**Severity Differences across Proficiency Levels among Peer-assessors**

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**Abstract**

Over the past few years, peer-assessment, as an alternative assessment procedure, has drawn the attention of many researchers. In the present study, it is attempted to find out what kinds of language components peer-assessors attend to when rating their peers' essays. For the purposes of the present study, Fifty-eight student raters at Imam Khomeini International University in Qazvin rated five essays, using an analytic rating scale. Peer-assessors were asked to rate five essays of their peers based on the IELTS scale, which is a 9-band scale, including four criteria to evaluate IELTS essays. The criteria include task achievement, coherence and cohesion, lexical resource, and grammatical range and accuracy. Moreover, in this study researchers used content to stand for task achievement, organization for coherence and cohesion, vocabulary for lexical resource, and grammar for grammatical range and accuracy. Results indicated that Peer-assessors attended to Task Achievement more than they did to the other criteria. Cohesion and Coherence was the next most attended criterion. Lexical Range was the third most attended criterion for peer-assessors. Grammatical Range and Accuracy was the least attended criterion. The findings may carry implications for language teachers and curriculum developers.

*Key words: criteria, peer- assessment.*