A balance of tripod model about satisfaction changing patterns for short-term international students from/to Japan that focused on involvement in host societies

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We discuss the techniques and impact of relationship formation between international students and hosts/society by qualitative and quantitative methods. In the first presentation, semi-structured interviews of 15 international students in the USA discovered the recognized, received and implemented social skills for interpersonal relationship formation with hosts. A variety of skills necessary in American culture like aggressive assertions was found by KJ methods and content analysis. Next to develop a cross-cultural social skills learning session for international students in Japan, a small group session was conducted based on cognitive and behavioral learning techniques. 12 international students learned specific Japanese cultural behaviors. 38 Japanese hosts later evaluated their performances. Subjective and objective session effects were discussed. 103 international students in Japan answered questionnaires about willingness to communicate (WTC). Score of WTC in Japanese positively related to evaluation of Japanese (L3) usefulness but negatively related to score of WTC in English (L2). Not only L3 but also L2 proficiency and confidence affected relationships with hosts. The fourth presentation used projective methods for 8 international students in Japan and 6 Japanese students studying abroad. They draw figures about their satisfaction changes and explained it while studying abroad. The figures didn’t follow the U-curve but was affected by events like positive contact with hosts. A balance among recreation, study and cultural experiences suggested the main regulator for their satisfaction.

1. Necessary Social Skills for Formation of Interpersonal Relationships With American Hosts for International Students
   Minako Nakashima & Tomoko Tanaka (Okayama University, Japan)

We used a qualitative method to study which social skills international students living in the U.S. perceive as necessary for fostering intercultural interactions between them and their host. In our research, “social skills” refers to communication skills that enable interaction without misunderstanding, which cultivate positive social discourse and help establish constructive international relationships (Tanaka, 2000). The participants in our study were 15 international students (from 14 different countries such as Japan, Vietnam, Russia, France, and Senegal) who had been living in the U.S. for more than two years. Semi-structured interviews were conducted for approximately one hour per participant, and their responses were analyzed using the KJ method (Kawakita, 1970) and content analysis. We discovered which recognized, learned, and implemented social skills are necessary for fostering interpersonal relationships between the students and their host. A larger variety of social skills (like being more assertive) is necessary for international students living in America than when they are living in their home countries or interacting with compatriots. We categorized these social skills and found perceived patterns in the way the students interacted with their host in the U.S.

2. Experimental Group Session for Cross-Cultural Social Skills Learning for International Students in Japan
   Tomoko Tanaka & Minako Nakashima (Okayama University, Japan)

To develop a cross-cultural social skills learning session for international students in Japan, a small group session was conducted based on cognitive and behavioral learning techniques. 12 international students who studied at a Japanese university and were
interested in learning about Japanese culture, joined the sessions, which were held once a week for three weeks. The students learned cognitive and behavioral social skills that focused on culture-specific behaviors. In the first session, self-assessment about cross-cultural social skills performance was done and target learning behaviors were selected. During the session, they learned about Japanese hesitation, Japanese drinking "communication", visiting behavior at Japanese homes and indirect refusals. Each session included lectures about Japanese behavior patterns and cultural backgrounds. They learned about situations through target behaviors, situational role plays, feedback, a second role play and finally discussion. Participants reported more interest in Japanese cultural behaviors increased self-confidence and greater motivation to experience cross-cultural contacts. 38 Japanese host students later watched their role plays by video and evaluated the performance by micro and macro evaluation items. Their performances and impressions improved after completing the session.

3. Willingness to Communicate in Japanese as a Third Language (L3) Among International Students in Japan
Mira Simic, Tomoko Tanaka & T. Yashima (Okayama University, Japan)

Purpose of the present study was to enlighten a social and psychological factors that contribute to the willingness to communicate (WTC) in Japanese as a L3 among international students in Japan. WTC model (MacIntyre et al, 1998) was used as a theoretical frame. Willingness to Communicate (WTC) is defined as the probability that an individual will choose to initiate communication, more specifically talking, when free to do so. Two important research questions influenced this study: 1. What are relations between communication-related variables (perceived competence, anxiety and WTC) for using English L2 and Japanese L3 among international students in Japan? 2. How factors distinctive for Japanese language speaking environment influence WTC in Japanese and English? 103 international students answered the questionnaire about WTC and Japanese social and psychological context. Model of L2/L3 communication was tested using structural equation modeling (SEM). Between WTC in English and in Japanese is found negative correlation. WTC in Japanese is positively related with evaluation of Japanese (L3) usefulness but negatively related with WTC in English (L2). Not only L3 but L2 proficiency and conveniences affect to relationship with host people. Those findings are further discussed.

4. A Balance of Tripod Model About Satisfaction Changing Patterns for Short-Term International Students From/To Japan That Focused on Involvement in Host Societies
Ai Takahama & Tomoko Tanaka (Okayama University, Japan)

The fourth presentation used projective methods for 8 international students in Japan and 6 Japanese students studying abroad. They draw figures about their satisfaction changes and explained it while studying abroad. It did not follow the U-curve but was affected by events like positive contact with hosts. A balance among recreation, study and cultural experiences suggested the main regulator for their satisfaction.