

# Self-assessment on Students' Oral Interaction and its Implications in the Development of Accuracy

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Modality: Research Report

Presented as Partial Fulfillment for the Degree of Magíster en Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros con Mención en la Enseñanza de Inglés. CES: RPC-SE-19-N°.140-2020. Cohort 2020 - 2021. Author's email: <a href="mailto:ihoanna.herrera@casagrande.edu.ec">ihoanna.herrera@casagrande.edu.ec</a> Guayaquil, February 25th, 2022

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Teaching practices in education have changed along the years. This is even more significant since the lockdown caused by the global pandemic. Covid-19 has forced teachers and students to adapt their practices to the current situation in a record time (Bonal & González, 2020; Damşa et al., 2021). Around the world, many countries have chosen virtual education to substitute face to face interaction and continue with the teaching- learning process.

Regarding the foreign language acquisition field in this context, there were some challenges. From the lack of appropriate technological resources required to its development (Tokarieva et al., 2021) to the necessity of the development of learners' autonomy and deep processes of metacognition due to the nature of learning in virtual environments (Gulbinskienė et al., 2017). Certainly, keeping in mind Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), Azimova (2019) argued that students should be provided chances to use the target language and realize on their own what to say according to the situation. One option is teaching students to evaluate their own performance.

Burns (2010) claimed that students tended to undervalue assessing their own performance because they do not know how to do it. That is the case of four students of second and fourth level of English (B1) of two public universities in Riobamba, Chimborazo province, who are taking online classes and have shown accuracy problems in their oral interaction with their teacher and peers. They perceived self-assessment as a non-convincing source to enhance their process of learning due to their lack of knowledge about its application.

## Literature Review

In this section, the reader will find the key notions related to Self-assessment, oral interaction, and its implication on accuracy. All the concepts will illustrate the main goal of the present research report and may be used to elaborate a deeper study related to it.

#### **Self-assessment and Oral Production**

As it was mentioned previously, currently, teachers are required to help learners to assess their own progress. According to Philippakos (2017), self-assessment of written texts could be beneficial in various aspects. For instance, it grants the development in the learners, of the external reader or audience awareness feeling. It refers to the students' ability to assess their own products as if they were an unknown reader outward themselves. The analysis to be performed since the depersonalization enlightens the problems that a real reader could face. Thus, the learners are able to establish real processes of comprehension and communication through correcting their own mistakes.

Following the same line but referring to the improvement of speaking skill, Knonamhri et al. (2021) performed a quasi- experimental research. In the study, there was found that self-assessment had a positive impact on the development of fluency and accuracy on speaking, using the target language. The results were obtained through the application of pre and posttest to five students. Indeed, the investigation also showed the potential that this kind of assessment has to the development of critical thinking.

Montero (2020) agreed with what was previously mentioned. After a training process on using self-assessment and mobile devices, the participants of the investigation reported favorable results in their oral performance. There were four voluntaries in total.

However, what does Self-assessment mean? In simple words, it could be defined as being conscious about the own process of learning with all the strengths and

weakness (Karakaya et al., 2017). The understanding of them, grants the students the possibility to plan of a variety of enhancement strategies. All of them, focus on the achievement of the communicative goals that are expected (Panadero et al., 2017).

## Challenges for self-assessment.

Nevertheless, there are some challenges that self-assessment confronts in its implementation. Leach (2012) reported some of them in her investigation, students were hesitant to put in practice self-assessment processes due to absence of the required skills to evaluate their own progress. The learners were frightened about making mistakes and did not find the main point or feeling bored on doing it. Likewise, students exhibited cultural issues for considering inadequate to give themselves a good grade. In contrast, some of the students preferred to be assessed by an expert instead of performing it themselves.

Furthermore, Adachi et al. (2018) performed a qualitative study with 13 academic volunteers. In which, based on their perceptions, there were reported some benefits and challenges of the application on self and peer assessment in face-to-face interactions and online environments. Regarding the difficulties of the application of self- assessment, participants mentioned: lack of time and context dependency to its implementation, and the necessity of constant motivation to understand why students should do it. Moreover, the risk of superficial learning and poor feedback.

In the same way, Mohamed and Razali (2019) said that the main purpose of training students to enhance and self-direct their process of learning could be affected when the learners do not assess themselves consciously and change their mentality. Indeed, a poor guidance and lack of clear criteria to perform improvements negatively influences the achievement of the desired results.

### How to train students to use Self-assessment.

With the constant enhancement of new technologies, to have access to the information is not a big deal for the learners. Though, they still require teachers' help to scaffold and interpret the unfamiliar topics. The teachers as facilitators, should allow students to go beyond and make-up new concepts and ideas from what they already know. In this form, learners perform deep processes of metacognition including critical thinking by consciously taking on their hands the process of learning (Fitzmaurice, 2018; Sackstein, 2015).

Sackstein (2015) emphasized that a real validity of what is expected to be learned and the own objectives planned, would be an effective tool for real self-assessment. In the light of this, the same author highlighted some important keys to train and motivate students to use self-assessment and judge their development:

1.	Make them reflect on why they should do it.	Provide students time to think about the main purpose of the activity. Engaging them and offering clear evidence about the importance and usefulness of the activity could increase the effectiveness of the application of the strategy.
2.	Create and establish actionable goals.	Present the general purpose of the lesson and guide learners to launch short-terms goals based on it. Persuade them to go further of the vague goals "I want to pass the school year" or "I want to speak better". Clarify that this kind of goals will not help them to improve and help students to make a list with the more achievable goals. Set a limit of time as well as short steps to guarantee its success. Provide feedback when students need it.
3.	Adjust Instruction Based on Students Goals and Reflections.	Teacher should incorporate individual students' goals into the goals expected for the whole class.
4.	Help them to understand the criteria they will be judged in each activity.	Commonly learners do not understand the criteria therefore they could feel frustrated. Providing a clear explanation and useful examples will avoid this

		feeling. For instance, let students discuss the criteria in groups and share opinions or rewrite it on their own words.
5. Allow them progress.	to document their	Even when the teacher could allow learners to reflect about their improvements in different forms, determine mechanisms to do it; Such as charts, recordings, or journals in which the learners evidence their ideas. Include some guidelines about how a deep reflection looks like.
6. Keep time t	o reflect in class.	Talking about the students' self- evaluation process during class will highlight the importance of the activity
	ormation gathered idents' reflections to ing.	Design detailed activities based on their findings and being conscious about the purposes established at the beginning. The feedback given will support the student mastery of the skill expected.

Adapted from Sackstein (2015) "Teaching Students to Self-Assess: How do I help students reflect and grow as learners? (ASCD Arias)"

### **Innovation**

The innovation was applied for four weeks. Two hours (45 minutes each hour) per week through Zoom, meetings application. It was developed as follows:

- 1<sup>st</sup> week (15<sup>th</sup> January 2022): Introduction to self-assessment and rubrics, how to use and apply them.

The whole lesson was divided in two parts. At the beginning, the learners were engaged to reflect on the standard and objective planned for the whole Unit and the class. Afterwards, the apprentices rewrote them using their own words and created their own short-term objectives list to achieve them. Their answers were registered on an online collaborative chart. The teacher provided feedback constantly along the process. In the second part of the lesson, rubrics were introduced. The teacher checked the learners 'previous knowledge and using a Ppt presentation taught them two types of rubrics: analytic and

holistic. The educator using a preestablished rubric, created by herself, modeled how to assess two students 'videos. Next, the students performed a guided practice.

At the end, the participants were persuaded to reflect the activities have done and worked on their autonomous work.

- 2<sup>nd</sup> week (22<sup>nd</sup> January 2022): Work on content, first modeling about how to apply self-assessment in assessing a video recording and pretest application. The class began with the initial reflection. In it, the learners made interrelationships between the objective of the class and identified their own achievable goal from the list previously created, to accomplish it. The teacher presented some examples about the usage of social media currently and stated the idea "Nowadays, we have a double identity, the real and the virtual" to promote critical thinking. The teacher reinforced students' knowledge through a video and a virtual brochure. Then, made them to choose between two situations and add a third one. This let students to interact and discuss in pairs and as a team about social media in our lives. The teacher exemplified how to self-assess using a video of herself talking about the topic. After that, the learners are guided to record their own video on Flipgrip and assess themselves using a rubric (pretest). The teacher kept providing feedback all the time. The learners are instructed to perform autonomous work (progress register).
- 3<sup>rd</sup> week (29<sup>th</sup> January 2022): Keep going on content but perform with the learners a teachers' guided practice on assessing videos.
   The initial reflection took place like the previous session. Next, the teacher exhibited some examples of technology and culture such as Daft Punk and

Miku Hatsune. Students worked on some activities to acquire vocabulary and develop critical thinking by analyzing the question "Is art something that only humans can do?" Discussion took place. Then, learners assess some videos of people sharing their opinion about it, using a rubric. At the end, learners were instructed about their autonomous work that includes progress register, record of video analyzing the quote "Technology, like art, is a soaring exercise of the human imagination" by Daniel Bell and self-assessment it using a rubric.

- 4<sup>th</sup> week (05<sup>th</sup> February 2022): Summative assessment (Posttest) and self-assessment autonomous practice.

Reflection was kept as the initial point of each session. The process was like the previous classes. The teacher presented the situation and there were performed some activities to prepare students to the main activity: Record an online class podcast about "Society and Technology". The activities included readings, videos, individual practice and took notes. Teacher and classmates gave feedback, and the podcast were recorded. Finally, the students self-assess their participation on the podcast using a rubric (posttest) and registered their progress (autonomous work).

## **Research Methodology**

The present study is a research report. In general terms, it refers to a written text (with publication purposes) in which is well-structured and documented all the development of a research study since the beginning till the end. It includes what the investigator is trying to figure out, why is it important to discover it, how the information will be gathered and what it all meant (Locke et al., 2009). The study was conducted to investigate the influence that self-assessment has on the development of oral accuracy. The data collected in this study will allow to understand how to train

students to enhance their speaking accuracy by using self- assessment strategy. The techniques and instruments that were applied to measure and describe improvement were an interview and a pre and posttest. The specific research questions planned are:

- 1. What are the students' perspectives about the use of self-assessment to improve oral accuracy?
- 2. What are students' difficulties with self-assessment?
- 3. How can the students' application of self-assessment to improve their oral accuracy be evaluated?

## **Participants**

In the present investigation four students (three males and one female) of two higher institutions in Chimborazo will participate. They are between 18 and 20 years old and are taking the second and fourth level of the required foreign language. An online English level test developed by Education First (EF) was applied to determine the current level of the learners according to Common European Framework. They have an intermediate level of proficiency in the usage of the language. Three learners belong to families with a lower medium socio-economic status and one high socio-economic status families. All of them have access to the internet and count with at least a smartphone and computer in their houses. In fact, they have extensive experience in the usage of platforms such as Zoom and Microsoft Teams.

## **Instruments**

To answer the research questions, the following instruments were applied:

To obtain trustable data about the first and second question, a
 structured interview will be applied. The interview will take place on
 Zoom. The instrument has four questions carefully prepared. (See
 Appendix 1)

2. To answer the third question, a pre and posttest were used. They will be recordings self-assessed by the learners using rubrics, before and after the application of the strategy. The only difference between them will be the inclusion of the "Interaction" criteria to self-assess the posttest. The rubrics were made up taking in consideration the essential features of accuracy and self-assessment (creation of own objectives) ;(See Appendix 3).

## **Data Analysis**

The data gathered was analyzed according to the nature of each research question. In that way, to the research questions:

- N°1: What are the students' perspectives about the use of self-assessment to improve oral accuracy?
- N°2: What are students' difficulties with self-assessment?

They were used the notes taken from the interview in addition to Students 'progress register notes collected after the application of the innovation in which there were found meaningful information too. The information gathered was transcribed, reviewed, and analyzed using The Grounded Theory Analysis (Strauss & Corbin, 1997) through a software called *Quirkos*. First, the general topics found in the responses regarding to the focus of the questions and the research (Self-assessment and Development of oral accuracy) were classified according with open coding: self-assessment problems, strategies for self-assessment and development of speaking accuracy. It was necessary another revision to guarantee that the thematic categories were accurate.

Later, an axial coding step took place. In it, self-assessment problems, development of oral accuracy and strategies for self-assessment were combining into

"Self-assessment complications" considering that the answers of the participants were interconnected among them. On the other hand, student's perspectives and feelings towards self-assessment was kept because according to author's opinion it required a proper category.

During the selective coding step, the researcher reviewed the categories previously established and embrace them into only one "Students' self-assessment: perspectives and issues". So, the category was determined as clear and consistent to response the first and second research questions.

- N° 3: How can the students' application of self-assessment to improve their oral accuracy be evaluated?

The pre and posttest were graded by the students using the rubrics delivered.

The investigator classified and analyzed the findings using the statistical software SPSS per student, who were named in the document as S1, S2, S3 and S4. Then, a Paired sample t-test (Repeated Measures) were applied to report the results.

### **Ethical Considerations**

The participants of the present research are volunteers. Creswell and Poth (2016) stayed that research contributors should be notified about ethical considerations and informed consent and confidentiality. Consequently, participants were informed about the purpose of the investigation, all the methodology as well as the procedures to perform the research. Furthermore, to guarantee the privacy of their personal information, their names were hidden and substituted by a number. All the data was collected anonymously and was used for academic purposes.

#### Results

The qualitative results were taken from notes of the interview applied to answer the research questions  $N^{o}$  1 What are the students' perspectives about the use of self-

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assessment to improve oral accuracy? And N° 2 What are students' difficulties with self-assessment?

Concerning to the students' perspectives about the use of self-assessment to improve oral accuracy, the student externalized their *Lack of knowledge* about self-assessment itself. It refers to absence of an adequate instruction regarding to concept, the possible strategies and uses of self-assessment and its use to improve speaking accuracy. Their replies included phrases such as "The word self brings an idea, but the concept is not clear", "the term is not familiar" and "I don't know the meaning".

Next, and after a brief explanation about the definition of self-assessment by the interviewer, the interviewees were asked for the process, and the kind of methods of self- assessment they used. The students said, "No idea, not a particular method", "Not at all", "Just think about the errors but not more, no process" and "No, I don't know if there is a process, and I don't really perform a deep self-evaluation". Showing once more their deficiency of knowledge on the field. Keeping on mind the situation presented, two questions planned for the interview previously were halted and replaced by a new one included on the interview: Why don't you use self-assessment?

The new question, let participants to talk about their difficulties on self-assessment. The learners answered in general *Lack of time, lack of evidence of the helpfulness of self-assessment and Lack of knowledge* as the main setbacks. Their responses included in whole "they do not see the usefulness of doing it", "The lack of time available to do it is also reduced" "Due to virtual education, they have a lot of distractors so applying self-assessment is the last of their worries" and "They do not know how to do it".

In opposition with the results obtained at the beginning, it is necessary to add and highlight some valuable information collected after the application of the

innovation. In the last students' progress register and non-expected post interview, learners communicated a different perspective about self-assessment: a positive one. In the planning step of the present research, the investigator considered that only apply an only interview would be enough to response the research questions N° 1 and N° 2. However, after its execution, the learners spontaneously share their thoughts and point of view, giving as a result the post interview. The relevance of the data indeed the notes collected made the research changed her mind.

First, the students were able to define self-assessment and identify keys to its process development on their words. The students describe it as "The way in which they can evaluate their performance and achieve goals", "correct our mistakes following an objective", "It has relationship with grammar" and "Assess our work and correct ourselves focusing on our goal planned and recognize some important keys to perform self-assessment". These new findings brought to the light, the favorable perspective about the use of self-assessment to improve oral accuracy that the leaners have developed. Interaction with others is one of the strongest and recurrent point mentioned.

- S1: "It was interesting and comfortable due to the small number of participants"
- S2: "I feel good at the end"
- S3: "It was interesting due the new content and also the possibility to interact as well as knew new people"
- S4: "It was interesting because the interaction with other participants helped to improve and achieve their goal. The experience in general was comfortable"

Besides, the participants of the research mentioned "I improve a little putting attention, because I follow your recommendations and the use of the rubric. In that way I could identify my errors", "I improve a little too. Because I have more time available on the class, I was able to pay attention of what aspects in which I can improve", "I

consider that I improved too, especially because the interaction with my classmates. In the university, normally I don't have opportunities and I like to practice" and "I believe that I have improved because I could correct my mistakes. The reflection part was significant to realize how to correct ourselves analyzing our errors. Before I couldn't but now I can". Contrasting with students' difficulties with self-assessment expressed at the commence.

1. How can the students' application of self-assessment to improve their oral accuracy be evaluated?

The quantitative results are presented in the following tables:

**Paired Samples Statistics** 

				Std.	Std. Error
		Mean	N	Deviation	Mean
Pair 1	Pretest	7.9775	4	.99684	.49842
	Posttest	9.2025	4	.67079	.33539

## **Paired Samples Test**

- Constitution of the Cons									
Paired Differences									
				95% Confidence					
					Interval of the				
			Std.	Std. Error	Difference				Sig. (2-
		Mean	Deviation	Mean	Lower	Upper	t	df	tailed)
Pair	Pretest -	-1.22500	.58278	.29139	-2.15233	29767	-4.204	3	.025
1	Posttest								

A paired sample t-test showed a significant difference between pre-test (M=7.97, SD=.99) and posttest (M=9.20, SD = 0.67) scores when examining all the sample together; t (3) = -4.20, p = .025".

## Discussion

Once the results were analyzed, there were found some coincidences with the authors studied and mentioned in the literature review. In connection with the Research Question Nº 1: What are the students' perspectives about the use of self-assessment to improve oral accuracy? It was found that the lack of knowledge about self-assessment, strategies to self-assess students' accuracy in oral interactions caused indifference and reluctant feelings among the learners. Therefore, their perception before the application of the innovation was negative. In concordance with it, Leach (2012) observed that the lack of the essential knowledge and abilities to apply self-assessment deviated on boringness and no-sense usage since the students' perspective.

In reference to the Research Question N° 2: What are students' difficulties with self-assessment? The participants coincided once more that the knowledge deficiency was one of their most significant difficulties. Lack of time, lack of evidence of the helpfulness of self-assessment and the interference of distractors that impeded a conscious self-assessment were pointed out as well. The answers suited with Adachi et al. (2018) and Mohamed and Razali (2019) results. The authors reported lack of time, lack of motivation and lack conscious and mindful self-analysis as factors that could affect the process.

On the other hand, after the application of the innovation, the learners' answers varied. The perspective of the learners against the use of self-assessment were replaced for a favorable one. The students emphasized that knowledge, interaction with peers, proper attention to teacher' feedback, enough time to self-assessing and practice were sciential to this change. They also mention reflection as an important step for error correction, identification of aspects to improve and plan strategies to do it, as Sackstein (2015) and Panadero et al. (2017) mentioned in their studies.

The students' application of self-assessment to improve their oral accuracy was analyzed using a Paired Samples T-test on the pre and post applied for the learners. It responded to the Research Question No 3 How can the students' application of self-assessment to improve their oral accuracy be evaluated? The result that was given evidenced a significant difference between the pre and post application of the innovation because the p-value is less than 0.05 subsequently the innovation had positive results. Along with, Knonamhri et al. (2021) and Montero (2020) recounted satisfactory repercussion of the use of self-assessment on speaking accuracy likewise. This is also reinforced with the quantitative results.

#### **Conclusions**

In this technological era, to understand how self-assess our process of growth should be mandatory. Thus, after the application of the innovation for this research report about Self-assessment on Students' Oral Interaction and its Implications in the Development of Accuracy with the participation of 4 students (B1) there are some conclusions:

- RQ N° 1: Before the application of the innovation, the learners had a negative perspective about the use of self-assessment to improve oral accuracy. It was originated mainly from the lack of knowledge and methods to do it consciously. After teaching and training them how to do it, the response was positive. This mind change was due the new knowledge acquired, interaction with peers, proper attention to teacher' feedback, enough time to self-assessing and practice.
- RQ N° 2: Lack of knowledge, time, evidence self-assessment usefulness and the interference of distractors that impeded a conscious self-assessment were reported as the most notorious difficulties with self-assessment. The application of the innovation helped to fulfill these complications.

- RQ N° 3: The students' application of self-assessment to improve their oral accuracy were evaluated through the application of a Pair Samples T-test and it showed positive results. The innovation applied revealed that there was improvement of the oral accuracy after the learners were instructed about the way in which evaluate our own progress as well as accuracy features on speaking.

### Limitations

From the teacher's field notes, some limitations were recognized. First, even when the innovation was planned to 4 weeks (2 hours) per class the time was not enough to maximum potential of the activities planned. Due to the students' knowledge absence about self-assessment, method for self-assessment and features of oral accuracy it was necessary to invest a lot of time to make students get it.

The lack of speaking practice of the learners because virtual education and crowed virtual classrooms made learners feel shy and did not want to interact with others. On few occasions, they used their mother tongue to try to stablish communication because of this lack of practice. It was necessary to use difference strategies to overcome this.

Because the application of self-assessment was not so common for the learners, they feel insecure and needed constant motivation and encouragement even when the learners possess a B1 level.

### Recommendations

- Plan the application of the innovation for a period longer to the current. At least six months. In that way, all the key aspects will be better grounded. Do not be afraid of adapting the activities planned or simplify some of them, keeping on mind that the most important is that the learners assimilate the process of self-

assessment. Work with emphasis on the understanding of oral accuracy. Take the necessary time to make them reflect willfully at the beginning and at the end of each session.

- Use quotes and phrases to make students to reflect on (critical thinking comment) and interact with others. Moreover, use games and common interest topics to break down shyness. If the group is extensive, try to create breaking rooms of no more 4 students on Zoom to allow them to interact more closely.

  Make all of them to participate using different mechanisms like Google Doc documents, Mentimetre, Zoom chat box and others. If the learners use their mother tongue do not prohibit it, contrarious let them talk but re-guide the conversation in the second language.
- Encourage learners to self-assess their performance in class and reinforce with an autonomous practice. Use the Gradual Release of responsibility and do not forget to assess them on time. Define deadlines in order to provide feedback opportunely.

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	Appendix 1
Instruments.	
Questions for the inte	erview through Zoom
Available upon request.	
	Appendix 2
	Quirkos Report Interview Coding
Available upon request.	
	Appendix 3
Lesson plan	
Available upon request.	
	Appendix 4
Rubric Sample	
Available upon request.	