Research Article

Investigating the applicability of Dynamic Assessment in Iran: From EFL teachers' perspectives

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Abstract

The present research intended to study the viewpoints of EFL teachers on the applicability of dynamic assessment. Two sub objectives were also to study the view points of male and female teachers as well as teachers with different levels of education on dynamic assessment. The participants included 100 EFL teachers and university instructors from 7 English language institutes, in Shiraz, and two universities in Fars Province, Iran. The participants were selected through availability sampling. A self-made questionnaire on dynamic assessment was used to collect the data required to undertake the study. The design used in the present study was survey method. To analyze the data, both descriptive (in the form of frequency counts, tables and figures) and inferential statistics (T-Test, factor analysis and ANOVA) were used. Based on the analyses undertaken, the following results were obtained: 1) EFL teachers from Shiraz English language institutes held a positive attitude towards the applicability of dynamic assessment. 2) Male and female EFL teachers from Shiraz English language institutes held similar and positive attitudes regarding the applicability of dynamic assessment. 3) Teachers with different levels of education held similar and positive attitudes regarding the applicability of dynamic assessment.

Key words: Assessment, Dynamic Assessment, Zone of Proximal Development, Interventionist Dynamic Assessment, Interactionist Dynamic Assessment.

Résumé

La présente étude visait à étudier les points de vue des enseignants d'anglais, langue seconde (ALS) sur l'applicabilité de l'évaluation dynamique. Deux objectifs secondaires ont été formulés; lesquels visaient à comparer les points de vue des enseignants hommes et femmes ainsi que ceux des enseignants de niveaux d'éducation différents sur l'évaluation dynamique. Les répondants étaient constitués de 100 enseignants d'ALS, d'instructeurs d'université de 7 instituts de langue anglaise à Shiraz et de deux universités de la province de Fars en Iran. Les participants ont été choisis selon la méthode d'échantillonnage de commodité. Nous avons eu recours à un questionnaire «fait maison» portant sur l'évaluation dynamique pour collecter les données nécessaires à la réalisation de cette étude. La méthode utilisée dans la présente étude c'est le sondage. Pour analyser les données, nous avons eu recours à la fois aux statistiques descriptives (sous forme de fréquence, tableaux et figures) et inférentielles (T-test et analyse de la variance). Sur la base des analyses effectuées, les résultats suivants ont été obtenus: 1) Les enseignants d'ALS des instituts de langue anglaise de Shiraz ont eu une attitude positive vis-à-vis de l'applicabilité de l'évaluation dynamique. 2) Les enseignants hommes et femmes d'ALS des instituts de langue anglaise de Shiraz ont eu des attitudes similaires en ce qui concerne l'applicabilité de l'évaluation dynamique. 3) Les enseignants de niveaux d'éducation différents ont eu la même attitude positive en ce qui concerne l'applicabilité de l'évaluation dynamique.

Mots clés: Évaluation, Évaluation dynamique, Zone proximale de développement, Évaluation dynamique interventionniste, Évaluation dynamique interactionniste.

I. INTRODUCTION

A glance at the history of teaching and testing reveals that the two have always had an undeniable relationship. However, whereas this relationship is sometimes immediately observable in cases such as the relationship between the audio-lingual teaching method and discrete point tests, at other times the impact is not so immediate (Sternberg &Grigrenko, 2002). A case in point is the newer communicative language teaching approaches, where the changes in teaching are more apparent than those in testing. In other words, testing lags behind teaching.

As cited in Birjandi (2012), testing as a universal feature of social life has attracted a great deal of attention by many language teachers and scholars. Throughout history, people have been put to the test to prove their capabilities or to establish their credentials. According to McNamara (2000), language tests play a powerful role in many people's lives, acting as gateways at important transitional moments in education, in employment, and in moving from one country to another. Since language tests are devices for the institutional control of individuals, it is clearly important that they should be understood, and subjected to scrutiny. Therefore, an understanding of language testing is relevant both for those actually involved in creating language tests, and also more generally for those involved in using tests or the information they provide, in practical and research contexts (McNamara, 2000).

Conventional static language tests dominated the field of language testing for many years. The central purpose of such tests was to determine whether some pre-determined achievement level had been reached. Traditional static assessment was limited because it did not directly aim to stimulate learners into becoming independent knowledge constructors and problem solvers. Also, language tests have undergone certain changes based on the scientific shifts dominant in the field. As Weir (1993) states language tests from the distant past to the present are important historical documents. They can help inform us about attitudes to language, language testing and language teaching when little alternative evidence of what went on in the bygone language classroom remains.

This line of different language testing can be categorized as follows:

A. Traditional Essay Translation Approach (1930s): This approach was commonly referred to as the pre-scientific stage of language testing. During this period of language testing, no specific skill or expertise in testing was required.

B. Structuralist Approach (Discrete-point) (1960s): According to Baker (1989), the roots of this approach can be traced back to the traditions of Psychometric Testing and Structural Linguistics. The psychometric tradition in psychology provided the tools for producing and developing tests which were mostly of closed type.

C. The Integrative Approach (1970s): Spolsky (1978) called the third stage the integrative-sociolinguistic stage, and it became prominent during the seventies. The decade of the seventies saw a more intense use of statistics to examine tests. In that sense, the 1970s was notably more scientific (psychometric) than the 1960s.

D. Functional-communicative Approach (1980s): Canale and Swain (1980) can be considered as the originators of this approach to language testing. They proposed a tripartite theory of communicative competence consisting of grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, and strategic competence.

For nearly half a century, various forms of language tests with different aims dominated the

field of language testing and teaching. Most of such tests consisted of large-scale tests with strong emphasis on statistical analysis. Tests' scores were considered as the only true indicator of testees' performances without any attention to the process of learning and teaching. Assessment developed historically for the purposes of selection and certification — particularly, selection for further educational opportunities beyond the minimum state provision and for employment (Torrance, 1995). The pressing need to find a mechanism of selection that would be socially acceptable and would identify the best candidates led to a premium being put on assessment techniques that appeared to be fair and objective, and had high levels of reliability (Broadfoot, 1995).

As mentioned through the above lines, for a couple of years, traditional forms of assessment were dominant in the field of language testing. According to Garb (2008, cited in Xiaoxiao & Yan, 2010) traditional summative assessment attempts to summarize students' learning at some point in time, say the end of a course, but cannot provide the immediate, contextualized feedback useful for helping teacher and students during the learning process. He describes DA as a way of assessing the true potential of children that extends the interactive nature of leaning to the process of assessment. Conventional static language tests dominated the field of language testing for many years. The central purpose of such tests was to determine whether some pre-determined achievement level had been reached. Traditional static assessment was limited because it did not directly aim to stimulate learners into becoming independent knowledge constructors and problem solvers.

Despite many 'reforms' which have been attempted, only simple modifications have been made to the existing language tests. Accordingly, Pena and Gillam (2000) claim that the room for the development of entirely new models of

assessment is still open. Yet, Sternberg and Grigrenko (2002) believe that Dynamic Assessment (DA) is good enough to bridge this gap because it, unlike the other approaches in testing, helps the assessor gain a richer and more valid view of learner's abilities, even those that are still developing. Unlike traditional psychometric approaches to assessment, DA capitalized on instruction during the assessment itself – it tapped into the pedagogical function of assessment in providing opportunities for learning and development to occur.

DA posited that learners' potential is a reliable measure for predicting learners' possible improvement in future, that is, learners' responsiveness to instruction was seen as a measure of learners' potential (ZPD). DA is recommended as a valid and useful assessment approach which could serve maximized instruction across age groups (Banks & Neisworth, 1995). When working with diverse populations, practitioners can utilize DA, which focuses on the learning process and utilizes meditational approaches that are more closely related to learning process in school and other life contexts (Haywood & Lidz, 2007). This alternative assessment provides a solution to the traditional problems of cultural insensitivity inherent in normed tests, and is used to describe psycho-educational assessment procedures (not specific tests or instruments) characterized by a sequence of testing, including pretesting, teaching, and post-testing (Banks & Neisworth, 1995). As cited in Birjandi (2012, p. ?), "We can affirm that the paradigm of DA is useful not only in the field of general cognitive performance but also in such curricular domain as EFL learning. At the same time one should be aware of those characteristic features of the DA procedure that impose certain limitations on the generalizability of the results. Any DA that includes an element of intervention depends on the quality of mediation provided by the assessor. In this respect

DA is closer to a situation of instruction rather than examination".

In short, while traditional classroom instructions were characterized by rigidly closed syllabi, the learning rout in most DAs is not sequential and invariant, and its scope and content is determined in an unanticipated, yet purposeful, fashion (Strenberg & Grigorenko, 2002). It means that both the instructors and learners get involved in instructional activities and cooperate in diagnosing and solving problems associated with each individual learner on the way toward the learners' development. Also, traditional static assessments are different from their dynamic counterparts in that the former concentrate on assessing a developed state; whereas, the latter focus on the assessment of developing process. DA, therefore, "examines the processes as well as its products" (Strenberg & Grigorenko, 2002, p. 29).

For decades, teaching English in Iran has been dominated by a teacher-centered, examination-oriented, grammar-based method (Zohrabi, Torabi, & Baybourdiani, 2012; Molavi Vardanjani, 2013). According to Abbasi (2015) teachers explain grammar rules in detail, and students are busy taking notes and have few opportunities for meaningful practice. Memorization and rote learning are used as basic acquisition techniques. Another problem is that a plenty of teachers feel that teaching through a test is an inappropriate and useless job while some teachers believe that teaching through testing can be completely communicative and enjoyable for learners even if achieving this can sometimes be quite demanding of our creativity as teachers.

Bachman (1990) has defined the effect of testing on teaching and learning as backwash, and believes that it can be harmful or beneficial. If the content of the test and testing techniques are inconsistent with the objectives of the course, the test may cause harmful backwash. The basis of traditional testing methods such as the translation method was considered subjective and the accuracy and fairness of such evaluations were considered at best questionable. On the other hand, in traditional assessment methods the relationship between examiner and the examinee is neutral and disinterested while in DA the examiner is interested in the examinees' development and assessment is performed in a very helpful atmosphere. The most distinguishing feature which differentiates the traditional assessment methods and DA is the process of providing feedback. In the traditional methods there was usually no specific plan for giving feedback during the process of assessment meanwhile in DA the process of assessment is mediated. Limited number of studies on this topic implies that more studies are needed in the field of language learning in order to better understand the effects of DA on language learning, and in order to provide more guidance to language teachers who wish to use DA in their language classrooms.

As for Iranian EFL classroom, the trend of critical thinking and giving teachers a voice in questioning the current methods of assessment and teaching is gradually gathering momentum, but compared to the global tempo, in Iranian EFL contexts, it is relatively restrained and slow. In fact, EFL teachers in Iran cannot cause a radical change in the existing tradition of static testing, dominant in educational settings. Moreover, there is no tendency in educational settings to keep up with the pace of the global paradigm shift in ELT, and replace the present system with DA or any other alternative assessment tools (Eshagi Sardrood, 2011).

Since a DA approach to language teaching and assessment is a newly established movement in Iran (It is only recently being used, in a limited manner, in combination with other assessment models), it is inevitable to provide rationales for its legitimacy in pedagogical contexts. To this

end, the present paper sought to study the viewpoints of Iranian EFL teachers on the applicability of this new testing model in the Iranian context.

Purpose of the Study

Although this field of research has attracted abundant attention on the part of researchers all over the globe, the present study intends to investigate the applicability of DA in Iran: From EFL teachers' perspectives. Based on this broad objective, the following research questions were formulated:

1. Do EFL teachers from Shiraz English language institutes hold a positive attitude towards the applicability of dynamic assessment?

2. Do male and female EFL teachers from Shiraz English language institutes hold significantly different attitudes regarding the applicability of dynamic assessment?

3. Do teachers with different levels of education hold significantly different attitudes regarding the applicability of dynamic assessment?

Accordingly, the following hypotheses were also tested:

H1. EFL teachers from Shiraz English language institutes do not hold a positive attitude towards the applicability of dynamic assessment.

H2. Male and female EFL teachers from Shiraz English language institutes do not hold significantly different attitudes regarding the applicability of dynamic assessment.

H3. Teachers with different levels of education do not hold significantly different attitudes regarding the applicability of dynamic assessment.

II. METHODOLOGY

Participants of the Study

The participants in this study included 100 EFL teachers from 7 English language institutesin Shiraz, south of Iran and two universities – Shiraz Azad University and Science and Research University, Fars Province. Both university instructors and language teachers (from language institutes) were used. The participants were selected through availability sampling. Both males and females were included in the study. Some demographic information including level of education (B.A., M.A., Ph.D.), gender, etc. were also included in the questionnaire.

Instruments of the Study

A self-made questionnaire on DA was used to collect the data required to undertake the present study. Having obtained a good command of the concept of DA, the researchers started turning the concepts into questions. In all, 42 questions were extracted each tapping one aspect or major issue in DA. The list was then shown to the first research aide of the study, expert with a Ph.D. degree in TEFL, who reviewed the whole list and made major comments on the form of each item. The questionnaire was then revised based on the comments made. The number of items was also reduced per the request of this expert since some items were found to be redundant. Further, some items were totally discarded and replaced by new items. This reduced the number of items on the questionnaire to 24. The same expert rechecked the revised questionnaire. Having received the approval of this expert, the questionnaire was shown to the second expert for his comments. At this stage, some minor revisions were made in the questionnaire. Having undertaken the test of reliability, items 2, 13 and 19 were eliminated from the questionnaire. Hence, this reduced the number of items to 21. These 21 questions were considered to be final and hence were used in the main part of the study.

The questionnaire had two parts. On top, some demographic information was included to be filled in by the participants. Then, there came the 21 questions on DA (c.f. the Appendix for the whole content of the DA questionnaire).

Analysis of Reliability and Validity
For the sake of validity, the researchers used the help of two experts, each with a Ph.D. degree in TEFL, to prepare the self-made questionnaire. The experts checked the whole content of the questionnaire and commented on it. Both experts had a good command of DA and were fully acquainted with it and its concepts. The experts suggested that some items be deleted and some other be revised. Some terms in the questionnaire were also recommended to be replaced by their synonyms since they were highly technical terms and were hence thought to be difficult for the teachers to understand.

To check the reliability of the questionnaire, it was piloted on 30 EFL teachers to check the suitability of the questionnaire for the main study. The Cronbach's alpha obtained for the questionnaire was .465 which was relatively low. A close inspection of the items revealed that some items were responsible for reducing the Cronbach's alpha substantially. They were items 2, 13 and 19. Having deleted these three items, the Cronbach's alpha increased to .60 which was acceptable. This reduced the items on the questionnaire from 24 to 21.

Scoring
The questionnaire was set based on a 5-point Likert scale. "The Likert scale is usually used when a special kind of survey question uses a set of ordered responses. Usually, the responses are arranged on a scale of 1 to 5" (Yamini & Rahimi, 2007, pp. 13-14). Question 19 was the opposite of question 2. Hence, to avoid rating fallacy, question 19 was rated in a reverse order.

Data Analysis Procedure
To analyze the data, both descriptive and inferential statistics were drawn on. First, for each of the variables of the study namely attitude of EFL teachers in males and females as well as different educational level groups, descriptive statistics including mean, standard deviation, minimum and maximum were presented. Then, for each variable a histogram including a normal curve was provided. Later, to test the hypotheses of the study use was also made of t-test and ANOVA test. In order to use these tests, the data needed to be normally distributed. Hence, prior to dealing with the hypotheses of the study, normality of the variables' distribution was checked using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test.

III. RESULTS
In Table 1, descriptive statistics for variables, (attitude of EFL teachers) in males and females as well as different educational level groups have been summarized. The results, in this table, indicated that the mean score obtained for the attitude of the EFL teachers was 74.68 with a standard deviation of 6.724. The whole scores, of course, ranged between 60 and 94. The Skewness in all groups was in the accepted range (between -1 and 1).

Table 1. Statistics for attitudes of EFL teachers in different groups

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Kurtosis	Skewness	Minimum	Maximum
Male	49	75.04	7.003	0.025	0.262	60	92
Female	51	74.33	6.495	0.432	0.212	61	94
BA	39	76.15	6.888	0.201	0.110	63	92
MA	40	73.98	6.612	1.113	0.407	60	94
PhD	21	73.29	6.412	-1.176	0.135	65	84
Total	100	74.68	6.724	0.159	0.247	60	94

To test the hypotheses, use was made of t-test and ANOVA. The precondition for the application of such tests is that the data should be normally distributed. Thus, before getting to the hypotheses of the study, normality of the variables distribution was checked by the Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test (Table 2).

Table 2. Kolmogorov-Smirnov test of normality for attitude of EFL teachers.

Group	Z	Sig. (p)
Male	0.498	0.965
Female	0.933	0.349
BA	0.825	0.504
MA	0.627	0.827
PhD	0.641	0.805

The above table shows the results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test. Since p –values were greater than 0.05 (p>0.05) for all the groups (male, female, BA, MA, and PhD), the statistics were not significant which means that the distributions were all normal. In the following sections, each research question will be analyzed separately.

Analysis of Research Question 1

Q1: Do EFL teachers from Shiraz English language institutes hold a positive attitude towards the applicability of dynamic assessment?

Hypethesis1: EFL teachers from Shiraz English language institutes do not hold a positive attitude towards the applicability of dynamic assessment.

Table 3. The one-sample t-test for the overall effect

Statistics / Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Test value = 60			
					Mean Difference	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Attitude	100	74.68	6.724	0.672	14.680	21.833	99	0.001

As shown in Table 3, the t-test was significant at the level of 0.01 (t=21.833, df=99, p=0.001<0.01). Thus, the difference between the attitude mean score and the expected value (60) was significant. In other words, the attitude of EFL teachers from Shiraz English language institutes towards the applicability of DA was significantly positive. Hence, the first hypothesis of the study, "EFL teachers from Shiraz English language institutes do not hold a positive attitude towards the applicability of dynamic assessment." was refuted.

Analysis of Research Question 2

Q2: Do male and female EFL teachers from Shiraz English language institutes hold significantly different attitudes regarding the applicability of dynamic assessment?

Hypethesis2: Male and female EFL teachers from Shiraz English language institutes do not hold significantly different attitudes regarding the applicability of dynamic assessment.

Table 4. The independent sample t-test for comparison of the attitudes towards DA between males and females.

Statistics / Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Mean Difference	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Male	49	75.04	7.003	1.000	0.707	0.524	98	0.601
Female	51	74.33	6.495	0.909				

The result of the independent sample t-test, as presented in Table 4, showed that there was no significant difference between the two gender groups (p=0.601>0.05). This simply means that male and female EFL teachers' attitudes towards the applicability of DA were the same. Thus, the second research hypothesis of the study, "*Male and female EFL teachers from Shiraz English language institutes do not hold significantly different attitudes regarding the applicability of dynamic assessment.*" was accepted.

Analysis of Research Question 3

Q3: Do teachers with different levels of education hold significantly different attitudes regarding the applicability of dynamic assessment?

Hypethesis3: Teachers with different levels of education do not hold significantly different attitudes regarding the applicability of dynamic assessment.

Table 5. The ANOVA test for comparison of attitudes among participants from different education levels.

Source / Statistics	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	145.422	2	72.711	1.629	0.201
Within Groups	4330.338	97	44.643		
Total	4475.760	99			

The results of ANOVA test in the above table indicated that the attitude was not significantly different among different educational levels (p=0.201>0.05). Thus, teachers with different levels of education did not hold significantly different attitudes regarding the applicability of DA, so the third research hypothesis of the study, "*Teachers with different levels of education do not hold significantly different attitudes regarding the applicability of dynamic assessment.*" was accepted.

IV. DISCUSSION

In this section, each research question will be restated and all the relevant discussions pertaining to that research question will be provided under it. For ease of discussion, each research question will be discussed separately:

For the first research question of the study, "*Do EFL teachers from Shiraz English language institutes hold a positive attitude towards the applicability of dynamic assessment?*" the one-sample t-test (t=21.833, df=99, p=0.001<0.01) revealed that the difference between the mean attitude score and the expected value (60) was statistically significant. In other words, the attitude of EFL teachers from Shiraz English language institutes towards the applicability of DA was significantly positive. This finding was in line with the results reported by Azarizad (2013). She reported that DA as a performance based test, along with the teacher's mediation during the testing, can reduce the learners' anxiety, create a positive attitude toward assessment and learning and provide an authentic context to testing as far as 'communicative era' is considered.

Regarding the second research question of the study, *"Do Male and female EFL teachers from Shiraz English language institutes hold significantly different attitudes regarding the applicability of dynamic assessment?"* the result of the independent t-test showed that there was no significant difference between the two gender groups (t=0.524, df=98, p=0.601>0.05). This indicated that male and female EFL teachers' attitudes towards the applicability of DA were statistically the same. Dordinejad and Porghoveh (2014) also reported a similar finding in their study entitled "The Relationship between EFL teachers' gender and their success as perceived by learners". They asserted that factors other than such static variables as gender or age could have a role in this regard. Similarly, Antecol, Eren and Ozbeklik (2012) in their study entitled "The effect of teacher gender on student achievement in primary school: Evidence from a randomized experiment" did not find any effect of having a female teacher on male students' test scores (math or reading) or female students' reading test scores. Finally, in another research accomplished by Coenen and Van Klaveren (2012) entitled "Better test scores with a same-gender teacher?" it was found that children's math performance was not influenced by the gender of their teacher.

Lastly, the third research question of the study was, *"Do teachers with different levels of education hold significantly different attitudes regarding the applicability of dynamic assessment?"* The results of ANOVA test indicated that the attitude was not significantly different among the three education levels (p=0.201>0.05). Thus, teachers with different levels of education did not hold significantly different attitudes regarding the applicability of DA. This finding is supported by the findings reported by Saw (2009) in his article "Evaluating the effect of teacher degree level on student achievement in Taiwan". The results of his study suggested that a teacher's M.A. degree would not necessarily present a signal of teacher quality.

Similarly, Goldhaber (2007), Goldhaber and Brewer (1997), and Nye et al. (2004) found that teacher's higher academic degree was not associated with increased student achievement.

According to Birjandi (2012) the field of DA as a whole still lacks a substantial body of empirical studies. What has been presented so far is a body of literature trying to elucidate the theoretical foundations and concepts of DA; however, not many practical investigations have been done in the area of language teaching and testing. Adequate training and support would seem to be essential if educational psychologists are to have a real choice of approaches to assessment and, in particular, if DA is to be critically evaluated. In fact, as a newly emergent instruction pedagogy grown up from a well-developed set of theories, DA is not yet widely practiced and is still virtually unknown to many psychologists and educators. According to Thorne (2005, p. 399), DA – a procedure that unites the goals of better understanding a learners' potential through structured sets of interactions and fostering development through those interactions – is just emergent into social-cultural-based L2 language research (Cited in Xiaoxiao & Yan, 2010). Eshagi Sardrood (2011) posits that in most Iranian EFL classrooms the number of students exceeds the standards, and teachers still stick to the traditional way of assessing learners by one-shot multiple-choice or, essay-like exams; in fact, teachers are not trained enough to practice DA in this particular EFL context. Second, according to the parameter of practicality, a method should be applicable in real situation; otherwise, the practice-theory relationship cannot be approached. This parameter argues against the existing dichotomous distinction, perceived in applied linguistics, in which the teacher is spoon-fed with whatever knowledge and theory theorist produces (Kumaravadivelu, 2003). Regarding the role of teachers in Iranian EFL classrooms, often the dominant pluralistic society of Iran influences the

educational contexts of EFL, which leads to ignoring teachers' sense of plausibility (Prabhu, 1990) and dictating some pre-determined set of materials and methods to be implemented in classrooms. However, this restricted view of methodology is limited mostly to school classrooms; in other language institutes, teachers have more liberty of deciding on the methodology and materials. Third, on the basis of the principle of possibility, authors encourage critical thinking of teachers and archive of students to question the status that keeps them restrained on what to teach, how to teach, etc. This parameter, moreover, highlights the importance of the experience they bring to the classroom; their values and background including culture, education, language, race, and other variables, directly or indirectly, influence the content and character of classroom input and interaction (Benesch, 2001, cited in Kumaravadivelu, 2006). All such comments imply that studies like the present paper are highly needed in the Iranian context and for the EFL classes.

V. **PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY**

With the burgeoning emphasis leveled at the role of interaction and socialization in the construction and socialization in the construction of reality and meaning and the ever-increasing wave of discouraging the collectivist approaches to the interpretation and construction of meaning and reality, it is deemed necessary to address the area of development which has been a direct outcome of such critical viewpoint and perspectives: hence, the present study's focus on DA. This focus, it is hoped, may make several contributions to the field of second language teaching. First, it not only verifies the efficiency of DA in real practice but it makes an attempt to consolidate the theoretical bases of the approach and provide evidence both for its dependability

and credibility. Second, the findings can be insightful for teachers and practitioners as well as the researchers and scholars undertaking research in second language pedagogy. Language schools and universities, particularly, may enjoy the findings of the present study in designing syllabi and evaluation. Educators can benefit from the results in that they can adapt them to their own practices in classrooms, their own lesson plans and even the syllabi and course examinations.

VI. **LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

Research is vast in nature and no single piece of research could ever be considered complete. It is exactly for the same reason that researchers continuously undertake research on even a single topic. The present thesis is not an exception. Accordingly, in the present paper, the researchers faced a number of limitations as follows: Due to time limitation only two independent variables namely gender and level of education were included in the study; availability sampling was used to select the participants in this study, and only one instrument, a self-made questionnaire, was used to collect the data from the participants. The findings in this research could instigate other researchers to commence other studies. For example, other researchers can include other variables like social class, types of motivation, the teachers' mother tongue, etc. Or other researchers may use other tools like semi structured interviews or even include sort of treatment in their study. Yet, other researchers may wish to make a comparative study between EFL and ESL teachers.

Appendix: Applicability of Dynamic Assessment Questionnaire

> **Dear respondent:** This questionnaire is only for research purpose and your information will be kept confidential. Thank you so much in advance for your cooperation.

Position/ Job: Teacher

Years of teaching experience: ------------------ year(s).

Gender: Male   Female

Degree level: BA   MA   PHD

Please read each statement and indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statement. Put an X in the appropriate box to indicate your opinion.	Strongly	Agree	Undecide	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1. Language teaching and assessment should be integrated.					
2. Gradual assessment during the course is more beneficial than final exams at the end of class.					
3. Language tests should be designed and developed before the intervention class.					
4. Contextualized language test can better assess learners' abilities.					
5. In language assessment the focus should be on process rather than on product.					
6. Reliability and validity are the most important features of language assessment.					
7. In language assessment the examiner should be observer rather than participant.					
8. In language assessment the focus should be onretrospective approach.					
9. In language assessment the focus should be on high transfer test (authentic task).					
10. Contextualization is not a necessary characteristic for language test.					
11. In language assessment the examinee should be receives mediation.					
12. Sentence-level language test can better assess learners' ability.					
13. In language assessment some abilities that are important for learning (in particular) are not assessed by normative, standardized intelligence tests.					
14. In language assessment observing new learning is more useful than cataloguing (presumed) products of old learning.					
15. In language assessment all students typically function less than their intellectual capacity.					
16. In language assessment the focus should be on perception rather than memorization.					
17. In language assessment the focus should be on thinking and problem solving.					
18. In language assessment contextualized feedback is useful for helping teacher and students during the learning process.					
19. Final exams at the end of class are more beneficial than Gradual assessment during the course.					
20. In language assessment the future development is constructed.					
21. Teaching and testing can not be separated in language test.					
22. In language assessment, authenticity is more important than reliability and validity.					
23. In language assessment the focus should be on prospective approach.					

Note: The definitions below have been provided to ease the participants' understanding of each single item on the questionnaire.

1. Authenticity:

Written or spoken texts which a first language speaker might read or listen to. They may be taken from newspapers, radio etc. The language in the texts is not adapted or made easier for learners or the language learning process.

2. Gradual assessment:

Evaluating students in the process of "testing" their competencies and skills with the goal of helping them to continue that growth process. The key to such formation is the delivery (by the teacher) and internalization (by the students) of appropriate feedback on performance, with an eye toward the future continuation (or formation of learning).

3. High transfer test (Authentic task or real world task):

A task which involves learners in using language in a way that replicates its use in the real' world' outside the language classroom. Filling in blanks, changing verbs from the simple past to the simple present and completing substitution tables are, therefore, not authentic tasks. Examples of authentic tasks would be answering a letter addressed to the learner, arguing a particular point of view and comparing various holiday brochures in order to decide where to go for a holiday.

4. Mediation:

The difficult concept of mediation is generally regarded as the centre piece of Vygotsky's theory of learning. In its most literal sense, mediation is the use of a tool to accomplish some action.

5. Normative test:

It means that a student's performance is being compared to the performance of other students who took the same test. Although normative tests allow a student to know how he/she performed in relation to other students tested, normative tests can promote a focus on how well the student performed against the sample rather than how well the student did or did not know the material being assessed.

6. Prospective evaluation:

Prospective evaluation defines a policy change project's short- and long-term goals up front and then emphasizes evaluating advocates' progress toward those goals throughout the life of the project. By more deeply integrating evaluation with program implementation, prospective evaluation provides funders with indicators of success long before policy change can be achieved. It also collects insights that advocates can use to refine strategies and document impact to funders and constituents.

7. Retrospective approach:

It takes into account the fact that learning is likely to be more efficient if the learners have an opportunity to talk about what they are learning. It will facilitate learning at a later stage when the learner is ready (in some way that is not yet understood) to internalize the new information about the language. The retrospective approach also has the advantage that, if the lesson is conducted in English, it encourages the learners to communicate fairly naturally about a subject that is important to what they are doing: the language itself.

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