parents would oppose such a marriage. There certainly is a generation gap between the students and their parents. Overall, Japan is changing in terms of international marriage.

In summary, the students' experiences with multiculturalism in both everyday life and the Intercultural Communication course lead them to become less discriminatory. They are, now, more aware of different cultures in the world, foreigners in Japan, racism in the world and Japan and other discrimination such as gay bashing and/or sexism. The students realised that every individual is unique including themselves, and every individual should respect one another. This tolerant attitude was overwhelmingly shown when it came to international or interracial marriages. The students became humanistic and understanding toward the differences that each person possesses.

Re-entry Process

A deeper humanistic understanding of open-minded attitude was a quality the students did not have prior to the sojourn. In this section, I will examine the third research question: how do the students think these changes affect their lives in Japan after the sojourn? I shall mainly explore the difficulties associated with the readaptation to Japanese society.

Re-entry Stress

One of the themes which emerged concerning how their additional changes affected their life after being back in Japan was re-entry stress. However, most said that it took only a short time for them to readapt to Japan. The longest period of readaptation was two

months while the shortest was one week. The average time was approximately one month.

The level of stress varied as well. Some students found the month of readapting easy and brief while others found it difficult and long. Many students said that readapting to the culture they were accustomed to was nothing compared to when they first experienced Canadian life. For example, Taizo did not even want to reassimilate but still found it quite easy. Yuri said it was not difficult to readapt to Japan at all in terms of what was going on in Japan because she kept in contact with her Japanese friends through letters and email. They had continually informed her of current events, trends and social issues. Stress came in different forms - one being difficulty adjusting.

Many students talked about what was difficult to adapt to or shocking to them upon returning to Japan. First of all, many students found Japan to be a foreign country when they returned. Everything was in Japanese and everyone was Japanese. The students were used to seeing different kinds of people and hearing English and other exotic languages. They were now unfamiliar with a homogeneous atmosphere.

Another element the students had to get used to was the size of things in Japan. Everything now seemed small although, when students first went to Canada, everything seemed dynamic and large. They were not used to small houses, rooms or streets. Hiroyasu said:

Although Japan is a developed country, I don't feel that the quality of life is high in Japan. Everything is crowded in Japan compared to Canada. It was frustrating to see all the small streets when I came back to Japan.

Hiroyasu meant quality of life in terms of space. Mari talked about nature. She said that Japanese people should enjoy nature more as Canadians do. In the future, she would like to live in the countryside with fewer people and cleaner air. The landscape of Canada was nice and Canadian people appreciated nature. Japanese people live in a concrete jungle. Other students talked about humidity. Some students could not even breathe for a while in Japan. Koyo, for example, noted that everyone in Japan smokes. The smoking bothered him after living in a non-smoker friendly environment like Canada. Like many European countries, Japan is not very strict when it comes to smoking.

Some students found everything different and were unable to get used to it. They

kept comparing things in Japan to things in Canada. Many students also said that time seemed to pass faster in Japan. Hiroyasu said that he felt that he was always rushed by something in Japan.

In terms of time, many students talked about the fast change in trends in Japan. Koyo was surprised that everyone had a cellular phone in Japan. It was difficult for the students to catch up with new trends when they returned. Kei said:

I couldn't believe how thin Japanese girls were and the change in fashion. I was used to casual style in Canada and I bought casual clothes in Canada. I also gained weight in Canada. I could not wear the clothes that I bought in Canada.

Nonetheless, some students did not want to have Japanese fashion anymore. They wanted to be different from other Japanese. They were now more aware of how quickly style changes in Japan and most were no longer willing to let it influence them.

Another issue they discussed was the manner of speech. The students had become assertive and more articulate in Canada as I mentioned in the Expression and Communication section. They had to change their way of speaking and it was frustrating for them. They were told to speak more softly and indirectly which is the Japanese way. They also had to practice speaking kei-go (honorific language). Koyo said:

I couldn't get used to kei-go and being the same as everyone else. I also realised that I had become very articulate and knew I would be hated by other Japanese if I had kept insisting on my opinions.

The students did not realise that they had become more articulate and had forgotten honorific language in Canada until after their return.

Another issue was changing attitudes toward the educational system in Japan. Many students were bothered now by the atmosphere of the classes in Japan. Hitomi said that the class is too big, with one teacher and a thousand students. It also began to annoy sojourners that Japanese university students are not as hard working. They had become serious about studying; university in Japan seemed very dull to them now. In terms of the quality of students in Japan, Tomoki said that Japanese students were not friendly when he went to a new class. Canadians smile and welcome other people more in classes. Furthermore, the students missed Canada's democratic system. For instance, Hideyo once told a professor his opinion and the professor called him rude. The students were troubled

with undemocratic educational environment in Japan.

Another stress was re-interacting with old friends. Many students did not know how to deal with their friends who did not attend the program. Their friends had not changed while they were in Canada but they had. Many students felt that they were not especially welcomed home. Many of them said that their friends did not understand them anymore. In addition to that, the student sojourners had become more independent. They had problems with groupism. Nami said:

To me, more qualities were added to me. But to my friends, I had changed. They criticised me and didn't accept me. It was very stressful. Japanese girls did everything together. I didn't want to do the same thing as others in the group and told them to do it on their own. It shocked them.

Their friends did not like their newly acquired Canadian qualities. Some students thought that their friends were jealous because they had lived in Canada and the friends had not. Toshio was too proud of being Canadianised to let his friends bother him. However, Masa was very disappointed in his Japanese friends:

I realised that Japanese friendship is not sincere. We never argued or talked about how we really felt. Since my Canadian friends were always honest and respected the differences when we didn't agree on something, I could not respect my Japanese friends anymore. It was very frustrating.

As he compared the friendships in Canada to those in Japan, he did not like his superficial Japanese friends. He had talked to Canadian friends about things honestly as I discussed in the Restrained Society: Japan and Open Society: Canada.

Some students were disappointed in their Japanese friends because the friends did not want to hear about Canada. Hitoshi said that none of his friends were interested in what he had to say about Canada. He kept referring to Canada and his friends got tired of that. On the other hand, some students were the only ones who had never lived abroad before they went to Canada. Now, they can talk about Canada and North America. They compare the USA and Canada sometimes. For instance, Noriyo's friends were all returning students and she can be at par with them now. Nonetheless, overall, the students were frustrated about their friends.

As well, some students did not get along with their parents. Taka who lives at home with his parents said:

I live with my parents. I didn't get along with my parents. I was independent in Canada and my roommates and I were in an equal relationship. However, my parents and I were in the hierarchy relationship because my father is very traditional. I couldn't stand the unequal relationship that made me obey my parents. It was very stressful.

Many students who lived at home faced similar stress. They had their own space in Canada and were used to being independent and were no longer used to being told what to do by their parents. Some had already moved out of their parents' house or decided to move out in the near future. In summary, the students had difficulties due to their change. These changes were recognised by other people such as their family members and friends.

Changes Perceived by Other People

I asked the students if other people said anything about their change. Many students were told they had changed while others were told they had not. Those students who were told that they had not changed were previously international students (kikoku-shijo) or admitted that they had been a little different from other Japanese people to begin with; therefore, people did not think that they had changed dramatically.

I will start with the positive comments given by other people. Overall, more parents appreciated the change than friends. Kosaku said that someone, who he could not recall, said that he seemed more sophisticated. He assumed that he became confident and his posture and attitude changed. Junichi's friends said that he became more laid back. He was always nervous before he went to Canada. I assume it also has something to do with confidence. Koyo commented that other people said that he had become more independent. Ken's friends stated that he had become more gentle (gentle man). Taka reported that his female friends said that he had changed for the better. He associates this with his change in attitude toward women. Koyo's friends were surprised that he now studied harder. He spends more time alone studying. Many of the students' parents are very happy with their English ability. Hiroyasu's family thinks he is cheeky when he speaks English at home sometimes. They suppose that he is trying to show it off. He, however, knows that they are happy about it. Miyo said something similar:

My parents are happy that I speak English well now. I showed them the video tape from Canada and when they saw me speaking to my roommates in English, they were very impressed.

Furthermore, many students talked about their family's trust toward them. For example, Hiroyasu's family bought a dish washer after they discussed the quality of life in Canada. The family trusts him and is so proud of him that they actually bought that. Kei's family believes that she accepts other people's opinion of her and other issues as constructive now. Yuka's parents were also happy that she is now helpful to them because she had lived away from home for the first time and knew what it was like to fend for herself. The students' families were very happy with their children's maturity. However, of course, they sometimes gave them a little advice as they praised them.

I will discuss the negative comments now. More friends were critical of their change and it was hard for friends to accept them. Many students talked about groupism and assertiveness. Kosaku said that some friends thought that he had become obnoxious. He believed that he had become more articulate and confident, hence, thinks that they are jealous. Hitoshi's friends commented that he is Westernised in a bad way. Akira expressed everything he thought honestly to his friends and it was far too direct for them. Toshio expresses 'yes' or 'no' clearly now, and his friends told him to be careful not to be so direct in Japan. Their friends were not accepting them as who they had become. It was very stressful for the students because their friends did not want to accept their change.

On the other hand, parents liked their change. There were only a few problems with parents. Taka's parents thought that he was now too laid back. He said earlier that he did not want to be told what to do at home and he probably did not listen to them as much. Kei said that, when she told her parents that she wanted to live in Vancouver or in a foreign country, they did not understand why. I assume that her parents understand but do not want to talk about it because she just came back from Canada.

In addition to positive and negative comments, some students received neutral responses. Kozue's friends said something about her has changed but they did not know exactly what it was. Nami's friends think that she uses body language more when she speaks. When I was interviewing the students, I noticed that many students were using more gestures, especially with their hands. Some students' facial expressions also reminded me of Canadian people. These changes are not necessarily good or bad.

There were also some students who said that they were not commented on about

change or were told they had not changed at all. As I said at the beginning of this section, some students were different from other Japanese prior to the sojourn, such as being direct. Yuri said that, every time she came back from a sojourn, nobody had ever said that she had become Americanised or changed. She said that she was and could be herself in Canada due to multiculturalism, so she did not change so much. Kosaku reported that his friends said his appearance had not changed although they expected him to gain weight. Concerning weight gain, for female students, it is always looked down upon for them; whereas for male students, it was not a big issue. Obviously, these students who did not receive negative comments about themselves from others had an easier time readjusting.

Overall, both the students and other people felt the students had changed in Canada. Although there were positive comments as well, the students had to go through some stressful re-entry processes of trying to explain, defend or readjust themselves according to how people reacted to their changes, and how they in turn reacted to those people. In the next section, I will discuss ways of overcoming the difficulties after the sojourn.

Bicultural Person

Many students had to do things in a traditional way back in Japan. They had to return to the Japanese way whether they liked it or not in order to be accepted as an adult in Japan. Hitoshi said that, without reverting to the Japanese way in Japan, you cannot survive. Japanese society does not like anything that stands out and Kei tried not to do anything differently from other Japanese. Toshio had a habit of using English words with a Japanese pronunciation when he returned. He tried not to use them because he did not want to be thought of as cheeky or trying to show his English ability. Concerning cheekiness, Nami kept using the word "cheeky":

I regret that I was too cheeky in Canada. Because I found myself and wanted to express myself, I was a little too cheeky. Now, I am back to reality and I should refrain myself a little.

Nami's parents told her not to be cheeky. She thinks that she should not be too assertive or insist on her opinions too much. Japanese people like to get along with other people and do not like to argue. When young people argue with seniors, they are considered to be very rude no matter how right they are. Japanese people have to know how to be silent

according to the situation. To the Western society it might seem as though people are killing their individuality, however, it is the way in Japan. Koyo also is proud to be who he is but he does not want to be considered selfish. He knows how to get along with other Japanese people. For example, honorific language, i.e. kei-go is very important when it comes to getting along with other people in Japan. Mari had to restudy kei-go when she came back from Canada for a job hunt.

Their attitude toward kei-go also had changed in Canada. Many students did not like it anymore. Kosaku said:

In Japan, people have to use kei-go. That makes people wear masks. In Canada, there is not such a strictly structured language. Japanese people have hon-ne (true feelings that are not expressed to other people) and tate-mae (untrue feelings that are expressed to other people). In English, there is not such a strict language.

Many students had some kind of resistant feeling toward it. They can speak kei-go as a technique, but in their heart they do not really like using it. Junichi said that younger people always have to speak it because of senpai-kohai (senior-junior) relationship in Japan. It is humbling to speak it when s/he does not respect the older person. Many students wished that they could speak to older people casually in Japan like people in Canada do.

Some students, however, did not mind it so much. They feel a little resistance to speak kei-go but they do not mind it because it is, after all, the Japanese way. Yuri said it is a Japanese mannerism and culture so it is important to do it in Japan. Although Taka used to dislike the system, he accepts it as Japanese culture now after living in Canada.

I further asked the students what they would think about younger people not speaking to them in kei-go. Many students became more tolerant about it. Many students said that Japan is changing in that respect and many young people nowadays do not speak kei-go anyway. Many students would use kei-go in order not to offend older people. However, they can accept younger people speaking casually to them. The reason is that they became used to Canada's non-hierarchy way and they wish that they could speak casually to older people. Mari said that people have to speak kei-go when the person is six months older or one year older depending on their grades (school year). In Canada, when people were two years older or even more, she spoke casually. She wishes that people could be more friendly and casual regardless of age, and wondered what makes older

people so superior. As Mari did, other people changed their attitude toward young people speaking casually as well. Kei used to get mad at younger people who did not speak kei-go to her, but she does not mind it now so much. Koyo summarised:

I never used to wonder about hierarchy and kei-go. I don't mind using it but I sometimes wonder about using it. However, Japanese people are changing and more people want a more casual relationship. Less kei-go is used and less hierarchy system is emphasised. Japan is changing.

Koyo, of course, does not mind when younger people are casual. He thinks that Japan is changing because many younger people speak casually and he also wants to speak casually.

Some people who are still traditional said that they cannot tolerate younger people speaking casually to them. Rei still thinks that it is inappropriate to not use kei-go when addressing older people. Recently, many younger people who she has encountered speak to her casually and she does not like it. Many of the students felt that because they have to speak kei-go to older people, younger people in turn should have to do the same to them. Some students would like to speak casually to older people, like they did in Canada, however they still continue to use kei-go. For instance, Taizo said:

I am not used to younger people speaking casually to me. It contradicts my feelings toward myself wanting to speak casually to older people but I am simply not used to it.

Although it contradicts their true feelings, culturally they feel insulted when spoken to casually by someone who is younger. The students still use kei-go although they do not endorse it. In short, they do so in order to be accepted and respected in Japan.

The ability to alternate mannerisms, behaviour, and the like depending on which culture you are in is a "bicultural" quality. For example, some students use kei-go as a technique: consciously use it to get by in Japan. Others talked about using direct expressions when speaking English. Some students emphasised that they try not to do things that might offend another culture. Ginji said, for example, that he would shake hands with North Americans when he meets them rather than bow like in Japan. Similarly, Taka explained the importance of not being rude:

An exchange student in Japan said that it was strange to eat everything on the plate at a cafeteria. In Japan, however, not many people leave even a grain of rice on the plate. I told him that, in Japan, he is the one who is strange. Therefore, I would do

whatever is considered acceptable in the country I was in, and would not criticise their ways as long as it was not too extreme.

He learned that in order not to be rude, it is best to do only things that are accepted in the culture or country that he is in. It is rude to go to a foreign country and insult that country's customs. People should try their best to accept the culture or customs of their host, providing they are not too extreme such as killing or abusing another person. He said "when in Rome, do as the Romans."

In summary, the students became bicultural in a way that allows them to maintain new attitudes and the ability to switch between traditional Japanese and Canadian ways. This bicultural quality leads to a multicultural way of thinking which one can apply to any country or culture.

Maintaining English

As they tried to keep their biculturalness, they also attempted to maintain their English. This leads us to the latter part of the first research question: how do the students think they learned English and what do they do to maintain it in Japan? I asked the students if and how they are maintaining their English ability acquired in Canada. Many students said that, in Japan, it is very difficult to maintain English. However, the students managed to attempt to maintain their skills in many different ways. For instance, some students now belong to English conversation clubs. Some students converse with friends who are native English speakers. Others are buddies for the exchange students at the university. Hana works as a volunteer translator. Some brave students just talk to foreigners on the street in English while others go to an English conversation school or take courses. Something I found unique to the program was that some students speak to their friends who also attended the program in English sometimes. Many students said that they call their ex-roommates from Canada. They continue their friendship with their ex-roommates and maintain their English at the same time. I would like to emphasise again that friendship is very important to acquiring both English and culture as well as maintaining it.

Different skills require different methods of practice. In terms of speaking skills, Mari tries to think to herself in English while Yohei speaks English to his pet. Many students also talk to themselves in English. In terms of listening skills, many watch

Hollywood or English movies. Others watch North American TV shows or videos as well as English news. Many watch daily English conversation shows on educational channels or listen to English conversation tapes. The students try to watch movies on TV without subtitles or in English. In terms of writing, Tomoki told me that he had just written a test in English before the interview. Some classes demand the students write the exam in English. However, most of all, many students said they e-mail or write letters to their ex-roommates and friends from Canada. Computers are also a useful tool in maintaining English via e-mail and the Internet. In addition to that, some students read English newspapers and books. Hitomi was presently reading the books that she had brought back from Canada. She also read some English literature for a class. Hence, the students are trying very hard to maintain their English skills although it is very difficult in Japan. While this section focused on their changes and how these changes affected their lives back in Japan, the next section will focus on their new constructed identity.

New Constructed Identity

The students constructed a new identity during their sojourn as they were becoming acculturated into Canadian society. Not only did they learn and acquire Canadian culture but also they added more perspectives and identities to their own. They have so many mixed feelings and identities inside of them. They have an identity that is in between Japanese and Canadian which is seen as bicultural. It is quite confusing to show multiple identities. However, I will categorise those identities into three: Canadian identity, Japanese identity, and International identity. International identity includes Asian identity and the combined identity of both Canadian and Japanese identities.

Canadian Identity

Many students talked about how close they feel toward Canada. They said that when they hear names such as Vancouver, Canada or North America, they pay attention right away and get excited. Hana said Canada is not foreign anymore. Koyo specifically used the word 'identity' and said that he even thinks that he has a Canadian identity in him now. Many students like Vancouver very much. Some students were actually planning to go back to Vancouver for the summer holiday or to live there or study there in the future. Toshio said:

I love Vancouver. I am into ice hockey now. I got so excited when they came to Tokyo. I went to see it in Japan. I miss hockey games and other things from Vancouver.

Hockey is a Canadian national sport. Many talk about it passionately. He went to see many games and became a huge fan of the sport. Hiroyasu also had very strong feelings about Canada:

My English friend always tries to correct my Canadian accent. I like my Canadian accent and he upsets me when he says English English is right and Canadian English is wrong.

He is proud to have a Canadian accent. In fact, many students were proud to be Canadianised. Furthermore, Taka used to think that Canadians were very different. He still thinks they are different but he has found more similarities. Canada was very foreign to the students before they went to Vancouver but it is now their second home.

Many students felt quite comfortable in Canada. Kei said that different kinds of people coexist in Vancouver and it was easy for her to live there. Other students said it was because they can be themselves and say what they want to say. Junichi feels that he does not always have to wear a mask in Canada. Overall, the students are attached to Canada, consider Canada a second home, and realise that they have a Canadian identity now.

Japanese Identity

Although the students found their Canadian identity and felt very close to Canada, many students also discovered their Japanese identity during the sojourn. They had never thought about who they were internationally before they left Japan having always been surrounded by only Japanese living in a homogeneous environment. They were the majority and had never even considered themselves Asians. They had never looked at Japanese tradition or culture from an outsiders perspective before. They were never asked questions about Japan or heard criticisms directed toward Japan. Many students realised that they are Japanese no matter where they go in the world and they cannot change that fact. Some students became more Japanese in Canada because they found their Japanese identity while others began to criticise Japan and hope for improvements. They had mixed feelings and talked about Japan from both a Japanese and an international perspective.

Many students realised in Canada that, although they were Japanese, they did not

know much about Japan. Many students said that when asked about Japan, they knew very little and found themselves feeling foolish. They now would like to know more about Japan after feeling embarrassed for their ignorance. Yuri thought that she should have studied Japanese society. Koyo said:

Canadians ask many deep questions. I was asked about temples in Kyoto and I realised that I didn't know much about them. I used to think that I knew everything about Japan but I realised that I didn't know much at all. I wouldn't have realised it had I not left Japan and looked at Japan from the outside. I used to think it was uncool to go to temples but I would like to go now. I want to know more about Japan from a Japanese person's perspective.

Many students were asked about their religion and could not answer because they did not have a particular one. As the students talked to their Canadian host families and friends, they realised that they should know more about themselves. Koyo said that he can pretend to be Canadian but can never be. Some students want to learn a Japanese tradition such as an instrument or tea ceremony to show foreigners Japanese tradition. Showing culture is as important as talking about it. However, some students were not embarrassed with not knowing so much about Japanese culture and Japan. Kozue said:

I think that not knowing about Japan is normal. So I would honestly say that young people including myself don't know much about some things. Not every Japanese person knows everything about Japan. But I will look into things more in the future.

They are not embarrassed about it because not every Japanese person is expected to know everything about Japan. They, however, did say that they want to look into things more and want to have a basic knowledge of Japan in terms of politics, economy, geography, language, literature, society, traditions, and culture.

I asked every student whether or not they can accept criticism directed toward Japan by foreigners. Many students would accept criticisms toward Japan when warranted. As long as it is fair, they would accept it. Some students emphasised that they had always been like that. However, many students added that, if they generalise Japan or other countries because of one incident or culture, they would disagree. Tomoki said:

No one culture is better than another. If they criticise Japanese culture, I might say something. But I became objective and accept fair criticisms.

Many students used to get emotional when foreigners criticised Japan in any way.

However, they can now look at things from both perspectives. Junichi also knows that people's perspectives are culturally based and can discuss things without getting emotional.

This question also lead to students talking about Westernisation in Japan and the world. Hitoshi said:

I think everything in the world is more Westernised. Some things are good but not everything should be Westernised. I consider both international criticism and traditional Japanese ways and want to be fair to both, not only the Western way.

Hitoshi believed that Japan has good qualities that should be kept. Taka similarly stated:

I think that Japanese people have been feeling inferior to Europeans for a long time since the Modernisation era. Western things are supposed to be better than Japanese. I realised that Japan has a nice quality of its own and people should recognise it.

Many students discovered both good and bad qualities about Japan. Next, I will talk about these good and bad qualities that the students discussed.

Although many students became objective and fair, some became more critical of Japan while some found wonderful things about Japan. There was a tendency for the students who used to love Japan to become more critical, and the students who already had a critical image of Japan to become more respectful toward Japan. Those who used to see only good qualities now found many negative ones. Nami used to be ethno-centric and thought that Japan was great. She said that she discovered lots of bad things about Japan such as the social system. Tomoki realised that you have to worry about other people's eyes too much in Japan. Koyo does not see Japan as the best, he is now fair. Kei always thinks about Canadian ways as well as Japanese ways, and thinks that many aspects of Japanese society can be improved applying Canadian values and ideas.

Those who used to be critical of Japan discovered many good qualities about Japan. They began to appreciate certain aspects of it. For instance, some students said that food in Japan is good. Other students said that the convenience and safety are great. Some students said that Japanese people care about other people's feelings and treat each other politely. Miyo thinks that little tiny things are cute and convenient in Japan. Some students talked about the service spirit of the service industry in terms of caring about the little things. Hana used to want to live only in a foreign country and work but she is thinking about working in Japan too now because she realised Japan is not so bad. Miyo used to criticise Japanese

groupism and closedness. She now thinks it has both good and bad characteristics such as groupism's ability to create a close community.

Some students feel more comfortable in Japan because it is their home country. Hitomi said that it is easier for her to know what people are thinking in general. Some students especially appreciated the comfort using Japanese language. In English, they still have to think about what to say and it is difficult. Nonetheless, the students have very mixed feelings. Hitomi and Rei said that because there is no language problem in Japan and they lived in Japan for longer, they feel more comfortable there. However, they sometimes feel very oppressed and restrained. Yuri also said that, because of the language, she feels more relaxed in Japan. However, she wishes that Japan were a multicultural society. Hence, there is no language problem, but at the same time, they do not have complete freedom to say whatever it is that they want to say.

In summary, the students looked at Japan externally and discovered their Japanese identity. They realised that they did not know as much about Japan as they would have liked, found both good and bad qualities of it, and became objective toward it. Although they had complaints about Japan and wanted it to improve, the students admit that they will always call Japan home.

International Identity

Another kind of identity the students talked about other than Japanese and Canadian was the international identity. As I mentioned at the beginning of this section, international identity includes a combined identity of Japanese and Canadian, and Asian identity. Many students said that they do not only think about Japan anymore when they perceive things. For example, Rei whose major is international politics compares her Canadian experiences to Japanese ways in terms of politics. They compare Japanese and Canadian ways to try to see the bigger picture. However, I have to note that this international identity is different from bicultural personality. Although, in bicultural personality, the students alternate between two cultures, the students now have combined perspectives of two cultures in the international identity.

The first step toward international identity was for the students to realise that Japan belongs to Asia (Asian identity). Tomoki who made many Asian friends in Canada said that

it was easier to communicate with other Asians. He found many similarities between Japanese and other Asian cultures based on Confucianism:

When I was talking to a Korean friend in Canada, we agreed that hierarchy system or honorific language is not bad. It's a Japanese culture and other Asian cultures are very similar. Japanese people should respect other Asian countries more rather than only looking at Western society. I used to dislike hierarchy system but I like it now. It is Asian.

He criticised that Japanese people tend to forget that Japan belongs to Asia since Japan always focuses on the West. Hitoshi similarly said that Japan is part of Asia and Japan should co-operate with other Asian countries more. Aya noticed that other Asians had a similar sense of humour to Japanese. Many students would like to study Chinese and/or want to explore Asia now. The students realised that they are treated as Asian in international settings. In summary, instead of looking down on Asia, Japan should be more involved with it. Japan tends to look at Western society too much. Tomoki concluded that English words are everywhere but good Asian quality should be respected.

The students seemed to know how to behave in international settings and emphasised the importance of friendliness. Being friendly, having mutual respect and confidence is the key to survival in foreign countries. Miyo said that, even when language and culture is different, she knows that there are more similarities than differences among human beings. She said to be international means to treat each other as equal human beings. Another step toward internationalisation was interest as opposed to ignorance. Kei said that when she talks about Canada or international settings, her friends are not interested. Similarly, Koyo said that when he talks to his Japanese friends, he feels very international because he knows much more about foreign countries while he is often surprised by their ignorance. The students are confident and feel international because they survived in Canada and think that it would improve others to discover as well that human beings are the same despite their cultural or language differences.

Another international quality they discussed was their attitudes when they watch the news. The students are more interested in international news now. Taizo is particularly interested in international news rather than just national news. Hitoshi is more interested in news about Asia because it has a direct impact on Japan. However, most of all, the way the

students watch the news has changed. Akira can watch the news more objectively. He tries to be fair and less ethno-centric. Some students especially, mentioned that when they watch news, they compare Japan and North America. Hitomi used to only look at Japan but she always connects Japan to other countries. Ginji criticised Japanese news media saying that Japanese media is biased and one perspective is accepted. He thinks that even the media offers only one integrated information that is being controlled by the government or some other power. North American media is much more democratic while freedom of speech is more widely utilized by its citizens.

Furthermore, some students became concerned about how Japan is situated in international news. Nami used to think Japan was great and she never criticised Japan in any way. Now, she is fair and criticises Japan as part of a global society. The students' way of perceiving what is happening in the world and how Japan is involved in it has changed. They are concerned when they watch the news knowing that they might not be getting the full story. The students who constructed new ideas, perceptions and identities while in Canada maintained them in Japan.

In summary, the students have multiple, new constructed identities within them. The way they perceive things such as news is different, and they always compare and try to see things from various perspectives. They constructed this new identity in the Rits Program. The organisation and the system of the program influenced what and how they learned, and how they changed during the sojourn. Finally, in the next section, I will conclude this chapter with students' perceptions toward the Rits Program itself.

Students' Impression of the Program

The impression of the program deals with the final research question: what do the students think about the program and how do the students think the program can be improved? The students already discussed their feelings toward the program repeatedly with different issues. Therefore, I will focus on the students' reaction when I asked them this particular question at the end of the interview.

Since the program has 100 Japanese students, and they spend quite a long time with each other, all the students talked about other Japanese participants in the program. They also talked about Canadian friends and roommates in the residence and on campus. Themes

of living conditions and the people around them daily during the sojourn lead to the importance of friendship.

Residence and Roommates

Many students said that living in a residence with both young Japanese and Canadian students was a learning experience. Taizo said it is something people have to experience to know and something people cannot learn from a book. Tomoki said that the residence was the place to learn about co-living, sharing, and communicating. He also said that Japanese people seem very different when they live together.

Furthermore, many students said that their roommates were the most influential people during the sojourn. Some students were previously very worried about living with Canadians as roommates. They thought it would be impossible to live with other people let alone people from different cultures. However, they became good friends with their Canadian roommates and are still good friends with them today.

Some students said that they learned how to solve problems with their roommates. First, some students could not tell their roommates to clean up when it was their turn. Even when they did, it was in a Japanese way. Hitomi said:

When I didn't like some things that my roommates did, I told them a long reason and then told them to stop it. They said, "why didn't you just tell us to stop it?" and I learned to say the conclusion first.

Japanese people are not used to verbalising or complaining. However, Kozue learned to have fights with Canadian roommates. She said that fights are not bad things in Canada.

Many students mentioned their Asian roommates. For some students, it was easier to interact with Asians because their culture is similar. Aya said that her Canadian roommates were all Asians and their ways of speaking was indirect like Japanese people. She also communicated with her Asian roommates using Chinese characters. In summary, the students live in residences and share facilities with other Japanese and Canadian students. Hence, roommates are the ones that they interact with most often; therefore, they are the most influential people during the sojourn.

Friends

Many students made numerous friends in Canada. Some students made friends

with both Canadians and the Japanese who attended the program. Other students made friends with more Canadians or more Japanese. Tomoki made friends with Chinese Canadians and said that he could understand “Chinglish” more easily than traditional English. Hitoshi said that his Canadian friend taught him that life is beautiful. Hitomi said that her Canadian friends encouraged her. She was very pessimistic but her Canadian friends said that she was doing great and she felt better. Many students said that they made friends with Japanese. Toshio said that they share the same experiences and they will remain life-long-friends.

I believe that friendship is very important during and after the sojourn. With intimate friends, people learn so much more including different cultures, language, behaviour, manners, and different perspectives. Hitomi used to be very shy around people before she came to Canada but learned to open up to her friends. She learned to be honest and sociable to have sincere friends.

In terms of friends, the students talked about friends who were interested in Japan. Some students thought that different kinds of Asians were more interested in Japan. Asian students always talked to them and made them feel comfortable. Tomoki said:

It was easier to communicate with Canadians who were interested in Japan or something about Japan such as Manga (Japanese comic books). It was not easy to communicate with people who I had nothing in common with.

Some students appreciated the Rits Program because, fortunately, they were surrounded by Canadians who were interested in Japan such as their roommates. The students usually made friends with people who were curious about Japan or had something in common. Common interests are very important for friendship.

Other Japanese Students

In terms of friends, every student talked about other participants in the Rits Program in the same year. Surprising to myself who thought that there were too many “nosy” Japanese people around in the program, some students liked the presence of other Japanese students. The most representative comment among them was that there were too many Japanese students but they were fun at the same time. Hence, the students are not completely saying that the other Japanese students’ presence was ideal. However, I thought

more students would complain about other Japanese students more furiously.

I will start with a negative comment since many people did complain and made suggestions for improvement to the program. Many students said this program is like a small Japanese community within a foreign country. Some students did not like the rumours that spread within the program. They wished that they had had more interactions with Canadians. Kozue suggested that it would have been better if every Japanese student stayed separately in different places during the stay. Furthermore, Miyo thought that 100 was too many while 20 would be better. She said that all the students that she knew agreed.

In terms of positive comments about other Japanese students, Hana explained:

I think there were too many Japanese people in the program but it was good for someone like me. It was my first time abroad and the protected environment was nice. The environment was a good first step.

For the students who were abroad for the first time, many Japanese students appreciated that they were in a protected environment. Japanese students can help each other and be great friends who understand each other since they are going through similar steps. Those who had previously lived abroad can be very encouraging to the students who had had no experiences abroad. Yuri said:

I was sometimes a good adviser for the students who went abroad for the first time. People who came abroad for the first time were home sick and stressed, so I listened to them and advised them.

Since Yuri had lived in the USA for two years previously, she was a good advisor for other students. They can help each other during the re-entry process back in Japan as well.

In summary, many students were in a continuum between the two different types of students: those who wanted to improve their English seriously and immerse themselves in a Canadian environment, and those who had never been abroad and wanted to stay closer to a Japanese environment. The first group tends to avoid the Japanese environment while the latter appreciates it. These different attitudes toward the Ritsumeikan environment varied depending on previous experiences abroad.

There were also many different levels of English ability prevalent. Yuri said that many of the Japanese students had previous experiences abroad and spoke English well. She thought it was a good environment. On the other hand, Taka said:

I think that there is a big discrepancy among students' English ability. Some people only have 420 for TOEFL and some people have 600. The program mixes returning students who had lived abroad and regular students, and expect us to do the same. It's not fair. They should integrate the score or make it into an ESL program.

The discrepancy in the score of TOEFL will always be a problem. The pre-departure orientation and academic writing courses should be strengthened. The students should begin encouraging each other even before the sojourn starts since these Japanese students play the main part during the sojourn.

As Japanese students influence each other tremendously during the sojourn, many students learned how to deal with Japanese people by living with them. It was the first time for many of the students to be in such close quarters with the same people and many learned the art of human relations. They learned how to get along with various Japanese people who were in the same boat as they. Kei learned how to protect her privacy as well as other students' and not depend on each other too often in difficult situations. The students learned not only how to deal with Canadians or different cultures but also how to deal with Japanese individuals who were also in the same program.

Reflection and Recommendation to Go Abroad

Many students now recommended other people to go abroad because these students valued their experience in Canada. Noriyo recommends that more people go abroad because Japan is too small. Hana emphasised that going abroad is something you really have to experience for yourself, not in a class or from a book. Taizo wanted more young people to go abroad while they are more flexible and open. Yuri said:

I am recommending other people to go abroad. My best friend is in a foreign country now because of my influence. She thought I grew up and she also wanted to be international like me. As such, returning students can influence other people.

Taka said that meeting various people in Japan is also possible. However, it is easier to do it in a foreign country and he wants other Japanese people to interact with various kinds of people to learn many things.

Furthermore, Koyo said that you need to reflect on what happened during the sojourn. He returned to Japan and realised that he had experienced many things and that he had changed. Everything was fresh and he acquired so many things that did not exist in him before. He knows this because he reflected on himself from before and after he went to

Canada. When he lived in Canada, he did not have time to reflect on himself because he had so many things to deal with. However, he found the time upon returning from Canada being as how Japan was his home country and his life was back to normal.

Rits Program

As they recommended other students to go abroad, I asked the students whether or not they would recommend the Rits Program itself. The answer was half yes and half no. Many students would recommend it because everything was new, first time, and fresh. Hiroyasu said that everything including his roommate, English, different people's values, living with a group of Japanese, really affected him. Many students also praised the program and said that it was one of the greatest experiences in their university life.

However, the students also gave lots of constructive criticisms. For example, the students talked about Japanese roommates and the other 100 participants in the program. The students had to deal with tremendous stress including language barriers, human relations, culture shock and home sickness. The students with negative opinions of the program felt that there was no support system for them during the sojourn such as a counsellor who could understand their pain.

Furthermore, the students discussed the content of the study in the program. For instance, many students thought that the assignments were too numerous. They had to stay in their room to study all the time. They wanted more time to interact with Canadians and/or wanted some time to study or audit classes of their own interests at a university in Canada. They said that not every student had the same interests. For example, the Intercultural Communication course that offered the opportunity to learn about different cultures was beneficial for many students. However, some students did not like it. Toshio said:

I did not particularly like the Intercultural Communication course because the course content was something I could experience outside of the classroom and learn myself. I would have rather taken a course in my field. Every student was from a different faculty and we should have had the opportunity to attend a course in our own speciality. The course did not academically stimulate me.

He wanted an opportunity to audit a course in his field. However, I do not think that he had time to audit such a course due to the work load assigned by the Ritsumeikan Program, and the lack of quality free time.

Although some students wanted more classes in their own field like Toshio, most of the students enjoyed the courses designed for the program. Mari, for instance, was in her fourth year of university when I interviewed her. In Japan, university students begin job hunting in this year and hope to find a job before the second semester commences. When I interviewed her, she had already found a job that she liked working for a Dutch trading company. She had always wanted to work at an international company and hoped to work in a foreign country someday. She felt that the Intercultural Communication course had helped her to attain her ideal job:

What I studied in the Intercultural Communication class helped me find a job I wanted. In the course, I learned that respecting each other's culture means benefits for both the other culture and your own. I applied that theory in my job search and talked to prospective employers about how the respecting of each other's company would benefit both companies. And how co-operation is frequently more effective than competition.

She referred to what she learned in the course and her Canadian life. Apart from the course, the students talked more about the benefits that they received from studying in the Rits Program in general. Miyo concluded:

Not everything was great. I learned that human beings are complicating, various people exist including both Japanese and Canadians. I learned how to deal with that. The amount of the study was also too much. However, I am still glad that I went.

Many students similarly said that all the bad and difficult things that happened seem positive in retrospect.

Advice to the Incoming Student Sojourners

Finally, I asked the students if the program was worth attending. Some students said that the program was a little different from what they had expected. However, everyone of them said that the experiences in Canada were great and everything was worth trying. I then asked them to give advice to the up and coming student sojourners. Some students emphasised the importance of pre-departure preparation. Noriyo said:

I want people to prepare a lot before they go abroad. I don't think they should expect to learn English just by living there. They have to study hard even before they leave for the country.

Some students emphasised the importance of immersing themselves in a Canadian

environment during the sojourn. Hiroyasu advised that, although it is easier to hang out with Japanese students, you should try and avoid that by being with Canadians for the limited time in Canada that you have. Junichi thinks everyone should live in a residence like the Totem Park in order to get away from other Japanese students because it will allow students to experience more of the different culture and change themselves for the better. The students should learn and absorb good qualities from other cultures. On the other hand, Hana advised the new sojourners to make good friends not only with Canadians but also with their fellow sojourners. Akira said that it is up to each student to make the most of the program. He personally did not feel that there were too many Japanese and felt that it was up to the individual to choose whether to hang out with Japanese or Canadians. The students feel that every experience both good and bad, turned out to be a worthwhile experiences. They learned to appreciate things that they took for granted and learned to make their own choices in order to make the most of any situation. Those students are the ones who really understand international communication. They are the international people with multicultural identities.

CHAPTER 4: DISCUSSION

The main purpose of this study was to understand what the students learned during the sojourn. My focus was primarily in terms of new perspectives and intercultural communication, how the students felt about their learning and the program itself, how students changed as a result of the sojourn, and how they dealt with the new, acquired identity upon returning home. Furthermore, I was interested in how students from a homogeneous society change when they study at a university that is in a multicultural society. In this chapter, I will review literature related to the above before returning to my research questions.

Overall Interpretation and Literature Review

Impacts of Study Abroad Programs

First of all, I will introduce a similar study in which the participants were European students (British, French, German, Swedish and American students). In the book titled Impacts of Study Abroad Programmes on Students and Graduates by Oppen, Teichler, and Carlson (1990), they found similar outcomes of organised study abroad programs to my study. In terms of students' experiences abroad in general, their participants also stayed in a foreign country for one academic year while they were fully registered at home. The students in their study became more knowledgeable about the host country by communicating with natives. Their study shows that the students learned much more by interacting with the natives rather than by literature or lectures. Discussion and conversation with inhabitants are the most frequent and best source of information about the host nationals and cultures. They argue that dormitory life was very important to learn about the country and the students felt that their friends from the dormitories were important influences. Furthermore, the students in their study encountered many natives in extra-curricular activities. The best way to increase the knowledge about the culture and society of the host country is to socialize with native friends, to spend time "discussing and exchanging views with friends, going to parties, playing chess and the like" (p. 47). The students in their study as well as the Rits students, said that the most valuable experience was to have become friends with people in the host country. Friends are one of the most important sources to learn from during a sojourn and the administrators should find ways

to enhance the chance for the students to interact with the natives.

Opper et al. (1990) also found a change in the students' values regarding international issues, self-confidence, opinions, and attitudes. The students dissolved stereotyped views held prior to the study abroad period. Their attitudes toward other people and societies had changed. They acquired a desire to become acquainted with other countries, a respect for other people and countries, a readiness to judge their own country critically, a belief in the need for close international cooperation and concern for world-wide political developments. The students became somewhat critical toward their own country and their desire for international peace grew. They became positive, confident, and responsible. They further discuss that the effects of studying abroad upon personality, work style, social competence, the ability to adjust to unfamiliar situations and to deal with different kinds of people are the qualities needed by employers. Many students in their study, reported that studying abroad had been helpful in acquiring jobs.

Other findings of Opper et al. (1990) were also similar to outcomes of my study in terms of academic outcomes, foreign language outcomes and cultural outcomes. The students became aware of differences in the education system including learning process. They learn to look at things holistically and become more active. The students' academic performance or attitudes toward it change. They also found that the students became better at communicating in the host language. They reported that listening and speaking skills improved. They learn the politics, society, and culture of the host country and exchange opinions using the communicative language skill. Furthermore, they keep in contact with native friends after they return home.

As displayed above and from the interviews I have shown, study abroad programs have great outcomes. Opper et al. (1990)'s study reported findings on European and American students with a Western cultural background, while my study focused on Japanese students from the East. The studies' similar findings lead to the belief that the outcomes of organised (higher educational) study abroad programs' impact on students correspond in both East and West.

New Social Identity

Specific theories on social psychology fit the student sojourners' identity change. I

have to start with Tajfel's (1972a) social identity theory that claimed individuals acquire a social identity through belonging to a certain social group (Doise, 1998; Serino, 1998; Turner, 1981a). He argues that individuals compare their own group to others (intergroup comparison) and establish a difference which is in favour of their own group. It is how discrimination occurs. In terms of social identity, Turner contrasts it to personal identity. He contends that personal identity corresponds to interpersonal behaviour that is differentiation between the self and the others, and social identity corresponds to intergroup behaviour that is differentiation between groups or between "we" and "them." Doise postulates that personal identity can be considered to be a social representation which can be defined as an organising principle of symbolic relationships between individuals and groups. Different identity dynamics exist because not all social relationships in which people take part are equally present in our minds. Serino summarises that personal and social process, as well as, individual and group identities are closely connected.

Furthermore, researchers on social psychology explain the impact of culture on identity. Morales, Lopez-Saez and Vega (1998) focus on individualism and compared it to collectivism. Hui (1988) contends that individualism is just an individual tendency since subcultural variation among individuals within any culture exists. Triandis (1993) contends that there are two kinds of collectivism: vertical collectivism and horizontal collectivism. He uses Japan as an example; he claims that Japanese people are more submissive to ingroup authority which is the vertical collectivism, and other ingroup relationships are a fusion with ingroup identity. Markus and Kitayama (1991a) assert that individualist cultures are "independent self" cultures, and collectivist ones are "interdependent self" cultures. They contend that there are significant differences between both cultures when emotional experience is concerned. For instance, in independent self cultures, the most important emotions are ego-focused, their basis consists on people's internal attributes, and their function is to express their inner feelings. In contrast, in interdependent self cultures, emotions are focused on others. Shame and sympathy, sensitivity to others, an ability to take the perspective of the other and interdependence are important. Their function is to express the outcome of interpersonal relationships (Paez, Martinez-Toboada, Arrospeide, Insua & Ayestaran; 1998).

While Tajfel's social identity theory (1972a) deals with processes of intergroup comparison and relative weight of personal and social identity, by 1990, Hinkle and Brown (1990) claim that social identity theory (SIT) takes place mainly in collectivist, interdependent self cultures. Hinkle, Brown, and Ely (1992) empirically found that identification with the group and intergroup differentiation is significantly greater in collectivist cultures than individualist cultures. They argue that only collectivist cultures are concerned with the comparisons between other cultures. Morales et al. (1998) state that both individualists and collectivists discriminate in favour of their own group although individualists are less discriminatory. Individualists consider themselves as less discriminatory than collectivists. "Individualists interpret their allocating behaviour as a research for justice and a wish to share with the other group" (p. 209). Furthermore, individualists seek independence and are autonomous vis-a-vis the group. Individualists try to preserve their individual initiative such as beliefs. Paez et al. (1998) argue that "the importance of social identity is stronger in collectivistic and sociocentric cultures in comparison to individualistic and egocentric ones" (p. 213). They state that collectivistic cultures are that in which there is a stable relationship between the individuals and groups that they belong to, a subordination of individuals to the groups, and an adjustment between the person's objectives and the group's. There is a tendency that collectivists do not leave the group. On the other hand, individualistic cultures are those in which a person has a negotiable relationships with various groups. The individual's goals are more important than the group's goals and individualists may abandon these groups (Morales et al., 1992; Triandis, 1992, 1994; Triandis, Bontempo, Villareal, Asai & Lucca, 1988). Individual cultures emphasise a concept of the individual as a separate, autonomous, self-contained and independent being, and collectivist cultures stress a representation of an individual as an entity focusing on the individual's relationship with others, and connection to and dependence on the social context (Markus & Kitayama, 1991b). Furthermore, collectivistic cultures which positively value the group reinforce the perception of intragroup homogeneity, and individualistic cultures which positively value an autonomous individual reinforce the perception of ingroup variety. Collectivistic cultures underline the relationship between personal self-esteem and group self-esteem. The group identification

regulates the behaviour and the collectivists are more emotionally reactive to stimuli such as group threats.

The student sojourners in my study, are originally from a collectivistic culture which is homogeneous and in which members are expected to subordinate to the group rather than individuals' own feelings. Before the students came to Canada, some students questioned the collective society because they had to conform to the society and could not express themselves, while others had never questioned the Japanese way because they did not know anything else. They came to Canada and experienced the milieu of a multicultural environment where individual uniqueness was allowed and reinforced. Many students liked it more and became more individualistic or independent in their identity. On the other hand, some students also learned that collectivistic society was not such an unfavourable thing. Sharing with and caring for other members in the group can also be rewarding.

Although the student sojourners overall became bicultural and learned both the individual and collective ways and learned to switch or combine them, many students had difficulties because they had become more individualistic and felt that people around them were not accepting them for it. However, because of the collectivistic culture, they had learned to follow the Japanese way and readjusted themselves by conforming with others and using the honorific language which is necessary. In conclusion, the students went through the process of acculturation: they grew up in a collectivistic culture, went to an individualistic culture, and returned to a collectivistic culture. They can simultaneously look at both the positive and negative qualities in both collectivistic and individualistic cultures. They can perceive the things around them and/or what is happening globally from both an individualistic and collectivistic perspective and be able to choose the optimum way fairly. Their homogeneous and multicultural identities are now a part of who they are and what they have experienced and believe.

Culture Learning

Educators, especially educational anthropologists that focus on culture learning or culture acquisition, contend that the change in identity occurs because of culture learning. Pitman, Eisikovits and Dobbert (1989) contend that culture acquisition theory treats learners as active agents selecting options (LeVine, 1982; Gearing & Sangree, 1979).

Culture acquisition "is a concept that is much broader than schooling, than informal teaching and learning, than child raising, or even than cultural transmission" (p. 3). For humans, instructive and formal learning activity constitutes a minute part of the learning process. Instead, the structures and processes of the entire sociocultural life going on around learners are the major forces in learning. There are no separations between people and sociocultural patterns; therefore, the process of culture acquisition is a holistic one. For example, the young members of a society or a social group learn whole cultural patterns within the context of everyday life and they individualise and adapt these patterns by changing some of the elements or creating new ones. They further contend that the learners have to be exposed to the whole of culture in order for culture acquisition to result because it is only through such exposure that their knowledge completes the adaptation. What is learned is not sets of information or behavioural traits, but a set of relations taken as a whole that encompass complex ecological-social-cultural environment.

Many studies on culture learning or patterns of culture focused on children's behaviour, child life, and child development (Henry, 1960; Hilger, 1960; Mead, 1928; Whiting, 1963). We, human beings, learn a great deal of things in the earlier stage of life. Nonetheless, Pitman et al. (1989) argue that it is necessary to look beyond childhood to study how cultural patterns are acquired, transmitted, maintained, and adapted. Cultural knowledge, learners and the structure of socioecological systems are interactive components and cultural patterns are acquired via the actions and choices of the cultural members. These perspectives direct attention to persons of varying levels of cultural competence, and adults are also the learners in a community. Among studies of adult learners, there are two kinds of studies: the psychology of lifespan development, and age stratification and the life course. Life-span developmental psychologists such as Freud, Piaget, and Erikson posit an inherent structure to human development that is cumulative and irreversible and determined by prior structures. Those researchers contend that there is an underlying order in the human life course and chronological age is the most powerful organiser of adult development (Levinson, Darrow, Klein, Levinson & McKee, 1978; Levinson, 1986; Gilligan, 1977; Chodorow, 1974, 1978; Birren & Cunningham, 1985; Gutmann, 1977). On the other hand, sociologist and social psychologists, namely age

stratification sociologists focus on social processes as the determinants of developmental change. They use the word "life course" instead of "life-span" in developmental psychology. Life course refers to age-related transitions that are socially created, socially recognised, and shared by a group or cohort (Hagestad & Neugarten, 1979). This perspective can contribute to a holistic conception of human learning because it adds to the social and cultural conditions missing from life-span analysis. The pattern of the life course will be structured not by biology but by social context; therefore, the course of cohorts will differ from one generation to the next.

Anthropologists studying age rely on both age stratification and lifespan development theories. Culture acquisition is a biologically based, ecological, interactive, socially constructed, and lifelong process. Human learning and development are beyond maturity as both biologically constrained and culturally variable. Culture is continually learned as a lifelong process of continual construction and adaptation. It is not simply received because learning is more than passing information down the chronological chain. Learning is interactive and learning itself will continue throughout the span of life (Pitman et al., 1989).

In the present study, the students learned Canadian culture actively through interacting with Canadians. Regarding the perspectives of learning previously discussed, the students have been learning in Japan and Canada and will keep learning throughout their life spans. However, this particular group of students experienced a particular social context which consisted of both Canadians and Japanese university students. Hence, they have learned not only Canadian culture but also unique Japanese culture in a foreign country. These experiences helped the students learn culture both formally and informally.

Cross-Cultural Learning and Self-Growth

In terms of cultural learning, I further discovered many similarities between the findings in a literature on social work and education and my findings in the present study. For example, in Cross-Cultural Learning and Self-Growth: Getting to Know Ourselves and Others, Sikkema and Niyekawa-Howard (1977) reported on a field training project in social work education which emphasised learning to deal with cultural differences as a professional. They contend that social workers as well as other professionals need to

understand the meaning and significance of cultural patterns and differences since people are interacting with different cultures more frequently. Interacting with a person from a different culture in a face-to-face situation, where understanding each other is essential. However, they insist that many "well-educated" people have a passive understanding of different cultures and subcultures that give them the feeling that they understand the different cultures. Passive understanding can be attained by studying the literature, philosophy, religion, history, or art of a particular culture, and can be achieved without leaving one's home town. Nonetheless, Sikkema and Niyekawa-Howard suggest that active understanding is required and achieved when people from different cultures or subcultures interact in face-to-face situations in which egos are involved. "The essential difference between passive and active understanding lies in intellectual and rational understanding on the one hand and affective understanding on the other" (p. 3). It is much easier to understand and accept cultural differences at the rational level than at the emotional level, and active understanding entails learning to see people of other cultures as more similar to us than different. Active understanding requires the development at emotional level with an attitude of acceptance, respect, and tolerance of cultural differences. It entails "culture shock" with which people feel anxiety or even fear in an unstructured situation and do not know what to do or expect. Furthermore, culture shock is the state of disorientation experienced by a person entering a new culture or subculture as s/he discovers for the first time that many of the things to which s/he is accustomed to are unique to his/her own culture (Bulthuis, 1986; Segawa, 1998). In the traditional classrooms, there is relatively little involvement at the emotional level; therefore, students do not experience embarrassment for their mistakes or the joy of their success in functioning in another culture. Wofford (1960, 1969) suggests experiential education, namely learning by doing. In this case, learning to live in a foreign country (different physical environment) under a different set of cultural values where active understanding takes place. By doing that, people become aware of their own culture and do not take anything for granted (Sikkema & Niyekawa-Howard, 1977; Pfriem, 1981). The more culture-bound the person is, the greater the shock. A monocultural person might notice that the ways s/he is accustomed to are unique to his/her culture, but would not notice that s/he has learned the unique ways

unconsciously in the process of growing up. The first step toward understanding another culture is becoming aware of one's own culture. Once this step is taken, learning a third and fourth culture will be easier because they become aware of the relativity of cultural values. They develop an attitude of acceptance, respect, and tolerance of differences in cultures, and become prepared to learn and appreciate more cultures. They learn "how to learn" another culture and develop a sensitivity to other's feelings, views, and needs, no matter what their cultural background. Learning will lead people not only toward biculturality but also in the direction of multiculturalism (Sikkema & Niyekawa-Howard, 1977). They also begin to see more clearly their own culture after stepping outside of it and viewing it objectively. They then may become more confident after they return to their home countries, with their new sense of themselves and others.

When the situation is ambiguous, people feel anxiety and do not know what to do or what the rules are. People have these experiences in the process of growing up such as a first date or first interview. Maslow (1956) points out that there are individual differences in the degree to which one is willing to tolerate ambiguous situations. For instance, the need for safety and defensiveness that makes one choose the familiar over the unfamiliar, or, the need for self that makes one choose unfamiliar over the familiar. Guilford (1959) identifies them as convergent and divergent thinking. Convergent thinking refers to logical thinking toward retaining the known and learning the predetermined. Divergent thinking refers to using a fact as a starting point, and then going in different directions. There is no one answer in divergent thinking and a number of alternatives are available (Getzels & Jackson, 1962). Although both processes exist in all individuals, they vary in each individual. A person in a convergent mode tends to proceed primarily toward the usual and expected intellectual acquisitiveness and conformity, while a person in a divergent mode tends to proceed primarily toward the speculative. To engage in divergent thinking, one must be willing to risk oneself, to take chances and be prepared for the unexpected, which sometimes result in negative outcomes. Schachtel (1959) argues that both formal education and socialization process make children learn given codes and weaken the opportunities for divergent thinking or creativity. Taylor (1969) argues that the child's capacity to keep learning more about the world depends on his/her openness and the opportunities for

extending his/her range. The child's knowing is accomplished through perceptual learning and there are differential effects on perceptual learning due to cultural differences. According to Gibson (1966), perception is selective and the child learns to focus on those attributes important for obtaining essential information in his/her environment and to screen out the rest. The attributes one learns to attend to selectively may be determined by the geographic and cultural environment. Language also plays a role in determining the crucial attributes for selective perception. Linguistics attributes influence the perception of those who speak it. Perceptual learning in geographical, cultural, and linguistic environment is not accomplished through training. It comes naturally and non-consciously while the individual is growing up. As long as people stay in one culture, there is little need to break the habit of convergent thinking as long as they are functional in the society in which they live. However, stepping out of one's own culture into a new one would help to break the habit of convergent thinking. Through the mistakes in the new culture, one becomes aware of the influence on oneself of the previous culture and achieves active understanding of the new culture. Hence, culture shock is an essential step of learning another culture. What is required for divergent thinking is a flexibility in cognitive reorganisation. Sikkema and Niyekawa-Howard (1977) argue that there is a relationship between two types of personality - the authoritarian and the monocultural on one hand and the non-authoritarian and the bicultural on the other. Learning an unfamiliar culture in an unstructured situation would lead to the development of personality characteristics associated with the non-authoritarian person.

Sikkema and Niyekawa-Howard (1977) conducted a project with which American social workers went to a foreign setting for eight weeks. Their objective was for the students to develop biculturality with a predisposition toward multiculturalism. The plan for experiential learning in another culture (Guam) "aimed at helping students develop a new style of learning by means of an unstructured situation as well as through culture shock that required ego-involving, affective learning for self-growth and development of creativity" (p. 106). It aimed at students learning to understand and respect another life-style rather than to judge one as good or bad due to the cultural difference. They state that this style of learning is applicable to the learning of third and fourth cultures and subcultures. Learning

cultural patterns involves learning a new culture outside one's own culture and the widening of perceptions changes one's old values and behaviours. Breaking the habit leads to the conscious awareness of one's own cultural priorities in comparison and the process leads beyond understanding of differences toward the understanding of the relativity of culture. When one gains an active understanding of another culture, one may attain personal growth and develop one's creativity by discovering alternative approaches in ambiguous as well as familiar situations (Bochner, 1975; Downs, 1969; Guthrie, 1975; Walsh, 1973). With these objectives and assumptions, Sikkema and Niyekawa-Howard observed and interviewed the students (they said that they had conversations) during and after the project. Their findings of outcomes of the students were very similar to my findings in the present study. They found that the students developed new perceptions as well as an open-mindedness that was freeing. They discovered the alternatives of doing things and learned to risk a search for other good alternatives other than the ways they already know. Learning ways to communicate was difficult at first but, as they learned the cultural system in the context, they became aware of how to communicate verbally and non-verbally. "Most students learned at the level of active understanding that forms of communication are different from culture to culture and vary in subcultures" (p. 110). They give the example of direct confrontation and indirect communication depending on the culture and assert that these different communication styles are acquired non-consciously within the group but not by outsiders.

In terms of personal growth, they found that every participant spoke of having a new confidence in themselves. The confidence they found was through their ability to do what they wanted to do, and overcome difficult situations, and willingness to take risks for alternatives. The basis of their sense of self-esteem and basis for understanding people as individuals were broadened. "A new tolerance for ambiguity was expressed as being more relaxed in meeting uncertain situations and experiencing less discomfort when they did not have the answers" (p. 111). They increased flexibility and strengthened the habit of seeking alternative meanings and interpretations of situations. They now look at each situation keeping in mind its context of culture, and perceive things more holistically.

Furthermore, the students in Sikkema and Niyekawa-Howard's study are more

interested in Guam (that is where they went), pay attention to news about Guam, and think about friends in Guam. They are more aware of other cultures and moved their emphasis on monocultural personal association groups to multicultural groups because they are more stimulating and interesting. In summary, those outcomes are substantial. They state that discovery is a pleasure and risking in order to discover is a challenge. They concluded that the overall learning and the outcomes support their initial assumption that the process of learning a new culture, by having to deal with ambiguous situations, would lead to broader cross-cultural perspectives and increased open-mindedness, flexibility, and creativity.

Applying Sikkema and Niyekawa-Howard's findings to my study, the student sojourners in my study could not attain active learning in Japan. In the traditional classrooms, students could not understand the culture at the emotional level which involves mistakes, embarrassment, and pleasure. The student sojourners came to Canada and went beyond passive understanding through culture shock and success in the unfamiliar environment. Through their experiences (experiential education), the student sojourners learned new ways by doing. The student sojourners became aware of alternative ways and became aware of their own culture and took nothing for granted at the same time. Once this step was taken, they became aware of the relativity of cultural values and developed an attitude of acceptance, respect, and tolerance of differences in cultures, and became prepared to learn and accept other cultures. For example, the students learned to accept the differences no matter what their cultural backgrounds were, including Chinese, East Indians, Mexicans, Iranians, Koreans, French, and Japanese. They also learned about their own culture by stepping outside of it and viewing it objectively. The students returned to Japan as new people, with more confidence in themselves. The students also changed their convergent thinking mode to divergent thinking mode in which there is no one correct answer and a number of alternatives are available. The students learned skills to become divergent thinkers, such as being flexible and how to reorganise cognitively.

Learning an unfamiliar culture in an unstructured situation can lead to the development of personality characteristics associated with the non-authoritarian, creative person. All the students learned to look at things holistically with open-mindedness. They learned to deal with ambiguity with relaxed attitudes. The student sojourners gained a

certain attachment to Canada, North America, and Vancouver. They continue to be interested in what is going on in those places and to think about their friends. The only thing I might add is that they also became very good friends with the other Japanese people within the group. Together they shared the same experiences of culture shock and success. They learned to look at things from multiple perspectives and know that many different and unique ways exist in the world.

Humanistic Culture Learning

Walsh (1979) argues that there is a world culture as compared to an individual culture. The culture of the world is called a "common denominator" view of the world culture. Others similarly argue that people of the world have more in common than they are aware of despite their many differences (Huxley, 1948). Huxley insists that such a common denominator can be found in humanism. Culture learning can be considered a good in itself. Knowledge makes a better and fuller human existence in the modern interdependent world to aid in the emergence of a world community (Bogardus, 1964; Mead, 1948). Walsh insists that, in culture learning, "our view points are expanded and broadened, our recognition of the similarities as well as the differences among cultures is sharpened, and our feelings about the possibility of the emergence of a true world community are reinforced" (p. 14). Culture learning brings culture itself under criticism, and beyond culture is humanity, human community, human kind, and any vital understanding of human brotherhood on this "earth village" (Hall, 1976). The person who does not learn another culture (monocultural person) remains largely unaware of the functioning of the culture itself, his/her own cultural biases, perspectives, and presuppositions. "Culture learning is the release, the liberation, the breakthrough to the higher level awareness of a common humanity" (Walsh, 1979, p. 147). Walsh contends that to engage in culture learning helps people realise that one's culture plays a central role in one's own life. Coming to this new awareness leads to accepting and identifying with others. It revolutionizes one's whole attitude toward people of other cultures. He further contends that people also realise that people of all cultures have an equal stake in the future of the planet, "earth." Culture learning alone is not enough to guarantee the development of a genuine world community but it is definitely a necessary first step in that direction.

Culture learning helps people realise that the welfare and self-interest of all culture is closely linked to those of all cultures. With the wisdom, a cooperative human community begins to emerge. Mutual trust and respect would reduce the need for defence and security program due to the hostility, and would humanise all those power structures based on ideas of competing, independent cultures. Walsh concludes that the more effective and widespread the culture learning is, the better chances for building a human community.

The student sojourners learned to accept the differences in terms of cultures and subcultures while they were in Canada. They are less discriminatory against people with different cultures, views and beliefs. They are more concerned about the social issues such as women's status in Japan, ethnic minorities in Japan, discrimination toward age, sexual preference, disability, and any injustice. They learned to respect unique individuals within Japan as well as in foreign countries. By living in Canada, they went beyond learning a Canadian culture since Canada consists of so many cultures. The student sojourners became a member of earth village in a true sense because they learned to be humanistic. They look at things with multiple perspectives and compare the Japanese way to others. Their perspectives broadened as an international humanist. They now consider the possibility of an international marriage since they learned to look at people as individuals merely with different cultural backgrounds.

The question here is how we can facilitate this culture learning in the classroom. Walsh (1979) insists that language learning is a part of culture learning since language and culture are not separable in reality. He contends that it is possible to learn a culture without fully understanding a language in the culture. However, obviously, the person who knows the language of a culture may be able to learn the culture more readily, directly, and fully than the person who does not know the language (Pfriem, 1981). I believe that learning a foreign language makes people curious about the country in which the language is spoken, and opens the door to a different world for the students. Therefore, the culture learning should be facilitated in the language class.

In summary, the students' identity changed because of active culture learning. Living in a multicultural society gave the students the opportunity to think more divergently in reality rather than just convergently in a classroom. The student sojourners, in other

studies as well as mine, became open toward differences that exist in the world, and realised the relativity of culture. They became humanistic in a way that allows them to care about what happens globally, for they now know that it also affects them as well.

A Return to the Research Questions of the Study

To summarise the findings of the interview and the literature review, I will return to my questions. The main research questions were: 1) How do the students think they learned English and what do they do to maintain it in Japan? 2) What do the students think they learned and became during the sojourn? 3) How do the students think these changes affect their lives in Japan after the sojourn? 4) What do the students think about the program and how do the students think the program can be improved?

The first question is concerned with the language learning. As I mentioned earlier, language learning is part of culture learning that in turn leads to humanistic thinking. The language is the most important communication medium between people. The students' main reason for attending the program was to learn and/or improve their English skills, especially communication skills which include listening and speaking. They felt that in order to do so, they had to come to Canada since English education in Japan focuses merely on reading, writing, and grammar without emphasising communication. The students believed that the most vital aspect of language is communication although grammar too is also important. Most of them believed that they would be able to speak with Canadians by the end of the program. Some students who had already lived in North America said that their academic language skill and vocabulary had developed at the university level. Many students in the program who had not previously lived in a foreign country reported that they became able to communicate in English without difficulty. Although some were a little disappointed having expected their English skill to improve more dramatically, they did say that there was definite enhancement. The key here is friendship. They became friends with their Canadian roommates, buddies, host families, people from a club and other activities. The more interaction there was, the more their English improved. Those who did not interact with Canadians often, thereby associated only with their Japanese friends did not learn English or culture as much as the ones who did. Some complained that they had to study too much and did not have time to interact

with or meet Canadians who had the same interests as they did.

The task of maintaining the skill they acquired in Canada is a difficult one for the students due to the scarcity of native English speakers in Japan. The students must resort to media such as television, radio, movies, and videos for listening skills. Some students speak to themselves or their friends in English or native English speakers. Some students continue their friendship with Canadians using email and the telephone. I suggest that the students use computers more frequently after they return to Japan. They can email their friends in foreign countries using English, research on the Internet in English just like they did in Canada (for the assignments), and keep up with Canadian news and trends.

The second question dealt with what the students learned and became in a multicultural society. My assumption was that the students' perspectives broaden in terms of internationalisation and globalisation. I expected that the students would learn that Japan is a small part of the world and the perspective and value that Japanese people are used to are one of many that exist in the world. As I assumed, the students did learn to accept the differences and to respect individual uniqueness. They also learned to look at things from many different perspectives and compare them to arrive at the optimum way.

The student sojourners are now bicultural in Japanese and Canadian culture which is the combination of East and West, collectivistic and individualistic, homogeneous and multicultural. Furthermore, it can be said that the students are multicultural because they know about the relativity of culture, can interact with anyone from foreign countries and Japan, and understand the best way to deal with differences globally.

The third question allowed me to explore how the students changed as a result of the program and how they had to deal with the change when they returned to Japan. I assumed that they would say that they became international and now think beyond Japan when they scrutinise things around them. I expected them to become more articulate and be able to express their honest feelings more casually. As I have become, I thought the students too would become more relaxed, autonomous, independent, and confident. Furthermore, I expected them to become aware of injustice and social problems, and think about the issues more subjectively since they experienced being a minority and broadened their perspectives in the academic environment. I thought they would have become

humanistic and fair seeking a better quality of life and happiness for all of humanity. Since the students did change, they experienced stress upon returning to Japan. I expected that their parents would embrace their independence and ability to speak English while their friends would be a little jealous. I assumed that they would now have a problem with groupism, the hierarchy system, honorific language, unfriendliness and unkindness of people, and oppression such as being unable to express their true opinions. The students agreed that they had changed as mentioned above. They became more open-minded, flexible, global and most importantly humanistic while thinking more about society, especially on the international level. Turning humanistic means challenging the world to be a better place, and I believe that such international exchange programs can reinforce that the most. I have to note that I could simply assume that all the changes occurred because of the students' maturation with age. However, the learning was not structured by biology but by a particular social context (Pitman et al., 1989). I believe that the students' experiences in an unfamiliar environment fostered the maturation process.

The last question is aimed at finding out what the students thought about the program and how it can be improved for the learners. Many students said that the program was suitable being their first time abroad. They felt protected in the sheltered immersion environment, and other Japanese people's existence helped. Some parents permitted them to attend the program because they felt it was safe in such an environment. However, many students complained about the dormitory, and interaction with Canadians as well. The students also complained about the content of the study because they were very curious about their own field. They wanted to attend classes of their speciality, however, they did not have time to attend those classes. I will discuss the solution to this issue in the "recommendation" section in the next chapter.

In conclusion, the students learned so much more than they expected. It was after they returned to Japan when they realised how much they learned and changed in Canada. They believed that they had experienced the same difficulties that anyone goes through in an unfamiliar environment, especially a foreign country. All the students said that they were glad they attended the program and that every experience, positive and negative, was a learning one. International exchange programs and study abroad programs should be

facilitated more and encouraged more by government and educational organisations since they have so much positive outcomes for both individuals and the world. In this global era, these activities leading toward world peace and humanity should be emphasised in education.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

This chapter will consist of recommendations for exchange programs focusing on this particular program in the present study, how we can facilitate the culture learning and intercultural communication in traditional classrooms, and how we can change the education system toward globalisation and humanity using the Asia Pacific University (APU) as an example.

Recommendations for the International Exchange Program

A Need for a Counsellor

First of all, the program should have a counsellor or advisor who has the same or similar experiences of going through the culture shock and learning process in a foreign country. According to Althen, Coelho, and Pusch (1981), my own experiences, and the students' experiences from the interviews, the international (foreign) students' stress and frustration are very drastic (Bulthuis, 1986; Segawa, 1998; Sikkema & Niyekawa-Howard, 1977). Althen et al. (1981) contend that many people go through major transitions in life, and stress and frustration result from it. However, those changes and frustration are more drastic in a foreign country. They further argue that there should be a counsellor to whom the foreign students can talk to as a friend with similar experiences because they can offer moral support, build trust, and treat the students as individuals who, like many others, are facing stressful situations and need support from others.

Cadieux and Wehrly (1986) contend that international students have unique advising needs due to language difficulties, adjustment to a new social and educational system, social and cultural adjustment, and relevance of academic programs. Counsellors for international students have to be knowledgeable about educational systems in other countries, be familiar with students' cultural background, and be flexible and open-minded. The counsellors have to be aware of the students' depression due to culture shock and heavy academic loads. The international students' emotional problems may evolve into physical problems. The counsellor should be on the students side and should consider the best way with genuine concern. For instance, when students are stressed with too many assignments, the counsellor has to consult with the teachers. Furthermore, they have to be willing to learn about other cultures and be aware of their own cultural influence on their

worldviews and biases. In summary, those qualities of counsellors for international students suggest that the counsellors have to be the ones who had experienced those difficulties in a study abroad context. They can be genuinely concerned with people of different views and cultural backgrounds when they have the same or similar experiences. The international exchange programs should consider those counsellors as staff members on-site for the students' learning and positive outcomes. Furthermore, the ideal counsellor should be able to speak the same language as the students, in this case Japanese. When the international students are frustrated, they do not want to speak a foreign language or they simply cannot speak it. Therefore, the counsellor should have similar acculturation experiences abroad and be able to speak both Japanese and English for this particular program (Segawa, 1998).

Situations in the Residences

Second of all, the program should consider the situations in the residences (dormitories) in this case Rits House. Pfriem (1981) contends that the pattern of peer behaviour and pressure, as well as culture, family, and authority figures, contribute to people's behaviour. He introduces a book called The Organisation Man written by William H. Whyte in 1956. "Organisation man" means workers for large corporations that plan their life around the needs of the corporation for which they work. Employees of large corporations are frequently transferred and live in a corporation residence. Whyte reports the life in the residence and shows how it changes people who reside there. In the residence, people usually change to be accepted in the close community which is like a second family. The residence enforces intimacy and those who do not mix with others are seen as troubled. There is little privacy, and the togetherness makes everyone similar to everyone else. People in the neighbourhood seek common values and consensus. The unity has advantages of belonging, of security, and of mutual support but a slight misunderstanding can end with terrible results. Everyone is watched and vicious gossip takes place. Therefore, one problem becomes a concern of the whole group. If someone resists to conform or fit in, the person is seen as a defiant, and will be punished with the nasty glares of residents in the community. The more social the community, the more difficult it is for those who do not conform. Therefore, people feel obligated to limit their

choices although it is frustrating and sad. Only a few people are able to take the middle course such as participating in the community activity and secretly pursuing their own interests. In a similar study, Asch (1963) found that: (1) some people are more resistant to group pressures than others while group pressure has an impact; (2) it is easier to resist group pressure when at least one other person is on their side; (3) the larger the group is, the more the pressure is to conform with the group. Hence, it depends on the individual whether or not s/he decides to conform or not to the very close community such as residences. However, Japanese people have a tendency to attempt to conform with the environment and it would be challenging for them to pursue their own interests in a residence with too many Japanese people. That makes it very difficult for the student sojourners to be different from others and interact with Canadians.

As I discussed above, in addition to living in a foreign country with tremendous stress, the student sojourners in the Rits Program have to deal with peer pressure from Japanese. Living in a residence solely enforces the students to deal with other people and have less privacy. Although some students liked the atmosphere of cooperating and supporting each other in an unfamiliar environment, many students hated the small Japanese community that always gossiped about someone and everyone knew what everyone else was doing, and wanted to live separately from other Japanese students.

My recommendation is to give students choices before they come to Canada and after they get accustomed to Canadian university life. It relates to pre-departure orientation. For instance, students should be notified about pros and cons of dormitory life by the prior students who just returned (alumni groups) and having access to the documents by prior students of previous years in many pre-departure orientations. Some students might like the protected environment because it is their first time to go abroad. Some students, on the other hand, might want to try to live in a residence where less Japanese people reside. Since they decide to live in those residences without actually living there, there might be a problem after they start living there. For instance, some students might not get along with their floor-mates that have no interest in Japan. Some students might get too frustrated due to their language skills and get physically sick. On the other hand, students who lived in the protected environment might want to challenge more difficult situations or make friends

with Canadians who live in a different residence. Situations change after the students actually live in Canada and the program should be able to offer the choice to the students accordingly. Every student is unique and everyone of them has their own way of dealing with things. I suggest, instead of forcing the students to live in a residence that they cannot tolerate, the students should be given choices of residences before the second semester commences. Of course, those who want to stay in the same residence with the same roommates do not have to change anything. The less pressure and more comfortable they feel, the better the outcome of the students' learning.

Interaction with Canadian People and Curriculum

Thirdly, the students should be given more time to interact with Canadian people outside the classes. I felt sorry for the students who were always struggling with the tremendous amount of assignments given in the computer lab. I believe that they can be given fewer assignments in order for the students to interact with Canadians or people from different countries, instead of being put in a class with other Japanese people. My finding showed that students become more knowledgeable about the host country by communicating with natives in the host country. Speaking to Japanese students in English does not foster them to acquire language skills or culture so much. The students learn so much more by interacting with the natives than by literature or lectures. Discussion and conversation with inhabitants are the most frequent and best source of information about the host nationals and culture. The students can encounter many natives in extra-curricular activities. The best way to increase the knowledge about the culture and society of the host country is to socialize with native friends. The students should be able to join activity clubs that they like such as tennis, karate, and poetry clubs. People learn quickly when they do things they like, and the students can make friends with Canadian people that share their same interests. With friends of same interests, the students can exchange their opinions and learn the language and culture more.

I also recommend that a couple of courses should be altered to independent, active learning classes in which the students decide the activity and consult with the teachers, and go out of the residence or classroom and interact with strangers or as many Canadian people as possible. The students can report on their specialty, interests, sports, hobbies, or

anything that they can get into. They should be allowed to present the outcome of their own study in any way that they want. For instance, they can show videos, pictures, bring someone in the class or make a play. It gives students an opportunity to focus on their speciality such as international relations, law, social science, computer science, and business administration, and the students would feel that they came to Canada for an academic purpose as a university student.

Concerning the classes, there are three curriculum positions in education (Miller & Seller, 1990). The curriculum in the program should go beyond the transmission position and approach the transformation position via the transaction position. According to Miller and Seller, the transmission position in the curriculum means that the curriculum is traditional in the way teachers are the authority, and memorisation may be a method for learning. It can be teacher-centred, atomistic, conservative, content-based, textbook-centred, and traditionally-evaluated. The students are passive and there is little interaction between students or/and students and teachers. The next position, the transaction position, deals with problem solving. It emphasises that interaction and discussion are necessary to be able to become a democratic citizen in society. The curriculum of the Rits Program is between the transmission and the transaction position. The students sit in the classroom, a teacher talks sometimes (transmission position) and students discuss and solve problems (transaction position) in the classroom. Some elements are transformational in the Rits Program since the students are given assignments and it entails their autonomy; they focus on humanity and some spiritual dimension to the environment. However, the students still have to stay in the classroom and do what the teacher decides. The students are adults and they can be given opportunities to do what they are interested in.

In summary, the student sojourners should be treated as responsible adults who can accomplish their goals. However, the students should be notified about Canadian life before they leave for Canada, consulted during the sojourn, and given chances to share their readaptation process after the sojourn. I believe that these can be done in orientations.

Pre, During, and Post Sojourn Orientations

The orientations should be held before the sojourn (pre-departure or pre-arrival orientation), during the sojourn (campus orientation or continuing orientation), and after the

sojourn (post-sojourn or re-entry orientation). Orientations are very important for international students. However, post-sojourn orientations in the home country are not focused upon in depth as others are. They should be given greater attention since the students go through a similar process as when they went to a foreign country for the first time (Gullahorn & Gullahorn, 1963; Marion, 1986; Segawa, 1998; Oppen et al., 1990).

The most resourceful people for pre-departure orientations are, of course, the alumni who have returned from abroad and experienced the sojourn. They still remember what questions and anxieties they had before the sojourn. Segawa (1998) suggests their memories include the basic knowledge about their host country in terms of climate, geography, history, religion, and customs. She further contends that the program should offer foreign language training when there is not a language admission criteria. She recommends using video materials and media images, however, teachers should be careful not to create stereotypes. The Rits Program has a language admission criteria using TOEFL. However, it does not mean that they are confident about their English or they know how to communicate in English. As the program is ongoing, it could offer an English course and an academic writing course before they come to Canada. Nonetheless, I recommend the English course to be more communicative by using real problem-solving situations. In the academic writing course, the teachers can show the example from previous years and kindly advise the students since the students have never written an academic paper in English. Those courses have to offer English skills which the students can use as soon as they arrive in Canada and the university. The Rits students in the interviews advised the incoming students to prepare as much as possible before they leave for Canada. The more prepared the students are, the less stress they would feel.

The alumni can tell stories and share their sojourn experiences with the students who are about to leave. The stories should focus on obstacles, struggles, and difficulties that they encountered, and how they overcame them. They can reveal their own reason why they had a difficult time such as the cultural differences, roommates, other Japanese students, and too many assignments. After the new students learn about the struggles, the alumni can talk about enjoyable experiences and what they learned. They can encourage the students to be positive and not to be intimidated by difficulties. Furthermore, they can also

bring exchange students from the host school (in this case, Canadian students from UBC) and those exchange students can talk about their experiences of living with the Rits students in the residence and activities that they attended with Japanese students. At the end, both alumni and exchange students can talk about the city and region, and what to bring. They can give advice to the students and interact with them face-to-face. The new students can ask questions and keep in touch (e.g. with emails) in case they come up with new questions later. If there is a counsellor in the program, s/he should talk about problems that other students had to deal with and advise them how to solve them too. S/he starts counselling even before the students leave.

When the students arrive in the host country, there should be campus orientation. The Rits students are introduced to necessities such as library, cafeteria, student advisors in the residence, transportation system, bank, laws including traffic laws, downtown, and the area. What the Rits Program can focus more on is the International House on campus. Since the Rits Program does not have a counsellor, they should at least inform the students that there is a place where they can meet counsellors and supportive people who are qualified to work with international students. The students can also meet other non-Canadian students and attend various activities. Furthermore, some of the Rits students come to Canada in the summer holiday to spend it living with home-stay families and going to an ESL school on the UBC campus. Therefore, not everyone in the Rits Program has a home-stay family. I recommend that every student is introduced to a home-stay family since it is a great opportunity to improve their English and to learn culture in a family environment.

Every Rits student is introduced to a buddy in Canada. The program arranges for Canadian students to pair up with Japanese students. However, my buddy was very busy and did not have time to interact. It made me lonelier. It is similar to a roommates situation. Therefore, I recommend that the administrators or interviewers for buddies and roommates at the residence carefully interview them more than once and make them write essays on why they want to be a buddy or a roommate and how they would deal with and interact with Japanese students when they are busy with school work. Furthermore, as the Rits program is already doing, the students should be introduced to language exchange partners

(in this case, students who are studying Japanese language) and volunteer activities in the community. When the students have more activities to attend and more friends to interact with, they feel less lonely and content.

As I mentioned earlier, the post-sojourn orientations in the home country are not developed as well as the others and should be organised more. Marion (1986) contends that returned students undergo a re-acculturation process in the home country that is similar to what they had to undergo when they went to a foreign country for the first time (Gullahorn & Gullahorn, 1963; Segawa, 1998; Oppen et al., 1990). Segawa contends that the program should provide support for its participants upon their transition to their home society after their sojourn using workshops, counselling, news letters, and social gatherings. As the Rits students reported in the interviews, they have a very hard time with their friends in Japan. Wang (1997) argues that the sojourners have a tendency not to attend re-entry workshops because they do not assume that there would be any difficulties returning home (cited in Segawa, 1998). However, the students should be informed about the reverse culture shock since so many Rits students sadly reported that they were disappointed in their friends in Japan. I recommend that they get together several times right after they return. The counsellor or teacher should ask them how they are doing with their friends and initiate the discussion. When they find that other returners are experiencing the same, they feel better. Sharing their problems with someone who can understand how they feel and encouraging each other is the best way to overcome the difficulties. I suggest that they can at least have parties and meetings once a month after the very first post-sojourn orientation.

I further recommend the use of computers for post-orientations. The students are very busy with trying to catch up on studies in Japan after they return. Hence, not everyone can attend the meetings or orientations. I believe that they can make a web-page or email address to which they can send messages back and forth. They can talk about how their lives back home are and tell their problems about readjusting if they want to. They can include Canadian students from Vancouver and everyone who had been involved can communicate. It also helps the alumni maintain their English skills and be reminded to keep studying. They can also include the news on campus, Vancouver, Canada, and anything nostalgic and related. For instance, when some staff or teachers have babies or get married,

they can report the news and congratulate each other as well. Keeping in touch with the program and people in it is very important. Alumni tend to forget the international quality and language as they get busy at work and drift further away from their memories and international environment. Computers can help students keep in touch with their acquired perceptions and open-mindedness. The students can keep learning by having those resources available to them.

How We Can Facilitate These Learning Experiences Abroad in Classrooms

The learning abroad experience has a great impact on students. The question here is how we can facilitate the learning experiences in the traditional classrooms, especially in Japan which is nearly homogeneous and in which people are more conforming to others. The intercultural communication course at the Rits Program can be used in the traditional classrooms in Japan. Universities or any educational institutions can offer culture learning courses or intercultural communication courses. Otherwise, English or foreign language courses can include the culture learning because language is a part of culture learning since language and culture are not separable in reality (Walsh, 1979; Pfriem, 1981).

As I introduced in chapter 4, Pitman, et al. (1989) contend that culture acquisition "is a concept that is much broader than schooling, than informal teaching and learning, than child raising, or even than cultural transmission" (p. 3) and interaction is very important in both language and culture learning. Therefore, the instructor can invite people from many cultures such as the Korean community, exchange students, and disabled people. The Rits Program invites real people such as gay people and people from other cultural groups, so the students can actually listen to their stories and interact with them face-to-face within the classroom context. I believe that getting to know different kinds of people face-to-face is very important. Without getting to know people, students cannot understand their lifestyles, struggles, and characteristics. Until I met my gay friends, I did not understand why they were gay and how they had to live with it. As I met various kinds of people, especially in Canada, I realised that everyone in the world is similarly "human" yet with different values and cultures. I also realised that I do not have to be stuck with my Japanese self and could choose to be myself by combining different cultures that I liked. Everyone is unique and we cannot judge people because of their uniqueness. Many students that I

interviewed felt the same. In order to break the stereotypes and prejudices, we have to interact with them and have a deep dialogue.

In terms of education in Japan, some Japanese educators are critical of the system. Kenji Miyo said, "Japanese children only memorise, and cannot conceptualise. Such terms as 'internationalisation' and 'individualism' are not understood" (cited in Stephens, 1991). Because of the students' passiveness of the transmission orientation, the students cannot judge quality, collect knowledge and information, conceptualise or explain things thoroughly. Masanori Higa said, "we don't need to memorise, but to learn to think. We Japanese need to explore what is known, what is still unknown..." (cited in Stephens, 1991). Because of "groupism" that emphasises to be rid of ego and to dedicate the total self to the group's success, Japanese students are suppressed and not allowed to speak up for themselves. They are not allowed to articulate their opinions so they tend not to think (Ellington, 1992). Yohei Yoshimura said, against the Ministry of Education in Japan's promotion of change on the surface, that internationalism and individualisation of education is just a government slogan. Teachers no longer feel that they are reforming society. Parents see education as a root to a good, secure job, not as a development of mind and character. Takeshi Ogawa stated, "Japanese education is all about product, not process. The system thinks only about getting students into a famous university (cited in Stephens, 1991). When the students are only supposed to memorise and not think, they cannot make choices of their own. Kenji Sakamoto said, "education should be about giving the citizen a sense of choice" (cited in Stephens, 1991). Japanese students are passive and do not think so they do not know what to do after they enter a good university. Their ultimate goal is to enter a good university and they are not familiar with thinking about their identity and what they really want to do. How can these students who are pushed to compete all the time think about other people? Do they have the time to think about the world? They are too busy memorising and probably think only about themselves. Education should not be that way. Isamu Yamaguchi suggests to learn foreign language in order to overcome that. He states (cited in Stephens, 1991):

It is highly improbable without learning to use a common language, share ideas, and make friends with people of other countries, that we will ever be able to ensure

world peace. Without a common language there can be no true understanding or friendship among individuals, without which the attainment of a lasting peace on earth is impossible. This is the reason for us to strive to learn foreign languages.

The education should help to develop individuals who show genuine concern for their friends, society, country and all humanity. Language education can be the first step toward becoming interested in other cultures and getting exposed to different life-styles. Dewey (1897) stated:

... Language is almost always treated in the books of pedagogy simply as the expression of thought. It is true that language is a logical instrument, but it is fundamentally and primarily a social instrument. Language is the device for communication; it is the tool through which one individual comes to share the ideas and feelings of others. When treated simply as a means of showing off what one has learned, it loses its social motive and end.

Language is logical but language that cannot be used for communication loses the true meaning of language as a social instrument. As the Rits students mentioned, they learned English by communicating with Canadians. However, they said that they learned more than language; they learned culture and the effective way of communication with people with different cultural backgrounds. Language acquisition was the students' purpose of the sojourn but they realised language was merely a tool of communication used to understand people and culture. They are now able to discuss their opinions about certain stories or situations. Therefore, the focus of language education has to be the real life communication. It entails the action that is inevitable in real life and helps students "process information, solve problems, and make decisions" (Miller & Seller, 1990).

In conclusion, culture learning, international learning, language learning, whatever you call it, has to focus on real life communication and interaction with various kinds of people. There are many ways by which this learning can take place. The teachers can invite real people and listen to their life story in the classroom, and the students can interact with them to understand them. It might be difficult to do in a closed society like Japan, however, face-to-face interaction with people under study has to take place sometime during the course in addition to lecture, textbooks, use of media and computers.

New Type of University: APU

Culture learning is mutual. International students can go to a host country and learn

so much. However, it also means that the host national students are learning from international students. There is no one-way learning in interaction. When international students are learning, host students are learning from them simultaneously. It is always two-way or more. The Japanese ministry of education emphasises internationalism. Many schools and organisations have international exchange programs. As I mentioned at the very beginning, it is the same for Canada and other countries. The globe is shrinking and people are willing to get out of their own country to learn. Dr. Kazuichi Sakamoto, who is an executive vice president at Ritsumeikan University, once told me a story. He said that when he came to Canada, he was asked by Canadian scholars how Japan as a nation or/and Japanese academia is contributing to the global era. He thought that many Canadian scholars were not sure that Japan was making an effort to deal with the shrinking world. However, when he recently visited a conference in Canada, he made a speech about the Rits Program. He said that many Canadian scholars were praising the Rits Program since it is a successful exchange program, and the outcome of it is excellent. Other reasons for its praise were its facilitation of its mutual learning and benefit to Canadian students as well.

Dr. Sakamoto proudly went on about a new university in Japan which will be open in April, 2000. He will be a president in the new university called Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University (APU). It will be located in Kyushu Island which is close to China and Korea. That is a new international educational institution that aims to foster international exchange in the Asia-Pacific region and to internationalise higher education in Japan. The objective is to foster global citizens who will contribute to sustainable development and peaceful coexistence in the Asia-Pacific region and other parts of the world. The students will nurture their visions for the future by studying with the support of the global and local communities. The administrators believe that the students will play leading roles in the Asia-Pacific region and around the world (Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University introduction, p. 1). At the university, students from over fifty countries will live together in an environment specifically designed to transcend traditional boundaries of race, nationality, religion, and culture. The school year commences in April in Japan, however, in this university, they will admit the students to begin in both April and October. The classes will be in both Japanese and English (and some Mandarin), therefore, both

Japanese and international students will learn each others' language by living there and studying in both languages. They want to have 50% Japanese and 50% international students, and 50% Japanese faculty members and 50% non-Japanese faculty members. Conventional Japanese universities normally do not have a dormitory but this university will have a dormitory on campus. Furthermore, conventional Japanese universities do not have so many scholarships, however, the APU will have a wide variety of scholarships from various sources. Japanese universities are usually not open to the local communities or non-students, however, the APU will be open to the local community's international development in academics, culture, and industry. Conventional Japanese universities do not have counsellors but the APU will have counsellors and a student support system as I suggested for international students earlier. They will, of course, support the extracurricular activities both on and off campus.

The new university, APU seems to have all the elements that I suggested in my study. The difference is the setting: Japan. Japanese students can do all the things at APU that they had to do outside of Japan. It is an ideal way in education. It is a new, pioneering university which can contribute to human kind and world peace. Other universities in both Japan and other countries can also create a similar environment and make the academic milieu significantly international. The educational system both in Japan and in the world should change little by little and APU will be an example to foster students to become a member of the international village.

Limitations of the Study and Future Research

There are some main limitations of this study. First, the study was limited to the experiences of Japanese prestigious university students who stayed in Canada for eight months. It might be more interesting to compare the experiences of this group and other ethnic groups, of university students and students at other institutions, with working holiday visas, with the students who stayed longer than eight months, with alumni from previous years, and with students who came abroad individually. These comparisons would have expanded more knowledge about experiences abroad and the outcome of those international exchange programs.

Secondly, it might be very interesting to explore what Canadian students learn in

the Rits House or at other residences because of the Japanese students in the Rits Program. Learning is always mutual and host institutions invite international students to internationalise the campus, especially in higher education. Spees and Spees (1986) contend that universities and colleges attempt to internationalise the campus with the objective of giving the context of microcosms of humanity. "The average undergraduate college student is no longer eighteen to twenty-two years old, white, middle class, and Protestant" (p. 6) in the United States. They argue that the model for internationalising the American campus is the United Nations and administrators are attempting to make the campus a mini UN to some extent. The Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University is the extended version of that. Returning to the first proposition, the researchers can conduct studies to understand the impact on the host national students by international students, and probably explore how an international exchange program is also good for host nationals and communities due to humanitarianism and internationalisation.

Thirdly, methodology was limited in the way that I only used interviews of one time after their sojourn. It is due to the geography that I was in Canada and the students were in Japan. I could not afford to go to Japan more than once. It would have been interesting to interview the same students in another three months to understand how the students change after the sojourn. Although I was not interested in the "process" of change, it would have also been worthwhile to ask the students to keep journals and reflect on them. It would have made the students remember some of the things in detail.

Finally, it is also important to realise how superficial changes in a society's value do/do not reflect important internal and deeply ingrained values. Nevertheless, it is unimaginable that Japan will reverse its internationalisation and globalisation movements. This study has helped us understand this globalisation process.

Furthermore, in the process of writing this thesis, I learned to reflect on myself while comparing my perceptions to the sojourners' that I interviewed. I realised that I also came from a conforming society, and became acculturated in a multicultural, independent society as the students did. I have also changed to be more empathetic and humanistic because of my newly constructed, multiple identities. This study made me comprehend my own changes due to my unique international experiences. I also grew to be autonomous

and independent in search of the best way to conduct the study.

In conclusion, I suggest more in-depth future research be done related to the impact of international exchange programs on the students. Future research can concern the limitations of my study above. I further recommend that the researchers conduct studies about the new, pioneering type of international university, the Asia Pacific University, in order to understand the effect of it. It can support the change of education systems in the world, and can make more of these international higher education institutions for humanity and world peace in the shrinking global village.

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Appendix

CLASSES What I studied in the Intercultural Communication class helped me find a job I wanted. In the course, I learned that respecting each other's culture means benefits for both the people in other culture and our culture. I applied that and talked about respecting each other's company that would benefit for both the other company and our company. I further talked about co-operating rather than competing against each other. [M] I did not particularly like the Intercultural Communication course because the course content was something I could experience outside of the class and learn myself. I would have rather taken a course in my field. Every student was from a different faculty and we should have been given a chance to attend a course in our own field. It did not academically stimulate me. 3 I studied a lot with the program. I feel I should study harder now. 5 I studied hard to get the credits. 2 When I think back, I cannot believe how much and how hard I studied in Canada. I did it because I had to and I don't have to do it now. I know I should study harder but it's difficult when you don't have to. [N] Because I want to be a teacher, I learned different style of teaching in Canada. [H] I am glad that the Intercultural Communication course introduced me to gay culture. I understand them and feel open toward them. That kind of class does not exist in Japan. It was very Canadian. [K] [academic gain in the program] I learned how to write a good essay. [H] I had already gone to high school in USA. I think the prior experience was more interesting. But I learned academic English with more vocabulary with the program. 4

EDUCATION IN CANADA vs. JAPAN I took regular courses at UBC. The professor at UBC was excellent. He helped the students to think critically. Japanese professors impose their opinions on the students and the students have to be passive. [G] Teacher are always right in Japan. 3 The essay test even has one answer in Japan. North America allows more opinions and the students are more respected. I just took a test and wrote the answer that would please the professor. [G] Everyone has to be the same in Japan. Education is part of it. [T]

CANADIAN STUDENTS Because Canadian students studied hard and played a lot on the weekends, their life style stimulated me. I would like to study hard and play hard and keep a good balance. 4 My Canadian friends studied a lot toward their future goal. I don't want to lose against them. So I study hard toward my future goal now. 3 I have always wanted to be a teacher. My Canadian roommates also wanted to be teachers. They studied hard and I was shocked. They made me realise that I should study harder to become a teacher and I am trying harder now. [H] The students at UBC study harder than Japanese university students in general. 10 It stimulated me. 7 I studied harder in Canada. In Canada, students were given chances to speak up and it motivated me to study harder. It was more autonomous. I still speak up in Japanese classes and I go to the library to study for it. [K]

REASON THEY ATTENDED I went to Canada to experience to live in a foreign country. 5 rather than acquiring English. [M] I wanted to improve my English. 7 I had always wanted to go to a foreign country for an extended period of time. But my parents didn't allow me to go to a foreign country as an exchange student in high school. They were worried about me. With this program from the Ritsumeikan university made my parents feel safe. They knew that there would be other 100 Japanese students in the program in the protected environment and I won't be alone. 5 I entered Ritsumeikan to attend the program. [Y] I attended the program to relax like a holiday. [G]

ENGLISH I learned English and my scores went up. 8 Although my English didn't

improve as much as I expected, my English reached the level that I can say that I can have a conversation in English. 3 My English improved in general although I didn't expect it to improve so well. [M] My listening skill went up. [K] When I had lived in the USA, my host mother called a travel agency and I never called those official places myself. However, I called a travel agency and ordered tickets and did such a thing by myself this time. [Y]

HOW THEY LEARNED ENGLISH I listened to my floor mates' English. I tried to speak in the classes. 4 I imitated some Japanese students' English in the class. Those who had lived abroad previously spoke better English than other Japanese students. In the class, that was the best way to practice my English because there were only Japanese students. [Y] I learned English from my roommates. 20 Everything was a learning experience with my Canadian roommates. Everything was, of course, in English. Even playing cards was a learning experience. [T] Floor mates. [H] During conversation, I asked everything I didn't know to my roommates. [H] I learned English from my language exchange partner who was interested in Japan. 5 I belong to a religious organisation so I talked to members. [H] I talked to my Canadian friends that I met with volunteer activity. 3 I was a volunteer at a day care centre. I strengthened my English by talking to different generations such as old people and children. Especially, children spoke very fast without thinking and my listening skill improved. [Y] Some friends from Rits House and club at UBC. [K] Friends from club. Snow boarding, volleyball. [Y] I learned most of my English outside of classes. I often talked to my buddy. 6 TV shows. 5 Radio with clear English. [M] **CULTURE AND LANGUAGE** In Japanese, people start explaining why or what is happening in speech. For example, if somebody cannot come to see a movie, the person would say, "well, I am very sick" and then "I cannot come to the movie today". But in English, the person would say, "well, I cannot come to the movie today" and then the reason, "because I am sick". English is always conclusion and then reason. [Y] You can never directly translate from Japanese to English, vice versa. In English, you have to make a point first and explain after. If I explain first and make a point later, English speakers would ask me what my point is before I get to the point. 5 because languages always include culture. [G] I used to translate Japanese to English. It was not possible. It did not make sense to Canadians. When I explained the reason first and made a point later, they asked me what my point was before I got to the point. I learned that I had to say what I wanted to say at first and then explain the detail later. [M] I write essay in both ways. When I write essay in Japanese, I explain and give the result and my opinion at the end. In English, I start with my opinion and my point, and then explain why. It is same with speech. In Japanese, I speak of my mind at the end, and I start with my opinion in English. [Y] It is easier for me to say my true feeling in English. [H] It was either yes or no in English and there wasn't much obscure expressions. I was articulate because of that. [K] [interaction with Japanese] When I speak to my Japanese friends in English, I speak English in Japanese way such as direct translation from Japanese. [N]

ENGLISH EDUCATION IN JAPAN [negative] I hate English education in Japan. 10 You have to learn culture, expressions, and the way to react when you study a language. They should teach communication. Speaking should be emphasised more. Too much grammar. 18 I want more people to be able to speak English. 8 Teachers cannot speak English in Japan. [K] The students should be able to access native news paper in English to learn what's going on there. [M] I think we should start at earlier age. 4 I think that we should learn what's happening in English speaking countries now than just reading classic literature with old English. [K] They should let the students know how fun the language is

by teaching communication. [M] I think people have to go to the native country to learn the language. [K] [positive] Grammar in Japan is good. 7 But they can't even get it right. [J] Some readings in the textbooks are interesting. Not bad. [G] Private schools are using more communicative style teaching. I hope that more schools including public schools will be communicative. [M]

BEYOND ENGLISH I went to improve my English. But I learned more than English. 9 I first felt the pressure that I had to improve my English at the beginning of the sojourn. However, when I realised that I was learning more than that, I started feeling comfortable and confident. I realised that English was not the only thing that I had to deal with or could improve. [K] I think that studying a language is possible in Japan. You can buy books, watch satellite, and listen English music. What's more important in these experience is the personal growth. I learned how to deal with people, how to accept different kinds of people objectively. 4 Personal growth was much more than English. 7 I used English just to communicate. My communication ability improved in general and English is just part of the medium. [M]

CANADA I used to think Canada was only a big country above USA. But I feel so close to Canada now. [M] I used to think North America was the same but I know the differences now. Canada is much safer. I would say a city like Vancouver in the USA would be more dangerous. I would want to live in Canada and visit the USA for fun. [Y]

ANALYSIS OF CANADA I think Canada is always struggling with identity. Canadians are always against USA and that's their identity. Canada is known as a country above a super power in the world and they don't like it. [G] [Canada vs. other English speaking countries] Canada is multicultural and USA is assimilation. I felt more discriminated against in USA. But minorities in USA had stronger identity and coherence because of that. Canadian minorities do not have to stick together to be accepted as much. [G] Compared to the USA's "melting pot", I like Canadian "mosaic". I can still be Japanese which is myself and can be accepted. [Y] I don't like the word 'Americanised' because it sounds like you have to be Americanised to be accepted. I prefer "mosaic" which allows me to be myself. [Y] I felt more discriminated against in the USA when I went there during the sojourn. 4 In England, I was treated as a foreigner just like Japanese treat foreigners as outsiders. They were kind but did not accept me as one of them. In Canada, it is easier to live for me because people accept me as part of them. [T]

MULTICULTURAL EXPERIENCE IN CANADA I met various kinds of people in Canada. 8 I met lots of people that I can't easily meet in Japan such as Iran, Chinese, Mexicans. 8 You can meet so many kinds of people in multicultural society. I had heard that there would be lots of Asians but there were also lots of Caucasians, Mexicans, etc. [H] So many different people exist in Canada. I went to an Indo temple with my friend. It's interesting. [M] I experienced lots of foreign cultures. [M] Different cultures exist everywhere in Canada. [H] Canada has lots of authentic foods!! [N] It was interesting because people with different cultures and languages spoke English and communicated with each other in Canada. [T] I enjoyed communicating with different kinds of people in English. I was not a native speaker and they were not native speakers. But we all spoke English and it was a nice feeling. 5 I realised lots of people speak English in the world. [T] As I learned in the class, "mosaic" was emphasised in Canada. Vancouver was especially very mixed and I felt comfortable. [T] I experienced differences and similarities among people with different cultural back grounds. 3 I found more similarities than differences among people although I expected to find more differences before she came to Vancouver. [Y] People in Vancouver seem to know no one culture is better than another. [K] Canadians

respected each other's cultures. [H] In Japan, people only judge with personality because there is not a cultural difference. In Canada, people judge each other with their ethnicity first and personality second. It was a double procedure and more interesting. [K]

JAPAN AS HOMOGENEOUS vs. CANADA AS MULTICULTURAL I think Japan is boring as a homogeneous society. Canada as a multicultural society is more interesting.¹² More problems exist because more differences co-exist in multicultural society. However, I find it more interesting. [Y] Japan is limited because there are not lots of interesting things to discover. In Canada, there are more answers than one. 3 Everyone is different and I never felt like a minority in Vancouver. In Japan, people look at foreigners. Especially, Vancouver had a lot of Asians, however, they were not stared at. 6 I don't think Japanese people use the term or understand the term "multiculturalism" in a true sense because Japan is homogeneous. You have to experience it to know. [T] I think Japan is strange because they try to be homogeneous. World consists of multicultures and multicultural is normal. [H] I used to think "foreigners" were Caucasians. But I think about more kinds of people now. [M] I accept different cultures because of multiculturalism. 4 In multicultural society, you have to accept different cultures and it is very difficult sometimes. In a homogeneous society like Japan, you don't have to interact with different cultures all the time. [M] [negative] I think that multiculturalism did not really exist in Canada. It is ideal but it is not happening in reality. I lived in the Totem Residence and noticed that different races and minorities stack together. Chinese people ate dinner with Chinese people and Caucasians ate with Caucasians at the cafeteria. People are segregated although it is called a multicultural society. 3 I think multiculturalism is great as a policy. However, I thought that it was not prevailing every where. I felt many Caucasians were looking down on Asians. [M] I was the only Asian on the floor at the Totem Residence so I felt treated a little differently. I felt it was easier to speak to Asians. [H]

HONEST CANADIANS vs. CONFORMIST JAPANESE People are honest in Canada. They don't wear masks. People can be themselves. I felt comfortable in an honest environment.⁶ But I have been doing it over 20 years and I am used to wearing a mask. [H] At the cafeteria in Canada, workers didn't have the service spirit. In Japan, workers are very polite. However, Canadian workers were friendly when I talked to them. They don't have to change their personalities at work so much in Canada. [K] Canadians spoke to each other casually although they were strangers. People were friendly in public places such as elevators and buses. People say 'hi' or 'how are you?' in friendly way. [K] In Canada, people talk to each other although they don't know each other. Some people tried to help me on the street and it was nice. [K] I didn't hide my feelings and personality with my Canadian friends. They were always honest and we talked about lots of personal things. It's a little different from Japanese friends. Canadian friends accepted me as who I am. [N]

EXPRESSION I used to be passive but I am more active now. [Y] I had to be active in Canada. I learned that I had to initiate the action to get what I want in Canada. Nobody talks to you unless I initiate the conversation. I should not just wait for other people to do something for me. 4 I learned that you have to initiate and act on things in Canada. [M] I can talk to strangers more casually now although I used to be introverted. [K] I used to be more unclear. For example, when I want to answer the questionnaire, I was always circling in between three and four, or anything in between, Now, I am more clear and circle, either three or four. [Y]

COMMUNICATION I learned human relations and different ways of communication. I learned how to make friends. 4 I was very nervous around people in general. I overcame that and became able to speak to foreigners and I am more confident. I can communicate with people more smoothly. [H] I can communicate with people better. I can switch the way according to what kind of person I am talking to. [M] I used to just talk and never listen to people in Japan. When my Canadian roommates and I were talking, they pointed that I was not carefully listening to what they were saying. I learned to listen to people and speak about what the interlocutor said. Especially when speaking in a foreign language, you have to listen very carefully. [K].

EXPRESSIONS OF OPINIONS/DIRECTNESS [teacher's mistakes] I don't know if I would correct teachers' mistakes in Japan. I am worried about what would happen afterwards. 4 I went to talk to my teacher to raise the mark that she gave me. That was the assignment that I had to make a web page. I am very familiar with computers and I got into the assignment. I planed and spent lots of time on the assignment. I couldn't believe the mark she gave me. I went to talk to the teacher and she said that she didn't like the colour of the web site. She raised the mark and I was happy. I wouldn't have done it in Japan. I guess I learned to ask questions for my rights and what I deserve. [T] I don't think I would correct them in Japan. But I did in Canada because everyone did it due to the democracy in the classes. 5 I would tell the teacher after the class. I never thought about letting the teacher know but I would now. 10 I would like to study and correct teachers' mistakes in Japan. [Y] I used to be passive but I listen to the teacher more carefully now. Because I am more serious, I would like to correct the teacher if he/she makes a mistake. [K] I did correct teacher's mistake in Japan after I came back from Canada. I did it in a modest way. I would correct it without hesitation in Canada. [H] I would correct teachers' mistakes in Japan too. But it's easier to do it in Canada because it's more democratic. 10 It depends on my mood. [M] I want to make everything clear now. [T] [boss's misbehaviour] I don't think I can correct boss's misbehaviour in Japan. I am worried about what would happen afterwards. 8 I would think about solution though. 5 I might say something in North America. 3 I would correct boss's misbehaviour in Japan too. But I would be worried about what would happen afterwards. So I would say or do things more indirectly in Japan. In Canada, I would say things more directly. I wouldn't have said anything before I went to Canada. 9 I did correct boss's behaviour in Japan. I did not even use the honorific language. I thought about when I work in real world. I think I would say something but in a softer way. [K] I would tell boss to correct misbehaviour directly. 8 I can't believe that other people don't say anything to the boss at work at bai-to. [H] I would even say that for my friends. 5 I want to sue the boss. I am in law and want to fight for my rights. I became to insist on my opinions and fight for my rights. It seems that my justice side was drawn out by Canadian society. [M] I had a molester touching me in the train. I told him to stop it directly. I couldn't have done that before I went to Canada. [M]

FUTURE GOAL I learned to analyse myself and discovered my identity because I was away from home and people who knew me well. I found goals or things I like. 6 I want to study in a foreign university in the future. 4 I think I am thinking more about my future than other students in Japan. [K]

AUTONOMY I used to think that I had to belong to a group. Now, I think I am who I am and do not need to belong to a group. [N] I never went to a cafe by myself in Japan before. I now go to a cafe by myself and don't have to be in a group to do anything. [Y] I became independent. I look for things that I want to do and do it. 7 I used to try hard to be in a group. I was never alone and never had time alone to scrutinise things. Now, I spend more

time alone to think about things deeply. I think it's important. I have become more independent and strong. [K] In Japan, everyone has to be the same. Even fashion has to be the same. Everyone goes after the same trend. I now have my own style and am proud of it. I don't want to be same as everyone else anymore about anything. 3 I have become proud to be who I am. I don't want to imitate other people. [K] It seems that everyone seeks for individuality and uniqueness. However, people are just going after the same trend after all. [K]

UNIQUENESS OF PEOPLE Every individual is different. Everyone is unique in Japan too. I would be interested in unique people. Before I went to Canada, I did not like strange people. 12 Everyone is strange in a sense. 3 Including myself. [Y] I found that different kinds of people, opinions, and uniqueness exist in Japan too. 9 I have always liked unique people. 6 But I pretended that I didn't like them because I didn't want to be considered one of them in Japan. [H] There is no one right answer in the world. Everyone is entitled to their own opinions. Nobody should be discriminated against because of that. There are lots of ways even in Japan. [M] Even in Japan, I think there are different cultures depending on the region. Especially, kansai (Osaka) vs. kanto (Tokyo). So Japanese people are different too. 4 I have an attitude of listening to other people and different opinions, and accept them now. I used to think I didn't want to be associated with strange people or people with different opinions so I avoided hanging out with them. 14 Because Canadians were accepting all kinds of people, I do too now. I used to dislike returning students but I don't dislike returners now. [J]

DIFFERENT CULTURES I learned to accept the differences in people. [Y] Before I went to Canada, I only thought about Japanese people. Now, I think about different kinds of people. They are not in the different world anymore. I would like to keep communicating with different kinds of people. [K] I used to be only interested in North America, especially USA. But I am more interested in Middle East and Asia now. [H]

RACISM I have been discriminated against in USA so I would never racially discriminate against anybody. [G] I would get angry at bigotry terms.¹¹ I have been like that. [M] I think everyone is equal and no race is better than other. Racism exists everywhere and we should try to get rid of it. [Y] [racism in Vancouver] I never felt discriminated against in Vancouver. 4 There are lots of Asians that I never felt like a minority. [A]

ETHNIC MINORITIES IN JAPAN As I learned in the Intercultural course, I know there are also many kinds of people in Japan. Ethnic Koreans, Chinese, half Japanese, returning students (from overseas), gay people, Ainu, Okinawans, gai-jin, burakumin, disabled people and so on. There are age discrimination, sexism, different religions and beliefs. Everyone is unique and the course made me think about how Japanese people deal with uniqueness. [M] Now, I notice that there are lots of ethnic minorities in Japan too.¹³ I notice more foreign languages on the street, signs in different languages, and Korean school uniforms. I know that Japan is also multicultural. 3

JAPAN AS NON-HOMOGENEOUS SOCIETY I used to think that Japan was homogeneous but I don't think so now. I went to Ainu conference in Vancouver and talked to them. Historically, Japan did terrible things to minorities. [H] [indifferent] I have not changed so much about racism. I don't meet minorities in Japan. I have nothing against them but I don't really pay attention.¹⁰ I think that Japanese people dislike anything different because it is homogeneous. So racial discrimination must exist somewhere but I have never encountered them. I notice more discrimination within the same group (Japanese) such as "bullies in schools". [M] [supportive attitude] I have Korean friends in Japan and they are same as me and everyone else.⁶ We are in the

fourth year and looking for a job now. My friends and I have found a job already. But my Korean friend has not found a job yet. She is very smart and active. I think being both an ethnic minority and a woman is contributing to it. It's not fair. 5 Asians are more looked down in Japan. It might be difficult but I want it to change as part of international community. 3 My parents are from Hokkaido and they told me about Ainu, and Koreans and Chinese prisoners since I was little. I was aware of it before I went to Canada. [K] I am more interested in minorities in Japan. But I never meet them. I would look into minorities in Japan now. 4 Minorities in Japan are more invisible. 3 I am more interested in minorities and racism because there were lots of kinds of immigrants in Vancouver. 3 I didn't know enough about it before. [Y] I think Japanese people try to avoid the issue. [H] I used to ignore the issue but I am more interested in disabled people, Korean people, and gay people. [K] I used to be too sensitive toward racism. I used to think minorities were different from Japanese and didn't know how to deal with them. But I look at them equally now so I am not too sensitive anymore. [Keiko] I notice that people in Kyoto are too sensitive toward racism such as Koreans and "buraku-min" because there are lots of minorities in the city. I think people should not be too sensitive because it is unnatural and superficial. [Y] I used to be nervous around non-Japanese because I thought they were different people but I try to look at their personalities and be friends now as a human being. [A] I used to look at minorities in Japan as something different. I now understand how minorities feel. I look at them as equal. I am more sensitive to native issues such as Ainu. [N] I had become more interested in different cultural groups and I still am interested in them. [K] [generation gap with racism] I think it's terrible when my grandparents say something racist. Japan is changing little by little around racism. [M]

GAY PEOPLE [positive] My perspectives broadened toward gay people. 5 Gay people were holding hands on the street and their existence was everywhere in Vancouver. They were accepted in Vancouver and I became accepting. First, it was very new and shocking to me and used to stare at them but I don't anymore. [H] I don't personally like gay people. But I am more open now. 4 I was surprised to see so many gay people in Vancouver. I didn't know that they existed. I don't mind that they exist as long as they don't come on to me. [M] I don't mind gay people. I have been that way. 3 I knew a gay American exchange student in Japan. First, I was surprised but I accepted him as who he was. He was a good friend. Therefore, I had accepted their existence already in Japan. [K] It's a shame that I only know little about gay people. I would like to know more. We learned about them in the class. 3 [negative] In my religion, gay people are unnatural so I don't know if I accept them. [H]

GAI-JIN I used to be scared of foreigners. [M] I used to think foreigners in Japan were special. Now, I feel close to foreigners and talk to them. When I see them I want to go back to Canada. I even feel that Japan is strange because there are only Japanese. I sometimes wonder if some Japanese are Chinese. [N] Japanese people do not have chances to interact with foreigners as much. The other day my Canadian friend came to Japan and we were speaking English. A little girl pointed at us and said "*gai-jin*" as if we were something strange. She said "it's English you are speaking!!" and ran away. If there is more interaction with foreigners, Japan will change. [K]

FOREIGNERS IN JAPAN [help a foreigner] I would like to help troubled foreigners in Japan. 22 I used to hesitate and not be confident to talk to foreigners. 8 I actually helped a foreigner at the station. He was asking the direction in English but nobody helped him. So I went and helped him. I would of course help foreigners if they do not speak English.

In fact I would also like to help any troubled people. 7 I was helped on the street in Vancouver so I would like to help troubled foreigners. 6 I understand how the foreigners feel so I want to help them. 4 Canadians were nice and I learned to be like them. So I want to help troubled people. 4 I was lonely in the USA because I had to ask them to help me. I would like to help foreigners voluntarily. [Y] I now want to talk to foreigners. [K] I work at a restaurant near the golden temple. Lots of foreigners come and I take orders in English. I used to hesitate to do that before I went to Canada. [M] I would not help a foreigner. [T] [language] I realised that not every foreigner speaks English. 5 I would like to speak to them in Japanese in Japan. 4 I would speak to foreigners in Japanese. I felt being used when Canadians spoke Japanese to me to maintain it in Canada. [T] I try in Japanese first and if it seems easier in English, I'll help them in English. 10 I used to think that I had to speak English to a foreigner but I now think that they maybe able to speak Japanese. [T] [unique] I don't know if I would help a foreigner who doesn't speak English. If they can't speak English or Japanese, I would not know how to help. [T] If they speak English, I can practice my English. It's killing two birds with one stone. Of course, I would help foreigners who don't speak English too. 8 I spoke to foreigners in English. [H]

WOMEN'S ISSUES

When I watched news about Japanese sexism when I was in Canada, I couldn't believe it. I want Japanese system to change. I want companies to look at personalities and abilities in the interviews. Not sex!! 3 I think that women have way more disadvantages in terms of occupations, maternity leave, and so forth in Japan. I feel that marriage is getting better but other things are still behind. I had a survey for a class, and 80% of the women said that they want to continue working after having a baby. They want to come back to work after a maternity leave. However, only 30% of the men said that they want their wives to return to work after a maternity leave. There is a big difference. I think Canada would have a more equal result between men and women. I also remember the comment that the men wrote. One guy wrote with a strong order form, "women, shut up and stay home!!". More men wrote similar things with a softer way such as "I want women to stay home, not work" or "I want the light to be on when I come home from work". Very traditional. But I suppose men change when they go abroad a little. If I had done the same survey with the guys who participated in the program, the result would be different. [Y] I was talking to my Canadian roommates about it but Japan is very behind. 3 I don't know so much about women's issues. But I would like my wife to keep working if she wants to. 6 I want to keep working after marriage. [H] Because I haven't worked, I don't know. But those sexist stories make me angry. 4 I thought Canadian women were more active than Japanese women. 5 Canadian women are stronger. Although Canadian women are weaker than men too, Japanese women are much more oppressed. [M] I used to think that Japanese way was normal. But in Canada, I realised that Japanese women are discriminated against. When I start working, I'll experience more. 4 When I was looking for a job, I felt sexism. I hate it. [M] I think men have to change to improve the situation for women. [M] I want Japanese society to change to respect women more in every sense. [M] My specialty is law. I think divorce rates are higher in Canada. When they divorce, women cannot get much money in Japan. Women are expected to be housewives so they cannot keep their own family name. Women are legally discriminated against in Japan. [T] I dislike Japanese girls who act like little girls now. They should not act and be themselves. [H] I met lots of Japanese girls in the program who were very independent and strong. I am more supportive toward women's rights. [K]

MARRIAGE [could be a foreigner] I would marry whomever I fell in love with no matter what nationality. 20 I have been like that. 6 I used to think it was impossible for me to communicate with foreign women, therefore, marrying one. But I met lots of mixed couples and Canadians who speak both Japanese and English. I know that I can communicate with foreign women now. I think international marriage is possible. 4 I was only thinking about Japanese person before but I think I never know what nationality now. 4 I used to be discriminating against Asians in terms of marriage. Now, I consider them too. [N] [has to be a foreigner] I met younger Canadian guys who were very smart and thoughtful. I now want to marry who think about the future and society. [H] I would be looking for a man who has different views from me. It's more interesting. Probably an international marriage would be nice. 3 I wouldn't like a Japanese man to marry because they have a certain expectation from a woman. [T] I used to want to only marry a foreigner. I wanted it to be international. However, I think Japanese person is okay too now. [M]

PARENTS' REACTIONS TO INTERNATIONAL MARRIAGE My parents would not like the idea of marrying non-Japanese. 3 I think that my mother would okay marrying a Caucasian person but not a black person or Asians. [T] My grandparents would be oppose to my marriage if I want to marry non- Japanese. [M] I don't think my parents would oppose to my marriage. [Kosuke, Mishina, Kazu] But maybe other relatives might mind it. [M] [wants to marry Japanese] I want to marry Japanese. I don't think I can handle cultural difference on top of personality. But I never know. I might change if I meet someone who is not Japanese and fall in love with her. [H] I want to marry Japanese now. I think I can understand a Japanese person the most. But if we can understand each other, the nationality doesn't matter. [M] I want to marry Japanese because she speaks Japanese. However, if she speaks Japanese, the ethnicity doesn't matter. I used to only want to marry Japanese. So I changed. [T] [wants to marry Asian] I want to marry Asian because I didn't like Caucasian women in Canada. They were too strong or maybe they are simply not my type. [M]

DORMITORY Living in a dormitory with other people (both Canadians and Japanese) was fun and I learned how to live with other people. [Y] Living there was just beyond the study. You have to experience this when you are young!! [T] Living in a dormitory itself is very different. Hang in there and experience it!! [H] I learned a lot from living in a dormitory with lots of Japanese also. Residence was the place to learn so much including co-living, sharing, communicating, and living. [K] I became more independent. Because I lived in a dormitory, I decided to live on my own when I came back from Canada, not depend on my parents. 4

ROOMMATES I learned how to solve problems with my roommates and deal with people. [K] I had fights with Canadian roommates. Fights are not bad things in Canada. People can say what's on their mind. [M] Before I left, I was very worried about living with Canadians. I thought it would be impossible to live with people from different cultures and I was even scared to talk to them. I now learned that it is very possible and nice. 4 I could not tell my roommates to clean up when it was their turn. I could not be so direct. [K] When I didn't like some things that my roommates did, I told them a long reason and then told them to stop it. They said, "why didn't you just tell us to stop it?" and I learned to say the conclusion first. [H] My Canadian roommates were all Asians and their ways of speaking was indirect like Japanese people. [A] I communicated with my Asian roommates using Chinese character at first. [T]

FRIENDS I made lots of friends. 4 I made friends with both Japanese and Canadians. 4 I

met lots of Chinese friends and it's easier for me to understand Chinglish. [K] My Canadian friend taught me that life is beautiful. [H] My Canadian friends encouraged me. I was very pessimistic but they said that I was doing great. [H] My Japanese friends and I are good friends. We share same experiences and will be life-time-friends. 3 I made lots of Canadian friends. [Jun] I lived with Canadians and the experience is tremendous. [T] I learned to open up to my friends. I want to be honest and have true friends. [H]

CANADIANS WHO ARE INTERESTED IN JAPAN I thought Asians were more interested in Japan. They always talked to me and made me feel comfortable. [T] I had more Asian friends. [M] It was also easier to communicate with Canadians who were interested in Japan or something about Japan such as Manga (Japanese comic books). It was not easy to communicate with people who had nothing in common. [K] Fortunately, we were surrounded by Canadians who were interested in Japan and it made it easier to communicate with them. Roommates were usually interested in Japan and it was a good environment. 4

100 JAPANESE STUDENTS [negative] This program is like a small Japanese community with 100 students in a foreign country. I wish that I had more interactions with Canadians. 6 I did not like the rumours. 6 I think it would have been better if every Japanese student stayed separately in different places during the stay. [M] 100 was too many. 20 would be the best. Students I know all thought so. [M] I think that there is a big discrepancy among students' English ability. Some people only have 420 for TOEFL and some people have 600. The program mixes returning students who had lived abroad and regular students, and expect us to do the same. It's not fair. They should integrate the score or make it to an ESL program. [M] [positive] I think there were too many Japanese people in the program but it was good for someone like me. It was my first time abroad and the protected environment was nice. The environment was a good first step. 4 To study English, 100 students were too many Japanese. But because there were 100 Japanese, there were lots of fun things happened too. 5 I was sometimes a good adviser for the students who went abroad for the first time. People who came abroad for the first time were home sick and stressed, so I listened to them and advised them. [Y] Lots of Japanese students had previous experiences abroad and spoke good English. I think it was a good environment. [Y] [lesson] I learned not to get too close to Japanese people. I learned not to depend on other Japanese no matter how hard it was sometimes. [K] I learned to get along with my Japanese roommates too. [Y] I learned to get along with Japanese friends. 4

RE-ENTRY STRESS [easy] It was not that difficult because I had lived in Japan for a long time so it was easier for me to readapt to the Japanese way than when I tried to adapt to the Canadian way. [K] It took me a few months. But it wasn't stressful because I was proud to be Canadianised. [T] It only took a week and I didn't want to get used to it. But it was easy. [T] It was not difficult to adapt to Japan. 9 It took me only one to two months. [Y] 1 week. [J] It took me a month to get used to the humid climate and the season, and small size houses and streets. However, it was not difficult at all about what was going on in Japan because I kept contacting my Japanese friends with letters and emails. They informed me with new things, trend and system. [Y] [difficult] Japan was like a foreign country. 6 I was stressed when I reentered Japan. Everything was in Japanese. It took me a month. 5 Everyone was Japanese. 5 Although Japan is a developed country, I don't feel that the quality of life is high in Japan. Everything is crowded in Japan compared to Canada. It was frustrating to see all the small streets when I came back to Japan. 5 Everything was small. 6 Everything was more dynamic in Canada. [T] Japanese people

should enjoy more nature like Canadians. I would like to live in a countryside with less people and nicer air. [M] It's humid. Everyone smokes. Everyone has cell phones. Smoking bothered me because it was not like that in Canada. [K] When I came back, I couldn't even breath. For a month, I couldn't get used to Japan and kept comparing things to Canada. 3 It took me a month. Everything was different. Time seemed to pass faster in Japan. 6 I was always rushed by something. [Y] It took me a month to catch up with new trendy stuff in Japan. 4 I couldn't believe how thin Japanese girls were and the change in fashion. I was used to casual style in Canada and I bought casual clothes in Canada. I also gained weight in Canada. I could not wear the clothes that I bought in Canada. 4 I didn't want to change my looks like other exchange students in the USA. Lots of people were Americanised and got ears' pierces. I even didn't get ears' pierces or dye my hair in Canada. Non-returning Japanese do that too but it's more typical of returning students. I didn't want to be a typical returning person. [Y] I didn't want to have the same fashion as Japanese anymore. I wanted to be different from them. 3 I was stressed when I went to Canada from Japan. I was also stressed in the same way when I went back to Japan from Canada after eight months. For example, I had to adapt to the Japanese way when I talked to people. [K] I was too direct when I came back. I had to get used to speaking indirectly. My friends told me that. [H] I couldn't get used to kei-go and being same as everyone else. I also realised that I had become very articulate and knew I would be hated by other Japanese if I had kept insisting on my opinions. [K] I couldn't get used to the atmosphere of the classes in Japan. 5 The classroom is too big with one teacher and a thousand students. The students are not as hard working. I couldn't get used to it. [H] Japanese people were not friendly when I went to a new class. Canadians smile and welcome other people more. 3 It took me two weeks. [K] I told a professor my opinion and he told me I was rude. It was difficult to adapt. [H] It took me two months. I didn't know how to deal with my friends. They hadn't changed and I had. They were not especially welcoming me home either. 7 My friends didn't understand me anymore. I feel like I have to be same as everyone else too. [Keiko] To me, more qualities were added to me. But to my friends, I had changed. They criticised me and didn't accept me. It was very stressful. Japanese girls did everything together. I didn't want to do the same thing as others in the group and told them to do it on their own. It shocked them. 3 I realised that Japanese friendship is not sincere. We never talked about how we really felt and argued. Since my Canadian friends were always honest and respected the differences when we didn't agree on something, I could not respect my Japanese friends anymore. It was very frustrating. [M] None of my friends were interested in what I had to say about Canada. I kept referring to Canada and my friends got tired of me. 4 My friends had lived in foreign countries and I was the only one who hadn't. So I can talk to them about Canada and North America now. We compare the USA and Canada sometimes. 3 [unique] I live with my parents. I didn't get along with my parents. I was independent in Canada and my roommates and I were in the equal relationship. However, my parents and I were in the hierarchy relationship because my father is very traditional. I couldn't stand the unequal relationship that made me obey my parents. It was very stressful. [M] I had my own space in Canada and I wasn't simply used to being told what to do by my parents. 5

CHANGES PERCEIVED BY OTHER PEOPLE [positive change] Some people said that I am more sophisticated. [K] My friends said that I am more laid back. [J] People say that I have become more independent. [K] I've become more gentle. [Y] My friends were surprised that I had become to study harder. I spend more time alone and study. [K] My female friends said that I changed for the better. Maybe my attitude toward women

changed. [M] My family said that I am cheeky when I speak English at home sometimes. They think that I am trying to show it off. I know that they are happy about it. 3 My parents are happy that I speak English well now. I showed them the video tape from Canada and when they saw me speaking to my roommates in English, they were very impressed. [M] My family bought a dish washer when we discussed the quality of life in Canada. [Y] My family thinks that I accept other people's opinions or what other people think about me now. My sister thinks I grew up and became gentle. 3 My parents and my teacher from high school thought that I grew up. My brother also thought so when I came back from the USA. They think that I am independent and can survive on my own. They trust me because I am confident in a good way. [Y] My parents thought I became more independent and strong. But they also told me not to be too confident. [N] My parents were so impressed that I became more independent and started helping my mother. That was my very first time to live apart from my family and they liked my change. [Y] [negative change] Some friends said that I have become obnoxious. I became articulate and confident. I think they are jealous. They say I am Westernised. 5 My friends said that I became articulate. I insist my opinions more. 3 I said everything I thought honestly and it was too direct for my friends. I am used to the way now. [H] Being a Canadianised person in Japan, I say 'yes' or 'no' clearly now. My friends told me to be careful not to be so direct in Japan. [T] My parents said that I became too laid back. [M]

DIFFERENCES WITH JAPANESE PARENTS I told my parents that I want to live in Vancouver or in a foreign country and they didn't understand why. [K] [neutral change] My friends said something about me has changed. [M] I use my body language when I speak. More gesture!! [N] [unchanged] My friends said that I have not changed at all. 8 I had been already a little different from other Japanese such as being direct before I went to Canada. 5 Every time I came back from a sojourn, nobody says that I am Americanised or changed. That's probably because I could be and was myself in Canada so I did not change. [Y] My friends said that my appearance haven't changed. [K]

BICULTURAL PERSON [back to Japanese way] I regret that I was too cheeky in Canada. Because I found myself and wanted to express myself, I was a little too cheeky. Now, I am back to reality and I should refrain myself a little. [N] Without changing to Japanese way in Japan, you can't survive in Japan. [H] I even studied kei-go when I came back from Canada for a job hunt. [M] I try not to stand out in Japan. [K] I try not to use English words so much. I don't want to be cheeky. [T] I am proud to be who I am but I don't want to be selfish. I know how to get along with other Japanese people as well. [K]

KEI-GO IN JAPAN [negative] In Japan, people have to use kei-go. That makes people wear masks. In Canada, there is not such a strictly structured language. Japanese people have hon-ne (true feelings that are not expressed to other people) and tate-mae (untrue feelings that are expressed to other people). 4 In English, there is not such a strict language. 5 I can speak kei-go as a technique. But I don't really like using it in heart. It's a pain to be a certain way but you have to do it in Japan. 9 I wish I could speak to older people casually in Japan like in Canada. 7 I don't want to use it when you don't respect the person, but I have to. Senpai-kohai relationship is a pain. [J] Because of kei-go, there are walls between people in Japan. 5 [positive] I feel a little resistance to speak kei-go but I don't mind doing it because it's Japanese way. 5 It's natural to speak kei-go in Japan so I switch and I have nothing against it. 3 It's a Japanese mannerism and culture so it's important to do it in Japan. 2 Younger people are weaker in Japan. Younger people always have to lose because of hierarchy. I accept it now as a Japanese culture. [M]

ATTITUDES TOWARD YOUNGER PEOPLE WHO DO NOT USE KEI-GO [positive] I don't want to offend older people so I would use kei-go. I can accept younger people speak casually to me. 3 People have to speak *kei-go* when the person is six months older or one year older depending on their grades (school year). In Canada, when people were two years older or even more, I spoke casually. *Kei-go* creates walls between people, and I wish that people could be more friendly and casual beyond the age. I wonder why those older people are so great. Two years difference is considered same age in Canada and it is not in Japan. I really want it to change. [M] I used to get mad at younger people who didn't speak kei-go to me. I don't mind it now so much. 4 I am still not used to it but I am old enough to forget the senpai- kohai relationship. I am not in junior high school anymore. [M] [unique] I never used to wonder about hierarchy and kei-go. I don't mind using it but I sometimes wonder about using it. However, Japanese people are changing and more people want more casual relationship. Less kei-go is used and less hierarchy system is emphasised. Japan is changing. [K] [negative] I still think it's natural to speak kei-go to older people. Recently, lots of younger people speak to me in a casual way and I hate it. 6 I am not used to younger people speak casually to me. It contradicts my feelings toward myself wanting to speak casually to older people but I am simply not used to it. 3 [switching the way] I am bicultural. I can switch the way in each culture. 18 When I speak English, I am more direct. (I try to be more direct 6) When I speak Japanese, I say the conclusion at the end. I switch. 5 I always try not to do things that would bother each culture. I act as they would expect me to. [G] In English, I avoid using the indirect expressions. 3 [unique] I didn't have to be assimilated to a Canadian way like the USA. I could be Japanese in Canada and I wanted to let other people know that I am Japanese. So I didn't speak too directly even in English. But I can switch if I want to. [M] An exchange student in Japan said it was strange to eat everything on the plate. In Japan, leaving something is rude. I told him that he is strange in Japan. Therefore, I would do something accepted in the country as long as it doesn't include anything extreme. [M]

CLOSE FEELING TOWARD CANADA When I hear words such as Vancouver, Canada and North America, I pay attention right away and get excited.¹⁶ It is not foreign anymore. [T] I like Vancouver. 19 I even think that I have a Canadian identity in me now. [K] I love Vancouver. I am into ice hockey now. I got so excited when they came to Tokyo. I went to see it in Japan. I miss hockey games and things in Vancouver. [T] I will go back to Vancouver in September. 7 I want to live there. [K] I love Vancouver and want to go back there. [H] My English friend always tries to correct my Canadian accent. I like Canadian accent and he upsets me when he says English English is right and Canadian is wrong. [Y] I used to think that Canadians were very different. I still think they are different but they are much closer and I found more similarities. [M]

COMFORTABLENESS IN CANADA Different kinds of people coexist in Vancouver and it was comfortable for me to live there. [K] I feel more comfortable in Canada because I can be myself and say what I want to say. 4 You have to wear different masks all the time in Japan. [J] In Canada, I don't have to use kei-go to older people. I can be myself even when I speak to older people and it's more comfortable. [H]

PERSPECTIVES TOWARD JAPAN [knowledge about Japan as Japanese] When some Canadians asked me about Japan, I did not know so much and could not answer. I would like to know more about Japan as Japanese. I was embarrassed. 18 I also think that I have to scrutinise Japanese society. [Y] Canadians ask many deep questions. I was asked about temples in Kyoto and I realised that I didn't know much about it. I used to think that I knew lots about Japan but I realised that I didn't know much. I wouldn't have realised it

without leaving Japan and looking at Japan from outside. I used to think it was uncool to go to temples but I would like to go now. I want to know more about Japan as Japanese. [K] I want to know more about Japan because no matter where I go, I am Japanese. I realised that when I looked at Japan from outside for the first time. 5 I can pretend to be Canadian but never can be one. I am Japanese. [K] I was teaching my language exchange partner Japanese. I didn't know Japanese grammar and decided to study Japanese linguistics a little to teach Japanese in the future. 4 I think that not knowing about Japan is normal. So I would honestly say that young people including me don't know much about some things. Not every Japanese person knows about everything about Japan. But I would look into things more. 6 People expect Japanese people to know about Japan in international settings so I should study about Japan more. [T] I want to acquire Japanese culture such as instruments or tea ceremony to show foreigners Japanese tradition. 3 [criticisms by foreigners] I accept criticisms toward Japan when it makes sense. 21 I have always been like that. 7 But if they generalise Japan or other countries because of one incident or culture, I would disagree. 14 No one culture is better than another. If they criticise Japanese culture, I might say something. But I became fair to the objective and fair criticisms and accept them. [K] I can look at things from both perspectives, not only one which is Japanese. 4 I am more objective. 6 I also know that people's perspectives are culturally based and can discuss it without getting emotional. [J] [westernisation in Japan/in the world] I think everything in the world is more Westernised. Some things are good but not everything should be Westernised. I consider both international criticism and traditional Japanese way and want to be fair to both, not only Western way. [H] I think that Japanese people have been feeling inferiority to Europeans for a long time since the modernisation era. Western things are supposed to be better than Japanese. I realised that Japan has a nice quality of its own and people should recognise it. [M] [objectivity toward Japan] I realised both good and bad quality about Japan. 14 I used to criticise Japanese groupism and closedness. I now think it has both good and bad quality such as groupism is good to have a close community. [M] I don't look at Japan as the best. I am fair. 4 I looked at Japan from outside and became objective. [Y] [negative attitude toward Japan] I've found lots of negative quality about Japan. I did not realise them before. 8 I always think about Canadian ways and Japanese ways can be improved applying Canadian ways in lots of things. 4 I used to be ethno-centric. So I found lots of bad things about Japan such as social system. [N] When I looked at Japan from outside for the first time, I became very critical about Japan. 3 You have to care about other people's eyes too much in Japan. [K] [positive attitude toward Japan] I've found lots of good quality about Japan. I was criticising Japan more before I went to Canada. 10 Food is good. 2 Convenience and safety is good. 3 People care about other people's feelings and treat each other politely. 3 Little things are cute and convenient in Japan. [M] Japanese people care about little things for customers or guests. Service spirit in business is good. 3 I used to want to live only in a foreign country and work but I am thinking about working in Japan too because I realised it's not bad. [T]

COMFORTABLENESS IN JAPAN I feel more comfortable in Japan because I can speak Japanese easily. 10 But I can't say things I really want to say in Japan and feel very oppressed. I compare Canada and Japan and think that I can say my opinions in Canada more easily. 6 Because of the language, I feel more comfortable in Japan. However, I would feel more comfortable in multicultural society to be myself. I would feel very comfortable if Japan was multicultural society. [Y] I like the dynamics and variety in Canada. But I feel more comfortable in Japan. This is home. 5 Because I know what people

are thinking in general and it's easier. [H] Because I lived in Japan for longer, it's more comfortable. But I sometimes hesitate to say my true feelings in Japan and feel uncomfortable. 3

IDENTITY AS JAPANESE [unique] I have become more Japanese because of the program. Lots of students say that they have become Canadianised but I haven't. [M] I used to think that I was very international, not so Japanese. But as I interacted with lots of different kinds of people, I realised that I am Japanese no matter where I go. 3 To be international means to know your true identity. [M] I used to feel inferior to Europeans but I am proud to be who I am as Japanese now. 4 I am proud to be Asian. [K] [Japan as a home] I think I'll stay in Japan in the future. I would like to work and visit in foreign countries. But I will always come home to Japan. [K] I realise that I am Japanese and Japan is my home country. So I want to change the bad quality to good quality and make Japan better. [H] Japanese people's main life is in Japan. I learned to take good advantage of good quality that I acquired in Canada in Japan. I have good quality from both cultures and I am very happy. [K]

COMPARISON OF JAPAN AND CANADA I used to think only in Japanese way. Now, I compare Canadian way and other ways to Japanese way. [N] I compare TV shows in Canada and Japan. Japanese TV shows seem more ridiculous. [M] I compare Canadian ways with my experiences to Japanese ways because my major is international politics. [Y] I always compare Canada and Japan. I can look at both good and bad in both countries. [J] I kept comparing Japanese and Canadians in Canada. I then objectively looked at Japan. [M]

IDENTITY AS ASIAN It's still a little difficult to communicate with Caucasians or East Indians or anybody who does not look Asian. I felt easier to communicate with Asians because their cultural back ground was similar to Japanese including Confucianism. [K] When I was in Japan, I didn't wonder that Japanese people used English words a lot. Japanese people should use Japanese language more and should be proud. When I was talking to a Korean friend in Canada, we agreed that hierarchy system or honorific language is not bad. It's a Japanese culture and other Asian cultures are very similar. Japanese people should respect other Asian countries more rather than only looking at western society. I used to dislike hierarchy system but I like it now. [K] It is a little frustrating to interact with people with different back grounds. For example, sense of humour is very different. I found Asians had a similar sense of humour and Caucasian's jokes were not funny. 3 Japan is part of Asia and we should co-operate with Asian countries more. 3 I would like to go to Asia soon. 2 I want to study Chinese now. [K]

BEYOND JAPAN/INTERNATIONAL IDENTITY I recommend to other Japanese people to go abroad. My perspectives broadened. I think about more than Japan now. 10 In Japan, people do not act friendly when they meet for the first time. In Canada, people are friendly. I have learned to be more friendly in international settings. [K] I became international. Foreign countries are close to me now. 3 I am confident. I can survive in foreign countries and I can live as an international person. 3 I can survive anywhere in the world!! 4 I know human beings are the same everywhere. 2 Language and culture is different but I found more similarities as a human being. [M] I am definitely more international than other Japanese who had never been abroad. 5 When I talk about Canada or international settings, my friends are not interested. I think I am more international than others who have never lived in a foreign country. 3 When I talk to my Japanese friends, I feel very international. I know much more about foreign countries and I am sometimes surprised at their ignorance about foreign countries. [K]

NEWS I am interested in international news in general. 7 rather than national news. [T]

I am more interested in news about Asia. It has a direct impact on Japan. [H] I can watch the news more objectively. I try to be fair and less ethno-centric. [H] When I watch news, I compare Japanese way and North American way.¹⁰ I used to only look at Japan but I always connect Japan to other countries now. [H] Japanese media is biased and one perspective is accepted. North America is more democratic and people complain and fight for their rights. [G]

JAPAN AS PART OF GLOBAL SOCIETY I am more interested in how Japan is situated in international news. I used to think Japan was great and never criticised. Now, I am fair and can criticise Japan as part of global society. [N] I think that Japan can't be separated from international setting. Japan is part of it. [H]

MAINTAINING ENGLISH [difficulty] It's difficult to maintain English in Japan.¹³ My listening skill is maintained okay but speaking skill is declining. [T] I talked to my Swedish friend and realised that my English is getting worse. [J] [how to maintain] {integrated/ communication} I belong to English conversation club. 4 I speak with friends who are native English speakers. 5 I work as a volunteer translator. [T] I am a buddy. 7 I speak to foreigners on the street in English. 4 I go to an English conversation school or take courses. 5 I call my roommates from Canada. 4 I speak to my Japanese friends in English sometimes. [N] {listening} I watch movies, TV, videos in English. 18 I listen to radio in English. 4 I listen to English conversation tapes. [M] {writing} I wrote three tests in English. [K] I e-mail my roommates from Canada. 5 I write to my Canadian friends. [K] {speaking} I think in English. [M] I talk to my pet in English. [Y] I speak to myself in English. 6 {reading} I read English news paper. [H] I read the books that I brought back from Canada. I also read English literature for a class. [H]

RECOMMENDATION TO GO ABROAD I really recommend that more people go abroad. Japan is too small. 14 You'll learn to look at Japan from outside and compare Canadian way to Japanese way. It broadens your perspective. 5 Going abroad is something you really have to experience for yourself, not from a book. [T] I want young people to go abroad because they are more flexible and open. [T] I am recommending other people to go abroad. My best friend is in a foreign country now because of my influence. She thought I grew up and she also wanted to be international like me. As such, returning students can influence other people. [Y] I recommend that other people interact with various kinds of people. You can do it in Japan too but it's easier in a foreign country. [M]

REFLECTION You'll discover yourself. I realised that I was Japanese and myself. [Y] I feel I am more positive because of my Canadian friends. All the experiences including the negative ones turned out to be all positive. 4 I became more positive. [H] World view expanded. [T] I am more flexible according to the environment. [M] I used to be less sensitive. I am more sensitive to people and communication. I even observe people. [M] Not everything was great. I learned that human beings are complicating, various people exist including both Japanese and Canadians. I learned how to deal with that. The amount of the study was also too much. However, I am still glad that I went. [M] I returned to Japan and realised that I had experienced many things and I changed. Everything was fresh and I acquired so many things that didn't exist in me before. You need to reflect to realise that you changed. [K]

RITSUMEIKAN PROGRAM Everything was new, first time, and fresh. 3 including roommate, English, different people's values, living with group of Japanese, and that experience really affected me. It was one of my greatest experiences in my university life. Fun!! 5 This experience was added as more confidence to my old experiences in the

USA.[Y]

ADVICE [pre-departure] I want people to prepare a lot before they go abroad. I don't think they should expect to learn English just by living there. They have to study hard even before they leave for the country. 4 [while in Canada] Try to immerse in Canadian environment more. Of course, it is easier to hang out with Japanese but you should avoid and be with Canadians in the limited time in Canada. [Y] I would recommend to make good friends not only with Canadians but also with Japanese. I didn't feel that there were too many Japanese. It's up to you to choose whether you want to hang out with Japanese or Canadians. [H] I think everyone should live in a residence like Totem and get away from other Japanese. Then students can experience more different culture and change themselves for the better. We should learn and bring good quality from other cultures. [J]