# Self-, Peer- and Teacher-assessment in Translation Course

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## Abstract

This present study was aimed at discovering the correlation between self, peer and teacher assessment in translation course. The study was conducted in an EFL private university in Garut. It involved 15 students enrolling in *translation 2* course. Quantitative approach was chosen as the appropriate method in dealing with the problem. Pearson product moment correlation was employed to see the direction and the magnitude of the correlation between the variables. The result showed that self-assessment correlates to peer and teacher-assessment by 0.27 and 0.24 respectively and the coefficient correlation between teacher and peer-assessment was 0.77. It confirmed that peer- assessment validate teacher-assessment better than self-assessment.

*Keyword: self- assessment, peer-assessment, teacher-assessment*

## Abstrak

Penelitian ini ditujukan untuk mencari tahu hubungan antara *self-*, *peer-* dan *teacher assessment* dalam mata kuliah translation. Penelitian ini dilaksanakan di suatu universitas swasta di Garut. Penelitian ini melibatkan 15 orang mahasiswa yang terdaftar di mata kuliah *translation 2.* Pendekatan kuantitatif digunakan sebagai metode yang dianggap sesuai dengan masalah yang diteliti. Untuk mengetahui arah dan besar hubungan antar variable yang diteliti, penelitian ini menggunakan *Pearson Product Monment Correlation.*Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa koefisien korelasi antara *self-* dengan *peer-* dan *self-* dengan *teacher-assessment* adalah masing-masing 0.27 dan 0.24. sedangkan koefisien korelasi antara *teacher* dengan *peer-assessment* adalah sebesar 0.77. hal ini membuktikan bahwa *peer-assessment* mampu memvalidasi *teacher-assessment* lebih baik daripada *self-assessment*

*Kata Kunci : self- assessment, peer-assessment, teacher-assessment*

# Introduction

Assessments play a crucial role in scaling learners' knowledge and achievement in a course. The existence cannot be separated from language teaching (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010). Therefore, assessment as a process of assigning and weighing up learners capability is supposed to be carried out as the part of the learning control. It means that the effectiveness of learning process can be estimated by the assessment process. The search for more flexible approach is supposed to accommodate , among others, a greater attention to skills in teaching and learning (Montgomery, 2010) which eventually leads to a better development of the on going process.

However, the crucial role of assessments comes along with its controversy in the learning process. As mentioned by Brown and Abeywickrama (2010) claims that for optimal learning to take place, students in the classroom must have the freedom to experiment, to try out their own hypotheses about language without feeling that their overall competence is being judge in terms of those trials and errors (p. 5)". This claim is one of other controversies dealing with assessments. Furthermore most of the language learners in their language classes are not satisfied with the final marks given by their teachers; they think they deserve more. (Zakiyan, Morada, & Naghibi, 2012). It might be due to the unclear rating criteria or scale from the teacher or the unreliable testing device used by the teachers.

Thus, the search for alternative assessment emerges in order to overcome the bias. As a result, students' involvement in the assessment offers the solution for this demand. It may affect students' behavior and shape their experiences more than the only teaching process (Bloxham & Boyd, 2007). In so doing, Student involvement in assessment typically takes the form of peer assessment or self-assessment. In both of these activities, students are engaging with criteria and standards, and applying them to make judgments (Falchikov & Goldfinch, 2000).

Self-assessment refers to the process in which students assess their own learning, particularly their achievements and learning outcomes (Lindblom-Ylanne, Pihlajamaki, &

Kotkas, 2006). Furthermore, Mats Oscarsson (1989) cited in (Coombe & Canning, 2002) provide six different reasons why self-assessment can be beneficial to language learning. First, he stresses that self-assessment promotes learning, plain and simple. Secondly, it gives both students and teachers a raised level of awareness of perceived levels of abilities. Thirdly, it is highly motivating in terms of goal-orientation. Fourth, through the use of self-assessment methodologies, the range of assessment techniques is expanded in the classroom. Fifth, by practicing self-assessment, the students participate in their own evaluation (Dickinson 1987 in Coombe & Canning, 2002). Finally, by successfully involving students in their own assessment, beneficial post-course effects will ensue.

Peer-assessment, on the other hand, refers to assessment practices in which peers assess the achievements, learning outcomes or performances of their fellow students (Lindblom-Ylanne, Pihlajamaki, & Kotkas, 2006). It has been recognized that engaging students in peer assessment can help them in learning to evaluate their own learning and in interpreting assessment criteria (The Higher Education Academy, 2009). As what is being sought in this study the learners' ability in assessing themselves and their peer is correlated and used to validate the what-so-called teacher assessment in translation course. The two of the crucial roles in translation assessment, among others, are for giving input for the learners enrolling in the subject and evaluating learner's skill in translation (Angelelli & Jacobson, 2009). Therefore, the assessment will reveal what the learners are capable of in transferring and rendering meaning from the source language into the target language

Students' involvement in Translation assessment is deemed challenging since it is not an easy task; it poses some consideration to take into accounts. For example, translation tests, as the part of assessment process have a long history of serving as an indicator of language proficiency in schools, universities, and colleges around the world, although some language testers have raised serious objections to this practice (Eyckmans, Anckaert, & Segers, 2009). It is due to the nature of translation nature as a rendering meaning activity of a text into another language in the way that the author intended the texts (Bassnet, 2002, p. 5) that involve complex approaches. This complexity seems to be the source of bias in measuring and assessing someone's ability in translating. One of the crucial steps in translation is to establish model of

quality and then transform it into set of metrics that measure each of the elements of that quality (Khanmohammad & Osanloo, 2009). Therefore, the current study attempts to answer "is there any correlation between self-, peer- and teacher assessment in translation course? This study seeks to answer whether or not self-, peer- , and teacher assessment are correlated so as to find out the confirmation of the use of self- and peer-assessment as the alternative for teacher-assessment in Translation course.

## Research Methodology

The current study applied quantitative method to reveal the correlation between self, peer and teacher assessment in translation class. Quantitative was chosen due to its nature that tries to see a possible connection between variables (Frankel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2012). This study belongs to correlational study which is described by Frankel, Wallen and Hyun (2012) as a research that describes the degree to which two or more quantitative variables are related, and it does so by using a correlation coefficient. The study fits to the definition in terms of describing the correlation between self, peer and teacher assessment using correlation coefficient. The correlation is then used to confirm the consistency of teacher assessment through the use of self- and peer-assessment as the correlating variables. Translation course was chosen because it is assumed that students enrolled in translation are university students who pose adequate capacity in understanding both source and target language. Twenty five students consisting eight female and seven female students were chosen purposively as the participants of the study. Third grade students (fifth semester) is considered to be appropriate in giving assessment themselves and their peer.

## Research Procedure

The research was conducted into two phases; the first phase was aimed to familiarize students with the assessment criteria. In so doing, students were given 10- 15 minutes to read and discussed the assessment rubric carefully. It was followed by explaining the assessment criteria for translation. It was carried out to share perception in assessing a translation work with reference to the assessment rubric. The explanation on assessment criteria was conveyed in the students' native language in order to avoid the misconception during the assessment

phase. It was also supposed to ensure that the students know what and how to assess the translated text. It was done to avoid prejudice that they might misunderstand the assessment criteria since, according to some experts, students sometimes encounter problem in dealing with assessment criteria (Norton, 2007).

The second phase deals with the translating process. In this phase, students were asked to translate a no-more-than-200-word English text into Bahasa Indonesia. They were given 50 minutes for translating the text. Fifty minutes was provided to ensure the text was translated carefully and fulfill the test practicality principle.

The last phase was the assessment process. The self-assessment process was actually done after the students had translated the text. The teacher then collected the translated text and the self-assessment score. The students translated texts were then distributed randomly to their peer to be assessed. However, the peer assessment process was assigned as a take home assignment the teachers also kept the copy version of the translated text for assessment.

The assessment criteria used in this study was taken from Zakiyan et al. (2012) covering some important aspects in translation; finding equivalent (25%), register, TL culture (20%), grammar and ST style (15%), shifts, omissions, additions and inventing equivalents (10%). This assessment rubrics consist of score range and its portion for every criteria accompanied by the description for every score range.

## Data Analysis and Discussion

After the scores from self-, peer and teacher's assessment were obtained; statistical computation using Pearson product moment correlation was utilized to unearth the correlation between self-, peer- and teacher-assessment. The description of the statistical data is presented in the following table

Table 1: Descriptive statistics for self, peer and teacher assessment

| Variable | N | Minimum Scores | Maximum Scores | Means | Standard Deviation |
|----------|-----|-----|-----|-------|------|
| SA | 25 | 60 | 85 | 71.64 | 8.14 |
| PA | 25 | 40 | 95 | 67.76 | 12.36 |
| TA | 25 | 30 | 80 | 59.84 | 16.6 |

As what its name suggested, table 1 provides statistical description on the overall result of the assessment given by the students, their peer and the teacher. It includes the number of the data, minimum and maximum scores, means and the standard deviation. The table shows that the means of self-assessment is the highest compared to peer and teacher assessment by 71.64 and standard deviation 8.14. It proves that most students values themselves higher than that is outlined in the assessment criteria. However, the highest score (95) came from the peer assessment. It leads to another interpretation that peer assigned higher value than teacher and the student himself. From the standard deviations distribution, teacher assessment showed wider range than that of self and peer-assessment.

In order to infer more information presented in table 1, inferential statistics were then carried out in which data were then processed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation to find out the correlation between self-, peer- and teacher- assessment. The correlation coefficient was used as the benchmark in measuring the direction and the magnitude of the correlation. The result was presented in table 2.

**Table 2: Correlation between self-, peer- and teacher- assessment**

|  |  | Self-assessment | Peer-assessment | Teacher-assessment |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Self-assessment** | Pearson correlation | 1 | 0.27 | 0.24 |
|  | N | 25 | 25 | 25 |
| **Peer assessment** | Pearson correlation | 0.27 | 1 | 0.77 |
|  | N | 25 | 25 | 25 |
| **Teacher assessment** | Pearson correlation | 0.24 | 0.77 | 1 |
|  | N | 25 | 25 | 25 |

The statistical analysis showed that self-assessment has positive correlation with peer-assessment and teacher assessment yet the magnitude of the correlation is insignificant referring to the correlation coefficient by 0.27 and 0.24 respectively. The coefficient proved

that in the case of assessing translation product, student himself tends to value his work higher compared to his peer and teacher.it is confirmed by the means of the assessment score. It confirms what has been discussed earlier that students think they deserve more than they were assessed. Their self-judgment proved so. However, the contributing factors causing the higher student self-assessment still calls for further research.

Despite the judgmental factors of self-assessment in properly assessing translation product, peer- and teacher-assessment offered promising fact. The coefficient correlation between peer- and teacher assessment seems to coincide by 0.77. It means that not only do they have positive correlation, but the magnitude also is categorized as highly correlated. It confirms the assumption on students' ability in assessing their peer work properly. Unlike the self-assessment, peer assessment seems to provide better alternative apart from teacher assessment. Referring to what Magin and Helmore, (2001) and Topping, (2003) cited in Lindblom-Ylanne, Pihlajamaki and Kotkas (2006) claimed that teachers' ratings are usually considered as the reference point, The finding proved that the students have adequate capability in assessing their peer work appropriately yet need further investigation dealing with assessing their own work. The other implication that derived from the correlation coefficient showed that peer assessment validated the teacher assessment in such a way that they coincide in determining good translation quality. Furthermore, peer-assessment as one of the alternative assessment also provides adequate information that is valid and reliable about the translation product provided that they agreed in terms of the used assessment criteria. Henceforth, it also revealed that the assessment rubric used in this study is consistent in ensuring students' translation quality. The coverage of the assessment criteria seems fulfill both students' and teacher's perspective in assessing the translation product.

However there are certain drawbacks encountered during the implementation of self- peer- and teacher assessment simultaneously. It is more time consuming rather than teacher assessment only; for assessing a certain learning objective through a single test. Three different phases need to be used: sharing the same perception on certain assessment criteria, doing self-

and peer assessment, and carrying out teacher assessment. It was completed in more than one meeting in the course.

## Conclusion

The present study revealed some interesting results about the underexplored self- and peer assessment field of Translation work. The application of self- assessment in this course still call for further research since the correlation between this variable and the other two variables only showed 0.27 and 0.24 coefficient correlation. It results from the self-judgmental perception. Students' tends to assess their own work higher compared to their peer and teacher In spite of the pre-assessment phase in sharing the understanding on the used criteria in the assessment. However, Peer-assessment provides promising answer to the search of alternative assessment for teacher assessment only. It showed statistically significant correlation by 0.77. Another interesting fact uncovered from the research revealed that the means of self-assessment score is the highest of the three types of assessment. It leads the assumption that student himself valued their own work higher than what is outlined or given by his teacher and his peer. Additional research could help to clarify the causal factors regarding to the limitation of self-assessment in translation course.

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**Appendixes**

**The translation assessment rubric**

| Score range | Description |
|---|---|
| **Accuracy (30%)** | |
| 25-30 | No identifiable problems of comprehension; original message has been conveyed completely to TL readers; no omissions or additions to information |
| 21-24 | Virtually no problems of comprehension except with the most highly specialized vocabulary with no influence on TL readers' understanding; some partial omissions and additions |
| 16-20 | Information is conveyed to TL readers with some difficulty due to translator misunderstanding of some parts of original message; apparent omissions and additions |
| 11-15 | Poor expression of ideas; numerous serious problems in understanding ST interfere with communication of original message; difficult to understand TT |
| 1-10 | Severe problems interfere greatly with communication of original message; TL reader can't understand what original writer was trying to say |
| **Finding equivalent (25%)** | |
| 20-25 | All lexical and syntactic elements have been understood; precise vocabulary usage; words have been chosen so skillfully that the work reads like a good publishable version |
| 15-19 | Full comprehension and good usage of a wide range of vocabulary and structures; specialized vocabulary presents some problems with unsuitable equivalents |
| 10-14 | General comprehension of a fair range of vocabulary although some gaps observed; some vocabulary misused; some evidence of plausible attempts to work around difficulties of finding equivalents, perception, wordplay and other linguistic features |
| 5-9 | Comprehension of vocabulary and structures show quite noticeable gaps which obscure sense; problems in finding correct vocabularies; unable to cope with specialized vocabulary |
| 1-4 | Inappropriate use of vocabularies; comprehension of original seriously impeded even with fairly everyday vocabulary and structures; translation as a whole makes little sense |
| **Register, TL culture (20%)** | |
| 17-20 | Good sensitivity to nuances of meaning, register are precisely and sensitively captured; there is a sophisticated awareness of the cultural context; translation shows a sophisticated command of TL lexis, syntax, and register |
| 13-16 | There is a fair degree of sensitivity to nuances of meaning, register, and cultural context |
| 9-12 | There is a lack of sustained attention to nuances of meaning, register, and cultural context; no awareness of register; TL lexis, syntax, and register are not always appropriate |
| 4-8 | There is scant attention to nuances of meaning, register, and cultural context; there are serious to severe shortcomings in the use of appropriate lexis, syntax, and register |

| 1-3 | There is no appreciable understanding of nuances of meaning, register, and cultural context; no concept of register or sentence variety |
|---|---|
| **Grammar and ST style (15%)** | |
| 13-15 | Gives the feeling that the translation needs no improvement from grammatical and stylistic points though one or two natural failings might be observed; native-like fluency in grammar |
| 10-12 | Shows flair for stylistic manipulation of TL items as if text were written in TL originally except where the language is placed under severe pressure of comprehension; maintains advanced proficiency in grammar; some grammatical problems but with no influence on message |
| 7-9 | Tends to have awkward grammatical usage in TL and literality of rendering though but not impeding sense in a significant manner; some attempts to reflect stylistic features of the original; some grammatical problems are apparent and have negative effects on communication |
| 4-6 | Clumsy TL; often nonsensical grammatical usages in TL; unnatural sounding; little attempt to reflect stylistic features of the original; there is evidence of clear difficulties in following style; grammatical review of some areas is clearly needed |
| 1-3 | Little sense of style which often makes poor sense in TL; knowledge of grammar is inadequate; use of TL grammar is inadequate; severe grammatical problems interfere greatly with message |
| **Shifts, omissions, additions and inventing equivalents (10%)** | |
| 9-10 | Correct use of relative clauses, verb forms; use of parallel structure; creative inventions and skillful solutions to equivalents; no fragment or run-on sentence |
| 7-8 | Almost all shifts appear with partial trespass, attempts variety; some inventions for not available equivalents in TL; no fragment or run-on sentence |
| 5-6 | Some shifts but not consistency; awkward and odd structure; only few run-on sentences or fragments present |
| 3-4 | Lacks variety of structure due to not preserving necessary shifts except for few cases; little or no evidence of invention in equivalents |
| 1-2 | Unintelligible sentence structure due to completely ignoring necessary shifts; no skillful handling of equivalents; no trace of invention |

Taken from Zakiyan, Morada and Naghibi (2012)

SOURCE LANGUAGE TEXT

## SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING

People often ask which the most difficult language to learn is, and it is not easy to answer because there are many factors to take into consideration. In a first language the differences are unimportant as people learn their mother tongue naturally, so the question of how hard a language is to learn is only relevant when learning a second language.

Some people seem to learn languages readily, while others find it very difficult. Teachers and the circumstances in which the language is learned also play an important role, as well as each learner's motivation for learning. If people learn a language because they need to use it professionally, they often learn it faster than people studying a language that has no direct use in their day to day life.

Different cultures and individuals from those cultures will find different languages more difficult. In the case of Hungarian for British learners, it is not a question of the writing system, which uses a similar alphabet, but the grammatical complexity, though native speakers of related languages may find it easier, while struggling with languages that the British find relatively easy.

No language is easy to learn well, though languages which are related to our first language are easier. Learning a completely different writing system is a huge challenge, but that does not necessarily make a language more difficult than another. In the end, it is impossible to say that there is one language that is the most difficult language in the world.