Learners' Perceptions on Peer Assessment in Team-Based Learning Classroom

Linchong Chorrojprasert

linchongchr@au.edu, Graduate School of Human Sciences, Assumption University of Thailand

Abstract

Focusing on the perceptions of learners on their peer assessment experiences, this study – a case study in nature – was conducted with mixed methods approach with the aim to shed light on how peer assessment, a prominent characteristic of team-based learning classroom, could enhance the learners' performance and learning skills, in particular the soft skills deemed most beneficial and essential in most professions. Data collection instruments employed included a survey questionnaire and a focus group session. Participants in the study included 18 graduate students of mixed nationalities in an English Language Teaching (ELT) required course. Findings from the study confirmed most of the proffered benefits of peer assessment on learners' improvement of knowledge and skills, and further raised some issues related to individual constraints in assessment and class preparation. Furthermore, recommendations for further study and instructional implications were discussed to provide guidance for those who share similar teaching contexts and are keen to embrace these teaching challenges.

1. INTRODUCTION

Among some astounding figures and reports from the World Economic Forum's first Jobs Reset Summit organized in October 2020 (World Economic Forum, 2020), there are concerns on both national and global scales on serious skill gaps among the current workforce and thus significant demands of the training and development of soft skills in our educational systems. Some of the required soft skills deemed prominent for any career paths include the following: analytical thinking and innovation; active learning and learning strategies; complex problem-solving; critical thinking and analysis; creativity, originality, and initiative; leadership and social influence; resilience, stress tolerance and flexibility; and reasoning, problem-solving and ideation. In identifying the soft skills, the reports offer some variation and extension from those specified and promoted by UNESCO in the recent years. Some examples include empathy, leadership, sense of responsibility, integrity, self-esteem, self-management, motivation, flexibility, sociability, time management and decision-making (UNESCO, 2018). Defined as "a set of intangible personal qualities, traits, attributes, habits and attitudes that can be used in many different types of jobs" by UNESCO's IBE Glossary of Curriculum Terminology (2013), soft skills are currently deemed as necessary in curriculum designs and classroom teaching at all levels. Policymakers, administrators, educators, and teachers are expected to not only integrate the development of soft skills in school and college curriculum but also to ensure meaningful adoption and effective application in classroom teaching and learning.

In response to these demands, various strategies, and approaches to increase the quality of classroom intervention, interaction as well as the development of much required soft skills have been adopted in syllabus designs and classroom instruction practices. Among the current trends of pedagogical approaches deemed innovative and prominent is team-based learning (TBL). Proponents of TBL have long contended that the characteristic elements of TBL: group work and interaction, individual and team accountability, effective and timely feedback, and properly designed tasks (Michaelsen & Sweet, 2008; Newell & Bain, 2018) are crucial and likely to stimulate collective learning which in turns improve the level of knowledge and skills and consolidate those constructed as the team members shared their goals and learning experiences (van

Woerkom & Croon, 2009; Schmidt et al., 2019). TBL classes may differ in their classroom design strategies and known in various terms such as collaborative learning, problem-based, cooperative learning or flipped classroom (Schmidt et al., 2019). As suggested by the early promoters of TBL and reported in the study findings (Haidet et al, 2012; Michaelsen et al., 2002), TBL includes in particular three essential phases: preparation, readiness assurance and application. With the first phase usually taking place prior to class session and emphasizing on the preparation of both the instructor and students getting ready with relevant learning material and resources on the target lessons, the second phase involves the team activities to evaluate and provide feedback on both individual and team performances. The final phase focuses on the team task where students in their teams are engaged in problem-solving as they complete the assignment, give presentation of their results and participate in the task evaluation and discussion. Through these classroom activities and learning processes, students are expected to not only strengthen their knowledge consolidation but also develop all the potential soft skills. According to Vaughan et al (2019) peer assessment, a crucial part of team-based learning, can be strengthened with the inclusion of peer feedback- with proper training, the validity and reliability of the evaluation are ensured and both assessors and assessees enhance their knowledge and skills.

Sridharan & Boud (2019) reported the research gaps in the areas of impact of feedback on the development of soft skills as well as the effect of peer assessment in the contexts where face-to-face communication was replaced by online or digital technology resources. Nawas (2020) also commented on the substantial lack of educational research in the area of peer evaluation practices. In this study, the course was conducted with all the pertinent elements of team-based learning put into practice with detailed plans and attentive practices where peer assessment serves as a part of the formative assessment of the course. The key objectives of this study are to examine the impact of peer assessment as part of team-based learning on the aspects of the learners' perceptions of their experiences on the perceived benefits and other outcomes, and to investigate any challenges or relevant issues for better understanding and improvement of future classroom practices. The research questions asked were:

1. How did the learners perceive their learning experiences in relation to peer assessment in team-based learning classroom as an individual and a team member?

2. What were the learners' reflections and opinions on the benefits and drawbacks of their peer assessment experiences?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Peer assessment as explained by advocates were grounded on various theoretical perspectives and different subprocesses as described by Topping (2013); these perspectives encompass successive levels with varied groups of factors which greatly contribute to the effectiveness of peer assessment and their practices. Some of the factors include:

- organization and engagement, cognitive conflict, scaffolding and error management, communication, affect;
- accretion, returning, and restructuring of knowledge and skills;
- intersubjective cognitive con-construction;
- practice, fluency, automaticity, retention, generalization, supported-to-independent, implicit-to-explicit;
- feedback and reinforcement;
- self-monitoring and self-regulation, implicit and explicit; and
- metacognition, explicit, intentional, strategic, self-attribution, and self-esteem (Topping, 2013, p. 398).

Promotors of peer assessment assert that its advantages directly derive from the principle of learner's autonomy as intrinsic motivation – learners' behaviors are driven by their own internal interest, satisfaction and desire to excel and not to earn external reward or to avoid punishment- is vital in achieving any goals and acquiring any set of skills, in particular second language acquisition (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2019; Topping, 2009; Topping, 2019). Benefits of peer assessment can be summarized as follows:

- knowledge and skill consolidation: learners are fully immerged in cognitively intensive activities as they carry out the role of assessors in summarize, review, evaluate, pinpoint missing links or mistakes, and provide meaningful feedback as well as practical suggestions; their own knowledge and skills are thus integrated and consolidated in the process.

- performance enhancement: learners can improve their learning skills through their team collaboration as they learn to share their opinions, asking and giving assistance when needed, and this process of interactive exchange can also sharpen their communicative skills at large; as they actively participate in all team activities, learners reinforce their perception of fairness, negotiation skills, problem-solving skills and interpersonal skills.
- empowerment: learners are provided with opportunities to take control of their own learning and not obliged to only depend on their teachers; they learn to be assertive and incisive as they give feedback to their peers while presenting their own knowledge and communicative skills.
- feedback: learners benefit from feedback as they can confirm, suggest, identify, and correct their strengths and weaknesses; learners can gain much positive impact and develop self-directed learning skills when they take the feedback in positive mindset and mindfulness.
- sense of accountability: both assessors and assesses can develop through their evaluation process the higher sense of self-reflection and understanding of others; they can as well sharpen their sense in recognizing errors or knowledge gaps and devise practical strategies or plans to rectify them.

Gielen et al., (2011, p. 140) identified the prerequisite factors in successful implementation of peer assessment as follows: explicating objectives and expectations; matching participants with contact channels; designing and explaining relevant criteria; organizing effective training for all participants; designating activities; setting systems to supervise and assist; mediating to ensure validity and reliability; and evaluating and giving feedback.

Based on findings of various studies (Gielan et al., 2010; Langan et al., 2008), it was contended that peer feedback – with clear evaluation criteria and supported by revision suggestions – could better contribute to learners' knowledge consolidation and improvement of thinking skills when compared with feedback from teachers or tutors. Moreover, if the evaluation criteria were properly taught and trained with the focus on content and generic styles or characteristics, the evaluation skills learners

acquired could later be applied and transferred further to other settings or contexts (Prins et al., 2006).

Regarding potential perceptions of partiality or bias which may threaten the reliability of peer assessment, researchers pointed out the relevant factors as follows: gender, institutional background, academic major and group status (Aryadoust, 2017; Langan et al., 2008). In their findings, they concluded that though some bias could be observed in their ratings based on gender, institutional affinity, and academic major− the tendency of overrating for the opposite gender and those from the same institution and underestimating the scores for peers from the same major, peer assessment was still deemed beneficial and reliable as a tool for formative assessment. Additionally, Topping (2013), based on his analysis of distinct studies, suggested there was also the cultural context which might influence the impact of peer assessment, particularly where high-stakes tests or examinations were involved. In other studies, it was reported that there could exist elements of concerns and reluctance on the assessors as they were worried that their judgement could harm or render negative effects on their peers' grades (Sridharan et al.,, 2018). Reports on the role of anxiety (Nawas, 2020) and likeability - degree of favorableness (Aryadoust, 2017) revealed that it was plausible that learners would experience some anxiety and be persuaded by the likeability of the evaluated peers; however, instructors could reduce such incidences and ensure the accuracy of their judgements by taking certain preventive measures, such as employing a detailed rubric and constantly reminding the evaluators of such influences to ascertain the consistency and reliability of the evaluation.

3. METHODS

This study aimed to examine the learners' perceptions of peer assessment used as part of the team-based learning activities in an ELT course; consequently, a case study approach was selected. Defined as the thorough examination of a small sample group or the investigation of a particular policy, program, project or system (Tight, 2010; Simons, 2009), a case study allows more comprehensive and thorough investigation into a class situation or a small group phenomenon and recognizes the complexity and subtlety of the case under study, and offers better and more accessible results which may easily lead to

transferability in classroom actions – though limited in its replicability and representativeness (Cohen et al., 2018).

Mixed methods research was adopted for this study. According to Creswell & Creswell (2018) and Creswell & Plano Clark (2018), the mixed methods procedures when properly selected and effectively applied will ensure richer data and new insight into the research problems or questions as both qualitative and quantitative data collected and analyzed – once "mixed" can complement and compensate each other in their strengths and weaknesses. The significant elements that define mixed methods research as explained by Johnson et al. (2007) and Cohen et al. (2018) entail the collection, data analysis and interpretation of both quantitative and qualitative data.

The data collection instrument employed in the study for the quantitative data was a survey questionnaire designed to examine the learners' perceptions on their experiences after the peer assessment as part of their class performance was completed. The survey questionnaire design was cross-sectional as it was constructed and administered once to the sample group to investigate whether there were patterns or differences of opinions, perceptions, or attitudes among the participants (Privitera & Ahlgrim-Delzell, 2019). Items were constructed and tested for validity based on the concepts and research findings covered in the literature review, and afterwards the expert validation and pilot study of the questionnaire were conducted. Some alterations in wordings were made prior to the actual administration of the questionnaires. The survey questionnaire used consists of three parts:

Part One: demographic questions on the respondents' personal profile (age, gender, nationality);
Part Two: 25 rating scale items on their perceptions of the peer assessment experience as an individual and a team member; and
Part Three: 2 open-ended questions on their opinions on the impact of peer assessment on their learning experience and further comments on adjustments or changes of the current practices.

In the introduction part, respondents were informed about the purposes of the study and the confidentiality issues were stated. Directions on how to complete the questionnaires and how to send them back to the researcher were clearly articulated. For *Part Two*, the Likert

scale of 4 was selected to avoid obtaining neutral opinions and to ensure specific responses in agreement and disagreement as the quantitative data would later be processed by frequency in descriptive data analysis.

The initial data collected from the survey questionnaires were then used to inform the design of the focus group questions which covered the following aspects of their peer assessment experiences:

1. potential benefits
2. practicality and fairness of the practices
3. personal constraints and limitations
4. further suggestions and other relevant issues

Designed as a classroom-centered study, all the students in the course (total of 18) with their informed consent participated in both the collection of quantitative (survey questionnaire) and qualitative (focus group) data processes. The convenience sampling was adopted as the students enrolled in the course were well-informed, willing, and accessible for the study. The small size of participants as well as the sampling technique suggested a drawback in the study generalizability as those sampled, with the limited number, their particular characteristics and contexts, may not represent the larger population of ELT students (Privitera & Ahlgrim-Delzell, 2019).

The course and teams

This classroom research was conducted with 18 graduate students enrolled in one of the ELT programs required courses. The 15-week course covered a variety of topics and issues related to the foundation of English language studies and comprised various class activities with online resources. The Zoom application was used as the majority of the students were still overseas due to the Covid-19. Although all 3-hour course sessions were totally conducted online via Zoom, there was no substantial issue hindering the completion and efficacy of class activities, except for some few isolated cases of poor internet connection.

All key elements and important phases of Team-based classroom, as suggested by Michaelsen et al. (2002) and Haidet et al. (2012), were meticulously integrated and reflected in the course design and lesson planning. Students were given the detailed course outline with class

schedule and lesson topics before classes began, along with prescribed reading texts and additional materials for workshop sessions. Most classes, except for the first introduction session and those set aside for task presentations, started with a lecture with the specified topics, displays of online videos or other resources, class discussions and questions to ensure the students' understanding of the related topics and assignment tasks. After a short break, a workshop session would be conducted for each team after thorough explanation given and task expectations discussed. Students were divided into two teams of 4 members and two of 5 members. During the discussions and workshop sessions, team members worked together in their team breakout room to complete the tasks and later joined the main room for presentation and discussion.

Preparation

In the preparatory session prior to the assignment of the team project, the students were given extensive explanation of how team-based learning could improve their learning performance and skills and benefit their learning outcomes at large. Example cases of effective team strategies and potential challenges were reviewed, and problem-solving alternative plans debated. Discussions on the advantages and disadvantages of peer assessment followed and a consensus was reached to allocate 25% of the score on the team project presentation, which amounted to 10% of the total course score, for peer assessment. A score card with all criteria listed was introduced and suggestions on how to provide further comments were elaborated. The evaluation criteria employed for oral presentation for the course included the following: 1. Use of Evidence 2. Use of Analysis 3. Organization & Style 4. Originality 5. Presentation Design 6. Body Language & Eye Contact 7. Poise & Voice 8. Introduction & Closure 9. Class Engagement, and 10. Team Dynamics. The scores were ranged from 1 to 4 for each category with detailed descriptions for the expected performance for each score level.

Prior to the actual presentations of the team project, the instructor conducted several practice sessions for the class by using some of the lecture sessions which were followed by a workshop where the teams were assigned to complete a task in 30 minutes and later give a short presentation of about 8 minutes on their results. After the team

workshop presentations, the class participated in giving feedback - verbally and voluntarily, to all the team and presenter performances based on the evaluation criteria. With the instructor taking the lead in providing both comments and suggestions to set an example, the discussions and feedback sessions usually took a few minutes to gradually gain the momentum. After all the teams completed their presentations and the feedback sessions ended, everyone was encouraged to express their opinions on their roles in both getting and giving feedback and their overall impressions of peer assessment experience.

Peer assessment in action

For the team project presentation conducted on the second last class, each team was allotted approximately 25 minutes for the presentation and about 15 minutes for discussions and verbal comments afterwards. The teams were paired in crisscrossing manner so they would evaluate one team while being evaluated by another. Every team member had to fill in the peer evaluation forms for all the members of the team they were assigned to evaluate, and the score cards were submitted to the instructor for compilation and mark calculation. In addition to giving the scores for each evaluation criteria for each speaker, they were required to provide written comments and suggestions for the individual speakers as well as the team performance. The score cards were combined for each team with the names of the evaluators deleted and sent back to the presenters. Each student would be evaluated by 4 or 5 of their peers. After the second last class, the survey questionnaires were distributed via email to all students and they were asked to complete and send them back within 3 days. On the last class, the instructor/researcher conducted the focus group session to confirm the data collected from the questionnaires and garner additional data. All students voluntarily took part in the data collection processes of both the administration of survey questionnaire and focus group session.

Data analysis and interpretation

Descriptive statistical data analysis was conducted to process and interpret the quantitative data collected from the survey questionnaires. Data from demographic items was summarized and cross tabulated for

display. Responses from the rating scale items were recorded, organized and analyzed by frequency distribution for interpretation and discussion. Qualitative data collected from the open-ended questions and the focus group session was processed by color coding and number system taken manually. Content analysis was then conducted. Some data was quantified for interpretation and some was reported as excerpts for representation.

4. FINDINGS

Participants
The table below shows the profile data of all 18 participants by gender, age, and nationalities.

Table 1

Participants' Profile Data

	Female			Male		
Nationality	<25	25-35	>35	<25	25-35	>35
Chinese	3	3			3	1
Thai	1	1	1			
Burmese		2			1	
Vietnamese						1
Korean		1				

As they were required to meet the set standard of English proficiency for program admission, the participants on average were in the B2 (Upper intermediate) level - defined by the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) as independent users of the language (Council of Europe, 2001).

Perceptions on the experiences

The results from the survey questionnaires are presented in the table below (n=18).

Table 2

Part Two Responses by Frequency

Item	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	From the peer assessment activities (peer evaluation, reviews, feedback, etc.) in this course, I believe that:				
1.	Understanding the evaluation criteria helped me to have clear understanding of the assignment outcomes and expectations.	7	9	2	0
2.	I became more involved and responsible in the class activities.	9	9	0	0
3.	I could better reflect on my personal performance and my role and responsibilities as a team member.	5	13	0	0
4.	I have developed better evaluation skills.	5	10	3	0
5.	I became more engaged and responsible for my own learning.	5	13	0	0
6.	I learned to give more relevant and practical feedback to my peers.	6	10	2	0
7.	I improved my critical thinking skills (analysis and evaluation) through peer assessment activities.	6	10	1	1
8.	I have developed better communication skills when giving and taking feedback and discussing comments with others.	7	10	1	0
9.	I learned how to effectively discuss and negotiate about the teamwork procedures and any related issues with my teammates.	6	11	1	0
10.	I have developed better problem-solving skills through peer assessment.	5	10	3	0
11.	I learned to adjust my learning approaches as I discussed my performance on different tasks with my teammates.	4	13	1	0
12.	I could generally share my opinions	4	14	0	0

	with other students though there were differences among us.				
13.	I learned to be fair and unbiased in giving evaluation and feedback on others' performance.	7	9	2	0
Throughout the course, I have experienced that:					
14.	The use of the peer assessment (verbal comments and evaluation rubrics) is practical and fair for all.	4	10	2	2
15.	Every student can benefit from peer assessment, regardless of their learning competence.	2	12	3	1
16.	The teacher's explanation on the evaluation rubric and process helped me to clearly understand peer assessment procedures.	7	10	0	1
17.	It is important that we are sincere and unbiased in giving our feedback and suggestions.	10	8	0	0
18.	Our comments are useful to our peers in improving their future performance.	5	10	2	1
19.	Peer assessment helps us reflect on our performance and contributions as a team member.	3	14	1	0
20.	Peer assessment helps us clearly understand and evaluate our roles and responsibilities in the team.	3	13	2	0
21.	Peer assessment helps us learn how to make constructive criticisms and professional judgements on others' performance.	7	11	0	0
22.	Exchanging feedback and comments helped me develop better communication skills.	6	10	1	1
23.	Peer assessment helped us feel more comfortable to talk about any issues we had working as a team.	3	13	2	0
24.	Peer assessment made it possible for students to support each other and give help when it was needed.	5	10	3	0
25.	Peer assessment helped me become more focused when listening to	9	8	0	1

	others' presentations and more involved in class discussion.				

All the participants expressed their agreement on the survey items stating that they believed peer assessment activities helped them become more involved and responsible (with 50% in strong agreement) and better reflect on their personal performance and their role and responsibilities as a team member (with over a quarter in strong agreement). Only one participant stated that he/she did not feel that it helped him/her become more focused or involved in class discussion. Almost all agreed that these activities helped them reflect on their performance and contributions as a team member as well. Similarly, they all agreed that they believed they had become more engaged and responsible of their own learning, with 5 participants strongly agreed with this.

Participants all agreed (with 22.25% strongly agreeing) that they found themselves able to share their opinions with others despite the differences among them. In addition, all participants also shared their agreement (with about 40% in strong agreement) that peer assessment helped them learn more about constructive criticisms and performance evaluation. When asked if they felt more comfortable discussion any issues as a team, most stated that they agreed with about 10% in disagreement.

While 83.33% of the participants agreed that they had developed better evaluation and problem-solving skills through peer assessment, the remaining others disagreed that they had managed to improve such skills. The majority of the participants (over 90%) agreed that they had developed their communication skills while working with their team and during the feedback sessions through sharing comments, giving, and taking feedback and negotiating on issues related to work procedures; while about 10% felt that exchanging feedback and comments did not help them with their communication skills. Furthermore, almost all agreed that they learned to adjust their learning approaches through their teamwork experiences.

Majority of the participants agreed that after the teacher's detailed explanation, their clear understanding of the evaluation criteria

helped them better understand the assignment outcomes and expectations, while about 10% of the participants disagreed on this. Similarly, about 10% disagreed that they learned to give more relevant and practical feedback to their peers and improved their critical thinking skills, while the rest were in agreement.

With more than half in strong agreement - they all agreed that it was important to be sincere and unbiased in providing their peers with feedback and suggestions. However, about 10% of them expressed their disagreement when asked if they had learned to be fair and unbiased in their evaluation of peers. When asked whether peer assessment helped make it possible for them to support and help their peers, most participants agreed with under 20% in disagreement.

Interestingly, 22.25% of the participants voiced their disagreement when asked if the use of peer assessment (both vocal and written comments) was practical and fair for all and if every learner- regardless of their learning competence – could benefit from these activities. Moreover, three participants disagreed that their comments were useful in helping them improve their performance. There were no suggestive differences noted among the participants of different age groups, gender, or nationalities when their responses were analyzed against their profile data.

Opinions and comments

The responses provided in the open-ended items on the questionnaires and those collected during the focus group session were integrated and reported by the themes emerged after the initial data analysis of the survey questionnaires.

Potential benefits

Majority of the participants had positive opinions about the benefits of the use of peer assessment as formative assessment. They felt that they could reflect on their learning performance and strategies as an individual and a team member. They agreed that these activities help

them develop stronger sense of responsibility as they had to be accountable for the team performance. Importantly, they became more aware of the evaluation criteria as they had to employ them in evaluating their peers. On average, they believed that they had improved their learning skills and develop better thinking skills in various aspects: problem-solving, analyzing, and evaluating. While several seemed doubtful, most thought that they had substantially improved their communication skills as they shared their ideas and negotiated on issues during the team work sessions and while they gave and took feedback and comments from others after the presentations.

Student 1: *It helps me improve my English level and I have a better understanding of my shortcomings.*

Student 3: *As far as I'm concerned, owing to the peer evaluation, I can obtain some comments and suggestions from my friends, which is beneficial for me to know the drawbacks and aspects that need to be improved during the presentation. Moreover, I'm able to learn from my friends' strengths and make up for my own deficiency for future presentation.*

Student 6: *Peer assessment helps to increase students' confidence, encourage us to involve in discussions and develop communication skills. The experience I have got on peer assessment is great. The criteria for each element are set up and clearly communicated and it helps me to learn how to analyze and evaluate ideas and performances.*

Student 10: *I pay more attention to others' performances now. Sometimes, their problems are the same as mine. Finding a solution for others is equal to finding a way out for my problems.*

Student 16: *I believe that it will be useful for my professional career in the future because it assists me to be familiar with professional performance evaluation and to overcome the subjective opinions, just focusing on the content to be evaluated not on the person.*

Student 18: *When I assess my friends, I have to pay attention to the speakers, focus on them and take notes on important points. It helps me clearly understand the materials rather than just listening.*

Practicality and fairness of the practices

During the focus group session when asked about practicality and fairness of the practices, several students voiced their concerns about the issues of fair evaluation and the demands of time and efforts required for valid and reliable evaluation. They were concerned that some evaluators might not spend enough time and efforts to make well-justified comments that would prove truly useful for their peers.

Student 1: *It takes a lot of time and it is necessary that you must clearly understand the criteria to do it correctly.*

Student 4: *It is very unpleasant if you make mistakes in giving your comments so you must pay careful attention and write it well so it will be useful. You need to spend a lot of time writing and rechecking your comments.*

Student 13: *I find it a time-consuming and energy-consuming work to do because you will have to think carefully and give your comments very thoroughly.*

Personal constraints and limitations

On the issues of personal constraints and limitations, some participants expressed their anxiety as evaluators. Some were worried about using the improper tone or inaccurate diction in giving comments and being unable to initiate useful suggestions for their peers. Some expressed their lack of confidence in complete understanding of the presentations which might be caused by their inadequate knowledge of the topics or poor listening skills. Several participants were frustrated as they felt that some

of their peers might not be qualified to evaluate others as they lacked the cognitive and language competence. Few participants raised the issues of interpersonal relationships and Asian culture where directly evaluating and criticizing others were deemed impertinent and may cause unnecessary emotional strain or conflicts among peers.

Student 5: *Actually, this kind of evaluation is good but if some students are not getting along well with others, this would be a tool to judge others negatively.*

Student 8: *Some students already paid attention to others' presentations; however, they were still confused with the content. This makes the peer assessment to be lacking on validity.*

Student 10: *It would negatively affect the presenters if you give inappropriate evaluation on them. Some evaluators might not be qualified to give the evaluation. Asian people tend to get upset to say anything negative about others and we feel uncomfortable evaluating others.*

Student 13: *Because of their different language levels, it might be a better way to finish peer assessment and then select a capable and just member among the team to make assessment on the presentations. Some are too subjective, and they ignore the main parts of the evaluation which they should emphasize.*

Student 15: *In my opinion, some comments are just to give compliments without any real feedback or comments. I think our friends maybe don't want to make us upset.*

Student 17: *Teachers are the most professional evaluators as most students believe so. Students would like to be evaluated by their teachers. Students are not used to peer assessment and they may have mixed feelings about this even though there are some advantages in doing this.*

Participants shared their suggestions on some adjustments required to make the peer assessment experiences more positive and productive. Most pointed out the importance of the preparation process and believed that more repeated practice sessions would help familiarize all students with the evaluation criteria as well as the evaluation procedures. Furthermore, more than half believed that tutoring on the target language appropriate for giving constructive criticisms and extensive discussion on the psychological impacts of giving and taking feedback and comments would be advantageous and help heighten the much-needed confidence in many.

5. DISCUSSION

It can be concluded from the findings of the study that peer assessment activities as part of team-based learning classroom practices are perceived as effective in fostering learners' positive learning skills and potentially beneficial in the development of their soft skills. Peer assessment with the accompanying valuable feedback was deemed advantageous to all learners in increasing the quality of their work in general as well as raising the awareness of their own learning strategies and limitations. Additionally, together with their peers through teamwork experiences, they managed to build on their confidence in communication skills. As they had to stay focused and paid attention to all evaluation criteria while evaluating others, learners believed they had effectively developed self-reflecting and critical thinking skills.

To sum up, the study yielded similar results as those reported by Sridharan & Boud (2019), Gielan et al. (2010); and Langan et al. (2008) as it confirmed the effectiveness of peer assessment and peer feedback on the enhancement of learners' knowledge, cognitive as well as critical thinking skills and autonomy.

Unsurprisingly, with no high stake involved, most concerns observed and reported stemmed from or revolved around personal factors such as sense of insecurity, language anxiety, social status and cultural perspectives. Comparable results were reported by Nawas (2020) and Sridharan et al. (2018).

6. RECOMMENDATIONS AND PRACTICAL IMPLICAIONS

As a case study based on a small group of participants with rather unique contexts, this study may lack in generalizability and representativeness. It was the sincere belief on the part of the researcher that the study may contribute some insights into classroom practices where similar approach, activities or other aspects apply.

Based on the results of the study, some recommendations are drawn for implementing effective peer assessment in team-based learning classroom and further study or future work in this area.

1. Preparatory sessions are essential. Instructors must make unrestricted efforts to prepare their learners for not only the team-based learning classroom but also all relevant tasks and activities involved. Ensuring the learners' comprehension of lesson topics and content prior to class is as crucial as preparing them to perform their roles efficiently as team members and proficiently as evaluators. For peer assessment with valuable feedback, learners must be provided with detailed explanation of steps to take in self-preparation as well as proper dispositions as evaluators. Discussions on possible psychological impact or challenges are necessary. For example, differences between positively negative comments and negatively positive comments should be clarified and debated. Discussions and suggestions on favorable and productive ways of taking criticisms and comments as feedback must be thoroughly explored.

2. Language input and simulation in providing feedback both vocally and in writing can be critical to enhance learning outcomes, create professional performance evaluation skills and foster collegiality among learners. If needed, instructors should prepare a tutoring session focusing on the vocabulary and expressions useful in making constructive criticisms and the proper strategies in writing constructive comments. Learners with different language competence may vary in their needs for language tutoring and repetition of practice sessions.

3. Further exploration of the interactions between variables (age and gender) and others such as social status and cultural perspectives may yield more insight in the successful adoption and application of peer assessment in team-based learning classroom where learners significantly differ.

4. The effects of different preparation procedures in terms of detailed procedures and repetition of practice sessions may prove interesting for future study as they will assist in lesson planning and instructional strategies.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Linchong Chorrojprasert: Assistant Professor in the MA ELT and PhD ELT programs, Graduate School of Human Sciences at Assumption University of Thailand. Her educational credentials comprise degrees in Arts (English), American Literature, Higher Education and Community College and Educational Science, from Thailand, USA, Belgium, and Australia. Her areas of interest include research methodology, teacher training, curriculum design and educational assessment.

REFERENCES

Aryadoust, V. (2017). Understanding the role of likeability in the peer assessments of university students' oral presentation skills: A latent variable approach. *Language Assessment Quarterly*, *14*(4), 398-419.

Brown, H. D., & Abeywickrama, P. (2019). *Language assessment: Principles and classroom practices*. (3rd Ed). Pearson.

Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2018). *Research methods in education* (8th ed.). Routledge.

Council of Europe. (2001). *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment*. https://rm.coe.int/1680459f97

Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (5th ed.). Sage.

Creswell, J. W., & Plano Clark, V. L. (2018). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research* (3rd ed.). Sage.

Gielen, S., Dochy, F., & Onghena, P. (2011). An inventory of peer assessment diversity. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, *36*(2), 137-155.

Gielen, S., Peeters, E., Dochy, F., Onghena, P., & Struyven, K. (2010). Improving the effectiveness of peer feedback for learning. *Learning and Instruction*, *20*, 304-315.

Haidet, P., Levine, R. E., Parmelee, D.X., Crow, S., Kennedy, F., Kelly, P.A., Perkowski, L., Michaelsen, L. K., & Richards, B. F. (2012). Perspective: Guidelines for reporting team-based learning activities in the medical and health sciences education literature. *Acad Med*, *87*(3), 292-299

Johnson, R. B., Onwuegbuzie, A. J., & Turner, L. A. (2007). Toward a definition of mixed methods research. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, *1*(2), 112–133.

Langan, A. M., Shuker, D. M., Cullen, W. R., Penney, D., Preziosi, R. F., & Wheater, C. P. (2008). Relationships between student characteristics and self-, peer and tutor evaluations of oral presentations. Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, *33*(2), 179-190.

Michaelsen, L. K., Knight, A. B., & Fink, L. D. (Eds.). (2002). *Team-based learning: A transformative use of small groups.* Greenwood Publishing Group.

Michaelsen, L. K., & Sweet, M. (2008). The essential elements of team-based learning. *New Directions for Teaching and Learning*, *116*, 7-27.

Nawas, A. (2020). Grading anxiety with self and peer-assessment: A mixed method study in an Indonesian EFL context. *Issues in Educational Research*, *30*(1), 224-244.

Newell, C., & Bain, A. (2018). *Team-based collaboration in higher education learning and teaching*. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-13-1855-9_4

Prins, F., Sluijsmand, D., & Kirschner, P. A. (2006). Feedback for general practitioners in training: Quality, styles and preferences. *Advances in Health Sciences Education*, *11*, 289-303.

Privitera, G. J., & Ahlgrim-Delzell, L. (2019). *Research methods for education*. Sage.

Schmidt, H.G., Rotgans, J.I., Rajalingam, P., & Low-Beer, N. (2019). A psychological foundation for Team-based learning: Knowledge reconsolidation. *Acad Med, 94*, 1878-1883.

Simons, H. (2009). *Case study research in practice*. Sage

Sridharan, B., & Boud, D. (2019). The effects of peer judgements on teamwork and self-assessment ability in collaborative group work. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, *44*(6), 894-909.

Sridharan, B., Tai, J., & Boud, D. (2018). Does the use of summative peer assessment in collaborative group work inhibit good judgement? *Higher Education.*
https://eprints.mdx.ac.uk/25805/1/Accepted%20version%20B%2CT%26B%20Summative%20peer%20assessment%20Higher%20Education%202018.pdf

Tight, M. (2010). The curious case of case study: A viewpoint. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, *13*(4), 329-339.

Topping, K. J. (2009). Peer assessment. *Theory into Practice*, *48*, 20-27.

Topping, K. J. (2013). Peers as a source of formative and summative assessment. In J.H. Mcmillan (Ed.), *Sage handbook of research on classroom assessment* (pp. 395-412). Sage.

Topping, K. J. (2019). *Using peer assessment to inspire reflection and learning*. Routledge.

World Economic Forum. (2020). *The future of jobs report 2020.*
https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/10/top-10-work-skills-of-tomorrow-how-long-it-takes-to-learn-them/

UNESCO International Bureau of Education. (2013). *IBE glossary of curriculum terminology*.
http://www.ibe.unesco.org/fileadmin/user_upload/Publications/IBE_GlossaryCurriculumTerminology2013_eng.pdf

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). (2018). *Skills for a connected world*.
https://en.unesco.org/sites/default/files/unesco-mlw2018-concept-note-en.pdf

van Woerkom, M. & Croon, M. (2009). The relationships between team learning activities and team performance. *Personnel Review*, *38*(5), 560-577.

Vaughan, B., Yoxall, J., & Grace, S. (2019). Peer assessment of teamwork in group projects: Evaluation of a rubric. *Issues in Educational Research*, *29*(3), 961-978.