The Effect of Portfolio Assessment on EFL Learner's Reading Comprehension Ability

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Abstract

Reading skill is a fundamental requirement to lifelong learner success, yet the way teachers assess their student's reading comprehension ability is challenging. One of the new trends in reading skill instruction is portfolio assessment. This study investigated the effects of portfolio assessment on EFL learner's reading comprehension ability. The participants, 50 advanced (female) EFL learners were randomly divided into the control and experimental group. The control group was instructed through traditional assessment while the experimental group was instructed through portfolio assessment. Two reading comprehension tests as pre-test and post-test were given to students of both groups to measure their reading comprehension ability at the beginning and at the end of the study. The findings indicated that students in portfolio assessment group outperformed the control group in their reading comprehension ability. The results of the study suggested that portfolio assessment improves student's reading comprehension ability

Key terms

Portfolio, Portfolio Assessment, Alternative Assessment, Reading Assessment, Traditional Assessment

Introduction

Assessment is fundamental in education and is "one of the most significant influences that the students experience of higher education and all that they gain from it" (Boud & Associates, 2010, p.1). According to Cohen, Carstenn, & Lane (2004, p.323) "Assessment is a major contributor to resisting standards in schools in terms of teaching, learning and students achievements". It is also noted that assessment is the central area of teaching learning situation used for several purposes and it can improve student's interests toward learning and help them to be lifelong learners (Calfee & Perfumo, 1993).

Since assessment is important in teaching and learning, every teacher should assess his/her students. In traditional tests, students memorize knowledge to score high in the exam and after the exam this knowledge disappears. Traditional tests also distract students from learning and cause stress and anxiety. Chang (2003) noted that students are trained to act as "testing machines" which should answer the given questions, with "standard answers", instead of thinking critically over questions. According to Johnson (2002) if we do not care to more details, the teachers may have some bias for a student as a result, for a teacher it is important to think of better way of assessment.

Statement of the Problem

The study, aims to investigate the effect of portfolio assessment on EFL learners reading comprehension ability. Traditional assessment tries to assess student's performance under time pressure by using paper-and-pencil tests, standardized tests.

In 1990, it was understood that all skills and all individuals could not be measured by traditional tests. Educators and learners found out the limitations of standardized tests and alternative approaches such as portfolios, journals, observations, self-assessment, peer-assessment were suggested (Herta-Marcias,1995; listed in Brown, 2004).

Traditional assessment is based on some theoretical assumption (Bintz , 1991). Berlak (1992) stated that knowledge has a single "consensual" meaning. For every individual it is possible to reach a "consensus" about meaning, since knowledge has "the same meaning for all individuals everywhere" (Berlak, 1992, p.13). But one assumption of alternative assessment is that knowledge has multiple realities with accompanying multiple meaning" (Ruderick, 1991, p.3). It is possible for everyone to have his/her interpretation:

In traditional assessment, the metaphor of "empty vessel" is used to talk about learners. In fact, it is supposed that students do not have prior knowledge about a topic. The teachers' role is "to fill the students by making deposits of information which the instructor considers to constitute true knowledge" (Freire, 1990, p.63). Learning about something is emphasized rather than learning how to do something. This process makes students to memorize the knowledge presented by the text or teacher. In alternative assessment learning requires "producing rather than reproducing knowledge" (Newmann & Archbald, 1992, p.72).

In traditional assessment students' products are assessed (Hutching, 1993; Johnson, 1992). The focus of traditional assessment is on distinct bits of information that show lower-level thinking skills (Engel, 1994 ; Herman, Aschbacher, & Winters1992) students are supposed to learn particular skills at one lever before moving onto the next. Alternative assessment focuses on real-world problem-solving skills development of that ask people to test their opinions (Herman et al, 1992). Generally traditional assessment motivates students learning by separating students who "know" by those who "don't know". In fact, traditional assessment ranks students (Berlak, 1992).

Alternative assessment connects cognitive, affective, and canotive abilities. One assumption of alternative assessment is that "it is meaningless to attempt to assess a person's abilities except in relation to their valued goals" (Raven, 1992, p.89).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to explore the effects of portfolio assessment on EFL learners reading comprehension ability. Rote learning and traditional assessment are the bases of educational system in Iran. Students' actual level of proficiency is not demonstrated by these traditional testing and assessment. PA provides students the chance to monitor their progress and use their portfolios for self evaluation and reflection. Portfolio assessment also increases students' meaningful learning. This study helps teachers and students to cooperate in setting learning goals and evaluating progress and enables students to be self-directed and autonomous learners. Through PA students can take more responsibility in learning and assessment and become active learners.

Significance of the Study

The majority of educators do not know how to conduct multidimensional assessment (Lin & Jun, 2006). There are still many teachers who do not understand portfolio assessment in EFL classrooms. Little has been published about the implementation of portfolio assessment in an EFL classrooms and about the functions of portfolios; the study presents the implementing portfolio assessment in an EFL classroom and also shows how students reading comprehension is influenced by portfolio assessment.

Research Questions of the Study

The present study will be an attempt to answer the following research question:

Is there any significant difference between the impact of traditional testing methods and portfolio assessment on EFL learner's reading comprehension ability?

Characteristics of Alternative Assessment

Alternative assessment procedures are more real life than traditional assessment, since they provide real life situations for the learner (Glazer & Brown, 1993; Goodman & Hood, 1989; Tierney, Carter, & Desai, 1991). Alternative assessment regards the learning process as a multidimensional one which leads in to language proficiency development. Acquiring, integrating, extending, refining and using knowledge in addition to issues like student's attitudes toward learning are different dimensions of learning (Davies, Cameron, Politino, & Gregory, 1992; Marzano 1994, Marzano, Pickering, & Mc Tighe, 1993).

Alternative assessment procedures let the learner to reach the possible improvement (Grace & Shores, 1991, Tierney et al, 1991), because it is possible to design assessment that is based on learner's needs, alternative assessment also put the learner in a context that is similar to his daily life context (Harp, 1991; Kletzien & Bednar, 1990; Roderick, 1991).

Alternative assessment allows learners to take the responsibility for their learning in a way that they can see their improvements. (Alexander, 1993; Jonker, 1993; Rief, 1990). AA gives a clear insight to parents about what their children are doing in school and helps them to participate in the educational process (Davies et al, 1992; Flood & Lapp, 1989, Hill & Ruptic, 1994). AA is also beneficial for the teachers, as it gives them information for educational decision-making.

Authentic Assessment

Assessment refers to a systematic approach to collect information about student's learning and performance normally gained from different sources. Alternative assessment is made from approaches to explore what students know or can do by the use of multiple-choice testing while authentic assessment is one of the alternative assessment's elements that believes student's performance can be illustrated by something more than standardized testing.

Any form of assessment that is based on classroom goals, instruction and curricula are described as authentic assessment, which should have activities that are representing to classroom and authentic settings (O'Malley & Pierce, 1996). The researchers introduced self-assessment portfolio as an example for authentic assessment. The focus of authentic assessment is to understand what students know and what students are able to do which is the similar outcome that communicative language teaching expects.

Portfolio Assessment

The notion of portfolio development was taken from the field of fine arts where portfolios are used to show demonstrative examples of an artist's work (Moya & O'malley, 1994). The goal here is to show the deepness of both work and interests of the artist.

It is not easy to define portfolio in a single definition; this is because portfolio is a growing concept and it is manageable to meet different requirements (Serger, 1992; Defina, 1992).The definitions presented by various authors are due to different needs portfolios are applied for. Defina (1992, p.13) described it as "alternative…or traditional way of examining student's strength and weaknesses". According to Bulter (2006, p.78) "a portfolio is a collection of evidence that is gathered to show a person's learning journey over time and to demonstrate their abilities". Hamp-Lyons (1996, p33) defined portfolio as "students writing over time which contains exhibits showing the stages in the writing processes a text has gone through and the stages of the writer's growth as a writer, and evidence of the writers self-reflection on her/his identity and progress as a writer". Calfee and Fredman (1996) claimed that portfolios are "prepared with a particular audience in mind", "…are selective" and "call for judgment". Portfolios can also be defined as "a purposeful collection of student work that illustrates efforts, progress, and achievement in one or more areas (over time). The collection must include: student participation in selecting contents, the criteria for judging merit, and evidence of self-evaluation. The northest evaluation association (as cited in Barret, 2005). Portfolio is a collection of student's works that shows to students and even others, their achievement and struggle (Genesee & Upshur, 1996).

Method

Participants

The participants of the present study were 50 EFL learners at advanced level of proficiency in a private language institution in Karaj, Iran. All the participants were native speakers of Persian and they ranged in age from 17 to 25. The project was held 4.5 hours weekly for 6 weeks.

The standard test of MTELP was administered in order to ensure that students were homogeneous in terms of their language proficiency, their performance on the MTELP test was analyzed, and 50 students from five different classes at the institution were selected from the population of 73 and randomly assigned into one of the following groups.

Group A: (control group), who were exposed to TA.

Group B: (experimental group), who were exposed to PA.

Instrumentation

The data collection in the study was via an MTELP test, two reading comprehension tests as pretest and posttest.

Michigan Test of English Language Proficiency

To check the homogeneity of the two groups an MTELP test was employed. MTELP is a standard test for specifying the EFL/ESL learner's level of proficiency. It consists of 100 multiple choice questions including 40 grammar questions, 40 vocabulary questions, and 20 reading comprehension questions. The participants were asked to answer questions in 60 minutes. The subjects were classified into two groups based on the results of the test. (A copy of the test is given in appendix A).

Reading Comprehension Pre-test and Post-test
Two different IELTS reading comprehension tests were given to the participants as the pre test and posttest. Each test comprised three passages with 40 reading questions. The time allocated for each test was 60 minutes.

Procedure
The procedures of the study are summarized as follows:
1.   Before the implementation, a pretest was given to both groups of the study under the same conditions.
2.   Traditional method was used in control group and portfolio assessment was employed in treatment group, during the six-week experimental study, the researcher was not the teacher of any groups.
3.   After the six-week implementation, a posttest was given to both groups under the same conditions.

    Different institutions and classes have different attitudes toward PA as a result there are a number of different portfolios used by any of them. The approaches of mentioned authors inspired Yordabakan and Erdogan (2009), to develop the following stages of the portfolio assessment process which are shown in figure 1.
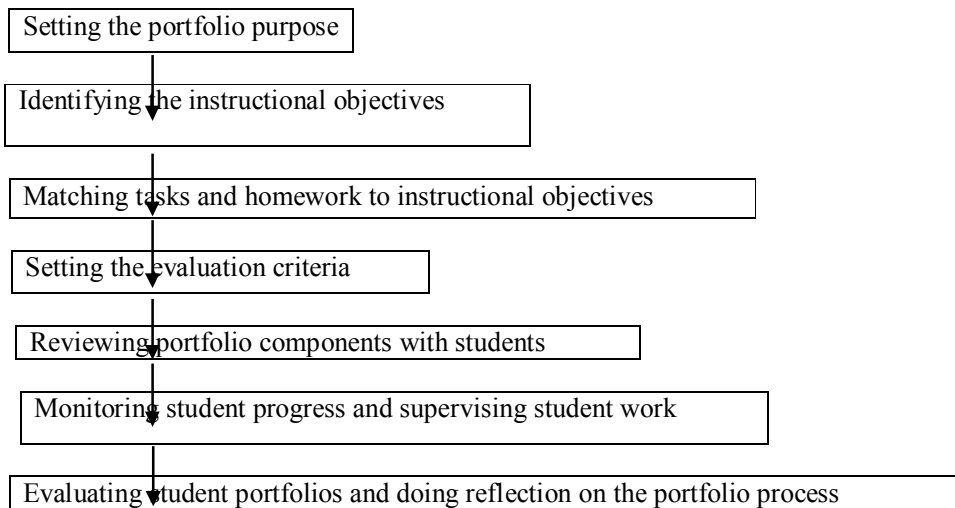

Figure3.1. Yordabakan and Erdogan's PA Process Model
    For six weeks experimental treatments were continued according to the stages illustrated in figure 1. The concepts like portfolio, portfolio assessment, portfolio components, portfolio tasks and homework, preparation of a portfolio, purposes of portfolio assessment, evaluation criteria and evaluation rubrics were discussed in the class. Students were asked to set goals for their own portfolios and explain their difficulties in reading skill and state the things they would like to improve. Next students were asked to develop their portfolios. Student's portfolios consisted of their reading texts and exercises, reading logs and strategy assessment charts.
    Eight reading passages of different genres with reading logs for each passage were given to students to monitor the reading comprehension, strategy use and students progress, evaluate the reading passages and, student's reflections about reading challenges they faced and summarize the whole text into a reading strategy chart (Appendix D). Students were also asked to grade their own portfolio pieces according to the assessment criteria assigned in student's strategy self-assessment sheet (Appendix E).
     In the last two sessions the participants of treatment group presented their portfolios to the class. They were also asked to mention the following items orally:
1.   The item liked most.
2.   The most challenging item.
3.   Achievement of their goals or not.
4.   A general reflection on portfolio assessment.

The participants of the control group were instructed through traditional method in which reading comprehension passages are taught in the class and the students work on the exercises. The number of reading comprehension passages depends on the students' course book.

Results
Reliability Statistics

The reliability of Michigan proficiency test, reading comprehension pre-test, and reading comprehension post-test that were used in this study were assessed using KR-21 and Cronbach's Alpha. As Table 4.1 shows, reliability of Michigan test consisting of 100 multiple-choice items was computed 0.91 through KR-21 method, and the reliability of reading comprehension pre-test and post-test containing 40 multiple-choice items each turned out to be 0.82 and 0.83 respectively via Cronbach's Alpha method, which are good indicators of internal consistency.

Table 4.1.
Reliability Statistics of the Instruments

Test	No. of Item	Reliability Method	Reliability Index
Michigan Test	100	KR-21	0.91
Reading comprehension Pre-test	40	Cronbach's Alpha	0.82
Reading comprehension Post-test	40	Cronbach's Alpha	0.83

Proficiency Test Results

Michigan Test was administered to 73 participants to select homogeneity advanced participants. The descriptive statistics, as appeared in Table 4.2, shows that the mean score is 57.29 with the standard deviation of 8.76. Also based on Table 4.2, the Michigan scores have normal distribution since the ratios of skewness and kurtosis over their respective standard errors do not exceed the ranges of +/- 1.96.

Table 4.2.
Descriptive Statistics for Michigan Proficiency Test

N	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
73	57.29	8.763	.131	-.577

Based on Michigan test results, those students ($N = 50$) whose scores are one standard deviation (8.76) above and below the mean (57.29), (scores between 48 and 66) were selected as homogeneous advanced participants for the study. Figure 4.1 below shows the distribution of the Michigan scores on a normal curve. Then these chosen participants were randomly divided into treatment ($N = 25$ and control ($N = 25$) groups.
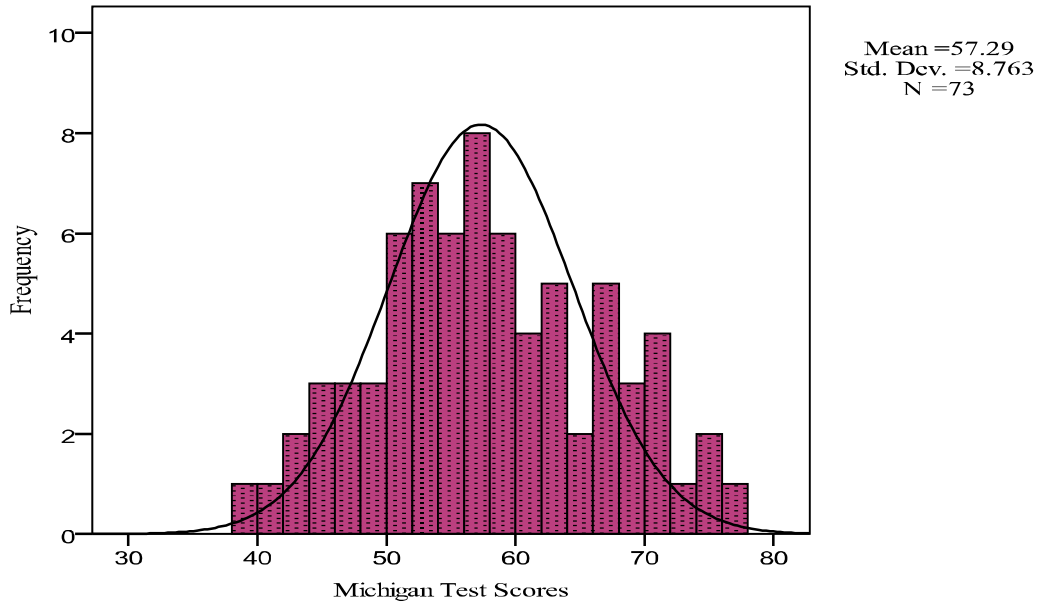
Mean =57.29
Std. Dev. =8.763
N =73

Figure 4.1. Distribution of Michigan Test Scores
 Investigation of the Research Question
The research question of this study sought to see whether portfolio assessment improves EFL learner's reading comprehension ability. In order to answer this research question, independent sample *t*-test was used. Before discussing the results of *t*-test, the related descriptive statistics are represented in Table 4.3. Table 4.3 shows that the mean and standard deviation of the treatment ($\bar{x}$ = 22.64, SD = 3.70) and control ($\bar{x}$ = 23.28, SD = 3.66) groups are not far from each other on pre-test of reading comprehension. On the other hand the results in Table 4.3 indicates that the students in the treatment group ($\bar{x}$ = 27.96, SD = 4.43) have acted better than those in the control group ($\bar{x}$ = 25.00, SD = 4.16) on post-test of reading comprehension. In addition, Table 4.1 indicates that Skewness and Kurtosis of the four sets of reading comprehension scores do not exceed +/- 1.96 and therefore are normally distributed.

Table 4.3.
 Descriptive Statistics for Two Group's Scores on the Pre-test and Post-test of Reading Comprehension (Out of 40)

Test	Group	*N*	Mean	*SD*	Skewness	Kurtosis
Pre-test	Treatment	25	22.64	3.707	.438	-.661
	Control	25	23.28	3.669	-.133	-.870
Post-test	Treatment	25	27.96	4.439	.051	-.552
	Control	25	25.00	4.163	.252	-1.030

Figure 4.2, Figure 4.3, Figure 4.4 and Figure 4.5 below illustrates the treatment and control groups' scores and their frequencies on normal curves on both pre-test and post-test reading of comprehension.

Figure 4.2 below displays that, in treatment group, the minimum score is 17 obtained by one student, and the maximum score is 31 recorded by one student on pre-test of reading comprehension. Also, as it is obvious from Figure 4.2, the scores have formed a curve normal shape implying normal distribution.
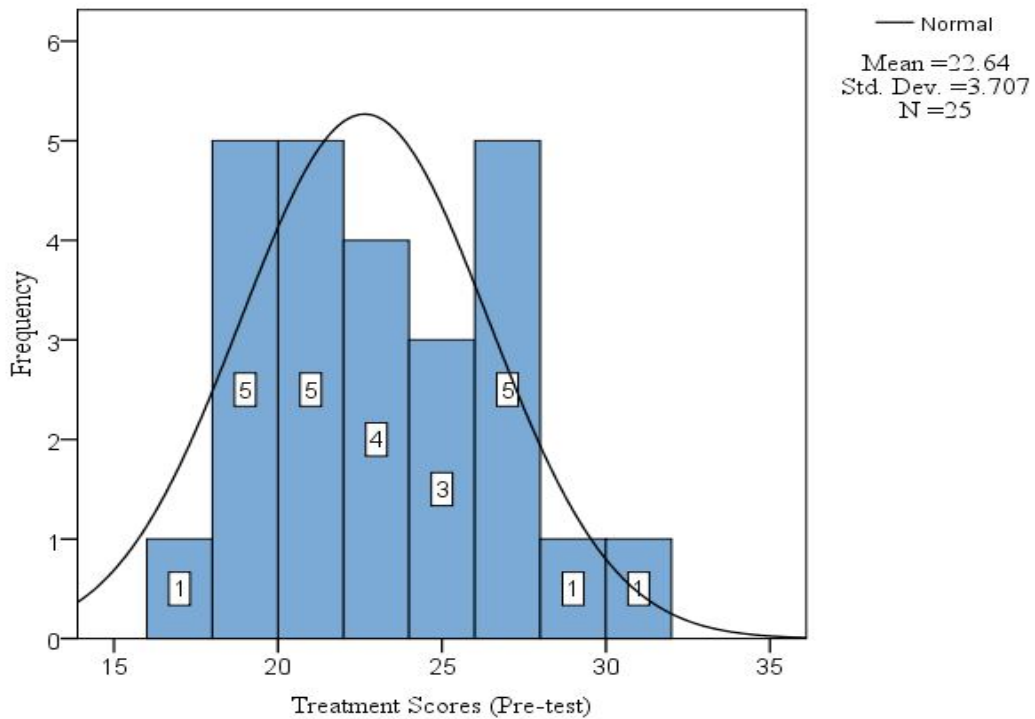
Figure 4.2. Distribution of Treatment Group's Reading Comprehension Scores (Pre-test)

Figure 4.3 below shows that, in control group, the minimum and score is 16 obtained by one student, and the maximum is 29 occurred by two students on pre-test of reading comprehension. Furthermore, based on the figure, we can conclude that the scores have normal distribution since they have made a curved normal shape.
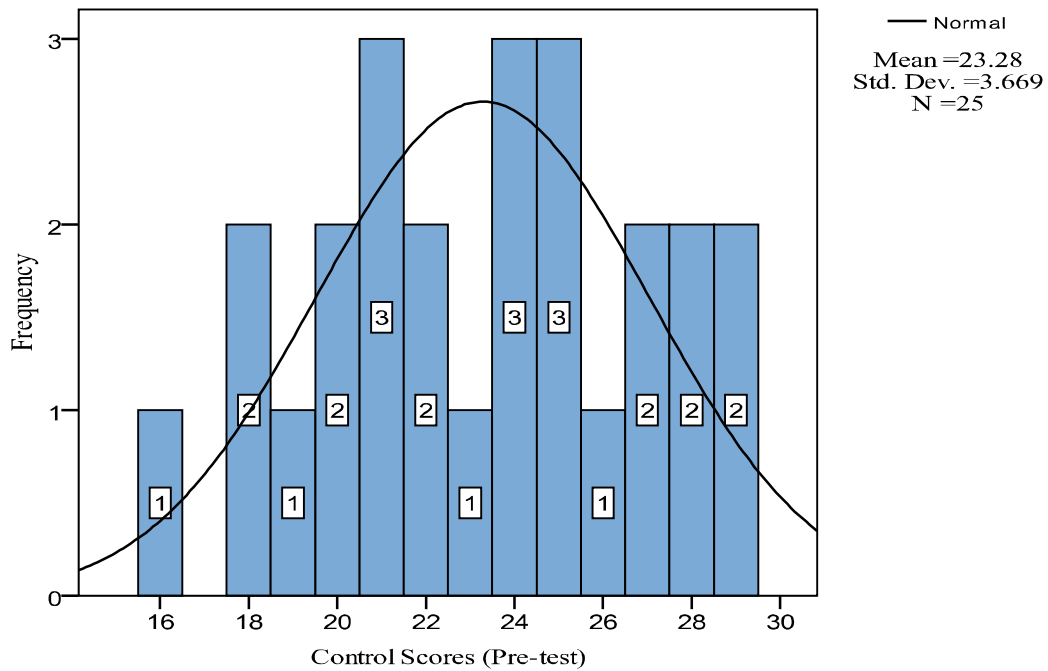
Figure 4.3. Distribution of Control Group's Reading Comprehension Scores (Pre-test)

Figure 4.4 below shows that, in treatment group, the minimum and maximum scores are 19 and 36 respectively acquired by one student on post-test of reading comprehension. Additionally the scores have formed a curved normal shape showing normal distribution of the scores.
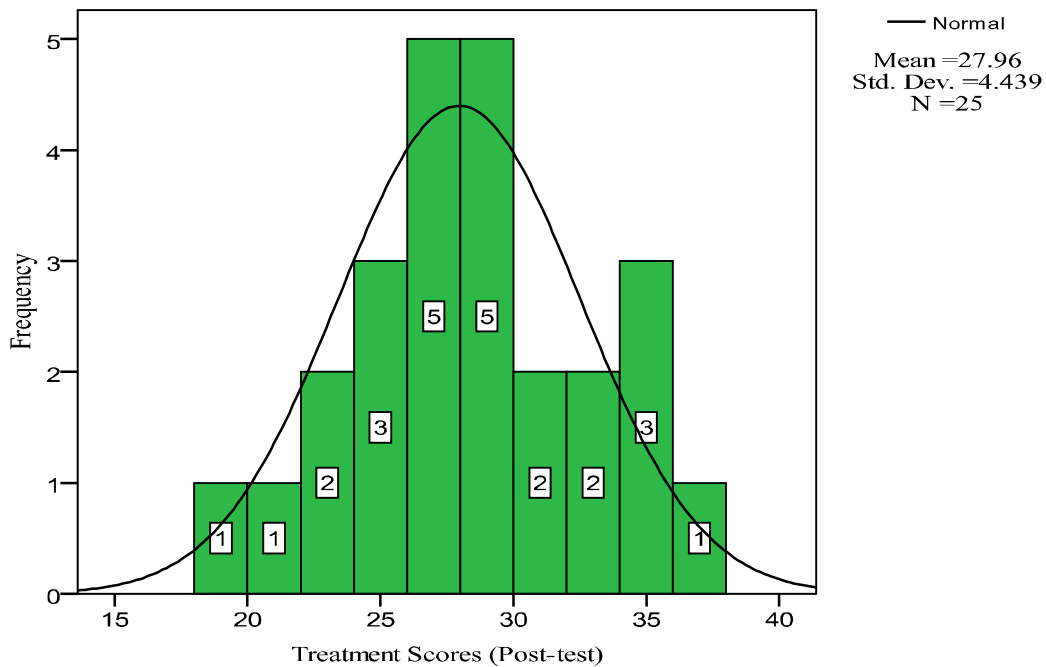

Figure 4.4. Distribution of Treatment Group's Reading Comprehension Scores (Post-test)

Based on Figure 4.5 below, in control group, the minimum and maximum scores are 18 and 31respectively obtained by one student each at post-test of reading comprehension. Besides, we can conclude that the scores are normally distributed since they have made a curved normal shape.
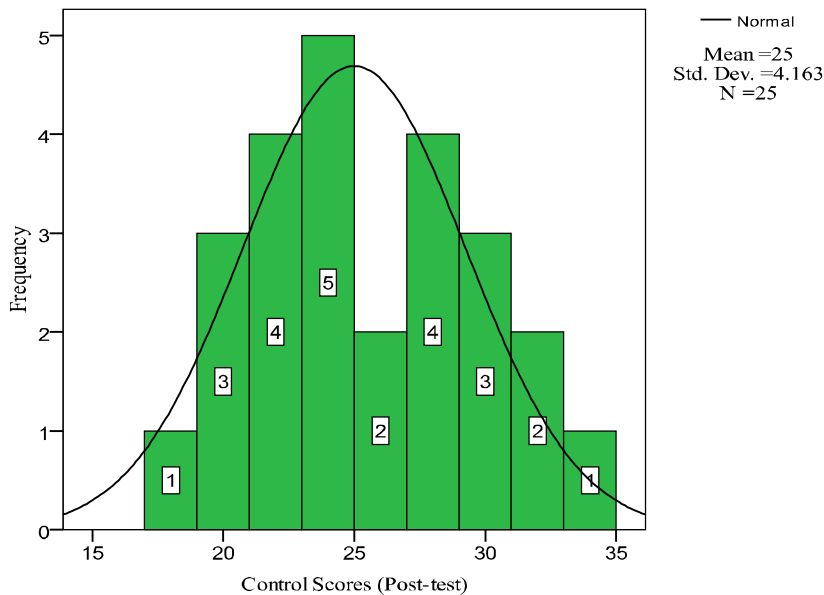

Figure 4.5. Distribution of Control Groups' Reading Comprehension Scores (Post-test)

Table 4.4 contains the results of independent t-test that was used to compare control and treatment groups' reading comprehension scores on the pre-test. We used parametric analysis (independent t-test and paired t-test) since four assumptions (i.e., interval data, independence of subjects, normality and

homogeneity of variances) were met (Field, 2009). Table 4.4 shows that the assumption of equality of variances is not violated as the Sig. associated with Levene's test is more than .05.

Table 4.4.
Independent Samples Test to Compare Two Groups' Reading Comprehension Measures (Pre-test)

Levene's Test for Variances			*T*-test for Means			
			t	*df*	*Sig.* (2-tailed)	Mean Diff.
Factor	*F*	*Sig.*				
Equal variances assumed .008		.929	-.614	48	.542	-.640
Equal variances not assumed			-.614	47.995	.542	-.640

Independent *t*-test results, as appeared in Table 4.4 above, indicated that there is not any statistically significant differences in reading comprehension scores for treatment ($\bar{x}$ = 22.64) and control ($\bar{x}$ = 23.28) groups (*t (48)* = .61, *p* = .54, *p* > .05), in which the *t*-observed (.61) is lower than the *t*-critical (2.02). Thus, we come to conclusion that the students in the two groups have the same knowledge of reading comprehension and therefore are homogeneous regarding reading comprehension knowledge before facing any special instruction.

We present a Box Plot that graphically illustrates the results of pre-test (Figure 4.6). As it shows obviously, the scores and means of reading comprehension for the treatment and control groups do not differ much.
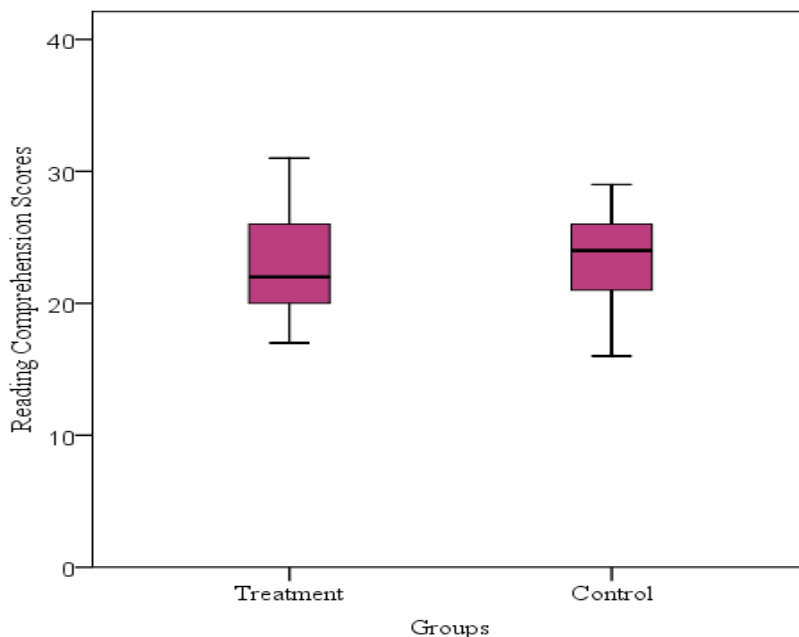

Figure 4.6. Two Groups' Reading Comprehension Scores (Pre-test)

Further, the results of independent *t*-test that was used to compare control and treatment groups' reading comprehension scores on the post-test are given in Table 4.5. A quick look at Table 4.5 reveals that the assumption of equal of variances is met (*p* > .05).

Table 4.5.
Independent Samples Test to Compare Two Groups' Reading Comprehension Measures (Post-test)

Levene's Test for Variances			T-test for Means			
Factor	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Diff.
Equal variances assumed	.004	.950	2.432	48	.019	2.960
Equal variances not assumed			2.432	47.804	.017	2.960

Independent *t*-test (Table 4.5 above) detected a statistically significant difference in reading comprehension scores for treatment ($\bar{x}$ = 27.96) and control ($\bar{x}$ = 25.00) groups (*t (48)* = 2.43, *p* < .05), in which the *t*-observed (2.43) is higher than the *t*-critical (2.02). Therefore we reject the first null hypothesis and claim that portfolio assessment improves EFL learner's reading comprehension ability. In fact, the students in the treatment group have performed better than the control group with the mean difference of 2.96 out of 40.

Figure 4.7 below is a Bar Graph that graphically shows the results of post-test. A quick look at Figure 4.7 reveals that the mean of reading comprehension for the treatment group is dramatically larger than the mean for the control group.
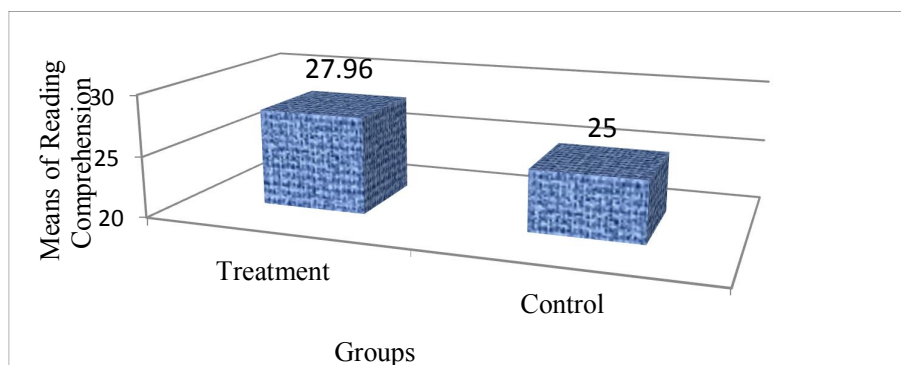

Figure 4.7. Two Groups' Means of Reading Comprehension (Post-test)

For more analysis, a paired sample *t*-test was conducted to compare the reading comprehension scores obtained on pre-test to post-test in each group. We used parametric analysis since the two sets of scores met the assumptions of parametric analysis in each group, if not Wilcoxon signed rank test, which is a nonparametric, must have been used. Table 4.6 represents the results of this analysis.

Table 4.6.
Paired Samples T-test to Compare Pre-test and Post-test of Each Group's Reading Comprehension Measures

Group	Mean	SD	*t*	*df*	Sig. (2-tailed)
Treatment	5.320	5.872	4.530	24	.000
Control	1.720	5.013	1.716	24	.099

Paired-samples *t*-test results as, represented in Table 4.6, shows that there is a statistically significant increase in reading comprehension scores for pre-test ($\bar{x} = 22.64$, $SD = 3.70$) and post-test ($\bar{x} = 27.96$, $SD = 4.43$) in treatment group, *t (24)* = 4.53, *p* < .05 (two-tailed), in which the *t*-observed (4.53) was higher than the *t*-critical (2.06). In fact the mean increase in reading comprehension scores is 5.32 out of 40.

In contrast, paired-samples *t*-test (Table 4.6) failed to find a statistically significant increase in reading comprehension scores for pre-test ($\bar{x} = 23.28$, $SD = 3.66$) and post-test ($\bar{x} = 25.00$, $SD = 4.16$) in control group, *t (24)* = 3.30, *p* > .05 (two-tailed), in which the *t*-observed (1.71) is lower than the *t*-critical (2.06). In other words, the mean increase in reading comprehension scores is just 1.72 out of 40, which is not significant.

We made a Bar Graph to graphically display the results of both pre-test and post-test (Figure 4.8). Figure 4.8 manifests that the students in the treatment group have acted more successfully than those in the control group due to the treatment of the study (i.e., portfolio assessment) experienced by the treatment group.
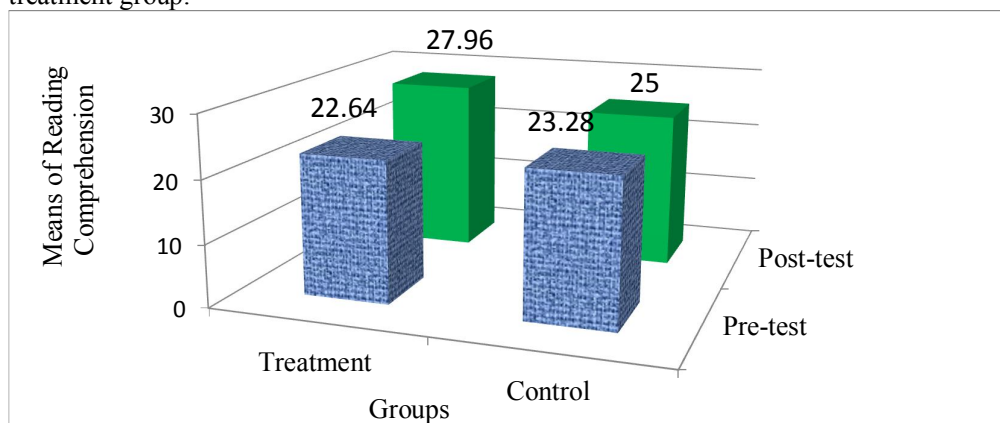

Figure 4.8. Two Groups' Means of Reading Comprehension (Pre-test & Post-test)

Discussion

The present study aimed at investigating the effect of portfolio assessment on reading comprehension ability of Iranian EFL learners at advanced level of proficiency. Knowing the fact that not enough studies have been done to shed light on the effect of alternative assessment techniques mainly portfolio assessment on reading ability in Iranian EFL classrooms, the researcher felt the requirement for further studies. The results of the study illuminated that applying portfolio assessment had a significant effect on development of reading comprehension of EFL learners.

The comparisons revealed that the reading skills of students in the treatment group where portfolio assessment was implemented differ significantly from students in the control group. The mean score of reading in the portfolio assessment group was significantly higher than that in the control group. The results of the independent t-test showed that the treatment group outperformed the control group. Overall the findings of the current study indicated the positive effect and value of portfolio use in improvement of learning and instruction.

In other words, portfolio assessment activities had an effect on student's reading. In both groups participants have made a progress. Results indicate learners of control group benefited from traditional instruction although the portfolio group performed better. There is a significant difference between the performance of the treatment group and the control group according to the post test of the two groups. The study found that portfolio assessment significantly increases students reading comprehension.

The students in the treatment group were involved in assessment and learning. They assessed and reflected their reading ability during term. According to Hagstorm (2006) the constructivist approach should be viewed as a learning process rather than a product since the formative assessment procedures are incorporated into teaching and learning.

The students understood the positive effect of portfolio assessment on their reading comprehension ability. This positive effect can be due to the "opportunities they afford students to become actively involved in assessment and learning" (Genesee & Upshur, 1996, p99). According to Murphy (2006)

by applying formative assessment procedures the learning process can be improved. As a result of self-assessment which is important in portfolio assessment, students are more aware of their learning process; they think about their weaknesses and strengths in reading comprehension and they assess themselves as learners.

Summary of the Findings

Based on the results revealed by the study the group instructed through PA had better performance. Paired sample t-test indicated that the differences between the control and the treatment group were significant. The treatment group outperformed the control group. Therefore, it can be claimed that PA empowers student's reading comprehension.

Implications of the Study

The results and findings of the research have nine main implications for syllabus designers, material developers, and language teachers as follows:

First, findings of the study showed that teachers and students can share the responsibility for setting learning goals and evaluating progress toward meeting these goals. Teachers can be facilitators and collaborator rather than knowledge transmitters. Students can be active learners through taking responsibility of their learning assessment

Second, portfolios can be used for assessment: students can use them for self-assessment and reflection. The future teachers can judge students performances by using student's portfolios.

Third, findings of this study can present parents details about their student's progress.

Fourth, the findings of the research can also be used to develop meaningful learning.

Fifth, PA is a good measure of students performances based on genuine samples of students work.

Sixth, the present study showed portfolios positive role in EFL learning and teaching. PA helps students to set goals for future learning, present their best work and take the responsibility for their own learning.

Seventh, the findings of the study can help syllabus designers in designing more suitable syllabuses by taking the learners into account in designing syllabuses.

Eighth, the findings can be applied to other language skills or sub skills such as speaking, listening, grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary and so on.

Ninth, the findings of the study can be applicable to other fields of education to improve student's meaningful learning and improve student's role in assessment.

Limitations of the Study

In conducting the present study there have been a number of limitations.

1.   The researcher was under time pressure, the study lasted six weeks which may affect the external validity or generalizability of the result.

2.   The study was conducted with 50 students of advanced level of proficiency in a private language institute in Karaj.

3.   Only reading has been taken into account among all language skills.

4.   Psychological factors like anxiety, intelligent and motivation were not considered by the researcher.

5.   Only female students were selected as participants.

Conclusion

There was a significant difference between the performances of the control group and the experimental group based on the results of hypotheses testing. There was not a significant difference between the two groups before the program.

At the end of the program a significant difference between the control and the experimental groups in terms of their reading comprehension was observed. The reading comprehension of students in the experimental group who received PA differs from students in the control group who received traditional assessment.

According to the findings of the research the first null hypothesis of the study was rejected and the second one was supported. The findings of this study conform the previous studies that indicated the positive effects of portfolio assessment on student's achievements. Based on the results it can be concluded that there is a significant difference between the impact of portfolio assessment and traditional assessment on EFL learners reading comprehension.

Suggestions for Further Studies
This study concentrated on the effects of portfolio assessment on EFL learners reading comprehension. For those who are interested in conducting studies on the impact of portfolio assessment on student's learning, the following suggestions are provided:
1.   This study was conducted to shed light on the influence of portfolio assessment on EFL learners reading ability, researchers can study the influence of PA on other language skills.
2.   The study was conducted on EFL advanced level students, other levels of proficiency can be selected by the researcher.
3.   Other kinds of alternative assessment techniques such as peer-assessment, self-assessment and etc can be investigated by the interested researcher.
4.   The relationship between student's anxiety or motivation and portfolio assessment can also be investigated
5.   The participants of this study were all 20-28 female students, variables of student's age and gender can be changed in similar studies.

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