



Research Article

The Role of Dynamic and Non-Dynamic Assessment in Iranian Intermediate EFL Students' Descriptive Writing Ability

Zaman Kargozari ¹, Mohammad Rostampour ², Leila Akbarpour ³

1,2, 3. Department of English Language, Shiraz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Shiraz, Iran

* Corresponding author: Mohammad Rostampour, Email: mo.rostampour@iau.ac.ir

ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<p>Submission History</p> <p>Received: 2024-03-04 Accepted: 2024-07-24</p> <hr/> <p>Keywords</p> <p>Descriptive Writing Dynamic Assessment Interactionist DA Interventionist DA</p>	<p><i>Dynamic Assessment (DA) method which combines instruction and assessment can reveal the extent to which the language learners have acquired what they have been taught. This quasi-experimental study examined the role of interactionist and interventionist DA on Iranian English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students' descriptive writing ability. This study also explored whether there is any relationship between students' attention to specific components of descriptive writing and their writing performance. To this end, 90 EFL learners who were at the intermediate level of language proficiency, based on the results of the Oxford Placement Test (OPT), constituted the sample of the study. The participants were requested to write a descriptive essay as a pretest. Then, they were randomly assigned to control, interventionist, and interactionist groups. During the mediation step, the control group was provided with the traditional teaching methodology, but the experimental groups were trained based on the DA method through distinct mediators. The students were finally asked to write a descriptive writing on a new topic for the post-test. To analyze the data, the descriptive statistics, paired samples t-test, one-way ANOVA, correlation, and regression analyses were run. The findings of this study indicated that the dynamic assessment proved to be effective in enhancing the writing competence of the participants; however, the impact of the interactionist approach was significantly higher than the interventionist one. The findings also revealed the significant relationships between students' attention to specific components and their overall writing performance, except Mechanics. These findings highlight the effectiveness of dynamic assessment approaches, particularly the interactionist method, in enhancing EFL students' descriptive writing skills.</i></p>

Introduction

Dynamic Assessment (DA) is a concept rooted in the Zone of Proximal Development, introduced by Vygotsky within the framework of social constructivist learning theory. It

encompasses two sub-branches: interactionist and interventionist approaches. Descriptive writing holds a crucial role in foreign language instruction, and DA can serve as an effective method to evaluate students' descriptive writing

skills. By analyzing participants' writing samples and providing constructive feedback, educators can assist students in enhancing their descriptive writing abilities.

Statement of the Problem

Writing assessment is a daunting area within the testing and evaluation methods. As researchers in both first and second language acquisition have noted, this presents a significant challenge arising from the diverse contexts in which writing is utilized by a wide range of individuals across various settings. This concept cannot be easily defined in a way that encompasses all characteristics of this skill (Camp, 2012). Generally, educators attempt to put forth their experiences in teaching in the evaluation process and involve themselves as active readers who try to understand and analyze their students' writing. Evaluating writing presents some ineligible daunts as written language is not just some spoken language that has been conveyed to a paper; relatively, it is a mode of communication, involving many sociocultural factors and cognitive procedures among other issues (Weigle, 2002). Accordingly, the problem might be unraveled with a meticulous study of the students' writing, they express their ideas on a sheet of paper to be evaluated later on, to see whether they can be judged solely based on their writing skills or some other factors might be involved (Graham & Rijlaarsdam, 2016).

A plethora of instructors are now more oriented toward Assessment for Learning (AfL) rather than Assessment of Learning (AoL) (Earl, 2013; Lee & Coniam, 2013; Dann, 2014). AoL interprets the results based on previous learning, while AfL promotes learning (Black et al., 2004; William, 2001). Some critics believe that the assessment of learning is product-oriented and decontextualized (Sadeghi & Rahmati, 2017), which cannot present a comprehensive image of the learning procedure as a result. However, assessment for learning is more popular as it meets previously accomplished learning procedures and actively involves learners in the learning procedure. Furthermore, AfL considers learning purposes to be necessary for both students and teachers in their development and evaluation journey (Gardner, 2006; Jones & William, 2008; Sadeghi & Rahmati, 2017).

Assessment and evaluation have always made the learning process easier and opened new doors for entering new teaching methods. Dynamic evaluation means examining the intervals of training and intervention and the progress of the individual. Dynamic assessment, which comprises two sub-branches: interventional approach and interactive approach expands assessment for learning with a great emphasis on the learning procedure and supports the perception that teaching and assessment are strongly intertwined.

In this vein, the role of interactionist or interventionist dynamic assessment will be evaluated in the writing section.

Significance of the Study

Nowadays, it is not only common but also necessary for everyone to learn a foreign or second language. Individuals can extend their communication abilities through speaking and writing. The use of emails and text messages has significantly increased the amount of written communication. As a result, writing is no longer seen as just a formal communication skill, but rather a skill that learners need to excel in due to the demand for new forms of written communication.

Writing is considered as one of the most challenging skills in second/foreign language learning. It is not just a usual skill, but an essential part of modern life due to the various forms of written communication such as messages, emails, letters, etc. According to Marashi and Jafari (2012), the difficulty lies not only on generating and organizing ideas, but also in translating these ideas into readable texts.

One of the four language skills, writing a coherent and well-written piece has been the most complex task in both first and second language learning. Foreign language learners often find writing to be a challenging task. One reason for this difficulty is the lack of suitable instruction for this skill which can be dealt with if appropriate instruction and assessment is employed.

Since assessment endeavors to bridge the gap between learning and teaching in academic settings, a recurring tendency in EFL/ESL writing instruction has attracted researcher's attention toward the concepts related to writing assessment (Connor & Mbaye, 2002). The shift of attention and focus on the writing assessment have increased rapidly in the last few years which resulted in raising teachers' and educators'

awareness of significant testing difficulties such as reliability and validity, test types and purposes, and particular methods of writing assessment. The testimony of this amplified consideration is several publications in recent decades that have considered or reconsidered the problems related to foreign language writing assessment (Cumming, 2001; Connor & Mbaye, 2002; McConnell, 2002; Marlin, 2003; Hargreaves, 2007; Bizhani, 2009; Siyyari, 2011). Although assessment in second/foreign language writing presents remarkable findings, this evaluation has not gone far beyond traditional methods concerning some other aspects, such as the presence of the students in the assessment procedure or considering the personality of the students on their performance in writing specific genres.

In general, DA is a path to evaluate students' achievements by inserting an intermediary in the evaluation process and trying to encompass evaluation and learning. The different DA models have been used in SLA and have confirmed their essential aids. However, there is a lack of studies on their application to learn descriptive writing skills. Therefore, this study is designed to use interventionist and DA interaction methods and to examine the impact of each method on students' performance.

Objectives of the Study

This study attempts to explore the impact of DA on English descriptive essay writing. After a meticulous study of DA and its underlying concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) along with its application to foreign language educational contexts, the two approaches of DA, namely, interventionist or interactionist, will be applied to assess the development of descriptive writing ability. This study aims to determine the extent to which each of these methods might help students. The results of the present research will expand the development of educators, the teaching community, and researchers concerning the significant role of assessment and how some other factors might be involved indirectly.

To attain the objectives of this quasi-experimental research, the following research questions were formulated:

1. Do the dynamic and non-dynamic assessments have any impact on the development of

Iranian EFL learners' descriptive writing ability?

2. Which method, traditional, interventionist dynamic assessment, or interactionist dynamic assessment, most effectively facilitates the development of descriptive writing skills?
3. Is there any relationship between students' attention to specific components of descriptive writing (namely, content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics) and performance?

Literature Review

Dynamic Assessment (DA)

DA is a method used to identify individual differences and their implications for instructional objectives by combining intervention with assessment measures. Some fundamental assumptions constructing this approach involve: 1) mental procedures are adjustable, 2) assessment is a communicative approach moving along with a learning stage, and 3) the principal objective of the assessment is to help students understand their potential and hidden abilities (Lidz & Gindis, 2003). In effect, DA conceptions sharply contradict with non-DA trainings that focus on students' individual actions and activities. Vygotsky (1978) believed that solitary performance in assessment circumstances merely demonstrates abilities that already have been improved, leaving behind those unknown elements in the development process. Accordingly, DA pays attention to both what students can attain individually and what they can attain through proper mediation. Therefore, DA covers both diagnostic and prognostic functions. These two aspects root from a fundamental alteration in the essence of the examinee and examiner connection, proceeding from an impartial and neutral behavior to teaching along with assisting action (Lidz & Gindis, 2003). Therefore, the obtained image from DA of a student's skills is relatively mature which implies potential guidance for further intervention (Anton, 2009).

The ZPD, as stated by Vygotsky (1978), is highly involved in DA. The ZPD is described as the distance between the actual progressive stage as identified by individual problem-solving and the stage of potential progression as identified by problem solving through educator's guidance or

in association with more competitive partners (Vygotsky, 1978).

Second language studies depict the influential mediation of ZPD activities as a function of the way it is emerged and exchanged in communications, which naturally take place between a student and an instructor. Following, Aljaafreh and Lantolf (1994), this mediation is progressed, conditional, and conversational. Mediation attributed to a student's ZPD turns into an increasingly more meticulous and explicit (i.e., progressed) contingent on the student's reaction. Mediation is also dependent, implying that it presents only when required and eliminated as soon as the student reveals proof of self-control and independent activity. Progressed and contingent mediation may appear as the mediator exchanges information with the student (i.e., conversation). The concepts have been employed to validate teacher-student relations in interactionist and interventionist DA (Lantolf & Poehner, 2010). A central difference between these two elements involves their approach toward mediation or the tentative autonomy mediators possess to react to students' problems and to follow daunting issues as they evolve throughout the communication. In interventionist DA, mediation widely scripts on a prompting scale of growing specificity concerning a present issue, such as a linguistic error. The interventionist expert thoroughly studies the scale prompt by prompt based on the student's reactions. Interactionist DA is, alternatively, more conversational and open-ended. The mediator possesses a mediatory-free space to adopt any measure that appears to be appropriate for the student based on their ZPD path (Lantolf & Poehner, 2010; Kushki et al., 2022).

Different Types of DA

DA is an approach that focuses on understanding the learning process of an individual. It involves a process of assessment and intervention, where the assessor assesses the individual's strengths and weaknesses and then intervenes to help the individual improve. This type of assessment is beneficial for assessing individuals with learning difficulties or those who are culturally and linguistically diverse. In this essay, we will focus on the different kinds of dynamic assessments for descriptive writing ability.

Mediated Assessment

Mediated assessment is a form of DA that involves an assessor working with the individual to develop their descriptive writing ability. In mediated assessment, the assessor provides support and guidance to the individual, helping them to understand the process of descriptive writing and to develop their skills. This form of assessment is particularly useful for individuals struggling with descriptive writing, as it allows them to receive feedback and support in real time.

Graduated Prompts

Graduated prompts are another form of DA for descriptive writing ability. In graduated prompts, the assessor provides prompts of varying difficulty to the individual, starting with more straightforward prompts and gradually increasing the difficulty of the prompts. This form of assessment allows the assessor to understand the individual's strengths and weaknesses in descriptive writing and to identify areas for improvement. Graduated prompts are handy for individuals who are struggling with descriptive writing, as they allow the individual to work at their own pace and to develop their skills gradually.

Test-Teach-Test

The test-teach-test approach is a form of DA that involves an initial assessment of the individual's descriptive writing ability, followed by a period of teaching and intervention, and then a final assessment to determine whether the intervention has been successful. This form of assessment is beneficial for individuals who are struggling with descriptive writing, as it allows the assessor to identify areas for improvement and to provide targeted intervention to address these areas.

Interactive Assessment

Interactive assessment is a form of DA that involves the individual and the assessor working together to develop the individual's descriptive writing ability. In interactive assessment, the assessor provides feedback and support to the individual, helping them to understand the process of descriptive writing and to develop their skills. This form of assessment is beneficial for individuals who are struggling with descriptive

writing, as it allows them to receive feedback and support in real-time and to work collaboratively with the assessor to improve their skills.

Collaborative Assessment

Collaborative assessment is a form of DA that involves the individual and the assessor working together to develop the individual's descriptive writing ability. In collaborative assessment, the assessor and the individual work together to develop a plan for improving the individual's descriptive writing ability, with the assessor providing guidance and support throughout the process. This form of assessment is handy for individuals who are struggling with descriptive writing, as it allows them to work collaboratively with the assessor to identify areas for improvement and to develop targeted interventions to address these areas.

Dynamic Assessment in the Classroom

Descriptive writing is an essential component of EFL instruction, as it allows students to develop their vocabulary, grammar, and communication skills. However, assessing student's descriptive writing ability can be challenging, as traditional assessments may not provide a comprehensive understanding of a student's potential for growth.

Dynamic assessment can be an effective way to assess students' descriptive writing ability in the EFL classroom. By identifying a student's strengths and weaknesses, as well as their ZPD, teachers can provide targeted instruction and feedback to help them develop their descriptive writing skills. During the assessment phase of dynamic assessment, teachers can use various techniques to evaluate students' descriptive writing ability. These may include analyzing student writing samples, observing students as they write, and conducting one-on-one interviews to identify students' strengths and weaknesses.

Once a student's ZPD has been identified, the teacher can use targeted instruction and feedback to help them develop their descriptive writing skills. This may involve scaffolding, such as graphic organizers or sentence starters, to help students organize their ideas and develop their writing skills. Teachers may also provide feedback on students' writing samples, highlighting areas for improvement and guiding. Duron et al., (2006) presented a five-step framework that can be used

in any classroom to help students gain critical thinking skills. The steps present as follows:

Step 1. "Determining learning objectives" (Duron et al., 2006, p.161). At this step, the teacher should identify the vital learning objectives that determine the behaviors students should show when the students leave the class. In order to improve critical thinking, learning objectives, activities, and assessments should match with target behaviors in higher-order thinking.

A good objective should contain a behavior suitable for the chosen level. Some suitable questions at this level that students could answer are what and who, and also the students should be able to explain everything. The students should understand the information by answering correctly to the comprehension parts. At this level, the students should be able to explain, paraphrase, compare, and contrast.

Step 2. "Teaching through questioning" (Duron et al., 2006, p.161). Asking questions is crucial in teaching and learning processes because teachers can understand how much their students have learned. Then, the teachers can develop new ideas and lessons according to how much their students have learned. Asking questions creates an interaction between teacher and learner, so the learner tries to defend himself and his position which leads to thinking critically. According to many researchers, among many strategies that can influence students' thinking, teachers' questions are the ones that have the most significant impact. They believe that the level of students' thinking is related to the level of questions the teachers ask. When the teachers consider the purpose of asking each question and consider the suitable level and form of the questions to match the purpose, the students think more critically about their answers.

Step 3. "Practicing before you assess" (Duron et al., 2006, p.161). At this step, the students should be active in their learning. Fink (2003) mentions that active learning shows that students learn more and retain knowledge for a long time when they get that knowledge in an active manner rather than a passive manner. In order to make students active in learning, we need to provide some opportunities and learning experiences or situations for students for reflective activities.

Step 4. "Reviewing, refining, and improving" (Duron et al., 2006, p.161). For this step, teachers

refine their courses in order to make instructional techniques that are useful for students to develop critical thinking skills in them. To achieve this goal, teachers should monitor their students' activities very carefully. During the monitoring process, teachers should notice the students who participate in class activities, and teachers should keep an assessment of their students' success. Another helpful point in improving a course is collecting feedback from students. One technique for collecting student's feedback is a 2-minute paper that wants students to present their ideas about the most critical point they have taught (Duron et al., 2006).

Step 5. "Providing feedback and assessment of learning" (Duron et al., 2006, p.161). Fink (2003) mentions that teachers' feedback like assessment compares standards to students' performance and evaluates their performance, too. Teachers' feedback has different purposes that include improving the students' learning and performance, grading their performance, and helping students to assess their performance in the future. Teachers can also utilize the obtained feedback to improve the quality of instruction, so they should be purposeful when providing feedback. They should provide good feedback to their students in order to encourage their students to practice what they are expected to do at the assessment time (Duron et al., 2006).

Vygotsky's (1978) view emphasizes the principle that ongoing relationships and interactions in the social environment play a fundamental and essential role in the development of mental processes. Therefore, activities that are mediated by cultural subjects and other people will play a favorable role in the forming of higher forms of alertness and awareness. He believes that learning happens first through social interactions and secondly through internalizing behaviors. The number of research regarding dynamic evaluation in the field of teaching English as a foreign language is not very high (Harsch & Poehner, 2016). Until today, a limited number of studies have investigated the performance of second language students from the perspective of dynamic evaluation. However, the increasing interest of applied linguists in Vygotsky's (1978) opinion has led to the authoring of some works and research about the functioning of DA in the second language context (Naeini & Duvall, 2012) language skills such as reading

(Ebadi & Rahimi, 2019; Farrokh & Rahmani, 2017), speaking (Derakhshan & Shakki, 2016). Also, grammar and vocabulary have been investigated (Ebadi & Asakereh, 2017; Hill & Sabet, 2009; Bahramlou & Esmaeili, 2019; Poehner & Lantolf, 2005; Sadeghi & Khanahmadi, 2011) but its effect on some Different aspects of semantics have received less attention.

Methodology

Research Design

The current study, being an empirical investigation that examined the effects of DA on EFL learners' descriptive writing ability without random assignment, can be classified as a quasi-experimental research design. Unlike true experimental studies, quasi-experimental research lacks the element of random assignment of participants to treatment or control conditions. The present investigation employed two experimental groups that received instruction based on the DA methods, and one control group that was taught using the regular method with traditional instruction.

Participants

The participants of this study were 90 intermediate-level adult Iranian EFL learners recruited from a prominent language institute in Shiraz. The sample was selected using a non-probability sampling approach to ensure an equal representation of male and female learners. The age range of the participants was restricted to 18-35 years, and their first language was confirmed to be Persian. Prior to the treatment phase, to verify the participants' homogeneity in English proficiency, all participants completed an online Oxford Placement Test.

Instrumentation

Descriptive Writing

This study employed an analytic scoring rubric for descriptive writing, which was based on Brown's (2007) framework. The rubric assessed five aspects of writing: content, organization, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics. Each aspect was scored with content receiving the highest weight at 30%. Organization and grammar were each weighted at 20%, while vocabulary and mechanics were each weighted at 15%. This distribution of weights reflected the relative

importance of the different writing components in descriptive writing assessment.

Oxford Test of English

To ensure the homogeneity of the participants' English proficiency before the treatment phase, two separate tests were administered. The first test assessed the participants' grammar knowledge, while the second test evaluated their vocabulary skills. Both tests consisted of 40 multiple-choice questions and were based on the Oxford Test of English (2021). After completing the tests, the participants' proficiency levels were determined based on the results provided by the testing website.

Procedures for Data Collection

After the participants completed the Oxford Placement Test (OPT) to establish their homogeneity in English proficiency, the study was conducted in three distinct phases: pretest, mediation, and post-test. Each phase served a specific purpose in the research design and contributed to the overall investigation of the research questions. The following sections provide a detailed explanation of the procedures and activities that took place during each phase of the study.

Pretest

All students were requested to write a descriptive essay before the treatment. The essays were collected, analyzed, and then scored based on the Brown's (2007) rubric for assessing descriptive writing. Students' scores were recorded for each participant and analyzed later. Then, they were randomly and equally assigned to interventionist, interactionist, and control groups. The mediator was experienced teacher of English as a foreign language and DA practitioner with a relevant research background and publication record.

Mediation

The experimental groups attended five two-hour-long weekly sessions after the pretest, throughout these sessions the instructor introduced and clarified the concept of descriptive writing along with the scoring criteria to help them understand the components and their significant role in the outcome.

To achieve this, the instructor presented the class with three sample essays to deconstruct based on the model. These essays were designed

precisely for instructional purposes and contained all of the model's components. The instructor modeled the task for the first writing, while the second and third essays were practiced by the class. After a thoroughly analyzing of the first three essays, students were asked to bring in a descriptive essay of around 300 words for each session. General topics such as technology, travel and holidays, environment, education, and friends were assigned, and their works were reviewed in the lesson.

The instructor provided regular, traditional feedback (without following DA procedures) on the presence or absence of the components of a descriptive essay in the control group. The feedback was presented orally to the whole class. On the other hand, "distinct mediatory" moves were followed by the instructor for the interactionist and interventionist groups. For the interactionist group, moves were not pre-specified, and proper and suitable assistance could emerge from interactions and conversations on problematic areas during the lessons. Assistance was graduated and contingent, depending on the participant's responsiveness to each move (Aljaafreh & Lantolf, 1994). Mediation was highly sensitive to ZPD. For the interventionist group, the mediator provides a collaborative mediation through predetermined steps and prompts including presenting the students with a problematic paragraph, asking them to spot an error, and finally demonstrating and clarifying it.

Posttest

One week after the last session, students were asked to write a descriptive essay on a new topic. However, the topic chose from some other general areas for writing, such as sports, music, health, or books and films, with a similar theme and difficulty level. Same as the pretest, no mediation offered on the posttest. The time limit for both the pretest and posttest was set at 40 minutes. Post-test essays were collected and scored using the same scoring procedures as the pre-test essays.

To ensure the reliability of the scoring for the participants' descriptive writings, interrater reliability estimates were conducted. Two experienced raters, who were trained on the analytic scoring rubric, independently evaluated the writing samples. The interrater reliability

analysis revealed a high degree of consistency between the raters' scores, indicating that the scoring process was reliable and the writing assessments could be considered trustworthy measures of the participants' descriptive writing ability.

Results

Q1 .Do dynamic or non-dynamic assessments have any impact on the development of Iranian EFL learners' descriptive writing ability?

Before starting the treatment, the participants were evaluated through a related pretest. At the end of the study, a post-test was administered to three groups one control and two experimental

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics of Pre and Post-test Scores of Interactionist Group

Interactionist Group	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Content-pre	19.80	4.41	0.80
Content-post	24.50	4.58	0.84
Organization-pre	13.27	3.14	0.57
Organization post	17.40	3.12	0.57
Grammar-pre	13.23	3.22	0.59
Grammar-post	17.37	2.70	0.49
Vocabulary-pre	10.53	2.32	0.42
Vocabulary-post	14.23	2.13	0.39
Mechanics-pre	10.50	2.32	0.42
Mechanics-post	14.23	2.13	0.39
Total-pre	67.27	13.18	2.41
Total- post	87.67	12.97	2.37

The results presented in Table 1 revealed that the interactionist group received higher post-test mean scores compared with the pretest scores. Afterward, to examine if the difference between the interactionist groups' pre and post-test mean

groups. To investigate the impact of dynamic and non-dynamic assessment approaches on the development of Iranian EFL learners' descriptive writing ability, the paired samples *t*-test analysis was performed. This statistical test allowed for the comparison of the participants' descriptive writing performance before and after the implementation of the two assessment methods.

The descriptive statistics presented in Table 1 reveal the mean scores and standard deviations for the pre-test and post-test descriptive writing scores of the interactionist group under. These results provide an overview of the interactionist group participants' performance before and after the treatment.

scores is significant, paired samples *t*-tests were run on the groups' pretest and post-test. Table 2 summarizes the results of the paired samples *t*-tests.

Table 2

Paired sample t-test to Compare Pre and Post-test Scores of the Interactionist Group

Components descriptive writing	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval		t	p-value
			Lower	Upper		
Content	3.83	0.70	-6.13	-3.27	-6.71	.000
Organization	2.58	0.47	-5.10	-3.17	-8.77	.000
Grammar	2.87	0.52	-5.21	-3.06	-7.88	.000
Vocabulary	2.23	0.41	-4.53	-2.87	-9.09	.000
Mechanics	2.29	0.42	-4.59	-2.88	-8.94	.000
total	12.88	2.35	-25.21	-15.59	-8.68	.000

Paired sample *t*-test shows the interaction treatment effects on component of descriptive writing significantly. According to Table 2, there was a statistically significant increase in the interactionist group participants' total writing

score from the pretest (M=67.27, SD=13.18) to the post-test (M=87.67, SD=12.97), $t(29)=-6.71$, $p < .05$.

The paired-test was conducted to compare the score before and after interaction treatment. As it

can see this treatment has a significant impact on all components of descriptive writing (p -value <0.05). As can be seen in Table 2, concerning the components of descriptive writing, the participants' post-test scores were higher than their pretest scores. Afterward, to examine if the

difference between the interventionist groups' pre and post-test mean scores is significant, paired samples t -tests were run to compare their pre and post-test scores. Table 3 depicts the paired samples t -tests results.

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics Pre and Post-test Scores of Interventionist Group

Interventionist Group	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Content_pre	19.80	4.41	0.80
Content_post	21.80	4.00	0.73
Organization_pre	13.27	3.14	0.57
Organization_post	15.83	2.82	0.51
Grammar_pre	13.23	3.22	0.59
Grammar_post	15.93	3.02	0.55
Vocabulary_pre	10.53	2.32	0.42
Vocabulary_post	13.13	1.80	0.33
Mechanics_pre	10.50	2.32	0.42
Mechanics_post	13.13	1.80	0.33
Total_pre	67.27	13.18	2.41
Total_post	79.93	12.44	2.27

The results of the descriptive statistics showed that the interventionist group gained higher scores in the total post-test as well as the components of descriptive writing compared to the pre-test scores. To see if there was any significant

difference between the pre and post-test scores of the interventionist group, the paired samples t -tests were run on the pre and post-test scores. Table 4 displays the pertaining results.

Table 4

Paired sample T-Test to Compare Pre and Post-test Scores of the Interventionist Group

Components descriptive writing	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval		t	p-value
			Lower	Upper		
Content	5.43	0.99	-4.03	0.03	-2.02	.053
Organization	3.85	0.70	-4.00	-1.13	-3.65	.001
Grammar	3.91	0.71	-4.16	-1.24	-3.79	.001
Vocabulary	2.80	0.51	-3.65	-1.55	-5.09	.000
Mechanics	2.79	0.51	-3.67	-1.59	-5.18	.000
Total	17.20	3.14	-19.09	-6.25	-4.04	.000

The comparison of pretest and posttest of the intervention treatment demonstrated the statistically significant increase in the total score from the pretest ($M=67.27$, $SD=13.18$) to the post-test ($M=79.93$, $SD=12.44$) meaning that the intervention treatment enhanced learners' descriptive writing. The results of

the paired sample t -test also showed the effects of the intervention treatment on the component of descriptive writing significantly except content. Table 5 displays the results of paired samples t -test comparing the control group's pre and post-test scores.

Table 5

Paired sample T-Test to Compare Pre and Post-test Scores of the Control Group

	Mean Difference	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
				Lower	Upper			
Content	-.03	.183	.033	-.102	.035	-1.00	29	0.33
Organization	-.03	.183	.033	-.102	.035	-1.00	29	0.32
Grammar	-.167	.379	.069	-.308	-.025	-2.408	29	.023
Vocabulary	-.167	.379	.069	-.308	-.025	-2.408	29	.023

	Mean Difference	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Lower	Upper	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Mechanics	-.167	.379	.069	-.30	-.025	-2.408	29	.023
Total	2.67	2.54	0.46	1.72	3.61	5.76	29.00	0.00

The comparative analysis of pretest and post-test scores for the control group revealed a statistically significant improvement in overall performance. Specifically, the mean score increased from the pretest to the posttest in Grammar, Vocabulary, and Mechanics. This indicates that the descriptive writing abilities of the control group participants improved following the course.

Q2. Which method, traditional, interventionist dynamic assessment, or interactionist dynamic assessment, most effectively facilitates the development of descriptive writing skills?

To investigate if there is a significant difference between the interactionist, interventionist and control groups' post-test writing scores, the One-way NOVA was run. Tables 6 and 7 summarize the results of the descriptive statistics of three groups' post-test scores and the One-way ANOVA, respectively.

Table 6
Descriptive Statistics

	Group	Mean	Std. Deviation
Content	Control	19.10	2.040
	Interaction	24.50	4.577
	Intervention	21.80	4.003
Organization	Control	15.17	2.547
	Interaction	17.40	3.125
	Intervention	15.83	2.817
Grammar	Control	14.83	2.627
	Interaction	17.37	2.697
	Intervention	15.93	3.016
Vocabulary	Control	11.73	1.337
	Interaction	14.23	2.128
	Intervention	13.13	1.795
Mechanic	Control	11.73	1.337
	Interaction	14.23	2.128
	Intervention	13.13	1.795

According to Table 6, the interactionist group received higher mean scores compared with other groups.

Table 7

One-way ANOVA to Compare three Groups in terms of Their Post-test Descriptive Writing Scores

		Sum of Squares	df	F	p-value
Content	Between Groups	437.400	2	15.949	.000
	Within Groups	1193.000	87		
	Total	1630.400	89		
Organization	Between Groups	78.867	2	4.890	.000
	Within Groups	701.533	87		
	Total	780.400	89		
Grammar	Between Groups	96.822	2	6.240	.003
	Within Groups	675.000	87		
	Total	771.822	89		
Vocabulary	Between Groups	94.200	2	14.809	.000
	Within Groups	276.700	87		
	Total	370.900	89		
Mechanic	Between Groups	94.200	2	14.809	.000
	Within Groups	276.700	87		
	Total	370.900	89		

According to Table 7, there was a statistically significant difference at the $p < .05$ level in the content ($F(2,87)=15.94$), Organization ($F(2,87)=4.89$), Grammar ($F(2,87)=6.24$), Vocabulary ($F(2,87)=14.80$), and Mechanic ($F(2,87)=14.80$). In the next step to find out exactly where the differences among the groups

occurred, the post-hoc comparisons using the Tuckey HSD test was run. The significant results of the post-hoc test are shown in Table 8.

Table 8
Summary of Post-hoc Test Results

Variable	Group differences	p-value
Content	Interaction> Intervention	.016
	Interaction> Control	.016
	Intervention> Control	.000
Organization	Intervention> Control	.009
Grammar	Intervention> Control	.002
Vocabulary	Interaction> Intervention	.049
	Interaction> Control	.009
	Intervention> Control	.000
Mechanics	Interaction> Intervention	.049
	Interaction> Control	.009
	Intervention> Control	.000

The results of the post-hoc analysis indicate significant differences between the interactionist and interventionist DA methods concerning the components of descriptive writing ability. The interactionist group outperformed the interventionist group with mean scores of $M = 24.50$, $SD = 4.57$ for Content, $M = 14.23$, $SD = 2.12$ for Vocabulary, and $M = 14.23$, $SD = 2.12$ for Mechanics. This suggests that the interactionist approach is more effective in enhancing these specific aspects of writing. However, it is noteworthy that no significant differences were found between the two groups regarding Organization and Grammar, indicating that both methods may equally support learners in these areas. Furthermore, both the interactionist and interventionist groups demonstrated superior performance compared to the control group across Content, Vocabulary, and Mechanics components of descriptive writing, highlighting the efficacy of DA approaches in improving EFL students' writing skills in these components. In addition, the intervention group outperformed the control group in Organization and Grammar components.

Q3. Is there any relationship between students' attention to specific component of descriptive writing (namely, content, organization, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics) and performance?

To find out if there is any relationship between the participants' five components of descriptive writing and their total writing

performance, the regression and correlation were run. Figure 1 illustrates the regression and correlation between five components of descriptive writing on total writing performance, this figure shows the standardized Regression coefficient of the Content score on the total writing performance is $.045$ (p -value < 0.05) statistically significant. The regression coefficient of organization is $.021$ (p -value < 0.05), Grammar equals $.026$ (p -value < 0.05). The regression coefficient of Vocabulary is $.044$ (p -value < 0.05). All of the components are significant except Mechanics equal to $.087$ (p -value > 0.05) which is not statistically significant.

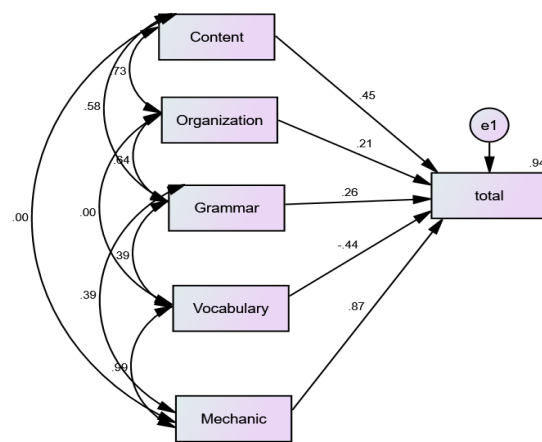


Figure 1. Standard Regression Weights of each component

Table 9 shows the standard regression weights of each component on the total scores of descriptive writing.

Table 9
Standardized Regression Weights: (Group number 1 - Default model)

		Estimate
total	<--- Content	.449
total	<--- Organization	.212
total	<--- Grammar	.258
total	<--- Vocabulary	-.440
total	<--- Mechanic	.870

Table 10 displays the Estimate Regression, Standard Error., and Covariance, and p -value.

Table 10

Regression Weights: (Group number 1 - Default model)

			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Label
total	<---	Content	1.092	.098	11.120	***	par_1
total	<---	Organization	.745	.153	4.869	***	par_2
total	<---	Grammar	1.086	.174	6.226	***	par_3
total	<---	Vocabulary	-2.247	.832	-2.702	.007	par_4
total	<---	Mechanic	4.438	.831	5.338	***	par_5

All the components of descriptive writing is statistically significant on total writing performance of the participants, hence all the components evaluated the performance, except mechanics.

Discussion and Conclusion

The present study aimed to investigate the effects of interactionist and interventionist dynamic assessments on EFL students' descriptive writing ability. The findings revealed significant improvements in the interactionist group's performance across all components of descriptive writing, including Content, Organization, Grammar, Vocabulary, and Mechanics, from the pretest to the posttest. The interventionist group also demonstrated statistically significant increases in their total writing score and most components, except Content, suggesting that both DA approaches positively impact students' descriptive writing skills.

The interactionist group's significant improvement in all aspects of descriptive writing can be attributed to the collaborative nature of the assessment process. By engaging in interactive dialogues with their peers and the instructor, students in the interactionist group had the opportunity to receive immediate feedback, negotiate meaning, and co-construct knowledge. This interactive approach aligns with the sociocultural theory of learning, which emphasizes the role of social interaction in cognitive development (Vygotsky, 1978). Through collaborative dialogue, students in the interactionist group were able to internalize the necessary skills and strategies for effective descriptive writing, leading to significant gains in all components.

The interventionist group's significant improvement in most components of descriptive writing, except Content, can be explained by the

structured nature of the assessment process. In the interventionist approach, students received targeted feedback and guidance from the instructor, which helped them identify and address specific areas for improvement. This structured approach allowed students to focus on developing their writing skills in a systematic manner, leading to significant gains in Organization, Grammar, Vocabulary, and Mechanics. However, the lack of significant improvement in Content may suggest that the interventionist approach is less effective in enhancing the depth and richness of ideas in descriptive writing compared to the interactionist approach. The control group's significant improvement in overall descriptive writing performance from the pretest to the posttest can be attributed to the regular writing instruction and practice they received during the course.

The finding of this research related to the positive impact of dynamic assessment on the descriptive writing competence of learners can also be justified by the fact that improving the autonomy of learners means motivating students "to determine the objectives, define the contents and progressions, select methods and techniques to be used, to monitor the procedures of acquisition and to evaluate what has been acquired" (Holec, 1981, p. 3). During this process, the autonomous learner determines "a personal agenda for learning" (Little, 1994; Chan, 2003) by making directions in the "planning, pacing, monitoring, and evaluating the learning process" (Balcikanli, 2010, p.90). It is believed that if students are "involved in decision-making processes regarding their own language competence" (Balcikanli, 2010, p.90), "they are likely to be more enthusiastic about learning" (Littlejohn, 1985, p. 258), and learning can be more focused and purposeful for them (Chan, 2001, 2003).

The one-way ANOVA results also revealed significant differences between the interactionist and interventionist groups in Content, Vocabulary, and Mechanics, with the interactionist group outperforming the interventionist group in these areas. However, no significant differences were found between the two groups regarding Organization and Grammar, and both groups demonstrated superior performance compared to the control group across the Content, Vocabulary, and Mechanics components.

The observed significant differences in Content, Vocabulary, and Mechanics between the interactionist and interventionist groups can be attributed to the fundamental principles underlying each assessment approach. The interactionist DA method emphasizes collaborative learning and peer interaction, fostering a rich linguistic environment where students can negotiate meaning and receive immediate feedback. This interactive process not only enhances students' engagement but also promotes deeper cognitive processing of language, which is crucial for developing content richness and vocabulary diversity. The higher mean scores in these areas for the interactionist group suggest that the social context and collaborative nature of their learning experiences effectively facilitated the internalization of descriptive writing skills.

In contrast, the lack of significant differences in Organization and Grammar indicates that both assessment methods provide comparable support in these areas. This may suggest that the structured nature of writing instruction inherent in both approaches allows students to develop a foundational understanding of organizational strategies and grammatical accuracy, regardless of the specific method employed. Additionally, the performance of both the interactionist and interventionist groups surpassing that of the control group across Content, Vocabulary, and Mechanics components reinforces the notion that dynamic assessments, whether through interaction or intervention, are more effective than traditional methods. This finding underscores the importance of integrating DA strategies into EFL curricula to enhance overall writing proficiency, as both methods contribute positively to students' writing development.

The research question guiding this study sought to explore the relationship between students' attention to specific components of descriptive writing—namely Content, Organization, Grammar, Vocabulary, and Mechanics—and their overall writing performance. Understanding this relationship is crucial for educators aiming to enhance EFL students' writing skills, as it can inform instructional strategies that emphasize the most impactful elements of writing. By examining the interplay between these components and total writing performance, the study aimed to identify which aspects are most influential in fostering effective descriptive writing.

The results indicated that all components of descriptive writing, except Mechanics, exhibited a statistically significant relationship with the participants' total writing performance. This suggests that students' focus on Content, Organization, Grammar, and Vocabulary directly contributes to their overall success in descriptive writing tasks. The absence of a significant relationship with Mechanics may imply that while mechanical accuracy is important, it may not be as critical as the other components in influencing overall writing performance. This finding aligns with the notion that the clarity and richness of ideas (Content), logical structure (Organization), and linguistic precision (Grammar and Vocabulary) play a more pivotal role in achieving effective writing outcomes. Consequently, educators should prioritize these components in their instructional practices, fostering an environment that encourages students to engage deeply with the content and structure of their writing, while still addressing mechanical aspects as a supportive element of their writing development.

The findings of this study have several important implications for EFL teachers, educational authorities, and curriculum designers in enhancing students' descriptive writing abilities through DA approaches.

The results highlight the effectiveness of incorporating DA strategies into writing instruction. EFL teachers should consider adopting interactionist and interventionist approaches to foster students' descriptive writing skills. By engaging students in interactive assessment feedback, teachers can help learners develop a deeper understanding of the

components of effective writing, particularly in areas such as Content, Vocabulary, and Mechanics where the interactionist approach proved more beneficial. Additionally, teachers should emphasize the importance of all components of descriptive writing, as the study found significant relationships between students' attention to these elements and their overall writing performance, except for Mechanics.

Educational authorities can provide professional development opportunities for EFL teachers to learn about and implement DA approaches in their classrooms. This may include workshops, training sessions, and resources that highlight the benefits of interactionist and interventionist methods in improving students' writing skills.

Curriculum designers should incorporate DA strategies into EFL writing curricula, emphasizing the importance of interactive assessment and targeted feedback in enhancing students' descriptive writing abilities. Furthermore, curriculum designers should provide teachers with resources and materials that support the implementation of interactionist and interventionist DA approaches, such as sample lesson plans, assessment tools, and feedback strategies.

Given that this study focused on EFL learners aged between 18 and 35, future research could benefit from examining a broader range of age groups to account for the variations in cognitive and personal characteristics associated with different developmental stages. Additionally, while this study included both male and female participants, it is recommended that subsequent research replicate the investigation separately for each gender to ascertain whether the findings are consistent across male and female EFL learners. Furthermore, researchers should explore the comparative impact of interactionist and interventionist DA techniques on other language skills, thereby expanding the understanding of how these approaches influence overall language acquisition. Future research should explore the long-term effects of DA on students' writing skills and investigate the potential synergistic effects of combining interactionist and interventionist approaches.

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