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Evaluación dinámica de la escritura como proceso en la clase de inglés como lengua extranjera

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Trabajo de Fin de Máster

Dynamic Assessment in EFL Process Writing

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1. ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to provide the reader with a brief overview of the Dynamic Assessment (DA) theory and its most recent implementation in the Second Language and Foreign Language courses as a mediated assessment procedure. In opposition to Western pedagogy that traditionally opposes assessment and instruction, DA offers an alternative way of conceptualizing this relationship. DA integrates instruction and assessment as a unified activity instead. DA is rooted in L.S. Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory of cognitive development (1978), according to which human cognitive abilities can only be fully understood through studying the processes of their development. According to this theoretical framework, abilities are not fixed but flexible and malleable. Therefore, a form of measurement that takes these characteristics into account is needed. This study presents an educational intervention in the EFL class using a dynamic approach to writing process assessment.

1.1 Resumen

El presente estudio tiene como finalidad introducir al lector en la teoría de la Evaluación Dinámica (DA, por sus siglas en inglés) y presentarle sus más recientes implementaciones en los cursos de segundas lenguas y lenguas extranjeras como procedimiento de evaluación mediada. Al contrario de la pedagogía occidental que tradicionalmente enfrenta o separa la evaluación de la instrucción, DA integra la instrucción y la evaluación en una única actividad. DA tiene sus orígenes en la teoría sociocultural de desarrollo cognitivo de L. S. Vygotsky (1978), según la cual, las aptitudes cognitivas del ser humano solo pueden comprenderse si se estudian sus procesos de desarrollo. De acuerdo con este marco teórico, las aptitudes no son fijas, sino maleables y flexibles y por lo tanto es necesario servirse de un sistema de medición que tenga en cuenta estas características. Este estudio presenta una intervención educativa en la clase de inglés como lengua extranjera basada en una evaluación dinámica del proceso de escritura.

2. INTRODUCTION AND THEORETICAL JUSTIFICATION

Each year, billions of tests are given to children, adolescents, and adults in the world. Almost all these tests are what are called 'static tests'. The examiner presents items, either one at a time or all at once, and each examinee must answer to these items without feedback or intervention of any kind. Later, each examinee receives a report on a score or set of scores and typically, that is the only feedback received.

There is an alternative way of testing called 'dynamic test', founded on the work of Lev Vygotsky as a means of measuring the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) and on Reuven Feuerstein attempt to measure the Mediated Learning Experience (MLE). This form of testing shares the same beginning from the static testing. However, the final score is not based just on the response to these items. In dynamic testing, the score is based on a procedure that considers the results of an intervention. The motivation for this intervention relies in the idea of measuring a person's ability to profit from a mediation. In this intervention, the examiner can teach the examinee how to perform better on individual items or on the whole test. Consequently, the final score must take into account intervention's results as well.

Foreign language instruction in our country has traditionally been product oriented versus process oriented. This could be related to a conventional perception of abilities by which they represent relatively stable attributes of individuals developed as interaction between heredity and environment. However, an alternative view on abilities as malleable and flexible rather than stable or fixed indicates us that abilities can only be understood through studying the processes of their development. Therefore, a form of measurement that takes malleability and flexibility into account is needed.

3. OBJECTIVES

Although DA research is still in its infancy, the work in the field of dynamic testing has suggested interesting paradigms and ideas as well as promising findings. Several study-dimensions can be reviewed and compared to distinguish static from dynamic assessment and the different approaches that DA can take such as interactionist or interventionist. In our field of interest, DA effect has been studied in different formats, from group DA to computerized DA, providing information on students' learning potential beyond what is available from a static test.

The goals of this study are:

1. To introduce readers to dynamic assessment as an alternative or addition to traditional static assessment.
2. To prepare readers for an understanding of modern and specific approaches of dynamic assessment.
3. To identify a problematic issue in the evaluation procedure in the EFL class.
4. To suggest a feasible DA intervention in the EFL class: a writing assessment.
5. To support teachers in grading making decisions upon objective assessment scores.

4. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Dynamic assessment (DA) refers to an assessment procedure that integrates instruction as part of the evaluation process. Its goal is to understand and promote learner's abilities through mediated interaction in Vygotsky's notion Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). DA finds its roots in Vygotsky sociocultural theory, however, DA was a concept termed by Vygotsky colleague Luria (1961) in opposition to 'statistical' approaches to assessment. According to Luria, 'statistical' assessment, although grounded in psychometric principles, it inappropriately assumes that learners test performance represents their full picture of capabilities (Luria, 1961 cited in Poehner & Lantolf, 2005). On the other hand, 'dynamic' approaches consider two additional bits of information: Learner's performance with assistance (named mediation) and the extent to which learners can benefit from the assistance (learning potential).

DA framework adopts key concepts from Vygotsky's work and recast them in a form that renders them more suitable for a new theory of development or assessment. According to Thomas (2011, p. 134), "the impetus for a researcher to offer a new or revised theory often derives from the researcher's desire to refine and embellish an earlier theorist's proposal". Working beyond Vygotsky and Luria's work, Feuerstein found in DA a way of measuring and individual's ability to profit from mediation and attempted to assess what he named the "mediated learning experience" (MLE).

Since Feuerstein, although DA has received a great deal of attention in the language assessment field and educational sciences over the past three decades (Sternberg & Grigorenko, 2002), until now not many teachers have implemented it into their evaluation practice (Veen, Dobber, & Oers, 2016). Many writers have claimed that Vygotsky was so futuristic that, only in the twenty-first century, his thoughts will be finally understood (Robbins, 2001) and nowadays, DA research is still in its infancy (Shabani, 2016). To realize the full potential of DA for educational practices, it is important to critically think about its integration, bridging the worlds of teachers and educational psychologists (Veen et al, 2016).

A review of the literature on DA FL/L2 implementations brings the reader different applications such as Computerized, Peer to peer, One to one, and Group DA. In addition, there are some secondary sources such as existing reviews of researchers (Shabani, 2016; Nazari, 2012) that provide an overview of the literature that has set the preliminary work for DA, as well as current investigations related to this type of assessment.

As a result, this theoretical background is organized as follows. It begins with a clarification of the DA concept in contrast to static or non-dynamic assessment. Next, it includes a distinction of the two DA approaches: Interactionist and Interventionist; and a differentiation of the possible DA structures: Sandwich and Cake mediation format. Finally it presents the different DA implementations found in the literature classified by type and by its application in L2 assessment.

4.1 Dynamic assessment vs. non dynamic assessment

The greatest distinction between dynamic assessment and conventional (static) assessment is the shift from a product to a process orientation (Cotrus & Stanciu, 2014). DA is a method of conducting an assessment which aims to identify the abilities that learners have as well as their learning potential. In order to achieve this, DA must be a process-oriented and interactive procedure that emphasizes the learning process and that accounts for examiner investment.

Poehner (2008) points out that DA and NDA refer to administration procedures rather than assessment instruments. Any assessment instrument can be used in a dynamic or non-dynamic fashion. There are three characteristics that distinguish between DA and NDA:

1. The view of the abilities underlying the assessment procedures. NDA considers abilities are static, fixed, whereas DA sees abilities in development and, as a consequence, they are malleable.

2. The purpose of conducting the assessment. NDA assessment's purpose is purely ontological in the sense that it aims to measure traits or abilities in isolation. DA assessment's purpose is epistemological since it intends to discover how can those abilities be further developed and to account for that development.

3. The role of the assessor. NDA assessor equals evaluator. If the assessment takes place in a classroom and the teacher proctors the assessment, the teacher's role is always assessor. In DA, the assessor has a double role: evaluator and instructor.

The next part of the study will exemplify different forms of this examiner investment, also called instruction or mediation. Mediation can be presented in different forms depending on the approach (interventionist or interactionist), the structure (sandwich or cake) and the examinees setting (individual, paired, group).

4.2 Dynamic assessment approaches

Poehner and Lantolf (2005) identified two general approaches to DA: *interventionist* and *interactionist* dynamic assessment. The difference in the approach relies on the form of mediation used. This can range from dialogic interaction to standardized hints.

4.2.1 Interventionist

This approach includes intervention from the examiner or mediation during the test procedure itself. This form of mediation consists of scripted prompts arranged hierarchically and administered sequentially. During this form of DA, participants receive mediation item by item. Examinees would receive pre-fabricated hints upon unsuccessful item resolution until:

- a) examinees solve the item.
- b) examinees give up.
- c) the amount of possible hints is reached.

According to Poehner (2008), the defining characteristic of interventionist DA is the use of standardized administration procedures and forms of assistance. Interventionist DA yields quantifiable results that allow group comparison and future performance predictions. The same way that NDA standardized assessment is quantifiable using criterion or normative references, DA is quantifiable using a development-reference.

Some examples on the interventionist approach found in the literature are: Khonamri and Sana'ati, (2014) who explored the impact of CALL and DA on EFL students' critical reading. A more recent example are Hamavandi, Rezai and Mazdaysna (2017) pre-scripted prompts used to construct learners' ZPD.

4.2.2 Interactionist

In contrast to quantitative measurement, the interactionist approach considers a qualitative assessment of the psychological processes and learners development dynamics. Vygotsky (as cited in Pohener & Lantolf, 2005: 240) "insisted that we must not measure the child, we must interpret the child" and this can only be achieved through interaction and cooperation with the learner (child). In the interactionist DA, mediation emerges from the interaction occurring between examiner and examinee. During this approach, hints are not pre-fabricated or planed in advance. On the contrary, they naturally emerge from collaborative interaction. Some examples of interactionist assessment found in the literature are: Rahimi, Kushki, and Nassaji, 2015; Shabani, 2014; Alavi, Kaivanpanah, and Shabani, 2012; and Hidri, 2014.

4.3 Dynamic assessment formats

Sternberg and Grigorenko (2002) distinguish two DA procedures depending on the mediation-assessment structure. These are named *sandwich* format or *cake* format.

4.3.1 Sandwich format

This DA format is labeled "sandwich" because mediation usually occurs between pre-test and post-test stages throughout the test administration, similarly to a traditional experimental research. This format consists of three stages: 1. Pre-test, 2. Mediation, 3. Post-test. First, examinees complete pre-activities; second, hey receive instruction (either planned in advance or adjusted to test-takers' needs taking into account their performance during the initial test), and third, examinees take a series of post-tests.

To determine mediation impact on learner's improvement, researchers must

compare the performance on the pretest and to the post-test. Some examples found in the literature of Interventionist sandwich approach are: Hamavandi, Rezai, and Mazdaysna (2017) whose pre-scripted prompts employed to construct individual ZPDs were anticipated in advance as mediation. Another example is the research conducted by Farangi and Saadi (2017) which used a pretest-enrichment-posttest design from an interventionist approach in a group setting. According to the authors, the preference of interventionist over interactionist approach was related to the type of setting feasibility in order provide a group of learners with mediation and help them to co-construct a group ZPD.

In contrast, Hessami and Ghaderi (2014) study is an example of interactionist sandwich in which the experimental group received mediation after pre-test in the form of suggestions, hints, explanations, and leading questions by the examiner. Amiri and Saberi (2016) also followed an interactionist approach with an emphasis on cooperation.

4.3.2 *Cake format*

In the layer-cake format, assessment includes examiner instruction (or mediation) from during the test administration itself, item by item. The examinee's ability to learn is measured during the process of learning and feedback is given until the examinees succeed in doing the task or give it up.

According to Poehner (2008) this type of format can be especially effective in individual procedures since mediation can be used to help learners identify errors item by item. In interventionist approaches to DA, the *cake* mediation offered might be in the form hints of a range from more to implicit to more explicit hints such as Poehner and Lantolf (2013), whose mediating prompts for each item on a computerized-DA test focused learners' attention on the key part of the text where the correct response is located. Another example of this format by means of oral hints prepared in advance by researchers in problem anticipation can be found in very recent study. Daneshfar, Aliasin, and Hashemi (2018) studied the effect of DA on grammar achievement using three orally-presented hints after each grammar question.

An interactionist cake-layer example is found in Shabani (2014) in which learners' developmental trajectories and improvement were traced in the form of reduced demands for explicit mediations and high frequency demands of implicit mediational moves.

4.4 Dynamic assessment implementations

Sternberg and Grigorenko (2002) indicated that mediation can be administered in either an individual or group setting. In individualized administration, this mediation is therefore individualized. Accordingly, in group administration, mediation is the same for everyone. Apart from this distinction, examples of other forms of administration have been found in the literature such Peer to Peer or Computerized DA. This section includes a classification of the studies consulted according to its implementation.

4.4.1 Individualized DA

Studies on DA using a one-on-one or individualized setting reveal more benefits of mediation beyond performance improvement. For instance, results indicate that a dynamic procedure provides information on students' learning potential beyond that which is available from the static test (Kozulin & Garb, 2002). In other words, it is possible to gain better insights into the participants' level of regulation and their potential for future socio-cognitive development (Birjandi & Ebadi, 2012). Furthermore, findings confirm that learners' motivation in L2 performance can be markedly stimulated as in the case of writing in Xiaoxiao and Yan study (2010).

Kozulin and Garb (2002) explored the feasibility of the development and implementation of the dynamic assessment procedure in such curriculum-based areas as English as a foreign language (EFL). Their study included a pre-test, mediation and a post-test. It was applied to a group of academically at-risk students who had previously failed English in high school. Findings indicated that dynamic procedure indeed provides rich information on students' learning potential beyond what is available from non-dynamic assessment.

Birjandi and Ebadi (2012) explored L2 learners' socio-cognitive development through dynamic assessment, in line with Vygotsky's preference for cooperative dialogue in the ZPD. Microgenesis as a general analytical framework was used to investigate the changes in learners' progression from other to self-regulation. Findings indicated that better insights into the participants' level of regulation and their potential for future socio-cognitive development can be gained by means of DA.

4.4.2 Group DA

Following Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory of mind and specially his concept of ZPD, group dynamic assessment or G-DA assumes that it is possible to engage a group of learners in collaboratively co-constructing a group's ZPD while observing everyone's ZPD (Shabani, 2014). Literature review findings, including both the quantitative and qualitative, indicated once again that non-dynamic assessment (NDA) procedures do not fully capture the learners' underlying potential and leave aside the abilities in their ripening state.

Poehner (2009) identifies two forms of G-DA; concurrent and cumulative. In the *concurrent* G-DA, the teacher dialogues with the entire group. Although, the teacher may provide mediation in response to an individual, the interaction shifts rapidly between primary and secondary interactants as one learner's question, struggle, or comment sets the stage for another's contribution. In the *cumulative* G-DA, the teacher administers a series of one-to-one DA interactions as the group works toward the problem resolution. Individuals engage in turns as primary interactants with the teacher, with the understanding that each subsequent one-to-one exchange will have the advantage of building on earlier interactions that the class witnessed.

Alavi, Kaivanpanah, and Shabani (2012) tested the applicability of G-DA in identifying the forms of mediation offered by an instructor during his G-DA interactions with a group of L2 learners. Researches attempted to discover the impacts of G-DA-based instruction on the co-construction of knowledge among L2 listeners. A microgenetic interactionist methodology formed the theoretical basis of the assessment procedures as well as its qualitative analysis. The goal involved the construction of a mediational strategies inventory of different forms of implicit and

explicit feedback. Findings revealed that all primary and secondary interaction participants mutually benefited from their contributions.

Davin and Donato (2013) examined collaboration during small group tasks with young novice level language learners studying Spanish. Researchers attempted to determine whether learners could help (mediate) their peers during the group task and if so, whether this mediation might be traced back to participation in classroom DA. Findings indicated that students made use of collective knowledge to fulfill the task by means of mediation and other scaffolding techniques.

Shabani (2014) attempted to track the developmental trajectories of L2 learners' listening comprehension ability within a microgenetic framework in hopes to bring into perspective learners' qualitative changes during the interaction and mediation. Learners collaboratively negotiated in their ZPD across a set of different innovative tasks. By means of a cumulative approach, Shabani moved the entire group forward in its ZPD through negotiations with individual learners in their respective ZPDs.

4.4.3 Peer to peer DA

Although scaffolding has been defined in the literature such as the emergent interaction with an instructor or more-capable peer, there is a research gap in determining if mediation in DA could also take the shape of the emergent interaction with an equal or less-capable peer. Taylor and Wigglesworth (2009), following the work on dynamic assessment paradigms of Lantolf and Poehner (2008), claim that collaborative writing tasks may have the potential for generating an integrated sample of spoken and written output. In other words, interactive paired work would allow learners to produce texts that demonstrate their capacity for learning as well as providing a sample of their written ability.

4.4.4 Computerized DA

Since providing human-to-human mediation to each learner can be unrealistic, computerized versions of DA have been developed in the past years. Computerized Dynamic Assessment (C-DA) literature seeks to provide more information regarding learner's abilities and on ways to promote development.

Shabani (2012) studied the effects of electronically delivering textual and visual mediation on L2 readers' comprehension processes. The C-DA procedure included a short reading text along with its manipulated version and visual prompts. Prompts were gradually administered upon the students' failure to provide the right answer. Findings revealed that C-DA could discriminate among low-achieving students regarding their responsiveness to electronic mediation and diagnose their underlying abilities in terms of both independent and assisted cognitive functioning.

Pishgadam, Barabadi, and Kamrood (2011) investigated the effectiveness of using a computerized dynamic reading comprehension test (CDRT) on Iranian EFL students with a moderate level of proficiency. They hypothesized that low achievers would make bigger gains on dynamic test and would narrow the gap with their counterparts in high achieving group. Their results indicated that DA was effective in both improving students' reading ability and understanding about their potential for learning. In fact, one year later, Pishghadam and Barabadi (2012) reported a validation study of the CDRT test. Their findings indicated that C-DA observed testing psychometric standards of validity and reliability.

Teo and Jen (2012) developed C-DA program that integrated mediation with assessment to support EFL learners' inferential reading skills. According to the authors, the mediation in the C-DA program acted as a more competent peer, allowing the internalization of information. Therefore, it helped promoting learners' potential development at the time it assessed learners' reading levels in the process of learning.

Poehner and Lantolf (2013) designed an instrument to assess listening and reading comprehension by means of a DA online format. Apart from incorporating mediation, they included transfer items to determine the extent to which learner development was supported during the test. This process generated three scores: actual (capturing unmediated performance); mediated (reflecting responsiveness to assistance provided on each test item); and a learning potential score (based on gain between actual and mediated performance) that indicated how much investment in future instructional activity is likely required to impact learner's development. Later, Poehner, Zhang and Lu (2015) published a study sharing the

results of the early piloting test for the Chinese language. According to the authors, all in all, experience to date was encouraging and C-DA has much to offer in diagnosing L2 development.

5. DYNAMIC ASSESSMENT IN LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT

In this section, studies reviewed are grouped according to their application in foreign or second language instruction, learning, and assessment.

5.1 Placement and level diagnosis

Antón, M. (2008) employed DA to assess reading and listening comprehension as well as oral and written expression in advanced level students aiming to identify their individual challenges and provide with a qualitative and elaborated description of their ripening abilities. These objectives were part of a higher common goal: To design a tailor-made instructional plan for each student.

Although no more studies have been found to date regarding placement purposes, a later study by Ajideh and Nourdad (2012) suggests that DA can be used at any level. Ajideh and Nourdad studied proficiency level in dynamic assessment and whether dynamic assessment can yield different results for learners with different proficiency levels. They also questioned whether participants with high-, mid-, and low-proficiency level differed in their ability to use the points during mediation in later non-dynamic sessions after some time interval. According to their results, if appropriate mediation is provided, DA improves learner's ability regardless of the proficiency level. No significant differences were observed in between groups. Furthermore, the positive and beneficial effect of dynamic assessment remained over time and was not limited to a short period of time after the mediation.

5.2 Vocabulary learning

Hessami and Ghaderi (2014) investigated the role of DA in the vocabulary learning of EFL learners. The pretest- mediation-posttest design (sandwich model of DA) was used in the study. The experimental group received mediation after pre-test in the form of hints, explanations, suggestions, prompts, and, more importantly, leading questions by the tester. The second group serving as a control group received no mediation. Findings indicated that the experimental group significantly outperformed the control group. In other words, incorporation of DA as a

supplementary procedure to standard testing has positive effect on both test performance and vocabulary learning of learners.

5.3 Listening comprehension development

Despite it holds a major relevance in learning and acquiring language, listening continues being the Cinderella skill in assessment research. Not only it has been much less addressed in research compared to reading, writing, and speaking, furthermore, research on listening testing has only been concerned with static testing (Hidri, 2014).

Hidri (2014) investigated whether test-takers' listening ability in testing would vary from a static context to a dynamic one, and whether there would be differences in raters' behavior from one context to the other. Bias presence was also considered. Results proved the effectiveness of DA over NDA and mediation impact in the test was recognized as, in general, test-takers' ability estimated more able students in the DA than in the NDA test. The study also concludes that raters' behavior varied depending on the text. While they graded more harshly in the static test, they were consistently lenient in the dynamic one.

In a more recent research, Farangi and Saadi (2017) compared two approaches claiming to be effective in enhancing EFL learners' listening capabilities including schema theory and dynamic assessment. Through a quasi-experimental design, the researchers recruited two classes of EFL learners being treated with schema theory approach and dynamic assessment. Each group participated in 15 sessions of one hour working on their listening abilities using different techniques. The dynamic assessment group employed a pretest-enrichment-posttest design and the schema theory group experienced a pre-listening, listening, and post-listening design using *shadowing* and *semantic maps*. Results showed that both groups' listening comprehension improved over time. The results of statistical tests didn't show a significant difference between the groups regarding their listening comprehension in the posttest although the schema group attained higher scores in the posttest. The findings in this study indicated that teachers should become aware of the different existing practices in teaching listening skills to EFL students.

5.4 Reading comprehension enhancement

Pishgadam, Barabadi, and Kamrood (2011) study of a computerized dynamic reading comprehension test showed that DA is effective in both improving students' reading ability and understanding about their potential for learning which surpasses their initial performance level (Pishgadam and Barabadi, 2012).

Ajideh and Nourdad (2012) findings showed that EFL learners could gain development in reading ability because after going through dynamic assessment session and being given the appropriate mediation they were able to take the advantage of the mediations in their later independent performance in immediate post-test.

Khonomri and Sana'ati (2014) explored the effects of CALL (Facebook) and DA on fostering EFL students' critical reading by means of an interventionist approach. The results indicated that the subjects' performance was statistically more significant than DA-Non-Facebook in the most part: CALL and DA had an impact on fostering students' performance. Furthermore, on the issue of transferability, findings indicated that students 'performance improved drastically on the DA posttest and far assessment tests.

Hamavandi, Rezai and Mazdaysna (2017) investigated the DA effect on reading comprehension and examined which method of assessing morphological knowledge could predict and account for EFL learners' reading ability. The participants in the experimental group were assessed using a dynamic assessment procedure, while the participants in the control group were taught the morphology following the methodology proposed by the institute. The Nelson–Denny Reading Test and Test of Morphological Structure were applied as posttests. The results indicated that dynamic assessment of morphology developed EFL learners' reading comprehension. Furthermore, the dynamic assessment task could predict EFL learners' reading comprehension over and above the static assessment task of morphology. Findings provided preliminary support for the usefulness of a dynamic assessment of morphological awareness within an EFL context.

5.5 Speaking self-regulation

Safa, Donyaei, and Mohammadi (2016) examined the impact of different approaches of DA on English language learners' speaking skills: Interactionist DA, interventionist DA and non-DA. Their findings revealed that interactionist DA participants outperformed the other learners.

In a more recent study, Ebadi and Asakereh (2017) investigated the impact of DA in the development of speaking skills. They asked participants to narrate a set of picture stories during which they received mediation based on their ZPD. Their goal was to identify any possible changes in the participants' cognition development. Findings revealed significant development in the participants' cognition and their movement toward further self-regulation.

5.6 Writing improvement

Although writing is not an easy task for students, most L2 teachers' method of teaching writing is merely to have students write essays or compositions without any instruction. One of the ways to aid writing is dynamic assessment via process writing or graduated prompt. The graduated prompting procedure consists on an intervention of predetermined standardized prompts, sequenced from general to more specific.

Xiaoxiao and Yan (2010) study was designed to test the effect of using Dynamic Assessment framework on students' writing ability and motivation by providing mediation as a vehicle for two purposes. First, promoting students to span the ZPD, established by the distance between them and their teacher or peers in a writing task. Second, to achieve the aim of enhancing their writing competence. Findings not only confirmed that learners' writing ability can be substantially improved. In addition, findings indicated that motivation of writing can be stimulated through DA.

Isavi (2012) applies a regulatory scale in dynamic assessment (Aljaafreh & Lantolf, 1994) to assess EFL learners' writing ability. The findings in this study not only indicated that a DA approach to writing enables teachers to more accurately assess learners' writing skill. Furthermore, according to the author, teachers can provide their learners with the necessary mediation after the error nature

identification, and therefore improve learners' writing ability. This point had already been stated by Sternberg and Grigorenko (2002) who claimed that DA should be used to make recommendations, and not only to describe a learner's performance.

Rahimi, Kushki, and Nassaji (2015) explored the role of interactionist DA in the development of conceptual L2 writing skills. Three advanced EFL students each produced ten writing samples in ten individualized writing sessions. They then engaged in ten collaborative tutorial sessions with their teacher and received feedback based on the interactionist DA principles. Results revealed important diagnostic and developmental effects for interactionist DA.

Amiri and Saberi (2016) presented an effective incorporation of DA as an alternative to static procedures of assessment. It aimed at examining the difference between dynamic and non-dynamic (NDA) types of assessment of EFL writing ability of intermediate students. To fulfill this end, data were collected through the application of writing tasks in both pre-test and post- test. One group of participants (DA) enjoyed six-week mediation after the pre-test while the other group (NDA) received traditional forms of instruction. Findings indicated that DA group made significant improvements in the post- test which can encourage practitioners to consider DA procedures more seriously in their everyday teaching practice.

Tahery and Dastjerdi (2016) investigated the effect of DA on the improvement of intermediate EFL learners' picture-cued writing tasks. The study not only revealed that DA has a positive effect on writing performance. Moreover, a questionnaire about learners' feelings about assessment through DA indicated that almost all the participants held positive attitudes toward writing, thus increasing their confidence in L2 writing.

These studies lay a more concrete path of DA linguistic implementations although not all of them are equally feasible with superior number of participants. Also, in these studies, instructors or tutors are the primary source of mediation. More research is needed into what happens in pair or small group dynamic assessment to discover potential learning opportunities. The use of collaborative writing for assessment purposes could be less common due to possible learner's reluctance to engage in co-authoring tasks (Wigglesworth & Storch, 2009) and self-esteem stress

derived from an undermining vision of feedback. In particular, Xiaoxiao and Yan's study (2010), that unifies EFL Process Writing instruction and DA, poses a line for further investigation into the extent to which different students with different degrees of response to feedback benefit from mediation. General assessment literature conducted in assessment needs more research on the ways in which students participate in the assessment process (Dann, 2002 as cited in Lantolf & Poehner, 2005).

This intervention attempts to respond or at least contribute to the above mentioned limitations by designing a dynamic process writing assessment that could render information about learner's emerging capacities and appropriation to mediation.

6. INTERVENTION PROPOSAL

Foreign language instruction and assessment in Spain has traditionally been product oriented versus process oriented. This could be related to a conventional perception of abilities by which they represent relatively stable attributes. However, an alternative view on abilities as malleable and flexible rather than fixed indicates us that they can only be understood by studying the processes of their development. Therefore, a form of measurement that takes malleability and flexibility into account is needed. This intervention aims to present an interventionist dynamic evaluation of writing in an EFL class.

Through schooling, writing becomes the main means by which learners display their academic competence and knowledge. Although literacy is one of the most valued educational outcomes, writing is the last communicative mode to control.

Traditional L2 teachers' method of teaching and assessing writing have followed separate ways. On writing instruction, research proves the effective use of drafts, and guided writing workshops that develop writing literacy. Despite this, being oriented towards result measurement and not learning measurement, writing assessment rarely incorporates this work and it only accounts for a final product. Moreover, students might only receive feedback once they have turned in their assignment.

This process may have a negative influence on class participants. Less motivated students are expected to move on to the next activity. Maybe even without paying attention to the feedback received. More committed and responsible students could feel their motivation diminishing as they might not have the opportunity of incorporating the feedback into their product. Finally, this influence can also affect instructors since conscientious feedback requires a time and effort that may not be recognized afterwards.

Following the distinction made between Summative, Formative and Dynamic Assessment by Poehner and Lantolf (2005), the use of essay writing as a summative assessment (SA) in the middle or at the end of course generally assumes that this evaluation instrument somehow captures the culmination of the learning process

defined by the course curriculum. Nevertheless, it does not consider “the future” as part of the assessment picture. Since Formative Assessment (FA) on the contrary could be used “to be responsive to learner needs, to gather information to inform lesson planning and teaching and to provide feedback to learners” (Rea-Dickins & Gardner, 2000:239), a window to the future could be considered in this procedure. Why, then, is dynamicity the new black? What is the difference between DA and FA? And/or what is the difference between scaffolding and mediation?

Feedback or instruction in FA is generally “informal and unsystematic” (Lantolf & Poehner: 2005:252) and despite this, it has a number of implications in class management. DA on the other hand,

minimizes the risk of erroneous evaluation, by definition. It provides mediation that is constantly adjusted and attuned to the learner’s or group’s responsiveness to mediation. At the same time, it promotes the very development it seeks to assess in the first place.

(Lantolf & Poehner, 2005: 252)

In DA, instruction and assessment are unified in a single activity whose goal is learner’s writing development whereas in FA the goal is getting the learner through the task. However, providing scaffolded aid, while promoting task completion, might not promote learner’s development. It is DA mediation what opens learners’ ZPD (the window to the future) and what eventually might enable them to become aware of their writing control and to transfer it from the writing task to future writing activities.

Apart from developing writing literacy, a dynamic assessment intervention might have non-linguistic benefits. It could empower students’ confidence in themselves, enhance peer empathy, and arise instructor recognition and respect. This intervention proposal aims to answer our research question and show how DA might promote writing development and ease writing assessment, and what other benefits might carry with on the way of its implementation.

6.1 Intervention group characteristics

Intervention will be implemented in a target population EFL adolescent learners from 17-19 years old enrolled in 2nd of Baccaulaureate (N= 187). The sample (n=28)

will be conveniently selected from one section of 2nd of Baccalaureate taught by or available to the researcher at the intervention time at a secondary school in the area.

Demographic variables will include gender, whether students have repeated any course, educational needs, native/schooling language, and last grade received in English. Thirteen students are male (46.43%) and fifteen students are female (53.57%). Two subjects are repeaters (7.14%), one subject has special educational needs, and one subject is a foreign student and has been previously schooled in Arabic and French for 13 years. A total of 24 students (85.71%) have passed the English subject in the previous term and 4 students (14.29%) had fail the subject.

The following table summarizes demographic data for the intervention group.

Table 1.
Group Data

	Male	Female	Repeaters	Ed. Needs	Foreigners
2nd BAC	13	15	2	1	1

In our target group there is a student with diagnosed ADHD. However, due to the reflective nature of the intervention task, we believe it could benefit student performance. Low reflection ability makes ADAH adolescents young “actors” who forget about thinking in their act’s consequences (Mena Pujol, Nicolau Palou, Salat Foix, Tort Almeida, & Romero Roca, 2006). The view of the writing exercise as a process instead of as a product, could compensate those impulsive behaviors that frequently compromise students’ performance.

6.2 Intervention design

Dynamic assessment considers instruction as a formal and systematic component of the evaluation. Therefore, instruction and assessment are connected in this process. The goal in this innovation project is to develop writing literacy in EFL by working on students ZPD on two instances. First, during the peer-editing workshop by making students work with their peers. According to the sociocultural theory, development in the ZPD could be mediated by an instructor or a more

capable-peer. It is impossible that by pairing students up, all of them get equal mediation in English literacy, however this step comprehends more than language accuracy knowledge. For instance, a student with a moderate knowledge of grammar may have a very creative and strong writing competence in L1. This student will be able to mediate by providing useful extra linguistic feedback.

In the second instance, mediation is received by instructor. Because of the natural form of writing, an interactionist mediation could make a true impact in the writing process. In this approach, “mediation is not standardized but tuned to the learner’s ZPD” (García, 2010: 958). Therefore, instruction is given in form of interactionist individualized contingent feedback and as a consequence, learners receive as much mediation as needed. The spectrum of implicit-explicit mediation is represented in two forms of feedback prompts. In the first review, teachers only highlight or inform on mistakes; in the second review, teachers identify those mistakes that have not been identified or successfully corrected, and in the third (last) review teachers explain those mistakes.

The following chart pictures the seven steps involved in this writing assessment procedure and later described in more detail. It includes two in-class writing workshops guided by instructors where students work individually and cooperatively.

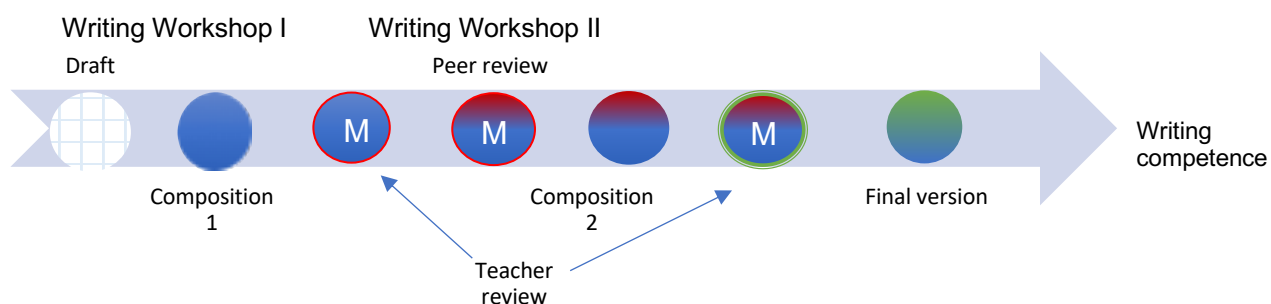


Figure 1.
Writing Process

6.2.1 Draft

Students are asked to produce a draft for a composition on a topic related to the lesson. Time allowed for this activity is 10 minutes. Students are guided through a

brainstorming and subsequently encouraged to organize their thoughts and ideas turning the draft into a visual organizer: globes, timeline, mapping connections, etc.

6.2.2 Composition 1

Students are asked to write a composition on the same topic during the next 20-30 minutes. They are asked to double space their writing.

6.2.3 Teacher review 1

Teachers read the first version of the composition in search for errors and room for improvement. In terms of grading, teachers only consider general content but do not penalize for errors. Teachers do not correct or identify the errors at this time either, they must only highlight, underline or mark somehow the error existence.

6.2.4 Peer review

Teachers return student's compositions together with an error list worksheet and the peer-editing worksheet. During the next period of the class, approximately for 10-15 minutes, students are paired up and asked to exchange their work and identify their classmate composition's errors using these instruments. They will have to identify the spotted errors but not to fix them. They only need to code the error, for example: AGR (agreement) or T (tense). After this review, students exchange their compositions back and share their comments with their classmates.

6.2.5 Composition 2

Students are asked to rewrite their composition taking both, teacher's mediation and their peer review into account. They must fix those mistakes consulting their notes, dictionary, book or other resources as they need.

6.2.6 Teacher review 2

Teachers read the second version and grade students' work on composition 2 and on the peer editing workshop using a rubric. This rubric is more detailed as it accounts for content, organization, grammar and vocabulary. Teachers also code

any unidentified prompt or new error if any using the same errors list that students have and give the writing work back to students.

6.2.7 Final composition

Students are asked to rewrite the composition considering teacher's mediation. Students will highlight or underline all the changes made and attach a list of all composition errors. In this list, any error addressed by the teacher should be identified, located, corrected and explained. These explanations may be written either in English or in Spanish. An example of how to present these explanations in a clear and ordered manner is included under the list of codes. Students will also assess their self-regulation and mediation appropriation. The self-assessment portion of the total work is 5%.

Teachers will grade the final composition using a more detailed rubric and eventually sum up the scores of each part of the process as the final grade or official record. In other courses with less academic pressure, this project could end in a different format. Following a transformation from the written text to an audiovisual one, an infographic, a presentation, a storytelling product, etc.

6.3 Intervention evaluation

Two anonymous questionnaires will be administered to students and teachers participating in the project. The first questionnaire, administered at the very beginning of the project, attempts to make participants thoughts on the existing evaluation system visible. To ease participants' reflection, this questionnaire has a quantitative part measured by a *likert* scale followed by a qualitative section. The second questionnaire, administered at the end of the project, and once the final grade is submitted, attempts to determine participants motivation towards the project and to register possible variations towards assessment perception.

Anonymity will be ensured by assigning students an individual code that will link both files. Researchers will be able to connect pre and post questionnaires through this code and without knowing the subject identity. Data will be later triangulated and employed to inform the educational leadership on current assessment procedures.

6.3.1 Questionnaire development and validation

Validity and reliability of the quantitative portion of the questionnaire will be ensured by Rasch analysis based on a questionnaire pilotage. Questionnaire descriptors and questions will be constructed upon a Small Group Assessment Diagnosis (SGAD) with college level students. SGAD is based on the Small Group Instructional Diagnosis (SGID) method which is a simple and straightforward instrument of mid-term course evaluation developed by Joseph Clark and Mark Redmond (1982). The main characteristic of this methodology is the use of an outside facilitator to conduct a discussion with students and later provide feedback using students voice instead of pre-fabricated descriptors. In an SGAD discussion, the facilitator takes students through a series of questions about their thoughts on assessment in small groups (three-four students). *What do you like the most about assessment? What do you like the least?* Group members must reach consensus on their answers. Then, small groups share their thoughts with the whole class. Finally, each student individually answers to each question, with the class voting “strongly agree,” “agree,” “barely agree,” “barely disagree,” “disagree,” or “strongly disagree” to each statement. This process can give researchers building a survey a good idea of areas where there is a lot of student agreement and/or where students are divided.

After the SGAD, 12 items were developed and tested on the topic of assessment and evaluation. Questionnaire is visible in Appendix C as well as the tables resulting from the Rasch analysis of the items with the program Ministeps of Winsteps. Rasch techniques can be used to document and evaluate the measurement functioning of an instrument (Boone, 2016). Using Rasch it is possible to confidently defend the reliability and validity of the instrument created. Also, Rasch allows the researcher to compute “measures” that can be accurately interpreted and used in parametric statistical tests. Using raw data and computing a mean answer of respondent results in a number that is flawed. The numbers used for the mean have not an equal interval and survey items are not all created equal (not all items are as easy to agree with). Two tables are included In Appendix C to show the statistics for each of twelve items and the conversion of raw scores into logits. The first column indicates the entry

number, and the column named Total Score accounts for the sum of the total number of responses of each item. The column Total Count shows the number of respondents that answered each item.

Finally, one of the most interesting aspects on instrument measurement that Rasch provides is the creation of a “Wright map” that explains the meaning of the easiness or difficulty to agree with items in a survey. The wright map (Figure 1 in Appendix C) allows a visual comparison of respondents and items to better understand how appropriately the instrument measured. This map is organized as two vertical histograms. The left side shows respondents and the right side shows items. The left side of the map shows the distribution of the participants agreeability from most agreeable at the top to least agreeable at the bottom. The items on the right side of the map are distributed from the hardest to agree with at the top to the easiest to agree with at the bottom. According to the wright map this instrument has construct reliability because agreeability is consistent with the content of items.

The wright map also shows that respondents have a well spread bell curve. Since the person’s mean is higher than the item’s mean, one improvement for this survey could be changing some of the items to make them harder to agree with. The space between items indicates how much harder or easier the items are in relation to each other. Items immediately above (harder) or below (easier) a given item have less space than items far above (harder) or below (easier) a given item. Items could be a bit more spread out especially those easier to agree with, but this survey has construct validity because agreeability is consistent with the content of items. It is logical that Item 1 *I think evaluations should make students reflect on their learning process*, .and Item 7 *I think evaluations are helpful to get a good grade*, are the hardest items to agree with. In contrast, the easiest item to agree with was Item 8 *I don’t think an evaluation that promotes anxiety is a good assessment instrument*.

Another analysis was conducted to evaluate the reliability of both the person measures as well as the items of the instrument. As it can be observed in Figure 2 Cronbach’s alpha or KR-20 is .41, however, as Boone, Staver and Yale (2014) explain, this coefficient calculated from raw data is corrupted due to the nonlinearity of the raw data used for its computation. According to the Rasch analysis, person

reliability is only .40 and person separation is 1.82. However, the survey presents a stronger item reliability of .76 and a longer item separation of 1.73. The conclusion derived from this analysis is that the sample is not that reliable (which makes sense since only 12 subjects took the questionnaire) nevertheless the items could potentially make a reliable survey. The person reliability index indicates the degree to which the items separate the participants so that some show a great level of agreeability and a low one, which means the measure must effectively distinguish between difference within the given population on the construct of evaluation. The item reliability index indicates the replicability of item separation should the items be given to a different, but equivalent group of respondents. High reliability suggests that items will behave in the same way with a similar sample of the population since the difference in item difficulty is consistent. Since all separation coefficients ranged from 0.00 to infinity, there is no ceiling effect and therefore no recoding of data would be needed to improve reliability.

Questionnaire rating scale included a moderately large range of responses (strongly disagree, disagree, barely disagree, barely agree, agree and strongly agree) in order to better distinguish the attitudes of respondents. As it can be seen in Figure 3, the observed average column shows the rating scale increasing, meaning that this rating scale is functioning well.

Validity of the qualitative portion of the questionnaire would be analyzed by triangulation with the literature. Students' perceptions regarding the use of DA highlight that L2 learners feel more relaxed and comfortable during assessment sessions. Mediation plays a scaffolding role during the assessment process and as a consequence, students feel stronger and reassured, whereas static assessment may put pressure and stress on them (Daneshfar, Aliasin & Hashemi, 2018).

6.4 Intervention instruments

Assessing writing often involves the use of a rubric but this does not mean that it considers previous work. To compute mediation in the assessment procedure, it is necessary to accommodate an accountable category in the assessment instrumentation.

The following table illustrates the grade division by categories. This table as well as all rubrics and materials are shared with students at the beginning of the workshop. This step is important to ensure grading transparency and render mediation accountability. Students should know that their work during the Writing Workshop I could only be made-up until the start of the Writing Workshop II since this task is sequential. Accordingly, students cannot make-up the peer-editing session if they missed that day since their realization of the task is necessarily connected to their presence in class.

Table 2.

Writing Assessment Grading Criteria

	Wages	Percentage	Points	Total points
Writing Workshop 1		20%		20
Draft	10%		10	
Composition 1	10%		10	
Writing Workshop 2		30%		30
Peer-editing	10%		10	
Composition 2	20%		20	
Final Version		40%	40	40
Self-editing		5%	5	5
Self-regulation		5%	5	5
TOTAL		100%	100	100

Rubrics, Peer-editing worksheet and Error Symbols handout can be found in Appendices, see Appendix A.

7. DISCUSSION

The ideas and thoughts described hereafter are based on hypothetical conclusions that could be derived from a future action research project. Strengths and weaknesses are discussed in hopes to help the reader better imagine the outcomes of an hypothetical invention and the answer to the following questions: How could DA support foreign language writing evaluation? How could DA improve EFL writing?

7.1 Assessment and evaluation perception

Hypothetically, a pre/post anonymous questionnaire is administered to those students and teachers participating in the project. The questionnaire attempts to make visible participants thoughts on the evaluation system in line with the results obtained in the questionnaire pilotage.

On perception towards assessment and evaluation, students are expected to express thoughts related to fear, stress, pressure, challenge level. Teachers, on the other hand are expected to answer with fairness, objectivity, accountability, respect, etc. On the reflection of how these perceptions may influence student's performance, expected positive influences could be: responsibility, hard work, pride, etc. Expected negative influences could be: demotivation, lack of interest, etc. In the case of teachers, expected positive influences could be: care, relief, etc. Expected negative influences could be: doubt, disinterest, skepticism, etc.

After the intervention, anonymous questionnaire responses are expected to show a shift towards learning, development, and mediation appropriation and appreciation. Student expected responses could include: learning opportunity, learning to learn competence, effort acknowledgement, meaningful feedback, etc. Teacher expected responses could include: new teaching opportunities, fairness, or feedback appreciation.

Hypothetical findings from these surveys would show actual perceptions on engagement and motivation during evaluation tasks both in students and educators. If triangulated and correlated with students' performance, results would possibly

show a strong correlation between writing development and task satisfaction level echoing previous literature results as those from Xiaoxiao and Yan, 2010.

7.2 Feasibility

If there is one clear disadvantage to be foreseen and outlined here is that this project is time consuming. On the one hand, instructors should note that a writing workshop takes time from regular *curriculum* time. Considering that a regular course meets for four times a week, at least one class would be used for the first writing workshop and half of another class would be used for the second writing workshop. On top of that, at least five to ten minutes from sequent lessons may be used to collect and hand out students' work, feedback review, etc. Any instructor who wishes to implement this project should foresee at least an accommodation period of 100 minutes (approximately two lessons of 50 minutes).

On the other hand, a regular full-time secondary instructor at a Spanish school teaches four sections, having between 100 and 120 students, and approximately lectures for 20 hours per week. Apart from that, instructors must remain at the school and work on other curricular, extracurricular, and even administrative tasks for at least 6 in-school hours. Although they are required to provide students with a formative evaluation, every piece of homework or manually grade task adds a considerable amount of stress and work to them. A natural perception of this project could be rejection in basis of additional work. One way of controlling this effect could be to reduce the amount of compositions programmed by term. In first level adaptation, a "less is more" initiative can motivate instructors to concentrate their efforts on 2 writing process assignments instead of 3 regular compositions per term. Foreign language departments could also program the writing process assignment dates in advance to avoid grading conflicts.

7.3 Intervention benefits

7.3.1 Informed grading decisions

As absence of bias is a must in assessment and measuring instruments and raters should measure as objectively as possible. One of the ways of ensuring

objectivity and absence of bias while raters are involved in assessment is the use of rubrics. Raters that are trained to rate according to a rubric and stick to its descriptors could be said to be objective in the assessment. However, this poses further concerns: Does objectivity equals fairness? Up to what extent is objectivity necessary? Up to what extent objectivity benefits students learning? And lastly, up to what extent objectivity eases teachers grading decisions?

In a school system that generally separates students on a basis of age and not level, it is frequent to encounter diverse groups with a heterogeneous variety of foreign language competence. For example, in the group under study, there are four students whose English level is under 2nd Baccalaureate threshold, three students whose actual English level is beyond B2, and one student whose level is C1.

Students starting 2nd of Baccalaureate with B2 level do not have a growing opportunity and usually they finish the course with the same level or even a lower level. This is a year with a lot of stress and students direct their effort and attention to those subjects or academic goals that are more relevant to them. On the opposite side, students that start with a level under B1, face an important struggle to maintain their GPA. Even if they might just earn enough credit to pass, their effort is rarely compensated because it will often be tagged to a much lower grade number.

One of the particularities of this type of assessment is that it gives students the opportunity to receive credit for their learning effort beyond their foreign language level. In other words, teachers could benefit from this procedure to make fair grading decisions based on objective scores. The present section describes how can derived data be interpreted and used for assessment purposes.

The following table summarizes hypothetical results for the group of students in our intervention. Each column organizes the scores received in each specific part of the writing process assignment. From left to right: draft, composition 1, peer-editing, composition 2, self-regulation, and self-edition. The last column named *Total* is the final grade received and accounts for the sum of all individual marks awarded in this project.

Table 3.
Intervention results

Subject	Draft	C 1	PE	C 2	Final	SR	SE	TOTAL
1	10	8	10	19	40	4	5	96
2	8	8	9	18	39	4	4	90
3	8	10	10	18	38	4	5	93
4	9	9	5	18	40	2	5	88
5	8	8	9	18	36	3	5	87
6	9	9	10	19	40	5	5	97
7	10	10	0	19	40	5	5	89
8	8	10	6	14	38	4	5	85
9	7	8	9	20	38	4	5	91
10	7	7	7	15	38	4	4	82
11	8	9	9	20	40	5	4	95
12	7	8	8	14	36	4	5	82
13	10	10	10	17	38	4	5	94
14	10	9	9	20	40	5	0	93
15	9	9	10	18	38	4	5	93
16	6	7	8	12	36	1	0	70
17	10	10	10	20	40	5	5	100
18	10	10	10	9	40	5	4	88
19	0	7	8	16	32	3	3	69
20	8	10	8	18	40	5	5	94
21	6	6	7	14	38	4	4	79
22	8	9	10	16	38	4	5	90
23	9	10	9	18	40	5	5	96
24	10	10	10	19	40	5	5	99
25	9	9	8	18	38	4	5	91
26	7	8	7	13	32	1	0	68
27	9	10	10	19	36	3	5	92
28	8	10	9	16	38	4	5	90

Only one student in the whole group would have obtained the maximum score. S#17 would have succeed during Draft, and Composition 1 writing, moreover he would have done an excellent work during the Peer-editing and Self-editing steps.

In this writing process, instructors have the opportunity to give differentiated feedback also to those students whose level goes beyond the course requirements. Furthermore, this process allows instructors to see and record that not all top students in the class dedicate the same amount of effort, and eventually consider this in their grading decision. For example, S#18 and S#24, who would not have fixed or presented the whole list of errors may not be as rewarded as other students who have successfully completed that step.

Let's study the four students at risk being S#10, S#16, S#19, S#21, who failed English on the previous term. It must be noted that during the workshop all these students but one were awarded with "some work" and task completion, since they were able to follow instructions, although their work quality was expected to be better for the course level. Further attention payed to S#19 would inform us that this student worked on the presentation of the first composition, however this student would not have completed all pre-writing work and would not have worked or presented a draft. S#19 is the student diagnosed with ADAH and it could be inferred that student's impulsivity avoided the draft and reflection process and he just took the pen to start writing instead. However, because of the nature of this task, this student would have the opportunity to later reflect and emend his work, and equally importantly, to receive credit for having done that. Effort recognition could be particularly important for struggling students. On top of that, apart from receiving credit, they would receive diagnostic information of their errors that would serve them beyond the EFL lesson.

A high correlation between the final grade and learners' self-regulation can be found ($r=0.739$) suggesting that there is a positive relation between the level of mediation appropriateness and final results. Given the hypothetical homogeneous variations in the rest of the results no significant differences would be identified in relation to gender, native language or repetition condition. This type of assessment would possibly accommodate classroom diversity and improve students' writing skills. Eventually, a later writing task could be incorporated to investigate the concept of transcendence and confirm (or deny) medium and long-term writing development.

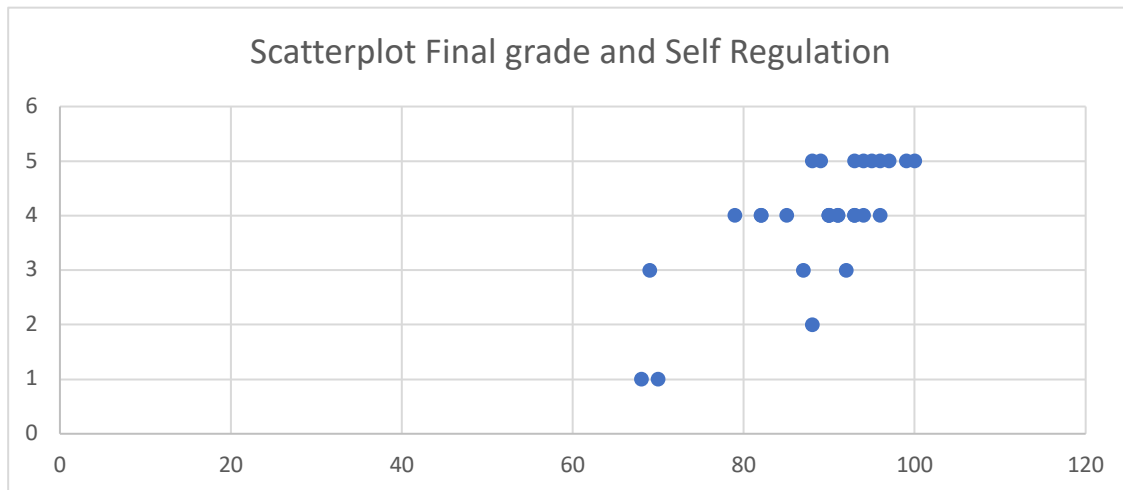


Figure 2.
Correlation between final grade and self-regulation ($r=0.73.94146$)

7.3.3 Diagnosis

Writing process transparency also helps teachers identify where to intervene and provide support. This point had already been stated by Sternberg and Grigorenko (2002) who claimed that assessment should be used to make recommendations, and not only to describe a learner’s performance. What is the point in informing students of what they did wrong (providing they can understand the nature of their mistake) if students do not have the option of processing that information?

Students receive two types of mediation in this project, peer’s feedback and teacher’s feedback. Peer’s feedback comes in the shape of a peer’s review form where they can read the comments and observations made from a fellow classmate. As Taylor and Wigglesworth (2009) suggest, two heads think better than one. When it comes to identify a mistake, however, peer’s mediation would take the same shape than teacher’s feedback. Errors would be tagged with a code, but would not be fixed. As students receive their composition back, they would see words like VOC, T, PRO, NEG, SP, WO, AGR, etc. and they would need to become aware of the error in the phrase in relation to the code. Later, they would need to fix those errors and be able to explain why they made them. Eventually, this process could help them retain their faults and eventually learn from their mistakes. Xiaoxiao and Yan (2010), and Tahery and Dastjerdi (2016) findings indicated that motivation and writing confidence can

be stimulated through DA. Through the experience of presenting their writing, students become aware of how they can control their own process and assist in others.

The next table illustrates the hypothetical most common errors encountered in this writing assignment. The first column indicates the error nature and the second column the total number of cases within the group. The third column indicates the number of accurate error identification cases by students and the fourth column indicates the number of accurate corrections. It can be observed how, in the case of spelling mistakes, students would have been able to successfully identify the error and correct it by the second composition with minimal mediation. In other vocabulary errors, however, students would have been able to identify 109 out of 135 (80.43%) errors and correctly amend 106 them with the minimal mediation (78.51%). After instructor's second mediation, students would have been able to correct 23 more errors accounting for the 97.77% of the errors.

Table 4.
Most common errors

Type of error	N.	Identified	Corrected (C2)	Corrected (C3)	Total % corrected
Vocabulary	135	109	106	29	97.7
Tense	68	55	50	10	88.23
Preposition	38	32	18	11	76.31
Spelling	36	36	36	0	100

For teachers, this process is enriching in its own way since it is a source of information on the categories of students' most common mistakes. Teachers can provide learners with the necessary mediation after the error nature identification (Isavi, 2012), and therefore improve learners' writing ability. They could even check if students are able to understand the errors they made by themselves or not and increase the explicitness of further mediation. Echoing García (2018), DA provides the instructor with a better idea of how to structure their classes more productively. Eventually, teachers could make later decisions on where to intervene or what to review next in the class as well or make individual learning recommendations.

7.3.4 Prognosis

The underlying potential of DA beyond diagnosis is that it promotes significant interaction aimed at the learner's ZPD as well as promotes learners' conceptual development. Furthermore, it allows teachers and researchers to explore the appropriation of the mediation offered, in other words, it identifies the level of mediation learners need to self-regulate their learning. The following table shows the hypothetical number of cases in which students responded to mediation in the present writing assignment for the errors presented above. Mediational instruction moves from more implicit to more explicit starting from error saliency and ending in error explanation.

Table 5.
Mediation appropriation

Mediation	Total error cases	Cases of appropriation	% of mediation
Minimal mediation: learner responded to error saliency.	277	210	75.81%
Medium mediation: learner responded to error identification.	67	50	18.05%
Maximum mediation: learner responded to error explanation.	17	14	5.05%
Unsuccessful mediation.	3	3	1.08%

In short, apart from allowing teachers to examine the reasons why learners are not able to complete certain tasks independently (diagnosis), DA allows us to establish the quality and quantity of mediation needed to complete a task satisfactorily, and to discover learner's potential for development.

8. CONCLUSIONS

The application of Dynamic Assessment in EFL secondary classroom is the result of a thorough study in innovative lines of educational research and educational psychology. In particular, a research into those alternative forms of assessment that are able to accommodate classroom diversity, to enhance opportunities for development, and to enrich both students and instructors experiences. Although the original goal in this study was to update EFL assessment procedures knowledge while improving English writing learning, the needs and assessment weaknesses observed during a shadowing period in an EFL department of a secondary school highlight the imperative necessity of reconsidering assessment procedures and assessment goals.

The sociocultural theory presents a particular assessment framework and different guidelines to apply it in linguistic settings. Vygotsky's theory claims that ZPD interaction allows instructors to diagnose and assess both the actual and the potential language development. Additionally, DA could promote language development in the process (Antón, 2008; Poehner & Lantolf 2005; Ableeva, 2010).

As educators or educational leaders we should be aware of testing short term and long term consequences. Tests could be high-stakes or low-stakes depending on how the evaluation procedure would affect examinees and other stakeholders such as education authorities, university applicants, schools, etc. (Impact, 2017). A composition grade may be low-stakes for some students but for those graduating seniors applying to medicine school, each assessment could be a high-stake one. The higher-stakes one examination is, the more consideration should be given to its reliability and validity. However, even low-stakes examinations have personal consequences at an emotional level. We should not test on one way or another just because that is the way we have been tested. Static and dynamic testing have their advantages and disadvantages and this research attempts to present the pedagogical opportunities that employing dynamic assessment can bring to EFL writing development. More research is needed on DA to fully understand its impact on foreign language acquisition and development.

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