

## ***Students' Objectivity and Perception of Self Assessment in an EFL Classroom***

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Various problems have been associated with the introduction of self assessment for evaluation purposes, and in particular students' lack of accuracy. However, several research studies have demonstrated that students are able to assess themselves accurately and that there can be from moderate to high degrees of correlation between teacher and student assessments. In this article, we report on a study aimed at 1) comparing students' oral self assessment with those of teachers' and 2) inquiring as to students' attitude toward self assessment. Data were collected from 94 students who were given training in self assessment. Students' scores were correlated with teachers' scores using the Pearson correlation coefficient. Students were also given a questionnaire which examined their feelings about self assessment. Results of the study showed from moderate to high correlations between teachers' and students' self evaluations and positive attitudes toward self assessment. The implications for the classroom are: 1) self assessment needs to be done on a continuous basis with constant guidance from the teacher, 2) cultural acceptance of self assessment needs to be raised, 3) students need to be provided with help on the use of self assessment as a means to identify cognitive and metacognitive learning strategies, and 4) teachers need to be trained for student autonomy.

**Key words: self assessment, evaluation, learner autonomy**

## **INTRODUCTION**

A considerable amount of research seems to indicate that learners have the ability to make precise and valid judgments about their own performance. In fact, different research studies support the benefits and reliability of self assessment for formative purposes (Cram, 1997; Oskarsson, 1989). However, the usefulness of self assessment for evaluation purposes, as well as student reaction to this practice in EFL classrooms, has not been sufficiently explored.

The teaching of English in Colombia has moved relatively rapidly from traditional to communicative approaches. Teaching communicatively means that the instructor makes use of authentic, or real-life, situations and activities that require communication and that are relevant to the lives of the learners. Language centers, schools, and universities claim to have adopted communicative methodologies and learner centered curricula. However, for many teachers, the concepts involved remain poorly defined and the area of self assessment is still largely neglected or unknown. Assessment is teacher-dominated and the learners depend very much on teachers' or institutional decisions. Students are not autonomous and need constant reassurance from the teacher. This situation may be due, in part, to lack of knowledge on how to conduct self assessment and the views that teachers and students hold about this procedure.

The current article addresses the topic of self assessment as a way to bridge the gap between teacher and student perception of the evaluation process and as a way to foster student autonomy and improve student learning. The study was conducted at a language centre in a private university in Colombia, South America. English in Colombia functions as a foreign language which is greatly valued as the language for international communications. Most schools include English in their curricula from the first year of school. English is also a requirement for graduation in many colleges and universities country wide.

On the other hand, the development of the field of Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) in Colombia has also created new demands on

teacher education programs. Perhaps the most significant one is the mandate that universities provide the bulk of the training for in-service teachers. In order to successfully meet this challenge, Colombian universities must have sufficient resources and expertise to adapt to the implications of these changes and to offer effective guidance to the EFL teachers.

This study begins by examining some of the problems associated with self assessment and discussing some of the benefits it can bring to EFL classrooms. It next suggests a two-stage training session to familiarize students with self assessment procedures and criteria. Then it goes on to objectively compare students' self ratings with ratings given by their teachers and to ask learners their opinion on the self rating sessions. Finally, the article presents the results and discussion of the study and suggests some implications for the EFL classroom.

## **REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**

Research has identified different problems associated with the introduction of self assessment for evaluation purposes such as lack of correlation between teacher ratings and student self ratings (Blue, 1988; Pierce et al., 1993), students' experience with evaluation (Mabe & West, 1982; Ross, 1998), cultural factors (Blanche, 1988; Blue, 1988; Yu & Murphy, 1993), and type of assessment instrument (global skills assessments seem to be less reliable than skill specific or behavior specific descriptors) (Chapelle & Brindley, 2002; Strong-Krause, 2000).

### **Correlations between Teacher Ratings and Student Self Ratings**

Research in second and foreign language learning has also demonstrated that students can reliably assess themselves and that there can be from moderate to high correlations between student self ratings and external evaluations. For instance, Bachman and Palmer (1989) report on self ratings

as reliable and valid measures of communicative language abilities in multilingual, multicultural communities. Oskarsson (1978) found out that adult EFL learners could make fairly accurate appraisals of their linguistic ability using a variety of scoring instruments. LeBlanc and Painchaud (1985) observed that the University of Ottawa's second language programs implemented self assessment as a placement instrument due to the high correlations obtained (0.80) by first-year undergraduate students when self assessing. Further, Von Elek (1985) reports strong agreement between the assessments of adult immigrant students and their Swedish teachers.

### **Students' Experience with Self Assessment**

Some of the most common problems that students without experience in self assessment may find include:

- Lack of understanding of the assessment process
- Lack of objectivity and reliability about their own work
- Reluctance to do something that they think is a teacher's duty

However, if students are trained and pass through different stages of support and guidance, they can self assess their language ability with reasonable accuracy (Carter & Nunan, 2001; Oskarsson, 1997). Training may involve the explanation of the purpose and benefits of self assessment as well as familiarization with the assessment criteria, tools, and procedures. According to Dickinson (1987, p. 136) training learners in self assessment is beneficial to learning; this should be therefore "an important educational objective in its own right."

### **Cultural Factors and Self Assessment**

The studies on cultural factors and self assessment are not conclusive and need further investigation. For instance, Blanche (1988) found that many

students did not share the same beliefs regarding evaluation as their instructors and Oskarsson (1997) concluded that there is a mismatch between learners and teachers' educational goals. Moreover, Blue (1994, 1988) pointed out that self assessment is more difficult with multi-cultural groups and that teachers are reluctant to lose control of assessment. Indeed, the way cultural and educational contexts affect teachers and students' beliefs deserves some attention. In many cultures, for instance, the teacher is perceived as the one responsible for preparing, administering, and grading the assessments. Students are passive recipients of knowledge who do not participate in the evaluation process. Although classes are supposedly student-centered, teachers control evaluation maybe because they do not trust the accuracy of students' self assessments. Nevertheless, if teachers' evaluations are regarded as valid and reliable, it is possible to determine the accuracy of their students' own assessment by comparing instructors with students' scorings (Heilenman, 1991). Furthermore, one way to bridge the gap between teacher and student perceptions is by comparing teacher and student self evaluation results, which, "should elucidate the merits and demerits of these classroom assessment tools and dispel ungrounded beliefs" (Saito & Fujita, 2004, p. 34) and help to resolve what may be cultural differences.

### **Self Assessment Instruments**

The nature of the self assessment instrument may also affect its reliability for evaluation purposes. When self assessment instruments ask for global judgments, it may be hard to interpret the information in terms of evaluation. Some studies have demonstrated that when more concrete and descriptive scales are provided, students are able to assess themselves more accurately (Jansen-van Dieten, 1989; LeBlanc & Painchaud, 1985).

Although there is not a consensus on the use of self assessment for evaluation purposes, it is clear that it is beneficial to learning. First of all, self assessment fosters autonomy and responsibility for learning. Since self

assessment triggers reflection and awareness, learners can take control of their own learning and become autonomous. It has been argued that self assessment is an integral part of autonomous learning (Gardner & Miller, 1999; Harris, 1997; Tudor, 1996) and that without learner self assessment, "there can be no real autonomy" (Hunt, Gow & Barnes, 1989, p. 207). It can be added that when self assessment carries a predisposition toward improvement, there can be real autonomy.

Secondly, self assessment promotes critical thinking. When teachers allow their students to self monitor, they foster students' understanding and management of cognitive processes, and also help them develop knowledge through conscious control over that knowledge or develop metacognitive awareness of knowledge and thought (Vygotsky, 1962). It is important to teach students metacognitive skills because they lead to the development of stronger learning skills and improved performance. According to Chamot and O'Malley (1994, p. 119) when students are required to self assess they need to "exercise a variety of learning strategies and higher order thinking skills that not only provide feedback to the student but also provide direction for future learning."

As a consequence, self assessment can help students improve learning through the recognition of their own knowledge and abilities.

The objective of this study was to identify similarities between teachers' ratings and students' self oral ratings and to examine students' attitude toward self assessment as a way to bring together teacher and student perception of evaluation.

## **METHOD**

### **Participants and Setting**

Ninety four college students (ages 18-20) and five teachers from a private university in Colombia participated in the study. The great majority of the

students who enroll in the English program take classes as a requirement for graduation as stipulated by the university's bilingualism policy. The English program is constituted by 14 courses that have been carefully aligned with the reference levels proposed by the Common European Framework (CEF) for Languages (Council of Europe, 2001). The distribution of courses by levels is shown in Table 1.

**TABLE 1**  
**Distribution of Courses Based on the CEF Reference Levels**

CEF	Language Center courses
B2	11, 12, 13, 14
B1	7, 8, 9, 10
A2	2, 3, 4, 5, 6
A1	Starter, course 1

From the program, students can take intensive, semi-intensive or regular courses, depending on their needs. The intensive courses can be completed in a four-week period, two hours a day, Monday through Friday. The semi-intensive courses are completed in eight weeks, three times a week. Regular courses are completed in a 10 week-period, twice a week. The participating students were in courses 7, 8, 9, and 10 (B1 level) and were taking intensive courses. The teachers were non-native speakers of English who had been working at the Language Centre for more than five years. All of them had undergraduate degrees in language teaching from Colombian universities and had been actively involved in the in-service program offered by the institution. They participated voluntarily in the study.

### **Procedures**

The study covered three months, corresponding to three courses of the intensive schedule (two hours daily from Monday to Friday) in the Adult English program. Prior to the study, teachers were trained on how to conduct self assessment with their students. Part of the training included several oral calibration sessions to familiarize them with the scoring instrument and to

ensure inter-rater reliability. Teachers were told that the self assessment was to be done in two stages. In the first stage, they needed to train their students on how to self assess and, in a second stage, they would conduct the actual self assessment (See sections a and b below). During the three months of the study, teachers' scorings, as well as students' self scorings on oral performance were collected. By the third month, an attitude questionnaire was given to students to see whether they liked self assessment and whether they found it useful.

*Stage one: Training Session with Students*

For this stage teachers were instructed to conduct a training session with students the first or second day of class. To ensure similar procedures, teachers received a set of written instructions in which they had to, first of all, inform students about the purpose of the self assessment activity. Three objectives were identified: Raise students' awareness and reflect on the evaluation process, increase responsibility in learning and evaluation, and become familiar with the scoring instrument. Next, teachers had to choose a volunteer to perform an oral activity in which the student had to describe a picture. The picture included eight frames that the volunteer had to describe without naming the characters (to force him or her to deal with reference). When the student finished, the teacher was to hand out the scoring instrument (See Appendix 1) and the self assessment form (See Appendix 2) to all of the students and explain them how to use these instruments. Afterward, instructions for task completion had to be given. Once the volunteer performed, the teacher was prompted to ask the student to grade himself/herself on three of the five aspects of the scoring instrument: Communicative effectiveness, grammar, and vocabulary, emphasizing that the scores were to be given based on the instrument descriptors. After that, the volunteer had to be asked to report orally the grades on the three aspects. Then, the teacher would conduct a discussion session with the students where the volunteer had to be questioned about why a particular score was given based on the descriptors

and why certain scores were more appropriate than others.

Teachers were encouraged to repeat these procedures with one or two more students if class time allowed them to do so.

#### *Stage two: Self Assessment Session*

For this stage, teachers had to conduct an oral assessment activity wherein all students were required to self assess on all the oral language aspects provided in the scoring instrument. On the day of the assessment, teachers had to make sure that the students performed the planned task and that they assess themselves, this time on the five aspects of the scoring instrument: Communicative effectiveness (CE), grammar (GR), pronunciation (PR), vocabulary (VO), and task completion (TC) using the instrument and the self assessment form, and, emphasizing the fact that scores needed to be based on the instrument descriptors. After this, teachers were asked to score the students and make sure to write detailed comments on their performance. Finally, the teachers had to ask students to hand in the self assessment forms. On the same day, or the next class, teachers were instructed to provide feedback by giving students the ratings from the self and teacher assessments, plus comments on why certain scores were given.

The self assessment activity was to be done once every month, including the training activity if there were new students in the course. By the end of the third month, teachers asked students to complete an attitude questionnaire. Both the attitude questionnaires and the teachers and students' oral ratings were collected and analyzed.

### **Instruments**

This study used two instruments:

*A self assessment form:* A form used by students during the self assessment activities in order to score themselves on the different language aspects (CE,

PR, GR, VO, and TC).

*A five-item attitude questionnaire in Spanish:* The questions asked students 1) whether they found self assessment useful and why (students were encouraged to list at least two reasons on why they thought self assessment was useful), 2) whether they thought some language aspects were easier to assess than others, 3) whether they perceived themselves as objective evaluators, 4) whether they perceived their teachers as objective evaluators, and 5) whether they thought feedback given by their teachers was useful. Each item was accompanied by a three-point rating scale ranging from most positive to most negative and worded according to the content of the item (see Appendix 3).

### **Data Analysis**

To estimate the relationship between teachers' ratings and students' self oral ratings, as reported in the self assessment forms, the Pearson Correlation Coefficient was used. For the questions about attitude toward self assessment descriptive statistics were used for explaining students' predisposition to accept or reject self assessment. The reasons given by students regarding the usefulness of self assessment were transcribed and then analyzed by identifying recurrent themes (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). The themes were listed and grouped into categories. Three main categories emerged as salient: awareness, responsibility, and critical thinking.

## **RESULTS**

In this section we present, first, the correlations found between teachers' ratings and students' self ratings. Next we describe the results of the attitude questionnaire.

## Teachers' and Students' Correlations

Table 2 below presents the correlations found between teachers' ratings and students' self oral ratings during the three months covered in the study. The first month students were asked to score themselves only on three aspects in order to facilitate the self assessment activity.

**TABLE 2**  
**Teacher-Student Oral Ratings Correlations – Months 1, 2, and 3**

Aspects	Month	Teacher-student correlation
Communicative Effectiveness	1	0.55**
	2	0.34*
	3	0.65**
Grammar	1	0.42**
	2	0.63**
	3	0.17
Pronunciation	1	N/A
	2	0.47*
	3	0.26
Vocabulary	1	0.55**
	2	0.57**
	3	0.59**
Task Completion	1	N/A
	2	0.57**
	3	0.52**
Total Score	1	0.42**
	2	0.57**
	3	0.54**

n= 94

\*Statistically significant p-value &lt; 0.05

\*\*Statistically significant p-value &lt; 0.01

The correlations between teacher and student oral ratings ranged from moderate to high except for grammar and pronunciation in month 3 which were not statistically significant (p-values > 0.05). As can be seen in the table, the correlations for all the aspects, except vocabulary, presented a random pattern along the three months. In other words, they were not stable or did not increase. Vocabulary correlations, on the contrary, showed a steady rising

pattern, which would have been desirable for all the aspects measured.

### **Students' Attitude Questionnaire**

From the 94 students 91% responded that self assessment was a very useful activity. Seven % found it partially useful and 2 % not useful at all. When asked about why students found this activity useful, we were able to group their responses into 3 main categories: awareness, responsibility, and critical thinking. Each category is described below.

#### *Awareness*

Awareness refers to the understanding that one has about one's own personality, preferences, and abilities. Self assessment practices teach students to become aware of their existing skills or awaken those they may have. The results indicate that 55% of the respondents referred to the utility of self assessment as a tool for raising consciousness of the learning process, especially in enabling students to realize how much they were learning, what aspects of language they needed to improve upon, and what the objectives and standards of the course were. The following students' comments provide good examples of this category.

- S20: Nos permite reflexionar a conciencia sobre lo que está mal o bien.  
[Self assessment allows us to reflect consciously on what is wrong or good.]
- S31: Me permite identificar que aspectos necesito mejorar.  
[I t allows me to identify the aspects I need to improve upon.]
- S52: Me ayuda a conocer mi aprendizaje y mi proceso durante el curso.  
[It helps me to know about my learning process during the course.]
- S81: Me doy cuenta qué tanto he aprendido.  
[I realize how much I have learned.]
- S84: Obliga a saber cuáles son los logros que debo cumplir para cada nivel.  
[It forces me to identify the standards I have to achieve at each level.]

### *Responsibility*

Responsible learners are the ones who have the ability to make good judgments and make decisions on their own. Self assessment offers students the possibility of taking charge of their own learning and making decisions. Thirty one percent of the answers referred to self assessment as a means to become responsible for learning. Students commented on a desire to improve on those aspects in which they did not feel strong and on self assessment giving them the opportunity to be honest with themselves, as well as participate in a rational negotiation with the teacher:

- S3: Me ayuda a ser honesta conmigo misma.  
[It helps me to be honest with myself.]
- S12: Saber por nuestra cuenta en qué fallamos y depende de nosotros corregirnos o no.  
[We can realize what we are doing wrong. It depends on us to correct ourselves or not.]
- S24: Permite que acepte mis errores.  
[It allows me to accept my mistakes.]
- S32: Uno identifica sus errores y sabe que debe mejorarlos.  
[I identify my errors and know that I have to improve.]
- S81: Puedo comparar mi punto de vista con el del profesor y expresar mi opinion.  
[I can compare my judgments with those of my teacher and express my own opinion.]

### *Critical Thinking*

Critical thinking is the exercise of cognitive and metacognitive skills that can be used to accomplish a task; both involve active monitoring and self regulation. Metacognition has been commonly defined as thinking about thinking and involves various processes such as planning, setting goals, monitoring one's production, and evaluating learning after an activity is

completed. Fourteen percent of the students reported that self assessment helped them gain control of metacognitive strategies such as analyzing, comparing, and questioning, as expressed by some students:

- S6: Permite que replantee la forma en que estudio.  
[I can question the way I study.]
- S42: Me ayuda a analizar cuanto he aprendido.  
[It helps me analyze how much I have learned.]
- S85: Para comparar en el tiempo y poder apreciar las mejoras.  
[To compare learning in time and be conscious of improvements.]

Although presented separately, we consider that the categories analyzed are necessarily interrelated. An awareness process constitutes the point of departure toward a critical view of the self. Being analytical of one's own actions carries a high degree of responsibility, which, in turn, leads to awareness. Therefore, these aspects should not be viewed separately, but as traits that complement each other.

When asked about the language aspects that were easier to assess, 32% of the students mentioned grammar and 30% vocabulary. Communicative effectiveness (23%), pronunciation (10%), and task completion (5%) were perceived as more difficult. In relation to the objectivity as evaluators, 59% of the students considered themselves as very objective whereas 41% viewed themselves as being not very objective. When asked about the objectivity of their teachers, 91% of the students thought that their teachers were very objective. Although the difference between those who considered themselves as very objective evaluators and those who considered themselves less objective is not significant ( $p$ -value = 0.060), the majority of the students perceived the teacher as the one who knows about evaluation.

Students' opinion on the usefulness of the feedback indicated that 97% thought that the feedback sessions helped them a lot. When providing feedback, teachers used the scoring instrument, written comments about students' performance, and comparisons of their own ratings with those of

the students. This way of providing feedback allowed for more objectivity of the evaluation process and supported the teachers' appreciations by making the assessment criteria explicit and leading students to the ownership of both the criteria and the instrument used.

## **DISCUSSION**

The results of the current study indicate that students' accuracy in self assessing is closely connected to their experience with the self assessment procedures. The training sessions offered by teachers gave students the opportunity to become familiar with the assessment purposes, criteria and tools. The high and moderate correlations indicate a similarity in scoring between teachers and students while the low correlations in grammar and pronunciation may have been due to 1) lack of guidance or support provided by the teachers during the third month; 2) increasing linguistic complexity as the courses change; 3) teachers' higher expectations and demands. This suggests that more assistance needs to be provided to students during instruction and the self assessment process. Teachers need to give consistent and detailed instructions on the self assessment procedures so that learners are able to internalize the concepts involved.

The majority of the students viewed the teacher as a very objective evaluator while almost half of the students considered themselves not very objective. This perception may reflect a cultural bias or the students' inexperience with assessment. In any case, score comparison and discussion can gradually aid in eradicating common ideas on the traditional one-way role of teacher-student evaluation. The value in establishing teacher and student score comparisons resides in its potential to bridge the gap between differences in judgments and, therefore, assist learners in identifying their own abilities to self assess objectively. When students recognize that they are able to accurately assess themselves, they'll be more confident and motivated to participate in self assessment activities.

Students' accuracy in self assessment has also been related to the precision of the scoring instrument. The results of this study showed that the students were able to assess grammar and vocabulary with less difficulty than communicative effectiveness, pronunciation, and task completion. It may be reasonable to think that grammar and vocabulary are more easily assessed by students because these aspects are more tangible than communicative effectiveness and pronunciation. For instance, students are confronted with grammar models in readings, drills, written structures on the board, etc. Lack of vocabulary is also more perceptible because when speaking, students can recognize that they do not have sufficient words to express meaning. However, communicative effectiveness (which in our scoring tool measures fluency and the ability to use strategies to negotiate meaning) is a more abstract concept, less observable for students. As for pronunciation, students may be unable to perceive faulty pronunciation. They may think they are producing correct or incorrect sounds when they really are not, both perceptions result in inaccurate assessments. Further, the only model for comparison in the classroom is the teacher who, in many cases, is not a native speaker. The implications point to the need to revise and adjust the descriptors for communicative effectiveness, pronunciation, and task completion in order to make them as concrete as possible and in terms that students can easily understand and directly relate to their performance. It is also important that teachers help students understand these descriptors by providing explanations or examples. In the case of pronunciation, models should be provided if the teacher is a non-native speaker.

Strongly associated to the design of the instrument is the manner in which teachers use it to provide feedback. The students found feedback very useful because, first, it was provided the same day or the next day of the assessment and, second, it was highly specific and descriptive. The use of the scoring instrument, the teacher's personal written comments and the score comparisons helped to reinforce students' understanding of the assessment.

The present study also investigated students' attitude toward the usefulness of self assessment. The majority of the students found self assessment

especially valuable for raising their awareness of the learning process. Self awareness helps students become progressively more objective and responsible and thus be able to regulate their own actions in order to reach learning goals. The findings show that only 31% of the students identify self-assessment with taking responsibility for their own learning. It is then crucial to design strategies to motivate students to participate in a more responsible and committed manner in their learning process. Self assessment is one of the tools that can be used to help students understand that they have the ultimate responsibility for learning. By fostering reflection, “self-assessment can begin to make students see their learning in *personal* terms [and] can help learners get better marks” (Harris, 1997, p. 13). Additionally, awareness involves thinking about learning. Few of the answers the students gave referred to the utility of self assessment for developing cognitive or metacognitive strategies. These results indicate that it is essential to help students in the identification of metacognitive strategies by making them more explicit in the self assessment instrument or in the feedback sessions. In sum fostering self assessment practices provides students with the opportunity to start thinking about their own learning and identifying study strategies that can help them learn more. Research indicates that learners who are aware of their abilities are more strategic and perform better than those who are unaware (Rivers, 2001; Schraw & Dennison, 1994).

## CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The results of this study lead us to the conclusion that it is possible for students to self assess with accuracy and that they can show favorable attitudes toward this practice. Teaching students to self assess requires consistent and systematic procedures. Therefore, training activities on self assessment need to be done on a continuous basis with constant guidance from the teacher on how to conduct them and on the materials used in order to obtain reliable results. As Coombe (2002, p. 2) states, “learner ability to

accurately self assess language performance is not automatic. Therefore, regular feedback within a formative, as well as summative framework is a crucial factor for obtaining reliable self assessment results." Indeed, self-assessment is not about leaving students on their own, but on providing opportunities for them to make adequate choices. It is also important to start training students on the assessment of a limited number of language aspects to facilitate students' comprehension of the evaluation method. Furthermore, the self scoring instruments must allow for an easy interpretation of the scale and descriptors used. The descriptors should describe concrete tasks or degrees of skill, avoid vagueness, be brief and explicit (Council of Europe, 2001).

Self assessment was perceived as a positive and helpful activity. Students found it useful, especially for raising learning awareness. In any learning situation, self awareness becomes the first step toward a critical position about the self, thus opening up the possibility to question oneself and being predisposed to implement changes in life. In our EFL classes students need to "know what their abilities are, how much progress they are making and what they can (or cannot yet) do with the skills they have acquired (Blanche, 1988, p. 75), so that they start making their own decisions and be less dependant on their teachers. The role of teachers in facilitating student autonomy is then significant. First, teachers need to help students understand the benefits of self assessment; second, they need to provide constant guidance on how to conduct self assessment and on how to use the instruments; and third, they need to help students understand the meaning of the self assessment results.

We can also conclude that self assessment activities need to be focused toward students' identification of metacognitive strategies. In other words, self assessment can be used to help students think about the learning process as it is taking place. When students reflect upon their learning strategies, they become better equipped to make conscious decisions on how to improve their learning. In general, it is agreed that the use of metacognitive strategies is positively related to language proficiency (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Oxford, 1993).

The findings also indicate that students and teachers' roles need to be redefined so that more student centered decisions are fostered and changing beliefs regarding the role of the teacher are encouraged. Control over content or processes in many of our EFL classrooms limit opportunities for student involvement. Successfully involving students in their own learning depends, to a great extent, on the teachers' ability to redefine roles. Therefore, they need to be aware of their own beliefs about teaching and learning because their perceptions will shape everything they do in the classroom. Teacher self awareness and self assessment will, in turn, lead to fostering their students' awareness. Consequently, teachers will start seeing learners as active constructors of their own learning.

In the context of the current study, the results provide some considerations for teacher education programs. One of the purposes of teacher training should be to prepare educators for student autonomy so that there is a clear understanding of student-centered evaluation techniques. Autonomous learning might be thus promoted by progressing from the teacher being responsible for learning to the students being responsible for themselves. Additionally, teacher training needs to be constantly provided to guarantee similar understanding of both the assessment criteria and procedures.

In conclusion, if students and teachers become aware of the benefits of self assessment, and if they experience the potential of this process, we could have more effective and self confident EFL students and teachers.

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Students' Objectivity and Perception of Self Assessment in an EFL Classroom





**APPENDIX 1**  
**Oral Assessment Scoring Instrument**

Score =	5.0	4.0	3.0	2.0	1.0
<b>Communicative Effectiveness</b>	<p>a. Speech is <b>always connected</b> with a high degree of fluency</p> <p>b. <b>Always</b> uses a <b>wide</b> range of strategies to negotiate meaning</p> <p>c. Can <b>always</b> be understood</p> <p>d. <b>Always</b> initiates and sustains speech <b>easily</b></p>	<p>a. Speech is <b>most of the times</b> connected with occasional hesitations</p> <p>b. <b>Most of the times</b> uses strategies to negotiate meaning</p> <p>c. Can be understood <b>most of the times</b></p> <p>d. <b>Most of the times</b> initiates and sustains speech</p>	<p>a. <b>Sometimes</b> uses non-fluent and unconnected speech</p> <p>b. <b>Sometimes</b> uses strategies to negotiate meaning</p> <p>c. The listener makes <b>some</b> effort to understand</p> <p>d. <b>Usually</b> initiates and sustains speech, but has to rely on repetition and self-correction</p>	<p>a. <b>Frequently</b> uses non-fluent and unconnected speech</p> <p>b. <b>Rarely</b> uses strategies to negotiate meaning</p> <p>c. The listener makes a <b>great effort</b> to understand</p> <p>d. <b>Rarely</b> initiates and sustains speech</p>	<p>a. <b>Lengthy</b> pauses or hesitations before <b>nearly</b> every word</p> <p>b. <b>Unable</b> to use strategies to negotiate meaning</p> <p>c. Message <b>mostly</b> incomprehensible</p> <p>d. <b>Never</b> initiates and sustains speech</p>
<b>Pronunciation</b>	<p>a. <b>Totally</b> clear</p> <p>b. Pronunciation errors <b>do not</b> interfere with communication</p>	<p>a. Rarely makes errors in sounds, stress and intonation patterns</p> <p>b. Pronunciation errors <b>rarely</b> interfere with communication</p>	<p>a. Makes <b>some</b> errors in sounds, stress and intonation patterns</p> <p>b. Pronunciation errors cause <b>some</b> confusion on the listener</p>	<p>a. Makes <b>numerous</b> errors in sounds, stress and intonation patterns</p> <p>b. Pronunciation errors cause a <b>lot of</b> confusion on the listener</p>	<p>a. Pronunciation errors so <b>severe</b> that communication is</p> <p>b. barely comprehensible</p>
<b>Grammar</b>	<p>a. <b>Total</b> control of simple and complex structures previously studied</p> <p>b. <b>Total</b> control of simple and complex structures studied in the course</p> <p>c. Is <b>always</b> able to use a variety of tenses</p>	<p>a. <b>Most of the times</b> has control of simple and complex structures previously studied</p> <p>b. <b>Most of the times</b> has control of simple and complex structures studied in the course</p> <p>c. <b>Most of the times</b> is able to use a variety of tenses</p>	<p>a. Has <b>some</b> control of simple and complex structures previously studied</p> <p>b. Has <b>some</b> control of simple and complex structures studied in the course</p> <p>c. Can <b>sometimes</b> use a variety of tenses</p>	<p>a. <b>Frequently</b> makes errors in simple and complex structures previously studied</p> <p>b. <b>Frequently</b> makes errors in simple and complex structures studied in the course</p> <p>c. Can <b>rarely</b> use a variety of tenses</p>	<p>a. <b>Little</b> evidence of accurate use of simple or complex structures</p> <p>b. Communication <b>severely</b> affected</p>
<b>Vocabulary</b>	<p>a. <b>Always</b> uses a <b>great</b> variety of vocabulary</p> <p>b. <b>Always</b> uses vocabulary appropriately according to context and interlocutor</p> <p>c. Paraphrases successfully</p>	<p>a. <b>Most of the times</b> uses varied vocabulary</p> <p>b. <b>Most of the times</b> uses vocabulary appropriately according to context and interlocutor</p> <p>c. Paraphrasing is <b>not always</b> successful</p>	<p>a. <b>Lacks</b> variety of vocabulary</p> <p>b. <b>Sometimes</b> uses vocabulary appropriately according to context and interlocutor</p> <p>c. Paraphrases <b>with difficulty</b></p>	<p>a. <b>Minimal</b> variety of vocabulary</p> <p>b. <b>Frequently</b> uses vocabulary inappropriately</p> <p>c. <b>Rarely</b> Paraphrases</p>	<p>a. limited to a <b>few isolated</b> word</p> <p>b. <b>Fails</b> to use vocabulary appropriately</p> <p>c. <b>Never</b> paraphrases</p>
<b>Task Completion</b>	<p>a. Is able to carry out <b>all</b> the instructions given to complete the task</p> <p>b. Performance is <b>directly</b> related to the task.</p> <p>c. <b>Exceptional</b> elaboration and detail included, <b>exceeds</b> expectations</p>	<p>a. Is able to carry out <b>most</b> of the instructions given to complete the task</p> <p>b. Performance is <b>relevant</b> to the task.</p> <p>c. <b>Good</b> elaboration and detail</p>	<p>a. <b>Part of</b> the instructions given to complete the task are missing</p> <p>b. <b>Some</b> digressions or irrelevancies in the development of the task.</p> <p>c. <b>Needs</b> elaboration and details</p>	<p>a. <b>Few</b> of the instructions given are included in the development of the task</p> <p>b. <b>Frequent</b> digressions.</p> <p>c. <b>Poor</b> elaboration and details</p>	<p>a. <b>Does not</b> follow the instructions given</p> <p>b. Performance is <b>unrelated</b> to the assigned task</p>

**APPENDIX 2**  
**SELF-ASSESSMENT FORM**

*Using the scoring instrument score yourself on the five aspects*

**Student Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Course:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Communicative Effectiveness =</b>	a. _____	<b>Pronunciation =</b>	a. _____
	b. _____		b. _____
	c. _____	<b>Total</b> _____	
	d. _____		
<b>Total</b> _____			

<b>Grammar =</b>	a. _____	<b>Vocabulary =</b>	a. _____
	b. _____		b. _____
	c. _____		c. _____
<b>Total</b> _____		<b>Total</b> _____	

<b>Task Completion =</b>	a. _____
	b. _____
	c. _____
<b>Total</b> _____	