

Students' Perception of the Effects of Using Self-assessment and Peer-assessment in Promoting Learner Autonomy in Speaking Skills

Phan Thi Minh Thao^{1*}

¹ Ho Chi Minh City University of Science, Vietnam National University, Vietnam

* Corresponding author's email: ptmthao@hcmus.edu.vn

 <https://orcid.org/0009-0000-6325-7696>

 <https://doi.org/10.54855/paic.24626>

©Copyright (c) 2025 Phan Thi Minh Thao

Received: 20/10/2024

Revision: 04/02/2025

Accepted: 05/02/2025

Online: 06/02/2025

ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the effects of self-assessment and peer assessment on learner autonomy development and the different effects between the two kinds of assessment practices in language use, focusing on EFL speaking skills. Eighty-eight first-year non-English majors at VNU-HCM University of Science taking a fifteen-week general English course participated in the study and were put in two groups: experimental 1 (n=49); and experimental 2 (n=39). The participants in experimental group 1 assessed their own work, whilst those in experimental group 2 assessed their peers' work. Quantitative data was collected from students' pre-and post-test questionnaires. Three key findings were revealed. First, through the use of self-assessment, dimensions of initiating, monitoring, and evaluating students' learner autonomy were significantly enhanced. Second, the implementation of peer assessment also considerably promoted students' learner autonomy dimensions by initiating, monitoring, and evaluating. Third, although both self-assessment and peer assessment developed these four learner autonomy dimensions, there is a small difference between the two kinds of assessment on dimension initiating. The effects of self-assessment on dimension initiating surpassed that of peer assessment on dimension initiating.

Keywords: *Learners' autonomy, Self-assessment, Peer-assessment, Speaking Skills*

Introduction

Since the emergence of the learner-centered approach, learner autonomy has been regarded as an essential part of the field of language learning and teaching. According to Phan (2024), autonomous learning significantly influences students' success or failure in the classroom and throughout their learning effort. Although learner autonomy is one of the most important factors leading to students' success in their studies, encouraging students to be autonomous learners is quite challenging in Vietnam. Trinh (2005), Dang (2010), Le (2013), and Tran (2022) acknowledged that Vietnamese students are passive learners and lack critical thinking skills and

CITATION | Phan, T. M. T. (2025). Students' Perception of the Effects of Using Self-assessment and Peer-assessment in Promoting Learner Autonomy in Speaking Skills. *Proceedings of the AsiaCALL International Conference*, 6, 376-390. ISSN: 2833-6836, ISBN: [979-8-9870112-6-3](https://doi.org/10.54855/paic.24626). DOI: <https://doi.org/10.54855/paic.24626>

autonomous learning. There are different reasons for this situation, including the teacher-centered approach, traditional learning, and summative assessment method. Among these reasons, the traditional summative assessment method is the main one that prevents students from moving toward autonomous learning.

Lately, alternative assessment (self-assessment and peer assessment) has grabbed the attention of many researchers because of the emphasis on learner independence and autonomy. Andrade & Valtcheva (2009) referred to self-assessment as a formative assessment process that offers students the chance to reflect on and evaluate the quality of their performance, identify strengths and weaknesses, and make the next steps for improvements. Peer assessment as learning is referred to as a process whereby students get involved in judging their peers' work by using given criteria and applying standards (Falchikov, 2005, as cited in Karami & Rezaei, 2015).

With my 10-year experience in teaching English at the University of Science, I realized that several teaching and learning-related problems that motivated me to carry out this research include low-level entry, no replacement test before entry, large class sizes, students' lack of awareness of foreign language importance, short study duration and traditional assessment method. The traditional assessment method is considered the most serious problem because it leads to a lack of student assessment skills and wastes teachers' time, especially in speaking skills. After experiencing this problem for a long time, I believed that focusing on the learning process made students motivated and more autonomous and helped teachers save time. Consequently, I decided to conduct my study to find out whether alternative assessment means, namely self-assessment and peer assessment, can help students improve their learner autonomy. In this study, these two alternative assessment methods were applied to investigate their effects on learner autonomy development and compare the different effects between these methods on learner autonomy in speaking skills.

Literature review

Learner autonomy

The Greek word "autonomous," where "auto" means self and "nomos" means law, is the source of the word "autonomy (Ho & Hoang, 2024). According to Little (1991), the term *learner autonomy* was first used by Holec has become a "buzz - word" to various authors in the area of foreign language learning and teaching. Holec (1981) defined LA as "the ability to take charge of one own learning". Littlewood (1996) explained that LA is "the ability and willingness to make choices independently". Lengkanawati (2017) regarded LA as the capacity to control learners' own learning by deciding on their learning objectives, contents, and progress, selecting their methods and techniques, monitoring the acquisition process, and evaluating learning outcomes. Kashefian and Nalini (2020) concluded that LA is not an inborn attribute, so learners have to nurture it through their intent and scientific learning methods. Due to the continuous change in the definition of LA, its dimensions have varied over time. Tassinari (2012, p. 28) stated, "LA is a complex construct, a construct of constructs, entailing various dimensions". As a consequence, in order to get a deeper understanding of this term, LA's dimensions must be identified. Several dimensions of LA are repeatedly identified in different studies. For instance, the dimension *goal-setting* was used by Chan (2000), Reinders (2010), and Dang (2012). Dimension *planning* was used by almost all authors except for Little (2003) and Dang (2012). The dimension *initiating* was included in Little's (2003) and Dang's (2012) studies. Similar to *planning* dimension employment, the dimensions of *monitoring* and *evaluating* can be found in almost all authors above except for Trinh (2005). In the present

study, the researcher employed these five dimensions constructed from the LA definition of Holec (1981). That is the ability to make all the decisions regarding all aspects of learning: *setting goals, planning, initiating, monitoring, and evaluating*.

Speaking skills

Speaking is an important part of learning and teaching a second language. According to Bygate (1987), “Speaking skill is the ability to use oral language to explore ideas, intentions, thoughts, and feelings with other people as a way to make the message clearly delivered and well understood by the hearer.” Kayi (2006) regarded speaking as the process of building and sharing meaning in verbal and non-verbal ways in different contexts. This author also added that a successful language learner is one who has the ability to communicate in a second language clearly and effectively; therefore, it is crucial that language teachers pay much attention to teaching speaking.

Learner autonomy and speaking skills

Various authors have investigated the relationship between LA and speaking skills. Dafei (2007) pointed out that there was a close connection between autonomy and language ability. This author concluded that autonomy may lead to greater proficiency in language use. Nguyen & Nguyen (2023) asserted that learners with lower speaking grades were less autonomous than those with better English-speaking proficiency. Risenberg and Zimmerman (1992, as cited in Dafei 2007) also stated that the students with high degrees of LA tended to achieve higher scores, while the ones with low degrees of LA might get low scores.

Self-assessment as learning

The term SA has been defined by many authors recently. Bourke & Mentis (2011 as cited in Ndoye, 2017) described SA as a process where students get engaged in setting goals, regulating, and reflecting on their learning by evaluating their performance. After understanding the criteria based on the learning goals, students evaluate their performance and then make plans for further improvement. As Rourke (2013 as cited in Thawabieh, 2017) stated, SA is the ability to monitor students’ learning process effectively, provide suitable feedback, and enhance their self-learning, making them autonomous learners.

Peer-assessment as learning

Strijbos and Sluijsmans (2010) defined PA as a process where students judge their peers’ performance, reflect, discuss, and collaborate. In agreement with Strijbos & Sluijsmans (2010), Sebba et al. (2008, as cited in Memiş & Seven, 2015) generalized that peer assessment is considered as the ability to assess each other’s work through reflection on the learning goals and how to achieve them. In the same vein, Robert (2006 as cited in Karami & Rezaei, 2015) declared PA as the process of reflecting on peers’ learning performance and suggesting grades for it.

The relationship between learner autonomy and alternative assessment

The relationship between learner autonomy and self-assessment

Over the past few decades, SA as learning has been proved to be an integral part of LA. Gardner (2000) claimed that SA is a contributing factor in helping students become responsible for their learning. It is because SA practice offers learners opportunities to reflect on and assess their performance, making them actively engage in their learning process. Additionally, Gholami (2016) stated that SA positively impacted students’ ability to evaluate and assess their performance and motivation. Ngo (2020) concluded that SA and reflection activities in listening

and speaking skills can be utilized to help students evaluate their performance and become autonomous learners. Phan (2021) also suggested that SA might be a useful operational approach for developing language learner autonomy in Vietnam and any other similar settings.

The relationship between learner autonomy and peer-assessment

According to Saito (2008), in the PA process, learners can promote their critical reflection through the observation of their partners' performances and being aware of performance criteria in the PA process. Moreover, Shams and Tavakoli (2014) accepted that when learners notice their peers' strengths and weaknesses and then compare them with theirs, they can promote their own learning, enhance critical thinking, and foster learner autonomy. Evidently, comparing their own strengths with those of their peers encourages learners to make more efforts to improve themselves. These two authors also emphasized that despite students' worries and concerns during their PA process, they can become fully aware of their own learning, recognize the differences between their own perception and their peers, and finally take control of their learning.

Comparing the effect of self-assessment and peer assessment on learner autonomy

Liao (2023) stated that using both SA and PA improved learners' LA by monitoring their learning process. Several researchers have proved that the effects of SA are greater than those of PA, whereas others have pointed out that PA's effects are more significant than those of SA.

The effect of PA has been proven to be less significant than that of SA due to some factors. The first factor making the effect of PA less considerable than that of SA is the assessors' level of lenience or severity. According to Ashraf & Mahdinezhad (2015), in practicing PA, students tend to give the same mark or score to any peers with whom they work. Also, students tend to be reluctant and anxious to indicate their peers' weaknesses since they want to avoid obvious criticism. PA is undoubtedly an effective tool to increase students' LA if it is conducted in the right way. With a lack of feedback quality of PA, the effectiveness of PA is limited.

Another factor that makes the effect of PA less significant than that of SA is the friendship bias. When comparing the effect of SA and PA, Farrokhi et al. (2012) concluded that students appear to assess their peers in a more biased way than they assess themselves. The implementation of PA was also found to be affected by friendship bias in the classroom by Amalia Izati (2018). This author stressed that friendship bias occurs during the PA process due to some factors: confidence, feelings, and willingness of assessors. Indeed, the implementation of PA experiences friendship bias, compared to SA implementation, which asks students to assess their own work. Once judging skills have been affected during PA activities, the assessors' reflection skills will not be developed, which cannot help students promote their LA. It can be seen that the effect of SA is greater than that of PA in terms of friendship bias. According to Phan (2021), students think that they have a low level of expertise, which prevents them from providing answers with a high level of reliability when doing PA practices. Therefore, in spite of accepting PA, they have more belief in the accuracy of their teacher feedback. Nowrozi Larsari and Sadegh Oghli (2016) asserted that SA had a more significant impact on Iranian EFL learners' LA compared to PA because SA could give students more motivation and lower tension.

However, the effect of SA is thought not to be as great as that of PA owing to several factors. Firstly, when doing SA, students assess their own performance, so they will be less responsible for the assessment activity. Therefore, they tend not to take the assessment seriously, leading to their surface-level study (Butler & Lee, 2010; Dann, 2002 as cited in Ashraf & Mahdinezhad, 2015). It is further explained that with the behavior of not undertaking the SA seriously, self-

assessors will lack feedback, compared with peer-assessors, and this leads to the limited effectiveness of SA (Butler & Lee, 2010; Black & William, 1998 as cited in Ashraf & Mahdinezhad, 2015). Karakaya (2015) also posited that self-assessors are not as strict as peer-assessors. In the same vein, Lin et al. (2001) pointed out a possible reason for the difference between the effects of SA and PA, which is that SA is based on a scoring standard that is not stricter than PA. The second factor that makes SA less effective than PA is a lack of an interactive, competitive, cooperative learning environment during the assessment activities. In SA, students only learn from their own judgment since they do not have the chance to learn from their peers (Ashraf & Mahdinezhad, 2015). It is apparent that self-assessors cannot recognize their own mistakes easily, which lessens the effectiveness of self-assessment. In addition, with a lack of an interactive learning environment, when undertaking SA, the students do not have the chance to observe their peers' work to compare with theirs. With this demerit, the students hardly come up with new ideas, learn from their peers' strengths, avoid weaknesses, and make more improvements (Chen, 2010; Chang et al., 2012, as cited in Khonbi & Sadeghi, 2013). Further, SA activities cannot offer students a competitive learning environment where they have the opportunity to make more progress and produce better work by keeping track of their peers' learning outcomes. This will limit the students' in-depth study and LA ability as well.

Research Questions

The present study aimed to answer the following research questions:

- 1. To what extent does students' self-assessment in EFL speaking skills affect their learner autonomy development?*
- 2. To what extent does students' peer assessment in EFL speaking skills affect their learner autonomy development?*
- 3. To what extent is self-assessment different from peer assessment in EFL speaking skills in triggering effects on students' learner autonomy development?*

Methods

Pedagogical Setting & Participants

Eighty-eight participants from two intact general English-2 classes at Ho Chi Minh City University of Science were conveniently taken from the population of about 800 first-year students who took general English 2. These two classes had an equal chance to be chosen for experimental group 1 and experimental group 2. The experimental group 1 (self-assessment group) was the class coded 17 KVL3 and the experimental group 2 (peer-assessment) was 17 DCH1.

Experimental procedures

The experimental procedures of this study include choosing teaching materials and teaching method; designing speaking tasks and choosing interaction patterns for speaking tasks; Designing SA and PA forms and training students to give feedback themselves and peers feedback based on SA and PA forms.

During the learning course, students were required to practice 25 speaking tasks. Students completed 2 speaking tasks each week except for the ninth and fifteenth weeks. In the ninth week, the students practiced only one task because they took a mid-term test, and due to the revision activity, the students did not practice any task in the fifteenth week. The speaking tasks

used similarly in 2 classes were mostly taken from the speaking sections in modules 9-15 of the "New Cutting Edge" coursebook and the teacher's book.

SA and PA activities were conducted after speaking tasks. Each of the SA and PA activity lasted about 5-7 minutes. During the learning course, the students were required to complete 25 self-assessment forms (SA group) or 25 peer-assessment forms (PA group). Students could complete the assessment forms in either Vietnamese or English, but in order to practice their writing skills, they were encouraged to accomplish the forms in English.

The researcher first introduced the students a speaking task including the topic, roles, context, objectives, and duration with some useful language for each speaking activity. Next, the students were informed of the important elements of a good oral performance, the assessment rubric, the format and purpose of assessment form which they would complete after the finished speaking task.

The students were given 10 minutes to complete this task in pairs. After that, the researcher chose two volunteer students to perform their work in front of the class. After the performance, the researcher instructed students on how to use the assessment rubric to assess the performance and then modeled giving feedback on the performance by the two volunteer students. At this point, the teacher ensured that the students could understand how to assess the performance.

For further practice, other two volunteer students were invited to perform in front of the class. The students were given 5-7 minutes to familiarize themselves with the assessment form by giving feedback based on the assessment rubric. After that, the researcher collected some of the students' assessment forms to judge whether they gave feedback correctly or not and discussed students' issues or concerns regarding self-and peer assessment practice.

Design of the Study

In this quasi-experimental study, the pre-post questionnaires were used for both groups at the beginning and end of the course to investigate the impact of SA and PA on students' LA development and compare the different impacts of these assessment practices on LA development. The questionnaire was designed in both English and Vietnamese.

Data collection & Analysis

After getting approval from the Board of Administrators of the Foreign Languages Center in HCMC US, the researcher met the two classes and told them about the purpose and procedure of the research in the first week. The students in these two classes agreed to take part in the study voluntarily. At the beginning of the first class meeting in week 1, eighty-eight students of both groups were given a pre-test to measure their learner autonomy level. In order to get reliable and valid information from the participants, the researcher explained the purpose of the pre-questionnaires, the way to complete them, and some difficult terms in the questionnaire. After the explanation, the participants completed the questionnaires for 30 minutes. After that, all of the questionnaires of 88 students from two classes were collected for data analysis.

So as to see the difference in the effects of SA and PA implementation on learner autonomy after the course, the post-test questionnaire was administered in week 15. The administration procedure was the same for the pre-test and post-test questionnaires. The eighty-eight students who completed the pre-test questionnaire were asked to do the post-test questionnaires. However, only 69 questionnaires were selected for further analysis since 22 out of 88 participants could not follow the training strictly. During the training course, each participant was required to finish 25 SA forms (SA group) and 25 PA forms (PA group). In both groups, those who completed over 18 forms (70 % of the total), their questionnaires were collected for

further analysis. The 69 valid questionnaires were collected for data analysis.

After the reliability of the questionnaire had been checked, eight out of thirty-eight items were removed to ensure the highest reliability level of the questionnaire. Data from the thirty remaining items in the questionnaires were computerized and analyzed by the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) program.

To answer research questions 1 and 2, a paired sample T-test was run within experimental group 1 (SA) and experimental group 2 (PA) to know how undergraduate students' SA and PA in EFL speaking skills impact their LA development. To answer question 3, an independent sample T test of both experimental group 1 and experimental group 2 for the post-test was run to see what extent SA is different from PA in triggering effects on learner autonomy.

Results/Findings and Discussion

RQ1: To what extent does students' self-assessment in EFL speaking skills affect their learner autonomy development?

Table 1

Results of Independent samples t-test analysis for five dimensions of LA (pre-questionnaires)

	Group	N	P
D1. Goal Setting (Pre-test)	SA group	36	.108
	PA Group	33	
D2. Planning (Pre-test)	SA group	36	.800
	PA Group	33	
D3. Initiating (Pre-test)	SA group	36	.992
	PA Group	33	
D4. Monitoring (Pre-test)	SA group	36	.294
	PA Group	33	
D5. Evaluating (Pre-test)	SA group	36	.309
	PA Group	33	

Table 1 shows the results of the independent sample T-test analysis for five dimensions of LA in 2 groups' pre-test questionnaires. As presented in this table, the pre-test scores of five LA dimensions of the two groups are not statistically different ($pD1=.108$, $pD2=.800$, $pD3=.992$, $pD4=.294$, $pD5=.309$, respectively). Consequently, it could be concluded that there was no statistically significant difference in students' learner autonomy dimensions of the SA group and PA group before the treatment. This conclusion was to make it conducive to any further conclusion about the effect of SA and PA on LA dimensions and the different effects of SA and PA on LA dimensions.

Table 2 illustrates the results of the paired sample T-test for LA dimensions in the SA group. As could be seen from the table, a statistically significant difference between the pre-test and post-test was found in the last four dimensions ($pD2,3,4,5 < 0.05$) but not in the first dimension ($p > 0.05$).

Table 2

Results of Paired samples *t*-test analysis for LA dimensions (SA Group)

	Dimension	Variable	M	p
SA Group	D1. Goal-setting	Pre-test	2.989	.060
		Post-test	3.294	
	D2. Planning	Pre-test	2.094	.000
		Post-test	2.622	
	D3. Initiating	Pre-test	2.482	.000
		Post-test	3.463	
	D4. Monitoring	Pre-test	2.343	.000
		Post-test	3.071	
	D5. Evaluating	Pre-test	2.467	.000
		Post-test	3.472	

On the other hand, the finding of this current study is not in line with the one of Ashraf & Mahdinezhad (2015), who stated that SA had no effect on the development of LA in speaking skills since the students did not do SA activities seriously. This author's conclusion confirmed the view held by several researchers that SA had no effects on LA. According to Birjandi and Tamjid (2010), "self-assessment is performed through complex cognitive processes which are affected by many uncontrollable factors, " making this method less effective. Similarly, Butler & Lee, 2010 and Dann, 2002, as cited in Birjandi and Tamjid (2010) argued that not taking the SA practice seriously causes students to just gain surface-level study.

The answer to research question 1 in this study indicated that the use of SA cannot help increase goal-setting ability. The theory of goal-setting and some empirical research can explain this finding. Haynes (2011) stated that goal-setting allows students to self-manage their own learning process through identifying targets. Dornyei (1994, as cited in Haynes, 2011) also explained that satisfaction from achieving goals can motivate students and develop their self-confidence and efficacy. However, several factors need to be considered to develop learner autonomy through goal setting. Latham and Locke (2006, as cited in Huei-Ju, 2018) identified four facilitators for maximizing the effects of goal-setting, namely "(1) feedback; (2) commitment to the goal; (3) task complexity; (4) situational constraints".

This result revealed that SA significantly affected the last four dimensions of LA. This finding is in line with Gholami's (2016) statement that the use of SA cannot foster all dimensions of learner autonomy. In Gholami's study, SA was identified to help develop four out of nine dimensions of LA: "importance of classroom and teacher, role of the teacher, objective/evaluation and assessment/motivation". The finding of the current study is similar to that of Gholami (2016) in that SA can foster the evaluating dimension in both studies because it is a core aspect of assessment. Also, these results align with the conclusion Juaythin (2017) reached that response journals can develop some aspects of LA. In Juaythin's study (2017), response journals are found to have effects on three aspects of LA, including students' self-awareness, self-recognition, and self-reflection.

RQ2: To what extent does students' peer assessment in EFL speaking skills affect their learner autonomy development?

Table 3

Results of Paired samples t-test analysis for LA dimensions (PA Group)

	Dimension	Variable	M	P
PA Group	D1. Goal-setting	Pre-test	3.291	.265
		Post-test	3.170	
	D2. Planning	Pre-test	2.133	.000
		Post-test	2.770	
	D3. Initiating	Pre-test	2.480	.000
		Post-test	3.066	
	D4. Monitoring	Pre-test	2.468	.000
		Post-test	3.047	
	D5. Evaluating	Pre-test	2.606	.000
		Post-test	3.212	

Table 3 presents the results of the paired sample T-test for LA dimensions in peer-assessment groups. From the table, a statistically significant difference between the pre-test and post-test was found in the last four dimensions ($p_{D 2,3,4,5} < 0.05$) but not the first dimension ($p > 0.05$).

This finding revealed that PA had a considerable effect on the last four dimensions of LA. This seemed to be in line with Cheng and Warren (2005), who found a positive effect of integrating PA into English language programs in LA. Also, these results are backed by Yinjaroen and Chiramanee (2014), Yang et al., (2006), and Yinjaroen and Chiramanee's (2014) view that the use of PA can help students take responsibility in considering and evaluating both the learning process and the product of their peers, facilitate interactions among students and develop students' skills in assessing their peers.

Nevertheless, the findings of this study are different from the ones reported by several previous studies, which show that the effect of PA is limited. Landry et al. (2015) confirmed that when students evaluate their peers' work, they tend to give higher scores to those who like it even though their peers' performances are not worth receiving such good grades. Therefore, biased assessment due to the friendship can be found in implementing this kind of assessment. Similarly, Tsui and Ng (2000) discovered that learners found peer feedback ineffective, and they highly valued their teacher's feedback instead of their peers. Phan (2021) concluded that students did not find PA effective because they did not believe in all degrees of their assessment accuracy.

RQ3. To what extent is self-assessment different from peer assessment in EFL speaking skills in triggering effects on students' learner autonomy development?

Table 4

Results of Independent samples t-test analysis for five dimensions of LA (post-questionnaires)

	Group	N	M	p
D2. Planning (Post-test)	SA group	36	2.622	.450
	PA Group	33	2.770	
D3. Initiating (Post-test)	SA group	36	3.463	.032
	PA Group	33	3.066	
D4. Monitoring (Post-test)	SA group	36	3.071	.896
	PA Group	33	3.047	
D5. Evaluating (post-test)	SA group	36	3.472	.094
	PA Group	33	3.212	

Table 4 shows the results of Independent samples t-test analysis for four dimensions of LA in post-test questionnaires. The analysis revealed that there was a statistically significant difference between the effects of SA and PA on learner autonomy dimension 3 ($p=.032$), whereas no statistically significant difference between the effects of these assessment methods was found on dimensions 2, 4 and 5 ($p>.05$). A close look at Table 4 indicated that the mean score of SA group is higher than that of PA group in initiating dimension ($M_{self} = 3.463$ and $M_{peer} = 3.066$, respectively). It can be understood that the effect of SA is higher than that of PA on the initiating dimension.

The results showed that there was no difference in the effects of SA and PA on dimensions 2, 4, and 5 (planning, monitoring, and evaluating, respectively). Meanwhile, a significant difference between the effects of these assessment methods on dimension 3 (initiating) was found. To be more specific, the effect of SA is higher than that of PA on one of four dimensions of learner autonomy, i.e., the initiating dimension. This finding is partly in line with that of Nowrozi Larsari and Sadegh Oghli's (2016) study, which found that SA had a more substantial effect on LA in general than PA. The researchers of this study concluded that by integrating SA activities into daily English language teaching instruction, students can gain a deeper understanding of the expected learning result, look for their strong and weak points, and set goals for improvement in the future. These results are backed by Bound (1995), Harris (1997), Gardner (1999), and Warchulski's (2016) view that SA is a powerful tool that helps learners become autonomous through the process of self-reflection.

Both the current study and Nowrozi Larsari and Sadegh Oghli's (2016) found a more significant effect of SA on learner autonomy than PA. However, the present study found the different effects between SA and PA on only one dimension of LA, namely initiating. It can be obvious that the findings of the current study are clearer.

On the contrary, the results of the current study did not align with those of Ashraf and Mahdinezhad (2015). These two authors concluded that the participants in the PA group outperformed those in the SA group, showing the positive effect of PA on LA and speaking skills. The findings of these two authors indicated that students can learn more from their peers than from judging themselves. To most students, noticing mistakes from others' work is easier than noticing them from their own. Ashraf & Mahdinezhad's (2015) conclusions are backed by the view of some authors (Blanche & Merino, 1998; Oscarson, 1997; Ross, 1998 as cited in

Ashraf and Mahdinezhad, 2015) that PA helps students to have more in-depth study because this kind of assessment creates a competitive learning environment among students where they are willing to assess their peers' work as accurately as possible.

The current study's result showed that PA's effect on the initiating dimension of learner autonomy is lower than that of SA. As discussed by various authors, PA has numerous advantages in language learning and teaching. However, many PA technique-related issues have been discovered lately, and one of the most obvious issues is the reliability of PA. According to Haas et al., (1998), it is suggested by the literature that peer-ratings may not be as accurate as self-ratings. This may be because peers find criticizing their friends difficult (Falchikov, 1995 as cited in Patri, 2002). From the assumptions above, it can be understood that under-rating brings students more benefits than over-rating. One of these effects might develop students' ability to look for opportunities to study more.

Conclusion

Self-assessment and peer-assessment practice significantly enhanced students' learner autonomy dimensions 2, 3, 4, and 5 (planning, initiating, monitoring, and evaluating, respectively). The employment of SA and PA did not change students' goal-setting skills because this skill belongs to thinking or awareness, which needs a long time to improve. With a four-month period in this study, it was obvious that students did not have enough time to practice the skill of goal-setting. This is a striking contribution of this study to the literature because very few studies have investigated the effect of SA and PA on each dimension of LA.

Also, two kinds of practice significantly improved students' LA dimensions 2, 3, 4, and 5 (planning, initiating, monitoring, and evaluating, respectively), but the effect of self-assessment outweighed that of PA on initiating dimension of students' learner autonomy, and the difference was statistically significant. This is the most notable contribution of this study to the literature since there have been no studies comparing the effect of SA and PA on each dimension of LA. This finding helps those teachers who waver between SA and PA have a suitable choice. Teachers who tend to focus on developing the initiating ability are recommended to use the SA technique as its effect is more significant than that of the PA technique.

The present study was thoroughly designed, and careful consideration was given to other issues related to the study. However, there are still several limitations that can be solved in further research. The first limitation is that the random assignment of subjects to the SA group and PA group was impossible because it was predetermined by the university administrations and the registration of the students. Thus, the generalization to the population of the study is limited. The second one is that the sample size for this study was small, with only 88 participants for both experimental groups. The third one is the limited time required to conduct the experiment. Accordingly, the present study's findings could not be used to guarantee a longer implementation of SA and PA with the same results in terms of their effect on various samples in different learning environments.

Some recommendations for further research are discussed as follows. The first recommendation is about the sampling method. Future researchers will apply the random sampling method to increase the possibility of achieving more generalized results. The second one is that further studies should be implemented with a larger population in different levels and contexts so that the generalization will not be restricted. The third one is the time for the implementation of SA and PA in developing LA. It is strongly recommended that further research should be carried out over a longer period. The fourth one relates to the types of speaking activities for

assessment. In this study, only pair-work speaking activities are mostly used for SA and PA practice. Hence, future researchers should use activities in individual and group work for these kinds of assessment practices. The final one is that most researchers normally use both questionnaires and assessment forms in their studies, but did not take assessment forms for analysis, as did the current study. Thus, to better understand the effects of SA and PA on learner autonomy development, further researchers should analyze assessment forms. All in all, LA development is a complicated process that takes a great deal of time and effort. Both teachers and students need to be patient. Besides language education, SA and PA can be applied to other subjects in sciences, humanities, and other education levels before university.

Acknowledgment

My profound gratitude goes to my teacher, Dr. Đặng Tấn Tín, for all of his valuable support and encouragement. My sincerest thanks also go to the Board of Administrators and other members of the Foreign Languages Center, HCMC University of Science, who directly or indirectly contributed to the implementation of this paper.

References

- Andrade, H. (2009). Promoting learning and achievement through self-assessment. *Theory Into Practice*, 48(1), 12-19. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00405840802577544>
- Ashraf, H., & Mahdinezhad, M. (2015). The Role of Peer-assessment versus Self-assessment in Promoting Autonomy in Language Use: A Case of EFL Learners. *Iranian Journal of Language Testing*, 5(2), 110-120.
- Authors, & Reinders, H. (2010). Towards a classroom pedagogy for learner autonomy: A framework of independent language learning skills. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 35(5), 40-55. <https://doi.org/10.14221/ajte.2010v35n5.4>
- Benson, P. (2007). Autonomy in language teaching and learning. *Language Teaching*, 40(1), 21-40. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444806003958>
- Birjandi, P., & Tamjid, N. H. (2010). The Role of Self-Assessment in Promoting Iranian EFL Learners' Motivation. *English language teaching*, 3(3), 211-220. <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v3n3p211>
- Bygate, M. (1987). *Speaking*. Oxford University Press.
- Chan, V. (2000). Fostering learner autonomy in an ESL classroom. *TESL Canada Journal*, 18(1), 75-86. <https://doi.org/10.18806/tesl.v18i1.901>
- Dafie. (2007). An exploration of the relationship between learner autonomy and English proficiency. *Asian EFL Journal*, 8(7), 1-23.
- Dang, T. T. (2012). *Learner autonomy perception and performance: a study on Vietnamese students in online and offline learning environments* [Doctoral dissertation, La Trobe University].
- Farrokhi, F., Esfandiari, R., & Schaefer, E. (2012). A many-facet Rasch measurement of differential rater severity/leniency in three types of assessment. *JALT Journal*, 34(1), 79-101. <https://doi.org/10.37546/JALTJJ34.1-3>

- Gardner, D. (2000). Self-assessment for autonomous language learners. *Links & Letters*(7), 49-60.
- Gholami, H. (2016). Self-assessment and learner autonomy. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 6(1), 46-51. <https://doi.org/10.17507/TPLS.0601.06>
- Harris, M. (1997). Self-assessment of language learning in formal settings. *ELT Journal*, 51(1), 12-20. <https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/51.1.12>
- Hay, M., & Mathers, L. (2012). Designing assessment for autonomous learning. *Practitioner Research in Higher Education*, 6(2), 95-106.
- Ho, K. H., & Hoang, T. H. (2024). Exploring vocational students' perceptions towards language hub in enhancing autonomy. *AsiaCALL International Conference*(6), 280-293. <https://doi.org/10.54855/paic.24619>
- Holec, H. (1981). *Autonomy and foreign language learning*. Pergamon Press.
- Izati, R. A. (2018). The influence of friendship bias toward peer assessment in EFL classroom. *RETAIN*, 6(2), 52-59.
- Juaythin, W. A. (2017). Fostering learner's autonomy through response journals. *International Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities Invention*, 4(2), 3314-3317. <https://doi.org/10.18535/ijsshi/v4i2.09>
- Karakaya, I. (2015). Comparison of self, peer and instructor assessments in the portfolio assessment by using many facet Rasch model. *Journal of Education and Human Development*, 4(2), 182-192. <https://doi.org/10.15640/jehd.v4n2a22>
- Karami, A., & Rezaei, A. (2015). An overview of peer-assessment: The benefits and importance. *Journal for the Study of English Linguistics*, 3(1), 93-100. <https://doi.org/10.5296/jsel.v3i1.7889>
- Kayi, H. (2006). Teaching Speaking: Activities to Promote Speaking in a Second Language. *The Internet TESL Journal*, 12(11), 1-6. <http://unr.edu/homepage/hayriyek>
- Kesten, C. (1987). Independent learning: a common essential learning: a study completed for the Saskatchewan Department of Education Core Curriculum Investigation Project. *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 30(2), 8-42.
- Landry, A., Jacobs, S., & Newton, G. (2015). Effective use of peer assessment in a graduate level writing assignment: A case study. *International Journal of Higher Education*, 4(1), 38-51. <https://doi.org/10.5430/ijhe.v4n1p38>
- Larsari, N., & Oghli, S. (2016). On the effect of self-assessment and peer-assessment on Iranian EFL learners' learner autonomy. *Journal of Language and Linguistics*, 2(1), 26-31.
- Le, X. Q. (2013). *Fostering learner autonomy in language learning in tertiary education: an intervention study of university students in Hochiminh City, Vietnam* [Doctoral dissertation, University of Nottingham].
- Lengkanawati, N. (2017). Learner autonomy in the Indonesian efl settings. *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 6(2), 222-231. <https://doi.org/10.17509/ijal.v6i2.4847>
- Liao, & Min-Hsun. (2023). Enhancing L2 English speaking and learner autonomy via online self- and peer-assessment. *Taiwan Journal of TESOL*, 20(1), 30-36.
- Littlewood, W. (1996). Autonomy: An anatomy and a framework. *System*, 24(4), 427-435. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0346-251X\(96\)00039-5](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0346-251X(96)00039-5)

- Lin, S., Liu, E. Z.-F., & Yuan, S.-M. (2001). Web based peer assessment: Attitude and achievement. *IEEE Transactions on Education*, 44(2), 211-224. <https://doi.org/10.1109/13.925865>
- Little, D. G. (1991). *Learner autonomy: Definitions, issues and problems*. Authentic Language Learning Resources.
- Memiş, E. K., & Seven, S. (2015). Effects of an SWH approach and self-evaluation on sixth grade students' learning and retention of an electricity unit. *International Journal of Progressive Education*, 11(3), 32-49.
- Miao, Y., Badger, R., & Zhen, Y. (2006). A comparative study of peer and teacher feedback in a Chinese EFL writing class. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 15(3), 179-200. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2006.09.004>
- Minh, N. H., & Ngoc, N. T. D. (2023). Learner autonomy, motivation and English speaking proficiency: A study among English foreign language university students in Nghe An. *VNU Journal of Science: Education Research*, 39(1), 77-86. <https://doi.org/10.25073/2588-1159/vnuer.4700>
- Namaziandost, E., & Ahmadi, S. (2018). The Assessment of Oral Proficiency through Holistic and Analytic Techniques of Scoring: A Comparative Study. *Applied Linguistics Research Journal*, 3(2), 70-82. <https://doi.org/10.14744/alrj.2019.83792>
- Ndoye, A. (2017). Peer/self-Assessment and student Learning. *International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*, 29(2), 255-269.
- Ngo, T. T. (2019). Promoting learner autonomy through self-assessment and reflection. *VNU Journal of Foreign Studies*, 35(6), 146-153. <https://doi.org/10.25073/2525-2445/vnufs.4483>
- Patri, M. (2002). The influence of peer feedback on self- and peer-assessment of oral skills. *Language Testing*, 19(2), 109-131. <https://doi.org/10.1191/0265532202lt224oa>
- Phan, T. N. L. (2024). Students' perceptions of the effect of blended learning on their learning autonomy. *AsiaCALL International Conference*. <https://doi.org/10.54855/paic.24620>
- Phan, T. T. T. (2021). Self-assessment and Language Learner Autonomy: An Exploratory Study in a Vietnamese University. *Vietnam Journal of Education*, 5(3), 72-83. <https://doi.org/10.52296/vje.2021.88>
- Saito, H., & Fujita, T. (2004). Characteristics and user acceptance of peer rating in EFL writing classrooms. *Language Teaching Research*, 8(1), 31-54. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1362168804lr133oa>
- Shams, N., & Tavakoli, M. (2014). The effect of peer, self, and traditional assessment on Iranian EFL learners' L2 reading comprehension. *Journal of Applied Linguistics and Language Research*, 1(1), 29-44.
- Shih, H.-J. (2018). Promoting language learners' awareness of autonomy through goal setting - An alternative approach of assessing goal setting effects. *English language teaching*, 11(10), 52-65. <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v11n10p52>
- Strijbos, J.-W., & Sluijsmans, D. (2010). Unravelling peer assessment: Methodological, functional, and conceptual developments. *Learning and Instruction*, 20(4), 265-269. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.learninstruc.2009.08.002>

- Tassinari, M. G. (2012). Evaluating learner autonomy: A dynamic model with descriptors. *Studies in Self-Access Learning Journal*, 3(1), 24-40. <https://doi.org/10.37237/030103>
- Thawabieh, A. M. (2017). A comparison between students' self-assessment and teachers' assessment. *Journal of Curriculum and Teaching*, 6(1), 14-20. <https://doi.org/10.5430/jct.v6n1p14>
- Tran, T. N. L. (2022). E-learning and learner autonomy in an EFL class in Vietnam. *Language Teaching Research Quarterly*, 27, 9-23. <https://doi.org/10.32038/ltrq.2022.27.02>
- Trinh, Q. L. (2005). *Stimulating learner autonomy in English language education: A curriculum innovation study in a Vietnamese context* [Doctoral dissertation, University of Amsterdam].
- Tsui, A. B. M., & Ng, M. (2000). Do secondary L2 writers benefit from peer comments? *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 9(2), 147-170. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S1060-3743\(00\)00022-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1060-3743(00)00022-9)
- Warchulski, D. (2015). Promoting learner autonomy through self-assessment and goal-setting. *New directions in teaching and learning English discussion*, 3, 215-222.
- Warchulski, D. (2016). Learner autonomy, self-assessment, and goal-setting: The accuracy of learner self-assessments in discussion classes. *New directions in teaching and learning English discussion*, 4, 260-269.

Biodata

Since joining the VNUHCM-University of Science, Thao Phan has been involved with studies related to English language teaching. Before joining the university, Phan worked as a visiting lecturer of English at several universities. Since 2021 Phan worked as a full-time lecturer of English at VNUHCM-University of Science, Ho Chi Minh City.