

PEER AND SELF-ASSESSMENT AT ESP CLASSES: CASE STUDY

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In order to develop the skills and competences required in a professional environment, university students have to reflect on their own role in the learning process. The traditional methods of assessment do not assess reflective thinking, critical thinking, self-evaluation and peer evaluation. The following paper outlines and evaluates the implementation of peer and self-assessment techniques in higher education, in ESP course at the National Technical University of Ukraine "Igor Sikorsky Kyiv Polytechnic Institute" as a case study. The rationale of the alternative type assessment systems is examined, and the efficiency of these methods is evaluated and compared by the use of attitudinal questionnaires completed by the participating students and the lecturer's assessments and feedback. The methodology to investigate the effect of peer and self-assessment as a part of the learning process includes literature observation, case study, developing marking criteria, examples of peer and self-assessment strategies and activities in ESP course. Forty quantitative peer and self-assessment studies were subjected to analysis. The study pointed to differences between self and peer assessments. Peer assessment was found to resemble more closely teacher assessments whereas self-assessment demonstrated difference with teacher's marks. One of the most essential conditions for objective and relevant performance of the evaluation was found as well-understood assessment criteria. Hypotheses concerning the greater validity of peer and self-assessments were not supported. We have drawn the conclusions that the application of peer and self-assessment methods improves students' critical thinking skills, involves students into learning and assessment processes, keeps motivation up to study and provides them with a greater ownership of the whole learning and assessment process. Therefore peer and self-assessment techniques could be effectively implemented in the course of ESP at universities.

Keywords: peer assessment; self-assessment; ESP course; assessment criteria; summative assessment; formative assessment; critical judgment.

Introduction

The process of teaching is always evolving. Nowadays the university education is transforming from the theoretical and academic into the real-life oriented context. We are witnesses of shifts not only in curricula but in educational approach from the teacher focused performance to the student self-directed learning, from assessment measurement model towards the learner empowerment and assessment for lifelong learning. Universities should provide the education that can match the needs of students and employers. Modern employers' expectations of graduates who ought to be motivated, determined and efficient, impact the direction of the education process. With a view of appropriate development of these characteristics, contemporary educational approaches emphasise collaborative and co-operative learning where modern teachers cannot simply assess knowledge of facts by testing, they have to assess the learning outcomes.

Moreover, if the assessment is completely monitored by a teacher, it will restrict the students' development of reflective, judgment and critique skills. The learning outcomes, as well as interest and motivation to study, could be improved when teachers suggest a dialogue lessons format, accept students' points of view, offer options and share the responsibility for learning. Most teachers are still afraid to reflect principles of cooperative assessment into the design of classes and they do not comprehend that active student participation in assessment is vital for the effective development of employability skills which are demanded beyond the university.

The best ways to empower students with the skills for their future successful career is to teach them to evaluate themselves objectively and critically, their partners, to analyse their resources and possibilities, to provide helpful feedback on mistakes or progress. We all experience from our mistakes and advances, so we have to know how to analyse and apply this experience. The most suitable educational techniques suggested for this purpose are peer and self-assessment. Since these assessment techniques imply interaction and communication, we consider that ESP classes are the best educational environment for training the assessment skills.

The objectives of the study are to explain the difference between the self- and peers assessment, to develop the understanding of students' peer and self-assessment positive and negative aspects through ESP classes and to present the case study on educational techniques to teach students these skills.

Literature review

The literature presents the scholarly analysis and reviews of training self- and peer assessment skills through two opposite approaches: those scholars who argue that these skills should not be taught because

they are not reliable, and those who consider the skills essential for a future career under the condition of appropriate training of the relevant techniques.

Among those scholars who advocate the integration of the alternative assessment techniques into the learning process, we would like to share the opinion of Falchikov (2007). The researcher has defined some essential characteristics of appropriate situations and educational environment for peer and self-assessment situations. Such situations should be aimed at the learning promotion, be organised in accordance with clear standards and assessment criteria and require students to take their ownership over their learning results.

Taking into consideration the students training for their professional career, we have to accept the necessity to teach them the basics of measuring quality and providing incentives. From this point of view, the assessment turns into an act of informing critical judgment. There is a substantial evidence for this statement in Topping's surveys. Topping (2003, p. 62) defines peer assessment as "an arrangement for learners to consider and specify the level, value, or quality of a product or performance of other equal-status learners". Dickinson (1995) outlines three reasons for self-assessment implementation: self-assessment teaching is an important educational objective; self-assessment is a necessary part of self-determination; self-assessment lessens the assessment burden on the teacher.

Those educational practitioners who consider that alternative assessment methods cannot provide a teacher with an objective assessment result, often refer to student's lack of assessment skills as a negative factor for the implementation. According to Kaufmann and Schunn (2010), the following activities can improve learners' attitude towards self- and peer assessment: active engagement of students; maintaining enough training and support; well-defined peer assessment criteria. Some scholars argue that self-assessment is more beneficial for the learning process when it does not imply grading. For example, Kirby and Downs (2007) argue for the benefits of a "formative, low stakes, criterion-referenced assessment" (p.490).

A number of studies have been conducted with a view of identifying the factors which prevent a teacher from using self- and peer assessment in class. Through these factors, researchers are trying to change teachers' mind and show how to overcome the fear of partnering in assessment. Thus, Ross (2006) enumerates the following negative factors:

- self-assessment can lower educational standards;
- students have the opportunity to embellish their grades;
- students can make mistakes out of ignorance;
- students may object to doing teachers' job;
- students may misunderstand data from the assessment sheets;
- these grades may not be included in the summative grades;
- difficulties in building trustful and positive environment focused on improving.

In order to eliminate the impact of these factors, pedagogic research findings highly recommend peer assessment application as it is the most efficient way to enhance students training (Topping et al., 2003; Toulmin, 2006). Self- and peer assessment methods are to some extent similar to teacher's assessment but they will not ever be as accurate as teacher's assessment. Furthermore, it must be noted that reaching high reliability and validity is not the primary objective of self- and peer assessment. As mentioned by Dickinson and Wenden (1995), the goals and functions of self-, peer, and teacher's assessment are different; teacher's assessment is a summative assessment technique which is mostly used for evaluation at the end of the courses, while self- and peer assessment techniques are formative assessment which is aimed at ongoing learning processes. One of the main advantages of having several input samples of students is to help teachers understand learning processes and their outcomes. In other words, self- and peer assessment methods are accompanying tools for students' engagement and empowerment which should be used along with teacher assessment. Taras, (2001) also stipulated that self- and peer assessment should be used as tools for gathering samples of language from learners. All in all, with careful training, monitoring and utilisation, self- and peer assessment are beneficial.

In the framework of a problem of alternative assessment at ESP classes, the scholars Aeginitou, Nteliou and Vlahoyanni (2010) claim that the high motivation rates, which were shown by the questionnaire results of their research on alternative assessment while language classes, evidence the vital necessity for peer and self-assessment of presentation skills at ESP. Moreover, the findings analysed by these researchers submit that the preparation and active involvement of students in self-reflective practices and assessment from the very early stages of learning enhance oral presentation skills. Grez, Valcke, & Roozen (2012) studied the impact of peer assessment on oral presentation. They carried out a Likert scale questionnaire of peer assessment. The findings of their research also evidenced that peer assessment fosters the speaking ability of learners if they are given a valid criterion or framework

The results of the researches are also in line with the study of Patri (2002) who proved that peer-assessment empowers students to evaluate the writing of their peers in a way comparable to their teachers. In addition, self-assessment has been identified as a key learning strategy for autonomous language learning (Iraji, Enayat, & Momeni, 2016) which allows language learners to monitor their own learning progress. According to the findings of the research, self- and peer assessments was advantageous and forcible in mastering the argumentative writing ability and in writing better compositions.

Alternative assessment techniques are easily integrated into daily activities of students. It is beneficial in ESL/ESP context due to students possibilities to demonstrate their practical real life speaking abilities, skills for critical tasks processing, rather than what they can simply recall. As self-assessment is a process through which students learn about themselves (Cheng & Warren, 2005), they are able to control their speech and pay attention to other's language performance and juxtapose their outcomes with standards they have already learned.

The nature of self- and peer assessment

The idea of students' involvement in the evaluation of their own academic achievement is not new. In the context of self-directed heuristic learning with a self-consciousness and creative activity as a priority, the teaching control and assessment should be aimed at the diagnostics, focused on foreseeing possible learning complications and their timely prevention (Stognieva, 2015). Since the main principle of heuristic learning is equitable relations between a student and a teacher, students should be actively involved in control and assessment activities. However, the techniques of self-control and self- assessment are not common for Ukrainian universities. The main reason is the insufficient practical skills of students to conduct self-diagnostics of their achievements.

Self-diagnostics, self-control and self-assessment are dialectically connected phenomena. It is substantiated by the following interaction: diagnostics performs a control function, control performs a diagnostic function and the logical completion of both procedures is the assessment. In the process of self-consciousness and educational activities students create two educational products: external (essay, article, annotation, presentation etc.) and internal (cognitive, creative and other soft skills). Therefore, self-assessment should be aimed at both products quality evaluation and grounded on the complex of appropriately developed criteria. Regarding the criteria, we have to bear in mind that criteria must be understandable and transparent for students; it will benefit not only the quality of performance but students' understanding academic standards as well. In order to teach students to control and assess their achievements, it is crucial to involve students into the development of the control-diagnostic criteria; to learn how to assess using these criteria (peer assessment); to discuss the result differences after self- assessment, peer assessment and teacher's assessment; to assist students in application received data to correct further actions (Toulmin, 2006).

Both self- and peer assessment skills are vital for a future successful career. Self- assessment encourages students to analyse mistakes, to set new goals, to improve learning methods, and to define own strengths and areas which need improvement. The main objective of this process is to provide the opportunity for students to identify what work is considered to be good or bad rather than simply generate grades. Self- assessment promotes profound learning as students can compare new knowledge with previously learnt and discover new levels of the subject comprehension.

Peer assessment implies students' feedback or grading to other students on the quality of learning tasks performance. Peer assessment enhances team or collaborative working skills, negotiating and judgment skills and adequate critique abilities. Peer assessment is a powerful tool for students to be in the role of "assessor" and to take ownership over the assessment process and its results. It motivates students to demonstrate high-quality learning of a subject as they have to assess the understanding of the subject rather than just knowledge of facts. Moreover, it is always better to study from other's mistakes as well as from success. Peer assessment allows developing such ability as "objective" assessment that is essential for a fair critique. Peer assessment makes lessons more interactive and involves feedback discussions. In some cases, students even get better and more full and relevant formative feedback from their peers than from their teachers. As the modern educational approaches require lessening the teacher involvement into the learning process, peer evaluation helps to overcome the prevailing of teachers' power and allows students to feel equality with a teacher as a partner in a learning process that promotes collaborative learning.

Although, such type of assessment may evoke some complications. Since students are inexperienced assessors, the questions of validity and reliability may arise, and that can cause conflicts or inaccuracy in assessment. Consequently, there is a discussion whether the peer-generated grades should be used as formative or summative assessment. We think that this technique is just one of the varieties of alternative

assessment methods and its application should be in a frame of the subject and learning outcomes of the course or subject. However, if this method is familiar to students and they are aware of academic standards, criteria are clear and a teacher respects and trusts students, the results may even be better than expected.

Ways of implementation

The successful implementation and efficiency of the self- and peer assessment depend on the organisation of the process, clear objectives and comprehensible assessment criteria. Magin and Helmore (2001) created guidelines how to manage the self- and peer assessment. They suggest: first step is to develop clear and high objective criteria; the second step is to discuss these criteria with students in advance; the third step is to monitor the procedure of assessment by random assessment of some works by a teacher; then it is essential for students to know that the results of such assessment are discussable and can be changed; and finally, provision of feedback to confirm the peer grades are valid. It is obvious that a teacher who ventures on this practice should trust students and accept the result of the assessment. However, in order to include these grades into final summative assessment, they should more or less but correspond to teachers' marks.

Considering the effective management of assessment procedures, we advise to follow some principles:

- the objectives of the assessment should be clear for students;
- the results of such assessment will be more valuable if involved into summative assessment, but it is possible only if these procedures has been well tired;
- teacher's management and possibility to change the grades;
- the assessment should be fair without personal attitude impact;
- the feedback should be the same as tutor's assessment;
- appropriate and tested criteria;
- systematic integration of the peer and self- assessment into learning activities so that students consider it as a usual learning procedure;
- including the assessment skills acquisition into the learning outcomes as it recalls the development of employability and reflective skills.

A variety of forms for assessment in ESP classes are suggested in the literature (Miragli, 1995; Cheng & Warren, 2005; Matsuno, 2009). Some teachers prefer using reflective diaries, blogs or journals as they enhance critical reflection on an individual level. If you want students' essays to be assessed, it is better to use feedback sheets which focus students on main points for the assessment: what was the best or the worst, the most difficult or easy. Considering this form, teachers should be aware that criteria for self- and teacher's assessment are the same. In such way, it would be easier to compare your impression and to justify your grade in case if students do not agree.

In order to prepare students for self-assessment, teachers may use such activities as conferences or interviews. While performing the activities, students express their opinion about the issue, discuss a matter of opinion, judge and critique, other words, they acquire all necessary skills for fair and effective assessment.

The most common tool for self- assessment is cooperatively developed rubrics. The most valued benefit of this activity is that it allows visualising the learning progress and areas for improvement. Using rubrics students are focused on key concepts and standards for the assessment. Therefore, students have a direction how to evaluate good or bad constitutes of a work. Rubrics enhances critical thinking concerning their own criteria for what is an appropriate work and how it corresponds with the educational standards.

There are some tips on how to get started with self-assessment (Zundert, Sluijsmans, & Merrienboer, 2010). First is to explain students the purpose of this activity and how you think it can contribute to their studying or future work. The next step is crucial for successful assessment: criteria development. If teachers involve students, they partially delegate the responsibility for the result to students. However, sometimes it is time-consuming to certify that students accept and understand the criteria against which they are expected to evaluate their works. But, we think, the most important point is to confirm students' freedom for the honest assessment, to persuade that you respect their opinion and ensure that other students will do the same without cheating.

Speaking about peer assessment, teachers should bear in mind that it is a rather time and resources consuming procedure and the effectiveness and validity come with practice. Such activities as feedback discussions, notes exchange and sharing the solution of the problems are considered as preparing activities for the peer assessment implementation. Another obstacle, which teachers face with, is a creation of the trustful environment in a class.

If students have never experienced peer assessment, it is recommended to start with simple activities such as feedback catchwords, PMI and spoof assessment (Stognieva, 2015).

Feedback Catchwords are usually short and simple peer feedback statements. For example: Today you did well on.....; The point you should improve is...; Next time try to.....

PMI stands for plus, minus and interesting. It is a useful tool to teach students to define strong and weak point of a peer's work. Students get a written sample or a peer's work and mark it with these letters PMI where it is necessary.

Spoof assessment is for identifying mistakes and correcting them. A teacher gives students pieces of writing with previously made mistakes. Students have to find them and correct if they can with the following discussion why it is wrong.

When students are familiarised with these activities and skills, they might be suggested more complicated activities as graphing progress and snowballing. These activities require systematic application as they develop more complicated skills. Graphing progress implies progress graphs charting with the data provided by a teacher from class achievements for a period of time. Students can share their graphs and discuss their progress, give helpful advice how their classmates can achieve success or improve. Snowballing involves the whole group or class as it develops collaborative and team skills. Students work in small groups and are given some tasks to perform, which they initially worked on individually at home. In a class students compare answers of all members of a group, choose the best one and try to explain why they chose that solution.

At a progressive level of peer assessment skills acquisition, students can perform peer editing, testing learning, peer essays and feedback strategies. Testing learning means the creation of students' own tests, quizzes or questionnaires with a marking scale on a learned issue. The tests are presented during a class and suggested to other students. The advantage of the activity is that students not only test their mates' knowledge but are able to suggest feedback on how to improve the knowledge or where to search for the information. The peer editing or feedback giving is a completely student-centred activity. Students are asked not to grade the works but to provide a feedback on the peers' performance as reviewers. So, students get an opportunity to respond to the assessment. Peer essays are pair activity in which students help each other with ideas for a writing task performing. At first, students work individually, then they are joined onto pair for a discussion. After that, students can whether write together or finish the essay individually depending on the learning goal.

Case report

In order to explore the effect of self- and peer assessment as a learning process constituents and compare the results, we have conducted a case study among the students of the National Technical University of Ukraine "Igor Sikorsky Kyiv Polytechnic University".

Participants

The study was conducted among 40 sophomore students from the Department of Mechanical Engineering, as the third year students usually try to get employed, so their skills of the assessments should be trained in advance. The students were from 2 academic groups from the same course and department (20 students per group). The students' proficiency level of language ranged from pre-intermediate to intermediate. They attend the class of English for Technical Purposes once a week and have a 90 min session per week.

Procedure

These students participated in individual oral presentations on the topic "Technology in Use" and its assessment. The case study included two stages and was performed during one term (3 months and 10 academic sessions).

Stage One. At this stage, the study objective was the juxtaposition the teacher assessment and peer assessment. 40 students presented their projects and were evaluated by peers and a teacher immediately in a class. 40 evaluation sheets were collected.

Stage two. At this stage, the study was focused on the issue of the teacher assessment and self-assessment. Upon the completion of a task, 40 students were asked to assess their performance in writing at home and hand out to a teacher upon completion. The quality monitoring was also performed by the teacher. 40 evaluations sheets were collected.

At the beginning of the study during the first session, the teacher explained the purpose and procedures for peer and self-assessment. The questions of the quality of assessment, concerns about the friendship influence on assessment, confidence were discussed. The next session was devoted to the issue of a good oral presentation, components, organisation and main requirements. The fourth session was about the assessment criteria; the teacher explained the main points for the assessment and discussed them with students. From the next session, one student presented the work and was assessed by groupmates by means of developed rubrics.

At the last session, students were offered to discuss some questions about the assessment techniques and their opinion about the effectiveness of the activities.

Instruments

The assessment checklists used in our study were based on Rignall's (1997) checklists for assessing oral presentations. Students were evaluated on an oral presentation using the same rubrics for peer-assessment and self-assessment but with a change of criteria wording. The rubric was divided into 5 parts of content, organisation, presentation, appropriate use of language, creativity. The content included the following points for the assessment:

- Is the content relevant to the title of the presentation?
- Is the presentation coherent and appropriately structured?
- Is the message clear?
- Is the argument consistent?
- Is sufficient evidence given to support arguments?
- Are conclusions drawn appropriately?
- Does the presenter put forward her/his own point of view?

The organisation was assessed in relation to the following points: timekeeping, management of questions and comments, use of resources, visual aids or handouts (quality, fitness to purpose). The presentation evaluation included the following points: audibility, pronunciation, eye contact, voice, gestures movements, confidence, and interaction with the audience. The appropriate use of language was evaluated in relation to clarity and fitness of expressions, accurate use of grammar and vocabulary, complication and variety of vocabulary, speech cohesion. The creativity was assessed for the use of imagination in content or presentation and originality. All criteria for the assessment were rated from 0 to 5 points.

The instrument for the last sessions was a short questionnaire which included the following points: What kind of assessment was harder for you to perform and why? What assessment do you consider more useful and why? How did the awareness of the assessment tasks affect your work on the task? Would you like to use these techniques in future ESP classes?

Results and discussion

Each presentation was assessed for characteristics mentioned in rubrics.

The first point for evaluation and discussion was the content. There were 27 respondents (67,5 %) who mentioned the most important aspects of the topic, presented explanations and arguments, well organised the content. During the peer feedback, some students claimed, "I should have worked a little bit more".

The second point was the organisation. The students (37 or 92,5 %) managed with this task successfully, finished on time, answered the peers' questions. During the feedback discussion from the peers, the students commented, "I did not follow the time, but tried not to speak too long".

The next point was presentation delivery. There were 33 students (82,5%) who knew material, were confident and interacted well with the audience. Some of the students were nervous and they said, "When I am nervous I speak quickly or forget the words".

17 or 42,5% students demonstrated a good command of English language. But during the peer feedback discussion, those who were not so successful confessed, "I did not prepare well because my knowledge of English language is not appropriate to perform oral presentations".

And 38 or 98% of students were creative and tried to impress their peers. During the peer discussion, one of them stated, "I wanted to hide my drawback and decided to add some video material".

All students demonstrated more or less the same attitude toward alternative assessment methods and the difference in students grading between peer- and self- assessment was not significant. First attempts of peer assessment were rather complicated since students were shy or did not want to assess objectively due to interpersonal relations. However, when I allowed students to answer peers' comments and discuss the assessment remarks, students more actively and rationally evaluated their group mates. This situation evidenced that it is essential for students to discuss assessment results and explain their point of view. Unfortunately, some students were not objective and overevaluated peers. It correlates the research findings of Patri (2002), who claimed that students overestimate the low-ability students. On the other hand, some students were very critical in their judgments; it could be explained by their lack of competence or jealousy toward more successful students.

Regarding the self- assessment, mostly all students evaluated themselves higher than a teacher or peers. It may evidence the lack of experience in assessing, the low competence of language and presentation knowledge. But what is more unexpected that advanced students evaluated themselves lower than a teacher. It may state of their critical attitude toward their performance and desire to improve. At the diagram (Fig.1) we demonstrate the approximate results of the general assessment according to three assessment activities. The results correlate the assessment criteria and grades from minimal 1 to maximal 5.

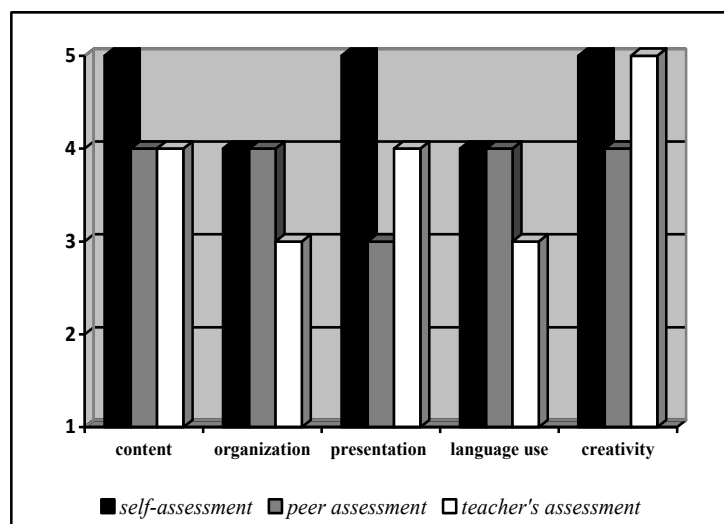


Fig. 1. Assessment results diagram

But the most unexpected result was observed while comparing teacher's and students' grades after both peer and self-assessment. The correlation of teacher and students grades was completely different between two academic groups. In one group the scores were mostly the same whereas, in the second group the scores were significantly different. If a teacher assessed low in assessment point of language or content, the students were not so critical. The opposite appeared when the teacher praised the student for interaction or performance, the students were rather critical. The difference between results of two groups can be possibly explained by the learning environment in the group. In the first group, the learning environment was rather trustful with mutual respect between students themselves and a teacher, while the second group did not demonstrate such confiding atmosphere.

Considering the final stage of the study the result discussion, students agreed that the peer and self-assessment are valuable tools to foster students' critical thinking and judgment abilities (Table 1.).

Table 1.

The results of assessment techniques application

Question	Self-assessment (%)	Students' comments	Peer assessment (%)	Students' comments
What kind of assessment was harder to perform?	36	It is hard to be honest with yourself; it is uneasy to identify problem areas as I always do my best; you have to be responsible for the results.	64	It is not easy to be fair but strict; I do not want to destroy our friendship; I am not sure that I can do better; peers can be too critical.
What assessment do you consider more useful?	47	I could analyse what should be improved; I could identify my poor sides; It is a key tool for a preparation; productive self-critique; more aware of assessment criteria before the task performance	53	It good to learn from other's mistakes; I got some ideas what and how to master; I did not think about some points which were mentioned by my peers; get more feedback
Would you like to use these techniques in future ESP classes?	40	As a preparation tool; Rubrics are useful as to be focused on main concepts of the work; to know what students feel about themselves and their progress.	60	It helps with fair grading; it helps to see students weak and strong points; it increases responsibility for outcomes; it builds up confidence; it fosters EL communication skills development; it helps to find mistakes before the teachers' assessment.

80% of students claimed that these assessment activities were of a great use and they worked on their assignment more diligent and with greater responsibility. Students confessed that they were impressed by the results of peer assessment, but considered it to be fair and reliable. While the performing self-assessment followed the peer assessment, students had the opportunity to be deeper involved into the assessment process and to try the teacher's role. It was harder to be objective to themselves and only after the peer assessment discussion they could find the drawbacks of their works. In students' opinion, it means that self-assessment results were not so fair and overestimated. However, self-assessment rubric helped in preparation the task as rubrics comprised the main constituents of a good work. At the last session, when we discussed the results of a study with students, they arrived at the conclusion that peer assessment is more useful and efficient for the assessment of educational performance and self- assessment is fruitful for the tasks preparation. Statistics evidence confirmed students' opinion: 53% of students considered peer assessment more useful than self-assessment and the results of peer assessment are more reasonable and unprejudiced. And students agreed to use these techniques in future classes.

Observing the case study findings, we have identified students' comments on self- and peer assessment separately, but there were comments concerning both activities. For example, "I have little experience on grading", "It is difficult to be objective when you assess yourself, moreover, when you assess your friend", "I was nervous to have my work assessed not by a teacher", "I understood how to be critical and constructive", "It motivated a lot to work harder".

From the viewpoint of a pedagogical study, we have defined some main advantages of the alternative assessment.

First, it developed students' judgment skills which are vital for their future work as they will have to provide their employers with feedback on their own, colleagues' or team member' performance.

Second, the students' critical evaluation skills have been improved. Students demonstrated accurate and respectful attitude toward their peers as criticising should be constructive and fair. Due to self-analysing skill mastering, the results have become more objective and students perceived their ownership over the results of the learning process. Through self-assessment teachers can learn what students feel about their knowledge and the classroom environment.

Third, as students knew about the assessment, they were more motivated, competitive and determined to high grades achieving. Moreover, when students had a clear goal and clear assessment criteria, they worked harder and faster to meet their own goals. Their high achievement promotes the confidence and evokes the willingness to complete more challenging tasks.

Fourth, the partnering assessment fosters the cohesiveness maintenance between students and a teacher and helps to build up a positive and inspiring environment in a class.

Fifth, it was very important for us to empower students with the awareness of the assessment standards, criteria and requirements. While completing our activities, students got marking sheets with assessment criteria; it helped them organise their presentations better. And if a teacher uses these sheets systematically, students will get used to them and in future, they will organise their professional project in the same way, even without marking sheets.

Sixth, as we have conducted our research through ESP classes, we should point out one more benefit of the activity. It deals with the linguistic side of the matter. The language of assessment and requirements can appear to be an obstacle for students as the assessment criteria and standards are not always completely comprehended by students because of the style and level of the language and it affects the assessment dialogue between a teacher and students. When students discuss the requirements, standards and criteria, a teacher can "translate" them and make more understandable.

Conclusions

Nowadays it is a high time to imply alternative assessment opportunities offered in the classroom. These activities promote life-long learning, meet the labour market demands as evaluation, self-assessment and critical thinking.

The case study presented in the paper is designed to explore whether peer or self-assessment techniques while ESP classes are effective tools for closing the gap between teachers' and students' feedback on learning outcomes and developing the employability skills. During the case study process, we evidenced students' concerns which are usually noteless to teachers unless we imply an assessment dialogue. Both self- and peer assessment have the potential to influence the students' attitude towards the studying and feedback process. The student's involvement into assessment dialogue contributes theirs:

- comprehension of self-learning goals,
- identification and analysing of own mistakes and complications;

- review of own learning goals and tasks;
- focusing on own achievement.

Consequently, we can state that peer and self-assessment skills acquisition and clarity of assessment criteria prevent conflict occurrence, establish effective self-learning activity, enhance the positive self-identity and foster to successful self-realisation. We strongly believe that alternative methods of assessment should be considered an effective way of teaching, learning and assessment integration with a view for better students training for a successful professional career.

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