Arizona Working Papers in SLA & Teaching, pp. 74-97 (2016)

SELF-ASSESSMENT TRAINING IN THE ESL CLASSROOM: A CRUCIAL STEP IN DEVELOPING LEARNER AUTONOMY

Nicole Schmidt
University of Arizona

Holly Wehmeyer
University at Albany (SUNY)

The current study examines the effectiveness of self-assessment training and factors which influence self-assessment for ESL students in a Tucson, Arizona IEP. A series of in-class training sessions and follow-up questionnaires are used to analyze student behaviors and perceptions across cultures, proficiency levels, and language acquisition skills (reading, writing, listening, speaking). Findings indicate that self-assessment training can help students reflect more honestly on their language ability, develop a framework for discussion of their language needs, and recognize their own autonomy in their language education.

Keywords: self-assessment; learner autonomy; affective strategy; metacognitive strategy; strategy training

INTRODUCTION

It has been widely accepted that most successful learners develop proficiency autonomously, and the connection between language learning and Learner Autonomy (LA) has been abundantly supported over the past 30 years (Cotterall, 1995; Nguyen & Gu, 2013; Wenden, 1998, 1995, 2007). Recently, it has been suggested that autonomous learning is a process which can be trained within a classroom setting, thus merging sociocultural interaction with a learner's utilization of available internal resources (Little, 1995; Oxford, 1990/2003; Rubin, 1990; Wenden, 1991). The development of an autonomous language learner is thus multifaceted, and self-assessment of one's linguistic acumen is recognized as a fundamental component in this process.

Self-assessment is perceived as a method for learners to gain authority over their learning processes and develop their own voices within a target language. In order to effectively self-assess, it has been suggested that both the metacognitive and affective nature of learning, which often interact, be addressed (Wenden, 1991). However, most self-assessment research concentrates on the analysis of the task with little regard for the affective aspects surrounding and motivating the learning process. As a result, there are currently few pedagogical tools available for teachers to prepare their students to take full responsibility for self-assessment activities which emphasize metacognitive awareness of both learner beliefs and the learning procedure. Thus, the current study seeks to narrow this particular gap by implementing classroom discussion and activities which train learner attitudes and beliefs as well as procedural knowledge surrounding the act of self-assessment.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The External and Internal Facets of Learner Autonomy

Despite the push for students to perform well independently and to guide their own learning, some critics argue that even the most independent students simply do not learn outside of social context (Murray, 2014). Traditionally, learner autonomy is defined as the "ability to take charge of one's own learning" (Holec, 1981, p. 3). This definition denotes two key ingredients: the acceptance of responsibility for one's own learning and the ability to self-navigate the learning process. Holec organized learner autonomy into a set of metacognitive competencies that include goal setting, defining one's learning parameters and pace, selecting modalities and practices, observing the learning process, and assessing achievements. However, notwithstanding its popularity and continued use in LA literature, Holec's conceptualization has been subject to a fair amount of scrutiny over the years. His theory has been perceived as a reflection of individualistic, Western values that are not in line with current views of socially constructed autonomous learning (Benson, 2007; Lantolf, 2000; Lantolf & Thorne, 2007; Toohey & Norton, 2003). As such, over the past 30 years, trends in autonomy research have shifted from a focus on *independence* to one of *interdependence* (Boud, 1988; Murray, 2014; Palfreyman, 2003). However, this paper will further argue that the descriptions of learner autonomy listed above lack attention to the affective nature of language learning which fuels learner acceptance of responsibility for their education.

Autonomy in language learning has been interpreted as a socially constructed process since Little's (2000) application of Vygotsky's (1978) Zone of Proximal Development (ZDP) theory. While making this connection, Little conjectured that external regulation, abbreviated in the current study as *training*, leads to self-regulation and learner autonomy. In other words, external mediation of a learner's progress until they reach the capacity to move on to a more independent phase of development positions autonomy as the ultimate goal of learning. Murray (2014, p. 6) further illustrates this point in writing that the ability to obtain assistance from a "more skilled and knowledgeable fellow classmate or teacher enables learners to perform independently, thereby rendering them more autonomous." This implies an inherent social construct in the development of autonomy. The "communities of practice," or groups of learners and instructors who collaborate to construct meaning and identity, form the context in which autonomous learning may occur (Benson, 2011; Lave & Wenger, 1991; O'Leary, 2014). Therefore, autonomy is externally guided, or trained, within a social context.

Despite the social, or external, influence on the development of the autonomous learner, one also ought to consider the role of internal processes, embedded within the social context, involving learner beliefs about teaching, learning, and the learners themselves; these beliefs inform attitudes which might determine learner readiness to embrace the principles of autonomy that precede self-assessment activities (Cotterall, 1995; Wenden, 1991). Conversely, beliefs which are not conducive to autonomy might lead to the application of less effective language learning and teaching strategies. Furthermore, according to Oxford, Crookall, Cohen, Lavine, Nyikos, and Sutter (1990, p. 211), attention to learner beliefs is central to the training of strategies, which "not only focuses on specific techniques, but also addresses the reorientation of learner beliefs and attitudes about the role of students and teachers." Dickinson (1987, p. 122) also suggests a psychological preparation, in conjunction with a methodological preparation, for self-instruction which involves the building of self-confidence and development of awareness of "learner processes and techniques which learners operate implicitly." Therefore, strategy training

not only provides information about the technique to be trained but also about the attitudes surrounding that technique.

The development of an autonomous language learner is multifaceted and incorporates a variety of metacognitive, affective, and social strategies (Rivers, 2001). Self-assessment of one's language competency, which is sociocultural and metacognitive by nature, is recognized as a fundamental component in the cultivation of autonomy. Self-assessment is perceived as a way for learners not only to gain authority over their learning processes but also to develop their own distinct voices, thereby cultivating identity. However, self-assessment lacks a pedagogy which is appropriate for today's multicultural language classroom. In the following section, a pedagogical approach involving the use of metacognitive and affective strategies within the context of self-assessment training will be explored.

Affective and Metacognitive Strategies and the Training of Self-Assessment

Taras (2010) characterizes assessment as a multifaceted integration of learner/teacher perceptions which are integral to the learning process and for which all participants hold equal responsibility. She delineates many forms of assessment, including formative and summative as well as both teacher- and learner-derived, and she claims that all modes are important for a holistic evaluation of language learning. According to this logic, self-assessment practices should be integrated with other forms of evaluation into the language classroom, and learner beliefs about their own performance could be seen as equally valid as their teachers' beliefs.

Self-assessment also allows students to make decisions concerning their education, which gives them an increased sense of responsibility for their own learning processes (Strong-Krause, 2000). The assumption that mastery of self-assessment leads to an increased sense of ownership of one's educational development has also been closely linked to claims that such activities promote learner autonomy (Noels, Clement, & Pelletier, 1999), or the lifelong pursuit of learning guided by, yet independent of, the educational institution (Little, 2007). In brief, proficient self-assessment, when properly guided, could lead to an enhanced ability to navigate second language acquisition.

Proper guidance for self-assessment comprises exposure to a variety of strategies. Researchers like Hurd (2008) and Oxford et. al (1990) claim that affective strategies, such positive self-talk, self-reward, and diary writing, are practiced in conjunction with cognitive and metacognitive strategies by successful language learners. Arnold and Brown (1999) define affect as components of emotion, feeling, mood, or attitudes/beliefs that mediate behavior, and many claim these factors play an important role in metacognitive strategy use, which develops learner autonomy. Dörnyei & Kormos (2000), who unite cognitive, metacognitive and motivational strategies in their article, suggest that affective (motivational) variables and sociodynamic factors play important roles in linguistic output. Likewise, Fandiño Parra (2008) claims that combined training of affective factors and language learning strategies results in students becoming autonomous/life-long learners. In other words, using affective strategies helps to conquer fears and actualize beliefs, and "learners' beliefs about their ability will affect their goals and motivational patterns, which in turn will influence their learning behaviors and strategy use" (Yang, 1999, p. 517).

Furthermore, the language teacher plays an arguably substantial role in the development of strategy use. Cotterall (1999), who investigated learner beliefs about autonomous language learning, found that while students tended to take responsibility for their own learning, many fell behind in their use of metacognitive monitoring and evaluating strategies, which were linked to

lack of self-confidence about their language abilities. Thus, the training of metacognitive strategies may begin with affective strategy training.

Just as affective strategies support the development of learner beliefs about self-assessment, metacognitive strategies increase learner awareness of their own beliefs, which will enable them to express and train these beliefs (Wenden, 1998). In order to do this, a learner must rely on several types of metacognitive awareness, known as personal knowledge, task/domain knowledge, and strategy knowledge. From this knowledge base, a set of both procedural and affective strategies arise which can be applied to the training of self-assessment.

Wenden believes that "learners' assessments of the reasons for problems encountered and their decisions about how to deal with these problems are also based on their metacognitive knowledge" (1999, p. 437). First, she describes personal knowledge as one aspect of metacognitive knowledge which encompasses "human factors that facilitate or inhibit learning," such as age, aptitude, and motivation. In other words, this is what learners believe about their effectiveness as learners and their ability to achieve goals (self-efficacy). . Domain knowledge is classified as not only familiarity with the subject matter but also the form of discourse through which the subject matter is communicated. Learners are thought to combine personal and domain knowledge to perform task analysis, which involves a comparison of the knowledge to be gained from a task and one's personal learning needs and goals. After a task is analyzed, a plan is created using strategic knowledge, which involves an understanding of which strategies are most successful for task completion (Rubin, 1990). Each area of metacognitive knowledge interacts with the other two to incite useful, holistic language learning techniques, such as self-assessment.

Metacognitive knowledge is therefore an essential prerequisite to the use of metacognitive strategies such as monitoring of self-improvement. Monitoring has been described as the practice of following the learning process to promote autonomy (Cotterall, 1995; Rubin, 1990). Interpretations of monitoring strategies used in the current research are the ability to observe oneself without judgement, observation of improved ability over time, and observation and manipulation of strategies which lead to improved ability. Monitoring strategies used in self-assessment have been linked to the promotion of learner awareness of personal knowledge and successful language acquisition (Ekbatani, 2000).

Another important metacognitive strategy in autonomous learning and self-assessment is the transferring of knowledge from previous experiences. *Knowledge transfer* occurs when knowledge from a previous task is applied to a current task. During acts of knowledge transfer, "metacognitive knowledge facilitates the appropriate choice of previously learned strategies to achieve learning goals and/or to deal with problems encountered during the learning" (Wenden, 1998, p. 526). Rubin (1990) claims that language learners make active language decisions based on what they know about the world, human nature, themselves, and communication. Examples of knowledge transfer strategies in relation to self-assessment include the ability to apply skills associated with self-assessment practices in language learning (e.g., observing without judgement and monitoring) in other domains, beyond the language classroom, or vice versa. For instance, understanding how one's errors in language production have changed over time could transfer to other domains, such as a better understanding of emotional growth over time or one's gradual integration into a foreign culture. Conversely, a person might develop the ability to realize when they have acquired a new skill, such as serving a tennis ball or cooking a new dish, and transfer that awareness to the acquisition of a second language, thereby gaining new confidence in their ability to properly conjugate verbs or select appropriate vocabulary for each

communicative context. It is possible that monitoring and knowledge transfer strategies work together to inform self-assessment techniques.

If self-assessment is a valuable language learning technique which promotes learner autonomy, then its training should be relevant from a pedagogical perspective. However, self-assessment activities are often implemented without proper training or attention to the attitudes that students hold about language learning. In order to become autonomous, learners must first assume responsibility for their own learning; learner acceptance of responsibility is in fact an attitude that needs to be trained before the process of becoming an autonomous learner, and honest self-assessment, can begin. This leads to the main research question which was explored in the current study: Can learners be guided to see themselves as evaluators of their own abilities and progress? The inductive, and mostly qualitative, exploration of this question will be delineated in the following sections.

METHODOLOGY

The theoretical framework used in the current study is derived from Wenden's (1991) guidelines for strategy training and Oxford et al.'s (1990) strategy training model, both of which focus on the affective aspects of strategy usage and language learning in addition to specific strategy instruction. Oxford et al. (1990, p. 198) state that their "underlying belief is that strategy training is not just an interesting research phenomenon beyond the reach of regular teachers; it is a set of concepts and procedures that any intelligent teacher can use to help students learn more effectively." They advocate for a "strategy plus control" style of training, which is also sometimes referred to as "completely informed training." In this approach, the learner is explicitly instructed regarding the nature and purpose of the technique and how it can be transferred, monitored, and evaluated. The authors also strongly advise that this kind of strategy instruction account for attitudes, which are comprised of beliefs, motivations, and emotions. Wenden's strategy training model, also integrated into the current research design, includes the following guidelines for implementing strategy training modules within the classroom:

- *Strategy training should be informed*: learners are explicitly told what they will do and why they are doing it.
- *Strategy training should incorporate self-regulation:* learners are taught how to plan for and monitor each strategy.
- *Strategy training should be contextualized*: strategies are integrated into the course material.
- *Strategy training should be interactive*: teachers work with students instead of leaving them to fend for themselves.
- *Strategy training should begin with diagnosis*: teachers first discover what the students already know and do before training begins.

For various reasons, including logistical ones, the aim of this study was not the direct training of self-assessment strategies. Instead, we attempted to develop a set of concrete classroom activities and discussion topics which would train the development of the attitudes that are prerequisite to the implementation of self-assessment strategies.

The training program itself was composed of four training sessions, spanning an eight-week period. Each training session occurred as a supplemental part of an intermediate or advanced Intensive English Program (IEP) course at an American university and involved an interactive, workshop-style lesson, language and self-assessment questionnaires for learners, and teacher reflection notes. These trainings were integrated into the regular curriculum, which is

divided into eight-week sessions (i.e., Fall I, Fall II, Spring I, Spring II, and Summer). The control and experimental groups were composed of IEP students enrolled in either Written Communication or Oral Communication courses, and each course met daily, Monday to Friday, for one hour and fifteen minutes. The trainings were administered every other week, and each training lasted for one entire class period.

A short time after the final training session, a semi-structured focus group interview was conducted with a select group of students who had participated in the training. The complete training program was administered four times over the course of a year — a pilot program in Summer 2014, and the full program in Fall I 2014, Spring I 2015, and Spring II 2015.

Participants

The participants in the study consisted of young adult ESL students between the ages of approximately 18-25, ranging from several countries in the Middle East, Africa, Central and South America, and East Asia. These participants were chosen due to their enrollment in an American university IEP and their placement in certain writing and/or oral communications courses. An experimental group received the training sessions and completed questionnaires, while a control group completed questionnaires only. A total of 143 students participated in the study either in the experimental or control groups (see Appendix A for more details).

Training sessions

Each training program within this study consisted of four in-class training sessions delivered over an eight-week school term. Each training session included a specific goal, a strategy linked to the affective nature of self-assessment, and collaborative in-class activities.

Training 1

- Goal: Explicit instruction on how to reflect honestly on one's abilities
- Strategy: *Reflecting*
- Method: After completing a **pre-test questionnaire**, students receive a lecture on the ability to honestly assess themselves. The lecture leads to a group discussion about language learning anxiety (De Saint Léger, 2009); afterward, students are given a partner and asked to complete a self-assessment activity in which they learn to distinguish observation from judgment. As a follow-up, a variety of affective strategies are explicitly suggested to help students use self-observations instead of self-judgments. At the end of the training, the same questionnaire is repeated.

Training 2

- Goal: Explicit instruction on using personal knowledge to enhance learning in the language classroom and other domains
- Strategy: *Transferring*
- Method: The training begins with the teacher asking students to reflect on an "aha" moment, wherein they realized that they had mastered a new skill. They are asked to share this moment and consider how they had become aware of it, whether they perceived the observation as an important aspect of their development, and finally whether this kind of observation could help them in their language learning processes. This metacognitive exercise is followed by the explicit lesson that understanding how one learns is key to that learner's development. Students are then given "To Do" list templates, in which they develop personal strategies, based on the lecture and class discussion, to try in both language learning contexts and "life in general."

Training 3

- Goal: Explicit instruction on how to notice one's improvement
- Strategy: *Monitoring*
- Method: Students first complete a short **Likert-based survey** in which they report on monitoring strategies that they use in self-assessment practices. The teacher then introduces the focus of the training as learning to monitor language improvement rather than simply noticing the improvement itself. Students watch a YouTube video and immediately reflect on it with a short speech (for the oral communications course) or writing sample (for the written communications course). After their reflections have been shared with a partner, students do a self- and peer-assessment of the performance/writing. Assessments are exchanged, and each student compares their self-assessment with the peer-assessment. Finally, they discuss the differences or similarities between assessments. Did each learner perceive their performance the same way or differently from their peer? If so, why? If not, why not? The training ends in a reflective discussion on how each student monitors their self-assessment.

Training 4

- Goal: Explicit instruction on how to select the most effective strategy
- Strategy: *Evaluating*
- Method: The teacher announces that students now know how to honestly self-assess using different affective strategies and how to monitor their self-assessment strategies; the final step will be for them to learn how to select the most effective self-assessment strategies and change what is not working. As Oxford et al. claims, "This means that the trainer explicitly talks with the learners about the need for greater self-direction and teaches strategies explicitly" (1990; p. 209). Students are asked to reflect on the strategies that have worked best for them throughout the past eight-week session. In groups, they devise a lesson plan for an English class activity on a poster board. Each lesson plan includes the most popular strategies selected by the students. Students share their activities and sign up for the ones which most interest them. Finally, the post-test questionnaire is administered.

Data collection

During the first training session in the program, a Language Proficiency Questionnaire (LPQ), which served as the base-line questionnaire, was administered to both the experimental and control groups. The LPQ was also given during each subsequent week without training (i.e., every other week). The teacher collected the questionnaires and made photocopies to give to students in the experimental group as part of subsequent training. Two versions of the LPQ (V1 and V2) containing slightly different statements were each administered twice. One version of a second type of questionnaire – a Self-Assessment Questionnaire (SAQ) containing a series of statements about self-assessment – was administered twice to both groups during each eight-week term. See "Training Model" in the Appendix B for a complete schedule of goals, strategies, activities, and questionnaires.

At the end of the final eight weeks, a focus group of five students from the experimental group was assembled and interviewed by one of the principle investigators (i.e., not the teacher of the interviewees). Students were chosen based upon the amount of change in their questionnaire answers. For these initial studies, only students with larger amounts of apparent change were included in the focus groups. Student answers to the interview questions were

recorded and analyzed for evidence of a change in the amount of their knowledge about self-assessment or a change in their attitude toward self-assessment.

Each method of data collection addressed a different purpose. The LPQs measured quantitative changes in student perception of their language abilities over time in order to determine whether students could evaluate themselves honestly. The SAQs measured any quantitative changes in student attitudes toward self-assessment in order to determine their comprehension of the concept of self-assessment. Finally, the focus group provided qualitative data on student attitudes, motivation, and beliefs about self-assessment, as well as additional evidence of growth in knowledge about self-assessment.

RESULTS

Overall, this study sought to discover how learners self-assess, what they believe about self-assessment, and whether self-assessment practices can be developed and nurtured in the ESL classroom. The Language Proficiency Questionnaires (LPQs) and Self-Assessment Questionnaires (SAQs) resulted in agreement or disagreement with a variety of statements about either language proficiency or self-assessment. Changes in students' answers between identical questionnaires given at different points in the training program were compiled and then analyzed using the t-test functionality in Microsoft Excel.

Results from all three training programs were mixed. After piloting the program in Summer 2014, the first full implementation of the training program occurred in Fall I 2014. The Language Proficiency Questionnaires (LPQ) yielded no statistically significant results, while the Self-Assessment Questionnaires (SAQ) yielded a statistically significant result for only one item:

- ✓ Q8. My newest ratings are more honest than the first ($t=1.88$, $p<.05$; see Table 1).

Students in the Fall I 2014 training sessions were taking intermediate or advanced written communications classes. The Self-Assessment Questionnaire was administered twice – at the beginning of Training 3 and again at the beginning of Training 4 – to measure any changes in attitude after Training 3. Eight pairs of unspoiled student questionnaires were analyzed. A complete list of the questions (statements about self-assessment with which the student agrees or disagrees) can be found in the Appendix C. As indicated by the P values, only Question 8 about honesty showed a statistically significant change in student answers from Training 3 in Week 6 to Training 4 in Week 8.

Table 1: Change in Student Answers on Self-Assessment Questionnaire
Fall I 2014 - Level 60 - Written Communication

TRAINING 3	TRAINING 4	SIGNIFICANCE (p value)
Q5*	Q5	0.28
Q6	Q6	0.82
Q7	Q7	1.00
Q8	Q8	0.05
Q9	Q9	0.10

Note: $p<.05$

* Questions 1-4 contained variations between questionnaires and are not included in the data.

The second set of training sessions in Spring I 2015 produced almost identical results. There were no statistically significant changes in the LPQs and the same item trending to statistical significance on the SAQs:

- ✓ Q8. My newest ratings are more honest than the first (t=1.86, p<.08; see Table 2).

Students in Spring I 2015 were taking advanced oral communications classes. The Self-Assessment Questionnaire was administered twice – at the beginning of Training 3 and again at the beginning of Training 4 – to measure any changes in attitude after Training 3. Ten pairs of unspoiled student questionnaires were analyzed. Their answers to Question 8 – the statement about honesty – varied enough to be trending toward statistical significance.

Table 2: Change in Student Answers on Self-Assessment Questionnaire
Spring I 2015 - Level 70 - Oral Communication

TRAINING 3	TRAINING 4	SIGNIFICANCE (p value)
Q5*	Q5	0.76
Q6	Q6	1.00
Q7	Q7	0.43
Q8	Q8	0.08
Q9	Q9	1.00

Note: p<.05

* Questions 1-4 contained variations between questionnaires and are not included in the data.

Spring II 2015, however, yielded more significant results. Students in the Spring II 2015 training sessions were taking advanced oral communications classes. Spoiled questionnaires included incomplete or blank questionnaires and questionnaires with illegible numbers or letters for answers. Although there were not enough unspoiled SAQs to analyze, multiple items on the LPQs showed statistically significant changes or a trend toward significance:

- ✓ 6. I can generally follow the main points of extended discussion around me, provided speech is clear and in standard language (t=2.04, p<.02; see Table 4).
- ✓ 11. I can understand standard spoken language, live or broadcast, on both familiar and unfamiliar topics normally encountered in personal, academic or vocational life (t=-2.50, p<.05; see Table 4).
- ✓ 12: I can understand articles and reports concerned with contemporary problems in which the writers adopt particular stances or viewpoints (t=-3.24, p<.02; see Table 4).
- ✓ 15. I can keep up with an animated conversation between native speakers (t=2.05, p<.08; see Table 3).
- ✓ 15a: I am using observation instead of judgment (t=-3.36, p<.02; see Table 4).
- ✓ 15d: I am noticing when I am learning (t=-2.50, p<.05; see Table 4).

Tables 3 and 4 provide data on student answers to the two different language proficiency questionnaires administered in Spring II 2015 in advanced speaking/listening classes. Students completed Language Proficiency Questionnaire V1 in Weeks 2 and 5 (March 25 and April 16); they completed Language Proficiency Questionnaire V2 in Weeks 3 and 8 (April 3 and May 5). Each questionnaire contained "can-do" questions, such as "I can understand short, simple texts", but V1 and V2 questions were different. A number of questions revealed statistically significant

changes. Values for questions with statistically significant or trending results have been highlighted.

Table 3: Change in Student Answers on Language-Proficiency Questionnaire V1
Spring II 2015 - Level 70 - Oral Communication

March 25, 2016	April 16, 2015	SIGNIFICANCE (p value)
Q1	Q1	0.45
Q2	Q2	0.36
Q3	Q3	0.35
Q4	Q4	0.35
Q5	Q5	0.47
Q6	Q6	0.63
Q7	Q7	0.03
Q8	Q8	0.23
Q9	Q9	0.35
Q10	Q10	0.45
Q11	Q11	0.73
Q12	Q12	0.50
Q13	Q13	0.14
Q14	Q14	0.60
Q15	Q15	0.08
Q16	Q16	0.16
Q16a	Q16a	0.11
Q16b	Q16b	1.00
Q16c	Q16c	0.28
Q16d	Q16d	0.65
Q16e	Q16e	0.53
Q16f	Q16f	0.23

Note: p<.08

Table 4: Change in Student Answers on Language-Proficiency Questionnaire V2
Spring II 2015 - Level 70 - Oral Communication

April 3, 2015	May 5, 2015	SIGNIFICANCE (p value)
Q1	Q1	0.36
Q2	Q2	0.6
Q3	Q3	0.1
Q4	Q4	1
Q5	Q5	0.46
Q6	Q6	0.02

Q7	Q7	0.60
Q8	Q8	0.60
Q9	Q9	1.00
Q10	Q10	0.17
Q11	Q11	0.05
Q12	Q12	0.02
Q13	Q13	0.06
Q14	Q14	0.10
Q15	Q15	0.70
Q15a	Q15a	0.02
Q15b	Q15b	0.67
Q15c	Q15c	0.45
Q15d	Q15d	0.05
Q15e	Q15e	0.60
Q15f	Q15f	0.36

Note: $p<.05$

Additional data can be found in the Appendix E.

The focus group interviews conducted at the conclusion of the training programs also provided evidence of changes to student knowledge and attitudes toward self-assessment. The following data was collected in Spring I 2015 from a group of five students:

Q: Can you describe your understanding of self-assessment?

A: I think it's about knowing your strength and weakness when you are studying, and learning how to, to … learning how to study. (Student 1)

A: It's very helpful to know your skills, and maybe you can find something else that you are going to focus on, so it's important to know your abilities. (Student 2)

Q: Can you describe your experience over the last eight weeks?

A: I learned that the difference between the judgment and observation, because before I don't know what the difference between them. And we, uh, we learn how to observe how to learn and don't just judge ourself. I think this was helpful for me. (Student 1)

Q: Can what you've learned help you in future university classes, and if so, how? Or if not, why not?

A: By asking yourself question and being honest with yourself, uh, that's an important part, I think. (Student 3)

At the beginning of the study, based on teacher observations, almost no students could give a definition of self-assessment or describe why it might be helpful. While the focus group results rely on self-reporting, we do believe that they show some evidence of student growth – both in knowledge and attitude. For example, in Training 1 the difference between observation and judgment are introduced. One student in a focus group interview reported not only that s/he learned the difference between these concepts, but also that s/he knew how to apply them: "observe how we learn and don't just judge ourself."

DISCUSSION

Can learners be guided to see themselves as evaluators of their own abilities and progress and, therefore, learn to perform their own self-assessments? Overall, the results of our study show that students can learn the concept of self-assessment and can make changes in how they evaluate their own abilities. Both the quantitative and qualitative data show that students understand the importance of honesty when reporting what they can do with language. They can also apply some of the self-assessment concepts (e.g., observing v. judging, noticing), although we do not know if they can apply these strategies in different contexts where there is no explicit focus on self-assessment.

While the students showed no statistically significant change when questioned about their "active role" in self-assessment – learning from failure, using self-assessment to improve themselves, setting goals – they did show a better basic understanding of what self-assessment is and the need to be honest when evaluating their language abilities. We believe that this provides a good foundation on which to build. Take, for example, the focus group comments, which show that some students have, at the very least, learned a basic definition of self-assessment and some simple applications. They understand that one needs to know "your strength and weaknesses" and "know your abilities." Some of them can distinguish between judgment and observation, e.g., "before I don't know what the difference between them." Some students may take this new knowledge into the future and apply it to their university studies, e.g., "by asking yourself question and being honest with yourself, uh, that's an important part…." And some students appear to have learned that honesty is an important part of self-assessment. Language Proficiency Questionnaire V2 included one short answer question: How would you describe self-assessment to a friend?" The answers indicated some recognition that honesty is important:

- "Self-assessment is how you can help yourself to learn better. You can find the right ways for you to learn by being honest with yourself." (Student 4)
- "The self-assessment is a way to let me know myself. In order to know a real person, I need to be honest. Using self-assessment can improve myself." (Student 5)

In addition, our results indicate that students with more advanced English language skills find it easier to comprehend the concepts of self-assessment as presented in our training program. While there were some advanced students in all three implementations of the training program, all the students in Spring II 2015 were in the most advanced oral communications course offered by the university's IEP. These students' language ability was already very high and did not change dramatically over the eight-week term; therefore, we interpret the results to mean that their ability to honestly assess their language ability changed instead. In contrast, the students at an intermediate level had more difficulty grasping the concepts and discussing them, which leads us to conclude that language ability is a factor and may be influential in affecting student answers on the questionnaires.

While the results of our study are encouraging for self-assessment research, we do acknowledge a number of limitations in our methodology. Due to the nature of our teaching environment, we were restricted to small sample sizes (20 or fewer students per class), we were unable to control the language skill or level of class assigned to each researcher (intermediate or advanced, oral or written communications), and we delivered the training in a very limited timeframe (one hour in alternating weeks in an eight-week school term). The training as written was more suited to oral communications classes; however, we believe it can be administered in any kind of class. The same holds true for level of ability. The current training program was more successful with advanced students, but we believe it can be re-created for lower level

students with more limited English comprehension. Student absences and spoiled questionnaires also limited the data available for analysis. Finally, self-assessment training is only the first part of what the researchers envision as a larger training program on autonomy, which would provide greater context for and impact on student knowledge and attitudes. These limitations are not dissimilar, however, to those in previous studies of self-assessment, which found that a short training period, a lack of context, and a lack of integration with normal classroom activities hampered findings (Oxford et al., 1990).

As stated earlier, there are currently very few practical tools that teachers can use to prepare their students for self-assessment activities, especially those that address affective aspects such as learner attitudes and beliefs. Despite the limitations of the current study, the results represent a step toward the discovery of what those tools might look like and how they might be implemented in the classroom at a variety of skill levels.

CONCLUSION

In order to produce a successful autonomous learner, any training in self-assessment has to address both metacognitive and affective factors (Wenden, 1991). The current study provides important feedback on how to approach the latter by measuring changes in learner attitudes and beliefs about self-assessment after a series of training workshops in an Intensive English Program. It also introduces a set of practical training tools that teachers and researchers can utilize to introduce and develop the concept of self-assessment.

This study produced three important findings regarding both metacognitive and affective processes in the training of self-assessment. First, self-assessment training can help students reflect and report more honestly on their language proficiency and their achievements in a language classroom. This could have a positive impact on their performance in future language classes. In addition, if students are able to transfer their knowledge about self-assessment from a language learning context to any university classroom, then an ability to self-assess could assist them in other subject areas.

Second, self-assessment training can give students a framework to use in describing their needs and abilities in language learning. For many of the students, the terminology introduced in the training sessions (e.g., judgment, observation, goal-setting, monitoring) was new. This previously unfamiliar vocabulary and conceptual framework might allow students to more comfortably navigate their learning processes and engage with teachers in negotiation of classroom activities.

Third, all students seemed to respond positively to the idea of increased control over their education. Since learner autonomy may depend upon students having control over the processes and content of their education (Benson, 2007), as well as possessing beliefs and attitudes that support autonomous learning (Wenden, 1991), this positive response bodes well for the implementation of self-assessment training programs.

Future research into the training of self-assessment should continue to focus attention on learner attitudes and beliefs in combination with procedural instruction. When a student is encouraged to evaluate their own abilities, and when their emotions about doing so are validated, they are essentially being invited into the process of learning. If autonomous language learning hinges on the training of self-assessment within a sociocultural framework, and self-assessment relies on the use of a learner's affective and metacognitive knowledge and strategy use, it would make sense to apply a pedagogical approach based on the transfer of a learner's beliefs into classroom practices. By encouraging students to use cognitive, metacognitive, and affective

strategies in self-assessment activities, a teacher is essentially endorsing their students as individual learners. During acts of self-assessment in the ESL classroom, it could be inferred that the teacher is administering tools which allow students to develop not only their language skills but also their own voices.

Acknowledgments

First and foremost, the authors wish to acknowledge the students who participated in our study and the teachers who helped facilitate the administration of the study. We would also like to thank Dr. Suzanne Panferov and Dr. Steve Randall at the University of Arizona's Center for English as a Second Language for allowing us to conduct our research on the premises and for scheduling us with classes that gave us access to our target student demographic. Dr. Rachel Kraut's efforts in serving as an advisor to the project are also appreciated. Without the support of these people, the current study would not have been possible.

REFERENCES

Arnold, J. (Ed.). (1999). Affect in language learning. Ernst Klett Sprachen.

Bakhtin, M. M. (1981). *The dialogic imagination: Four essays*. M. Holquist (Ed.). C. Emerson & M. Holquist (Trans.). Austin: University of Texas Press.

Benson, P. (2007). Autonomy in language teaching and learning. *Language Teaching*, *40*(01), 21–40.

Benson, P. (2011). *Teaching and researching autonomy, second edition*. Harlow, UK: Pearson Education.

Boud, D. (1988). Moving towards autonomy. *Developing student autonomy in learning*, *2*, 17–39.

Cotterall, S. (1995). Readiness for autonomy: Investigating learner beliefs. *System*, *23*: 195–205.

Cotterall, S. (1999). Key variables in language learning: what do learners believe about them? *System*, 27(4), 493-513.

de Saint Léger, D. (2009). Self-assessment of speaking skills and participation in a foreign language class. Foreign Language Annals, *42*, 158-178.

Dickinson, L. (1987). Self-instruction in language learning. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Dörnyei, Z., & Kormos, J. (2000). The role of individual and social variables in oral task performance. *Language teaching research*, 4(3), 275-300.

Ekbatani, G. (2000). Moving toward learner-directed assessment. In G. Ekbatani & H. Pierson (Eds.), *Learner-directed assessment in ESL*. New York: Routledge.

Fandiño Parra, Y. J. (2008). Action research on affective factors and language learning strategies: A pathway to critical reflection and teacher and learner autonomy. Profile Issues in Teachers Professional Development, (10), 195-210.

Holec, H. (1981). *Autonomy and foreign language learning*. Oxford: Pergamon Press.

Holliday, A. As cited in Palfreyman, D. & Smith, R. (2003). *Learner autonomy across cultures: Language education perspectives*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Hurd, S. (2008) Affect and strategy use in independent language learning. In S. Hurd & T. Lewis (Eds.), *Language learning strategies in independent settings* (Vol. 33). Bristol: Multilingual matters.

Lantolf, J. (2000). *Sociocultural theory and second language learning*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Lantolf, J., & Thorne, S. L. (2007). Sociocultural theory and second language acquisition. In. B. van Patten & J. Williams (Eds.), *Theories in second language acquisition* (pp. 201–224). New York, NY: Routledge.

Lave, J. & Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated learning: Legitimate peripheral participation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Little, D. (2000). We're all in it together: Exploring the interdependence of teacher and learner autonomy. In L. Karlsson, F.Kjisik, & J. Nordlund (Eds.), *All together now*. *Papers from the 7th Nordic Conference and Workshop on Autonomous Language Learning, September 2000* (pp. 45–56). Helsinki: University of Helsinki Language Centre.

Murray, G. (2014). *Social dimensions of autonomy in language learning*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Noels, K. A., Clement, R., & Pelletier, L. G. (1999). Perceptions of teacher communicative style and student's intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. *Modern Language Journal*, *83*(1), 23–24.

Nguyen, L. T. C., and Yongqi, G. (2013). Strategy-based instruction: A learner-focused approach to developing learner autonomy. *Language Teaching Research*, *17*(1), 9–30.

O'Leary, C. (2014). Developing autonomous language learners in HE: A constructivist perspective. In G. Murray (Ed.), *Social dimensions of autonomy in language learning*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Oxford, R. L. (2003). Language learning styles and strategies: Concepts and relationships. *International Review of Applied Linguistics and Language Teaching*, *41*(4), 271-278.

Oxford, R., Crookall, D., Cohen, A., Lavine, R., Nyikos, M., & Sutter, W. (1990). Strategy training for language learners: Six situational case studies and a training model. *Foreign Language Annals, 23*(3), 197-216.

Palfreyman, D. & Smith, R. (2003). *Learner autonomy across cultures: Language education perspectives*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Rivers, W. P. (2001). Autonomy at all costs: An ethnography of metacognitive self-assessment and self-management among experienced language learners. *The Modern Language Journal, 85*(2), 279-290.

Rubin, J. (1990). How learner strategies can inform language teaching. *Language Use, Language Teaching and Curriculum*, 270–284.

Schmenk, B. (2005). Globalizing learner autonomy. *TESOL Quarterly*, *39*: 107–118.

Strong-Krause, D. (2000). Exploring the effectiveness of self-assessment strategies in ESL placement. *Learner-Directed Assessment in ESL*, 49–73.Taras, M. (2010). Student self-assessment: Processes and consequences. *Teaching in Higher Education*, *15*(2), 199-209.

Toohey, K., & Norton, B. (2003). Learner autonomy as agency in sociocultural settings. In D. Palfreyman & R. C. Smith (Eds.) *Learner autonomy across cultures: Language education perspectives* (pp. 58–72) New York: Palgrave.

Ushioda, E. As cited in Murray, G. (2014). *Social dimensions of autonomy in language learning*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Vygotsky, L. (1978). *Mind in society*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 79–91.

Wenden, A. L. (1991). *Learner strategies for learner autonomy*. New York: Prentice Hall.

Wenden, A. L. (1995). Learner training in context: A knowledge-based approach. *System*, *23*, 183–194.

Wenden, A. L. (1998). Metacognitive knowledge and language learning. *Applied linguistics*, *19*, 515–537.

Wenden, A. L. (1999). An introduction to metacognitive knowledge and beliefs in language learning: Beyond the basics. *System*, 27(4), 435-441.

Yang, N. D. (1999). The relationship between EFL learners' beliefs and learning strategy use. *System*, 27(4), 515-535.

APPENDIX A
STUDY PARTICIPANTS

Study Participants		
Semester	**Experimental Group**	**Control Group**
Summer 2014	13	14
Fall I 2014	33	35
Spring I 2015	12	13
Spring II 2015	11	12

APPENDIX B
TRAINING MODEL

Training Model

Week 1: NOTHING

Week 2: Training 1

- Goal = Explicit instruction on how to apply the technique (to a specific activity)
- Strategy = *Reflecting* on our work honestly, without fear

1) Learners do an activity without any strategy training (Questionnaire 1)
   a. Students fill in the (pre-test) questionnaire. Teacher collects them.
   b. Learners briefly discuss how they decided how to answer each prompt (teacher can offer praise for the mention of useful strategies and self-directed attitudes)

2) Explicit strategy instruction: How to reflect honestly
   a. Slide 2: Purpose of self-assessment
      i. The teacher announces that we are going to learn to assess our own abilities in language learning. *(Because it will help us set goals and make plans, which is what successful people do. However, don't state this explicitly.)*
      ii. Discussion questions
         1. Why do we assess ourselves? / Is it important to know that we are learning?
            a. The teacher can first ask students to speak amongst themselves, and then there could be a follow up class discussion. During the class discussion, some of the following points should be addressed: how and why we assess ourselves / beliefs about self-assessment (cultural beliefs and expectations about language learning and learning in general/ emotions towards language learning, including anxieties*, fears, and anger) / purpose of learning English / degree of willingness to learn.
   b. Slide 3: After discussing the questions from slide 2, teacher can read and clarify the answers on slide 3.
   c. Slide 4: Honesty and Self-Assessment

*Leger 2009; pg 167 table lists anxieties and comments… might be useful.

3) **Explicit strategy ACTIVITY:** Judgment vs observation

a. Slide 5: "Being Honest" Activity
    i. The purpose of this activity is to introduce learners to the distinction between "observation" and "judgment". After the students check each other's' lists, the teacher should make 2 columns on the board, labelling one column "observation" and the other column "judgment". The teacher should then elicit examples for each column from student lists.
    ii. The same activity could be repeated in terms of language ability. Before writing answers on the board, teachers could allow students to discuss their lists in small groups and make their own two columns. On the board, teacher adds a third column, named "Why we judge". For every language learning judgment, students and teacher could try to find a cause (fear, anxiety, stress, etc.)

4) Explicit strategy instruction: how to choose which strategy to apply

a. Suggest and demonstrate other helpful strategies to combat each cause for judgment. Maybe make a fourth column on the board?
    i. Some possible strategies to include: (recognizing when your emotions impair your judgment / being kind to yourself / understanding that fear & anxiety are normal and part of improving / looking at learning as an opportunity, not an obligation)

5) **Follow – up** Give the questionnaire to the students and have them fill it out again without looking at the original. Then pass out the originals and ask students to compare. (Remember to label and collect both copies at the end of the training.)

After the training, the teacher should write a reflective journal entry, summarizing the training.

Week 3: Questionnaire

Week 4: Training 2

- Goal: Explicit instruction on how to transfer the technique (to other activities)
- Strategy: *Transferring* self-assessment strategies to other language tasks

1) **Learners do an activity without any strategy instruction**
    a) Ask students to think about a situation in their lives in which they have experienced growth or improvement. Give them some time to write in their journals, answering the following questions:
        i. What did you improve?
        ii. How did you notice you were improving?
        iii. Was noticing this an important part of your development? Why or why not?
    b) Group discussion:
        i. First, go over the following three questions to check for comprehension.
            1. How do you know when you are getting better at something? Is it important to know this?
            2. Why is it easy to feel frustrated when you are trying to learn English?
            3. How can we use self-assessment to overcome negative feelings about learning?
        ii. Next, divide learners into groups of three. Assign a number to each learner (1, 2, or 3). Each learner is responsible for taking notes on the question which corresponds with his/her number). So "1's" will lead the discussion on question 1, 2's on question 2, etc.
        iii. Finally have all learners meet with the other learners who shared their question / number to summarize all viewpoints and create a report for the class.
        iv. Students give their reports, and teacher writes main points on the board.

2) **Explicit strategy instruction:**

a) Announce that we are going to learn how to notice our progress in all aspects of language learning. Emphasize the following:
   i. Noticing is key to understanding how we learn
   ii. Understanding how we learn can help up to learn more efficiently
   iii. Learning more efficiently is important both inside and outside the classroom

3) **Explicit strategy ACTIVITY:** Give students a self-assessment to-do list. The left column is a list of TECHNIQUES for which students should brainstorm specific strategies. Ask students to make a plan for how they will integrate each strategy into other language courses and life in general. Students can share their ideas with each other. Write all ideas on the board.
4) **Explicit strategy instruction: how to choose which strategy to apply**
   a) Discuss:
      i. Which strategies that you learned today are most important for this/all of your English classes?
      ii. Which strategies do you think you will use?
      iii. How can these strategies help you after you leave CESL?
5) Things to think about – how we transfer self-assessment to language learning (in school vs. real world / college prep, etc…// learners CHOOSE techniques provided during the workshop and discuss how to transfer them!)/ combatting (un)affective beliefs (anxiety, shame, lack of motivation, belief that the classroom should be teacher centered)

After the training, the teacher should write a reflective journal entry, summarizing the training.

Week 5: Questionnaire

Week 6: Training 3

- Goal: Explicit instruction on how to monitor the technique
- Strategy: *Monitoring* our self-assessment techniques

1) **Learners do an activity without any strategy instruction**
   a. Pass out copies of all past learner questionnaires
   b. Ask students to rate themselves (Likert Scale) in response to the following statements:
   c. Students discuss their ratings
2) **Explicit strategy instruction:**
   a. Announce that we are going to focus NOT on our improvement but rather on our ability to NOTICE our improvement and understand it accurately.
3) **Explicit strategy ACTIVITY:**
   a. http://film-english.com/2014/06/30/whats-on-your-mind/
   b. Students do a quick activity (i.e. short presentation, dialogue) and assess themselves afterwards
   c. Students also peer review each other (in addition to the self-assessment) in small groups
   d. Students compare their self-assessments and their feedback. Which was most accurate and why?
4) Training 3 – (part 1) how we monitor our self-assessment / (part 2) refocusing education on the learner (learners identifying their learning needs) / learners list their negative attitudes and brainstorm ways to overcome them – maybe with suggestions provided by trainer "…relaxation exercises; emotional checklists; extensive use of laughter in the classroom; regular writing in language learning diaries; diary-sharing; classroom games designed to reduce anxiety…" Oxford et al. (pg. 209; 1990)

After the training, the teacher should write a reflective journal entry, summarizing the training.

Week 7: Training 4

- Goal: Explicit instruction on how to evaluate the technique
- Strategy: Evaluating the strategy

1) **Learners do an activity without any strategy instruction**
    a. Discuss the Poem "Blind Men and the Elephant"
        i. You can hand out the transcript and/or watch the video (link provided in the power point)
        ii. Main idea = our self-assessment is only ONE part of the true picture.
    b. Ask students to rate themselves (Likert Scale Training 4)
2) **Explicit strategy instruction:**
    a. Explain that students now know how to notice their learning, and the final step is for them to choose the most effective way for their personal learning styles.
3) **Explicit strategy <u>ACTIVITY</u>:**
    a. Teacher divides students into groups. Each group is asked to reflect on their own strategies and develop a language learning activity. Groups write their "lesson plans" on the board or posters or large-format post-its. Each student should walk around the room and rate each lesson plan according to how much they would like to do the activity (5= this activity would really help me to learn; 1=I do not think my learning style fits this activity).
4) Training 4 – (part 1) how we evaluate our self-assessment "This means that the trainer explicitly talks with the learners about the need for greater self-direction and teaches strategies explicitly," Oxford et al. (pg 209; 1990) / (part 2) the power of honesty (real learning vs anxiety – reaction/ how do I learn?/ how can I plan for learning? Etc…)

After the training, the teacher should write a reflective journal entry, summarizing the training.

Week 8: Questionnaire (post-test)

APPENDIX C
QUESTIONNAIRES

<u>Language Proficiency Questionnaire (Version 1)</u>

Instructions: Read each sentence and then rate yourself (**5=strongly agree; 3=neutral; 1=strongly disagree**).

1. I can understand short, simple texts containing the most common words, including some shared international words. (1,2,3,4,5) _____
2. I can understand enough to manage simple, routine exchanges without too much effort. (1,2,3,4,5) _____
3. I can find specific information in simple everyday material such as advertisements, brochures, menus and timetables. (1,2,3,4,5) _____
4. I can understand enough to be able to meet concrete needs in everyday life if speech is clear and slow. (1,2,3,4,5) _____
5. I can understand straightforward texts on subjects related to my fields of interest. (1,2,3,4,5) _____
6. I can guess the meaning of occasional unknown words from the context and understand sentence meaning if the topic discussed is familiar. (1,2,3,4,5) _____
7. I can recognize significant points in straightforward newspaper articles on familiar subjects. (1,2,3,4,5) _____
8. I can understand straightforward factual information about common every-day or job-related topics, identifying both general messages and specific details, if speech is clear and a familiar accent is used. (1,2,3,4,5) ____

9. I can read correspondence relating to my field of interest and easily understand the essential meaning. (1,2,3,4,5) _____
10. I can evaluate different ideas and solutions to a problem. (1,2,3,4,5) _____
11. I can understand in detail what is said to me in the standard spoken language. I can do this even when there is some noise in the background. (1,2,3,4,5) _____
12. I have a broad reading vocabulary, but I sometimes have difficulty with less common words and phrases. (1,2,3,4,5) _____
13. I can follow extended speech and complex lines of argument provided the topic is reasonably familiar, and the direction of the talk is clearly stated by the speaker. (1,2,3,4,5) _____
14. I can expand and support points of view in writing at some length with subsidiary points, reasons and relevant examples. (1,2,3,4,5) _____
15. I can keep up with an animated conversation between native speakers. (1,2,3,4,5) _____
16. Are you using any of the self-assessment skills in your own life? (1,2,3,4,5) _____
    a. I am using observation instead of judgment. (1,2,3,4,5) _____
    b. I am being honest with myself about my ability. (1,2,3,4,5) _____
    c. I am finding new ways to help myself learn better. (1,2,3,4,5) _____
    d. I am noticing when I am learning. (1,2,3,4,5) _____
    e. I am understanding how I learn. (1,2,3,4,5) _____
    f. I am planning how I will learn. (1,2,3,4,5) _____
17. How would you describe self-assessment to a friend? Please write 1–3 sentences.

Language Proficiency Questionnaire (Version 2)

Instructions: Read each sentence and then rate yourself (**5=strongly agree; 3=neutral; 1=strongly disagree**).

1. I can understand short, simple texts written in common everyday language. (1,2,3,4,5) _____
2. I can generally identify the topic of discussion around me which is conducted slowly and clearly. (1,2,3,4,5) _____
3. I can understand everyday signs and notices in public places, such as streets, restaurants, railway stations and in workplaces. (1,2,3,4,5) _____
4. I can catch the main point in short, clear, simple messages and announcements. (1,2,3,4,5) _____
5. I can find and understand general information I need in everyday material, such as letters, brochures and short official documents. (1,2,3,4,5) _____
6. I can generally follow the main points of extended discussion around me, provided speech is clear and in standard language. (1,2,3,4,5) _____
7. I can understand clearly written straightforward instructions for a piece of equipment. (1,2,3,4,5) ___
8. I can catch the main points in broadcasts on familiar topics and topics of personal interest when the language is relatively slow and clear. (1,2,3,4,5) _____
9. I can understand specialized articles outside my field, provided I can use a dictionary to confirm terminology. (1,2,3,4,5) _____
10. I can synthesize information and arguments from a number of sources. (1,2,3,4,5) _____
11. I can understand standard spoken language, live or broadcast, on both familiar and unfamiliar topics normally encountered in personal, academic or vocational life. Only extreme background noise, unclear structure and/or idiomatic usage cause some problems. (1,2,3,4,5) _____
12. I can understand articles and reports concerned with contemporary problems in which the writers adopt particular stances or viewpoints. (1,2,3,4,5) _____
13. I can follow a lecture or talk within my own field, provided the presentation is clear. (1,2,3,4,5) _____
14. I can follow films which contain a considerable degree of slang and idiomatic usage. (1,2,3,4,5) ____
15. Are you using any of the self-assessment skills in your own life? (1,2,3,4,5) _____
    a. I am using observation instead of judgment. (1,2,3,4,5) _____

b. I am being honest with myself about my ability. (1,2,3,4,5) _____
c. I am finding new ways to help myself learn better. (1,2,3,4,5) _____
d. I am noticing when I am learning. (1,2,3,4,5) _____
e. I am understanding how I learn. (1,2,3,4,5) _____
f. I am planning how I will learn. (1,2,3,4,5) _____

16. How can self-assessment help you? **Please write 1–3 sentences.**

Self-Assessment Questionnaire

How do you know when your self-assessment is accurate?
Instructions: Read the statements below and rate yourself (1 = strongly disagree; 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 5 = strongly agree). **You can write below each statement if you want to add a comment.**

	Strongly disagree	**Disagree**	**Neither agree nor disagree**	**Agree**	**Strongly agree**
1. I assess myself honestly.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I am positive about my progress.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I understand my failures and learn from them.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I understand my successes and learn from them.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I use self-assessment to improve myself.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I feel good about my answers.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I see my improvement more clearly than before.	1	2	3	4	5
8. My newest ratings are more honest than the first ones.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I understand how to assess myself better than before.	1	2	3	4	5
10. My self-assessments in this course have been useful.	1	2	3	4	5
11. My self-assessments in other courses have been useful.	1	2	3	4	5
12. I have learned how to use my self-assessments to set goals.	1	2	3	4	5
13. I am more aware of the positive side of my abilities.	1	2	3	4	5
14. I am more aware of the negative side of my abilities.	1	2	3	4	5
	Strongly disagree	**Disagree**	**Neither agree nor disagree**	**Agree**	**Strongly agree**

APPENDIX D
FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

Focus Group Questions

1. Can you describe your understanding of self-assessment?
2. Can you describe your experience over the last eight weeks?

3. What were the most useful parts of the training?
4. What were the least useful parts of the training? Was there anything you thought was not helpful?
5. Can what you've learned help you in future university classes, and if so, how? Or if not, why not?
6. Has your ability to assess yourself changed?

APPENDIX E
RAW DATA SAMPLES

Sample Quantitative Data

Table 5: Raw Data for Language Proficiency Questionnaires v1
Fall I 2014 – Group Level 40

Student W		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12	Q13	Q14	Q15	Q16	Q17	Q18	Q19	Q20	#	%
v1	Week 2	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N	N	Y	N	Y	N	N		
v1	Week 5	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	N	N	Y		
v1	Change					√		√				√			√				√		√	6	30%
v2	Week 3	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	Y	N	Y		
v2	Week 8	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	N	N	Y	N	Y		
v2	Change							√	√			√		√	√							5	25%
Likert	Week 6	5	4	3	4	2	4	4	4	5													
Likert	Week 8	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5													
Likert	Change	*	*	*	*	√	√	√	√													4	80%

*N/A due to questionnaire variation

Table 6: Raw Data for Language Proficiency Questionnaires v2
Fall I 2014 – Group Level 60

Student M		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12	Q13	Q14	Q15	Q16	Q17	Q18	Q19	Q20	#	%
v1	Week 2	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		
v1	Week 5	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y		
v1	Week 8	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y		
v1	Change									√	√		√				√			√		5	25%
v2	Week 3	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y		
Likert	Week 6	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4													
Likert	Week 8	4	4	4	4	4	5	4	4	4													
Likert	Change	*	*	*	*		√															1	20%

*N/A due to questionnaire variation

Tables 5 and 6 illustrate the changes over time in two students' answers to the language proficiency and self-assessment questionnaires in Fall I 2014. In Table 5, we can see that Student W answered one version of the language proficiency questionnaire in Weeks 2 and 5 and a different version of the language proficiency questionnaire in Weeks 3 and 8. These questionnaires consisted of Yes/No questions about language proficiency; the student's answers are indicated with a Y or N. This student showed only minimal changes to his/her answers from Week 2 to Week 5 (30% of the answers given to the same questions changed) and Week 3 to Week 8 (25% of the answers given to the same questions changed). Table 5 also includes data from the self-assessment questionnaire completed by the student in Weeks 6 and 8. The student's choice on the 5-point scale is indicated with a number (1-5). This student showed a greater percentage of change in these answers from Week 6 to 8 (80% of the answers given to the same questions changed). Similar data is provided in Table 6 for Student M.

Table 7: Raw Data for Self-Assessment Questionnaire
Fall I 2014 - Level 60 - Written Communications

	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	S7				AVG	RAW CHANGE	SIGNIFICANT CHANGE?
Question 1:	4	5	5	5	4	4	4				4.43		
again in week 8	4	4	5	3	3	4	3				3.71	-0.71	None
Question 2:	4	2	5	4	4	4	3				3.71		
again in week 8	4	4	5	4	3	4	5				4.14	0.43	Trending
Question 3:	3	3	5	4	4	4	4				3.86		
again in week 8	5	3	5	4	2	4	3				3.71	-0.14	None
Question 4:	3	3	5	5	3	4	4				3.86		
again in week 8	3	5	5	4	4	4	4				4.14	0.29	Trending
Question 5:	4	3	4	5	1	4	3				3.43		
again in week 8	5	4	4	4	4	4	3				4	0.57	Trending
Question 6:	3	3	2	5	2	4	4				3.29		
again in week 8	5	4	2	3	3	5	4				3.71	0.43	None
Question 7:	4	3	5	3	3	4	5				3.86		
again in week 8	5	2	4	4	3	4	5				3.86	0	None
Question 8:	4	1	5	1	4	4	3				3.14		
again in week 8	5	3	5	3	5	4	3				4	0.86	YES, P<.05, T=2.52
Question 9:	4	3	5	4	3	4	2				3.57		
again in week 8	5	5	5	4	3	4	3				4.14	0.57	Trending

Table 8: Raw Data for Self-Assessment Questionnaire
Fall I 2014 - Level 40 - Written Communications

	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	S7	S8	S9	S10	AVG	RAW CHNG	SIG. CHANGE FOR THIS QUESTION?
Question 1:	5	5	3	5	3	5	3	5	5	5	4.4		
again in week 8	3	4	1	4	3	4	3	5	4	3	3.4	-1	YES, P<.01, T=3.87
Question 2:		4	4	2	2	5	3	5	4	4	3.67		
again in week 8	4	4	3	4	3	4	3	5	4	3	3.7	0.03	None
Question 3:	2	4	3	4	3	5	4	5	3	4	3.7		
again in week 8	3	4	3	5	3	5	4	5	5	3	4	0.3	None
Question 4:	3	4	3	5	3		4	5	4	3	3.78		
again in week 8	3	5	1	4	3	4	3	5	5	3	3.6	-0.18	None
Question 5:	3	5	4	4	3	4	3	4	2	2	3.4		
again in week 8	4	6	1	4	2	4	4	4	5	5	3.9	0.5	None
Question 6:	4	4	3	3	3	4	3	5	4	3	3.6		
again in week 8	4	5	1	4	3	4	3	4	5	4	3.7	0.1	None
Question 7:	3	5	4	3	2	5	4	4	4	3	3.7		
again in week 8	2	5	3	3	3	5	4	4	5	5	3.9	0.2	None
Question 8:	3	5	3	1	2	4	4	5	4	4	3.5		
again in week 8	3	5	1	1	3	5	5	5	5	3	3.6	0.1	None
Question 9:	3	4	3	4	2	5	4	4	5	4	3.8		
again in week 8	4	4	3	5	3	5	3	4	5	3	3.9	0.1	None

Tables 7 and 8 record the data on student answers to the self-assessment questionnaires administered in Weeks 6 and 8 of Fall I 2014. Students chose 1-5 on a Likert Scale to agree or disagree with the statements on self-assessment.