LEARNER AUTONOMY IN A STUDY ABROAD PREPARATION PROGRAM

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Abstract - This presentation will examine how aspects of learner autonomy, particularly reactive and proactive autonomy, were evident and predicted success or failure among students in the Super Global Program, a study abroad preparation program at a University in Japan. The goal of the SGP is to prepare students for long term study abroad for one semester or one year in regular faculty classes at foreign universities. To qualify to study abroad, students need to achieve at least an IELTS 5.5 within about one year of entering university. Achieving this goal requires students to be highly motivated and to work independently outside of class. Data was collected via questionnaires and interviews and subjected to both quantitative and qualitative analysis. Overall, the study found that while students did demonstrate some capacity for learner autonomy, this was generally at a less than desirable level. Furthermore, as students who demonstrated comparatively higher levels of learner autonomy were more likely to qualify to study abroad, it can be concluded that fostering learner autonomy at the outset of the program could improve the overall success rate of students in the program.

Index Terms - IELTS, Learner Autonomy, Second Language Acquisition, Study Abroad