The Effect of Assessment Type (self vs. peer vs. teacher) on Iranian University EFL Students' Course Achievement

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Abstract
This research investigated the effect of self-, peer-, and teacher-assessment on Iranian undergraduate EFL students' course achievement. Four intact classes, including 82 students from Urmia, Tabriz, and Tabriz Islamic Azad universities were randomly assigned into one of the self-, peer-, teacher-assessment, or control groups. The students were pretested on their current Teaching Methods knowledge. After receiving relevant instruction and training, the first experimental group (N= 21) were involved in self-assessment activities, the second one (N= 23) were engaged with peer-assessment tasks, and the third one (N= 21) were subjected to teacher-assessment; however, the control group (N= 19) received no assessment-related treatment. The application of ANCOVA on the results of the achievement posttest indicated differences in the performances of peer-, self-, teacher-assessment, and the control groups $F(3, 77) = 23.15$, $p= .05$, in favour of peer-assessment. A medium effect size was found between the independent and dependent variables (partial eta squared= .47); however, the covariate, albeit significant (.03), had a small effect size (partial eta squared= .05). Further findings and implications are discussed in the paper.

Keywords: Alternative assessment; Course achievement; EFL students; Peer-assessment; Self-assessment; Teacher-assessment

Introduction

In educational systems, assessment is an inevitable ingredient because it may influence learning, and when made authentic it provides feedback and revision to improve learning. Furthermore, through meaningful engagement of students in the learning process, assessment can affect motivation. Assessment would also enhance instruction by helping the teacher recognize students' weaknesses and strengths. Assessments can also be made valid, fair, ethical, feasible, and efficient tools for learning using multiple measures (Mousavi, 2012).

It has been argued that learning how to learn (self-directed learning) would be of utmost importance for language learners for at least three reasons. First, because of the complexity of the task which learning presents, there is never enough time within a formal scheme of instruction to ensure mastery on the part of students, and if the learner has not been prepared within the classroom to take responsibility to learn autonomously outside, it is unlikely that any learning will take place (Dickinson & Carver, 1980; Carver & Dickinson, 1982). The second reason is the belief that engaging students in the process of learning and assessment would encourage their learning efficiency. Studies of the characteristics of good language learners (Stern, 1975; Naiman, et al. 1978; Stern, 1983) suggest that efficient learners consciously monitor their performances, analyze them, and develop a repertoire of efficient learning strategies. Thirdly, in a self-directed scheme, through reducing the distance between the learner and the teacher, feelings of anxiety, frustration, and alienation decrease, and consequently the learner becomes more receptive to the learning process (Brown, 1973; Schumann, 1975).

The present research investigated the effect of three types of assessments, namely, self, peer, and teacher, on Iranian university EFL students' course achievement. Indeed, student-centred approaches in language teaching led the field of language testing to a shift of paradigm from traditional *psychometric* (teacher-centered) testing to alternative *edumetric* (student-centered) assessment (Farhady, 2006; McNamara, 2000; Brown & Hudson, 1998). The implementation of student-directed assessment arises out of a faith in student autonomy as an educational goal (see Boud, 1981). Powell (1981, p.209), summarizing the value of this approach, claims that:

> The promotion of independent learning is . . . central to the whole enterprise of higher education because the intellectual powers which it seeks to foster cannot (logically cannot) be exercised except in an independent mode. Critical thinking, judgement, creativeness, initiative, interpretative skills, hypothesis formulation and problem-solving capacities can only be made manifest by someone who is operating independently.

Research studies involving peer- and self-assessment have indicated that in order to enable students to perform these tasks effectively, they need training and experience (Jafarpur, 1991; Adams & King, 1995; Freeman, 1995; Pond et al., 1995). They have also revealed that peer- (and self-) assessment can work toward developing students' higher order reasoning and higher level cognitive thought (Birdsong & Sharplin, 1986), helping nurture student-centred learning among undergraduate learners (Oldfinch & MacAlpine, 1995), encouraging active and

flexible learning (Entwhistle, 1993) and facilitating a deep approach to learning rather than a surface approach (Entwhistle, 1987; Gibbs, 1992).

Applying student-directed assessment for improving students' course achievement may signify that self-assessment is particularly good for 'low-stakes' assessment: 'Low stakes' assessment would include formative assessment, where the students' performance in the assessment task in question is not considered in the calculation of their overall mark for the course. Roever (2001, p. 90) is of the belief that self-assessment is less appropriate for medium- and high-stakes assessment. Medium-stakes assessment is defined as that which affects students' lives, though not radically so (for example, mid-term examinations), and high-stakes assessment as that which can have life-altering potential (e.g. final examinations for a degree).

Self-assessment is an assessment technique that refers to the process whereby "learners simultaneously create and undergo the evaluation procedure, judging their achievement in relation to themselves against their own personal criteria, in accordance with their own objectives and learning expectations" (Henner-Stanchina & Holec, 1985, p. 98). According to Topping (1998), peer-assessment is an arrangement in which individuals consider the amount, level, worth, and quality of success of the products or outcomes of learning of peers of similar status.

Curriculum developers and syllabus designers in general and course designers and university professors in particular may feel the need to pay more attention to students' needs and styles, since they may somehow act as contributing factors to the students' ultimate academic success; therefore there is a necessity for research to let the students gain autonomy in and self-awareness of their learning.

Therefore, to clarify what the story is in an EFL university context, and to contribute to the growing body of work in the field, the present research was aimed to answer the following question: *Is there any statistically significant difference among self-, peer-, and teacher-assessment on Iranian university EFL students' course achievement?* The question was tentatively answered in the form of a null hypothesis as follows to be tested at 0.05 level of significance: *There is no significant difference among self-, peer, and teacher-assessment on Iranian university EFL students' course achievement.*

Method

Participants

The participants were 82 male and female EFL students at Urmia, Tabriz, and Tabriz Islamic Azad universities, West and East Azarbaijan Provinces, Iran, working for a BA in English Language and Literature. They were within the age range of 20 to 22. There were 19, 23, 21, and 19 candidates in the self-, peer, teacher-assessment, and the control groups, respectively.

Instruments

The particular course of interest was *Teaching Methodology* course for which *Techniques and Principles in Language Teaching* (Larsen-Freeman, 2006) was used as the instructional material as a four-unit credit bearing course. The two other materials used were the pretest (knowledge test) and the posttest (course achievement test), both included in the appendix. The tests paralleled each other, were content valid to a satisfactory degree and enjoyed a phi(lambda) dependability

index (Brennan, 1980, 1984, 2001) of .90. This formula is the only squared-error loss agreement index for criterion-referenced tests that have a single test administration.

Procedure

This study followed a semi-experimental intact group design in which the classes were randomly assigned into either self-, peer-, teacher-assessment, or control group. At the beginning of the term, all the groups had a pretest which measured the students' existing knowledge of the specific course book. Then, in the self-, and peer-assessment groups, the students were trained on how to assess themselves as well as their peers, respectively. For example the students were informed that they will have an assessment every two units covered from the course book, and they are free to construct items of any type. While in the self-assessment group, they were instructed to make, answer and mark their own papers, in the peer-assessment group, the candidates were instructed to answer tests made and marked by anonymous peers. In the teacher-assessment group, however, the teacher was asked to design and mark the papers.

The students in the first experimental group were required to make and bring to the class pre-designed papers based on the first two units covered, with items in any format. The papers were collected. This procedure was repeated for the next two-unit-based papers. In the third assessment session, while they were expected to deliver their third two units-based papers, their first assessment papers were reviewed by their peers in order to check any obviously faulty items. Then each student began to answer his first paper and when finished, they were again reviewed by peers to mark any unanswered items. When the process was over, each student marked his own paper and his score was recorded by the researchers. No one expressed dissatisfaction with his scores and there was no further feedback. In each assessment session, the same procedure was followed.

In the second experimental group, students were required to design tests at home with items of any type. In each assessment session, when the papers were brought to the class, they were collected, and students' names were taken apart. After assigning each student's name with a code in a notebook, the papers were distributed among their peers, again writing a new code in front of each previously given paper. Meanwhile, care was taken not to give any paper to its own designer. When students had finished answering, the papers were given to their designers for marking. Finally, based on the codes, students were allowed to review their papers to eliminate any mismarking. There was negotiation among students, giving justifications by both the assessors (for the marks they had given) and assessees (for the answers they had written). When any dissatisfaction was resolved, the scores were recorded by the researchers. The next three assessments were conducted in the same way.

In the third experimental group, however, the tests were made by the researchers, then checked by the teacher and modified accordingly. In each assessment session, when students finished answering, the papers were collected and marked by the researchers. Every next assessment session, previous assessment scores were reported to the students; however, no one seriously criticized his score and no one wanted to receive feedback as to the right answers. The procedure was

similarly followed for the next three assessment sessions. Having received an assessment every two units, the three experimental groups took four assessment series during the term. The control group had no assessment during the semester. Finally, at the end of the term, all groups took the posttest.

Results

One way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was run to explore the differences in the four groups' mean scores on the pretest in order to figure out whether any initial differences existed between groups. Table 1 shows descriptive statistics for the pretest in all four groups and Figure 1 is a visual representation of the four groups' mean scores on the pretest.

Table 1
Descriptive statistics for the pretest

Descriptive								
Pretest scores								
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
self	**19**	**6.8305**	2.13973	.49089	5.7992	7.8618	4.00	12.00
peer	**23**	**5.3465**	1.84401	.38450	4.5491	6.1439	.58	9.15
teacher	**21**	**4.5476**	1.72008	.37535	3.7646	5.3306	.00	7.43
control	**19**	**5.3584**	1.23753	.28391	4.7620	5.9549	2.29	6.86
Total	82	5.4885	1.91664	.21166	5.0674	5.9097	.00	12.00

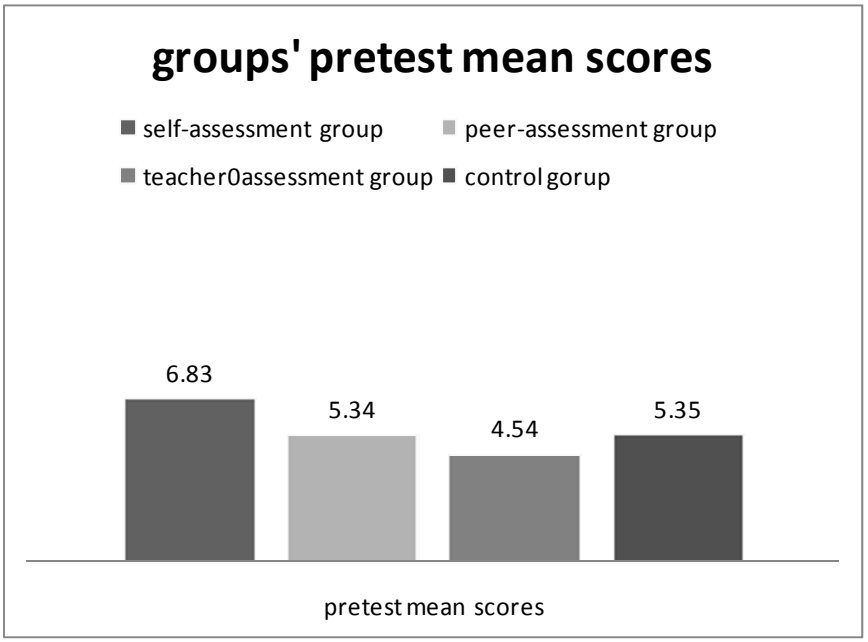

Figure 1. Groups' mean scores on the pretest

As indicated in table 2, significant differences (at $p < 0.05$. level) were found among four groups' mean scores on the pretest: $F(3, 78) = 5.71$, $p = .001$.

Table 2
ANOVA for the pretest

ANOVA					
Pretest scores					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	53.595	3	17.865	5.712	**.001**
Within Groups	243.960	78	3.128		
Total	297.556	81			

The results of post-hoc tests (table3) indicated a significant difference (sig.= .041) between self-assessment (M= 6.83, SD= 2.13) and peer-assessment groups (M= 5.34, SD= 1.84). In addition, a significant difference (sig.= .001) was also found between self-assessment (M= 6.83, SD= 2.13) and teacher-assessment groups (M= 4.54, SD= 1.72). However, control group (M= 5.35, SD= 1.23) did not differ significantly from eitherself-, peer-, or teacher-assessment groups. Peer-assessment (M= 5.34, SD= 1.84) group was also found to have no significant difference from teacher-assessment group.

Table 3
Multiple comparisons for the pretest

Multiple Comparisons

Post Hoc Tests

Pretest scores
Tukey HSD

(I) Group	(J) Group	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval Lower Bound	Upper Bound
self-assessment group	peer	1.48400*	.54827	**.041**	.0446	2.9234
	teacher	2.28291*	.55996	**.001**	.8129	3.7530
	control	1.47211	.57379	.058	-.0343	2.9785
peer-assessment	self	-1.48400*	.54827	**.041**	-2.9234	-.0446
group	teacher	.79890	.53378	.444	-.6024	2.2002
	control	-.01190	.54827	1.000	-1.4513	1.4275
teacher-assessment	self	-2.28291*	.55996	**.001**	-3.7530	-.8129
group	peer	-.79890	.53378	.444	-2.2002	.6024
	control	-.81080	.55996	.474	-2.2809	.6593
control group	self	-1.47211	.57379	.058	-2.9785	.0343
	peer	.01190	.54827	1.000	-1.4275	1.4513
	teacher	.81080	.55996	.474	-.6593	2.2809

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

For the four series of assessments, one-way ANOVAs were used to compare the experimental groups' mean scores on the associated assessments. Table 4 shows descriptive statistics for the four series of assessments in the self-, peer-, and teacher-assessment groups and Figure 2 is a visual representation of the three experimental groups' mean scores on the four series of assessments.

Table 4
Descriptive statistics for the four series of assessments

Descriptive

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
First assessment	self	**19**	**18.4211**	2.00875	.46084	17.4529	19.3892	14.00	20.00
	peer	**20**	**16.8250**	2.82505	.63170	15.5028	18.1472	12.00	20.00
	teacher	**21**	**14.6676**	1.58632	.34616	13.9455	15.3897	11.40	16.30
	Total	**60**	**16.5753**	2.65853	.34321	15.8886	17.2621	11.40	20.00
Second assessment	self	**17**	**19.4706**	1.12459	.27275	18.8924	20.0488	16.00	20.00
	peer	**21**	**16.1429**	4.22535	.92205	14.2195	18.0662	7.00	20.00
	teacher	**21**	**15.0952**	2.68616	.58617	13.8725	16.3180	10.00	18.50
	Total	**59**	**16.7288**	3.50532	.45635	15.8153	17.6423	7.00	20.00
Third assessment	self	**18**	**19.4444**	1.14903	.27083	18.8730	20.0158	16.00	20.00
	peer	**17**	**17.1294**	3.52629	.85525	15.3164	18.9425	9.00	20.00
	teacher	**21**	**15.9048**	1.84132	.40181	15.0666	16.7429	13.00	20.00
	Total	**56**	**17.4143**	2.73904	.36602	16.6808	18.1478	9.00	20.00
Fourth assessment	self	**16**	**18.3750**	4.20912	1.05228	16.1321	20.6179	4.00	20.00
	peer	**20**	**17.9750**	3.37356	.75435	16.3961	19.5539	9.00	20.00
	teacher	**21**	**15.5000**	2.02312	.44148	14.5791	16.4209	11.50	19.00
	Total	**57**	**17.1754**	3.42940	.45424	16.2655	18.0854	4.00	20.00

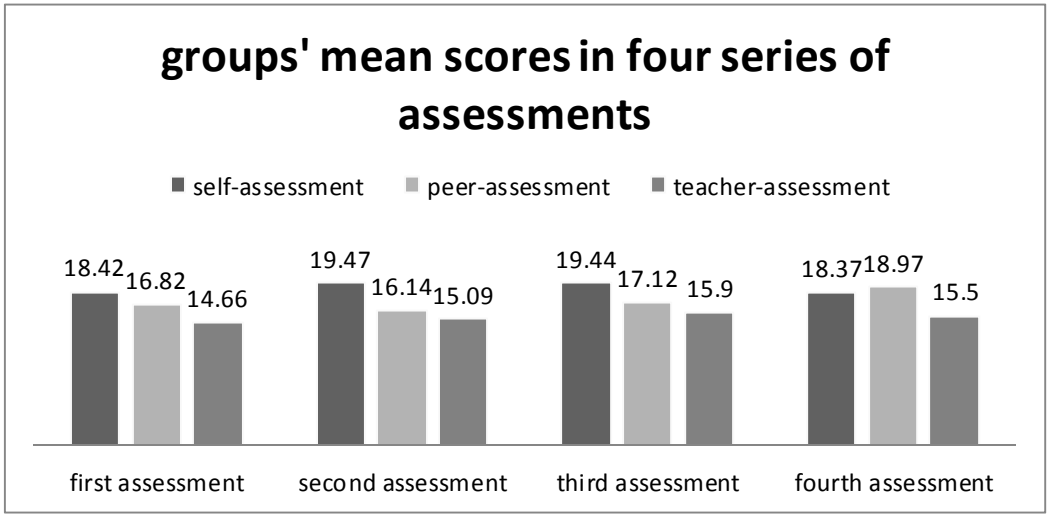

Figure 2. Self-, peer-, and teacher-assessment groups' mean scores in four assessment series

The results of one-way ANOVA for the four series of assessments at the $p < .05$ are presented in table 5.

Table 5
ANOVA for the four assessments

ANOVA						
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
First assessment	Between Groups	142.400	2	71.200	**14.780**	**.000**
	Within Groups	274.597	57	4.817		
	Total	416.998	59			
Second assessment	Between Groups	191.045	2	95.522	**10.255**	**.000**
	Within Groups	521.616	56	9.315		
	Total	712.661	58			
Third assessment	Between Groups	123.419	2	61.710	**11.309**	**.000**
	Within Groups	289.209	53	5.457		
	Total	412.629	55			
Fourth assessment	Between Groups	94.758	2	47.379	**4.538**	**.015**
	Within Groups	563.848	54	10.442		
	Total	658.606	56			

Table 6 shows the result of post-hoc test for the four series of assessments.

Table 6
Post Hoc Tests

Multiple Comparisons

Tukey HSD

Dependent Variable	(I) Group	(J) Group	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
First assessment	self	peer	1.59605	.70316	.068	-.0960	3.2881
		teacher	**3.75343***	.69495	**.000**	2.0811	5.4258
	peer	Self	-1.59605	.70316	.068	-3.2881	.0960
		Teacher	**2.15738***	.68577	**.007**	.5071	3.8076
	teacher	self	**-3.75343***	.69495	**.000**	-5.4258	-2.0811
		peer	-2.15738*	.68577	.007	-3.8076	-.5071
Second assessment	self	peer	**3.32773***	.99572	**.004**	.9305	5.7250
		teacher	**4.37535***	.99572	**.000**	1.9781	6.7726
	peer	Self	-3.32773*	.99572	.004	-5.7250	-.9305
		teacher	1.04762	.94186	.511	-1.2200	3.3152
	teacher	Self	-4.37535*	.99572	.000	-6.7726	-1.9781
		peer	-1.04762	.94186	.511	-3.3152	1.2200
Third assessment	self	peer	**2.31503***	.79003	**.014**	.4101	4.2200
		teacher	**3.53968***	.75033	**.000**	1.7304	5.3489
	peer	Self	-2.31503*	.79003	.014	-4.2200	-.4101
		teacher	1.22465	.76212	.252	-.6130	3.0623
	teacher	Self	-3.53968*	.75033	.000	-5.3489	-1.7304
		Peer	-1.22465	.76212	.252	-3.0623	.6130
Fourth assessment	self	peer	.40000	1.08383	.928	-2.2120	3.0120
		teacher	**2.87500***	1.07230	**.026**	.2908	5.4592
	peer	Self	-.40000	1.08383	.928	-3.0120	2.2120
		teacher	**2.47500***	1.00960	**.045**	.0419	4.9081
	teacher	Self	-2.87500*	1.07230	.026	-5.4592	-.2908
		peer	-2.47500*	1.00960	.045	-4.9081	-.0419

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Based on the above two tables (5 and 6), the significant differences among the groups' mean scores, along with ANOVA results, are summarized below.

On the first assessment, teacher-assessment group (M= 14.66, SD= 1.58) differed significantly (sig. = .000) from self-assessment group (M= 18.42, SD= 2.00) and (sig.= 007) from peer-assessment group (M= 16.82, SD= 2.82): F (2, 57)= 14.78, p= .00.

On the second assessment, self-assessment group (M= 19.47, SD= 1.12) differed significantly (sig.= .000) from teacher-assessment group (M= 15.09, SD= 2.68) and (sig.= .004) from peer-assessment group (M= 16.14, SD= 4.22): F(2, 56)= 10.25, p = 00.

On the third assessment, self-assessment group (M= 19.44, SD= 1.14) differed significantly (sig.= .000) from teacher-assessment group (M= 15.90, SD= 1.84) and (sig.= .014) from peer-assessment group (M= 17.12, SD= 3.52): F(2, 53) = 11.30, p = .00.

On the fourth assessment, it was the teacher-assessment group (M= 15.50, SD = 2.02) that had a significantly different performance (sig.= .021) from self-assessment group

(M= 18.37, SD= 4.20) and (sig.= .045) from peer-assessment group (M=17.97, SD= 3.37): F(2.54) = 4.53, p = .01.

Since the groups' mean scores differed significantly in the pretest, at the posttest stage, one-way between groups analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was employed to compare the groups' mean scores. Table 7 reveals the groups' characteristics on the posttest. The independent variable was the type of assessments (self vs., peer, vs. teacher), and the dependent variable was scores on the posttest. Students' mean scores on the pretest were used as the covariate in this analysis. The same information is graphically represented in Figure 3.

Table 7
Descriptive statistics for the posttest

Descriptive Statistics			
Dependent Variable:Posttest			
Group	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
self-assessment-group	16.2632	1.92071	**19**
peer-assessment group	17.3478	1.36611	**23**
teacher-assessment group	14.9648	1.41877	**21**
control group	13.2947	1.81521	**19**
Total	15.5471	2.20790	**82**

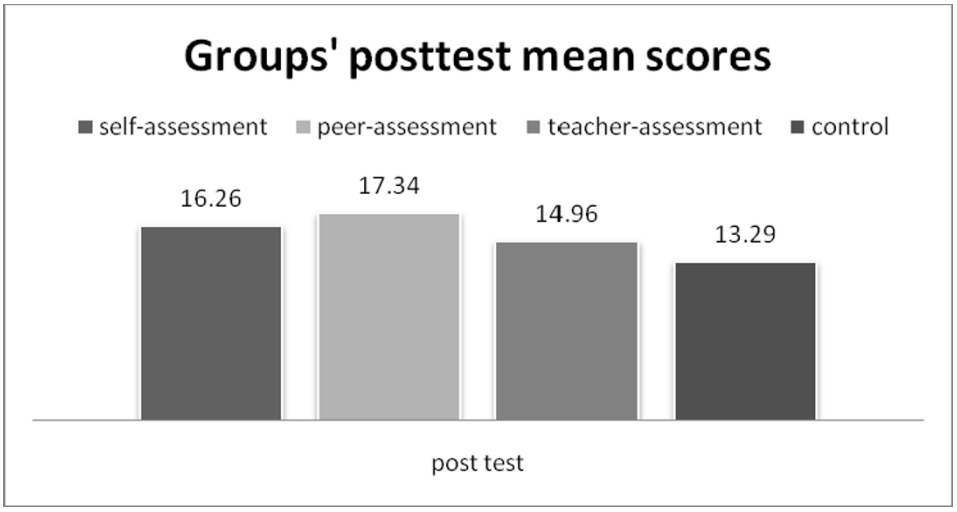

Figure 3. Groups' mean scores on the posttest

Preliminary checks were conducted to ensure that there was no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity, homogeneity of variances. After adjusting for pretest scores, since the significance value corresponding to the posttest scores was p= .00, there was a significant difference among self-, peer-, teacher-assessment and the control groups' mean scores F(3, 77)= 23.15, p= .000. The corresponding effect size (partial eta squared) was .47, which according to Cohen's (1988) classification indicated a medium effect. In fact, 47% of the variance in the groups' mean scores on the posttest was due to the type of assessment. Although the

influence of the groups' mean scores on the pretest was significant (p = .03), it had a small relationship with the posttest scores. These results are displayed in table 8.

Table 8
ANCOVA results for the post-test

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects						
Dependent Variable:Posttest						
Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	199.186[a]	4	49.796	19.595	.000	.504
Intercept	1485.527	1	1485.527	584.565	.000	.884
Pretest scores	11.353	1	11.353	4.467	.038	.055
Group	176.546	3	58.849	23.157	**.000**	**.474**
Error	195.676	77	2.541			
Total	20215.204	82				
Corrected Total	394.862	81				
a. R Squared = .504 (Adjusted R Squared = .479)						

Discussion and Conclusion

The results showed that during the four assessment series, self-assessment group had the highest mean scores in the first three followed by peer-assessment group but for the last assessment, peer-assessment group overperformed the other groups. Meanwhile, teacher-assessment group had the lowest mean scores in all series of assessments. On the posttest, peer-assessment group outperformed all the other groups, followed by self-assessment, thenteacher-assessment, and finally the control group that had the lowest mean score (all the differences were significant statistically). Postest data analysis revealed that the type of assessment had a medium effect on the results, while the pretest scores had a small effect size. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected and the type of assessment proved to have an effect (in favour of peer-assessment) on Iranian university EFL students' course achievement. Based on the observations we had in this research, we can offer the following tentaive conclusions, although we believe that replication of this study in other contexts will lead to a better understanding of the role of assessment type in course achievement.

It can be concluded that among the many likely reasons, students in self-assessment (SA) group did not take the assessment serious(e.g., Butler & Lee, 2010; Dann, 2002) and this might have led to their surface-level study. Theteachers could design ways to better enable students to realize the reasons for the assessment (e.g., by telling them that they have the power to influence instruction). Another reason may be the lack of feedback in this group compared to peer-assessment (PA) group that limited the effectiveness of SA. The teachers may negotiate papers with students or exercise peer-feedback (e.g., Butler & Lee, 2010; Black & William, 1998).

The presence of some competitive environment among the students in PA group and their willingness to assess their peers' achievement as accurately as possible led them to have more in-depth study and to be strict both in item construction and designing measurement criteria - two elements which certainly affects the effecicency of an assessment practice(e.g., Blanche & Merino, 1989; Oscarson, 1997; Ross, 1998).

Among the many elements that might have affected the students' performences in the teacher-assessment group, it seemed that the teacher had designed more difficult items and assessed the students with much strictness. If it was the case, so students ought to have study harder, but this was not substantiated by posttest scores. Such a finding can be attributed to the introduction between self- and peer-assessment, which were new to the students in their associated groups, promoting self-regulatory learning and autonomy (e.g., Dann, 2002; Oscarson, 1989, 1997; Paris & Paris, 2001) and leading to the claim that learning advances from assessing one's own and others' performances (Stone Wiske, 1999).

Abolfazli and Sadeghi (2012) also found that when self-assessment is compared with peer-assessment in terms of their effect on students' course achievement scorses, it is the latter that proves to be more influential. The same results were also forund by Chang et al. (2012) on portfolio assessment in which they found that peer-assessment group had the highest mean scores followed by self-assessment and the teacher-assessment with lowest scores. Similarly, Chang et al. (2012) and Sadler and Good (2006) reported that peer-raters are stricter than self-raters. Peer-evaluation of writing has also been found to have a significant impact on the improvement of the student writers (Brown, 2001; Patri, 2002).

The difference in the performance of students in the self-and peer-assessment group in the present research can be comaprable also with Patri's (2002) study on the influence of peer-feedback on self-and peer-assesment, where it was claimed that the behaviour of peer-assessment was different from that of self-assessment. Consistent with the findings of the present research, Lin et al. (2001) found that students in the self-and peer-groups had different performances and stated that a possible reason for the difference is that self-assessment is based on a more lax scoring standard than peer-assessment. Sadler and Good's (2006) study, supporting the findings of the present research, revealed that peer-based scores were lower than self-based scores, which may mean that peer-raters tend to under-grade while self-raters tend to over-grade.

A finding of this study that teacher-assessment groups' scores were the lowest on the series of assessments, and that this might have been as a result of the teacher's strictness in scoring is in line with (but the other finding that self-assessors used a more lax scoring standard than peer-assessors did is in sharp contrast to)findings by Chang et al. (2012), Lin et al. (2001), and Sadler and Good (2006). In their study they found that the teacher-scoring was the strictest, and peer-scoring was the most lax, with self-scoring in between, showing that peer-raters tended to adopt more lax scoring standards than self-raters did. In contrast with the results of the present research, Pond et al.(1995) and Falchikov (1995) found peers less strict in assessing eachother. They even defined this over-marking by peers as 'friendship marking' or 'decibel marking', and claimed that this could be because peers found it difficult to

criticize their friends. The divergent outcomes above may probably be due to the various educational levels of students, students' and teachers' attitudes toward and beliefs about the assessment methods, the assessment environments, assessor trainings, no previous autonomous learning experience, etc.

A major limitation of the present study was the different educational and cultural contexts of the groups, since the classes that were observed showed some differences either in the professors' teaching method or differences in students' seriousness, attentiveness, motivation, ect., a problem also identified by Butler and Lee (2010), Hamp-Lyons, (2007) and Oscarson(1997). Another limitation in this research that might have affected the results would be with the type of items made in each group. For example in the SA group, students designed mostly multiple-choice items, then true-false, fill-in-the-blanks with very rare cases of short-answer items. But in the PA group, open-ended type questions were the most frequent ones, followed by some multiple-choice and rare cases of true-false and fill-in-the-blank items. In the TA group, except for the first assessment which consisted of short-answer and fill-in-the-blank items, as students wished to have multiple-choice items, and this is why all three remaining assessments were used multiple choice format. Furthermore, the pre-test and post-tests both used multiple-choice items, which while was a contributing factor to their reliability, may have affected their validity adversely.

What is suggested here for further research is to design studies to control for the validity and reliability of the self-, peer-, and teacher-assessments, especially for the former (McDonald & Boud, 2003; Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006; Orsmond etal., 2000; Stefani, 1998; Taras, 2001). Sulzen et al. (2008) identified high levels of validity for alternatives in assessment, but low levels of reliability and concluded that increasing the number of raters was effective in reliability improvement. It is assummed that students would be more likely to sharpen their rating abilities when provided with sufficient practice and training which will in turn make a higher validity possible (e.g., by giving them instruction and feedback). Some interviews may also be conducted with teachers to discover their insights regarding the assessment practices that may influence their implementation (Butler & Lee, 2010).

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Appendix

In the name of God

Dear students

This is a first step in the accomplishment of an MA thesis project by Zainab Abolfazli khonbi at Urmia University. This acts as a test of your current knowledge of Techniques and Principles in Language Teaching (Diana Larsen-Freeman, 2006).

All the questions are in multiple-choice format. Mark the right choice on its letter. In cases you do not know the answers simply leave them unmarked.

Your name:

Thanks for your admirable attention.

For further information about the present research, you may contact the researcher:

E-mail:z.abolfazli1986@gmail.com

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1. *"As a ……..teacher, I do not force my students to speak. They are allowed to speak when they feel they are ready."*

a. task-based approach b. communicative method

c. community language learning d. total physical response

2. *The …… approach makes use of a curriculum which is not a predetermined product, but the result of an ongoing context-specific problem-posing process.*

a. task-based b. participatory c. communicative d. content-based

3. *A teacher who used the……..approach believes that communicative competence involves more than using language conversationally but also includes ability to read, discuss, and write about subject matter from other fields.*

a. communicative b. content-based c. task-based d. natural

4. *A(n)…… teacher might ask students to fill in the vocabulary words in the blanks in the modified cloze passage as they watch the video because he believes that vocabulary is easier to learn when there are contextual clues to help convey meaning.*

a. task-based b. content-based c. participatory d. community language learning

1

5. *A student is very good at seeing abstract patterns. He is also capable of reasoning well. Which of the following intelligences is probably stronger in him?*

a. visual/spatial b. musical/rhythmic c. body/kinesthetic d. logical/mathematic

6. *A certain student who has shown to have high interpersonal intelligence is good at doing…… .*

a. hands-on activities b. project-work

b. sequential presentations d. drawing

7. *According to the communicative approach, there are some common features between…… and real communication.*

a. music b. games c. puzzles d. songs

8. *"As a …… teacher, I believe that learning to communicate in another language should be fun and learners should start learning it by listening."*

a. total physical response b. communicative method

c. content-based approach d. integrative approach

9. *In the total physical response method, it is believed that learners' memory is activated when they respond…… .*

a. through their actions b. with their hands

c. by listening d.by writing

10. *"I take care of my students' feelings by creating in them the feeling that they are learning to do something useful." This sentence is most probably stated by a…… teacher.*

a. communicative b. content-based

c. learning strategy training c. cooperative learning

11. *Which of the following is one of the features of truly communicative activity?*

a. choice b. speed c. interaction d. turn taking

12. *Someone who is a(n)…… believes that there is some real value to each method and that different methods and part of methods should be practical in the same context.*

a. interactionist b. pluralist c. realist d. positivist

2

13. *"When my students fail to say what they want to say, I supply the missing language when they have trouble in explaining a concept in the target language." Which of the following is most probably practiced by this teacher?*

a. task-based approach b. cooperative learning

c. communicative approach d. content-based approach

14. *"I try my best to connect what happens in the classroom with what happens outside that has relevance to my students. So, I sometimes engage my students in an initial discussion about what is happening in their lives." Which of the following is most probably practiced by this teacher?*

a. participatory approach b. natural approach

c. comprehension approach d. cooperative approach

15. *When the teaching approach involves……., the teacher's job is not only to teach language but to teach learning. So, he teaches the best ways of mastering a language.*

a. multiple intelligence b. strategy training

c. chain drill d. whole person

16. *A method is said to be……. if the teacher chooses, from among methods, to create his own blend.*

a. communicative b. integrative c. combinatory d. eclectic

17. *"As a ……. teacher, I believe that telling students what they should exactly do in the class gives them a sense of security."*

a. total physical response b. content-based approach

c. task-based approach d. community language learning

18. *"As a ……. teacher, I walk around in my class and encourage my students to communicate in English. When they fail to do so, I translate what they wish to say in English.*

a. participatory approach b. cooperative learning

c. content-based approach d. community language learning

3

19. *"As I wanted to learn English as a foreign language through interaction with others in TL and negotiation of meaning, I enrolled in a(n)…… class.*

a. community language learning b. task-based approach

c. communicative language teaching d. participatory approach

20. *Another name for body intelligence is……. .*

a. visual b. rhythmic c. intrapersonal d. kinesthetic

21. *The concurrent study of language and subject matter with the form and sequence of language presentation dictated by context material is known as…… instruction.*

a. task-based b. collaborative c. learner-centered d. content-based

22. *The advocates of Total Physical Response insist in creating…… .*

a. psedu-passiveness b. reflecting listening procedures

c. fostering interaction d. low affective filter

23. *"Education is most effective when it is experienced-centered" is the principle of…… .*

a. cooperative learning b. content-based instruction

c. participatory approach d. task-based instruction

24. *In the Communicative Approach, the teacher evaluates his students'…… .*

a. pronunciation as well as usage b. fluency but not accuracy

c. accuracy but not fluency d. accuracy as well as fluency

25. *The task in which students have to listen to different parts of a total set of information they need to complete a task is called…… .*

a. jigsaw b. information-gap c. integrated d. reasoning-gap

26. *The examples of linguistic/verbal intelligence activities are…… .*

a. hands-on activities, field trip b. puzzles and games, categorization

c. note-taking, story telling d. self-evaluation, journal keeping

4

27. *Both native speakers and non-native speakers of a particular language follow a regular academic curriculum in……. .*

a. theme-based language instruction b. sheltered-language instruction

c. adjunct-language instruction d. team-based approach

28. *Which one is among the principles of Total Physical Response?*

a. The students' speaking should be developed before understanding of the target language.

b. Language learners are intelligent and bring the experience of already learning a language.

c. Meaning in the target language can often be conveyed through actions by the students.

d. Pattern practice helps students to form habits which enable the students to use the patterns.

29. *The ability to orient oneself in the environment, to create mental images, and a sensitivity to shape, size, and color is called…… intelligence.*

a. spatial b. logical c. interpersonal d. verbal

30. *In the adjunct model of Content-based instruction,……. .*

a. instruction is geared to students' developing second language proficiency

b. students learn vital "life-coping" or "survival" skills such as using the telephone

c. the teacher scaffolds the linguistic content by helping what they want to say

d. students take a language course that is linked to the academic course

31. *In Communicative Language Teaching,…… .*

a. communicative interaction encourages competition among students within groups

b. the teacher answers the students' questions by drawing on the blackboard or giving examples

c. the teacher moves from group to group offering advice and answering question

d. the students take turns tapping out the sentences of their choice on the word chart

5

32. *All of the following are among the key assumptions of task-based instruction* ***EXEPT****:*

a. learners can learn by interacting communicatively

b. the focus is on product rather than on process

c. basic elements are purposeful activities and tasks

d. activities are sequenced according to difficulty

33. *One of the principles of cooperative learning is that students are encouraged to think in terms of "positive interdependence". This means that students think…… .*

a. competitively b. in isolation

c. individualistically d. cooperatively

34. *"Groups move back together to compare and combine scores" indicates the principle of …. .*

a. competency-based instruction b. cooperative learning

c. participatory approach d. content-based instruction

35. *Which of the following is implied by "Human computer" in Community Language Learning?*

a. the teacher reads the transcript while the students listen

b. strengthening the students' independent learning

c. the teachers' consistent repetition of words or phrases

d. recording the students' conversations

"Blessed is he who sets the aim of his endeavor in life on success in seeking the knowledge of what is useful"

Thanks for your great participation

6

In the name of God

Your Name:

Allowed Time: 30 Min

Directions:

You had covered the units on Grammar-Translation Method, Direct Method, Silent Way, Audio-Lingual Method, Dessugestopedia, Community Language Learning, Communicative Language Teaching, and Total Physical Response based on *Techniques and Principles in Language Teaching* (Diana Larsen-Freeman, 2006) that was used as the course book. This is a course achievement test which reveals the extent to which you had learnt from your course book. All the questions are in the multiple choice format. Mark the right choice on its letter. There will be no penalty for the wrong answers.

---

1. "As a .....teacher, I do not force my students to speak. They are allowed to speak when they feel they are ready."

a. Direct Method *b. Communicative Method*

c. Community Language Learning *d. Total Physical Response*

2. According to the Communicative Approach to language teaching, there are some common features between..... and real communication.

a. music *b. games* *c. puzzles* *d. songs*

3. "As a/an ..... teacher, I believe that learning to communicate in another language should be fun and learners should start learning it by listening."

a. Total Physical Response *b. Communicative Method*

c. Audio-Lingual Method *d. Integrative Approach*

4. In the total physical response method, it is believed that learners' memory is activated when they respond..... .

a. through their actions *b. with their hands*

c. by listening *d.by writing*

1

5. Which of the following is one of the features of a truly communicative activity?

a. Choice *b. Speed* *c. Interaction* *d. Turn taking*

6. "As a ..... teacher, I believe that telling students what they should exactly do in the class gives them a sense of security."

a. Total Physical Response *b. Dessugestopedia*

c. Direct Method *d. Community Language Learning*

7. The advocates of Total Physical Response insist on creating ..... .

a. pseudo-passiveness *b. reflecting listening procedures*

c. fostering interaction *d. low affective filter*

8. In the Communicative Approach, the teacher evaluates his students' ..... .

a. pronunciation as well as usage *b. fluency but not accuracy*

c. accuracy but not fluency *d. accuracy as well as fluency*

9. Which one is among the principles of Total Physical Response?

a. The students' speaking should be developed before understanding the target language.

b. Language learners are intelligent and bring the experience of already learning a language.

c. Meaning in the target language can often be conveyed through actions by the students.

d. Pattern practice helps students to form habits which enable the students to use the patterns.

10. In Communicative Language Teaching, ...

a. communicative interaction encourages competition among students within groups

b. the teacher answers the students' questions by drawing on the blackboard or giving examples

c. the teacher moves from group to group offering advice and answering question

d. the students take turns tapping out the sentences of their choice on the word chart

11. Which of the following is implied by "Human computer" in Community Language Learning?

a. The teachers' reading of the transcript while the students are listening

b. Strengthening the students' independent learning

c. The teachers' consistent repetition of words or phrases

d. Recording the students' conversations

2

12. What is the effect of paying attention to similarities between the target and the native language in Grammar-Translation Method?

a. Learning is facilitated. *b. Learning is ever-changing.*

c. Learning is blocked. *d. Learning is limited.*

13. How is the meaning made clear in Total Physical Response method?

a. Through body movement

b. By translating into the students' native language

c. By contrastive analysis of native and target languages

d. By forcing the students' perceptions

14. Which of the following is correct regarding Total Physical Response method?

a. The written language is emphasized over spoken language.

b. Students read in the target language (e.g. dialogs) and write (e.g. compositions).

c. It is important that students acquire the melody of the language.

d. The spoken language is emphasized over written language.

15. What is the role of students in Total Physical Response method?

a. Imitator *b. Communicator* *c. Counselor* *d. Passive learner*

16. In Communicative Approach, how is the culture viewed?

a. Culture is viewed as consisting of literature and fine arts.

b. Culture consists of the history of the people who speak the target language.

c. Culture is viewed as having unique reality, or spirit for a particular mass of people.

d. Culture is the everyday life style of the people who use the language.

17. In which one of the following methods, posters displaying grammatical information about target language are hung around the room in order to take advantage of students' peripheral learning?

a. Communicative Language Teaching *b. Silent Way*

c. Dessugestopedia *d. Community Language Learning*

3

18. The syllabus in Direct Method is based on ..... and ..... .

a. linguistic structures – deduction *b. situations – deduction*

c. topics – situations *d. linguistic structures – topics*

19. Which of the following is **FALSE** as one of the characteristics of Audio Lingual Method?

a. Errors lead to formation of bad habits.

b. Positive reinforcement helps students to develop correct habits.

c. Written form of the language is more basic than the speech.

d. Language cannot be separated from culture.

20. In an Audio Lingual Method, most of the interaction is between ..... and ..... and is initiated by the ..... .

a. students – imitators – teachers

b. students – teacher – imitators

c. teacher – students – teacher

d. students – imitators – students

21. What is the role of a teacher in Silent Way?

a. A technician or an engineer *b. An orchestra leader*

c. An imitator *d. A skillful grammarian*

22. What is the logic to choose 'target language names' in Dessugestopedia?

a. The teacher can call the names of students easily.

b. Native language translation is avoided.

c. The barriers will be reinforced.

d. New identity makes students feel more secure.

23. In both Grammar Translation Method and Dessugestopedia, the teacher plays the role of a/an ..... .

a. coordinator *b. conductor* *c. authority* *d. participant*

4

24. "I take care of my students' feelings by creating in them the feeling that they are learning to do something useful." This sentence is most probably stated by a…….. teacher.

a. Communicative *b. Cognitive code*

c. Direct method *d. Audio-lingual method*

25. "When my students fail to say what they want to say, I supply the missing language when they have trouble in explaining a concept in the target language." Which of the following is most probably practiced by this teacher?

a. Cognitive Approach *b. Audio-Lingual Method*

c. Communicative Approach *d. Suggestopedia*

26. "As a …… teacher, I walk around in my class and encourage my students to communicate in English. When they fail to do so, I translate what they wish to say in English.

a. Cognitive Code *b. Grammar Translation Method*

c. Communicative language teaching *d. Community Language Learning*

27. "As I wanted to learn English as a foreign language through interaction with others in target language and negotiation of meaning, I enrolled in a …….. class.

a. Community Language Learning *b. Total Physical Response*

c. Communicative Language Teaching *d. Direct Method*

28. What is the nature of student-student interaction in Communicative Language Teaching method?

a. Students issue commands to one another as well as to the teacher.

b. Students interact a great deal with one another.

c. Initially, the students can only respond nonverbally or with a few words.

d. Student-student verbal interaction is desirable, so the teacher is silent.

29. As a teacher who follows the Communicative approach, which of the following areas would you most emphasize in your teaching?

a. Pronunciation *b. Vocabulary* *c. Functions* *d. Structures*

30. Which of the following is **NOT** the teacher's role in Communicative Approach?

a. Orchestra leader *b. Facilitator* *c. Advisor* *d. Co-communicator*

5

31. Information gap, role plays, and games are language teaching techniques used in……. .

a. Communicative Language Teaching *b. Audio-Lingual Method*

c. Cognitive Code Approach *d. Dessugestopedia*

32. How is the learning process in Community Language Learning Method?

a. Dynamic and creative *b. Passive and repetitive*

c. Time-consuming and useless *d. Communicative and sudden*

33. Which of the following methods states that each language has phonological, morphological, and syntactic levels, and that a good language learner is one who has enough knowledge and skill in all these levels?

a. Communicative approach *b. Direct method*

c. Audio-lingual *d. Silent way*

34. In Direct Method, evaluation is accomplished by asking the students ……. .

a. to demonstrate their knowledge *b. to draw a map*

c. to read aloud a text *d. to use the language*

35. Based on the Communicative approach, students should consider the L2 at is discourse level which refers to …… .

a. authentic material *b. cultural development*

c. cohesion and coherence *d. sentence structure*

"Blessed is he who sets the aim of his endeavor in life on success in seeking the knowledge of what is useful"

6