How Technology is Changing Study Abroad Research: Implications for Pedagogy

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Outline of presentation

• Using digital technology to enrich SA research

• Case studies: Technology-enhanced research
  • HK pre-service English Education majors in the UK
  • Asian STEM majors in English-speaking countries
  • Inbound international exchange students in HK

• Research-driven, theory-based, technology-enhanced pedagogical interventions in SA
What is the ‘digital revolution’?

The advancement of technology from analog electronic and mechanical devices to the **digital technology** available today (e.g., electronic tools, systems, devices and resources that generate, store or process data) (Sidhu 2016).
Data Collection Tools
(eSurveys – YouTube Tutorials)

• Google Form
  (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xEY10Ub-k-U)

• SurveyShare
  (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wIT_VkJQ3YA)

• SurveyMonkey
  (http://help.surveymonkey.com/?l=en_US)

• Qualtrics
  (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4ukfq1QPdG4)
Qualitative data collection

• Audio files/video clips (e.g., interview transcripts)
• Field notes
• Digital images/video excerpts
• Narratives (SA blogs, diaries, essays, etc.)
• Illustrations (e.g., drawings, maps, relationship sociograms)
• Artifacts (e.g., written reports)
Cloud storage

- Facilitates the storage and sharing of large amounts of data
Computer-Assisted Quantitative Data Analysis (CAQDAS)

• Word (e.g., preparation of charts, graphs, tables)

• Excel (e.g., spreadsheets)

• SPSS (statistical Package of Social Sciences) (descriptive statistics, sophisticated quantitative data analyses)
### Non-Digital Photo Routines

<table>
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<th>Where do you display your photos?</th>
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<th>Why did you store your photos there?</th>
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<th>What doesn't work well about this location?</th>
<th>Etc.</th>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Location Codes:**

- [LR] A location within the living room of the home.
Microsoft Excel Software

Sample Photo and Souvenir Study Coding

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<th>Members</th>
<th>Parent</th>
<th>Parent</th>
<th>How did</th>
<th>Why did</th>
<th>What was</th>
<th>What did</th>
<th>Etc</th>
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</table>

Codes for Locations:

- **LR**: A location within the living room of the home
SPSS Software

Frequency Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
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</thead>
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<td>100.0</td>
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</tr>
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</table>

Minority Classification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>21.9</td>
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<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>474</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Perceived value of sojourn
Computer-Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis (CAQDAS)

• Atlas.ti

• HyperResearch

• MAXQDA

• NVivo (NVivo 11, NVivo 11 Pro, NVivo 11 Plus, NVivo for Mac, NVivo for Teams, NVivo 12)
NVivo software

• Helps to organize and analyze (code) interviews, field notes, textual sources, and other types of qualitative data (e.g., digital images, audio and video files)

• Facilitates the sharing of data from multiple sources

• Enables the creation of models that represent relationships among ideas/concepts

• Generates reports that can be shared/annotated
Technology-enhanced Study Abroad Research

• **Quantitative studies** (e.g., large scale e-surveys) can provide a description of the population and identify trends or patterns;

• **Qualitative studies** (e.g., technology-enhanced case studies) can offer deeper insight into the participants’ emotions and experiences;

• **Mixed-method studies** may provide a more complete picture of the phenomenon under study & explain relationships among variables.
Examples of Technology-enhanced Study Abroad Research

- HK English Education majors in the UK
- Chinese STEM majors in English-speaking nations
- Inbound international exchange students in HK
Theoretical underpinning

• Poststructuralist notions of identity as dynamic, multiple, multi-layered, relational & sometimes contradictory (Jackson 2018; Kinginger 2013)

• Construct of second language (L2) identity (Benson et al. 2013; Block 2007; Jackson 2018)

• Acculturation/L2 socialization of short-term sojourners (Jackson 2018; Mitchell 2015; Ward 2015)

• Language & intercultural attitudes & willingness to communicate (Jackson 2018; MacIntyre et al. 1998)
Example #1

Second language (L2) identities and study abroad: Mixed-method case studies of Hong Kong English Teacher Education majors in a short-term study abroad program in the UK

Chan Sin Yu (Cherry)
Research design & aims

Research design: Mixed-method case studies

Aims:

• To identify the internal and external factors that impact the evolving second language (L2) identities of English language Education (ELED) majors (pre-service teachers) from Hong Kong who participate in an 8-week English language and culture immersion program in the UK.

• To offer suggestions to enhance the SA L2 learning and engagement of future ELED majors
## Profile of participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>GPA</th>
<th>DSE English</th>
<th>Perceived English proficiency</th>
<th>Previous international experience</th>
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<td>Carla</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>5*</td>
<td>good</td>
<td>travel abroad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beryl</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>fair</td>
<td>travel abroad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agnes</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>5*</td>
<td>very good</td>
<td>travel abroad; study abroad in secondary 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kate</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>5*</td>
<td>fair</td>
<td>travel abroad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allen</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>5*</td>
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<td>travel abroad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grace</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>5*</td>
<td>good</td>
<td>travel abroad; service-learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>Emma</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>5*</td>
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<td>Brian</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>5**</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>5*</td>
<td>very good</td>
<td>travel abroad</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Instrumentation

• Questionnaires
  • Pre-sojourn questionnaire
  • Post-sojourn questionnaire

• Semi-structured interviews
  • Pre-sojourn interviews
  • Sojourn interviews (Skype interviews)
  • Immediate post-sojourn interview
  • Post post-sojourn interview

• Pre- & Post-immersion reflective essays

• Reflective journals

• Computer-mediated communication (e.g., Whatsapp, Facebook)
# Data collection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Phase One: Pre-sojourn</th>
<th>Phase Two: While abroad (8-weeks)</th>
<th>Phase Three: Immediately post-sojourn</th>
<th>Phase Four: Post-post sojourn (4 months later)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Immersion reflective essay</td>
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<td>Questionnaires</td>
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<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Informal onsite visits &amp; chats</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Written report – Host university</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMCs (e.g., Emails, Facebook)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Data processing & analysis

• Closed responses in the questionnaires were processed by Excel;

• Qualitative data (e.g., open-ended survey questions, pre-immersion reflective essays, and interview transcripts) was stored and processed using NVivo 11 (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013, Creswell, 2015);

• Recursive coding process (Grbich, 2013) was employed, with codes modified when necessary (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013; Grbich, 2013).
Key findings

• Participants’ L2 identities are varied and dynamic, changing in different contexts and situations (e.g., relational, contested);
• Key aspects of their linguistic self-concept that emerge from their narratives include their perception of their L2 proficiency and L2 use, their emotions when using their L2, and their self-perception of being a L2 learner and user. (Benson et al., 2013)
Pedagogical implications

• In pre-departure orientations, participants can be encouraged to set clear, specific, and attainable goals for SA (e.g., enhancing L2 social skills); instructors can raise awareness of language and culture learning strategies that could be used to enhance the students’ L2 learning and engagement in the host environment;

• During the sojourn, instructors can incorporate activities that require SA students to critically reflect upon their language learning history, identities, intercultural and learning attitudes, and how their attitudes influence their beliefs about L2 teaching and learning (Jackson, 2018)(e.g., post blogs online)

• After the sojourn, returnees can be asked to post their post-sojourn reflective essay online and interact with other returnees in an online platform (e.g., Blackboard, Moodle)
Ex #1: Technology in SA Research

• Pros

• Helps to collect data more efficiently (e.g., skype interview)

• Easier to reach participants in different locations (e.g., through Whatsapp, Facebook messenger)

• Cons

• Technological difficulties (e.g., unstable connection to the internet in skype interviews)
Example #2

Second language identities and socialization in study abroad: Chinese STEM exchange students in an English-speaking country

Tongle Sun

www.apaie2018.org
Research design & aims

Research design: Mixed-method case studies

Aims:

• To identify the internal and external factors that impact the second language (L2) identities and socialization of Chinese STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) students from a Hong Kong university who join a semester-long international exchange programme in an English-speaking country.

• To offer suggestions to enhance the L2 and intercultural learning/engagement of future STEM students in study abroad
## Profile of participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Yr of study while abroad</th>
<th>Faculty</th>
<th>Major code</th>
<th>No. of years living in HK</th>
<th>Host country</th>
<th>Host University</th>
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<td>ELEG</td>
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<td>MATH</td>
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<td>USA</td>
<td>University of Pennsylvania</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Instrumentation

• **International exchange questionnaire surveys**
  • Pre-sojourn questionnaire survey
  • Immediate post-sojourn pre-sojourn questionnaire survey
  • Six-month post-sojourn pre-sojourn questionnaire survey

• **Semi-structured interview protocols**
  • Pre-sojourn interview protocol
  • Mid-semester interview protocol
  • Immediate post-sojourn interview protocol
  • Six-month post-sojourn interview protocol

• **Monthly email prompts**
• **Multimodal entries**
• **Research journal**
# Data collection

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Instrumentation</th>
<th>Phase 1: Pre-sojourn</th>
<th>Phase 2: During the sojourn</th>
<th>Phase 3: Immediate post-sojourn</th>
<th>Phase 4: Six-month post-sojourn</th>
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<tr>
<td>Research journal</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Data processing & analysis

• NVivo 11 Pro (a qualitative software that supports data organization and analysis) was used to store and process interview data (transcribed and translated), monthly email prompts, multimodal entries, etc.;

• Questionnaire survey data was uploaded to the NVivo database after performing basic descriptive analysis;

• Qualitative data was subjected to open coding (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013) and thematic analysis (Creswell, 2015; Riessman, 2008);

• Throughout the study, data was triangulated; data related to different phases was compared.
Key findings

• The participants had different linguistic, academic, cultural, and personal goals for their international exchange experience; language- and culture-related goals appeared to be strong (e.g., to improve English proficiency, to enhance intercultural communicative competence, to make international friends);

• The participants differed in their host language proficiency and had different attitudes/emotions towards the host language and culture.

• Individual differences (e.g., sojourn goals, language and intercultural attitudes, social circles, choices in the host environment) lead to different sojourn experiences (e.g., Jackson, 2018), and variations in their L2 identities and socialization (different sojourn outcomes).
Pedagogical implications

• In the pre-sojourn stage, language enhancement courses and pre-departure workshops that focus on goal setting and the fostering of an intercultural mindset may be necessary for a smooth transition in the host environment.

• Online courses that are designed to support successful integration can be offered to sojourners in the host setting (Jackson, 2018).

• Intercultural transition courses (Jackson, 2018) can be offered to help returnees make sense of their international/L2 learning experience and its potential long-term impact.
Ex #2: Technology in SA Research

• Pros

• Easier to collect questionnaire data (e.g., Qualtrics) and conduct sojourn interviews (e.g., on Skype/Wechat)
• Facilitated rapport-building online (e.g., Wechat, Facebook)

• Cons

• Challenging to conduct online interviews due to time differences
• Challenging to keep up with the multimodal entries on social media sites (unstructured data) (e.g., Wechat, Instagram, Facebook)
Example #3

eLearning and English as an academic lingua franca: The needs, perspectives, and experiences of incoming exchange students at CUHK

Professor Jane Jackson
Research design & aims

**Research design:** Mixed-method study (full cohort & focal case participants)

**Research aims:**
- To identify and make sense of the internal and external factors that facilitate or hinder their eLearning and academic integration
- To provide direction for pedagogical interventions (e.g., eLearning workshops, EAP courses)
Profile of participants (N = 74)

Sex: 44 (59.5%) F; 30 (40.5%) M  Age: 21.90 yrs

Year of study: 29 (39.2%) 3rd year; 26 (35.1%) 4th year; 10 (13.6%) 2nd year; 2 (2.7%) PG

Ethnicity: 40 (54.1%) Caucasian; 20 (27.0%) Chinese; 5 (6.8%) Hispanic; 3 (4.1%) Korean; 2 (2.7%) Vietnamese; 2 (2.7%) African American; 1 (1.4%) Bengali; 1 (1.4%) Indonesian

Discipline: 30 (40.5%) Business Admin.; 15 (20.3%) Social Science; 12 (16.2%) Engineering; 6 (8.1%) Science; 5 (6.8%) Arts; 5 (6.8%) Law; 1 (1.4%) Medicine
Instrumentation

**Full cohort (N = 74):**
- Pre & post sojourn international exchange questionnaires (F2F or online via Qualtrics)

**Focal case participants (N = 15):**
- Pre & post semi-structured interview protocols
- Photo-elicitation protocols (digital images)
Data collection

• The Pre-sojourn questionnaire survey was administered F2F or online on arrival at CUHK
• The data was reviewed to select 15 case participants
• The case participants were interviewed and participated in photo elicitation sessions (selection/sharing of meaningful digital images)
• The post-sojourn questionnaire survey was administered online (Qualtrics)
Data processing & analysis

• Quantitative survey data was processed by SPSS (descriptive statistics)

• NVivo 11 Pro database: All qualitative/ hypermedia data (e.g., interview transcripts, digital images, responses to open-ended survey questions) were collected and analyzed (coded); the findings were linked to the quantitative measures (separate nodes for case participants); Data collected at various stages was compared (Pre- during and post-sojourn) (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013; Creswell, 2015)
Key findings (Student perspectives)

Perceived advantages of eLearning:
- Helpful to share ideas with students in discussion boards;
- Helpful to get ideas from local and non-local students;
- Useful to gain exposure to different viewpoints;

Perceived challenges of eLearning:
- Can make the workload very heavy;
- Is very time-consuming;
- Is more difficult to express ideas/feelings online in a second language.
Pedagogical implications

• Offer eLearning workshops for in-coming (ESL) international exchange students;

• Encourage all Faculty to better integrate local and non-local students in their courses (e.g., projects, group work);

• Avoid stereotyping and recognize diversity; create activities that cater to diverse learning styles;

• Recognize inbound international students (and SA returnees) as a valuable resource (e.g., encourage the sharing of examples from other contexts and situations).
Ex #3: Technology in SA Research

Pros

• Facilitates storage/processing of digital images & other hypermedia data
• Online access to primary library resources
• Facilitates the creation of social network maps

Cons

• Time-consuming (can be challenging to master some software)
• Can be expensive (software license)
Study abroad (SA) myths

• Our SA research & the finding of other SA researchers challenge idealistic notions of ‘immersion’ and the ‘automatic transformation’ of student sojourners; a complex range of internal and external factors can lead to divergent outcomes (Jackson, 2012, 2018; Kinginger, 2009; Vande Berg & Paige, 2012).

• While some student sojourners experience gains in host language proficiency, intercultural competence, and global-mindedness, many others do not, and have very limited contact with hosts. Sojourns are highly idiosyncratic.
The imperative for SA interventions

• Increasing participation rates in SA programs does not necessarily bring about meaningful intercultural interactions, intercultural competence, and global mindsets;

• Therefore, more and more researchers now advocate **theory-based, research-driven pedagogical interventions in SA programs** (e.g., Deardorff & Arasaratnam-Smith 2017; Jackson 2018, in preparation; Jackson & Oguro 2018; Plews & Misfeldt 2018; Vande Berg *et al.* 2012).
Intercultural interventions are... ‘intentional and deliberate pedagogical approaches, activated throughout the study abroad cycle (before, during, and after) that are designed to enhance students’ intercultural competence’ (Paige & Vande Berg 2012: 29-30).
Intercultural interventions in SA

• **Pre-sojourn** (orientations, workshops, blended intercultural communication courses, sharing sessions with students with SA experience)

• **Sojourn** (welcome orientations, ‘buddy schemes’, intercultural communication courses)

• **Post-sojourn** (re-entry workshops, blended/online intercultural transition courses)
Technology & SA interventions

• eLearning platforms (e.g., Blackboard, Moodle)
• Social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, YouTube)
• Hypermedia/hypertext (e.g., Wikis, blogs)
• MOOCS (e.g., SA courses with a wide reach)

Enabling innovative forms of pedagogical interventions in SA both in home and host institutions of higher education
SA interventions at CUHK

1. *Intercultural communication & engagement abroad*
   (a fully online, 13-week, credit-bearing General Education course for international exchange students who are in the host environment)

2. *Intercultural Transitions: Making sense of international experience* (A blended, 13-week credit-bearing course for returnees as well as incoming international exchange students)
Digital technologies & SA Practice

• Digital technologies can be harnessed to optimize international educational experience;

• More research is needed to identify the most effective and appropriate ways to employ technology to deepen and extend the language and intercultural learning of SA students in various contexts. Exciting prospects!
Thank you for your kind attention!

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References

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References


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