The Impact of Cumulative Group Dynamic Assessment on the Learning of Congruent and Non-Congruent Collocations among Iranian Intermediate EFL Learners

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Abstract

The present study was an attempt to find out how cumulative group dynamic assessment impacts on the learning of congruent and non-congruent collocations by Iranian Intermediate EFL learners. To conduct the study, 58 language learners at intermediate language proficiency level were selected as the participants of the study. Their age range was between 19 and 27 who studied English language in Zabankadeh Language Institute in Tehran, Iran. Before and after receiving cumulative group dynamic assessment, language learners were tested on their knowledge of cumulative collocations through using a researcher-made collocation test developed and validated by an expert in TEFL. The statistical analyses included the use of paired samples t-test, Wilcoxon test, and Mann Whitney U test. The results indicated that cumulative group dynamic assessment was significantly effective in the learning of congruent and non-congruent collocations. Obviously, it was found that there were significant differences between the learners' scores on congruent and non-congruent posttest. Finally, it was concluded that the scores of congruent collocations being higher than the non-congruent collocations test.

Keywords: Cumulative, Dynamic assessment, Congruent, Non-congruent, Collocations, English as a foreign language (EFL)

INTRODUCTION

For a long time and even today, second language teachers have been using standardized tests in language programs. According to Isavi (2012, p. 2), "The history of second or foreign language programs has been characterized by a long tradition of standardized testing as the most reliable procedure to uncover learners' language abilities".

Based on Vygotsky (1978)'s socio-cultural theory, this form of evaluating learners' language ability was called into question due to its underestimation of learners' abilities by paying attention to the developmental differences among the learners and, therefore,

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more accurately accounting for their abilities. This was along with the recognition that interaction is an important and powerful tool of language assessment.

Given that dynamic assessment serves as a procedure thereby the learners' development is assessed and enhanced at the same time. This kind of assessment is closely related to zone of proximal development (Lantolf & Poehner, 2004). Dynamic assessment which is not intended as a replacement for other types of testing but as a complement to them, was first developed by Feuerstein in the early 1950s to estimate the learning potential of low-performing children. It has since been mainly applied to assessment of cognitive development potential by psychologists and later in language testing (Anton, 2003).

Given that dynamic assessment opposes any separation of instruction and assessment, resulting in the following outcomes including: dynamic assessment omits old demarcations between instruction and assessment; and dynamic assessment paves the way for better learning-friendly cooperation between an examiner as a mediator as well as the examinees as learners.

Based on what Poehner (2008) asserts, dynamic assessment offers an assessment paradigm which is considerably different from that we are accustomed to think of. As pointed out by Poehner (2008), the main characteristics of this paradigm includes: it is process-oriented, it motivates interaction, it draws on ZPD, and it turns assessment in a type of instruction with emphasis on what a learner has acquired and learned so far.

One type of dynamic assessment is cumulative group dynamic assessment. In this type of dynamic assessment as Pohener (2004) claims, the students initially take turns to engage as primary interactants with the teacher. When an erroneous answer is given by a learner, the teacher provides prompts for the learner until s/he comes up with the right answer.

It is suggested that in cumulative group dynamic assessment, the students participate in an interaction (Pohener, 2009). In the same vein, he further maintains that, when an erroneous answer is given by a learner, the teacher provides prompts for the learner until s/he comes up with the right answer. This approach is cumulative since its goal is to move the group forward in its ZPD through negotiations with individual group members in their own ZPDs (Pohener, 2009).

Cumulative group dynamic assessment is operationally defined as the steps taken to provide process oriented group dynamic assessment based on Pohener (2009). In cumulative group dynamic assessment, the students should take part in a conversation to show their abilities in interaction.

Collocations as defined by Richards and Schmitt (2010), refer to the restrictions on how words are used together, for instance which prepositions go with particular verbs, or which verbs and nouns are used together. Given the importance of collocations in learning a foreign language and the significant role of first language transfer as well as the fact that in general few studies examined non-native speakers' use of collocations and based on Nesselhauf's (2003) idea, these studies are few and their findings are unreliable.

Today, collocation knowledge is believed to serve an important function in learning and acquiring foreign and second language; since collocation paves the way for less cognitive

demands on L2 learners in terms of second language production and processing (Conklin & Schmitt, 2008). In addition, as Hsu and Chiu (2008) argue, lack of ability to correctly apply collocations highlights   L2 learners' foreign-soundness. As Nesselhauf (2003) maintains, "collocations not only enhance accuracy but also fluency" (p. 223).

Knowledge of collocations can certainly help foreign language learners have a better performance in different skills and components of the language (Granger 1998; Lorenz, 1999). Given the fact that non-congruent collocations, due to their nature, might bring about difficulties for EFL learners in what follows the problems of learners regarding learning collocations (Nesselhauf, 2003); thus, the possible contributions dynamic assessment can make would be a better learning of collocations.

As Haywood and Lidz (2007) argue, in the case of research on dynamic assessment in general and group dynamic assessment in particular, one of the main concerns is how to appropriately provide mediation. This has resulted in unwillingness to conduct empirical research. This issue has not been in focus as it should be in both general dynamic assessment literature and literature on L2 dynamic assessment; therefore, it has not received the attention both in general dynamic assessment and in L2 dynamic assessment research (Aljaafreh & Lantolf, 1994).

Poehner (2009) asserts that group dynamic assessment should be used to investigate social mediation and interaction in the context of classroom. There is a general consensus among practitioners that the mediator can have negotiation simultaneously with several learners in order to co-construct multiple ZPDs, paving the way for the progress of the entire group in their ZPD (Poehner & Lantolf, 2005; Poehner, 2009).

Vygotsky who characterizes ZDP as the proper time for instructing the group and individual ZPD corroborates the role of dynamic assessment in improving a number of ZPDs (Vygotsky, 1998). According to Guk and Kellogg (2007), Vygotsky mainly focused on public school teaching, rejecting the notion of a pedagogical duet between learner and instructor. One area in which the use of dynamic assessment can possibly have promising results is collocations.

A review of literature reveals that collocations pose important challenges for learners even at the most advanced levels of proficiency (Kallkvist, 1995; Granger 1998; Lorenz, 1999; Nesselhauf, 2003). It has been also argued that this is typically true of highly used words, due to their semantic capacity as well as limited collectability.

Bisk-up (1992), and Bahns and Eldaw (1993) worked on first language interference in German speakers' English collocation production through translation. Those whose L2 collocational skill was limited clearly resorted to German, which was a major cause of the errors found. However, empirical evidence for such a conclusion is scant. The main problem in this respect is the fact that Iranian EFL teachers and learners may also grapple with the problem of inappropriate L1 transfer while teaching and learning collocations, respectively.

One particular way which may help EFL learners tackle with the problem of learning collocations is adopting the procedures of dynamic assessment in general and cumulative group dynamic assessment in particular.

Many scholars working in vocabulary domain (e.g. Halliday, 1961; Kjellmer, 1990; and Sinclair, 1991) have drawn on the notion of collocation. For example, Halliday (1961) argues that collocations can be described as co-occurrences of all probabilities of lexical items. Along the same lines, those lexical items that are semantically connected to each other are used in close proximity in a text.

Most scholars and educators are of the opinion that collocations should be taught (Nation, 2001; McCarthy, 1990; Hill, 2000). This is because a review of the error types made by EFL/ESL students show that collocations make important contribution to EFL/ESL contexts. That is, a lot of errors are related to collocations (Meara, 1984). According to Nesselhauf, (2005), a large number of types of prefabricated units (e.g. collocations) are still not adequately taken into consideration in English language instruction today.

Along the same line, a lot of instructors and researchers (e.g. Boonyasaquan, 2006; Conzett, 2000) insist that collocations are required to be included in all stages of a learners' academic path. They should be taught in the instruction of English language skill including listening, speaking, reading, writing, and translating. This is due to the fact that one of the most crucial phenomena to enhance learners' fluency and accuracy is to improve their mental lexicon by providing them with the quality of collocational input.

In an attempt, Dorkchandra (2015) did an investigation to shed light on the possible impact of instruction of noticing collocation on English learners with respect to their collocational competence and opinions towards the instruction in Thailand. Seventy-five freshmen in the 2nd semester of academic year participated in the study. The findings revealed the effect of instruction of collocation on language learners based on their collocational competence.

Jafarpour, Hashemina, and Alipour (2013) conducted a study to shed light on the effect of taking the corpus-based approach in second language classes. This study was mainly aimed at comparing the impact of the corpus-based approach with that of the traditional approach in terms of the acquisition of collocations of near-synonymous pairs. To this end, two groups of L2 learners were selected, namely, experimental and control groups. In the case of experimental class, the participants proceeded while using concordance. In contrast, the participants in the control group learned the collocations, using the traditional approach. The students in both groups were similar with respect to their L2 proficiency and collocation competence.

In their study, Rahimi and Momeni (2011) examined the impact of the instruction of collocations on English language proficiency. The sample of the study consisted of sixty students and a pretest-posttest quasi-experimental design was used in the study. Given that the participants in control group were instructed the new words in isolation, using traditional techniques including translation and definition. In contrast, in the case of experimental group, the students were taught vocabulary by being provided with collocations of a particular word through the use of concordancers and corpus-based tasks. Finally, all participants took part in a language proficiency test. Based on the statistical analyses, the participants in the experimental group had a better performance

than those in the control group on their posttests. This indicates that the instruction of collocations can enhance L2 learners' language proficiency.

Ucar and Yukselir (2015) tried to discover the effect of corpus-based tasks on EFL learners' verb-noun collocation learning. Two groups with a total number of 30 students participated in the study. Prior to the implementation of the treatment, the participants in both groups took a pre-test. Based on the results of pre-test, there was no significant difference between the members of both groups in terms of their language proficiency.

Ashouri and Mashhadi Heidar (2015) studied the effect of corpus-based collocation teaching on Iranian EFL learners' writing ability. The members in the control group were taught writing skill, using conventional methods whereas the students in the experimental group were exposed to corpus-based collocation instruction with a focus on writing essays. The results showed a significant difference between the mean scores of control and experimental groups with respect to writing elements.

Regarding dynamic assessment, a study by Barzegar and Azarizad (2014) indicated the positive effect of dynamic assessment on the writing skills of the learners. They concluded that there were no significant differences prior to the start of the experiment in the learners' performance. However, the results of the posttest revealed that after the study was completed it was the experimental group who had a better performance than the control group due to the implementation of dynamic assessment as the midterm exam.

Anton (2009) carried a study where she also probed the usefulness of dynamic assessment with university students. To this end, she implemented dynamic assessment with third year Spanish majors on the speaking and writing sections of a diagnostic test. The findings of the study revealed that dynamic assessment led to a deeper grasping of learners' abilities.

According to Anton (2009), students have the chance to revise what they believe they do not know. Yet, it is not obvious if students have the chance to make revision to the incorrect forms they are unaware of. Not being aware of something wrong, they are more likely not to ask about it. This will lead to the loss of opportunities for interacting and correcting themselves. According to Skinner and Madden (2010) even if students think that they need help, it is not guaranteed that they will explicitly demands it.

The present study was intended to find out the impact of cumulative group dynamic assessment on the learning of congruent and non-congruent collocations among Iranian intermediate EFL learners. Thus, to conduct the study, the following research questions were formulated.

Research questions

- Q1: Does cumulative group dynamic assessment have any significant impact on the learning of congruent collocations among Iranian intermediate EFL learners?
- Q2: Does cumulative group dynamic assessment have any significant impact on the learning of non-congruent collocations among Iranian intermediate EFL learners?

- Q3: Is there any significant difference between the learners' achievement of congruent and non-congruent collocations in the group receiving cumulative group dynamic assessment?

Research hypotheses

Based on the above-mentioned questions, the following null hypotheses were formulated:

Null Hypothesis 1: Cumulative group dynamic assessment does not have any significant impact on the learning of congruent collocations among Iranian intermediate EFL learners.

Null Hypothesis 2: Cumulative group dynamic assessment does not have any significant impact on the learning of non-concurrent collocations among Iranian intermediate EFL learners.

Null Hypothesis 3: There is not any significant difference between the learners' achievement of congruent and non-congruent collocations in the group receiving cumulative group dynamic assessment.

METHOD

The current study was intended to find out the impact of cumulative group dynamic assessment on the learning of congruent and non-congruent collocations among Iranian intermediate EFL learners. To conduct the study, the researcher relied on the main framework of the study including the participants, instrumentation, procedure, design, and data analysis.

Participants

The participants of this study were 58 intermediate EFL learners selected based on convenient sampling method due to availability and manageability reasons. The participants were given a PET in order that those whose scores fell within +/- one standard deviation were selected to make sure that the participants were homogeneous in terms of overall proficiency level. The participants of the study were all female learners within the age range of 19 to 27.

A panel of experts consisting of one Ph.D. holder in TEFL and another one in linguistics as well as translation studies were also requested to assist the researcher in choosing the congruent and non-congruent collocations for the purpose of this study.

Instrumentation

Preliminary English Test (PET)

A sample of Preliminary English Test (PET) was adopted from Preliminary English Test 5 of Cambridge TESOL Examinations published by Cambridge University Press (2008) in order to determine the learners' proficiency level. Thus, the aim was to select

homogenous participants. The present study used three sections of PET for the purpose of the study which are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Different Sections of PET

Section 1	1 hour	Reading and Writing	5 Parts	35 Marks
Section 2	35 minutes	Listening	4 Parts	25 Marks
Section 3	10-12minutes	Speaking	4 parts	15 Marks
		Total score:75		

As it is evident in the table, section 1 is dedicated to evaluating reading and writing. This part consists of 35 questions that will be presented in 5 parts including; five multiple choice questions (five points), five matching questions (five points), ten true/false questions (10 points), five multiple questions (five points), and finally a cloze test which includes 10 multiple choice gaps (10 points) .the reading section has a total score of 35.

Writing section consists of four parts including; seven multiple choice questions (seven points), six multiple choice questions (six points), six fill in the gap questions (six points), and six yes/no questions (six points).The listening part therefore has 25 points overall.

Regarding speaking section of PET four parts were included. In the first part, the examiner introduces him/herself and asks the participants' name and personal information and asks them to spell their names. In part two, the examiner gives the participants a picture and asks them to talk about it together. In part three, each participant is given the chance to speak alone; the examiner provides the participant with a colored photograph taken from the mentioned book and asks the learner to talk about it. In part four, the examiner asks the participants to talk more about the photograph in part 3.

Congruent and Non-congruent Collocation Test

To assess the learners' performance on congruent and non-congruent collocations, a test containing 60 items was developed by the researcher. For every collocation, the learners were required to provide the meaning of that collocation and use it in one sentence. To assure the validity of the test, the initial items were chosen and revised by a Ph.D. holder in TEFL. To this aim, sixty collocations which could be translated word by word into Persian and were meaningful (congruent colocations) and those which did not have translation equivalents in Persian and if translated into Persian word by word sounded unnatural (non-congruent collocations) were identified. As for the reliability index, the test was piloted and the scores gained were analyzed through test-retest procedure.

Design

The present study is quasi-experimental as the participants were selected based on convenient non-random sampling method. More specifically, the design of the present study is comparative group pre-test post-test design.

Procedure

Pilot Study

The congruent and non-congruent tests developed for the purpose of this study were piloted first to assure their appropriateness. Moreover, to make sure that the study was feasible, the researcher first piloted the cumulative group dynamic assessment procedures on some participants having the same characteristics of the participants of this study.

Main Study and Data Collection

For the purpose of the study, initially, 58 females as the participants were divided non-randomly to two experimental groups. Afterwards, 30 non-congruent and 30 congruent collocations were chosen from collocation in use. Then, learners in one of the groups were given congruent collocations and the other one were given non-congruent collocations. In cumulative group dynamic assessment, the students should take turns to engage as primary interactants with the teacher. When a student provides an incorrect answer, the teacher provides that same student with mediation prompts until s/he reaches the correct answer. This approach is believed to be cumulative since its goal is to move the group forward in its ZPD through negotiations with individual group members in their own ZPDs.

Based on these definitions the following steps were taken in both groups:

- Initially, the exercises in the collocations in use book corresponding to the identified congruent and non-congruent collocations were given to the participants.

- Having finished the exercises, the researcher put the learners in groups.

- The learners were asked to check their answers in groups.

- The groups were advised to work together and make sentences in which the collocations are used.

- Some individual students from the groups were asked to read out the sentences.

- If the sentence read was not correct, the teacher provided the learner with another sentence in which the collocation is used.

- If the learner could make another sentence, the researcher stopped here but if not the other steps were taken as follows.

- The teacher gave a broader context in which the meaning of the collocation became clearer.

- In case the learner could not manage to get the right meaning in step number 7 the teacher gave a synonym of the collocation or an antonym and finally a definition.

- In case all the previous steps proved ineffective the teacher gave the Persian meaning of the collocation and asked the learner to make sentences and also use a dictionary to come up with the right examples.

As it is evident from the above mentioned steps, the researcher or mediator as Lantolf and Poehner (2004) put it, started within a broad zone of proximal development and narrowed down the zone until s/he gets within the zone of proximal development in an attempt to provide the learner with most effective feedback available.

The treatment lasted for 10 sessions in both groups. After the treatment was over, both groups were given the post-test. The results of the post-test were analyzed to explore the null hypotheses.

Data Analysis

To investigate the research questions, paired samples T-tests, Wilcoxon test, and Mann Whitney U test were used. It should be noted that Wilcoxon and Mann Whitney test were used since the collected data violated the normality assumptions required for parametric tests. The study also made use of descriptive statistics such as standard deviation and mean scores.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The current research intended to investigate the impact of cumulative group dynamic assessment on the learning of congruent and non-congruent collocations among Iranian Intermediate EFL learners. To this aim, 58 female language learners at intermediate level of language proficiency were selected through convenience sampling method. In order to obtain the homogeneity of the participants' language proficiency level, the PET was taken so that their PET scores could be used as a criteria to select those participants who had the closet scores to the mean score. Table 2 reveals the descriptive statistics of the 58 language learners.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of the 58 Female Language Learners

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
PET for 58	58	30.00	57.00	44.3333	5.43451
Valid N	58				

As it is evident, Table 2 shows the distribution of PET scores of all the 58 samples. It illustrates that language learners had a mean score of 44.33 (SD=5.43) on PET. Thus, the distribution of PET score is close to normal distribution which means that mean score can be a good indicator of central point of distribution. To choose those learners with homogenized language proficiency, those whose PET scores fell within the range of mean score ±1 SD were extracted from the pool of 58 participants. Table 3 shows the descriptive statistics of those students with scores between mean score ±1 SD.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics of those learners with Scores between Mean Score ±1 SD

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
PET for 58	58	40.00	50.00	44.0833	2.48916
Valid N	58				

In Table 2 the mean score of students is now 44.08 (SD=2.48). Mean score of the students has not changed from initial pool of language learners; however, SD have almost half reduced which is an indication more homogenized PET scores.

As part of the fact that raw data were pertinent to scores obtained through administering the collocation test, it was necessary to check the normal distribution of data too. To this end, Kolmogorov Smirnov test of normality was run the data of the all groups of the study. Table 4 shows the results of Kolmogorov Smirnov test of normality.

Table 4. Results of Kolmogorov Smirnov Test of Normality

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]		
	Statistic	df	Sig.
Pretest congruent concurrent	.094	29	.200*
Pretest non-congruent concurrent	.095	29	.200*
Pretest congruent cumulative	.118	29	.200*
Pretest non-congruent cumulative	.180	29	.012
Pretest congruent and non-congruent cumulative	.139	29	.135
Posttest congruent cumulative	.168	29	.028
Posttest non-congruent cumulative	.077	29	.200*
Posttest congruent and non-congruent cumulative	.084	29	.200*

As it is seen in Table 4, all the data of the current study are normally distributed and have significant levels greater than the confidence interval of 0.05 except the data related to data of pretest on non-congruent collocation and posttest on non-congruent collocation in cumulative group dynamic assessment.

To answer the first research question relating to the impact of cumulative group dynamic assessment on learning congruent collocations by Iranian intermediate EFL learners, the students' test scores on congruent collocation test before and after receiving cumulative group dynamic assessment were compared. Table 5 shows the descriptive statistics of student on cumulative collocation test before and after treatment.

Table 5. Descriptive Statistics of Student on Congruent Collocation Test before and after Treatment

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Pretest congruent cumulative	29	27.8333	5.17343	16.00	38.00
Posttest congruent cumulative	29	41.2000	7.30800	24.00	54.00

Based on pretest and posttest results, the group receiving cumulative group dynamic assessment had a mean score of 27.83 (SD=5.17) in pretest and a mean score of 41.20 (SD=7.30) in posttest. To determine if the difference in mean scores is significant or not, Wilcoxon test was run on the pretest and posttest scores due to the fact that posttest scores were not normally distributed. Table 6 shows the result of Wilcoxon test between congruent collocation pretest and posttest in cumulative group dynamic assessment.

Table 6. Result of Wilcoxon test between Congruent Collocation Pretest and Posttest in Cumulative Group Dynamic Assessment

		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Z	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)
Posttest congruent cumulative - Pretest congruent cumulative	Negative Ranks	0[a]	.00	.00	-4.800[a]	.000
	Positive Ranks	30[b]	15.50	465.00		
	Ties	0[c]				
	Total	30				

Based on the results of Wilcoxon test it was found that there was a significant difference between pretest and posttest scores Z=4.80, P=0.00). Therefore, cumulative group dynamic assessment had positive effect on learning congruent collocations by Iranian intermediate EFL learners.

The second research question was about the effect of cumulative group dynamic assessment on learning non-congruent collocations by Iranian intermediate EFL learners. Initially, the students' test scores on non-congruent collocation test before and after receiving cumulative group dynamic assessment were compared. Table 7 shows the descriptive statistics of students on non-congruent collocation test before and after treatment.

Table 7. Descriptive Statistics of Students on Non-congruent Collocation Test before and after Treatment

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Pretest non-congruent cumulative	29	20.7000	5.74846	10.00	34.00
Posttest non-congruent cumulative	29	32.9333	5.95925	22.00	46.00

Based on pretest and posttest results, the group receiving cumulative group dynamic assessment had a mean score of 20.70 (SD=5.74) in pretest and a mean score of 32.93(SD=5.95) in posttest. To determine if the difference in mean scores is significant or not, Wilcoxon test was run on the pretest and posttest scores due to the fact that pretest scores were not normally distributed. Table 8 shows the result of Wilcoxon test between non-congruent collocation pretest and posttest in cumulative group dynamic assessment.

Table 8. Result of Wilcoxon Test between Non-congruent Collocation Pretest and Posttest in Cumulative Group Dynamic Assessment

		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Z	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)
Posttest non-congruent cumulative - Pretest non-congruent cumulative	Negative Ranks	0[a]	.00	.00	-4.805[a]	.000
	Positive Ranks	29[b]	15.50	465.00		
	Ties	0[c]				
	Total	29				

Based on the results of Wilcoxon test, it was found that there was a significant difference between pretest and posttest scores (Z=4.80, P=0.00). Therefore, cumulative group dynamic assessment had positive effect on learning non-congruent collocations by Iranian intermediate EFL learners.

The third research question was about any significant difference between the effects of cumulative group dynamic assessment on learning congruent and non-congruent collocations. To find the answer to this question the students' scores on congruent and non-congruent collocation tests after receiving cumulative group dynamic assessment were compared. Table 9 shows the results of comparison between congruent and non-congruent collocation test scores after treatment.

Table 9. Comparison between Congruent and Non-congruent Collocation Test Scores after Treatment

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Posttest congruent cumulative	29	41.2000	7.30800	24.00	54.00
Posttest non-congruent cumulative	29	32.9333	5.95925	22.00	46.00

Based on comparison between posttest scores, students had a mean score of 41.20 (SD=7.30) in congruent collocation test and a mean score of 32.93 (SD=5.95) in non-congruent collocation test. Due to the fact that congruent collocation posttest scores were not normally distributed and scores were related to the same group, Wilcoxon test was run on the test scores to find any possible significant difference between the congruent and non-congruent collocation test scores after treatment. Table 10 shows the results of Wilcoxon test.

Table 10. Results of Wilcoxon Test between the Congruent and Non-congruent Collocation Test Scores after Cumulative Group Dynamic Assessment

		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Z	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)
Posttest non-congruent cumulative - Posttest congruent cumulative	Negative Ranks	26[a]	14.46	376.00	-4.505[a]	.000
	Positive Ranks	1[b]	2.00	2.00		
	Ties	3[c]				
	Total	30				

Based on the results of Wilcoxon test, it was found that there was a significant difference between the posttest scores (Z=4.50, P=0.00). Therefore, cumulative group dynamic assessment had significantly more positive effect on learning congruent collocations.

DISCUSSION

The present study aimed to find out the impact of cumulative group dynamic assessment on the learning of congruent and non-congruent collocations among Iranian EFL learners. The study adopted pretest-posttest design and EFL learners were checked for congruent and non-congruent collocation knowledge before and after receiving treatment. The

results of data analyses within groups indicated that cumulative group dynamic assessment was effective in enhancing EFL learners' collocation.

CONCLUSION

The present study aimed at investigating how cumulative group dynamic assessment impact on the learning of congruent and non-congruent collocations among Iranian intermediate EFL learners. The study adopted pretest-posttest design and EFL learners were checked for congruent and congruent collocation knowledge before and after receiving treatment. The results of data analyses indicated that cumulative group dynamic assessment was effective in enhancing EFL learners' collocation knowledge.

Based on the results, it can be maintained that the effectiveness of cumulative group dynamic assessment is attributable to the common core of the assessment, which is dynamic assessment. Accordingly, the present study adds to previous studies (Zoghi & Malheer, 2013; Barzegar & Azarizad, 2014; Anton, 2003) on the effectiveness of dynamic assessment in language learning. In the same line, the study by Hessamy and Ghaderib (2014) on the role of dynamic assessment on the learning of vocabulary by Iranian EFL learners showed that dynamic assessment significantly affected the vocabulary knowledge of Iranian EFL learners. Their study followed a pretest posttest one control group design in which experimental group received mediation procedure drawn on dynamic assessment and the control group just received regular instruction. After the treatment period, experimental group achieved a significant gain in the knowledge of vocabulary when compared to control group.

It can also be stated that dynamic assessment and its emphasis on interaction may have contributed to learners' involvement and consequently more willingness to sustain their studies. To support this argument, the study by Zoghi and Malheer (2013) is helpful. Findings of the study by Zoghi and Malheer (2013) indicated positive effect of dynamic assessment on the learners' motivation. The aim of their study was to understand if there is a significant difference in students' intrinsic motivation while a dynamic assessment procedure is implemented.

In addition to empirical studies supporting the findings of the present study, theoretical explanations are also conductive in interpreting the results of the current study. For instance, dynamic assessment was built on the principal of ZPD which pushes the learners in a progressive manner from their current status of development to the next stage of development. All these theoretical explanations drawn from Vygotsky's ZPD and his sociocultural theory give credence to the validity and justifiability of the findings of the present study.

However, the findings should not be taken as conclusive and the findings are best generalizable to the population of the study. It is noteworthy that there are critics regarding dynamic assessment too and some (e.g. Swanson & Lussier, 2001) believe that superiority of dynamic assessment when compared to traditional assessment has been critically evaluated. In contrary to the findings of present study, Murphy (2002) stated that not all empirical studies on dynamic assessment led to positive results in education. Therefore, the findings of the present study although support and get supported by the

previous studies showing positive effect of dynamic assessment should not be taken as absolute and need to be taken into consideration with care. In other words, the contextual characteristics of the present study should be considered for deciding on the employment of dynamic assessment in ELT.

The study also showed cumulative group dynamic assessment was more effective on learning of congruent and non-congruent collocations. This is because non-congruent collocations do not have direct equivalent in the first language of the learners and negative transfer may contribute to the challenge of learning them. Nesselhauf (2003) argues that L1 transfer has been claimed to take place at various levels of linguistic aspect including phonological, syntactical, lexical, and grammatical levels. He further maintains that, despite the fact that when the issue of transfer in language learning is raised, it evokes mainly phonological transfer to phonological level, transfer of vocabulary and collocations appear to be one of the main contributors to poor proficiency of L2 learners.

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