THE EFFECT OF SELF/PAIR VS. TEACHER CORRECTION AND TASK REPETITION ON INDIVIDUAL AND PAIR WRITTEN PERFORMANCE

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ABSTRACT

A great number of investigations have focused on the subject of task rehearsal (repetition) and its likely influence on language learning. Giving language (L2) learners an opportunity to repeat the task may help them to redistribute their focus on form, since they have already become fairly familiar with the content. Several studies have also documented that providing learners with feedback on their initial task performance has a positive effect on their second performance. Accordingly, this study examined the effects of two types of feedback methods, namely self/pair vs. teacher correction, as well as task repetition (same task repetition and similar task completion) on individual and pair written performances. Six (N=90) groups of EFL learners were asked to write a narrative task individually and three groups in pairs. After task completion, two groups (both in individual and pair groups) received teacher feedback on their writing narrative production, two groups (both in individual and pair groups) attempted to find their mistakes in their own writing (self/pair correction), and the other two groups (control groups) were provided with no feedback or correction on their task performance. After focusing on their mistakes all four groups and the two control groups repeated the same task. Then after a two week interval, a similar task (another narrative task) was given to the learners. Then learners' performances were compared in first (initial performance), second (repetition of the same task) and third (similar task performance) production stages in terms of three measures: complexity, accuracy, and fluency. The results obtained through mixed ANOVA revealed that learners' performances improved in terms of accuracy, fluency, and complexity when they were asked to repeat the same initial task. Learners also benefitted from task repetition when they were asked to perform a similar task. Moreover, the results indicated that individual performances resulted in higher scores of accuracy, fluency, and complexity compared to pair performances. Another finding was that focus on

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form through self/pair correction and teacher-correction assisted learners in improving their written performance in their second and third productions.

Key words: accuracy, complexity, corrective feedback, fluency, individual and pair performance, task based language teaching, task repetition

INTRODUCTION

In the past decades a growing interest has accrued among language (L2) teachers and researchers in task-based language teaching (TBLT) (Chesney, Chuah, Hoffmann, & Larner, 2017; Cho, 2018; Ellis, 2003; Rommers & Federmeier, 2018; Shehadeh & Coombe, 2012; Skehan, 1998; Van den Branden, Bygate & Norris, 2009). With the advent of communicative language teaching, several researchers and language teachers made an attempt to utilize task-based principles in classrooms to promote learners' language production (Ellis, 2003). However, Cooke (2013) states that language learners rarely attend to the language they have produced unless they are provided with opportunities to discover their mistakes. Therefore, SLA researchers have brought into question the feasibility of teaching particular grammar structures to language learners through the medium of TBLT (e.g. Sato, 2010; Swan, 2005). Admitting that noticing may not always be undertaken by learners themselves, Thornbury (1997) suggests that in the L2 classrooms there is a need for pedagogical intervention to encourage noticing among L2 learners. As a result, researchers have attempted to design different ways for task implementation: Ellis (2005) identified two types of task planning: (a) pre-task (i.e. planning done before task performance) which is categorized as rehearsal (i.e. giving learners an opportunity to perform the task before performing it a second time) or strategic planning (i.e. planning the content or language without any opportunity to rehearse the complete task); and (b) within-task planning (i.e. on-line planning at the time of task performance) can also be categorized into pressured (i.e. performing the task by setting a time limit) or unpressured (i.e. giving an unlimited amount of time to learners to perform the task). These implementation factors are likely to affect learners' performance differently in terms of three dimensions of language production, namely complexity, accuracy, and fluency. For instance, the findings of several studies have indicated that online-planning appears to have a profound impact on accuracy (e.g. Ahmadian, 2012, Ellis, 1987; Ellis & Yuan, 2004; Sangarun, 2005). On

the other hand, strategic planning aids learners in improving their fluency (e.g. Abram & Byrd, 2016; Ellis, 1987; Foster & Skehan, 1996; Foster & Skehan, 1999; Kim, 2013; Park, 2010; Philp, Oliver, & Mackey, 2006; Skehan & Foster, 1997; Yuan & Ellis, 2003). Moreover, studies on the post-task effect (e.g. Fukunta, 2015; Saeedi & Rahimi Kazerooni, 2014; Skehan & Foster, 1997, 2002) have demonstrated the beneficial effect on learners' accuracy of activities such as transcribing one's speech or re-doing the task publicly or privately. Another factor that has been found to have a major impact on learners' task performance is rehearsal or task repetition. Ellis (2009) sees rehearsal as a certain kind of pre-task planning (i.e. the first task performance can be regarded as providing an opportunity for planning for performing the same task at the second time). In the field of second language learning and teaching, a great number of investigations have focused on the subject of task rehearsal (repetition) and its likely influences on language learning (e.g. Ahmadian & Tavakoli, 2011; Bygate, 1996; Gass, Mackey, Alvarez-Torres, & Fernandez-Garcia, 1999). Skehan (1996, 1998) claims that in the first task performance learners mainly attend to meaning and content and this diverts their attention away from linguistic accuracy. Giving learners an opportunity to repeat the task may help them to redistribute their focus on form since they have already become fairly familiar with the content (Bygate, 2001). As a result, task repetition proves to be beneficial in both familiarizing learners with the content of the task, as well as the retrieval of previous linguistic knowledge. Moreover, task rehearsal seems to be effective for language automatization (Date, 2013; De Jong & Perfetti, 2011; Suzuki & Dekeyser, 2013). Several studies have also documented that for task repetition to have beneficial effects on acquisition learners need to receive some kind of feedback on their first-time performance of the task (e.g. Ahmadian, 2012; Bygate, 2001; Ellis, 2009). For instance, Sheppard (2006) demonstrated that providing learners with feedback on their initial performance has a positive effect on their second performance (in terms of complexity, accuracy, and fluency).

As the above short review suggests many studies on task repetition have documented the positive effects of task repetition on L2 performance in terms of complexity, accuracy, and fluency. Therefore, the present research aimed to examine the effects of task repetition as well as feedback (self/pair vs. teacher feedback) on learners' individual and pair task performances in terms of complexity, accuracy, and fluency.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Despite the growing interest in TBLT, many SLA researchers have expressed their concerns over the feasibility of teaching particular grammar structures to language learners through this approach (e.g. Sato, 2010; Shintani, 2016; Swain, 2005). In this regard, Ellis (2009) argues for a number of ways in which grammar can be brought into focus in various stages of task implementation and performance in L2 classrooms.

Several studies made an attempt to give learners a chance to focus on form at all three stages of the TBLT cycle (e.g. Skehan, 1996; Willis, 1996). TBLT cycle starts with a pre-task performance, is followed by the main task performance and then possibly learners are provided with some kind of post-task activities to perform. Activities like guided planning (e.g. Foster & Skehan, 1999), input enhancement (e.g. Doughty & Williams, 1998; Seyedtajaddini, 2014) and modeling (e.g. Kim, 2013), provision of corrective feedback (e.g. Lyster, Saito & Sato, 2013), anticipation of a public performance (e.g. Foster & Skehan, 2013) and post-task transcription of the oral performance (e.g. Qian, 2014) have been utilized in various studies to help learners focus on language form at the pre-task stage.

Moreover, the effectiveness of different types of feedback has been the subject of many research. Various types of written corrective feedback methods have been applied and studied such as teacher, peer, and self - feedback (e.g. Berg, 1999; Bitchener, 2008; Chandler, 2003; De Guerrero & Villamil, 2001; Diab, 2016; Lee, 2015; Min, 2006; Paulus, 1999; Sachs & Polio, 2007; Yu & Hu, 2017). Peer feedback studies monitored language development resulting from peer interaction and interpreted their findings from the perspective of Vygotsky's (1978) socio-cultural theory (De Guerrero & Villamil, 2000; Donato, 1994; Ohta, 2000). Socio-cultural theory posits that learners' social interaction within their ZPD (Zone of Proximal Development), help them in filling the gaps in their knowledge and extending it to the level where they cannot learn independently anymore (Aljaafreh & Lantolf, 1994; Donato, 1994; Nassaji & Swain, 2000). Results of studies that monitored the effect of such assistance (e.g. De Guerrero & Villamil, 2000; Foster & Ohta, 2005; Ohta, 2001) revealed that peer interaction helped learners to focus on language forms and develop their language. Teacher feedback studies, also, used different types of designs to investigate the effect of this type of error correction on L2 learners' written performance (e.g. Ferris & Roberts, 2001; Mawlawi Diab, 2015; Sampson, 2012; Zheng, 2007). Ferris (2006), for instance,

investigated the effects of different types of teacher feedback on reducing various language errors in revised essays and in essays that had not received any feedback. The results showed that learners were remarkably successful at correcting their errors in revised drafts which resulted in significant improvement in the accuracy of five out of 15 error categories in the last essay of the semester. In addition, the results of studies related to the effect of self-feedback on language development (e.g. Lee, 1997; Xiang, 2004) indicated that students were able to spot and rectify some of the errors in their essays.

Moreover, in the field of TBLT, several studies have reported the beneficial effects of task repetition in drawing learners' attention to language forms. For instance, Hawkes (2011) found that task repetition as a post-task activity could be a useful pedagogical activity for bringing the language forms into learners' focus. Ahmadian (2011) also came to the conclusion that massed repetitions of the same task help learners in improving their performance in terms of complexity and fluency but not accuracy. The findings of a study by Saeedi and Rahimi Kazerooni (2014) revealed that giving learners an opportunity to repeat a tightly structured narrative task leads to better performance in terms of complexity, fluency, and accuracy. Van de Guchte, Braaksma, Rijlaarsdam and Bimmel (2015) investigated the impact of task repetition (after having directed learners' attention to form during the main task) on German L2 learners' performance. Forty-eight students were randomly assigned to two conditions: one group repeated a similar task and the other group did not. Findings revealed that written accuracy and metalinguistic knowledge of the repetition condition was enhanced compared to the non-repetition condition. Similarly, Fukuta (2015) found that task repetition resulted in more focus on language form among learners when they engaged in the same task twice. Azkarai and García Mayo's (2016) study came up with the result that L2 learners can benefit from task repetition since familiarity with procedure and content gives them the chance to focus on more specific aspects of language.

Most of the studies on task-based language learning and teaching support the claim that giving learners feedback leads to significant improvements in performance. Another point is that, learners' performance may be influenced by a participatory structure in which learners are required to perform the task (individual, pair, or group performance). As Ellis (2017) mentions "A common misconception about TBLT is that it must involve small group work" (p. 519). Little is known

about the other forms of participatory structure in task performance. Therefore, the purpose of the present study was to examine and compare the effectiveness of discourse mode (pair vs. individual work), feedback type (learner vs. teacher feedback), and task repetition on intermediate EFL learners' performance in terms of complexity, accuracy, and fluency. Few attempts have been made to investigate the effects of these variables on EFL learners' task performance in a single study. Therefore, to this end, the present study addressed the following research questions:

1. Do types of task performance (i.e. individual written output with self-correction, pair written output with pair-correction, teacher correction of individual written output, teacher correction of pair written output, and individual and pair output with no feedback) affect EFL learners' subsequent performances in terms of **accuracy** on the same task repetition and on a similar task performance?
2. Do types of task performance (i.e. individual written output with self-correction, pair written output with pair-correction, teacher correction of individual written output, teacher correction of pair written output, and individual and pair output with no feedback) affect EFL learners' subsequent performances in terms of **fluency** on the same task repetition and on a similar task performance?
3. Do types of task performance (i.e. individual written output with self-correction, pair written output with pair-correction, teacher correction of individual written output, teacher correction of pair written output, and individual and pair output with no feedback) affect EFL learners' subsequent performances in terms of **complexity** on the same task repetition and on a similar task performance?

METHOD

Participants

The participants of this study were 90 EFL learners in Zanjan, Iran. They were studying at an intermediate level in the Pardis Language Institute. In this research, convenience sampling was used to select the participants. Among different language schools in Zanjan, the Pardis Institute was selected and six intact classes participated in this study.

Their age range was between 14 to 17 years old. They were both female and male students. Six groups of learners performed the narrative task in this research, three of which performed the task individually and three others performed the tasks in pairs. The students attended English classes twice a week during the study. To assure the homogeneity of the participants in terms of language proficiency, a language placement test (Oxford Placement Test) was given to the learners at the beginning of the study.

Instruments

Oxford Placement Test

The Oxford Placement Test (OPT) was given to all of the participants at the beginning of the study to assure their homogeneity in terms of their level of language proficiency. The test contained 100 multiple choice questions which consisted of three main sections of grammar, reading, and vocabulary. Participants' responses to the test were scored on a scale of 100 points. Results revealed that participants in all groups had a range of scores between 42 and 49.

Narrative task:

In the narrative task, students individually or in pairs had to construct a story based on a series of pictures with common characters but no obvious storyline. In this study, a series of pictures were given to the learners and they were required to write a story based on the pictures. In this study two similar narrative tasks (both of them focusing on the subject of food and restaurants) were utilized and which were taken from a book written by Julich and Chabot (2006, see pp. 35 & 83).

Measures of Linguistic Performance

Three measures are generally used to analyze learners' performance in TBLT: complexity, accuracy, and fluency. Complexity, has been measured in different ways by L2 researchers. For instance, Yuan and Ellis (2003), defined complexity as the ratio of clauses to T-units. T-unit (or Terminable Unit) is defined as the shortest unit which a sentence can be reduced to, and consisting of one independent clause together with whatever dependent clauses are attached to it, generally used to measure

written language (Richards & Schmidt, 2002). However, as subordination may decrease with L2 proficiency Bulté and Housen (2012) suggested using analysis of the mean length of units. Foster, Tonkyn, and Wigglesworth (2000) have proposed the use of the AS-unit (Assessment of Speech) as a unit of complexity measurement. An AS-unit is defined as 'a single speaker's utterance consisting of an independent clause or sub-clausal unit, together with any subordinate clause(s) associated with it' (Foster et al., 2000, p. 365). They argue that this is more appropriate for a spoken language than the T-unit which is more appropriate for written language. The second variable, accuracy, has also been measured in various ways in L2 research including error-free clauses (i.e. the percentage of error-free clauses to the whole number of clauses) or the ratio of error-free t-units to overall t-units, to the total number of clauses or to the total number of words, weighted t-unit measures, analyses of different error-types and error-severity (see Polio and Shea, 2014 for more information). Mehnert (1998), also argues that it is more accurate to measure grammatical accuracy as the number of errors per 100 words since clauses can be of different lengths. Fluency, the third component of CAF (Complexity, Accuracy, Fluency), has been typically measured in different studies as a number of syllables produced per minute of speech or the number of words produced within a time limit (Hudson, Lane, & Mercer, 2005; Ong & Zhang, 2010).

To allow cross-study comparisons, in this study: syntactic complexity was measured by the number of clauses per T-units; accuracy was measured in terms of error-free T-units; and fluency was measured in terms of the number of words produced within a time limit.

Procedure

The aim of this study was to examine the effect of type of correction (self/pair vs. teacher correction), task repetition and type of task performance (individual vs. pair) on intermediate EFL learners' written performance (in terms of complexity, accuracy, and fluency). Six groups of EFL learners participated in this study. First, learners in all six groups received a narrative task (a series of related pictures). Learners were asked to write a story based on the sequence of the series of pictures. They were given ten minutes for the completion of the task and were not allowed to use dictionary or any other kinds of resources. Three groups were asked to perform the task individually and three groups in pairs (students

themselves selected their partners). After task completion, two groups (both individual and pair groups) received teacher feedback (teacher corrections were mostly based on grammar, lexis mistakes and sentence construction which were pointed out explicitly) on their writing narrative production, and the other two groups (both individual and pair groups) were asked to find and correct as many mistakes as possible in their writing narrative production (self- and peer-correction). For the other two groups (control groups), one group was required to perform the task individually and the other group in pairs without receiving any kind of feedback or correction. After focusing on their mistakes, all the four groups and the two control groups repeated the same task. Then after a two week interval, to see the effect of type of feedback and task repetition on individual and pair performances, a similar task (another narrative task) was given to the learners. Then learners' performances were compared in first (initial performance), second (repetition of the same task) and third (similar task performance) production stages. The following table summarizes the grouping and the steps followed in the research process:

Table 1

Grouping and the Steps Followed in the Research Process

	Step 1	Step2	Step 3	Step 4
Group 1 Individual performance/self-correction (n=11)	Performing task A individually	Two weeks later, self-correction of the performance	Then, repeating the same task (task A) individually	Two weeks later, performing a similar task (task B) individually
Group 2 Pair-performance/pair-correction (n=18)	Performing task A in pairs	Two weeks later, pair-correction of the performance	Then, repeating the same task (task A) in pairs	Two weeks later, performing a similar task (task B) in pairs
Group 3 Individual-performance/teacher-correction (n=11)	Performing task A individually	Two weeks later, receiving teacher-correction of the performance	Then, repeating the same task (task A) individually	Two weeks later, performing a similar task (task B) individually
Group 4 Pair-performance/teacher-correction (n=18)	Performing task A in pairs	Two weeks later, receiving teacher-correction of the performance	Then, repeating the same task (task A) in pairs	Two weeks later, performing a similar task (task B) in pairs
Group 5 Individual-performance/no correction (n=14)	Performing task A individually	No feedback or correction	Then, repeating the same task (task A)	Two weeks later, performing a similar task (task B) individually
Group 6 Pair-performance/no correction (n=18)	Performing task A in pairs	No feedback or correction	Then, repeating the same task (task A)	Two weeks later, performing a similar task (task B) in pairs

DATA ANALYSIS

The obtained data was analyzed by using SPSS software version 24 to see if there were significant differences in terms of complexity, accuracy, and fluency on intermediate EFL learners' performances. First, the Kolmogrove-Smirnov Test was used for checking the normality assumption of the data (the results of K S-test indicated the normal distribution of scores for the groups since the p value exceeded .05 in all cases). Then a mixed way ANOVA (repeated measure) was run to compare the groups' performances. Post-hoc Tukey tests were also employed to analyze any significant pairwise differences between groups.

Results of Research Question One

Results of mean scores of six groups for accuracy

To provide an answer to the first research question, the mean scores of accuracies in performing task 1 (narrative task), task 2 (repetition of task 1), and task 3 (similar narrative task) for all six groups were calculated (Table 4.2).

Table 2

Mean Scores of Accuracy in Performing Task 1 (narrative task), Task 2 (repetition of task 1), and Task 3 (similar narrative task) for All Six Groups

Groups	Task 1 (narrative) Performance 1 Mean Accuracy 1	Task 2 (repetition of task 1) Performance 2 Mean Accuracy 2	Task 3 (similar task) Performance 3 Mean Accuracy 3
1.Individual performance/self-correction	0.72	0.82	0.75
2.Pair performance/pair-correction	0.56	0.68	0.65
3.Individual performance/teacher-correction	0.45	0.55	0.58
4.Pair performance/teacher-correction	0.65	0.84	0.83
5.Individual performance/no-correction	0.79	0.82	0.76
1.Pair performance/no-correction	0.63	0.57	0.60

As clear from Table 2, groups 1 (individual performance/self-correction), 2 (pair performance/pair-correction), 3 (individual performance/teacher-correction), 4 (pair-performance/teacher correction), and 5 (individual performance/no correction) accuracy scores improved in task 2, i.e. repetition of task 1, compared to their first performance. This higher mean is also evident in the third performance of the groups 1, 2, 3, and 4.

Results of mixed ANOVA for accuracy

To statistically compare the six groups in terms of 'within-subject'

and 'between-subject' differences in accuracy (performances of tasks 1, 2, 3) a mixed ANOVA was run. Table 3 shows the results of mixed-design ANOVA for overall significant differences in accuracy scores.

Table 3

The results of mixed-design ANOVA for overall within-group and between-group significant differences among six groups of the study in the measures for accuracy measure

		SS	df	MS	F	Sig.	ηp^2
Within-group							
	Task	46.163	2	23.082	2365.8	**.000**	.976
	Group*Task	.197	5	.039	3.275	**.011**	.223
	Error	0.687	57	.012			
Between-group							
	Group	2.023	5	.405	7.706	**.000**	.403
	Error	2.992	57	.052			

As depicted in Table 3, in terms of accuracy, there were overall significant within-group and between-group differences (P-values ≤ .05) among the six groups of the study. In addition, a significant interaction effect was found between the two factors of group and task. This means that, the interval time among first task performance (task 1/narrative task), second performance (task 2/repetition of task 1) and third performance (task 3/similar task) had a significant effect on different groups' performances.

Moreover, in order to determine significant pairwise between-group differences a Tukey test was conducted in the mixed-design ANOVA procedure. The results showed that significant between-group differences

existed between groups 1 with groups 3 and 6 (p-values of 0.002 and 0.027 respectively), groups 2 and 5 (p-value of 0.028), group 3 with groups 4 and 5 (p-values of 0.010 and 0.000 respectively), and group 5 with group 6 (p-value of 0.003). There were no significant between-group differences in the accuracy scores of group 1 with groups 2, 4, 5 (p-values of 0.169, 1.000, and 0.985, respectively). Also, no significant differences were found between group 2 with groups 3 and 4 (p-values of 0.737 and 0.317), group 2 and group 6 (p-value of 0.976), group 3 with group 6 (p-value of 0.990), and group 4 with groups 4 and 6 (p-values of 0.948 and 0.071, respectively).
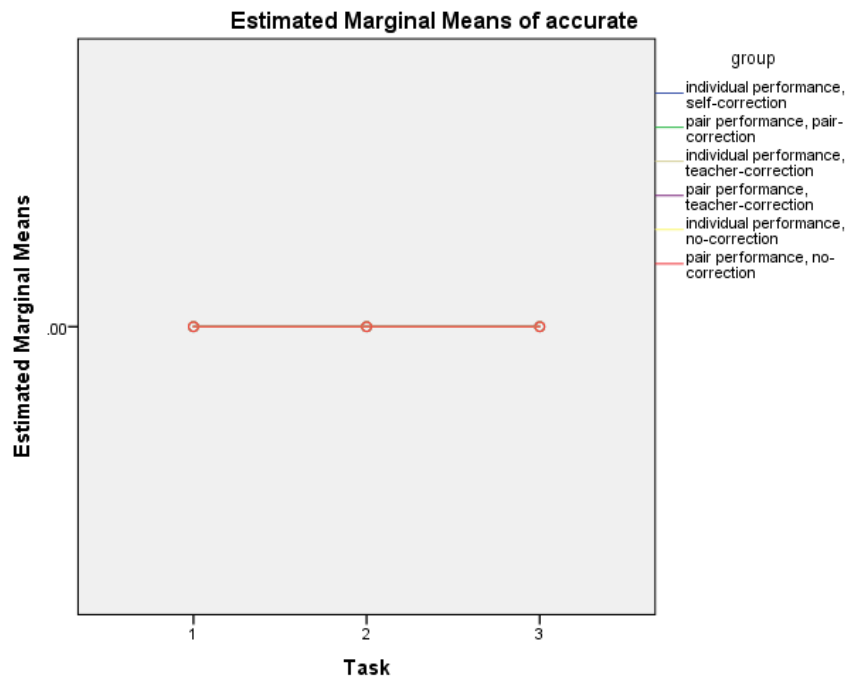

Figure 1. Profile plot for accuracy measure (group 1= individual performance, self-correction; group 2= pair performance, pair-correction; group 3= individual performance, teacher-correction; group 4= pair performance, teacher-correction; group5= individual performance, no-correction; group 6= pair performance, no-correction)

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Figure 1 displays the profile plot of the measure of accuracy measure in terms of the three task performances in different groups. As shown, groups' performances overlap with each other to a great extent.

Results of Research Question Two

Results of Mean Scores of Six Groups for Fluency

To provide an answer to the second research question, the mean scores of fluency in performing task 1 (narrative task), task 2 (repetition of task 1), and task 3 (similar narrative task) for all six groups were calculated (Table 4).

Table 4

Mean Scores of Fluency in Performing Task 1 (narrative task), Task 2 (repetition of task 1), and Task 3 (similar narrative task) for All the Six Groups

Groups	Task 1 (narrative) Performance 1 Mean Accuracy 1	Task 2 (repetition of task 1) Performance 2 Mean Accuracy 2	Task 3 (similar task) Performance 3 Mean Accuracy 3
1.Individual performance/self-correction	107.02	138.12	110.01
2.Pair performance/pair-correction	101.29	112.74	101.26
3.Individual performance/teacher-correction	97.03	88.97	86.12
4.Pair performance/teacher-correction	83.19	84.44	73.11
5.Individual performance/no-correction	98.95	128.76	105.33
6.Pair performance/no-correction	99.03	101.26	96.37

As depicted in Table 4 mean scores of learners' fluency improved in groups 1, 2, 4, 5, and 6 from performance 1 to 2. Similarly, fluency scores increased in groups 1 and 5 from performance 1 to 3. No increase in fluency scores was obtained in these six groups from performance 2 to 3.

Results of mixed ANOVA for fluency

To statistically compare the six groups in terms of 'within-subject' and 'between-subject' differences in fluency (fluency scores in performances of tasks 1, 2, and 3) a mixed ANOVA was run. Table 5 shows the results of a mixed-design ANOVA for overall significant differences in fluency scores.

Table 5

The Results of Mixed-Design ANOVA for Overall Within-Group and Between-Group Significant Differences among the Six Groups of the Study for the Measure of Fluency

		SS	df	MS	F	Sig.	ηp^2
Within-group							
	Task	5056.954	2	2528.47	6.255	**.003**	.099
	Group*Task	1769.638	5	353.928	1.230	.307	.097
	Error	29687.524	57	520.834			
Between-group							
	Group	36170.409	5	7234.08	2.004	.092	.149
	Error	205774.48	57	3610.07			

As depicted in Table 5, there was a significant within-group difference (P-values ≤ .05) among performances of tasks (i.e. tasks 1, 2, and 3) in the

study. No significant between-group differences were found and also no significant interaction effect was found between the two factors of group and task. This means that, the interval time among the first task performance (task 1/narrative task), second performance (task 2/repetition of task 1), and third performance (task 3/similar task) had no significant effect on different groups' performances.

Moreover, in order to determine significant pairwise between-group differences, a Tukey test was conducted. The results showed that there exist no significant differences between-pairwise groups differences among the six groups of study.
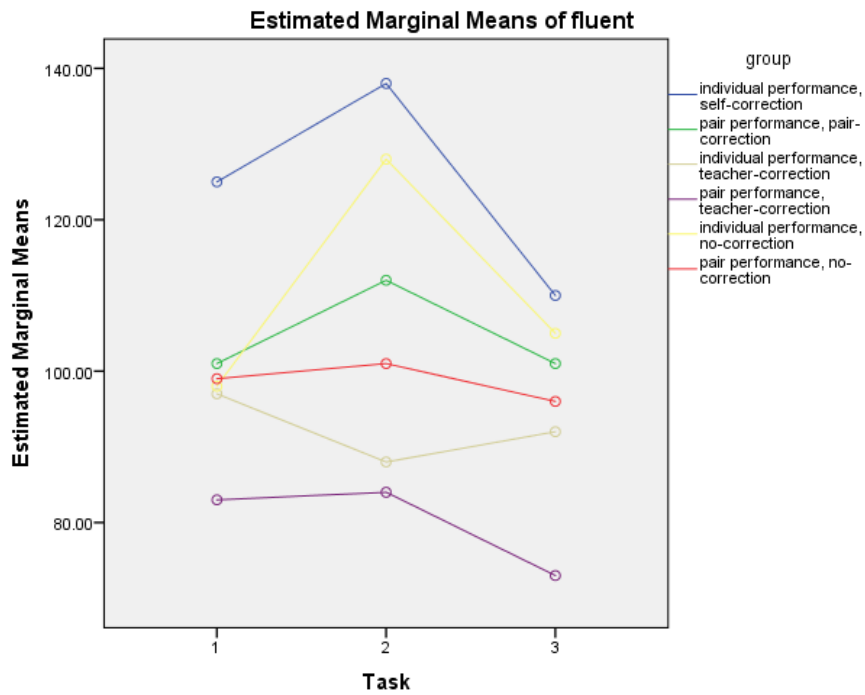

Figure 2. Profile plot for fluency measure (group 1= individual performance, self-correction; group 2= pair performance, pair-correction; group 3= individual performance, teacher-correction; group 4= pair performance, teacher-correction; group5= individual performance, no-correction; group 6= pair performance, no-correction)

Figure 2 displays the profile plot of fluency in terms of interval time among three task performances in different groups. As shown, all of the groups' performances improved from task 1 to task 2, except group 3. However, all of the groups' performances were disappointing in task 3, and this poor performance in terms of fluency was evident in all of the groups except group 3. Group 3's fluency score was exceptional since unlike other groups the second performance was the worst compared to the first and third performances.

The figure also indicates that group 1's (individual performance following self-correction) fluency was the highest among all the six groups. Groups 2, 6, 5, 3, and 4 fluency scores were placed in the second, third, fourth, fifth, and sixth places, respectively, in performing the first task. This situation slightly changed in performing the second task (repetition of task 1): groups 5, 2, 6, 3, and 4 were placed in the second, third, fourth, fifth, and sixth places respectively in performing the second task. This order of group performances was the same for completion of the third task, except that fluency scores were lower in performing task 3 compared to performing tasks 2 and 1. Therefore, according to these results, the null hypothesis 2 can be rejected.

Results of Research Question Three

Results of mean scores of six groups for complexity

To provide an answer to the third research question, the mean scores of complexities in performing task 1 (narrative task), task 2 (repetition of task 1), and task 3 (similar narrative task) for all six groups were calculated (Table 6).

Table 6

Mean Scores of Complexity in Performing Task 1 (Narrative Task), Task 2 (Repetition Of Task 1), and Task 3 (Similar Narrative Task) for All Six Groups

Groups	Task 1 (narrative) Performance 1 Mean Accuracy 1	Task 2 (repetition of task 1) Performance 2 Mean Accuracy 2	Task 3 (similar task) Performance 3 Mean Accuracy 3
1.Individual performance/self-correction	2.17	2.63	2.83
2.Pair performance/pair-correction	2.67	2.75	3.09
3.Individual performance/teacher-correction	3.37	2.93	2.51
4.Pair performance/teacher-correction	2.33	2.55	2.67
5.Individual performance/no-correction	2.61	2.89	2.64
1.Pair performance/no-correction	3.08	2.86	2.68

As the table indicates the performances of groups 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 were improved in terms of complexity from performance 1 to 2. In addition, performances of groups 1, and 2 were improved from performance 2 to 3. Similarly, performances of groups 1, 2, 4, and 5 became more complex from performance 1 to 3.

Results of mixed ANOVA for complexity

To statistically compare the six groups' means in terms of 'within-subject' and 'between-subject' differences in complexity (complexity scores in performances of tasks 1, 2, and 3) a mixed ANOVA was run. Table 7 shows the results of mixed-design ANOVA for overall significant differences in complexity scores.

Table 7

The Results of Mixed-Design ANOVA for Overall Within-Group and Between-Group Significant Differences among the Six Groups of the Study in the Measure of Complexity

		SS	df	MS	F	Sig.	ηp^2
Within-group							
	Task	135.043	2	67.521	355.24	**.000**	.862
	Group*Task	3.598	5	.720	2.727	**.028**	.193
	Error	15.043	57	.264			
Between-group							
	Group	2.912	5	.582	1.527	.196	.118
	Error	21.746	57	.382			

As depicted in Table 7, there were significant within-group differences (P-values ≤ .05) among performances of tasks (i.e. tasks 1, 2, and 3) in the study. Also significant interaction effect was found between the two factors of group and task. No significant between-group differences were found. This means that, the six groups' performances in terms of complexity were similar.

Moreover, the results of a Tukey-test showed that there were no significant pairwise between-group differences among various groups of the study.
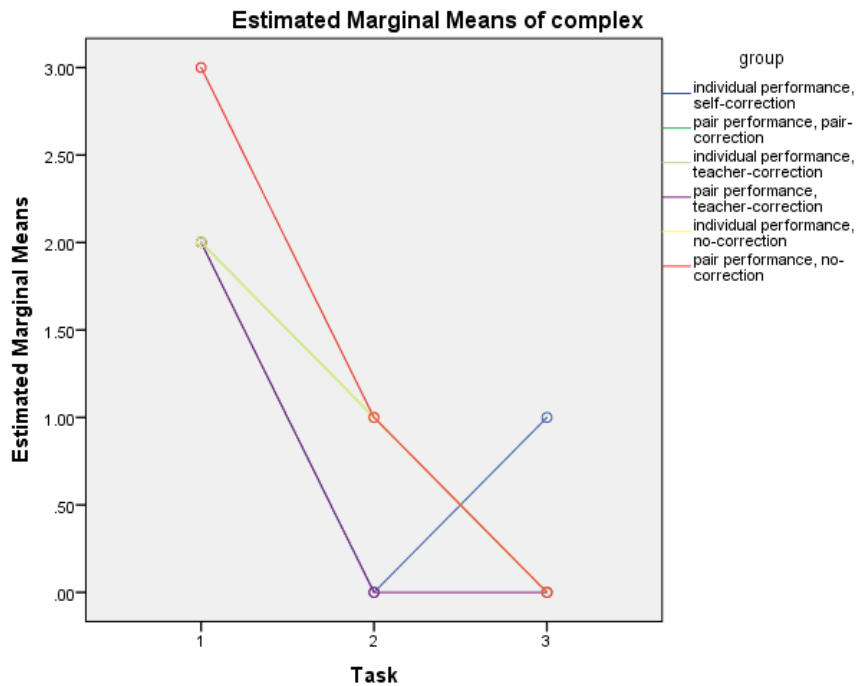
Figure 3. Profile plot for the measure of complexity (group 1= individual performance, self-correction; group 2= pair performance, pair-correction; group 3= individual performance, teacher-correction; group 4= pair performance, teacher-correction; group5= individual performance, no-correction; group 6= pair performance, no-correction)

Figure 3 shows the profile plot of complexity in terms of interval time among the three task performances in different groups. As the figure indicates, group 6 gained the highest score in terms of complexity; among the other groups, groups 2, 3, and 5 were in second place and groups 1 and 4 were in third place. The same situation exists for the completion of the second task, though the complexity scores were lower in comparison to the first performance. In completion of the third task all of the groups had lower scores in comparison to the completion of the first and second tasks. Group 1's complexity score was the exception since, unlike other groups, their scores were boosted in performing the third task in comparison to

performing the second task.

Discussion

Overall, the findings of this study indicated that learners' performances improved in terms of accuracy, fluency, and complexity when they were given an opportunity to repeat the same task. Earlier research (e.g. Ahmadian & Tavakoli, 2011; Bygate, 2001, 1996; Lynch & Mclean, 2000) has shown that repetition of the same task is associated with higher performance and can help different learners expand diverse areas of their interlanguage. Wang (2014) also found that repetition of a narrative retelling helped learners improve their complexity, accuracy, and fluency. Saeedi and Rahimi Kazerooni's (2014) study confirmed the idea that task repetition contributes to EFL learner gains in accuracy, fluency, and complexity. Bygate (1996) has argued that during the first task performance, attention is mostly devoted to processing the pre-verbal message (focus on content) and little attention is devoted to the lexico-grammatical (focus on form) aspects of production. However, when learners are given a chance to repeat the same task they may allocate their attention to various dimensions of their output. Skehan (1998) also argues that learners cannot simultaneously attend to both content and form since it leads to cognitive overload for them. Skehan's limited attentional model or trade-off hypothesis maintains that learners have limited attentional capacity, and allocating attention to one aspect of language performance may hinder it from attending to other aspects. Therefore, learners have to prioritize where and when to direct their attention to different aspects of language. In initial task performance learners tend to pay attention to the meaning, but when they are provided with an opportunity to repeat the same task they switch their attention from content to form of language. Hence, as stated by Fukuta (2015) "easing cognitive demands on content by task repetition is considered to be useful for successful grammar instruction" (p. 3). Fukuta's (2015) study confirmed Skehan and Bygate's account. Fukuta found that participants of his study focused more on syntactic processing when they were asked to perform the first task for the second time since they were already familiar with the content of the task and were able to devote more attention to the linguistic form in the second performance. Similarly, as Skehan (2014) suggests partial lemma retrieval that has been formed during the first task performance leaves some traces in learners' mind that can be activated in the second performance, and

consequently speeds up the cognitive processes.

However, a number of studies have found that repeating the same task would negatively influence learners' performances since some learners experience a feeling of fatigue and boredom when they are asked to repeat the same task. For instance, Qiu and Lo (2016) have found that although their participants generally felt positive towards task repetition and became more efficient in the second performance since they tried to supply more details to make their speech more eloquent, some of the participants were behaviorally and cognitively less engaged in repeating the same task (second performance) and tried to produce fewer words in their speech as they felt bored by repeating the same content to the same audience. Similarly, in the present study, the underlying reason behind the poor performances of certain groups of learners in performing the same task again may be easily explained by the distaste or boredom felt in repeating it.

Moreover, in the present study, in most of the cases participants gained higher scores (for all measures of accuracy, fluency, and complexity) in performing task 3 compared to performing task 1. Although this gain was not higher than the gains achieved in performing task 2, it was quite evident that learners were able to transfer whatever they have learnt to a similar (or new) task performance. This finding is in conflict with Bygate's (2001) study which indicated that task repetition does not generalize to other similar tasks of the same task type. By contrast, Benson's (2015) study has provided some evidence that task-related abilities are transferable and some learning gains occur across similar task performances.

When it comes to comparing groups' means in terms of accuracy, in performing task 1 (narrative task) groups 1 and 5 (mean score of 0.72 and 0.79, respectively), who performed the task individually, outperformed other groups. In performing task 2 (repetition of task 1): group 4 (pair performance with teacher-correction), group 5 (individual performance with no correction), group 1 (individual performance with self-correction), and group 2 (pair performance with pair correction) gained higher means (means of, 0.84, 0.82, 0.82, 0.68 respectively). In addition, performing task 3 (new similar task) resulted in higher accuracy scores in group 1 (mean score of 0.75), group 4 (mean score of 0.83), and group 5 (mean score of 0.76). In terms of fluency, group 1 (individual performance with self-correction), group 2 (pair performance with pair correction), and group 5 (individual performance with no correction) gained higher scores

in performing all three tasks. Regarding complexity, in performing task 1, group 3 (individual performance), group 6 (pair performance), and group 2 (pair performance) produced more complex language (mean scores of 3.37, 3.08, and 2.67, respectively) compared to the other groups' performances. In repetition of task 1, group 3 (individual performance with teacher-correction), group 5 (individual performance with no correction), and group 6 (pair performance with no correction) gained higher scores. In performing task 3, i.e. similar task, group 1 (individual performance with self-correction), and group 2 (pair performance with pair correction) achieved higher scores in complexity. Therefore, on the whole, we can conclude that individual performance resulted in higher accuracy, fluency, and complexity scores, both with and without correction or feedback, in all task performances (i.e. narrative task 1, repetition of task 1, and similar task performance). This finding is in line with Kuiken and Vedder (2002) who found that pair and collaborative performance did not necessarily result in a better performance compared to an individual performance. In another study conducted by Storch (2005) the effect of pair work vs. individual work on written performance of learners was investigated. The products of learners were examined in terms of accuracy, fluency, and complexity. The researcher concluded that the collaborative pair work led to many opportunities for exchanging ideas and peer feedback. It was also found that students who produced the text collaboratively wrote shorter but grammatically more accurate and more complex texts in comparison to those who produced them individually. However, the difference between the individual and pair work was not statistically significant.

Moreover, the findings of this study indicate that participants benefitted (especially in terms of fluency and complexity) from receiving feedback (i.e. self-correction, pair-correction, and teacher-correction) when they were asked to perform the same task again. In addition, participants were able to transfer whatever they have learnt to a similar (or new) task performance mostly in terms of accuracy and complexity. This is in line with Hawkes's (2012) study which suggested that within a task cycle (i.e. pre-task, during-task, and post-task stages) task repetition could be used as a useful pedagogical tool to draw learners' attention towards form after completing a meaning-focused task. As Hawkes (2012) asserts

Following Skehan's (1998) view that learners have limited attention, if we accept that learners were indeed focusing more on form in the

repeat performance then this suggests that more attention must have been on meaning during the main task. Therefore, with much support for the argument that a strong version of TBLT with no focus on form may not be enough for interlanguage development, this application of task repetition could be useful for directing learners' attention from meaning to form. (p. 335)

Conclusion

The findings of this study revealed that learners' performances improved in terms of accuracy, fluency, and complexity when they were asked to repeat the same initial task. Learners also benefited from task repetition when they were asked to perform a similar task. Moreover, the results indicated that individual performance resulted in higher scores of accuracy, fluency, and complexity compared to pair performance. Another finding was that focus on form through self/pair correction and teacher-correction assisted learners in improving their written performance in their second and third productions.

The present study's findings are confirmed by previous researchers in task-based pedagogy. Skehan (1996, 1998) claims that in the first task performance learners mainly attend to meaning and content and that this diverts their attention away from linguistic accuracy. Giving learners an opportunity to repeat the same task may help them to redistribute their focus on form, since they have already became fairly familiar with the content (Bygate, 2001). As a result, task repetition proves to be beneficial in both familiarizing learners with the content of the task, as well as the retrieval of previous linguistic knowledge. Moreover, task rehearsal seems to be effective for language automatization (Date, 2013; De Jong & Perfetti, 2011; Suzuki & Dekeyser, 2013). Several studies have also documented that for task repetition to have beneficial effects on acquisition learners need to receive some kind of feedback on their first performance of the task (e.g. Ahmadian, 2012; Bygate, 2001; Ellis, 2009). For instance, Sheppard (2006) demonstrated that providing learners with feedback on their initial performance has a positive effect on their second performance (in terms of complexity, accuracy, and fluency).

Implications of the Study

The current study can inform teachers, syllabus designers, and

material developers and it may be of particular relevance for communicative approaches such as TBLT. In this study it was revealed that 1) pair and individual work had a considerable impact on the performance of the EFL learners' written performance; 2) task repetition could be effective in the improvement of different aspects of learners' performances; 3) focusing learners' attention on form can be conducive to learning. Teachers can design various task implementation conditions (e.g. pair vs. individual performance, self vs. teacher correction, and same task repetition vs. similar task performance) to direct learners' attention to different dimensions of language.

Limitations of the Study and Suggestions for Future Research

Despite the above mentioned points, it should be indicated that the present study is not without its limitations. First, subjects from a single language institute participated in this study. Further research is also needed in different contexts to compare the results. Second, the sample size for this study was not large, and thus further research is needed to make stronger generalizations. Third, only narrative tasks were examined in this study. Future research will be undertaken to investigate the effect of other task types on EFL learners' performance. Fourth, the focus of this research was on written performance of learners. Future studies can attempt to focus on this limitation and will investigate the effect of oral performance in their studies. Moreover, the focus of this study was on the product or the end result of the written performance of learners. Further research can be done to explore the processes that learners go through to produce the written narrative (think aloud and observation can be helpful in this regard). In addition, no rubrics or guidelines were given to the teacher or students when they were asked to correct the mistakes. In future studies researchers can ask teacher and students to focus their correction on one or more specific language forms or provide them with specific guidelines for correcting the written performances. Also, the think aloud technique can be utilized by future researchers to ask learners to vocalize their thoughts when they are performing the first and subsequent tasks to see what is noticed by learners and whether they will transfer it to their future performances or not.

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