Abroad, on Campus, or Zoom: Comparing the Best Environments for Pragmalinguistic Awareness

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Abstract

The role of culture instruction in modern language classrooms has varied through the years, most recently presenting the option to learn virtually as opposed to on campus or abroad. The current study compares various learning environments of 49 participants (in-person, abroad, Zoom) to test the efficacy of targeted culture instruction through the analysis of a short film-clip. The research questions guiding this study are: 1) How effective are targeted pragmatic interventions in promoting intercultural communicative competency? 2) Do students studying abroad, online, or on the home-campus approach and complete pragmatic activities similarly? The results from these data suggest that the study away and Zoom participants engaged in the target culture in more meaningful ways than their at-home peers. This initial analysis indicates that short-term study abroad programs and Zoom learning provide environments that may encourage pragmalinguistic and cultural awareness in ways that differ from home-campus based courses, especially when coupled with in-class interventions.

Abstract in German

In den letzten Jahren hat sich die Rolle der Kulturpädagogik im Fremdsprachenunterricht geändert, insbesondere mit der Möglichkeit jetzt virtuell zu lernen statt auf dem Campus oder im Ausland. In der vorliegenden Studie werden die unterschiedlichen Lernumgebungen von 49 Teilnehmern (auf

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dem Campus, im Ausland, auf Zoom) verglichen, um die Wirksamkeit gezielter Kulturpädagogik durch die Analyse eines kurzen Filmclips zu testen. Folgende Forschungsfragen leiten diese Studie: 1) Wie wirksam sind gezielte pragmatische Interventionen in der Förderung interkultureller Kommunikationskompetenz? 2) Gehen Studenten im Ausland, online, oder auf dem Campus pragmatische Aktivitäten in ähnlicher Weise heran? Gibt es einen Unterschied in der Fertigstellung derselben Aktivitäten? Die Ergebnisse der Daten schlagen vor, dass sich die Teilnehmer im Ausland und auf Zoom auf eine bedeutendere Weise mit der Zielkultur auseinandersetzen als ihre Kommilitonen auf dem Heimatcampus. Diese erste Analyse deutet darauf hin, dass kurzfristige Auslandprogramme und Zoomlernen Umgebungen schaffen, die pragmalinguistisches (oder sprachliches?) und kulturelles Bewusstsein fördern, in Weisen, die sich von dem Unterricht auf dem Heimatcampus unterscheiden, vor allem wenn sie in Verbindung mit Interventionen im Unterricht stattfinden.

Keywords

1. Introduction

Study abroad research has recently come to the forefront in the academy, especially in the fields of second language acquisition (SLA) and applied linguistics. From a US-American perspective, most scholars across disciplines agree on the positive benefits of study abroad programs (DeKeyser, 2010; Engle & Engle, 2004; Kinginger, 2008; Kubota, 2016; Lemmons, 2013; López-Rocha, 2018; Tullock, 2018; Vande Berg et al., 2012; Wanner, 2010; Watson & Ebner, 2018) although some disagree, noting that from a linguistic perspective, students are not necessarily better off than their peers who remain Stateside (Arnett, 2013; Howard & Schwieter, 2018). These sentiments, however, are not limited to the US-American academy and could be shared across cultural and geographical boundaries, with several countries advocating for student exchange, see, e.g., the success of the European Erasmus programs.

This study seeks to fill a gap in the literature by critically investigating the participation and outcomes from in-class interventions in learning environments not often compared. The activities researched in this study aimed at promoting pragmalinguistic awareness and deep learning through the analysis of a film scene. The principal researcher (Krauter) surveyed three

environments: the home institution (an R1 university in Southwestern USA), the abroad location (Würzburg, Germany), and online (Zoom). The current study is of important and novel relevance considering the recent boom in online instruction despite the continued push from government agencies and universities for students to learn abroad, as well as the omnipresent constraints preventing students from doing so, e.g., finances, safety concerns, homesickness, etc.

In other words, current university students are often presented with three modalities for learning: online, abroad, or on the home campus, with each modality presenting a particular set of advantages and disadvantages. This study brings new data to the discussion by comparing these locations through the lens of foreign language learning. The results from this study indicate that the students who completed the activities abroad and virtually yielded higher levels of participation and submitted more in-depth reflections than their campus-based classmates by providing more nuanced responses engaging with the themes of social justice and racism. These results suggest that the environment of instruction is a significant factor that encourages students to engage with activities that promote pragmalinguistic awareness.

2. Literature Review

2.1. A General Overview of the Research

Much of study abroad literature focuses primarily on pre- and post-tests aimed at measuring the linguistic gains in participants such as morphosyntax, pronunciation, and local dialect assimilation (e.g., see Arnett, 2013; Knouse, 2012; Reynolds-Case, 2013; Seijas, 2018). Further, the research in this area generally investigates semester- or year-long study abroad programs (e.g., see Barron, 2000; Bataller, 2010; Dwyer, 2004; Engle & Engle, 2004; Ringer-Hilfinger, 2012; Shively, 2011). By comparison, little work has been conducted on short-term study abroad programs or the benefits of virtual classrooms for foreign language learning, both of which are the focus of the present study.

"Short-term" study abroad programs differ from the typical "junior year abroad" (JYA) in that such programs usually take place during the summer months and last anywhere from three to ten weeks (Martinsen, 2010, p. 505). Studies that have investigated these programs test their efficacy in a multitude of ways – linguistic, pragmalinguistic, and beyond (Allen, 2010; Chieffo &

Griffiths, 2004; Cubillos et al., 2008), but the literature is not current and lacks breadth when compared to the current rise in popularity of these programs. Recent national trends suggest that the majority of US-based college students opt for these shorter sojourns as opposed to year- or semester-long programs (*Open Doors*, Institute of International Education, 2024).

Historically, many believe that semester-long programs are beneficial to language learning, but DeKeyser (1991) challenges this idea by suggesting that students who spend a semester abroad do not outperform their peers who stay on the home-campus, citing less profound group differences and more nuanced individual differences in fluency and vocabulary during a semester study in Spain (p. 115). Similarly, there have also been mixed results in semester-long studies which focus on intercultural communicative competency. The University of Minnesota's Maximizing Study Abroad (MAXSA) project investigated students who spent three months in a French or Spanish speaking country, testing the participants through pre-and post-tests, with the experimental group receiving periodical pedagogical interventions and the control group none. The study used a multimodal test employing several different assessments to measure different aspects of intercultural communicative competency (IDI), and growth in linguistic abilities (the speech Act Measure of Language Gain) (Paige & Vande Berg, 2012, pp. 32-33). The findings in this study show that all students in the program showed statistically significant growth in intercultural communicative competency (ICC) when tested with the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) (Paige & Vande Berg, 2012, p. 33). The intervention group also perceived greater differences and credited their growth to the interventions administered, whereas the control group reported less perceived growth and gains in these areas, thus emphasizing the effectiveness of academic interventions for self-perceived growth, but also the overall benefit of study abroad, regardless of interventions administered (Paige & Vande Berg, 2012, p. 33).

Briefly, ICC is a nuanced term, with a general definition being "attitudes, knowledge, and skills and being able to communicate and behave appropriately with cultures and subcultures different than one's own" (Kirkpatrick et al., 2015, p. 47). The four terms "attitudes, knowledge, skills, communicating" are generally agreed upon and referenced throughout ICC literature as the benchmark against which all research is normed.

As such, to understand the significance of ICC, it is first important to establish what is meant by culture, as elements that are deemed "appropriate" or "inappropriate" vary based on this definition, be it linguistic, pragmatic, or otherwise. The present study uses Byram's (1997) theoretical definition of ICC, namely, a definition that indicates it is comprised of those four aforementioned learning objectives: attitudes, knowledge, skills (of interpreting and relating), and skills of discovery and interaction, i.e., communication (pp. 49-54), as well as Deardorff's (2006) practical application of this term: that an ICC individual is one that can communicate and behave appropriately in intercultural situations.

Finally, the largest scale study of its kind to date which investigated cultural growth in students is the Georgetown Consortium Project (Paige & Vande Berg, 2012, p. 34). This study took place over a four-year period with 1,297 participants and investigated intercultural awareness by utilizing the Intercultural Development Inventory or IDI (Hammer, 2007; Hammer & Bennett, 1998). The IDI is a 50-item questionnaire which assesses intercultural competence and can be completed online or in-person in about 15-20 minutes (Hammer, 2007, pp. 116-117). The results indicate that students studying abroad for a semester (13-18 weeks) yielded more gains in their IDIs as opposed to those enrolled in shorter or longer programs (Paige & Vande Berg, 2012, p. 37).

Barron (2000) differs from the previous studies mentioned in that, like the present study, she looks at German learners' abilities rather than focusing on Spanish or French learners. In her research, she surveyed 33 Irish English speakers' cross-cultural pragmatic knowledge through a series of three data collections during a 10-month sojourn in Germany (Barron, 2000, p. 6, 18). Barron used a discourse completion task (DCT) to collect her data and tested the participants' pragmatic ability through speech acts. The results suggest that time in the target country can lead to a more "native-like" command of the target language (p. 19). Barron claims that students can only mitigate potentially face-threatening pragmatic situations while they are abroad as opposed to in the home country; however, she uses no control group for the study, but rather, compares her participants' results to native speakers.

In another large-scale study comparing learner gains with length in country, Davidson (2010) suggests that year-long sojourns result in more significant gains in listening, speaking, and reading as compared to shorter stays in country such as summer or semester programs. Conversely, Dietrich (2018)

argues that longer stays are not necessarily more beneficial to students, citing that there is less accountability from faculty members as well as less time-induced pressure to learn the language, assimilate, etc. due to the impression that the participants have more time to accomplish these goals and may therefore put them off (Davidson, 2010, pp. 552-553).

In sum, although the "junior year abroad" was once seen as the standard for programs, the model is shifting due to demand for shorter programs and some data which show remarkable results for shorter programs. Further, the surveyed studies show the potential for pragmalinguistic awareness and engagement with pedagogical interventions leading to deep learning for students abroad, but do not offer a comparison for students completing the same activities at the home university or online. As such, the current study builds on the previous literature by assuming pedagogical interventions will lead to greater intercultural and pragmatic awareness and tests the efficacy of this claim in shorter study abroad programs as well as compares those data to students completing the same activities during a regular academic semester at the home-university and a summer semester online.

2.2. Short-Term Study Abroad Programs

The practical reasons for choosing a short-term program as opposed to a semester or year are numerous and convincing, ranging from fear of homesickness to the possible financial burden or even worries about graduating on time (Chieffo & Griffiths, 2009). As such, there have been several recent studies on short-term study away (SA) programs to test their efficacy on a myriad of skills ranging from linguistic to intercultural, ultimately advocating for these SA programs, regardless of how miniscule (or non-existent) the benefits for learners may be. Here, a survey of these studies is presented to further contextualize the need for the current study.

The first of such studies comes from Allen (2010) who investigates student motivations to learn the L2 (French) while completing a six-week summer program in Nantes, France within the activity theory perspective. The data in this study ($n = 6$) indicate that students who viewed the SA program as an opportunity to improve linguistic abilities tended to improve these skills, returning to the States with a desire to continue their French skills. Conversely, SA participants who viewed the program as a chance to immerse themselves in

a foreign culture and travel were not motivated to improve their language skills (Allen, p. 42). Similarly, a five-week SA program in Costa Rica and Spain testing listening comprehension compared to a control group of Spanish learners at the home university (Cubillos et al., 2008), suggest that all SA learners (n = 48) approached the tasks differently than their control group peers (n = 92), with more advanced SA participants scoring better than the control group and showing higher levels of confidence and self-perceived ability than their on-campus peers, despite no significant changes in test scores between the two groups (Cubillos et al., 2008, pp. 157, 177; Chieffo & Griffiths, p. 373). Another study from Arnett (2013) compared learner gains in syntactic forms from an SA group (n = 9) to an on-campus control group (n = 25) of German language learners during a 10-week study in Potsdam, Germany, indicating that both groups yielded similar results in their mastery of skills (p. 706); however, the SA participants were able to provide more ditransitive clauses, suggesting an added benefit or advantage to studying in the target country (pp. 706, 711).

Chieffo and Griffiths (2004) submitted the largest study in this field by comparing 1,509 SA students to 827 on-campus learners who took similar courses over a month-long period. At the end of this study, the SA learners scored higher than on-campus learners in their perceived changes regarding cultural sensitivity (Chieffo & Griffiths, 2004, pp. 170-171). In sum, although the data from short-term study abroad research does not always yield significant results when compared to on-campus learners, the researchers are united in their push for SA learning over on-campus learning.

2.3. Discussion of Other Studies on Pragmalinguistics and Cultural Gains

Pragmalinguistic awareness is defined as linguistic accuracy informed by cultural knowledge such as knowing when and how to use the formal versus informal register (Ishihara & Cohen, 2010, p. 114). Although this definition may seem simplistic, it encompasses what it means to be an advanced and fluent interlocutor in a foreign country: one not only understands the target language and in turn is understood, but they also navigate the cultural nuances presented on a daily basis, thus acclimating to the traditions and becoming pragmalinguistically and interculturally fluent. In other words, they navigate

interpersonal situations as "a local" would – understanding the social, cultural, and linguistic cues needed to survive and flourish in a foreign setting.

There are several ways to promote this type of awareness such as taking a "learner as ethnographer" or "learner as researcher" approach as suggested by Ishihara & Cohen (2010). Through this approach, educators empower students to take an active role in their education by consciously experiencing their surroundings whilst studying abroad through targeted interventions (Ishihara & Cohen, pp. 113-115). These interventions seek to "pull the curtain back" on cultural traditions or everyday mundane tasks to promote awareness and spark curiosity in the minds of the students so that they are not walking around their new cities, oblivious or ignorant of the nuances, but are actively observing, engaging, and questioning behaviors from the locals that may seem foreign or familiar. Through such tasks, students become more aware of the foreign and familiar, thus making connections or taking the extra step to ask why such traditions feel foreign to them, which in turn can lead to greater awareness of their home culture, e.g., why is it that I find that cultural tradition strange? What does that say about my culture? As stated earlier, studies with guided interventions yield more positive results than studies without them, thus exhibiting the potential need for additional faculty support for students while abroad so that such activities can be administered.

Further studies such as Takahashi (2005) suggest that there is a link between pragmatic awareness and learner motivation with students oftentimes displaying "individual difference" in certain tasks relating to this topic, citing that those with higher scores on such tasks also had greater motivation to excel. Roever (2006) investigated the pragmalinguistic abilities of ESL learners and found that ability in the L2 correlated to knowledge of speech acts and implicature, and that exposure to the L2 resulted in greater knowledge of routines (p. 229). Watson and Wolfel (2015) researched 279 participants over five semesters during a semester-long program across languages (Modern Arabic, Mandarin Chinese, Russian, French, German, Spanish, and Portuguese) to look for a connection between language and cultural gains and socialization in the target countries. Their data suggest that there was no correlation between gains in language tests and gains in intercultural competence, meaning that the two skills may not be interdependent (Watson & Wolfel, 2015, p. 64). In other

words, students from every level of language skill have the ability to develop intercultural competence.

Further, Watson et al. (2013) assessed student outcomes in language skills, cross-cultural competence, and regional awareness before and after a semester abroad. Their data come from 498 students across 14 countries and show positive gains for all students in language and cross-cultural competence, but only positive gains in regional awareness/competence for those in China and Western Europe (Watson et al., 2013, pp. 67-69). All studies mentioned point to positive changes in cultural and pragmalinguistic competencies in immersive abroad environments, while simultaneously suggesting that pragmalinguistic and intercultural skills may not always develop in tandem with linguistic progress.

3. The Present Study

Considering previous findings that study abroad is more beneficial than staying at the home campus – and given the recent boom in short-term SA programs – the present study takes the view that it is important to understand how these programs can affect student learning, and in which domains they have the capacity to do so. As noted in the literature review, there has been little research on the pragmalinguistic gains of students partaking in semesters abroad, thus inspiring the current study. Much research in SLA regarding study abroad (SA) programs has argued that studies comparing at-home students with SA students are neither productive nor insightful, as the data reflect two different student demographics (see, e.g., Sanz and Morales-Front, 2018). While student demographics may influence the results of these studies, such comparisons are still useful for understanding the effects of learning context, especially when examining areas of development that are presumably linked to the context of language learning, such as L2 pragmatics and ICC.

The research questions guiding the current study were: 1) How effective are targeted pragmatic interventions in promoting intercultural communicative competency? 2) Do students studying abroad, online, or at the home-campus approach and complete pragmatic activities similarly? Data were collected from three different groups of students enrolled in a third semester German language and culture class. The groups are called at-home (AH), study-abroad (SA), and Zoom (ZM) for the remainder of this paper. All three courses were designed to

be equivalent, meaning that all participants were students from the same US institution and completed the same in-class activities. The data collected were rewrites to a movie scene from the film *Die Kriegerin* ('Combat Girls,' 2011), directed by David Wnendt. The data analyzed were changes made to a film scene to make it "more appropriate" for a US-American audience. This intervention was aimed at testing the students' beliefs surrounding pragmalinguistics and intercultural communicative competence, e.g., how did they interpret the scene viewed in class and what changes would they make for US-American audiences. As such, certain beliefs the participants had regarding US-American and German culture were revealed in their responses.

4. Methodology

The data for the current study comes from a larger project and was collected in conjunction with pre-, post-, and delayed posttests aimed at morphosyntactic skills and intercultural communicative competency. Additional data consisted of surveys, interviews, and field notes. For this article, the data focus is on the first of four in-class interventions although the data from the interviews inform the discussion and analyses of the data. The other data are not included in this article as they investigate more traditional research questions in this arena, e.g., pronunciation and morphosyntax, and the aim of this paper is an oft overlooked outcome of modern language programs, namely pragmalinguistic competency.

4.1. Participants

The participants in this study were comparable in gender (AH = three male, 15 female; SA = seven male, 10 female, one transgender; ZM = seven male, six female; all self-reported), and had similar demographics in terms of their hometowns, academic majors, language background, and ethnic identity. To promote study participation, the instructors of each course offered participants 2% extra credit upon study completion. All participants had approximately the same number of contact hours with their instructors. The first intervention was administered to the SA and ZM groups approximately one week after the courses started and two weeks after the course started for the AH group. Since each course was on a different semester schedule, (10 weeks for SA, 9 weeks for AH, and 16 weeks for AH), the interventions were delivered at parallel times in the semester when each student had approximately the same amount of contact

hours and the courses were at the same point in the textbook. Finally, the data were collected from each group at different points in time because of teaching schedules and researcher availability: the SA group data was collected during summer 2018; the AH group data was collected during fall 2018, and the ZM group data during summer 2020.

4.1.1. Study Abroad (SA)

The SA group consisted of 18 students who participated in a 10-week faculty-led study abroad program in Würzburg, Germany. The participants were all in the same section, had the same course materials, and same instructor. This current study included classroom observations three times a week to document any changes in behavior, language, attitude, and motivation. The class met five times a week, but the principal investigator only observed them three times per week to maintain an appropriate distance from the subjects.

4.1.2. At Home (AH)

Students in the at-home (AH) group were recruited from two third-semester German courses to ensure that the participant number was equivalent to the SA group. The AH group had the same number of participants as the SA group (n = 18), but the gender distribution differed slightly. All the AH participants had the same instructor, and the course met three times a week over a 16-week period. The principal researcher observed the participants once a week to make note of their progress and behavior in class.

4.1.3. Zoom (ZM)

Students in the Zoom (ZM) group were recruited from one section of an online third-semester German nine-week summer course. The participation level of this group was sporadic, and possible reasons for this are explained in the discussion section of this paper. Six participants completed every component of the study, but intervention participation varied as data were submitted in rates ranging from 13 to four participants. For the intervention studied in this paper, N= 13. Since the ZM group participated in an accelerated summer course, they met five times a week for two-hours. The principal researcher observed them during the days data were collected (four in total). This group was included as an alternate control group for the SA participants as well as to provide the field with necessary data on Zoom learning which has recently increased in popularity.

4.2. Interventions

The interventions took place in three equivalent third-semester German courses that used the textbook *Sag Mal*: *An Introduction to German Language and Culture* (Anton et al., 2018) and followed a "flipped-classroom" communicative model. There were four interventions to parallel the four chapters (chapters 9-12) taught over the course of the semester. As such, the interventions were delivered at the start of each new chapter and were designed to amplify the topics covered during that specific unit by providing pragmalinguistic ways to engage with the target language and culture. The principal investigator created, administered, and evaluated each intervention to control for differences between the instructors of these courses.

For the first intervention, which is the focus of this article (subsequent articles concerning the other interventions are forthcoming), the study combined techniques from two previous studies (Hammer & Swaffar, 2012; Kahnke & Stehle, 2011) by asking the participants to compare cultural frames through media; specifically, a two-minute film clip from *Die Kriegerin*. The study chose this clip because it provides a general experience of what grocery shopping could be like in Germany with German personnel. In the movie scene shown for the intervention, there are several customers milling around, two of whom are minority adolescent boys from an unspecified country, but presumably Middle or Near-East, though this is not explicitly stated in the sequence.

Briefly summarized, this film follows the story of a young girl (the cashier in the scene shown to the participants) living in former East Germany who is a part of a violent Neo-Nazi group which often targets immigrants throughout the film, including the boys from the grocery store scene. The cashier has a "Chelsea" haircut, which can denote membership to Neo-Nazi groups. Further, although the film is fiction, it could reflect far-right extremist groups in Germany today. That said, even though this clip was chosen for how it documented grocery shopping in Germany, it may have skewed the results because of the setting and characters, e.g., a Neo-Nazi cashier, her relationship to her mother who also worked at the grocery store, and the run-down grocery store in former East Germany. These variables will be discussed further in the limitations section of this study.

In the scene, the minority boys try to pay for their groceries with a government exemption slip and the young female cashier ignores them, causing another cashier (a white, older woman, who is also the cashier's mother) to step in and finish the transaction. The clip was shown to the participants twice for comprehension purposes, but it should be noted that the language spoken in the clip was not tested and was not necessary for analysis or activity completion; it was more important for the participants to analyze the physical aspects of the grocery store as well as the body language of the characters. Again, although this clip provided much content to analyze through a sociocultural lens, the focus of the intervention was "everyday routines and running errands" and how those may differ across cultures, as well as the interpersonal interactions that may happen during them.

For this intervention, the participants completed an activity in 3 parts: (1) a video viewing (the same for all three groups), (2) an in-class writing assignment (same for all three groups), and (3) an action assignment (done as homework, differed between the three groups). Following the recommendation from Hammer and Swaffar (2012), the film clip was played in German with no English subtitles. For the pre-viewing or warm-up activity, the students worked with a partner in their L1 (English) to discuss their grocery shopping routines in the United States. As a class, students collected answers on the board for what was "typical" in terms of grocery shopping. The students then worked with their partner to discuss their ideas about what grocery shopping could be like in Germany. They again collected answers on the board to compare the two countries. They used a Venn diagram on the board to illustrate not only differences, but also similarities between the two countries visually and thus to avoid an "us versus them" mindset.

This study focuses on the SA participants' answers to the following in-class writing assignment:

> Rewrite the scene for a US-American audience. What would you change? (Clothing, speech, interaction, products, body language, etc.) Afterwards, go shopping at a German grocery store and interact with the personnel, e.g., ask for where the apples are, and write a summary of your experience (about 250 words, in English). Things to include: where you went shopping, what time, who you interacted with, what you asked, if you stayed in German in the entire time and how your experience

compared to times when you interacted with personnel at a US-American grocery story.

In other words, the assignment was to make changes to the original film clip so that US-American viewers would better understand it according to their own cultural norms and traditions. The ideas provided for possible changes (clothing, speech, interaction, products, body language, etc.) were intended to give the students a starting point for things to consider although this may have inadvertently influenced their responses, which will be discussed in the limitations section of this paper. To control for time spent on the in-class writing assignment, all three groups (SA, AH, and ZM) were given approximately 20 minutes of class time to rewrite the scenes.

Upon completion, the SA participants were asked to shop at a German grocery store in Würzburg and interact with store personnel, etc., whereas the AH and ZM groups could not, since they were in the United States. As such, the AH and ZM participants were asked to be cognizant of their grocery shopping routines next time they went to the store and submit a reflection on their habits and anything that they were more aware of after watching and rewriting the scene. As such, this intervention tested the efficacy of the "learner as researcher" hypothesis, or rather, the variable of not only viewing a different country, but also being able to engage with that culture in real time. Further, the action assignment proved challenging for the ZM participants because many lived in areas with COVID-19 lockdown restrictions which prevented them from completing their normal grocery routines.

4.3. Procedures and Analysis

The current study combined qualitative and quantitative procedures for data analysis. From this initial survey of the data, four main categories of analysis were created by the principal researcher, with subcategories in each. See, e.g., the following list of changes made by the participants documented in their scene rewrites:

- Physical elements of the store:
  - Lighter store
  - Music
  - Bright colors
  - Standing cashier

- Taller shelves
- Bigger store
- More people
- Business-oriented elements of the store
  - Advertisements
  - Self-checkout
  - Tobacco behind the counter
- Social interactional elements
  - Nicer cashier/cashier would engage in small talk
  - Minority characters
- Other

The "physical elements of the store" included changes made to the store's appearance in the rewrite as listed in the subcategories. Next, changes to "business-oriented elements of the store" were categorized based on any new advertisements, self-checkouts, or changes in product display, e.g., tobacco behind the counter. The third category, "social interactional elements," documented any character or behavioral changes in the scenes. The last category for data analysis is "other." This category included any changes that personalized the scene, such as including community or university features, or changes to the narrative, e.g., new actions by created characters.

5. Results

The current study implemented a combination of methods following theories that emphasize the interconnectedness of language and culture (Brooks, 1968; Kramsch, 2000). In terms of language mechanics, the average word count for the in-class writing assignment for the ZM participants was 146 (rounded to the nearest whole number) whereas the averages were lower for the other groups: AH participants submitted approximately 37 words per rewrite, and SA participants submitted approximately 115 words per rewrite. These differences in length are meaningful, as the longer entries not only supplied more codable data, but also suggest more engagement and reflection with the activity which could lead to heightened pragmatic awareness and intercultural communicative competency. It could be argued that wordcount is not a significant variable since some students are more verbose than others and may not signal greater engagement or pragmalinguistic awareness; however, since

the activity was based on analyzing changes made to the scene, longer entries could signal heightened pragmalinguistic awareness and intercultural communicative competency since longer entries allow participants to give more details, explanation, and support for their changes.

Table (1) shows descriptive results for each of the groups by the changes they made. The following sections describe these results in more detail.

TABLE (1)

DESCRIPTIVE RESULTS FOR EACH GROUP'S CHANGES MADE TO THE SCENE

| Changes	SA	AH	ZM
Physical Elements of the Store	49	40	21
Lighter store	10	8	1
Music	9	2	3
Bright colors	12	3	2
Standing cashier	5	3	1
Taller shelves	5	1	1
Bigger	1	11	7
More people	7	12	6
Business-Oriented Elements of the Store	9	5	7
Advertisements	8	0	2
Self-checkout	1	1	1
Tobacco behind the counter	0	4	4
Social Interactional Elements	21	13	8
Nicer cashier/cashier would engage in small talk	9	13	5
Minority characters	12	0	3
Other	8	2	4
Total changes overall	**87**	**60**	**40**

6. Discussion

To begin, it is worth revisiting the two research questions: How effective are targeted pragmatic interventions in promoting intercultural communicative competency? Do students studying abroad, online, or at the home-campus approach and complete pragmatic activities similarly? The data from each group—SA, AH, and ZM—suggest that in-class interventions do promote

intercultural communicative competency with each participant submitting a rewrite that had at least one change to the film scene, indicating that cultural practices such as grocery shopping could differ between the US and Germany. This is significant because it suggests that the participants were aware of cultural differences and therefore recognized that not all cultures are the same. Consulting the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS), this would indicate that on the "experience of difference" continuum, the participants are somewhere between acceptance, adaptation, and integration, all of which are on the side closest to ethnorelativism, or the "interculturally sensitive interlocutor" (Bennett, 2013). In other words, although there was not a benchmark taken for everyone's starting intercultural competency, their reaction to the first intervention already shows an advanced awareness of cultures. See figure 1 for an illustration of the intercultural continuum.

FIGURE (1)

INTERCULTURAL CONTINUUM

Experience of Difference

| Denial | Defense | Minimization | Acceptance | Adaptation | Integration |

Ethnocentrism ➡ Ethnorelativism
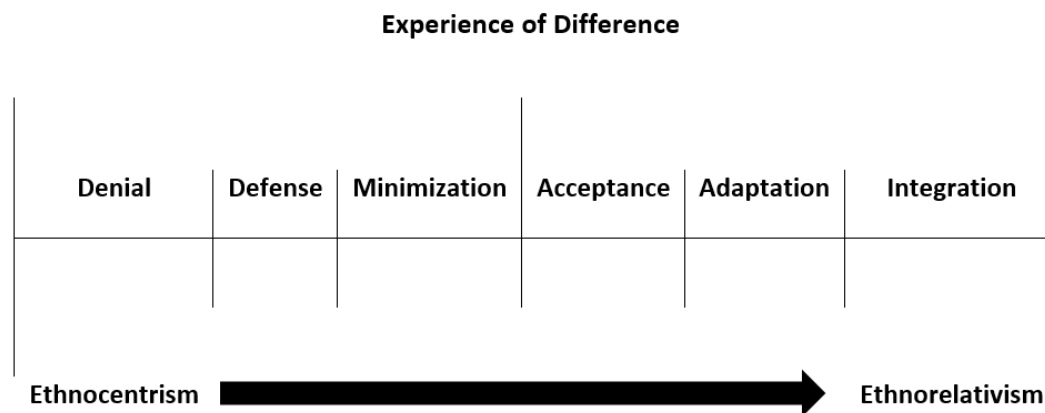
SOURCE: BENNETT (2013)

For the second research question, the answer is also yes; though the reasons for such are more nuanced. The SA participants had the advantage of living and learning in the target culture and language, as well as completing daily tasks in the area with natives, whereas the AH participants were on the home campus in the United States and ZM participants had mostly an isolated experience based on the COVID-19 regulations in their community.

As such, even though much of this applied component of this intervention was theoretical for the AH and ZM participants, since they could neither shop in a German grocery store nor interact with German personnel,

they were still able to engage in a productive class discussion about how grocery shopping routines could differ across cultures by creating and comparing cultural frames as well as establishing a horizon of expectation before watching the film clip through the warm-up activity (the Venn diagram). Further, it is important to mention that since this was a third-semester language and culture course, the students had already completed two previous semesters of instruction and thus had some familiarity with this topic as well as a strong theoretical foundation, with many having already traveled to Germany or heard stories from German friends or instructors about daily life in the country.

Conversely, even though the SA participants were living in the target culture (C2), they had only been in Germany for a few weeks at the time of this activity and were therefore still acclimating to German cultural norms. Based on anecdotal data and field notes, the SA students had been to the grocery store only a few times at the delivery of this intervention because they ate most of their meals in restaurants or the university cafeteria and did not cook. Put differently, the SA, AH, and ZM participants were approximately equal in their experience and expectations of the C2.

The data presented similar trends in each group, with slight nuances. For example, for the AH, SA, and ZM participants, the most changes were made to the physical aspects of the store, followed by the social interactions, then the business-related aspects, with the lowest number of changes made to the "other" category. These results provide some insight into the types of changes made; however, it is also necessary to analyze the results qualitatively in order to further assess the learners' cultural awareness.

6.1. Physical Elements

All three groups prioritized the physical elements of the scene, with the SA participants making the most changes overall to this category. This indicates an awareness of the physical and superficial properties of grocery stores in the US, as well as a metacognitive awareness of the nuances between the two countries in terms of store design. In sum, all three groups made similar changes in this category, though each group focused on slightly different physical aspects of the store. For example, the SA participants made the most changes to the color of the store, making the scene brighter. The AH participants focused on adding more people to the scene and the ZM participants made the store bigger. These

changes can only be analyzed theoretically since the participants were not asked why they focused on these changes, but some assumptions could be made. For example, perhaps the SA participants chose the color and brightness of the store since they experienced the lighting and colors of authentic German grocery stores and felt US-American ones were brighter. For the AH participants, the home campus is in a large city in Southwest America with a population close to one million residents. That considered, their personal experiences shopping on and around the home campus could have influenced their rewrite. Lastly, the ZM participants making the store bigger could have been a commentary on their COVID isolation, as many individuals were relegated to their homes for long periods of time and may have been yearning for bigger spaces. Finally, the attention to detail regarding the physical properties again signals attention to cultural differences and awareness.

6.2. Business-Oriented Elements

The number of business-oriented element changes did not vary significantly across groups, however, the SA participants focused on different elements of the scene as opposed to the AH and ZM participants. For example, the SA participants keyed in on the advertisements in the store whereas the AH participants mainly changed the location of the tobacco products, moving them from alongside the conveyor belt for groceries to behind the counter and only accessible by the cashier. Similarly, the ZM participants also focused on the tobacco placement in the scene.

During follow-up interviews and classroom discussions, the SA participants focused on capitalism and its cultural influence in the United States, which perhaps explains their focus on the advertisements in the scene. Conversely, since the AH and ZM groups were not in Germany, they were perhaps less aware of the ubiquity of advertisements in US stores and focused instead on the cultural differences regarding tobacco. For example, the SA group did not mention the use or placement of tobacco in the scene, whereas the other groups did (and in higher numbers). This could show that the SA participants had acclimatized to some of the changes whereas this was seen as disorienting to the other groups. The tobacco in the film scene was not a focal point, but it was highlighted when the characters bought their groceries as it was next to the conveyor belt and not locked up behind the cashier as it usually is in the United States.

6.3. Social Interactional

The social interactional changes made to the scene lend the most insight into the participants' intercultural communicative competency and pragmalinguistic awareness since they deal specifically with interpersonal relations. The changes in this category also show the most variation by group, which may lend to the intervention's ability to promote heightened awareness to intercultural communicative competency and pragmalinguistics. Changes from this category were clustered into two subcategories: (1) changes to the cashier's behavior (either by making them nicer or having them engage in small talk), and (2) changing the minority characters in the scene.

As seen in Table (1), participants in the SA group made nine changes to the cashier's behavior, the AH group made 13 changes, and the ZM group made five. Comparing the number of participants to changes in each group, the data show that the AH group made the most changes, followed by the SA and ZM groups. This suggests that the AH engaged more with interpersonal communication in the scene during the revisions, which may indicate growth in terms of pragmalinguistic awareness and intercultural communicative competency. It also suggests a focus on the non-minority characters, which points to several theories for speculation, though none confirmable since the participants were not asked about their motivations behind the changes. Regardless, the choice to focus on the "native" characters in the scene could indicate a greater identification with those characters or perhaps knowledge with how those individuals should act in such situations (in this instance, "native" means the German characters who would then be US-American characters, not the minority characters). This choice could have been influenced by the fact that most of the AH participants were native residents of the university's state and were not studying abroad. Put differently, they were more familiar with the cultural norms and expectations for individuals who worked in their region as cashiers in grocery stores.

Perhaps more interesting, the SA group made 12 changes to the minority characters in the scene, while the ZM group made 3 changes, and the AH group made none. This variation presents several different paths to explore. First, the data suggest that since the SA participants were in the target culture, they may have identified with the minority characters more readily and thus addressed them explicitly in their rewrite since they (as US-Americans) were now

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foreigners or minorities in Germany, whereas the AH participants were at the home university and were not in an unfamiliar environment where they may have been perceived as foreign. The ZM participants provide a different angle to the results, because although they were not in a foreign land, their attention to the minority characters may have been influenced by the current events during their data collection which, again, took place in the summer of 2020 whereas data were collected from the SA and AH participants during the summer and fall of 2018. During the summer of 2020 discussions of race and racism in the US were amplified and this may have made students more aware of racial dynamics in everyday interactions. This interpretation is bolstered by results from changes that fell into the "other" category, most importantly those that changed the narrative structure and altered interactions between the characters.

To understand the ZM changes in narration, it is helpful to review the world events that happened at the time of data collection to understand the mindset of the participants. The data were collected from this group on June 12th, 2020; on May 25th, 2020, George Floyd (a black man) died in Minnesota and a white police officer was charged with his death. Following this incident, several cities around the United States and beyond staged protests for months after his death. News and social media also covered these events extensively with police brutality and racism as leading topics of discussion. It is possible that this affected some of the ZM participants thus inspiring them to submit responses more critical of race, as several of the ZM participants were still in the university's city even though they were learning remotely, and this city staged several demonstrations in the wake of Floyd's death.

6.4. Other

The "other" changes made to the scenes also reveal interesting insight into the participants' understanding of US-American cultural norms and grocery practices as well as appropriate behavior in those situations. The "other" changes include rewrites which focused on character development and the general narrative, thus changing the outcome of the scene as well as providing answers that did not conform to the earlier categories. The changes discussed here are significant because they create a different narrative, instead of a transposition of the original film clip to a US-American setting, by changing more than just the physical and visual aesthetics of the scene.

Beginning with the SA data, eight participants made changes coded as "other" – six of these participants focused on the interaction between the cashier and the two adolescent boys. These changes varied by suggesting different actions:

- four SA participants wrote in some sort of manager intervention,
- one participant wrote in a response from other shoppers coupled with a manager intervention; and
- one participant wrote in a termination of the cashier.

The SA data from this section suggests a social justice paradigm. The participants who provided this kind of rewrite in their assignment insert a judicial element: a person in power would intervene, the disadvantaged parties would stand up for themselves or someone would defend them, and/or the employee who exhibited the inappropriate behavior would be terminated. These changes indicate that for these SA participants, the cashier's behavior in the original scene (and rewrite) is problematic, warrants justice, and must be addressed, and that these types of injustices would be rectified in a US-setting. In a sense, the changes to the scene and characters reflects the participants' perceived view of justice within an US-American framework, and that such justice is lacking in the German representation.

Further, two responses from the SA group provided a metacognitive approach to the activity by renaming the geographic location for the film scene. Specifically, participants 8 and 11 from the SA group changed the setting for the US-American rewrite to Oklahoma. As such, participant 8 wrote the scene would take place in, "Oklahoma mom-and-pop shop (or some state that is somewhat close to the border)" and participant 11 wrote, "…there are not many people in this store [for the revised scene]; it is a local mom & pop shop in Oklahoma or something." Although these participants took a different approach to the rewrite by naming Oklahoma as the setting, this decision suggests perceived geographical and cultural knowledge of the United States. The choice of Oklahoma is perhaps intentional, as stereotypically, neighboring states do not have a positive view of Oklahomans (and such geographical stereotypes in regard to neighboring countries/states are seen in other parts of the country and world). In other words, the choice by these participants to change the location to Oklahoma suggests that they are aware of the negative views some people may have of that area, namely that it has rural areas and that such racist

behavior on the part of the cashier would not be surprising/uncommon in such areas. Again, since these participants were not asked to justify their answers, only observations can be made based on the information provided.

As previously stated, the AH data from the "other" category is limited. Two participants from the AH group made "other" changes in their rewrite by tailoring their changes to a specific audience: Texans. This suggests both a personal and narrow interpretation by making the rewrite specific. Additionally, it is important to note that none of the AH participants changed or even mentioned the minority characters in the film. Instead, the majority focused on the physical and superficial aspects of the store. However, most of the AH respondents did change the cashier's behavior, making her nicer, but, again, there was no mention of repercussions for racist comments. Further, no AH participants labeled the cashier's behavior as "racist" although participant 24 wrote, "the older cashier would be friendly to compensate for the rude young cashier" – thus labeling the cashier as "rude" (not racist, a different quality assessment which would have been more severe).

Moreover, the data from the AH participants suggest little reflection and metacognitive awareness. Although two AH students did supply "other" answers in terms of personalizing their rewrites, these did not add an intercultural dimension, but rather, limited the rewrite in scope and audience understanding, as the grocery store and college mascot mentioned in their rewrites are particular to the AH university, region, and neighboring areas.

For the ZM participants, there were nine recorded changes for "other" from this data set: four changes to the grocery store listed, making it a local chain or a common grocery store for the university town thus personalizing the scene, but also narrowing its scope like the AH students. The other changes focused on race and narrative. Comparing these to the SA answers, ZM participant 62 called for the manager to become involved, but these rewrites differed from the SA answers in that they mainly focused on the racism presented in the scenes with a critical eye to how this would be translated for US-American audiences. For example, ZM participant 57 wrote, "As far as interactions, I would have the cashier be more kind, and if there were a conflict it would probably be more loud and dramatic." Similarly, ZM participant 62 reiterated this sentiment before bringing the manager into the scene by writing, "The interaction between customers at grocery stores in America can be very

hostile to other customers just like in Germany [...] I would rewrite the interaction to be more aggressive and an employee or even a manager would become involved."

Further, ZM participant 63 wrote, "Unfortunately, racism is extremely prevalent in the United States, and racist incidents do happen at grocery stores and often escalate. So I might change the scene to make the manager less competent and take much longer to come over." Finally, participant 64 follows this trend by writing, "The interaction with the foreigners would have been much worse in the American version because they tend to be louder here in the US about race and immigrants, and managers in the US do not always have the best de-escalation skills." In other words, these four participants made the scene "more racist" – implying that racial tensions are handled differently in the United States than Germany and that such interactions are worse in the US. Again, these rewrites could be reflections on the events occurring in the US during data collection, but they also indicate a somewhat stunted intercultural understanding by assuming that everything would be worse in the US. Such interpretations indicate a mindset of the target country being superior to the home country, even if this is not the case, and suggest a lack of intercultural communicative competency, since every country faces challenges, with racism and inappropriate behavior not being issues exclusive to the US.

In addition to this, another world event happening during the time of ZM data collection was COVID-19. Their detailed responses could have also been in part because access to grocery stores was limited. Several cities across the nation imposed different lockdowns and restrictions during the study which would have forced the participants to adopt new routines and may have had the effect of making them hyper-aware of former routines. As such, it is important to note that only one ZM participant mentioned COVID in their rewrite: participant 59 wrote, "people tend to stop to talk to people they know [at the grocery store], so they are not as focused all the time. It is typically very busy (pre-COVID)." Presumably, the ZM participants had time to reflect on their daily routines since they may have altered significantly; the same is true for SA participants since they also had to develop new routines abroad.

Finally, several ZM participants added frozen food sections (n = 5) or processed food (n = 4) and changed the clothing of the characters by making them more casual (n = 6). Although these could be markers for US-American

grocery shoppers, these changes also suggest a reflection of that moment in time since the news media encouraged shoppers to buy more frozen foods as they did not spoil as quickly as fresh foods and frequent trips to the grocery store were either discouraged or prevented by local COVID-19 ordinances. Of note, there were no mentions of frozen or processed foods in the AH or SA submissions. Again, this could reflect life during a pandemic, or it suggests a detailed interpretation of grocery shopping in the United States that was not present in the AH and SA groups.

In sum, the data show that each group of participants approached the assignment differently, further answering the second research question of this study. Since the groups were similar in terms of demographics and academic status, the data suggest that the language learning environment, and its role in their personal lives played a more significant role in this intervention. For example, the SA participants were abroad which made them foreigners in a country, and they perhaps experienced homesickness because of this. Homesickness could have been a motivating factor for them to submit detailed assignments as they were perhaps missing and reflecting on the small details from home. They also had an advantage that the two other groups did not: they were living in the host country and confronting cultural differences daily which forced them to reflect more on their home culture.

To summarize: the goal of the intervention was to encourage participants to not just notice cultural similarities and/or differences, but to take another step and ask the question "why"? Why are cigarettes locked up in US-American grocery stores and not German ones? What does that say about how the two countries view, advertise, and sell these products? What information does that convey about the consumers or the citizens of that country in general? Many foreign language classrooms in the US must engineer these types of potentially culture-shocking encounters which lead to deep learning, intercultural communicative competency, and pragmatics but students in the target culture could experience these situations daily – if they are aware of it.

To conclude this discussion, the data suggest that the SA group submitted longer scene rewrites because they faced differences every day and incorporated those differences to create a realistic grocery scene in the US. Conversely, the AH group treated this assignment as a regular in-class assignment by completing it quickly and focusing mainly on the superficial

aspects of the scene in their rewrite, instead of engaging with the material in a metacognitive, pragmalinguistic, and intercultural way. Their lack of detail is difficult to interpret; perhaps they wanted to finish the assignment and move on, or perhaps their lack of involvement points to more significant differences between the three learning environments. It is possible that since the AH participants were not living abroad, they were not confronted with cultural differences and did not think to include things that would have been typical for a US-American audience. Further, the results from their data show how drastic the differences are between students who go abroad versus those who stay at the home university and those who learn remotely.

Conversely, the ZM participants submitted the lengthiest rewrite, which points to the benefits of online instruction in terms of pragmatic interventions compared to in-person or even abroad. However, such claims may just reflect the zeitgeist as concerns of Zoom burnout have recently come to the fore in academic settings (e.g., see Samara & Monzon, 2021; Nesher Shoshan & Wehrt, 2022). Like the SA participants, the ZM participants focused on the interaction between the cashier and the minority characters, but their focus differed. The SA participants focused on the race of the minority boys, changing their ethnicity to what they perceived as marginalized or underrepresented groups in the US whereas the ZM participants focused on the racism in the scene, pointing out that the scene would have been worse if it happened in the US. This presents two groups of students who focused on race by submitting culturally sensitive rewrites, which the AH group lacked, thus suggesting that taking students out of the classroom, or rather, out of their normal environment, be that virtually or abroad, has significant benefits in terms of reflection. Further, these data imply the benefits of foreign language instruction for the facilitation of difficult conversations, e.g., race and discrimination. While the ZM group submitted the lengthiest rewrite, these results do not necessarily reflect greater detail in their response or increased ICC relative to the other groups. Such an interpretation is unjustified given that they identified the fewest changes of the three groups. Thus, it seems that the length of their rewrite stems from the fact that the ZM typed responses, whereas the other groups hand wrote their responses.

Finally, the AH participants choice to not include as significant changes in their scene rewrites also suggests a lower score on the Developmental Model

of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS, see figure 1), as individuals at the lowest level on this spectrum, "Denial," have trouble identifying differences between cultures. Further, since the AH participants suggested in many of their rewrites that the US response would have been worse than the German one, this also suggests a low score on the DMIS scale. Although higher than "Denial," in the "Defense" stage, individuals either think their country is better than all others, or that all others are better than theirs (Bennett, 2013). As such, in terms of the DMIS scale, the data show that the SA participants were the most advanced, since they were able to articulate significant differences between the two cultures, but did not pin them against each other, which would fall in between "Acceptance" and "Adaptation" – the two highest levels on the spectrum of intercultural sensitivity.

6.5. Limitations

With every study, there are limitations associated with data collection and analysis. Some of these limitations are explored in this section. Regarding this study, the location of instruction, Germany versus the United States versus virtual, may have confounded several factors concerning data and participation. Despite this, the current study chose to compare the three groups of students for several reasons, even though one could argue that the study equated three incomparable groups.

First, there is still need for a comparison of short-term SA programs regarding AH and SA students, as the literature is lacking in this area. Second, the demographic survey administered to the participants reported similar demographics in terms of religion, ethnicity, academic majors, hometowns, and US-American identity thus signifying a relatively similar data pool across all groups. As a final note, even though the groups did have differences, it is better to have a comparison group as a basis and benchmark as opposed to none. This is especially relevant here, as this study focused not only on learner gains in students who went abroad, but also on gains made by those who chose to stay at the home university and who were online.

The film clip analyzed in the intervention for this paper also presents some unforeseen limitations to the current study. Although the film clip was chosen by the researcher based on its representation of how grocery shopping in Germany could be, it opened a metaphorical can of worms in that it presented

ideas of Neo-Nazism, racism, and East versus West German tensions. As such, what should have been an activity focusing simply on differing everyday routines between the countries, became a test of how students would react to racism and discrimination. Although not intended, this presented the study with more nuanced data to analyze and provided some interesting insights as discussed previously. Further, two of the films' characters in the scene (the cashier and the manager) were related as mother and daughter, and as such, that potentially explains why the cashier in the scene did not face more serious repercussions for her behavior, which some participants included in their rewrites. Again, this narrative detail was not shared with the participants and could have influenced their rewrites and/or interpretations of the scene and grocery store personnel in Germany.

Further, the students were guided in how they should rewrite their scenes as the worksheet provided ideas as a starting point in the worksheet instructions. Although these instructions were merely intended to spark inspiration and creativity, they may have influenced the rewrites. However, not all of the suggested changes were implemented by the group participants, and as seen in the data, each group chose to focus on different aspects in their rewrites.

Finally, there is currently no official formula for data collection in SA research. On the one hand, this leaves the field open for innovative and collaborative methods, such as the current study, but on the other hand, this means that there is little consistency within the field. There have been strides within this arena, e.g., The Language Contact Profile (LCP) from Freed et al. (2004), which measures learners' interaction with the target language during sojourns abroad. Still, many researchers must alter previous methods to fit their research needs or come up with new procedures, which, although helpful to the field, require time and energy that could be devoted to data collection and analysis. The breadth of the current study is therefore expansive, in terms of methodology and data collected, in hopes that the methods can be refined in further studies to provide a basis for SA research in the future.

7. Conclusion

The results from the data presented from a classroom intervention administered to three different groups of undergraduate students learning German in three separate environments (abroad, at the home university, online)

suggest that targeted interventions in short-term SA programs and virtual classrooms increase intercultural communicative competency, lead to deeper analyses of the home culture (C1) and target culture (C2), create more conscientious participants, and encourage metacognitive thinking with an emphasis on social justice and other-oriented thinkers. The data indicate that these interventions allow students to reflect on situational dynamics and thus promote pragmalinguistic awareness in the classroom.

Further, the more critical engagement with the intervention exhibited by the study abroad (SA) and Zoom (ZM) participants when compared to the minimal engagement by the at-home (AH) participants imply that short-term study abroad programs as well as virtual learning are valuable for foreign language learners, namely, by suggesting that learning about cultural differences is best done in the target culture or out of the regular classroom setting. Specifically, the abroad environment enables the students to discuss and experience cultural differences directly, which presents the chance to test cultural stereotypes by practical application and personal experience. The change in location to a virtual mode may increase students' reflection and metacognitive awareness, increasing their sensitivity to issues such as racism and the experience of minorities. Further, such changes are easily implemented into foreign language classes through the planning of short excursions to areas on/around campus such as campus libraries, museums, monuments, and so on. Removing students from the classroom environment encourages critical thinking while reinforcing the real-world applicability of foreign language instruction.

Based on the literature reviewed, it is evident that all researchers advocate for time abroad, regardless of learner gains which implies that current methods of learner measurement are missing the mark: what is more important for students when they go abroad – to return with a greater mastery of the language, or with improved self-reliance, independence, and confidence? Which will aid them more in their future careers and lives? Which will help them achieve the elusive goal of "global citizen" so many universities are chasing and claiming to deliver upon graduation from their institution? Like the aforementioned authors, the data in this study suggest any and all time abroad beneficial, no matter the length. At best, these students can participate in classroom interventions that will deepen their understanding of their own

backgrounds, communities, and cultures, and at worst, they will have spent time in an exotic locale, with memories (good or bad) to last them a lifetime. The experiences gained through study abroad remain invaluable, especially considering our current moment in time when cultural understanding, exchange, and sensitivity can help rebuild and reconnect our communities and world.

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