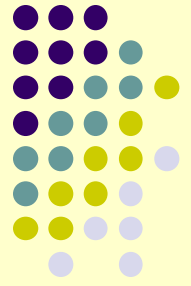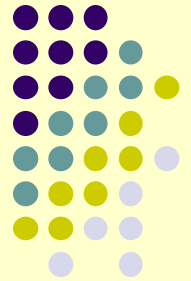# Raising English learners' autonomy through a model-based assessment of their speaking ability in the Test of English as a Foreign Language Internet-Based Test

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# Introduction

- More research needs to be conducted conceptually and empirically to involve students deeply in learning regarding what and how they study.

- This topic could be helpful to teachers in providing them some empirical experience that may be necessary in teaching speaking skills to prepare students for the TOEFL iBT.
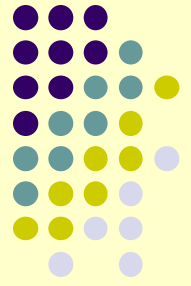
# The purpose of the study
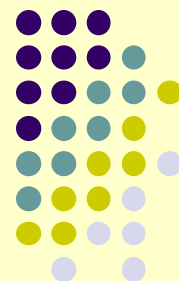
To investigate whether it is possible to raise English learners' autonomy through a model-based assessment of their speaking ability in (TOEFL iBT).

To see if a model for speaking assessment can be built through the analysis of data from the posttests.
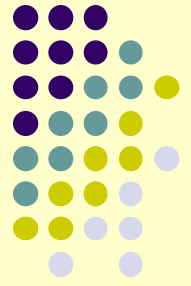
# Limitations of the study

- Referring to the language convention by ETS;

- Considering language structures in lexical-grammatical aspects regarding basic interpersonal communicative skills in context-reduced language.
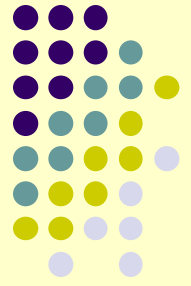
# Literature review

- There is a gap in the theory for CALL and CALL does not have a dedicated theory.

- CALL theory is drawn from a number of sources that are comprised of SLA theories, general learning theories, linguistic theories, and human-computer interaction theories (Hubbard, 2012).
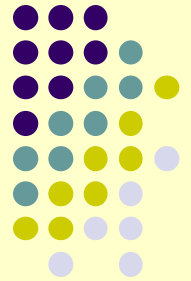
# Literature review
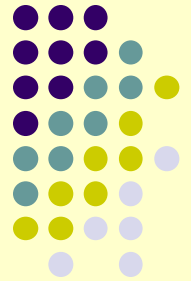
The three meta-functions comprise three characteristics: Interpersonal, textual, experiential (Eggins,1994), (Halliday,1994) & (Martin,1992).
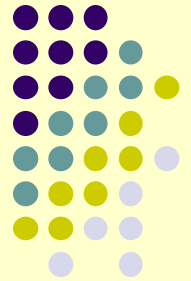
# Literature review

- The score on a given test interpreted as an indicator of students' language ability must be reliable and valid (Bachman, 1997).

# Literature review

Students not only responded adequately to the question but also stated that they were more motivated to speak in front of a computer than in a human-to-human interaction (Garcia, Magal, & Bakieva, 2010)

# Literature review
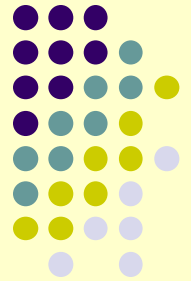
This study develops the idea to raise English learners' autonomy through a model-based assessment of their speaking ability for Vietnamese students learning TOEFL iBT to reach high intermediate levels.

# RESEARCH QUESTIONS
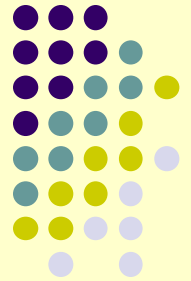
1. What are the effects of the ETS rubrics (Educational Testing Service, 2005b) in rating the learners' speaking ability in their second language acquisition?

2. Is it possible, based on the investigation, to raise English learners' autonomy through a model-based assessment of their speaking ability in the TOEFL iBT?

# Method

*Participants*

The participants belong to an experimental group (19 students) and a control group (19 students) of English at a university in Vietnam, who had finished studying high intermediate intensive English courses.

# Method
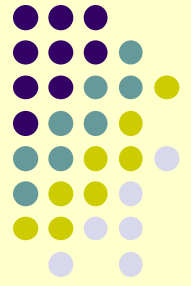
*Data collection and procedures*
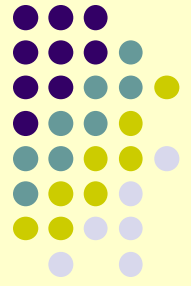
All participants took the computer-based exams. The participants performed 6 tasks in the allotted time of 6 minutes (2 independent and 4 integrated speaking questions)

# Method

- A two-group design was used in this study. The major data in this study included the scored speaking responses.

- The scored speaking responses were classified according to the points earned after being marked against the language conventions in the ETS rubrics. After the collected data were analyzed, a model was suggested.

# Results

- The two-sample t-test

|  | Experimental group | Control group |
|---|---|---|
| Observations | 19 | 19 |
| Mean | 17.2631578947368 | 15.6842105263158 |
| Hypothesized Mean Difference | 0 | |
| df | 34 | |
| t | 1.71529729896265 | |
| p value | 0.0476961972673258 | |

# Results
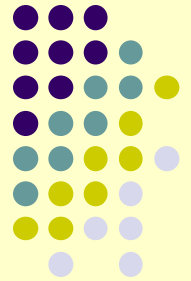
*Percentage of respondents of both groups acquiring test criteria*

| No. of experimental group students | Percentage of experimental group respondents | Percentage of control group respondents | No. of control group students |
|:---:|:---:|:---:|:---:|
| **13** | 68.4% | 47.4% | 9 |

# Discussion
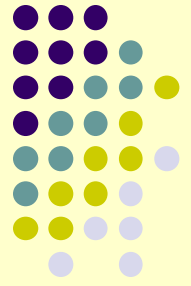
- The statistical significance for the speaking tasks with the p value for the posttests [$p <$ 0.05 (0.0476961972673258)] taken by the experiment group and the control group.

- The better scores may result from the fact that the tests were taken by students who had been given clear and systematic instructions of CALL and linguistic knowledge in advance.

# Discussion
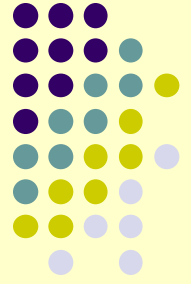
- The proposed model for the assessment of English performance refers to Nesbitt (2013) in the combination with ETS rubrics.

# Discussion
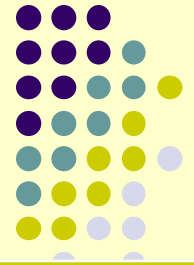
| KNOWLEDGE BASE | KNOWLEDGE TRANSFORMATION | KNOWLEDGE TESTING - (Speaking) RURICS |
|---|---|---|
| **Informational Learning**<br><br>**Structural Learning** | Contextual learning (listening & reading)<br><br>Contextual learning (listening & reading) | - Delivery (expression of speech: pronunciation & intonation);<br>- Language use (grammar & vocabulary;<br>- Topic development (ideas & coherence) |
| **Lifelong memory development (timed)**<br><br>**Lifelong memory development (self-led)** | Lifelong memory development (personal)<br><br>Lifelong memory development (extended) | |
| **Simple Contextual Learning (listening & reading )**<br>**Simple Knowledge Sharing (speaking)** | Knowledge Sharing (speaking) | |

# Discussion

*Elements of the learning framework for student autonomy*

| | |
|---|---|
| **1. Guidance** | - help cards/guides to using learning tools<br>- planning advice/learning advice (experts)<br>- learning advice (peers and teachers)<br>- contact with teachers |
| **2. Feedback** | - personal record of achievement for all learning tools<br>- personal reflection on results<br>- reflection and planning for future success with teacher feedback |
| **3. Review** | - peer testing with reward system<br>- review of items studied<br>- reflective self-testing<br>- examination practice scripts |
| **4. Engagement** | - teacher blog on learning strategy use<br>- public links to English learning blogs<br>- peer chat facility<br>- discussion forum<br>- photo gallery |
| **5. Presentation** | - group project wikis<br>- learning plan templates and examples<br>- digital storytelling instructions and examples |

# Conclusion

- The study contributes to the building of a model that assesses the process of language learning in which students develop autonomy as it may have an impact on the course outcomes.

- The study also provides necessary feedback to work out the appropriate methods to improve students' weaknesses

- The investigation of this study ascertains individuals' beliefs that they are competent to use computers in their decision to take speaking tests on the computer.

# Conclusion
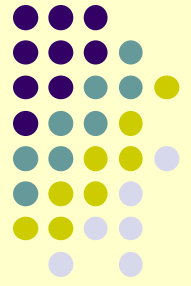
- This article presents how to raise students' autonomy using a model-based assessment of speaking skills in the TOEFL iBT.

- Basic interpersonal communicative skills can be improved beyond the level of context-reduced language with the help of technological advances.

# Implications of the study

- Accordingly, a model for assessing oral skills on the computer for the TOEFL iBT is conducted as a first step to lead to automatic scoring.

- The model can help to satisfy the evaluation of students' language ability and make student aware of their learning.

- The results of the study can lead to developing high-stakes selection for students to go on to take university  courses on effective presentation.

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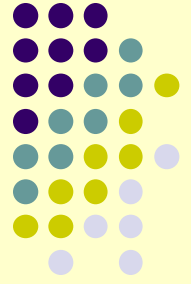
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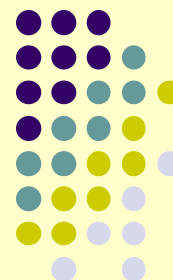
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# Thank you for listening