

Teachers' insights on self-assessment of multilingual students according to the CEFR

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Assessment issues are particularly sensitive, complex and demanding when they involve a second language (L2) and multilingual students who attend national schools (Ross 2006). The modern student-centered pedagogical orientation combined with the ever-increasing needs for more authentic, equitable, individualized and differentiated assessment has led to the implementation of alternative practices, including self-assessment (Andrews 2016; Butler and Lee 2010). During self-assessment students are encouraged to express their opinion on their own work and to judge the extent to which it meets predetermined goals and criteria (Panadero et al. 2016: 2). This paper presents teacher beliefs on the implementation of self-assessment in the teaching Greek as L2 in Experimental Intercultural public schools. The participants were 124 teachers who answered an e-questionnaire, while 12 of them were also interviewed. The results revealed that most teachers develop a positive attitude towards self-assessment recognizing its multiple benefits. As was also reported in previous research (e.g., Oscarson 1989; Gardner 2000), self-assessment supports the contemporary student-centered pedagogical orientation and autonomous learning while it also enhances student performance, motivation, and metacognitive skills. However, teachers continue to question their own and the student's readiness to adopt it, a finding also attested in the literature (Figueras et al. 2009).

Keywords: alternative assessment, self-assessment, second/foreign language, teacher believes, L2 Greek

1 Introduction

The term *self-assessment* (hereafter *S-A*), refers to the formative assessment process during which students contemplate on the quality of their work, judge the extent to which it reflects specific and clear goals or criteria, and revise it. In addition to its academic benefits, *S-A* also plays an important role in students' personal development. The active participation of students in their assessment has been reported to have a positive impact on their progress, enhancing deeper cognitive understanding, critical thinking skills and metacognitive development (Andrade and Valtcheva 2009).

The aim of this research is to investigate teacher beliefs regarding the implementation of *S-A* in the teaching of Greek as an L2 in state Experimental Intercultural secondary schools in Greece, mainly as a means of formative assessment of multilingual students. This article sheds light on the importance of *S-A* and its impact on the academic development of students, according to teachers' beliefs. It also explores the impact of *S-A* on students' personal development and highlights the importance of *S-A* in enhancing student self-awareness, self-confidence, self-regulation and personal development.

From the 90s onwards, the educational landscape in Greece has been constantly changing and student diversity in classrooms has increased. The growing influx of migrant and refugee waves in Greece contributed to its transformation into a multicultural country. Classes in Greek schools became socially and culturally diverse reflecting the composition of the student population (Ventouris et al. 2022), which raised the need for an educational policy towards inclusion. Thus, a ministerial decision/ Law 2413/1996 (Government Gazette 124/issue A/17-6-1996) established Intercultural schools in Greece which in 2016 were renamed as *Experimental Intercultural schools*. In Experimental Intercultural schools multilingual students can be enrolled irrespective of the particular place of stay in the area, while it is generally attempted that the student population is kept at an analogy of 40-45% of multilingual students and 60% of students with Greek as first language (L1). These schools are open to cooperation with the Greek universities by implementing on an experimental basis research and innovative programs relevant to intercultural education with the aim of preventing educational and social exclusion on racial and cultural origin grounds, a line of practice which later can be adopted to other schools in the Greek context.

The study presented in this paper is part of a broader research program (Ventouris et al. 2022) which targeted the implementation of S-A grids¹ according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) (COE 2001). The research questions that the study seeks to answer are the following:

- 1) What do teachers believe is the impact of S-A on multilingual students' performance?
- 2) Do teachers believe that S-A leads to the personal development of multilingual students?

To respond to these questions, 124 teachers in intercultural schools completed an online questionnaire. Semi-structured interviews were also conducted with a randomly selected representative sample of Greek as L2 teachers. The results presented in this paper further support previous data on the recognition of S-A as an effective practice in the education of multilingual students who are through an L2. Therefore, support and development of the integration of S-A into educational curricula and the training of teachers and students on S-A grids of the CEFR (Runnels 2013) should be encouraged to improve the learning of an L2, as well as school success.

2 Literature review

The S-A grid of CEFR (2001) illustrates the levels of proficiency described in it within 34 scales for listening comprehension, reading comprehension, spoken interaction, spoken production, and writing activities. The S-A grid, incorporated in the CEFR, encourages students to reflect on their learning experiences and assess their strengths and weaknesses. This process develops metacognitive skills, allowing students to monitor their own learning strategies (Panadero et al. 2017), identify areas that require improvement, and develop self-regulatory skills, even though low-level learners tend to overestimate themselves, while high-level learners tend to underestimate themselves (Figueras et al. 2009).

Nevertheless, developing self-confidence is vital for personal growth and future success in various aspects of life. Another important skill students can develop through S-A is the ability to take control of their learning process, i.e., the self-regulation skill. By evaluating their work based on predetermined criteria, students learn to set goals, track their progress, and adjust their strategies accordingly. Hillocks (1986), in a meta-analysis on teaching approaches, focused on composition instruction at the elementary, secondary, and college level, and found that giving students clear rating scales to assess their work improved not only their writing skills, but also their ability to self-regulate. Self-regulating students are more able to effectively manage their time, resources, and emotions, which leads to improved academic performance and personal development (Zimmerman 2019).

S-A equips students with the necessary skills for lifelong learning. By taking an active role in assessing their work, students develop the ability to recognize gaps in their knowledge and seek additional

1. <https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages/table-2-cefr-3.3-common-reference-levels-self-assessment-grid>

resources to address them (Karagkouni et al. 2023). Hargreaves et al. (2002) in their research focused on 29 students of Grade 7 and 8 in Ontario, Canada. The school system administrators identified them as being committed to implementing changes concerning curriculum integration and the researchers tried to implement alternative assessment, a part of which is S-A. According to the obtained data, the adopted self-directed learning approach which involved S-A promoted independence, adaptability, and a willingness for continuous self-improvement, traits which are vital for success in an ever-evolving knowledge-based society.

By assessing their own work based on predetermined criteria or learning objectives, students gain a clearer understanding of their progress and identify areas for improvement. As it is noted by Andrade and Du (2007), students who engage in S-A tend to outperform their peers in terms of learning outcomes, as they develop a deeper understanding of the topic and take responsibility for their learning (Andrade and Du 2007). According to their results, the experience of undergraduate students as expressed by means of a checklist or rubric-referenced S-A indicated that students felt that S-A was valuable, but they needed support and practice to reap the full benefit of the process (Ibberson 2012).

Schmidt and Wehmeyer (2016) examined the effectiveness of S-A training as well as the factors which influence S-A in English as an L2 student. A series of in-class training sessions and follow-up questionnaires were used to analyze students' behavior and perceptions across cultures, proficiency levels and language acquisition skills (reading, writing, listening, speaking). The results point out that after S-A training students can reflect more honestly on their language skills, build a framework for discussion considering their language needs and acknowledge their personal level of autonomy. The researchers also noted that metacognitive awareness in S-A allowed students to self-monitor without judging themselves only negatively and, above all, to have the ability to transfer knowledge of past experiences to the current learning, thereby building new knowledge based on what already existed.

S-A's contribution in the field of critical thinking is also important as students become familiar with the critical analysis of their work. By assessing the quality and effectiveness of their efforts, students learn to identify strengths and weaknesses, detect logical inconsistencies, and implement value judgment. This process stimulates higher-level thinking skills, promoting a more comprehensive understanding of the topic. Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick (2006), in their research, identified seven principles of good feedback practice, such as facilitation of S-A and encouragement of positive motivation and self-esteem, which might strengthen students' ability to self-control their performance.

The ability to critically assess one's work is a valuable lifelong skill that extends beyond the classroom. When students are actively involved in the assessment process, they develop a sense of ownership and responsibility for their learning outcomes. S-A provides students with a clear understanding of their progress and reinforces a growth mindset (Vygotsky 1978), promoting the desire for continuous improvement. Research by Kluger and DeNisi (1996) – after a meta-analysis of 607 effect sizes and 23.663 observations- highlighted that students engaged in S-A tended to show higher levels of motivation, resulting in increased effort and dedication to their studies.

Self-awareness, which is developed with the implementation of S-A, is also a critical element in students' personal improvement. Students develop a sense of ownership and responsibility for their work. As students assess their progress and recognize their achievements, they build confidence and faith in their abilities. This trust positively influences their willingness to face challenges and persevere until they achieve the goals they have set, as noted in the work of Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick (2006).

Allowing students to think deeply about their learning experiences and the strategies they use, S-A facilitates self-reflection, while students become more aware of their thought processes, assumptions, and biases. This introspective practice enhances their critical thinking skills and promotes a deeper understanding of themselves and the world around them (Andrade and Valtcheva 2019). Reflection is a key component of personal development and lifelong learning. Similarly, students, as self-assessors, decide what they assess, when and how, taking responsibility for monitoring their progress and building their assessment on learning based on their needs (Gardner 2000: 51).

S-A plays a critical role in cultivating a growth mindset, where students see challenges as opportunities to learn and grow (Glover 2011). When students engage in S-A, they recognize that mistakes and failures are part of the learning process and can be used as a stepping stone to improvement. Zimmerman (2019), with his overview on previous research on self-regulated learning concluded that metacognitive skills contribute to effective learning by facilitating goal setting, planning, and reflection, leading to improved academic performance. Additionally, this mindset change encourages students to accept challenges, persist in failures, and adopt a positive attitude towards their own development (Dweck 2017).

In the context of the assessment reform movement, self-assessment is considered useful among other forms of alternative assessment and its value is generally recognized. It is largely combined with the purpose of assessment for learning, which is based on an approach that engages the learner in the classroom assessment (Noonan and Duncan 2019). In addition, by participating in the assessment process, students have the opportunity to express their opinion on the options offered and their learning path. As a result, they gain greater mastery of their learning, their level of interest, commitment and participation may increase, and, more importantly, their learning outcomes may be significantly better. Self-assessment is related to self-regulation and autonomous learning that has to do with intellectual development and the creation of life-long learners, who will be able to adapt to modern fluid learning and communication environments (Logan 2015).

Self-assessment also functions as a key tool in the modern educational landscape, especially in the fields of lifelong learning and multicultural schools. Through its ability to promote reflection, adaptability to technological developments and inclusive learning environments, self-assessment emerges as a transformative pedagogical tool. As educational paradigms continue to evolve, there is a growing recognition that traditional summative assessments have limitations in capturing students' holistic learning experiences. In this context, self-assessment emerges as a dynamic alternative aligned with the shift towards assessment for learning (Noonan and Duncan 2019), emphasizing continuous improvement and a student-centered approach. Self-assessment not only enhances metacognitive skills, but also promotes a deeper understanding of the learning process.

This is especially important in light of ongoing technological advancements, as students should constantly evaluate and adapt learning strategies to navigate new tools and platforms (Anderson and Krathwohl 2019). Social interaction and cooperation play a fundamental role in the learning process. When placed in a multicultural educational context, self-assessment encourages dialogue and understanding between different groups of students (Vygotsky 1978). The UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL 2020) highlights the need for individuals to undertake their own learning throughout their lives. Self-assessment allows students to set goals, track their progress, and adjust their learning strategies, equipping them with the skills needed for continuous personal and professional development.

3 Research methodology

In an effort to investigate the impact of S-A on multilingual students' performance and personal development, a field research (Cohen et al. 2008) was carried out in two stages. At the first stage, an e-questionnaire² was distributed to 124 teachers of Greek as an L2 and, at the second stage, 12 semi-structured interviews of Greek language teachers were conducted based on the questionnaire used at the first stage. The aim of this methodological choice was the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data and the reinforcement of the reliability of this research (McEvoy and Richards, 2006; Olsen, 2004). Therefore, this paper presents part of the answers given to the questions of the questionnaire (8 out of 24 questions in total, see Appendix 1). During the interviews followed a discussion with the research participants and an in-depth investigation of their answers. In this paper 3 out of 22 in total open-ended interview questions with relative answers are presented.

1. 2 Available at https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScLqtvrjEKLWUHamBJIuNw0MNjdKVdTmKHT7cIqJ3oVOq2e_w/viewform?vc=0&c=0&w=1&flr=0&pli=1 (In Greek).

3.1 The participants

The research population consisted of language teachers who teach Greek as L2 in Experimental Intercultural Schools with Integration Classes for multilingual students in Greek public secondary schools. Since access to the complete list of teachers working in those schools was limited, a cluster sampling strategy was applied. On this basis, 5 Experimental Intercultural schools out of the 13 existing in Greek secondary education were randomly selected and the e-questionnaire was sent to all teachers of Greek as L2 teaching in those schools. Additionally, during the year 2022 in which the research took place, 163 schools with integration classes operated in Greece (ministerial decision 122014/D2/5-10-2022), with 1 at least integration class per year each, bringing the number of integration classes to 489. Accordingly, out of the 489 integration classes in Greece in total, 123 high schools (75%) with such classes were randomly chosen, and the questionnaire was sent to the teachers. The target sample size calculated was 116 teachers, with confidence level 90%, margin of error 5%, and z 1.65 (Gray 2021). A total of 124 teachers were collected for the final sample, since some did not respond and were replaced with other teachers of Greek as L2 from the same school. For this reason, it was considered necessary for the researchers to increase the sample size to overcome the possibility of a potential reduction in reliability caused by the substitution of the initial sample units with others. All the answers collected were valid and were further processed.

The teaching experience of the participants met the minimum requirements according to the research specifications (at least 1 year), with the following distribution: 1-5 years (27.5%), 6-10 years (19.4%), and 11-15 years (28.9%). Most of them were women (90 out of 124), while their age ranged from 25 to 55 years old. More than half of the teachers held a master's degree and had previous knowledge of the implementation of S-A, while only 1/3 of them had been trained on the assessment of multilingual students (Table 1).

Table 1. Demographic information on the e-questionnaire participants

Gender	Age	Education	Training on S-A	Training on multilingual student assessment
Women 90	25-35 years 35.5%	BA 32.3%	YES 66.9%	YES 33.1%
Men 32	36-45 years 42.7%	MA 58.9%	NO 33.1%	NO 66.9%
Other 2	46-55 years 15.3%	PhD 8.9%		
	>55 years 6.5%			

In the second stage of the research, we conducted semi-structured interviews using the building on the questions of the e-questionnaire with the aim of triangulating the results. From the 124 L2 Greek teachers in the Experimental Intercultural schools who were asked to participate 12 teachers answered voluntarily within the time framework of the research.

3.2 Research tools

The data collection tool used at the first stage of the research was a structured e-questionnaire of 34 close ended questions, followed by an ordinal answering Likert scale of 5 values, corresponding to 1 =

very much, 2 = much, 3 = enough, 4 = a little, 5 = not at all. This questionnaire was distributed via e-mail to the research participants by the investigators through the school principals.

Before the distribution, the reliability (internal consistency) of the questionnaire was measured in the pre-testing phase and returned satisfactory results ($\alpha=0.866$). The face and the construct validity of the questions were examined by the research group with the rational method (Tsopanoglou 2010), a process which resulted mainly in linguistic adjustments and improvements. At the second stage, a semi-structured interview was conducted, based on the questions of the initial e-questionnaire. After all, interviews can go hand in hand with other methods to provide in-depth information about participants' inner values and beliefs (Alshenqeeti 2014).

3.3 Data analysis

To answer the research questions, a descriptive analysis was conducted on the data obtained by the e-questionnaire questions. The statistical analysis was performed using SPSS 27 software. For the data collected in the second stage content analysis was performed.

More precisely, a report on participants' responses, including means and standard deviations regarding the impact of S-A on L2, was generated. In addition, the descriptive analysis included frequency tables of each question and a number of cross tabulations, in order to indicate the connection of some variables and help to better understand the findings. A number of figures were added to the presentation of the second stage data, aiming to make the data collected clearer.

4 Research results

4.1 The first stage of the research

As Table 2 shows, the respondents reported a remarkable improvement of students across the educational aspects tackled in the questionnaire. In all cases the mean point is near 4, which corresponds to the value much. The higher mean (4.43, near to 5 = very much) was observed in the last question, regarding the enhanced effectiveness in learning L2 Greek. This demonstrates the positive impact of the S-A on the learning process in general. The relatively low deviation of the answers collected indicates a noticeable accordance between the respondents. A detailed presentation of the teachers' answers to each question is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Participant responses: The impact of S-A on L2 learners

Report	Mean	Std. Dev.
Select the degree of impact that S-A can have on foreign language learners in the following areas		
Greek language skills improvement	4.03	1.05
Improvement of Writing Skills	3.96	1.02
Improvement of Speaking skills	4.19	1.05
Use of the Greek language in the classroom	4.23	1.05
Use of the Greek language outside the classroom	4.20	1.09
Increased productivity	4.00	1.13
Higher level of thinking	4.16	1.12
Maintaining and enhancing student attention	4.23	1.04
Better transformation of language knowledge	4.22	1.05
Better distribution and retention of knowledge	4.18	1.17

Report			
Select the degree of impact that S-A can have on foreign language learners in the following areas		Mean	Std. Dev.
Quality of learning		4.33	1.16
Increased effectiveness in learning the Greek language		4.43	1.22

Next, according to the participant responses, S-A helped students to improve their language skills in Greek, to a great extent. More precisely, almost the 64% (n=79/124 pers) of the respondents answered that S-A helped the students enough, while the 23% of the research participants (28/124 pers) considered that it helped them much. Finally, about 8% (10/124 pers) reported a very high (very much) contribution of the S-A to the improvement of student language skills. The relative information is presented in Table 3.

Table 3. S-A contribution to language skills improvement

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not at all	1	.8	.8	.8
	A little	6	4.8	4.8	5.6
	Enough	79	63.7	63.7	69.4
	Much	28	22.6	22.6	91.9
	Very much	10	8.1	8.1	100.0
	Total	124	100.0	100.0	

Considering the particular areas in which improvement was reported, the responses reveal that S-A favored both students' writing and speaking skills in L2 Greek. As is shown in Tables 4 and 5, the option not at all was never chosen by the participants, while the option a little was infrequently chosen (8.1% and 6.5% respectively). On the contrary, the choice *enough* was selected by nearly 39% of the participants as regards writing and 46% of them as regards speaking. Additionally, 44% of the participants considered the contribution of S-A to improved writing skills high, while the corresponding rate for speaking skills is at 35%. Finally, a very high relation between S-A and students' improvement in writing and speaking reached lower percentages, about 9% and 13% respectively. The distribution of the answers is presented in Tables 4 and 5.

Table 4. S-A contribution to writing improvement

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	A little	10	8.1	8.1	8.1
	Enough	48	38.7	38.7	46.8
	Much	55	44.4	44.4	91.1
	Very much	11	8.9	8.9	100.0
	Total	124	100.0	100.0	

Table 5. Speaking improvement

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	A little	8	6.5	6.5	6.5
	Enough	57	46.0	46.0	52.4
	Much	43	34.7	34.7	87.1
	Very much	16	12.9	12.9	100.0
	Total	124	100.0	100.0	

Turning to language use in the classroom, nearly 94% of the respondents indicated an improvement after the implementation of S-A. More precisely, 49% of the teachers (61/124 pers) responded that the language in the classroom had improved enough, 36% (45/124 pers) considered the improvement high, and 8% (10/124 pers) very high. A considerably low percentage of the respondents saw limited improvement (near 5% - 6/124 pers) and less than 2% (2/124 pers) did not notice any relative improvement. Conversely, a lower percentage (approximately 58%) was reported on improvement in language usage outside the classroom. Specifically, 37% of the respondents, which is a relatively significant percentage, responded that the student language was improved only a little. However, almost 27% of the respondents responded that the language was improved enough, while 23% of them reported much improvement. A very high improvement was reported only by nearly 8% of the participants. The distribution of the answers is presented in Tables 6 and 7.

Table 6. Improvement of language use in the classroom

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not at all	2	1.6	1.6	1.6
	A little	6	4.8	4.8	6.5
	Enough	61	49.2	49.2	55.6
	Much	45	36.3	36.3	91.9
	Very much	10	8.1	8.1	100.0
	Total	124	100.0	100.0	

Table 7. Language improvement outside the classroom

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not at all	8	6.5	6.5	6.5
	A little	46	37.1	37.1	43.5
	Enough	33	26.6	26.6	70.2
	Much	28	22.6	22.6	92.7
	Very much	9	7.3	7.3	100.0
	Total	124	100.0	100.0	

The difference between students' language improvement inside and outside the classroom probably could be attributed to the diversity in school settings across the schools, which may correspond to different levels of language use. In the classroom, the language needs are more formal, although sometimes they vary according to the students' performance. Outside the classroom, students feel free to speak without paying any attention to the language they use, and the communication events are more informal.

Moving on to thinking skills, S-A seems to promote a higher level of thinking which could be linked with student productivity, i.e., with their high level of efficiency achieved in a task or in an activity in

the language classroom. Approximately 31% (57/124 pers) of the respondents stated that S-A strongly supports (very much response) the development of higher level of thinking as well as increases students' productivity significantly (much response)). On the contrary, the percentage of the teachers who did not see such a connection is very low ($\approx 2\%$ -2/124 pers). A noticeable percentage of the respondents however indicated a non-significant (little response) relation between S-A and students' enhanced productivity in the L2 Greek class. Generally, from the crosstabulation of the two variables one can conclude that most of the teachers think that S-A has a very positive impact on higher-level thinking development ($\approx 94\%$ -117/124 pers) and on students' enhanced productivity ($\approx 86\%$ -106/124 pers).

It is noteworthy that the most positive values of the scale (4=much and 5=very much) had the higher frequency in the responses. This result may be interpreted because of the students' autonomy that is generated by S-A, allowing them to make the appropriate choices for themselves. The relative information is presented in Table 8.

Table 8. Cross tabulation data on the impact of S-A on higher level of thinking and increased productivity

Not at all A little		Increased productivity					Total	
		Enough	Much	Very much				
Higher level of thinking	A little	Count	2	5	0	0	0	7
		% of Total	1.6%	4.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	5.6%
	Enough	Count	0	11	18	0	0	29
		% of Total	0.0%	8.9%	14.5%	0.0%	0.0%	23.4%
	Much	Count	0	0	18	19	0	37
		% of Total	0.0%	0.0%	14.5%	15.3%	0.0%	29.8%
	Very much	Count	0	0	0	38	13	51
		% of Total	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	30.6%	10.5%	41.1%
Total		Count	2	16	36	57	13	124
% of Total			1.6%	12.9%	29.0%	46.0%	10.5%	100.0%

As regards, attention and effectiveness, research results as presented in Table 9 show that the respondents consider that the positive impact of S-A on student attention to the learning procedures and on their effectiveness in language learning is significant. About 94% of the respondents think that S-A increases student effectiveness in language learning, with most of them considering that S-A is very useful to this end (much response, $\approx 38\%$ -47/124 pers). About 43% (53/124 pers) of the participants consider S-A enough helpful, while 13% (16/124 pers) of them consider it very helpful.

Additionally, S-A is very useful (much response) for maintaining and enhancing students' attention for about the 41% (51/124 pers) of the respondents, while it is considered very much useful for a percentage close to 27% (34/124 pers). 27% of the teachers consider S-A useful enough, while less than 5% sees limited connection between students' attention and S-A use in the learning process.

The crosstabulation of the two variables (maintaining and enhancing student attention and increased effectiveness in language learning) revealed a noteworthy connection between them, since 25% (31/124 pers) of the respondents stated that S-A positively affects language learning and contributes to students' memory reinforcement to a satisfactory degree (enough: response), while 24% of them (29 participants) rate the effect as considerable (much response). Perhaps, the respondents do not strongly associate the memory abilities of the language learners with their effectiveness in learning the target language,

however the research results allow us to draw the conclusion that they consider the two variables connected, at least to some extent. Table 9 presents the relevant information.

Table 9. Cross tabulation data on the impact of S-A on maintaining and enhancing student attention and increased effectiveness in L2 Greek learning

Not at all A little			Increased effectiveness in language learning					Total	
			Enough	Much	Very much				
Maintaining and enhancing student attention	Not at all	Count	2	0	0	0	0	2	
		% of Total	1.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.6%	
	A little	Count	1	3	0	0	0	4	
		% of Total	0.8%	2.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.2%	
	Enough	Count	0	2	31	0	0	33	
		% of Total	0.0%	1.6%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%	26.6%	
	Much	Count	0	0	22	29	0	51	
		% of Total	0.0%	0.0%	17.7%	23.4%	0.0%	41.1%	
	Very much	Count	0	0	0	18	16	34	
		% of Total	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	14.5%	12.9%	27.4%	
	Total		Count	3	5	53	47	16	124
	% of Total			2.4%	4.0%	42.7%	37.9%	12.9%	100.0%

On the topic of knowledge transformation and distribution/retention, as is shown in Table 10, teachers who answered the questionnaire believe that S-A can contribute to student distribution and retention of knowledge at a considerable level enabling them to transform language knowledge. However, the S-A perceived impact on these two educational variables is not very strong, since almost 55% (68/124 pers) and the 48% (60/124 pers) of the respondents rated the relevant contribution as satisfactory (enough response). On the other hand, the frequency of the two negative values (not at all – a little) is relatively low (about 11% and 10% respectively), while the frequency of the two higher values (much – very much) is high, at 34% and 42% respectively. Some hesitation was detected among the respondents regarding the impact of S-A on these variables, since these correspond to student characteristics that may be more easily evident upon the completion of a language course.

Table 10. Cross tabulation data on the impact of S-A on better transformation of language knowledge and better distribution/retention of knowledge

Not at all A little			Distribution/retention of knowledge					Total	
			Enough	Much	Very much				
Transformation of language knowledge	Not at all	Count	2	0	0	0	0	2	
		% of Total	1.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.6%	
	A little	Count	0	10	2	0	0	12	
		% of Total	0.0%	8.1%	1.6%	0.0%	0.0%	9.7%	
	Enough	Count	0	0	58	10	0	68	
		% of Total	0.0%	0.0%	46.8%	8.1%	0.0%	54.8%	
	Much	Count	0	0	0	31	4	35	
		% of Total	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	25.0%	3.2%	28.2%	
	Very much	Count	0	0	0	0	7	7	
		% of Total	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	5.6%	5.6%	
	Total		Count	2	10	60	41	11	124
	% of Total			1.6%	8.1%	48.4%	33.1%	8.9%	100.0%

4.2 The second stage of the research

We proceeded with the second stage of the research to examine whether the data obtained from the first stage would be confirmed. As already mentioned, 12 teachers participated voluntarily in the semi-structured interviews. Table 11 presents the participants' basic profile. All informants were women, with their ages ranging from 25 years to 55 years. All of them held a bachelor's degree, and more than half of them reported that they had been trained on the implementation of S-A. In order to maintain the anonymity of the participants in the current research, teacher names were replaced by the letter T (teacher) and a number, e.g., T1, T2, etc. The extracts have been translated into English by the researchers.

Table 11. Demographic information of interview participants

Gender	Age	Education	S-A training
Female	25-35 years	BA	Yes
12	33%	25%	58%
Male	36-45 years	MA	No
0	42%	75%	42%
Other	46-55 years	PhD	
0	0%	0%	
	>55 years		
	25%		

The information obtained from the 12 interviews on the impact of S-A on students was grouped as follows: group a. impact on students' metacognitive skills (Figure 1), group b. impact on students' emotional world (Figure 2) and group c. impact on students' autonomy and self-regulation (Figure 3).

The results from the first group, include data on 10 metacognitive skills that, according to the respondents, can be promoted by S-A. A large percentage of the interviewees stated that S-A helps in

developing self-image monitoring-awareness (66.66%), awareness of strengths-weaknesses (66.66%), goals-expectations awareness (58.33), and time management (50%). A considerable percentage of the interviewees reported that the conscious control of cognitive abilities and the development of the ability to select the proper learning strategies (41.66%) is developed by the implementation of S-A. Furthermore, a part of the interviewees emphasized the contribution of the S-A to the organization of student’s activities since it promotes self-consciousness. Figure 1 presents the relevant information:

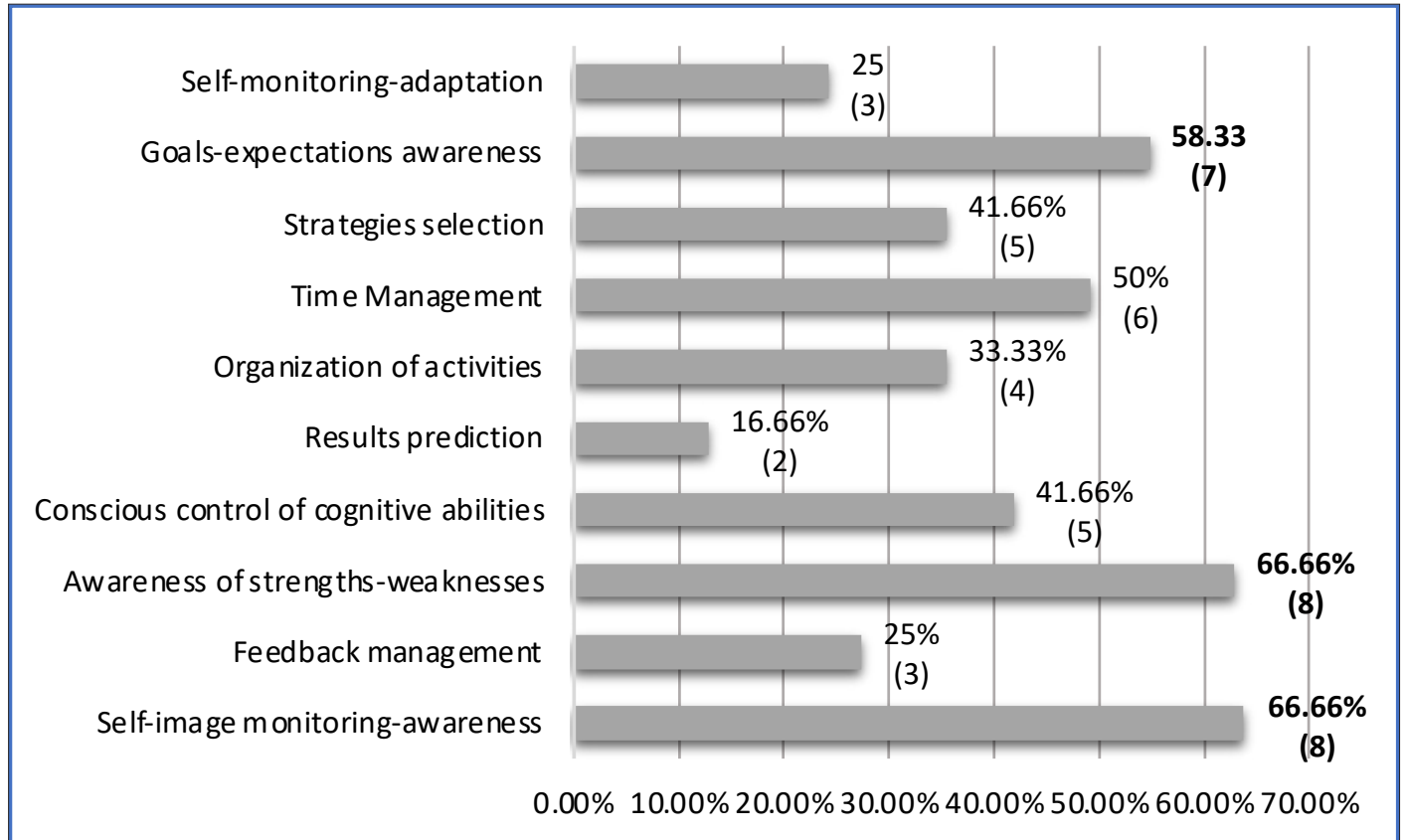


Figure 1. Impact of S-A on students’ metacognitive skills.

As regards the triangulation of data from the questionnaire and the interviews, in what follows we present representative interview extracts on student metacognitive skills (Extract 1 and 2):

Extract 1: “[...] I believe that self-assessment will help students to monitor and be aware of their trajectory. When they know that they must assess themselves, they will pay more attention to the lesson and the time they spend in the classroom. Through self-assessment, they (students) will identify where they fall short and whether they are good in the Greek language course.” T6

Extract 2: “[...] I would say that self-assessment can describe the performance of a student that learns Greek as an L2. Sometimes children surprise you with their honesty and self-awareness. Children who do not know the language well [...] I believe that they are aware of their language level, and they will assess themselves more rigorously.” T4

Focusing on the emotional world of the students, the data obtained from the interviews shows that the impact of S-A concerns mainly the elimination of competition (66.66%), perhaps because S-A stimulates students to assess themselves in relation to their previous performances and behaviors and not against other students (Panadero et al. 2016). Moreover, most of the interviewees indicated S-A is very helpful to students’ self-confidence reinforcement (83.33%). This could be attributed to the self-regulation and self-control that the implementation of S-A requires. In addition, S-A was indicated as a method that

helps students develop the feeling of freedom and reinforces their self-image (58.33%). 50% of the interviewees stated that S-A reinforces students' confidence and self-value recognition, and almost the 42% of them claimed that S-A generates high expectations and learning motivation, findings that differ significantly from the results on the implementation of the traditional assessment method (Eccles et al.1993; Ross et al. 2006). Figure 2 presents the relevant information.

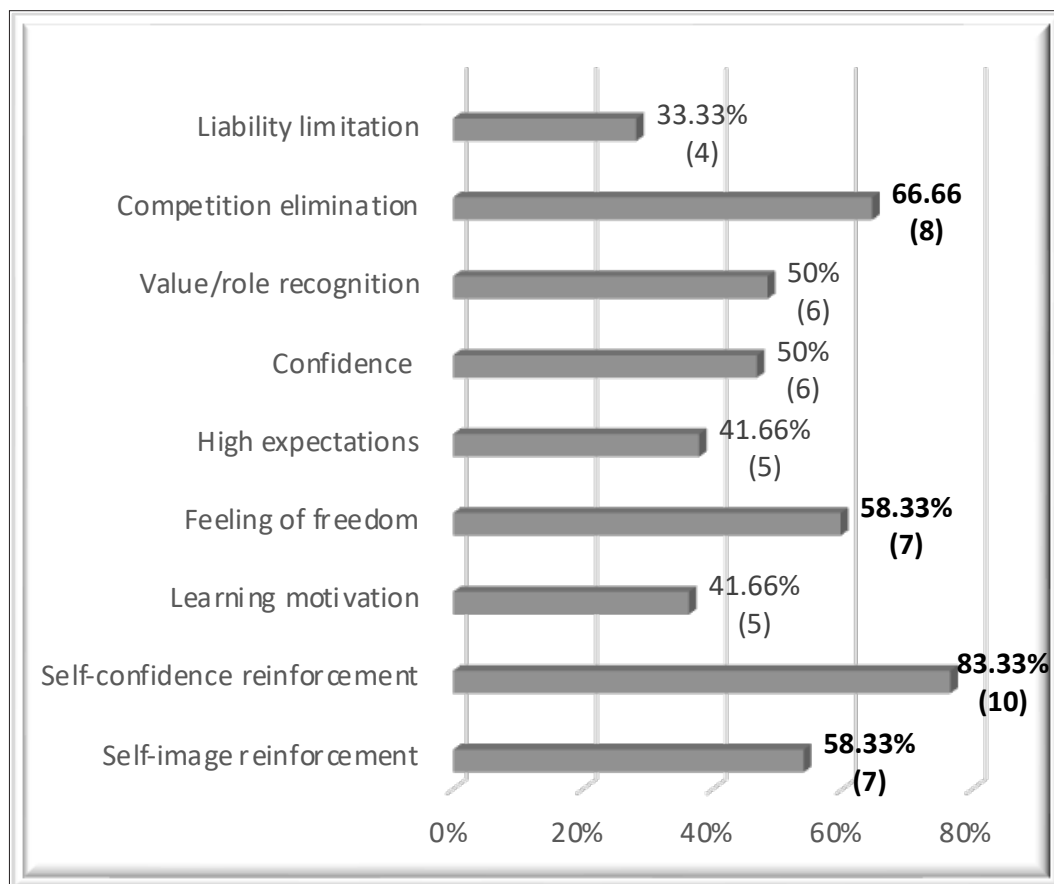


Figure 2. S-A impact on students' emotional world.

The effect of S-A on students' emotional world is evident in the following extracts (Excerpt 3 and 4):

Excerpt 3: "When a student knows that he/she will not be graded, he/she acquires a sense of freedom in his/her thinking, in what he/she will say and write, and even in his/her behavior towards the teacher." T8

Excerpt 4: "When children are self-critical about their performance and released from the stress of the teacher's assessment, they have no reason to compete with their peers, they try to improve themselves." T10

Finally, as regards autonomy/self-regulation, the data showed mainly S-A effect on active participation in the learning process (near 75%), learning independence and responsibility in learning (66.66%), as well as error detection/correction (58.33). The interviewees probably notice that the implementation of S-A motivates students, without the traditional driving by the teachers to be necessary, thereby helping them to develop independence and take responsibility for their own learning. These qualities can further promote learning as they allow the learner to continue developing his/her skills outside the classroom (Baleghzadeh and Masoun 2013). Figure 3 presents the relevant information.

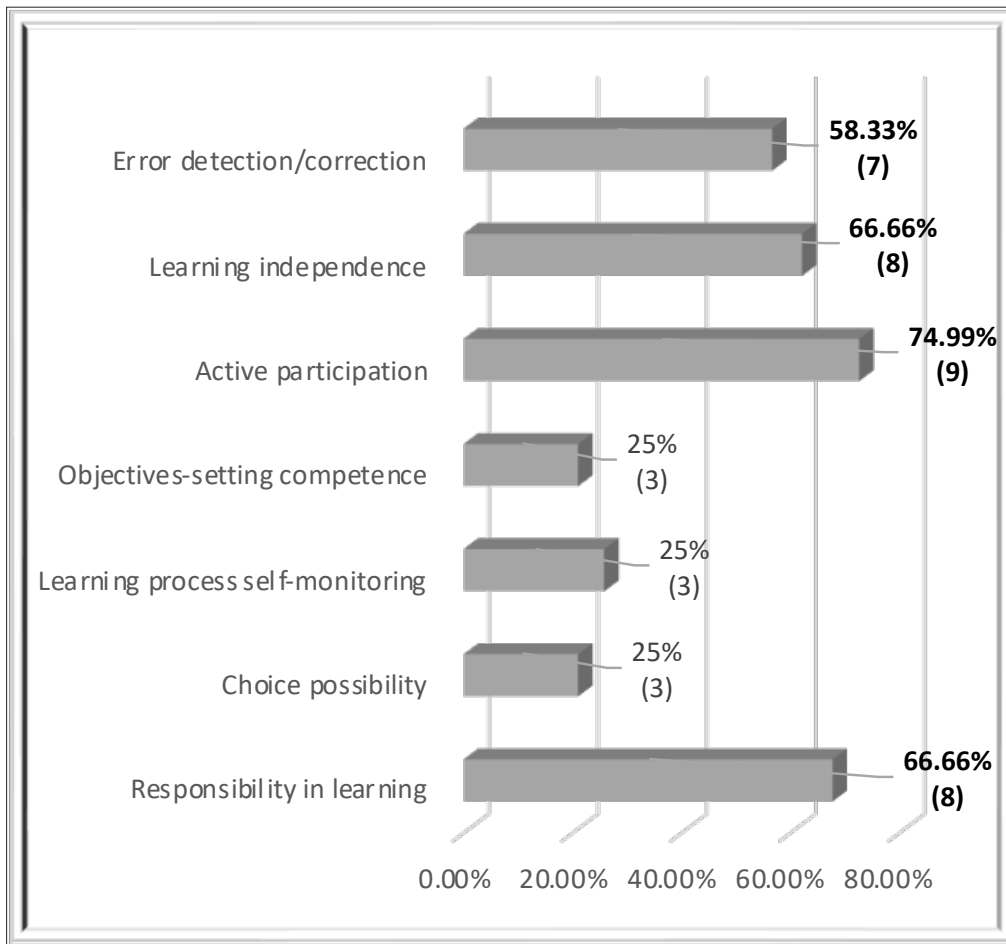


Figure 3. S-A impact on aspects of student autonomy/self-regulation.

Two teachers in their interview commented on the autonomy/self-regulation of students that stems from the implementation of S-A (Extract 5 and 6):

Extract 5: “[...] When students become autonomous and can regulate by themselves the way they read, what they learn and how, they acquire a kind of responsibility, their morale is boosted, and they participate more in the learning process.” T5

Extract 6: “[...] Sometimes children can surprise you with their honesty. When they self-evaluate themselves and identify their weaknesses and strengths, they are more involved in this process, and they are also able to identify their mistakes and improve them. That is, they use their mistakes [...] to improve themselves.” T11

5 Discussion

According to the relevant literature, S-A encourages students to reflect on their learning experiences and assess their strengths and weaknesses (CEFR 2001), even though very high-level students tend to underestimate their performance, while low-level learners tend to underestimate it (Figueras et al. 2009). This article discusses not only the impact of S-A on students’ performance but also on their personal development (Gardner 2000). The data collected raised several points for discussion regarding the implementation of S-A in classes with multilingual students.

Considering the research questions, the information presented in Section 4 may facilitate the following considerations:

Research Question 1 (RQ1): What do teachers believe is the impact of S-A on multilingual students' performance?

Teachers' responses to the questionnaire from the equilibrium point upwards (enough, much, very much), accumulate a very high frequency (86% and beyond), which means that the implementation of S-A led students to a remarkable improvement in all the educational aspects investigated. According to participant responses, the implementation of S-A helped students to improve their language skills in L2 Greek and improved both writing and speaking skills in L2 Greek.

The improvement of language use by students in the classroom, after the implementation of S-A, is something that was reported by nearly 94% of the respondents. A lower percentage, approximately 58%, reported an improvement in language usage outside the classroom. This could be attributed to the following: first, intercultural school settings may be diverse, demanding different levels of language usage. Second, while the language needs of multilingual students are more formal in the classroom, although sometimes they vary according to students' language ability outside the classroom students feel free to speak without paying any attention to the language they use with the communication events being more informal.

On the other hand, S-A seems to promote a higher level of thinking which could be linked with student productivity, for example it could be associated with high levels of efficiency achieved in a task or in a classroom activity. Research results show that teachers consider the positive impact of the S-A on students' attention to the learning procedures and on their effectiveness in language learning as significant. The effectiveness of S-A in language learning may be interpreted because of the students' autonomy generated by the implementation of S-A (Schmidt and Wehmeyer 2016), which allows them to make the appropriate choices for themselves (Dweck 2017). In particular, the crosstabulation of higher-level thinking variables and increased productivity reveals that most teachers believe that S-A has a positive impact on higher level thinking development ($\approx 94\%$ -117/124pers) and on increasing student productivity ($\approx 86\%$ -106/124 pers), findings also attested in the work of Andrade and Valtcheva (2019).

S-A is also very useful for maintaining and enhancing students' attention. The crosstabulation of the two variables (maintaining and enhancing student attention and increased effectiveness in language learning) revealed a considerable connection between them, since more than half of the respondents stated that S-A positively affects language learning and contributes to a satisfactory degree to students' memory reinforcement. Perhaps, the respondents do not strongly associate the memory abilities of the language learners with their effectiveness in learning the target language, but the research results allow us to draw the conclusion that they consider the two aforementioned variables connected to some extent.

Participants also attested that S-A can contribute to the distribution and retention of knowledge at a considerable level enabling students to transform language knowledge. Some hesitation was detected among the respondents regarding the impact of S-A on these variables (almost 50% of them choose the equilibrium point enough in their answers), since the question refers to student characteristics that may be more easily evident upon the completion of a language course.

Multilingual students usually face communication problems trying to learn the language of the host country (Karananou et al. 2022). Based on the results of this research, it seems that teachers consider S-A as a method that can help multilingual learners to improve their school performance and language skills (Noonan and Duncan 2019).

A notable finding of this research is the improvement that can be brought about in the language skills of multilingual learners by the implementation of S-A, a finding also attested in the work of Hargreaves et al. (2002). This is so since, to a large extent, teachers believe that S-A can enhance students' performance in producing and using written language (Hillocks 1986) and spoken language (Glover 2011), as well as it contributes to higher levels of thinking, improving the quality of learning and achieving maximum effectiveness in language learning (Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick 2006).

Our findings seem to agree with the data presented in Rosset al. (1998) and Czura (2012), which show a direct correlation between performance variables and the implementation of alternative assessment methods, as well as with previous research (Ross et al. 1998; Ross 2006; McMillan and Hearn 2008: 41; Joyce et al. 2009: 2), which highlight the correlation between S-A implementation, improved student performance and student participation in the learning process (Logan 2015).

Research Question 2 (RQ2): Do teachers believe that S-A leads to the personal development of multilingual students?

The additional information collected from the 12 interviews on the impact of S-A were organized into three groups: impact on student metacognitive skills, impact on student emotional world and impact on student autonomy and self-regulation. According to the respondents 10 metacognitive skills can be promoted by S-A (see Figure 1). Accordingly, more than half of the interviewees stated that S-A contributes to the development of self-image, monitoring-awareness, awareness of strengths-weaknesses of the students, awareness of their goals-expectations and time management.

Data collected from the interviews revealed that the impact of the S-A on student emotional world concerns mainly the elimination of competition, perhaps because S-A motivates students to assess themselves in relation to their previous performances and behaviors (Kluger and DeNisi 1996; Panadero et al. 2016) and not against others. Most of the interviewees argued that S-A was very useful for boosting students' self-confidence, while 50% of the respondents stated that S-A boosts students' confidence and recognition of their self-worth. In addition, S-A was indicated as a method of developing students' sense of freedom and enhancing their self-image. This could be attributed to the self-regulation and self-control that is required for the implementation of S-A (Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick 2006).

Finally, the aspects of students' autonomy and self-regulation that were impacted on by the implementation of S-A were mainly active participation in the learning process, learning independence and responsibility in learning (Andrade and Du 2007), but also error correction.

These findings are extremely encouraging as regards research in the areas of metacognitive skills (Anderson and Krathwohl 2019) and emotional profile of students, since most of the research sample clearly recognized the strong positive effect of the S-A in these areas (Li and Zhang 2020). According to previous research by Paris and Paris (2001), students manage to better regulate their effort during the educational process, make the most of the required time, choose the appropriate strategies (Anderson and David 2019) and thus shape the picture of their individual effort by focusing on their strengths and weaknesses. S-A helps students set higher goals for the future, boosts motivation to learn, assists them to identify their weaknesses and use them to improve and increase their self-confidence (Gardner 2000; Andrade and Cizek 2009). In this way, students are given the opportunity to learn from their mistakes.

Most teachers seem to agree with the above views, as they argue that S-A strengthens multilingual students in areas such as self-image, self-esteem, self-confidence, and promotion of motivation to learn (Liu and Brantmeier 2019). The responses of the teachers in the field of metacognitive skills are also encouraging, as they seem to recognize that the implementation of this method helps students develop skills, such as the use of appropriate strategies (Anderson and Krathwohl 2019), the awareness of strengths and weaknesses, goals and expectations, the monitoring of their progress and the proper allocation of time. These findings are also confirmed by previous research (Paris and Paris 2001; Anderson 2002; Siegesmund 2017; Zimmerman 2019).

Another important finding is the belief among teachers that S-A will reduce student anxiety and encourage weak students to participate in the learning process. These results seem to agree with the views of Butler (2018) and Little (2009), who consider S-A as a means of reducing learning anxiety, increasing learning autonomy and boosting multilingual students' self-confidence.

However, teachers' responses also revealed the concern, to a certain degree, about the correct implementation of S-A associated with responses in the lower level of the scale (i.e., little or none). This concern is attributed to the variability that characterizes the method as opposed to the more weighted

tests which use grading scales with standardized information for all those involved in the learning process which are available in traditional assessment methods (Panadero et al. 2016).

Teachers' views are consistent with research results which show that if the goal is to properly implement S-A, it is essential that students first understand the self-assessment criteria (Williams 1992; Earl 2013). Especially, it is important to train further teachers and students according to CEFR scales (Figueras et al. 2009; Ibberson 2012; Runnels 2013) and stress that the CEFR and its 'Can Do' statements must be adapted and changed to suit the specific context they serve each time (O'Dwyer et al. 2017). Having this in mind, CEFR S-A grids statements could be used to encourage multilingual students' learning and success in L2 learning.

6 Conclusion

The current paper contributes to the field of alternative assessment by providing new insights into how teachers view S-A. This research confirms the importance of S-A to enhance the skills and performance of multilingual students learning an L2. Teachers recognize its potential to enhance students' written and oral language proficiency, activate higher levels of cognitive function, improve the quality of learning, and maximize its effectiveness (Ross 2006; Ross et al. 2006; McMillan and Hearn 2008: 41; Joyce et al. 2009: 2).

Overall, this paper confirms the widespread recognition of S-A as an effective method in the education of students taught an L2 from the point of view of teachers. Therefore, support and development of the inclusion of S-A into educational curricula should be encouraged to improve multilingual learners' learning and success in L2. A data analysis aimed at revealing the deep structure of data, such as correspondence analysis, could help in a deeper understanding of this condition.

Regarding the existing literature, this research highlights the need to implement self-assessment to multilingual students in intercultural schools as a means of self-regulating the learning process and enhancing the learning confidence of multilingual learners. In particular, in the Greek education system, the majority of students in intercultural schools consist of refugees and migrants belonging to vulnerable social groups (Venturis et al. 2022). In this case, the implementation of self-assessment will likely boost the self-confidence of students who are lagging behind in learning level compared to native speakers of Greek not only due to cognitive but also psychological factors (Rousoulioti et al. 2022).

Finally, this research brings to the light the need to train teachers and students in the implementation of self-assessment as a means of regulating the learning process and improving the performance (Noonan and Duncan 2019) of multilingual students of intercultural schools. The training (Li and Zhang 2020) will help students to implement self-assessment in the best possible way and teachers to overcome their objections to the validity of its implementation.

Further research could also explore multilingual students' attitude in secondary education towards the implementation of S-A, but also proceed to gather evidence of their performance after the implementation of S-A. A comparative study between a control group without S-A and groups with S-A would be essential to determine the influence of S-A implementation on both the achievement and personal development of multilingual students. This could be also achieved by observing multilingual students in classes and gathering the required data on their performance in all four language macro-skills implementing the new illustrative scales descriptors of the companion volume of CEFR (2020). Therefore, research on the implementation of S-A, after training students and teachers, will probably open up new avenues for future studies on the topic.

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8 Biographies

Thomais Rousoulioti, PhD in Didactics, specializes in teaching and assessment of multilingual students, with emphasis on Greek as L2. She works as a Special Teaching Staff at the Department of Italian Language and Literature, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (AUTH), Greece (since 2017). She is a fellow Researcher at the Centre for the Greek Language in the division for the Support and Promotion of the Greek Language (since 2010). She is also a member of the steering group of the SIG for inclusive assessment in Education (AEA Europe), of EALTA, ALTE and of the Research Team EnA (OsloMet). She published numerous articles in English and Greek on teaching and assessment of multilingual students, distance education and language education policy.

Antonios Ventouris, Associate Professor of applied linguistics at the Department of Italian Language and Literature of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (AUTH), specialised in language assessment and certification. He is a member of the scientific board of the National Foreign Language Exam System, responsible for the Italian language. He is also the academic responsible for the LAAS certification system for the Italian language, since 2015. Science Leader of the AXIO-LOGOS Project, and supervisor of the Greek Institute of Educational Policy research group on educational evaluation. He published a considerable number of scientific books and articles in Greek, Italian, and English language concerning educational evaluation and teaching methodology.

Olympia Blatsioti, MA in teaching Greek as L2, works for the Greek Ministry of Education, Religious Affairs and Sports since 2015 as teacher of Greek. Since 2022 she teaches Greek as Second Language (L2) in Integration Classes in Greek public secondary schools focusing on multilingual students. She also takes part in Erasmus+ programs as part of the effort to integrate and empower the presence of refugees in school. In this context she studies the use of alternative assessment methods for the L2 learners with an emphasis on implementing self-assessment. In September 2022 she presented her research about teachers' perceptions on multilingual students' self-assessment participating in the 15th International Conference of Greek Linguistics in Belgrade.

Dimitra Tsalta, MA in Teaching Greek as L2 and Special Education. Since 2011, she has worked in private education as a teacher of Greek. Since 2022, she has been teaching online lessons for Greek as an L2 to children living abroad. She also takes part in Erasmus+ programs as part of the effort to integrate and empower the presence of refugees in school. In this context she studies the use of alternative assessment methods for the L2 learners with an emphasis on implementing self-assessment. In 2022, she participated in the 15th International Conference of Greek Linguistics in Belgrade, where she presented her research paper about Teachers' Beliefs on Multilingual Students' Self-Assessment in L2 Learning.

Appendix 1

E-Questionnaire questions

8 of the 24 questions that the survey participants were asked to answer, in addition to the demographics, were as follows:

15. The method of self-assessment contributes to strengthening the performance of foreign language students. State your degree of agreement or disagreement. *

1. absolutely disagree, 2. disagree, 3. neither agree nor disagree, 4. agree, 5. strongly agree, 6. i do not know

16. For each of the following factors that concern aspects of students' performance in learning Greek as L2, choose the degree of influence you think self-assessment can have. *

1. not at all, 2. a little, 3. enough, 4. very, 5. very much.

- Improving language skills in general in the Greek language
- Improvement in writing skills
- Improvement in speaking skills
- Better use of the Greek language in the classroom
- Better use of the Greek language outside the classroom
- Increased language productivity
- Higher levels of thinking
- Maintaining and enhancing student attention
- Better transformation of language knowledge
- Better understanding and retention of knowledge
- Increased effectiveness in learning the Greek language
- Improved quality of learning

18. Flavell (1976) defines metacognitive skills as the student's awareness of organizing, directing, and controlling their knowledge at the level of thinking and feeling. Do you think that the self-assessment method cultivates and strengthens students' metacognitive skills? (i.e. awareness of how they learn)?*

1. not at all, 2. a little, 3. enough, 4. very, 5. very much.

19. If so, which characteristics of metacognitive skills do you think are most developed in students? (Multiple choice possible) *

- Monitoring and awareness of the picture of their progress
- Feedback management
- Awareness of strengths and weaknesses in learning Greek
- Conscious control of their cognitive skills
- Predicting learning outcomes
- Organization of activities
- Awareness and good allocation of necessary/available time
- Selection and application of appropriate learning strategies by the students themselves Awareness of goals and expectations
- Ability to self-monitor and adapt to new learning requirements

20. Do you think that the method of self-assessment has a positive effect on the emotional world of students learning the Greek language, leading to better performance?

1. not at all, 2. a little, 3. enough, 4. a lot, 5. too much

21. In what way do you think self-assessment affects the emotional world of students of Greek as L2, enhancing performance? (Multiple choice possible) *

- Self-image boost
- Enhancing self-confidence during the learning process
- Cultivating and promoting learning motivation
- Feeling of freedom and possibility of action
- Higher individual expectations
- Feeling confident
- Recognition of the value and role of students in the learning and teaching process
- Freedom from the feeling of competition and constant comparison in the classroom
- Limiting guilt from the outcome of the assessment

22. Do you think that self-assessment contributes in some way to the development of the autonomy/self-regulation of multilingual students?

1. not at all, 2. a little, 3. enough, 4. a lot, 5. too much

23. Which of the following characteristics related to students' involvement in self-assessment do you think most promote their autonomy/self-regulation? (Multiple choice possible) *

- Taking responsibility for the learning and assessment process
- Ability to choose the evaluation process

- Self-monitoring of the course in L2
- Targeting capability
- Active presence and involvement of the student in the learning and assessment process
- Learning independent of the teacher
- Recognition of mistakes and personal effort to correct them

Appendix 2

Interview questions

In addition to demographics and participants' responses to the e-questionnaire, 3 of the 22 interview questions asked were as follows:

1. Which metacognitive skills are more developed in multilingual students who implement self-assessment. Please justify your answer.
2. How do you think self-assessment affects the emotional world of multilingual students? Please justify your answer.
3. What features of self-assessment do you think most promote multilingual students' autonomy/self-regulation? Please justify your answer.