The Effectiveness of Self-Directed-Learning Method in Teaching Speaking Skill to Iranian EFL Learners

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ABSTRACT: It is generally agreed today that, the mastery of speaking skills in English is a priority for many schools and second language learners so how best to approach and develop this skill has long been the focus of methodological debates. Since Iranian EFL learners highlight speaking as the most demanding skill to develop, this study is conducted to determine the effectiveness of SDL in teaching speaking to Iranian EFL learners. In so doing the researcher has chosen his participants using selective clustering approach, the participants of the study are 30 high school students, enrolling in a language institute for conversation classes at pre-intermediate level. The learners are put into either control or experimental group, 15 students each. Then the control group is taught following the book Interchange instructions and the experimental group has received SDL instructions. When the fifteen-session-planned course is over all the participants are given a post-test by three different raters, the speaking module of the IELTS exam, this is exactly the test they are given as the pre-test. Finally, the results of pre and post tests, when analyzed and compared, show that the experimental group outperformed the control group in speaking skill development and this proves the effectiveness of SDL model in teaching speaking skill to Iranian EFL learners.

Key words: Second language Speaking skill; Self-Directed-Learning Method; Student-Centered model, Speaking module of IELTS test.

Abbreviations: EFL- English as a foreign language; SDL- self-directed-learning; SDLRS- self-directed-learning-readiness-scale

INTRODUCTION

Speaking, its Importance, and Complexity

Speaking is an interactive process in constructing meaning that involves producing, receiving, and processing information orally (florez: 1999). Gatenby (1972) argues that what is essential in learning a language is that the language being studied should be, as far as possible, the sole medium of communication in any given environment.

According to Hornby (1995) teaching means giving the instruction to (a person): give a person (knowledge skill, etc). While speaking means to make use of words in an ordinary voice. So, teaching speaking is giving instruction to a person in order to communicate. As Chaney 1998 points out speaking is "the process of building and sharing meaning through the use of verbal and non-verbal symbols, in a variety of contexts". Courses in listening and speaking skills have a prominent place in language programs around the world today. Ever-growing needs for fluency in English around the world because of the role of English as the world’s international language have given priority to finding more effective ways to teach English (Jack, 2008). Zaremba and Zhang hypothesize that, of the four macro English skills, speaking seems to be the most important skill required for communication (Zaremba, 2006). Students who study English as a foreign language usually have limited opportunities to speak English outside the classroom (Zaremba, 2006) and also limited exposure to English speakers or members of the international community.

Richards 1990, believes that the mastery of speaking skills in English is a priority for many schools and second language learners; learners consequently often evaluate their success in language learning as well as the effectiveness of their English course in the basis of how well they feel they have improved in their spoken language proficiency.

The complexity of learning to speak in another language is reflected
in the range and type of sub skills that are entailed in L2 oral production. Learners must simultaneously attend to content, morph syntax and lexis, discourse and information structuring, and the sound system and prosody, as well as appropriate register and pragmalinguistic features (Tarone, 2005).

**Teaching Speaking**

Speaking has always been a major focus of language teaching, however both the nature of speaking skills as well as approaches to teaching them have undergone a major shift in thinking in recent years.

The teaching of EFL speaking can be focused on either training the students to speak accurately (in terms of, for example, pronunciation and grammatical structures) or encouraging them to speak fluently. The former is considered to be form-based instruction while the latter is considered to be meaning-based instruction (Murdibjono, 1998).

Each of these focuses of instruction has its own characteristics. Form-focused instruction aims to provide learners with language forms (e.g., phrases, sentences, or dialogues) which can be practiced and memorized so that these forms can be used whenever the learners need them. The activities, usually teacher-centered, include repetition, memorizing a dialog, responding to drills and substitution drills which are essentially used to activate phrases or sentences that learners have understood. Shrum and Glisan 2000 point out that this view of proficiency was prevalent in the audiolingual, Situational Language Teaching and other drill-based or repetition-based methodologies of the 1970s and 80s. In contrast, the emergence of communicative language teaching in the 1980s led to changed views of syllabuses and methodology as well as the Threshold Level and more recently proposals for task-based and text-based approaches to teaching, which are continuing to shape approaches to teaching speaking skills today, meaning-focused instruction, usually student-centered, aims to make learners able to communicate and the teacher, therefore, plays a role more as a facilitator than a teacher.

From that point on fluency became a goal for speaking courses and this could be developed through the use of information gap and other tasks that required learners to attempt real communication despite limited proficiency in English. In so doing they would develop communication strategies and engage in negotiation of meaning, both of which were considered essential to the development of oral skills.

Recently, MacIntyre (2007) drew attention to the learner’s decision to voluntarily speak the language when the opportunity arises, even as basic language skills are being acquired. Nevertheless, despite the emphasis on communication in modern language pedagogy and the well-accepted view that learners require practice in speaking in order to learn (MacIntyre, 2003), some language learners habitually choose to remain silent.

Cotter (2007) proposed a method in his work and said that there should be three stages in any language classroom and they are:

- **Preparation:** Allow the students to prepare for the tasks ahead with an effective warm-up. This gives everyone in the class ample opportunity to get their English wheels turning. **Presentation:** Next present the topic for discussion, target grammar, or any vocabulary selected for the lesson. **Practice:** After the presentation, ESL / EFL students need to practice the new material. It’s unfair to expect them to make use of the new language without adequate practice. And Free Use: You should always work towards real use of the language.

**SELF-DIRECTED-LEARNING METHOD(SDL)**

Ellinger, 2004 proposes SDL has been identified as an approach to knowledge that relies on a person being both responsible for and able to be self-directed in their own learning. Knowles, 1975, also, points out; Self-directed learning refers to an educational process in which learners have the primary responsibility for their own educational experiences. It is considered a learning practice in which an individual takes the initiative in identifying learning needs, preparing goals, determining resources, and evaluating outcomes.

In its broadest meaning, SDL describes a process by which individuals take the initiative without the assistance of others in diagnosing their learning need, formulating learning goals, identifying human and material resources for learning, choosing and implement appropriate learning strategies and evaluating outcomes,(Knowles, 1972).

According to Nelson & Conner (2008), teachers and administrators, along with parents and students, must have an understanding of the following characteristics of becoming a self-directed learner: student motivation, goal orientation, self-efficacy, and locus of control, self-regulation, and metacognition. These concepts provide a framework for helping students to truly gain an understanding of themselves as learners and how they can improve their self-awareness as a learner.

**Motivation:** Brown (2007) defines motivation as “the anticipation of reward, whether internally or externally administered; choices made about goals to pursue and the effort exerted in their completion.” Williams and Burden...
(1997) argue that “motivation involves choice about actions or behaviors: decisions as to whether to do something, how much effort to expand on it, the degree of perseverance, and so on.” Self-efficacy: Perceived self-efficacy is defined as people’s beliefs about their capabilities to produce designated levels of performance that exercise influence over events that affect their lives (Bandura, 1994). Self-efficacy beliefs determine how people behave, think, feel, and motivate themselves. Self-efficacy, although somewhat similar to self-esteem, differs in one main concept. Self-efficacy is a personal belief of competency, rather than one’s emotional reaction to an actual accomplishment (Nelson and Conner, 2008).

Self-regulation: Self-regulation refers to “thoughts, feelings and actions that are planned and cyclically adapted to the attainment of personal goals” (Zimmerman, 2000). Vohs and Baumeister (2011) define it as: “the sense of purposive processes, the sense that self-corrective adjustments are taking place as needed to stay on track for the purpose being served (whether this entails overriding another impulse or simply reacting to perturbations from other sources), and the sense that the corrective adjustments originate within the person.”

Locus of control: Locus of control as noted by Miller, Fitch, and Marshall (2003) is “the tendency students have to ascribe achievements and failures to either internal factors that they control (effort, ability, motivation) or external factors that are beyond control (chance, luck, others’ actions)”

Metacognition: Flavell (1979) describes metacognition as “cognition about cognitive phenomena,” or “thinking about thinking.” Kuhn and Dean (2004) suggest that metacognition is: “Awareness and management of one’s own thought.” Finally, Martinez (2006) regards it as “The monitoring and control of thought.”

Goal orientation: As stated by Caraway, Tucker, Reinke, and Hall (2003), it is the individual’s ability to make plans and set goals, and works in combination with self-efficacy, to increase a student’s motivation.

Followings are some basic tenants of Self-Directed-learning:

*As the term suggests, SDL views learners as responsible owners and managers of their own learning process. SDL integrates self-management (management of the context, including the social setting, resources, and actions) with self-monitoring (the process whereby the learners monitor, evaluate and regulate their cognitive learning strategies) (Bolhuis, 1996; Garrison, 1997).

*SDL recognizes the significant role of motivation and volition in initiating and maintaining learners’ efforts. Motivation drives the decision to participate, and volition sustains the will to see a task through to the end so that goals are achieved (Corno, 1992; Garrison, 1997).

*In SDL, control gradually shifts from teachers to learners. Learners exercise a great deal of independence in setting learning goals and deciding what is worthwhile learning as well as how to approach the learning task within a given framework (Lyman, 1997; Morrow, Sharkey, & Firestone, 1993).

*Teachers scaffold learning by making learning ‘visible.’ They model learning strategies and work with students so that they develop the ability to use them on their own (Bolhuis, 1996; Corno, 1992; Leal, 1993).

*SDL is, ironically, highly collaborative. Learners collaborate with teachers and peers (Guthrie, Alao & Rinehart; 1997; Temple and Rodero, 1995).

SDL develops domain-specific knowledge as well as the ability to transfer conceptual knowledge to new situations. It seeks to bridge the gap between school knowledge and real-world problems by considering how people learn in real life (Bolhuis, 1996; Temple & Rodero, 1995).

**Self-directed-learning readiness scale (SDLRS)**

Self-Directed Learning Readiness Scale is a self-report questionnaire with Likert-type items developed by Guglielmino in 1977. It is designed to measure the complex of attitudes, skills, and characteristics that comprise an individual’s current level of readiness to manage his or her own learning.

The SDLRS is a method for evaluating an individual’s perception of their skills and attitudes that are associated with self-directedness in learning. The scale is structured around eight factors, attitudinal and personality, that are linked to self-directedness. Other than learners’ perception of readiness for self-directed learning, this instrument is used for researching the relationship between self-directed readiness and other personological variables.

SDLRS includes 58-items with a 5-point scale for responses, ranging from almost always true to almost never true. The test uses 41 positively phrased questions and 17 negatively phrased. Also, the instrument is available in a number of different languages.

Since its initial development, Self-Directed Learning Readiness Scale also known as the Learning Preference Assessment, (LPA) has been used widely. The SDLRS has been used by more than 500 major organizations around the world. The instrument has been translated into Spanish (Castilian, Colombian, and Cuban), French, German, Italian, Korean, Malay, Chinese, Japanese, Finnish, Greek, Portuguese, Afrikaans,
Measuring speaking skill

O'Malley (1996:56) says that teachers need to use assessment tasks that are as authentic as possible in a classroom setting. This means: (1) using authentic language in listening/speaking activities; (2) setting real-world tasks, such as getting the gist of a message, listening selectively, describing, giving directions, and giving opinions; and (3) giving students opportunities to use language in situations based on everyday life. There are different views regarding the basic components of Speaking skill, all of which agree on the ones pointed out by Syakur (2007:4), namely; comprehension, grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and fluency.

Grammar

It is needed for students to arrange a correct sentence in conversation. It is in line with explanation suggested by Heaton (1978:5) that student’s ability to manipulate structure and to distinguish appropriate grammatical form in appropriate one. The utility of grammar is also to learn the correct way to gain expertise in a language in oral and written form.

Vocabulary

Vocabulary means the appropriate diction which is used in communication. Without having a sufficient vocabulary, one cannot communicate effectively or express their ideas in both oral and written form. Having limited vocabulary is also a barrier that precludes learners from learning a language. Language teachers, therefore should process considerable knowledge on how to manage an interesting classroom so that the learners can gain a great success in their vocabulary learning. Without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed.

Pronunciation

Pronunciation is the way for students’ to produce clearer language when they speak. It deals with the phonological process that refers to the components of a grammar made up of the elements and principles that determine how sounds vary and pattern in a language. There are two features of pronunciation; phonemes and supra segmental features. A speaker who constantly mispronounces a range of phonemes can be extremely difficult for a speaker from another language community to understand (Gerard, 2000:11).

Fluency

Fluency can be defined as the ability to speak fluently and accurately. Fluency in speaking is the aim of many language learners. Signs of fluency include a reasonably fast speed of speaking and only a small number of pauses and “ums” or “ers”. These signs indicate that the speaker does not have to spend a lot of time searching for the language items needed to express the message (Brown, 1997:4).

For the purpose of the present study, the following research questions were formulated:
1. Will the experimental group outperform the control group in fluency test after the treatment?
2. Will the experimental group outperform the control group in pronunciation test after the treatment?
3. Will the experimental group outperform the control group in lexical resources test after the treatment?
4. Will the experimental group outperform the control group in grammar test after the treatment?

MATERIALS AND METHODS

In this true-experimental study (with an experimental group and a control group applying pre and post tests), an attempt is made to figure out the effectiveness of self-directed-learning method in teaching speaking skill to Iranian EFL learners.

Participants

The present study is conducted in Omid language Institute in Shahrekord, Chaharmahal va Bakhtiari province, Iran. A selective clustering method is applied to choose the participants of this study. The institute provided six separate classes of Interchange one part one, the exact level needed for this experiment, who enrolled for the spring semester. two of these classes concluding 15 students each, eight males and seven females per
class, were targeted for the aim of this study. All subjects are aged between 15 to 17, and enjoy the same level of language proficiency, language skills, the institute had conducted placement tests and interviews to determine each student’s level, they all live in Chaharmahal va Bakhtiari and have approximately the same cultural backgrounds. Then they were assigned as either control or experimental group and were given the IELTS speaking test. To eliminate any fake and false behavior from the students’ side, they were not informed of being a part of the study until the course is over and results are revealed.

Instruments and Their Reliability

To satisfy the needs of this study a number of conversation books were investigated, for the most part have been taught by the researcher during the past years, finally, with experts’ suggestions, the interchange series, by Jack.C.Richards, were selected. The first four units of the red book, interchange one, fit the time and the aim of, 15 sessions conducted course. Another story-book series named ‘Can You Believe It? by Jann and Linda Huizenga Oxford university press’, Were also used as the supplementary materials along with the main book.

To gather the data in this study the International English Language Testing Service (IELTS), the speaking module was used as both pre and post tests for two reasons: First; it is internationally valid, reliable and easy to administer; and Second; because there were raters who could reliably and validly score students’ speaking skill, since experienced teachers who specifically teach IELTS perpetration courses develop an ability to “guess” students mark with an acceptable degree of precision. Each subject was rated by three different raters, prior to and after the treatment sessions, for each of the four criteria being tested, the mean of the given scores was the score calculated for any of the individuals.

IELTS Speaking is a one-to-one interaction between the candidate and an examiner, the three parts give the candidate opportunities to use a range of different speaking skills and the participants are given score due to IELTS rubrics.

Procedure

After the groups were defined the pre test was given to both groups and the results were recorded, then the instructor followed SDL instructions in experimental class and started from the very beginning session to help students develop lifelong learning strategies, set goals and sub-goals for each session and for the overall course. The instructor provided students with different motivational activities and gave them chances to choose which one to do at any time, he encouraged them to have control over what they are learning and what goes on in the class, asks them to self-monitor and self-evaluate and use their metacognition.

The whole course truly exhibited a practice on learning how to learn during which the vitality of language practice out of the classroom was accentuated all along the way. As for the control group, the instructor followed the Interchange teachers’ manual and completed the course just like all other normal conversation classes. There were lots of practice on the four skills along with activities and assignments.

After the course was over, both groups were given the post test, the results of which was compared with pre test results and the therefore the results of the study were made clear.

Because the individuals were scored by three different raters a series of Pearson product moment correlations were conducted to ensure the inter rater reliability of the given scores for each criteria and for the overall speaking skill scores. An independent sample T-test is applied for comparing the results of pre and post tests for each of the criteria and to answer each research question. Besides another T-test was conducted to compare the overall developments of speaking skill of the participants in the study.

Data Analysis

After data was collected from the population, Data management and analysis was performed using SPSS software. To compare and study the performance of control and experimental groups. the participants were given pre and post tests, the results of which was the base of the collected data in this study.

As it was explained before an independent sample T-test is applied for the aim of each research question, which was to compare the results of pre and post tests to figure out the practicality of each hypotheses, and for the comparison of the components of speaking skill namely, fluency, grammar, lexical resources and pronunciation of the subjects in both groups. There was also another T-test conducted to compare the overall developments of speaking skill of the participants of the study. a series of Pearson product moment correlations were conducted to ensure the inter rater reliability of the given scores by the raters.
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the experiment revealed the fact that the scores of the participants regarding the four criteria being tested and also for the overall speaking skill prior to the treatment had no significant differences and there existed a minimal mean difference between the scores which mean all the participants are almost at the same level.

Table 1 shows the comparison of the mean differences between the two groups.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics for Comparing Pretest Overall Speaking Scores (POSS) of Control and Experimental Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>POSS CG</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4.7893</td>
<td>.35752</td>
<td>.09231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EG</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4.7500</td>
<td>.42854</td>
<td>.11065</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics for the scores of the participants in the control and experimental groups before the treatment sessions. As this table shows there were 15 participants in each group with a minimal difference in the mean of these two groups (MG1= 4.78, MG2= 4.75).

Table 2 shows the results of the comparison between the overall speaking scores of the participants in both groups.

Table 2. T-Test Results Comparing Pretest Overall Speaking Scores (POSS) of Control and Experimental Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levene’s Test for Equality of Variances</th>
<th>t-test for Equality of Means</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Sig.</td>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POSS</td>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
<td>.630</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td>.273</td>
<td>27.129</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 shows the t-test results for overall speaking scores of the participants in control and experimental groups before the treatment sessions. T-test was run to see if there has been any differences between the two groups regarding their overall speaking skill before the study. According to this table t(28)= .27, p>0.01 which cannot reject the null hypothesis and we can conclude that there are no significant difference between the control and experimental group with regard to their fluency before the treatment sessions.

After the treatment sessions are completed the data were analyzed and compared, the following results were drown out then; First: the experimental group outperformed the control group in fluency test after the course which rejects the first null hypothesis of the study(RH 1) and proves that Self-directed-learning-method is highly efficient in helping Iranian EFL learners develop better fluency in English.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics for Comparing Posttest Fluency Scores (PFS) of Control and Experimental Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PFS CG</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5.5467</td>
<td>.65560</td>
<td>.16927</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EG</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6.4267</td>
<td>.51750</td>
<td>.13362</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 shows the descriptive statistics for the scores of the participants in the control and experimental groups after the treatment sessions. As this table shows there were 15 participants in each group and there exists significant difference in the mean of these two groups (MG1= 5.54, MG2= 6.42).
Table 4 shows the results of the comparison between the overall speaking scores of the participants in both groups.

**Table 4. T-Test Results Comparing Posttest Fluency Scores (PFS) of Control and Experimental Groups**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Levene’s Test for Equality of Variances</th>
<th>t-test for Equality of Means</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Sig.</td>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PFS</td>
<td>3.799</td>
<td>.061</td>
<td>-4.081</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>assumed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-4.081</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 shows the t-test results for fluency scores of the participants in control and experimental groups before the treatment sessions. T-test was run to see if there has been any differences between the two groups regarding their overall speaking skill before the study. According to this table t(28) = -4.08, p<0.01 which can reject the null hypothesis and we can conclude that there are significant difference between the control and experimental group with regard to their fluency after the treatment sessions.

Second: the experimental group outperformed the control group in pronunciation test after the course which rejects the second null hypothesis of the study (RH 2) and proves that Self-directed-learning-method is highly efficient in helping Iranian EFL learners develop better pronunciation in English.

**Table 5. Descriptive Statistics for Comparing Posttest Pronunciation Scores (PPS) of Control and Experimental Groups**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PPS</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4.8867</td>
<td>.61163</td>
<td>.15792</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CG</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5.8700</td>
<td>.66756</td>
<td>.17236</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EG</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5 shows the descriptive statistics for the scores of the participants in control and experimental groups after the treatment sessions. As this table shows there were 15 participants in each group and there exists a significant difference in the mean of these two groups (MG1 = 4.88, MG2 = 5.87).

Table 6 shows the results of the comparison between the overall speaking scores of the participants in both groups.

**Table 6. T-Test Results Comparing Posttest Pronunciation Scores (PPS) of Control and Experimental Groups**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Levene’s Test for Equality of Variances</th>
<th>t-test for Equality of Means</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Sig.</td>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Equal variances</td>
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<tr>
<td>assumed</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-4.206</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 shows the t-test results for pronunciation scores of the participants in control and experimental groups after the treatment sessions. T-test was run to see if there has been any differences between the two groups regarding their pronunciation skill after the study. According to this table t(28) = -4.20, p<0.01 which can reject the null hypothesis and we can conclude that there are significant difference between the control and experimental group with regard to their pronunciation after the treatment sessions.

Third: the experimental group outperformed the control group in lexical resources test after the course which...
rejects the third null hypothesis of the study (RH 3) and proves that Self-directed-learning-method is highly efficient in helping Iranian EFL learners develop better lexical resources in English.

Table 7. Descriptive Statistics for Comparing Posttest Diction Scores (PDS) of Control and Experimental Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
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<tbody>
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<td></td>
<td>EG</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6.0933</td>
<td>.59338</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table 7 shows the descriptive statistics for the scores of the participants in the control and experimental groups after the treatment sessions. As this table shows there were 15 participants in each group and there exists a significant difference in the mean of these two groups (MG1 = 5.46, MG2 = 6.09).

Table 8 shows the results of the comparison between the overall speaking scores of the participants in both groups.

Table 8. T-Test Results Comparing Posttest Diction Scores (PDS) of Control and Experimental Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levene’s Test for Equality of Variances</th>
<th>t-test for Equality of Means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>t</td>
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<tr>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
<td>.353</td>
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<tr>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

Table 8 shows the t-test results for diction scores of the participants in control and experimental groups after the treatment sessions. T-test was run to see if there has been any differences between the two groups regarding their lexical resources after the study. According to this table (28) = -1.89, p < 0.01 which can reject the null hypothesis and we can conclude that there are significant difference between the control and experimental group with regard to their lexical resources after the treatment sessions. Fourth: the experimental group outperformed the control group in grammatical resources test after the course which rejects the fourth null hypothesis of the study (RH 4) and proves that Self-directed-learning-method is highly efficient in helping Iranian EFL learners develop better grammatical resources in English.

Table 9. Descriptive Statistics for Comparing Posttest Grammar Scores (PGS) of Control and Experimental Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>.57504</td>
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<td>EG</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table 9 shows the descriptive statistics for the scores of the participants in the control and experimental groups after the treatment sessions. As this table shows there were 15 participants in each group and there exists a significant difference in the mean of these two groups (MG1 = 5.99, MG2 = 6.28).

Table 10 shows the results of the comparison between the grammar scores of the participants in both groups.
Table 10. T-Test Results Comparing Posttest Grammar Scores (PGS) of Control and Experimental Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Levene’s Test for Equality of Variances</th>
<th>t-test for Equality of Means</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Sig.</td>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PGS</td>
<td>.150</td>
<td>.701</td>
<td>-1.401</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-1.401</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 10 shows the t-test results for grammar scores of the participants in control and experimental groups after the treatment sessions. T-test was run to see if there has been any differences between the two groups regarding their grammar skill before the study. According to this table t(28)= -1.40, p<0.01 which can reject the null hypothesis and we can conclude that there are significant difference between the control and experimental group with regard to their grammar after the treatment sessions.

Finally the results of the final overall T-test which was a thorough comparison of the total speaking scores of the participant prior to and after the treatment sessions made it crystal clear that the students in experimental group simply outperformed the students in control group in overall speaking tests.

Table 11. Descriptive Statistics for Comparing Posttest Overall Speaking Scores (POSS) of Control and Experimental Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>POSS</td>
<td>CG</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5.5533</td>
<td>.29244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EG</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6.1580</td>
<td>.40466</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 11 shows the descriptive statistics for the scores of the participants in the control and experimental groups after the treatment sessions. As this table shows there were 15 participants in each group and there exists a significant difference in the mean of these two groups (MG1= 5.55, MG2= 6.15).

Table 12. T-Test Results Comparing Posttest Overall Speaking Scores (POSS) of Control and Experimental Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Levene’s Test for Equality of Variances</th>
<th>t-test for Equality of Means</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Sig.</td>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POSS</td>
<td>1.501</td>
<td>.231</td>
<td>-4.691</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-4.691</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 12 shows the t-test results for overall speaking scores of the participants in control and experimental groups after the treatment sessions. T-test was run to see if there has been any differences between the two groups regarding their overall speaking skill after the study. According to this table t(28)= -4.69, p<0.01 which can reject the null hypothesis and we can conclude that there are significant difference between the control and experimental group with regard to their overall speaking skill after the treatment sessions.

As shown in tables above and explained in previous section the results indicate that both control and experimental groups were in the same level regarding the four criteria being tested and they had quite close performances while comparing one to another, but there is a different story after the treatment, the participants of experimental group exhibited much better performance in all the four speaking criteria in comparison to the participants of the control group.
In order to have a clear cut view of the results of the study two overall calculations are done, one before the treatment sessions and the other after the course was ended, in these sections overall speaking score of the each participant, following IELTS rubrics, is calculated and mean differences are made clear then the overall T-test are run to compare the speaking skill scores of the participants in control and experimental groups both prior to and after the treatment. The overall speaking scores after the experiment proved that self-directed-learning method is strongly effective in teaching speaking skill to Iranian EFL learners.

Needless to say that there is very little, if any, practical works in this area and this research sheds more lights on new methods and approaches of EFL teaching and learning. Furthermore language experts and EFL instructors can use the results of this study to flesh out their programs, syllabuses, activities and the way they conduct the speaking courses.

REFERENCES

Book Chapter: Burns, Anne; Joyce, Helen. "Speaking activities in the classroom" in Focus on Speaking , Burns, Anne; Joyce, Helen , 1997 , 81-98.


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