Assessing the Pedagogical Impact of Dynamic Assessment on Students' Writing Achievement

Matahari; Erna Andriyanti

English Education Department, Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Abstract

Dynamic assessment is crucial in writing instruction as it combines assessment with teacher support to ascertain students' learning capacity. Dynamic assessment prioritises the writing process above the final output, enabling teachers to assist students in developing ideas, text organisation, and language usage in accordance with their capabilities. This study aimed to examine the efficacy of dynamic assessment on students' ability to write and to investigate the perceptions of both teachers and students over its implementation in the classroom. This study employed a mixed method approach, using both quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative data were collected through a quasi-experimental design involving pre- and post-tests. Participants in this study consisted of 32 students from Class VIII A and 32 students from Class VIII B at public junior high school in Tellu Siattinge. The qualitative data were obtained through interviews, with the English teacher and five students from the experimental class to support and deepen the interpretation of the quantitative findings. The findings revealed a statistically significant disparity between the control and experimental groups. The statistical analysis revealed a significant value Sig. (2-tailed) of 0.018, which is below the significance threshold of 0.05. The control group demonstrated enhancement, with the mean score rising from 59.49 (SD = 5.65) on the pretest to 71.28 (SD = 6.23) on the post-test. The experimental group exhibited significant enhancement, with the mean score rising from 57.49 (SD = 8.12) on the pre-test to 75.03 (SD = 6.14) on the post-test. Furthermore, interviews with teacher and students indicated that dynamic assessment effectively identified students' learning needs and enabled the provision of relevant feedback through mediation throughout the learning process. Mediation in dynamic assessment fosters enhanced interactive and collaborative learning.

Keywords: *Dynamic Assessment; Mediation; Scaffolding; Writing Proficiency; Zone of Proximal Development*

Introduction

Assessment is a fundamental aspect in education, particularly language learning, as it allows teachers to track students' progress and adjust instruction (Winna & Sabarun, 2023). Nonetheless, conventional approaches like Static Assessment (SA), which aim to assess learners' ultimate performance without integrating instructional support, tend to be insufficient in facilitating long-term learning

development. SA tends to evaluate products rather than processes with minimal feedback and no encouragement towards continuous improvement of complex skills like writing (Xian, 2020).

Dynamic Assessment (DA) has become an acceptable way to get around these restrictions. With a focus on mediation, scaffolding, and the developmental potential of students. Dynamic Assessment (DA) is a process-integrated approach to assessment that emphasizes both the evaluation of students' current abilities and the support of their developmental potential through mediated instruction (Poehner, 2008). Rooted in Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory, particularly the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), DA aims to reveal not only what learners can do independently but also what they can achieve with assistance (Vygotskij & Cole, 1981; Afshari et al., 2020). Mediation, whether structured or spontaneous, forms the core of DA and includes feedback, prompting, modeling, and questioning to scaffold learners toward autonomous performance (Daneshfar & Moharami, 2018; Lantolf, 2011). In contrast to SA, DA actively promotes students' learning by offering advice and comments throughout the assessment process in addition to evaluating their present performance (Rashidi & Bahadori Nejad, 2018). By determining what students might achieve with help rather than just what they can do on their own, it fosters growth (Etemadi & Abbasian, 2022).

DA is thought to be particularly valuable in the EFL context, especially when it comes to writing instruction. Writing is a complex skill that includes organization, coherence, creativity, vocabulary, and grammar (Prastikawati et al., 2020; Dewi, 2024). However, a lack of confidence, poor grammar, a small vocabulary, and inadequate teaching support are the main reasons why many students find writing difficult (Smit, 1991; Kayaalp et al., 2022). According to research, by combining process-focused feedback with focused intervention, dynamic and mediated approaches can greatly improve students' writing proficiency (Lutfi et al., 2021; Estaji & Ameri, 2020).

Empirical research has proven that DA enhances the writing development of EFL students. According to research by Mauludin et al. (2021) and Rashidi & Nejad (2018), DA facilitates language use, organization, and idea generation through real-time mediation. Likewise, it has been shown that digital and hybrid DA models (e.g., Ebadi & Rahimi, 2019; Rad, 2021) can enhance descriptive writing performance. However, few studies have looked at how DA is used with secondary school students, especially when teaching descriptive texts, even though a lot of research supports it in adult or higher education settings.

This study examines the efficacy of dynamic assessment in raising junior high school students' writing achievement, with a particular focus on descriptive text composition, in line with Indonesia's *Kurikulum Merdeka*, which encourages autonomous and student-centered learning (Rahayu et al., 2022). The study also looks at how students and teacher feel about the use of DA. It is anticipated that the findings will provide insightful information about how process-based evaluation can improve EFL writing instruction and help students reach significant, introspective goals during learning.

Research Methods

The study utilized a mixed methods approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative data to deliver a more comprehensive understanding of the research objectives. The quantitative data were collected used a quasi-experimental design, involving two groups (experimental and control) that participated in a pretest-posttest procedure to examine the effectiveness of Dynamic Assessment (DA) in teaching descriptive writing. The quasi-experimental design allowed the researcher to investigate the impact of DA in a controlled setting without random group assignment (Creswell, 2012). The study was conducted at SMP Negeri 2 Tellu Siattinge in the Bone Regency during the 2024/2025 academic year, from January to March 2025. The research subjects were eighth-grade students. Both groups took tests on

the same theme, and assessments were conducted using a writing assessment rubric adapted from Brown (2013). Following the quantitative data, then the qualitative data, were collected through interviews with the teacher and five students from the experimental class to explore their perceptions of Dynamic Assessment implementation in writing instruction. The research instruments were validated to ensure content validity and intra-rater reliability.

Several statistical tests were conducted on the data using SPSS version 26. First, a normality test was conducted to determine if the results were normally distributed (a p-value greater than 0.05 indicates normal distribution). Next, a homogeneity test was performed to confirm that the variances were similar between groups (a significance value greater than 0.05 indicates homogeneous data). These two tests are important for determining the suitability of parametric tests. After the assumptions of normality and homogeneity were met, two types of hypothesis tests were conducted: The independent t-test was used to compare the post-test results of the experimental and control classes. The paired sample t-test was used to compare pre-test and post-test scores within each group. The decision criteria were based on the significance level (Sig., two-tailed). If Sig. <0.05, H_0 is rejected, indicating a significant difference in students' writing ability. Then, to enrich the quantitative findings, the qualitative data were obtained by watching classes, interview session to teachers and students, and looking at documents. It used Miles and Huberman's interactive model to examine at qualitative data. This included condensing the data, displaying it, and drawing conclusions

Results and Discussion

Results

The Effectiveness of Implementation of Dynamic Assessment

a. Data Descriptive

The control and experimental classes' differences in pretest and posttest scores were examined using descriptive statistics. In particular, the lowest and maximum scores prior to and following treatment were analyzed. Pretest results in the control group varied from 45.00 to 67.50. Post-test scores rose from 61.25 to 82.50 following traditional instruction. In contrast, the pretest scores in the experimental class that was given the Dynamic Assessment (DA) treatment ranged from 41.25 to 70.00. Post-test scores, which ranged from 62.50 to 87.50, dramatically improved following the intervention.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistic: Control and Experimental Classes

	Pretest Control	Post-test Control	Pretest Experimental	Post-test Experimental
Valid N (listwise)	32	32	32	32
Minimum	45.00	61.25	41.25	62.50
Maximum	67.50	82.50	70.00	87.50
Mean	59.49	71.28	57.46	75.03
Std. Deviation	5.65168	6.23372	8.12258	6. 14414

Table 2. Percentage of Control Class

Percentage of Control Class					
Classification of Scoring		Pre-Test (Frequency)	Percentage	Post-Test (Frequency)	Percentage
86-100	Excellent	0	0%	0	0%
71-85	Good	0	0%	15	46.9%
56-70	Fair	25	78.1%	17	53.1%
0-55	Poor	7	21.9%	0	0%
Total		**32**	**100%**	**32**	**100%**

Additional analysis of the distribution of control class scores revealed changes following treatment. At the pretest, 78.1% of students were in the fair category (scores of 56–70), and 21.9% were in the poor category (scores below 56). No students were in the good or excellent categories at this stage. After the post-test, there was an improvement in student achievement. 46.9% of students moved to the good category, while 53.1% remained in the adequate category. Interestingly, no students were in the poor category anymore. While none reached the excellent category, these results indicate progress despite the absence of dynamic assessment. This progress is likely due to regular learning and practice through conventional approaches.

Table 3. Percentage of Experimental Class Score

Percentage of Control Class					
Classification of Scoring		Pre-Test (Frequency)	Percentage	Post-Test (Frequency)	Percentage
86-100	Excellent	0	0%	3	9.4%
71-85	Good	0	0%	22	68.8%
56-70	Fair	21	65.6.1%	7	21.9%
0-55	Poor	11	34.4%	0	0%
Total		**32**	**32**	**100%**	**32**

Students' accomplishments in the experimental class both before and after the intervention are displayed in Table 3. The majority of students (65.6%) fell into the adequate category, while 34.4% fell into the poor category, according to the pretest results. Prior to the intervention, no student received a good or very good rating. The post-test results, however, revealed a notable shift. 9.4% of students advanced to the "very good" category, while 68.8% of students advanced to the "good" category. None fell into the poor category, while 21.9% stayed in the adequate category. This shift suggests that students' writing abilities are significantly improved by the use of dynamic assessment. The conclusion that this method successfully raises students' writing achievement is supported by the change in students' placement from lower to higher categories.

1. Hypothesis Analysis

This data analysis examines at hypothesis testing, homogeneity, and normality. The data's normality is assessed using the normality test. The homogeneity test looks at how similar group variances are. The hypothesis test assesses how well dynamic assessment affects students' writing proficiency.

Table 4. Test of Normality Shapiro Wilk

	Statistic	df	Sig.
Pretest Control Class	0.948	32	0.127
Post-test Control Class	0.937	32	0.062
Pretest Experimental Class	0.946	32	0.107
Post-test Experimental Class	0.968	32	0.449

The Shapiro-Wilk test showed that all pre-test and post-test scores in both groups were normally distributed (Sig. > 0.05), indicating the data met the assumption for parametric analysis.

Table 5. Test of Homogeneity

	Sig.
Based on Mean	0.123

Levene's test results (Sig. > 0.05) indicate that the data are homogeneous, meeting the assumption for conducting parametric tests such as independent and paired sample t-tests.

Table 6. The Result of the Independent Sample T-test in Post-test

Significance	Sig. (2-tailed)
0.005	0.018

The post-test results for the experimental and control classes are shown in Table 6. A significance value of 0.018 (Sig. 2-tailed), which is less than 0.05, was determined based on the results of the independent samples t-test. As a result, the alternative hypothesis (H_a) is accepted and the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected. This suggests that the two classes' post-test results differed statistically significantly. The experimental class, which employed the Dynamic Assessment approach, had an average post-test score of 75.03 with a standard deviation of 6.14, while the control class had an average score of 71.28 with a standard deviation of 5.65. These findings imply that the Dynamic Assessment method outperforms the traditional learning method in terms of enhancing students' writing abilities.

Table 7. Paired Sample T-test

	Sig. (2-tailed)
Control Pre-Control Post	0.000
Experiment Pre-Experiment Post	0.000

Table 7 indicates that both the control and experimental groups demonstrated a statistically significant enhancement in writing scores. The significance (2-tailed) value for both classes is 0.000, which is below the threshold of 0.05. Consequently, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis (Ha) is accepted for both groups. Although both groups exhibited an increase, the experimental group demonstrated a more substantial average rise compared to the control group. This indicates that the intervention, specifically the application of Dynamic Assessment, exerted a more pronounced effect on pupils in the experimental group.

2. Teacher and Students' Perception toward the Implementation of Dynamic Assessment

a. Teacher Perception

The teacher who was interviewed expressed a positive view of Dynamic Assessment (DA) in relation to the improvement of students' descriptive writing skills. She pointed out that DA helped students build phrases into coherent writings and provided them with clearer instructions. Given that students frequently needed help forming and articulating ideas, mediation was thought to be especially helpful for improving vocabulary and content. She emphasized how DA helped the others assist students with the revision process by offering comments that improved coherence and clarity. Additionally, she noticed that through contextual engagement, DA helped students activate their passive vocabulary. She realized that the DA process was time-consuming because each student's feedback had to be tailored to their needs. Although it required more instructional time, DA was thought to be more successful than traditional methods at fostering deep conceptual understanding. The teacher indicated that she would be open to using DA in subsequent classes, particularly as a hybrid approach combined with more conventional teaching techniques. She acknowledged that if teachers were given enough training and preparation, DA might be adopted more widely in the school

b. Students' Perception

In general, the students' responses to the DA-based writing lessons were positive. They said the tasks were interesting and familiar, like writing about people, animals, objects, or everyday life. Their difficulties were aided by DA, particularly in the areas of sentence structure and vocabulary selection. They valued the instructor's examples, criticism, and direction, which made writing simpler and more pleasurable. Students reported that DA fostered an inspiring and encouraging atmosphere that prompted them to actively participate and ask questions. Additionally, they acknowledged how well the method assisted them in editing and improving their work. Students felt that DA offered more structured and interactive support than earlier teaching methods. Students thought the approach made writing easier and more understandable, even though there were still certain difficulties, like vocabulary restrictions and group dynamics. The majority suggested utilizing DA in subsequent classes, emphasizing how it improved their writing independence, confidence, and comprehension.

Discussion

1. The Effectiveness of Dynamic Assessment in Writing Descriptive Text

As demonstrated in this research, students' writing proficiency in descriptive texts increased significantly when Dynamic Assessment (DA) was implemented. After receiving tailored feedback and mediation, students in the experimental group outperformed those in the control group on the post-test. The experimental group, for instance, outperformed the control group by increasing their scores from 41.25 to 62.50 (the lowest) and 70 to 87.50 (the highest). The main reason DA is effective effectively is that it combines instruction and assessment, giving students personalized, in-the-moment support. By offering scaffolding, guiding questions, and contextual prompts, DA places an emphasis on the learning process rather than outcomes, which is in line with Vygotsky's (1978) Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). Students were able to improve and edit their writing more thoroughly thanks to this method, particularly in areas like vocabulary, organization, and elaboration. Additionally, scaffolding and mediation were essential to students' development. Teachers helped students reflect, edit, and expand their writing by giving them ongoing, dialogic feedback that was tailored to their individual needs. These results support the claims made by Poehner (2008) and Lantolf & Poehner (2004) that DA promotes learner development beyond autonomous performance.

2. **Teacher and Students' Perception toward the Implementation of Dynamic Assessment**

The results from interviews with the teacher and students revealed a positive view of the implementation of Dynamic Assessment (DA) in teaching descriptive writing. DA was regarded as an effective method that enhanced students' capacity to structure and articulate their ideas while offering significant and personalized assistance throughout the writing process. The teacher observed that DA enhanced the creation of more cohesive texts by providing organized guidance, contextual feedback, and the stimulation of students' passive vocabulary. These practices connect with Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), highlighting the significance of social interaction and guided support in fostering cognitive development (Shabani et al., 2010; Lantolf & Poehner, 2011).

Both the teacher and students acknowledged DA as not merely an evaluation technique, but as a diagnostic and instructional instrument that facilitated the identification of specific learning requirements and offered scaffolding via modeling, guiding inquiries, and direct feedback. Students conveyed gratitude for the method, claiming that DA made writing assignments easier to understand and more acceptable. The interactive nature of the learning activities and the teacher's rapid support were specifically allocated with their increased confidence, motivation, and engagement during sessions. These results are consistent with studies by AlAdl (2023) and Chien (2024), which showed that DA improves writing skills and fosters positive students' perspectives. Nevertheless, there were issues. Both the teacher and the students agreed that DA takes time because it calls for constant communication and tailored feedback. Additionally, students struggle with group adaptation and terminology use. These problems can be resolved by incorporating technology-based support solutions (Babamoradi et al., 2018). Teacher and student support for DA in future writing instruction was strong in spite of these obstacles. They felt that DA produced more student-centered learning, active engagement, and deeper comprehension than traditional methods. These results show how effective DA is at teaching EFL writing, especially at the junior secondary level.

Conclusion and Suggestions

According to the study's findings, students' descriptive writing proficiency can be improved through the use of Dynamic Assessment (DA). By combining assessment and instruction, DA makes it possible to provide tailored feedback and focused assistance, which improves students' writing abilities more profoundly. In addition to encouraging active participation, confidence, and a deeper understanding of the writing process, this technique enhances writing final results. The results obtained suggest that in order to provide more specialised support, teachers should consider incorporating DA into writing lessons, especially for EFL students. In addition, both teacher and students had positive perceptions of the implementation of Dynamic Assessment, according to interviews. Teachers felt that it helped them identify students' individual needs, and students became more confident and motivated thanks to the direct guidance they received while writing. These findings were reinforced by observations showing increased active and collaborative interaction in the classroom, which aligns with the principles of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). However, successful implementation requires adequate training and preparation, particularly in organizing, mediation techniques and effectively managing time. More research is needed in the areas of applying DA to different text genres and educational levels and integrating it with digital tools that improve efficiency and flexibility.

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