The Use of Peer Assessment and Non-Scripted Role-Play Activities in Improving Thai EFL High School Students' English Oral Performance

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Article information	Abstract
	This study explored the effectiveness of integrating peer assessment (PA) and non-scripted role-play (NSRP) activities in enhancing the oral performance of Thai EFL high school students. Conducted at a public secondary school in Bangkok, the research involved 31 Grade 12 students and utilized a mixed methods approach. Over nine weeks within the "Research Methods and Presentation Skills" course, the intervention included training sessions, a speaking rubric, an attitude questionnaire, and semi-structured interviews. Data analysis encompassed quantitative methods like t-tests and qualitative methods such as thematic analysis. The findings demonstrated that PA and NSRP activities significantly enhanced oral performance by fostering speaking skills, cultural competence, and self-awareness. NSRP activities improved speaking complexity, accuracy, and fluency through real-life communication scenarios, enhancing motivation via authentic interactions. PA complemented NSRP by promoting collaborative learning, self-reflection, and critical self-evaluation. Pedagogically, effective implementation of PA and NSRP aligned with communicative language teaching principles integrated digital literacy, and accommodated learner diversity.

INTRODUCTION

Assessment plays a crucial role in shaping educational practices, particularly in fostering continuous student development and learning. Within the area of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education, formative assessment stands out as a crucial tool for enhancing language acquisition and performance in the long term (Dixson & Worrell, 2016; Harrison et al., 2016; Lin, 2012). Formative assessment, through methods such as peer assessment (PA), not only provides constructive feedback but also promotes a collaborative learning environment where students actively engage in evaluating and improving their peers' language skills (Brown, 2004; Green, 2013; Kasch et al., 2022). PA has accumulated significant attention in educational research, particularly its potential to enhance students' language abilities and sense of responsibility (Everhard, 2015; Patri, 2002; Yunella, 2017). Despite challenges like varying

Language proficiency levels and concerns about anonymity (Saito, 2008), effective training can empower students to become proficient peer evaluators (Yunella, 2017). Moreover, PA complements traditional teacher-centered assessments by encouraging student autonomy and shared responsibility in the learning process (Everhard, 2015).

In Thai high school EFL education, students face unique challenges that hinder their oral competence, including speaking anxiety, which reduces confidence and participation (Akkakoson, 2016; Pruksaseat, 2022). Traditional teaching methods focused on grammar and memorization further limit their ability to engage in real-life communication (Rajani Na Ayuthaya & Sitthitikul, 2016; Tan & Phairot, 2018), while linguistic interference from Thai (L1) causes errors in grammar and fluency (Sermsook et al., 2017; Watcharapunyawong & Usaha, 2013). Limited exposure to authentic English also restricts opportunities for practice (Prapunta, 2017). To address these issues, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), which emphasizes meaningful interaction and authentic language use, and Non-Scripted Role-Play (NSRP) activities, which simulate real-life conversations, have been introduced to enhance students' speaking skills (Akmal, 2018; Asriyani et al., 2019; Canale & Swain, 1980; Ku, 2015; Littlewood, 1981; Savignon, 1976; Suryani, 2015). These activities also foster collaborative learning environments where students engage in meaningful interactions and develop critical communication skills necessary for real-world applications (Krebt, 2017; Phuetphon et al., 2012; Rodpradit, 2013). By reducing anxiety and promoting students' willingness to communicate, CLT and NSRP activities help shift the focus from grammar-based instruction to real-world competence, improving fluency and overall outcomes (Chaya & Inpin, 2020). To maximize impact, educational reforms should emphasize teacher training, curriculum revisions, and supportive learning environments that encourage risk-taking in language use (Noom-ura, 2013; Sinwongsuwat & Nicoletti, 2020).

Despite extensive research on PA and NSRP activities individually, little has been explored regarding their combined impact on high school EFL students' oral performance. This study aims to address this gap by investigating how the integration of PA and NSRP activities influences Thai EFL high school students' oral English performance. Specifically, this research employs a mixed-methods approach to gather quantitative data through pre- and post-tests, an attitude questionnaire, and qualitative insights through interviews, aiming to provide actionable recommendations for optimizing EFL teaching practices. The research findings have significant potential to inform EFL teaching strategies in global contexts by demonstrating the adaptability of PA and NSRP activities. These strategies can enhance students' oral communication skills and promote collaborative learning, making them relevant across diverse educational settings. Moreover, the study supports evidence-based practices, encouraging teachers to implement effective methods that meet the communicative needs of learners worldwide. Overall, the insights gained can guide curriculum development and improve language acquisition for students in various contexts. As a result, this study seeks to address the following questions:

1. How do peer assessment and non-scripted role-play activities influence Thai EFL high school students' oral English performance?
2. What are Thai EFL high school students' perceptions of peer assessment and non-scripted role-play activities?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Integration of NSRP activities and PA in language education

The integration of NSRP activities and PA in language education has gained significant attention for its potential to enhance students' oral communication skills. NSRP activities are characterized by their emphasis on spontaneity and creativity, allowing learners to engage in real-time interactions without pre-established scripts. This pedagogical approach promotes active language utilization, fostering problem-solving abilities and fluency (Bora, 2020). Effective NSRP activities typically involve key stages: introducing objectives, assigning roles, brainstorming, and conducting debriefing discussions, which collectively contribute to a comprehensive learning experience (Hervia, 2016; Samsibar & Naro, 2018). In parallel, PA is a structured process wherein peers evaluate each other's work based on predefined criteria, enhancing understanding of assessment standards and promoting deeper engagement (Musfirah, 2019; Romadhona et al., 2023).

Framework and phases of NSRP activities

In the initial phase of NSRP activities, teachers set the context and objectives by providing scenarios that guide student interactions (Hervia, 2016). This preparatory stage is crucial for effective communication. Students are then encouraged to brainstorm and prepare their dialogues, thereby enhancing their critical thinking while maintaining the spontaneity that NSRP promotes (Dewi, 2014). The absence of scripted dialogues compels students to rely on their linguistic resources, which enhances their communicative competence (Saptari et al., 2022).

During the role-play, the focus shifts to natural interaction, prioritizing fluency over grammatical precision (Akmal, 2018). Teachers monitor these interactions, providing guidance and feedback to ensure productivity (Romadhona et al., 2023). This monitoring phase is vital for identifying areas of improvement and delivering constructive feedback (Hung, 2018). The debriefing session is essential, as it allows students to reflect on their experiences and discuss effective strategies and challenges faced (Bora, 2020). This reflective practice reinforces learning and promotes a deeper understanding of their language use (Fauzan, 2016). Encouraging subsequent practice through additional role-plays is essential to consolidate learning outcomes (Rosmayanti et al., 2023).

Incorporating PA in NSRP activities

Integrating PA into NSRP activities enriches the learning environment by fostering collaboration and accountability in performance assessment. The implementation of PA typically follows a multi-phase framework: preparation, training, implementation, reflection, and follow-up (Huang, 2020). The preparation phase establishes clear objectives and communicates assessment criteria to students (van der Meij et al., 2020). During the training phase, students learn PA concepts, purposes, and examples of effective feedback (Wijayanti et al., 2023).

This training equips students to provide constructive feedback, thus enhancing the quality of the assessment process (Cho, 2015).

During implementation, students assess each other using set criteria, fostering accountability and ownership of their learning (Krebt, 2017; Nikijuluw, 2022). Facilitating discussions around feedback is crucial for understanding different perspectives and encouraging constructive criticism (Dewi et al., 2020; Edstrom, 2013). The reflection phase allows students to review the feedback received and consider improvements to their speaking skills (Huisman et al., 2019). Research has consistently demonstrated the effectiveness of PA in improving speaking abilities and fostering collaboration (Fauzan, 2016; Hung, 2018).

Challenges and gaps in existing research

While the integration of PA complements teacher assessment, challenges such as potential bias in peer feedback and students' confidence in their assessment abilities can arise (Winstone et al., 2017). Educators must provide clear training on the assessment process to establish trust and promote constructive feedback (Harrison et al., 2016). Despite the growing literature on NSRP activities and PA, significant gaps remain in understanding their combined impact on language education. Few studies have examined how these methodologies can be effectively integrated to enhance students' oral communication skills, presenting an opportunity for further investigation into their potential synergistic effects on language learning experiences.

In conclusion, the integration of NSRP activities and PA offers a promising approach to enhancing oral communication skills in language education. The interactive nature of these methods fosters active participation and deeper language understanding among students. However, educators must address the challenges of PA and establish a clear framework for its integration to promote student engagement and the development of essential language skills.

METHODOLOGY

Study design

This study employed a mixed-methods approach, integrating both quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques to address the research questions comprehensively. The instruments utilized included pre- and post-tests to evaluate students' English oral performance, training sessions, a speaking rubric, an inventory assessing students' attitudes toward PA and NSRP activities, and semi-structured interviews. This mixed-methods framework facilitated the triangulation of quantitative and qualitative data, allowing for a nuanced understanding of the effects of PA and NSRP activities on students' oral performance. By combining numerical performance metrics from the pre- and post-tests with qualitative insights gathered from interviews and attitude inventories, the study captured not only the measurable outcomes but also the perceptions and experiences of the students. This approach provided a richer understanding of the intervention's impact on their learning motivation and engagement.

The course titled "Research Methods and Presentation Skills" was specifically designed for Grade 12 students at a public high school in Bangkok. Its goal was to equip students with essential research skills, critical thinking, data analysis, and effective communication strategies. The curriculum also prepared students for university entrance interviews and English proficiency tests, such as IELTS, with a focus on presentation skills.

This course was designed for five classes in the English Program, all taught by a single instructor (the lead researcher). When the lead researcher was assigned to teach the course in the 2020 academic year, the head teacher of the English Program gave the lead researcher the freedom to design the course content and teaching methods. The lead researcher independently developed the course, and both the lesson plans and syllabus were approved by the head teacher.

Additionally, the lead researcher took the opportunity to integrate a research project into the course and received approval from the head teacher. The research data for this study was collected in December 2023, after the lead researcher had already taught the course for two years. The course design and academic ethics were reviewed and approved by experts and the university's Institutional Review Board (IRB). Since all five classes were taught by the same instructor, the course and related activities did not disrupt the students' regular lessons, as they were aligned with the course content and research design.

Integrating PA and NSRP activities within this course is particularly relevant, as these methodologies foster collaborative learning environments and enhance students' oral communication skills—key elements for effective presentations. The learning outcomes of the course include improved confidence in public speaking, an enhanced ability to provide and receive constructive feedback, and the development of critical thinking skills through peer interactions. Engaging in conversational activities, such as interviews and dialogues, enables students to practice diverse scenarios, further enriching their speaking skills and critical thinking.

The study was implemented in three distinct phases: pre-implementation, implementation, and post-implementation, spanning nine weeks with two weekly periods (100 minutes each). Prior to the implementation, the rubric, lesson plans, and content for NSRP activities were validated by experts and approved by Institutional Review Boards (IRB).

In the pre-implementation phase, the first week involved administering a speaking skills pre-test by the lead researcher and a qualified native English speaker with relevant teaching experience. This was followed by an introduction to role-play activities (structured and non-structured) and training on the evaluation rubric in the second week. During this phase, the lead researcher acted as both instructor and trainer.

During the six-week implementation phase, students participated in two conversational activities. The first three weeks focused on interviews, while the subsequent three weeks centered on dialogues, each with distinct objectives and topics. Students were randomly paired and alternated roles to simulate real-life conversations. Their performances were evaluated using the Oral Performance Assessment Rubric, with students assessing each other's performances

and discussing topics before speaking when selected. Each student's PA sheets were collected after every session to ensure attentiveness.

After implementation, a post-speaking test was administered by the same native English speaker and the lead researcher. A questionnaire was then distributed to collect quantitative data. Additionally, eight students were interviewed by the lead researcher to clarify questionnaire items and obtain further feedback. See Table 1 for more information.

Table 1

The implementation phases

Phase	Week	Content	Period
Pre-implementation	1	Speaking Test (pre-test)	2
	2	Introduction of the activities: SRP activities and NSRP activities, and 2 different styles: Interviews & Dialogues	1
		The training of using the rubrics for PA.	1

Implementation	3	**NSRP activities (Week 3 to Week 8)**
		Interview 1 Giving Personal Information
		    I. Special skills and talents
		    II. Favorite subjects and extracurricular activities
		Oral Performance Assessment Rubric
			2

	4	***Interview 2 Understanding of the school***
		    I. Knowledge of the chosen major
		    II. Plans after graduation
		Oral Performance Assessment Rubric
			2

	5	***Interview 3 Preparing for University Life***
		    I. Transportation options to the university
		    II. Accommodation choices near the university
		Oral Performance Assessment Rubric
			2

	6	***Dialogue 1 High School Life***
		    I. Recommending a good restaurant on campus
		    II. Asking for directions to a specific place on campus
		Oral Performance Assessment Rubric
			2

	7	**NSRP activities:**
		Dialogue 2 Giving Academic Advice
		    I. Giving advice on selecting a specific class, course, or teacher
		    II. Asking about strategies to pass the English exam)
		Oral Performance Assessment Rubric
			2

	8	**NSRP activities:**
		Dialogue 3 Socializing
		    I. Asking about weekend plans
		    II. Preparing for a school trip
		Oral Performance Assessment Rubric
			2

Post-implementation	9	• Speaking Test (post-test) • PA and NSRP Activities Inventory • Semi-structured interview	2

Participants

The participants for this study comprised a specific intact group of 31 Thai Grade 12 (Matthayom 6) public high school students aged 17-18 enrolled in an English Program. These

students had a minimum of 11 years of English study, consisting of 6 years in elementary school and 5 years in high school. None had previously enrolled in this course or completed a similar one, and they were unfamiliar with PA or NSRP activities. Before this study, the participants had completed a CEFR assessment in Year 11, which provided standardized information regarding their English proficiency levels. To further assess their skills, a pre-test was administered during the study.

The lead researcher secured permission from the school and organized information sessions for the participants and their parents. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, ensuring their rights and confidentiality were protected. Informed consent procedures were employed, anonymity was guaranteed, and secure data storage was implemented. Cultural sensitivities were respected throughout the study, and ethical approval was obtained. Continuous monitoring ensured adherence to ethical standards, and the participants received feedback and debriefing upon the study's conclusion.

Research instruments

The study employed the following research instruments for data collection and analysis: (1) oral performance assessment rubric, (2) English oral performance tests (pre- and post-tests), (3) NSRP Activities: interviews and dialogues, (4) PA and NSRP activities inventory, and (5) semi-structured interview questions. To address ethical concerns, the lead researcher explained the study's objectives and requirements before data collection.

Oral performance assessment rubric

The lead researcher designed the oral performance assessment rubric to be user-friendly and meet the study's requirements for the evaluation of the students' English-speaking proficiency levels and performance. It includes key indicators such as fluency, pronunciation, accuracy, content (Phisutthangkoon, 2012; Suphan, 2020), and quality of interaction (Young, 2011), each rated on a scale from 1 to 4, with a total score of 20. These indicators are integral to the course outcomes as they assess essential aspects of effective communication. Fluency reflects students' ability to express ideas smoothly, aligning to develop spontaneous speaking skills. Pronunciation and Accuracy ensure clarity and correctness in communication, promoting linguistic competence. Content evaluation fosters critical engagement with topics, while the Quality of Interaction encourages meaningful exchanges, ultimately enhancing interpersonal communication skills. Together, these criteria support the overarching goal of preparing students for real-world communication challenges. To ensure the rubric's accuracy and appropriateness, three experts reviewed it using the Item Objective Congruence (IOC) Index, requiring each item to achieve an IOC value of 0.5 or greater for acceptance. Adjustments were made as necessary. The reliability of the rubric was confirmed through a positive correlation between students' speaking scores, validating its effectiveness (See Appendix A for more details).

English oral performance tests

The English Oral Performance Tests were designed to measure the students' speaking performance across various proficiency levels. Administered to 31 students, the comprehensibility of the

questions and the time requirements were carefully verified beforehand. The tests were conducted by two examiners: a native English speaker with relevant qualifications and experience in language assessment alongside the lead researcher. Including a native speaker was crucial, as their expertise provided an authentic evaluation of the students' speaking abilities, offering insights into natural language use, pronunciation, and cultural nuances that non-native speakers might not fully capture. Moreover, three experts validated the test questions and objectives using the IOC Index. Each item required an IOC value of at least 0.5 to be satisfactory, with adjustments made for any item that did not meet this criterion (See Appendix B for more details).

NSRP activities

The "Research Methods and Presentation Skills" course was divided into midterm and final exam sections. The midterm section aimed at enhancing speaking and presentation skills through NSRP activities. As aforementioned, the participants engaged in interviews and dialogues for two 50-minute periods weekly for 6 weeks. NSRP activities were verified by four experts using the IOC Index. The process of doing NSRP activities is listed as follows:

1. Random Pairing: Students were paired randomly.
2. Role Switching: Students alternated roles between interviewer/interviewee and dialogue initiator/responder.
3. Brief Discussion: One-minute discussions before performing.
4. Role-playing: The paired students had to role-play their characters according to the roles and the scenario they got at least 1 minute to 1.5 minutes.
5. Performance Evaluation: Peer-evaluated using the Oral Performance Assessment Rubric.
6. Grading Sheet Collection: Regular performance scores from the participants were collected every time.

PA and NSRP activities inventory

The PA and NSRP Activities Inventory gathered students' opinions on PA and NSRP activities. It comprised ten personal background questions and twenty-five statements on a 5-point Likert scale. It was developed primarily by the lead researcher, incorporating original elements and adaptations based on existing research. The structure and content were carefully designed to address the specific needs of the study while being informed by established methodologies in educational assessment. The choice of a 5-point scale was based on findings from Adelson and McCoach (2010) and Chyung et al. (2017), as it reduces exaggerated responses and provides a midpoint for neutrality. Administered through Google Forms, the questionnaire's content validity was assessed by three experts, and it was piloted with 30 students. A Cronbach's alpha coefficient of around 0.70 indicated high internal consistency.

Semi-structured interview questions

Semi-structured interviews were conducted to gather in-depth information on the implementation of the course. Eight students were selected based on their voluntary participation. The interview

questions covered a range of topics, including course objectives, teaching methods, NSRP activities, PA, and evaluation criteria, and allowed for additional comments. Three experts validated the interview questions using the IOC Index, ensuring a minimum IOC value of 0.5 for acceptability.

Procedures

The pre-implementation phase, which spanned the first two weeks, included conducting a speaking test as a pre-test to gauge initial speaking performance in the first week. In the second week, SRP and NSRP activities were introduced. SRP activities were served to help the participants become familiar with role-playing patterns. NSRP activities, encompassing two styles, interviews and dialogues, were accompanied by the introduction, samples, and explanations. Moreover, the use of the Oral Performance Assessment Rubric for PA was practiced in this phase.

As the study moved into the implementation phase from the third to the eighth week, specific NSRP activities—Interviews and Dialogues—were conducted sequentially each week to enhance oral proficiency. Alongside these activities, an Oral Performance Assessment Rubric was consistently applied to evaluate student performances in every class.

In the ninth week, a speaking test was administered as a post-test to evaluate the impact of the implemented activities on the students' oral proficiency. Additionally, an inventory of PA and NSRP activities was compiled, and semi-structured interviews were conducted to gather qualitative insights from the participants.

Throughout these phases, the research stages were chronologically integrated:

1. **Stage 1: Development of the research instruments** - This stage was completed before the pre-implementation phase to design and develop the necessary instruments for data collection.
2. **Stage 2: IOC Experts Validation** - Occurred after the development stage and before the implementation phase to ensure the content validity and practicality of the research instruments.
3. **Stage 3: Ethics Review for Research Involving Human Subjects** - Conducted after the validation stage and before the implementation phase to ensure ethical standards were met.
4. **Stage 4: Pilot Study** - Implemented after the ethics review and validation stages, involving Grade 12 students for four weeks to test and refine the research instruments.
5. **Stage 5: Data Collection for the real study** - Initiated after the pilot study and carried out throughout the implementation phase for nine weeks to gather comprehensive data from various sources.
6. **Stage 6: Data Analysis** - Conducted after the data collection phase to analyze the gathered data.
7. **Stage 7: Data Report** - Prepared after the analysis phase to interpret findings, discuss implications, and prepare presentations for dissemination.

Data analysis

The pre-test and post-test provided a comprehensive assessment of the students' improvement in English oral performance. Using the Oral Performance Assessment Rubric, the study measured content, accuracy, fluency, pronunciation, and quality of interaction. This systematic approach evaluated the effectiveness of PA and NSRP activities over time. T-tests enabled a quantitative comparison of pre-test and post-test scores, providing valuable data on the interventions' overall effectiveness. Additionally, the Pearson Correlation Coefficient ensured consistency between two assessors, enhancing the reliability of the evaluation process and strengthening the rubric.

Next, the attitude questionnaire served as another crucial method to capture the students' perceptions of PA and NSRP activities. Descriptive statistics like mean and standard deviation provided insights into the general attitudes held by students towards these educational interventions. Additionally, correlation analysis explored potential connections between students' attitudes and their oral performance outcomes. This method quantified the overall attitude, offering nuanced perspectives on how attitudes might influence learning outcomes.

Moreover, semi-structured interviews provided additional insights into the students' personal experiences and perceptions of the PA and NSRP activities, complementing the quantitative data. Through content analysis of interview transcripts, common themes and variations in perceptions emerged. This qualitative approach provided rich, context-specific insights into how students perceived the activities, helping to contextualize the quantitative data obtained from the attitude questionnaire. Together, these methods created a robust framework for evaluating the comprehensive impact of PA and NSRP activities on students' English oral performance and perceptions.

RESULTS

RQ1: How do peer assessment and non-scripted role-play activities influence Thai EFL high school students' oral English performance?

Table 2 illustrates the pre-test and post-test results, with a sample size of 31 participants.

Table 2
Findings of oral performance pre-test and post-test scores

Tests	*N*	Min.	Max.	Range	Mean	*SD*	Mean Difference	*t*	*df*	Sig. (2-tailed)	*d*
Pre-test	31	11	19	8	15.61	2.08	2.1	-6.71	30	.000*	1.74
Post-test	31	13	20	7	17.71	1.79					

p* < .01

Results revealed a significant improvement in oral performance from the pre-test (M = 15.61, SD = 2.08) to the post-test (M = 17.71, SD = 1.79), as indicated by a mean difference of 2.1 (t = -6.71, df = 30, p < .001). Pre-test scores ranged from 11 to 19, while post-test scores ranged from 13 to 20. The effect size (Cohen's d = 1.74) suggests a large effect, underscoring the practical significance of the improvement observed. These findings suggest that the PA and NSRP activities implemented between the pre-test and post-test enhanced oral performance among the participants.

Table 3 provides a comprehensive overview of pre-test and post-test scores across different criteria of oral performance, namely content, accuracy, fluency, pronunciation, and quality of interaction. Each criterion shows notable improvements following the intervention, reflecting positive outcomes in language proficiency development.

Table 3
Findings of different criteria from pre-test and post-test

Tests	N	Min.	Max.	Range	Mean	SD	Mean Difference	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	d
Content											
Pre-test	31	2	4	2	3.10	0.49	0.30	-3.71	30	<.001	0.46
Post-test	31	2.5	4	1.5	3.40	0.43					
Accuracy											
Pre-test	31	2.5	4	1.5	3.08	0.43	0.24	-3.03	30	.005	0.45
Post-test	31	2	4	2	3.32	0.42					
Fluency											
Pre-test	31	2	4	2	3.07	0.72	0.43	-4.12	30	<.001	0.59
Post-test	31	2.5	4	1.5	3.50	0.52					
Pronunciation											
Pre-test	31	2.5	4	1.5	3.23	0.36	0.43	-6.75	30	<.001	0.36
Post-test	31	3	4	1	3.66	0.37					
Quality of Interaction											
Pre-test	31	2	4	2	2.94	0.47	0.63	-6.79	30	<.001	0.52
Post-test	31	2.5	4	1.5	3.57	0.40					

The quality of interaction saw substantial improvement, with scores increasing from 2.94 in the pre-test to 3.57 in the post-test. The mean difference of 0.63 (t = -6.789, p < .001) underscores a significant enhancement in the participants' ability to engage effectively in oral interactions. A moderate to large effect size (d = 0.52) indicates that the intervention positively impacted the participants' interactive skills, facilitating more meaningful and effective communication.

Fluency also showed considerable progress, as indicated by an increase from 3.07 in the pre-test to 3.50 in the post-test. The mean difference of 0.43 (t = -4.124, p < .001) highlights a substantial improvement in the participants' ability to speak fluently and coherently. A large effect size (d = 0.59) underscores the robust impact of the intervention on fluency, demonstrating significant strides in oral communication fluency.

Regarding pronunciation, the participants' scores improved from 3.23 in the pre-test to 3.66 in the post-test, reflecting enhanced articulation and clarity. The mean difference of 0.43

(t = -6.750, p < .001) indicates a considerable enhancement, supported by a moderate effect size (d = 0.36), suggesting that the intervention effectively contributed to improving the participants' pronunciation skills.

In terms of content, the participants' mean score increased from 3.10 in the pre-test to 3.40 in the post-test, indicating a measurable enhancement in their ability to convey information effectively. The significant mean difference of 0.30 (t = -3.712, p < .001) underscores the substantial improvement, supported by a moderate effect size (d = 0.46), suggesting that the intervention positively influenced content-related oral skills.

Similarly, improvements in accuracy were evident with an increase from a pre-test mean of 3.08 to a post-test mean of 3.32. The mean difference of 0.24 (t = -3.028, p = .005) signifies a noteworthy enhancement in linguistic precision and correctness. This improvement is supported by a moderate effect size (d = 0.45), indicating that the participants significantly benefited from the intervention in terms of enhancing their accuracy in oral expression.

Overall, the findings from the pre-test and post-test comparisons across these dimensions demonstrate the efficacy of the intervention in enhancing various aspects of oral proficiency among the participants. These improvements not only reflect quantitative gains but also underscore the qualitative enhancement in the participants' ability to communicate effectively and confidently in the target language contexts.

RQ2: What are Thai EFL high school students' perceptions of peer assessment and non-scripted role-play activities?

Quantitative analysis

To provide a better explanation of the following data, Table 4 illustrates four distinct subcategories within the overarching theme of perceptions: Course Alignment and Content, Non-Scripted Role-Play Activities, Peer Assessment, and Teacher's Role and Evaluation. Each subcategory is individually examined and discussed for a comprehensive analysis.

Table 4
Perceptions of PA and NSRP activities

	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Course Alignment and Content:			
1. The course objectives are clearly linked with the course content.	4.78	.43	Strongly Agree
2. The course content is suitable for my current English proficiency level.	4.71	.46	Strongly Agree
3. I find the course content interesting and engaging.	4.68	.48	Strongly Agree
4. The overall activities and exercises have practical value.	4.74	.51	Strongly Agree
5. The activities and exercises in each lesson are beneficial.	4.71	.53	Strongly Agree
6. The teaching methods employed are appropriate and effective.	4.65	.55	Strongly Agree
7. The use of rubrics enhances my learning experience.	4.55	.77	Strongly Agree
8. Analyzing examples of videos and feedback is valuable for my progress.	4.55	.85	Strongly Agree
9. I still think doing English oral presentations is difficult.	4.26	1.24	Agree
10. This course has helped improve my English oral presentation skills.	4.68	.54	Strongly Agree
11. This course has proven to be useful and beneficial.	4.81	.40	Strongly Agree

	Mean	*SD*	Interpretation
Non-Scripted Role-Play Activities:			
12. Non-scripted role-play activities are valuable for improving my oral presentation skills.	4.58	.56	Strongly Agree
13. I feel confident when engaging in non-scripted role-play activities.	4.55	.77	Strongly Agree
14. Non-scripted role-play is an essential training method in an oral presentation course.	4.77	.43	Strongly Agree
15. Non-scripted role-play requires a certain level of proficiency.	4.65	.61	Strongly Agree
16. Non-scripted role-play presents valuable challenges for learning.	4.77	.43	Strongly Agree
Peer Assessment:			
17. I feel confident when participating in peer assessment.	4.52	.77	Strongly Agree
18. Peer assessment plays a significant role in an oral presentation course.	4.68	.48	Strongly Agree
19. Engaging in peer assessment can be challenging but rewarding.	4.65	.49	Strongly Agree
20. Receiving peer feedback is beneficial to my growth.	4.71	.78	Strongly Agree
Teacher's Role and Evaluation:			
21. The teacher demonstrates adequate preparation of the lessons.	4.71	.53	Strongly Agree
22. The teacher's teaching style is easy to understand.	4.65	.61	Strongly Agree
23. The teacher creates a positive learning environment.	4.77	.50	Strongly Agree
24. The evaluation criteria are appropriate.	4.81	.40	Strongly Agree
25. The evaluation methods utilized are suitable for assessing my progress.	4.68	.65	Strongly Agree

N = 31

Course alignment and content

The data indicates a highly positive perception of the course's alignment and content. The participants strongly agree that the course objectives are linked to the content, with a mean (*M*) score of 4.78 and a standard deviation (*SD*) of 0.43. Similarly, they perceive the course content as suitable for their current English proficiency level (*M* = 4.71, *SD* = 0.46) and engaging (*M* = 4.68, *SD* = 0.48). The overall practical value of activities and exercises is well-received (*M* = 4.74, *SD* = 0.51), as is the perceived appropriateness and effectiveness of teaching methods (*M* = 4.65, *SD* = 0.55). The participants strongly agree that the course has been valuable and beneficial, with an overall mean score of 4.81 and a low standard deviation of 0.40. However, some participants expressed difficulty with English oral presentations (*M* = 4.26, *SD* = 1.24), suggesting potential areas for targeted improvement.

Non-scripted role-play activities

The data from the NSRP Activities section indicates positive sentiments among respondents. The mean (*M*) scores for each statement are consistently high, ranging from 4.55 to 4.77, with an overall strong agreement. This suggests that the participants perceive NSRP activities as valuable for improving oral presentation skills and expressing confidence in engaging in such activities. The standard deviations (*SD*) are relatively low, ranging from 0.43 to 0.77, indicating a narrow spread of responses and a high level of agreement among the participants on the perceived benefits and importance of NSRP in oral presentation courses.

Peer assessment

The data specifies a positive perception of PA in an oral presentation course. The participants strongly agreed that they feel confident when participating in PA (M = 4.52, SD = 0.77) and believe that PA plays a significant role in the course (M = 4.68, SD = 0.48). The perception that engaging in PA can be challenging but rewarding also received strong agreement (M = 4.65, SD = 0.49). Moreover, the participants acknowledged the benefits of receiving peer feedback for their personal growth, with a mean score of 4.71 and a standard deviation of 0.78. Overall, these results suggest a high level of acceptance and recognition of the value of PA in the context of an oral presentation course.

Teacher's role and evaluation

In assessing the participants' perceptions of the teacher's role and evaluation, the data indicates strong agreement across various aspects. The teacher's demonstration of adequate lesson preparation received a mean rating of 4.71 with a standard deviation of 0.53. Similarly, the teacher's teaching style, deemed easy to understand, earned a mean score of 4.65 with a standard deviation of 0.61. The participants strongly agreed that the teacher creates a positive learning environment, as reflected in the mean score of 4.77 with a standard deviation of 0.50. Additionally, the evaluation criteria were perceived as appropriate, garnering a mean rating of 4.81 and a standard deviation of 0.40. Lastly, the participants affirmed that the evaluation methods utilized for assessing their progress were suitable, as indicated by a mean score of 4.68 with a standard deviation of 0.65. Overall, these results suggest a high level of satisfaction and positive perceptions regarding the teacher's role and evaluation in the learning environment.

Qualitative insights

To further validate student responses to the checklist items, semi-structured interviews were conducted with eight volunteers invited from the same group of participants, aiming to gain a deeper understanding of their perceptions and explore common themes and variations through pre-determined questions and opportunities for open expression.

Reflection of course objectives in content

The students recognized that the course objectives were effectively mirrored in the course content, emphasizing personal growth and self-disclosure. Activities that facilitated personal reflection and PA were particularly highlighted. For instance, Student 5 appreciated the revealing nature of PA: "*Yes, those activities I participated in reflected how I think and revealed aspects of myself to my friends.*" The clarity and relevance to future goals of the course were also noted as crucial. Student 7 found the course clear and essential for future aspirations, saying, "*Of course, this class is clear because it's crucial for my future.*" This demonstrates the dual focus on personal development and academic advancement, contributing to significant improvements in English skills, as observed by Student 2: "*I think when I followed the target, my English skills improved compared to before.*"

Suitability and challenge of course content

The students expressed diverse opinions on the course content's suitability, appreciating its balance of challenge and interest. Many found the activities engaging and appropriately challenging, which motivated them to improve their skills. Student 1 remarked, "*I think it's suitable for me and my friends because it's not too challenging. And it's so interesting.*" This sentiment was echoed by Student 8, who found the content challenging yet fitting: "*Of course, it's challenging, and it's appropriate.*" The course's effectiveness in addressing the students' needs, particularly regarding university preparation, was also noted, demonstrating its relevance and appeal.

Impact of analyzing videos and feedback

The method of analyzing videos and receiving feedback significantly impacted the students' learning, fostering self-assessment and motivation. The students appreciated the ability to observe their peers and identify areas for improvement. Student 3 emphasized the value of this approach: "*Watching video samples of others helped me think about their performances and skills in speaking.*" Noticeably, preferences for private feedback to avoid embarrassment were noted by some, as Student 7 stated, "*I believe feedback is important, but I prefer it in private.*" Despite these mixed feelings, this method was acknowledged for promoting self-awareness and skill development in speaking and fluency.

Value of NSRP activities in oral presentation skills

NSRP activities were widely valued for enhancing oral presentation skills and speaking competence, fluency, and confidence. The students highlighted these activities as pivotal in their language development. Student 6 noted, "*Those activities really pushed me to improve my speaking skills.*" The adaptability required in role-playing unfamiliar scenarios was seen as beneficial, with Student 4 stating, "*The benefit is to improve my English skills because, in role-play, the keywords are not the same as in my real life.*" Overall, NSRP activities were appreciated for their multifaceted advantages in refining oral presentation abilities.

Impact of peer feedback on speaking skills

Peer feedback was viewed as a valuable tool for improving speaking skills and fostering mutual learning and motivation. Student 5 expressed that peer feedback encouraged better performance: "*Peer feedback has motivated me to do better.*" While some students found constructive criticism beneficial, others felt intimidated or embarrassed by it, as noted by Student 2: "*Feedback is important, but sometimes it makes me feel embarrassed.*" Despite these challenges, peer feedback was recognized for providing valuable perspectives and fostering improvement. Balancing the quantity of feedback to ensure it remains constructive and manageable was highlighted as necessary for effective learning.

DISCUSSION

The implementation of PA and NSRP activities in language education has been widely recognized for its potential to enhance the students' oral proficiency. These methodologies provide immersive experiences that foster not only language skills but also cultural competence and self-awareness among learners. While they hold promise, various barriers can impede their effectiveness, particularly in diverse educational contexts.

Barriers to effective implementation

One significant barrier is cultural differences, which influence the students' receptiveness to feedback. Research suggests that the students from different cultural backgrounds may have varying expectations and norms regarding feedback, which affects their engagement with PA and overall learning outcomes (Sortkær, 2019). For example, Tornwall and Ikonen (2024) found that intentional support for international peer-to-peer communication can improve learning outcomes, but cultural capital plays a critical role in shaping how students perceive and respond to feedback. Additionally, variations in students' language proficiency can significantly affect the effectiveness of peer feedback. The students with differing language skills may struggle to both provide and receive constructive feedback, leading to misunderstandings and communication breakdowns (Kang, 2023; Kasch et al., 2022). Winstone et al. (2017) also identified challenges, such as difficulties with terminology and a lack of effort to engage with feedback, highlighting the need for training to help the students proactively receive and apply feedback.

Logistical challenges also pose significant barriers to the successful implementation of NSRP in large classrooms. Managing peer feedback in crowded settings can be challenging, requiring careful coordination to ensure all students receive adequate attention and support (Kasch et al., 2022). Furthermore, the dynamics of large groups can lead to a lack of individual accountability, where the students may feel less responsible for their contributions to PA, which can diminish the perceived value of feedback, as the students may not see the relevance of their input in a larger context (Winstone et al., 2017).

Despite their recognized benefits, some studies have reported minimal or even negative effects of PA and NSRP on student outcomes. Research by Winstone et al. (2017) indicates that barriers to feedback engagement, such as the students' emotional states and perceptions of credibility, can significantly diminish the effectiveness of feedback processes. Similarly, Harrison et al. (2016) found that cultural differences in feedback receptivity can lead to varying outcomes in different educational contexts, suggesting that the effectiveness of PA and NSRP may not be universally applicable. These findings underscore the importance of contextual factors and the need for tailored instructional strategies that consider diverse student backgrounds and needs (Harrison et al., 2016; Rajani Na Ayuthaya & Sitthitikul, 2016).

Variations in the implementation of PA and NSRP can also lead to discrepancies in student improvement. For instance, the effectiveness of peer feedback may depend on the training provided to the students in giving and receiving feedback, as well as the clarity of the assessment

criteria (Huisman et al., 2019). Studies show that when the students lack proper training, the quality of peer feedback can suffer, resulting in minimal impact on learning outcomes (Yunella, 2017). Additionally, the relationship between the students and their peers can influence feedback dynamics, with social status and friendships affecting how openly the students provide and receive feedback (Kasch et al., 2022).

The emotional and psychological aspects of feedback engagement cannot be overlooked. The students' emotional states can significantly impact their receptivity to feedback, with anxiety and fear of negative evaluation often leading to avoidance behaviors (Rajani Na Ayuthaya & Sitthitikul, 2016; Winstone et al., 2017). This emotional barrier can be particularly pronounced in diverse classrooms, where the students may feel vulnerable due to language proficiency issues or cultural differences (Harrison et al., 2016).

Benefits of PA and NSRP activities

Despite these barriers, PA and NSRP activities have proven to be powerful tools for enhancing oral performance in English language education. They are integral components of effective language education, offering the students immersive experiences that develop their oral proficiency and cultural competence. NSRP activities are recognized for their effectiveness in improving speaking skills, enhancing complexity, accuracy, and fluency (Cho, 2015), and allowing the practice of real-life communication in controlled settings, thereby fostering a deeper understanding of language use (Romadhona et al., 2023). Additionally, NSRP activities boost motivation and engagement by providing opportunities for authentic interaction and meaningful communication (Samsibar & Naro, 2018).

PA complements these benefits by promoting collaborative learning and self-reflection. Research indicates that PA helps the students identify strengths and areas for improvement in their speaking skills (Young, 2011) and encourages active participation and responsibility among learners, contributing to their overall language development (Topping, 1998). Engaging in PA allows the students to receive valuable feedback from peers and critically evaluate their performance, thereby enhancing their self-assessment skills (Everhard, 2015). Previous studies highlight the positive impact of NSRP activities on speaking skills across various proficiency levels (Asriyani et al., 2019; Cho, 2015). Despite overall efficacy, variations in student improvement underscore the importance of tailored instructional strategies to address diverse learner needs (Bocanegra Bonilla & Ramirez Valencia, 2018).

To elaborate on how PA and NSRP activities contribute to different levels of the students' improvement in oral performance, PA serves as a versatile educational tool that facilitates peer evaluation and encourages critical self-reflection (Samsibar & Naro, 2018). Aligning with communicative language teaching principles, PA promotes authentic language use and a deeper understanding of interactional norms (Samsibar & Naro, 2018). This method enhances motivation by giving the students ownership over their learning process (Galaczi & Taylor, 2018; Young, 2011) and integrates technology to improve accessibility and develop digital literacy skills (Huang, 2020; Tseng & Tsai, 2007). Similarly, NSRP activities immerse learners in realistic communication scenarios, significantly enhancing motivation and contributing to

language acquisition through meaningful interactions (Fadilah, 2016; Samsibar & Naro, 2018; Tamim, 2014). Positive perceptions of NSRP activities underscore their role in creating supportive learning environments that foster active participation and learner satisfaction (Asriyani et al., 2019; Musfirah, 2019; Romadhona et al., 2023; Suryani, 2015). These activities also enhance collaborative skills and reinforce positive learning attitudes, thereby supporting learner autonomy in language acquisition (Dörnyei & Csizér, 2005; Noonan & Duncan, 2005; Topping, 1998).

In conclusion, while PA and NSRP activities show promise in enhancing oral proficiency, their successful implementation requires careful consideration of learner diversity and educational contexts. Addressing barriers such as cultural differences, language proficiency levels, and logistical challenges is crucial. The evidence suggests that a one-size-fits-all approach may not be effective; instead, educators must consider the unique contexts and needs of their students to maximize the benefits of these methodologies. Continued research and refinement of these practices are essential for ensuring they are inclusive and effective for all learners.

PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

Effective implementation and ongoing research are crucial for refining PA and NSRP methodologies and enhancing their applicability across diverse educational settings and learner demographics (Asriyani et al., 2019; Cho, 2015). The findings provide valuable insights for improving language education practices. Integrating PA and NSRP activities within broader language curriculum frameworks enhances their effectiveness and sustainability, aligning with overarching educational goals and addressing specific learning objectives related to oral communication skills (Akmal, 2018; Dewi, 2014).

Teachers play an important role in fostering meaningful learning experiences through PA and NSRP activities, creating engaging classroom environments that promote active learning and develop the students' communicative competence (Galaczi & Taylor, 2018; Young, 2011). Collaborative efforts among educators, researchers, and policymakers are essential for promoting the widespread adoption of PA and NSRP activities in language education. Advocating for evidence-based practices and supporting professional development initiatives can significantly enhance educational outcomes and student engagement in language learning (Tsai, 2013; Tseng & Tsai, 2007).

LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE STUDIES

This study focused on investigating the effects of PA and NSRP activities on oral performance and perception among Thai EFL high school students. The study utilized one intact group of participants, chosen for their accessibility within the school environment and to ensure consistency in participant characteristics throughout the study. While this approach facilitated logistical ease and minimized variability within the study group, it also limited the generalizability of findings to broader populations with different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Moreover,

the study's relatively short duration may not fully capture the long-term impacts of PA and NSRP activities on the students' oral proficiency and perception. Future research could consider expanding the participant pool to include more diverse groups, employing randomized controlled trials or comparative designs to enhance generalizability, and conducting longitudinal studies to assess the sustained effects of these pedagogical interventions over time. These steps would provide a more comprehensive understanding of how PA and NSRP activities can be effectively integrated into EFL education to promote oral communication skills.

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Appendix A

Oral performance assessment rubric

CLASS: 6/	NO:	DATE:	ASSESSOR:
SPEAKING TOPIC:			

Students you assessed today: (Full score is <u>20</u> points)

STUDENTS											
SCORE											

	CONTENT	ACCURACY	FLUENCY	PRONUNCIATION	QUALITY OF INTERACTION
4	The information given fully and extensively matched the topic. (4)	Very accurate, no/few vocabulary and grammar mistakes. (4)	Natural flows with no/few pauses. (4)	The pronunciation is mostly clear with ease to understand. (4)	Interaction is clear, organized, and meaningful. Communication is effective and engaging, promoting a strong understanding and exchange of ideas. (4)
3	The information given adequately matched the topic. (3)	Some vocabulary and grammar mistakes do not interfere with meaning. (3)	Several pauses, but the overall flow is smooth. (3)	Some unclear pronunciations do not interfere with comprehension. (3)	Interaction is mostly clear, organized, and engaging. Communication is effective with a good mix of clarity and depth. (3)
2	The information given limitedly matched the topic. (2)	Frequent vocabulary and grammar mistakes that are difficult to understand. (2)	Frequent pauses distract listeners' attention. (2)	Frequent unclear pronunciations interfere with comprehension. (2)	Interaction shows some organization but could be more consistent. Communication is simple and might have a few unclear parts. (2)
1	The information given inadequately matched the topic. (1)	Multiple vocabulary and grammar mistakes take away meaning. (1)	No flow at all, and the pauses caused confusion. (1)	The pronunciation is largely incomprehensible. (1)	Interaction is disorganized and lacks engagement. Communication is unclear and not effective. (1)

Appendix B

English oral performance tests (pre- and post-tests)

Instruction:
1. You will have about 3 minutes to finish this test.
2. The test includes 3 parts: self-introduction, interview, and dialogue.
3. Your answer will be graded according to the rubrics.

Part 1: Self-introduction: (1 minute)

You'll briefly introduce yourself (e.g., age, nickname, nationality, hobbies).

Part 2: Interview: (1 minute)

• You will be randomly asked one question that you might encounter in the college enrollment interview.
• You will need to answer the question and some follow-up questions which are like your real-life situation.
• You will need to interact with the teacher for around 1 minute and the content must relate to the target question and some follow-up questions.

Interview Questions: [Students will not see these questions. Choose 1 question to ask them.]

A. Interview 1: Giving Personal Information
Question 1 (Special skills and talents):
Would you please tell me your special skills or talents?
Question 2 (Favorite subjects and extracurricular activities):
What is your favorite subject / extracurricular activity? Can you explain why you like it?

B. Interview 2: Understanding of the School
Question 1 (Knowledge of the chosen major):
What is your major? Why do you choose it?
Question 2 (Plans after graduation):
Where do you plan to work after graduation?

C. Interview 3: Preparing for University Life
Question 1 (Transportation options to the university):
What university do you expect to enter? How do you come to this university in the future? / Do you know how to come to this university?
Question 2 (Accommodation choices near the university):
What university do you expect to enter? Do you plan to live in the dorm, share a flat with others, or live at home? / What might be your plan to stay after entering our school?

Part 3: Dialogues: (1 minute)

- You will be randomly given one scenario.
- You will take one role assigned by the teacher.
- You will need to take turns constructing the dialogue like your real-life situation.
- You will need to interact with the teacher for around 1 minute and the content must relate to the target scenario.

Dialogue: [Students will not see this part. Choose 1 scenario and assign a role for them.]

A. Dialogue 1: High School Life
Scenario 1 (Recommending a good restaurant on campus):
Speaker A: Asking for a good restaurant on campus.
Speaker B: Giving some recommendations.
Scenario 2 (Asking for directions to a specific place on campus):
Speaker A: Asking for directions to a specific place, such as the library.
Speaker B: Showing the way.

B. Dialogue 2: Giving Academic Advice
Scenario 1 (Giving advice on selecting a specific class, course, or teacher):
Speaker A: Asking for advice on selecting a specific class, course, or teacher.
Speaker B: Giving advice accordingly.
Scenario 2 (Asking about strategies to pass the English exam):
Speaker A: Asking for strategies to pass the English exam.
Speaker B: Giving strategies.

C. Dialogue 3: Socializing
Scenario 1 (Asking about weekend plans):
Speaker A: Asking about weekend plans.
Speaker B: Giving feedback.
Scenario 2 (Preparing for a school trip):
Speaker A: Asking for suggestions on preparing for an overnight school trip.
Speaker B: Giving suggestions.