

NOVEL APPROACHES AND METHODS OF TEACHING DYNAMIC ASSESSMENT PLUS USING LEXICAL BUNDLES TO TEACH ESL/EFL

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ABSTRACT

Dynamic assessment (DA) is recognized as an evolution that efforts to modify performance, through examiner assistance, in an endeavor to apprehend the teaching/learning potential. It stresses the requirement for unifying assessment and instruction. So, the teaching of DA plus Lexical Bundles (LBs) known as multi word-expressions in the classroom needs strategies and tactics which can account for the distinctive meaningful features of them. Likewise, in EFL (English as a foreign language) and ESL (English as a second language) learning situations, the instructors necessitate taking into consideration that the EFL/ESL are non-native speakers of English. Hence, the training and teaching of DA possibly will involve an outlook to texts as linguistic resources plus cultural artifacts. The ZPD (zone of proximal development) by Vygotsky's research into the development of cognitive functions reveals that process is not a matter of innate abilities growing into a mature state but that it is the emergence of new ways of thinking, acting, and being that result from an individual's engagement in activities where learners are supported by cultural artifacts and by interactions with others. In this way, the social environment is not merely the stage on which development plays out; it is, in fact, the driving force of development. Initially, the teaching of DA and LBs should be concerned with enabling students to experience it, and later to enable them to describe and eventually account for the knowledge by making critical comments. The definition of Lexical Bundles and the style of presentation and the teaching of it should promote students to experience measurement, and later to enable them to describe and eventually account for the capability by making critical comments and the needs to catch on more about the ways in which tests and other assessments are used. So, the focus of this paper is on the implementation of DA and LBs materials and texts in reading comprehension in ESL/EFL learners for drawing/illustrating a better futurology-performance of teaching/learning English in a classroom setting that would be employed, apprehended and used in all Universities in the world.

KEYWORDS: *DA (Dynamic Assessment), Reading Comprehension in ESL (English as a Second Language)/EFL (English as a Foreign Language), Futurology, Teaching DA/LBs, ZPD, Lexical Bundles*

INTRODUCTION

It appears that one of the most exhausting experiences and frustrating portions of any educational course is the assessment concern. Poehner (2008) declared that "Students frequently echo this frustration when they are required to undergo regular assessment in order to demonstrate mastery of content or competency to pass to the next level of instruction" (p. 3). Researchers can also make the situation even harder when they raise the rerun question of "Why do we assess our students?" The reality is that assessment is most fully looked at as an information-gathering tool (Bailey, 1996). Restricting the function of assessment as only the data collecting tool not only leads to the division between teaching, learning, and assessment, but puts assessment in direct opposition to instruction. One possible way to combine the two into

distinctive as well as related fields is the development of DA is through reading comprehension materials and texts that make learning an easy and meaningful grasp. This reunification happens only when the researchers integrate a mediation phase into our assessment (Lidz & Gindis, 2003). This view is in line with the approach to assessment and instruction defined in the SCT (Sociocultural Theory of Mind), as developed by the Russian psychologist Vygotsky and his followers about 80 years ago (Poehner, 2008).

Willaiams and Burden (1997) recounted that SCT is part of a larger paradigm that is entitled constructivism. There are two terms which are collaborated with constructivism that are known as Piaget and Vygotsky. They disagreed mostly in the degree to which they value the role of social context in the development of language. Piaget stresses that language grows as a result of the progressive growth of general intellectual skills (Woolfolk, 2004). Thus, it is possible to say that Piaget theory is a developmental one. However, Vygotsky proposed an alternative to Piaget's stages of cognitive development. Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory of Development (1986) is at present an influential factor in education (Woolfolk, 2004). Vygotsky maintains that the primacy of social constructivist theory in social interaction is the motivational stimulus in language development. By the way, social constructivist theory, according to Nyikos and Hashimoto (1997), is mostly used to address learning through social interaction as described by ZPD which is taken into account as the distance between a child's actual cognitive employment and the level of potential development via mediation or scaffolding. So, under collaborative condition students reveal certain emergent functions which have not been yet fully internalized, or which have not been part of ZPD (Zone of Actual Development) (Kouzin & Grab, 2002). These are the functions that belong to ZPD.

The principle of Vygotsky's theory (1986) was also considered as the relationship between the development of thought and language. Vygotsky's theory regards language first as social communication which will step by step be promoting both language and cognition. This assumption comprises the fundamental part of the social constructivist theory that puts its emphasize on the importance of socio-cultural factors in understanding what occurs in society and constructing knowledge based on interaction (Kumaravadivelu, 2006). It is assumed that if we are to apply social constructivist theory to our ESL (English as a second language)/EFL (English as a foreign language) teaching setting, the evaluation of the students in these settings also needs a change that should be appropriately redesigned. As Dixon and Krauss (1996) pointed out ZPD was a dynamic working model because of it both guides and evolves through the social interactions that take place during the course of learning activity. If this is the case, then we should think of a new model in order to measure the level of development of students in such a dynamic context. The new model should be DA reading comprehension which is a proposal for measurement in such contexts that makes learning as easy as possible. They state that DA which is a recent development can be considered as an interactive approach to psycho educational assessment that pursues a test-intervene-retest format, focusing on learning processes and modifiability, and provides the possibility of direct linkage between assessment and intervention.

The interactional and reciprocal ties, as well as the collaboration of DA and language teaching through reading comprehension, have been the subject of interest to many foreign language teaching researchers, especially in the 20th century. Using DA as a vehicle for the teaching of a second or foreign language has proved very beneficial to the EFL and ESL students' learning experience. In educational contexts, this means that assessment—understanding pronominal learners' abilities, and instruction—supporting learner development, are dialectically integrated activities. This pedagogical approach has come to be known as DA. By the way, the task is not only concerned with the potential relevance of

assessment to teaching and learning but conceptualizes their relationship in a manner that differs both epistemologically and ontologically from the perspectives that have come to dominate language studies in the world Poehner (2008).

Notable researchers such as Poehner (2008) and Van der Veer and Valsiner (1991) have all attested to the effectiveness of the implementation of DA in the language class. Teachers must emphasize on DA reading comprehension as a fundamental language skill that requires a complex acquisition process which can account for the way that learners comprehend what they obtain about DA. Many researchers and educators have made untiring attempts to find more efficient ways of enabling learners to become more proficient DA learner. Therefore, a good number of ESL/EFL experts do agree that content knowledge is an important factor in the learning process of DA comprehension (Poehner, 2008; Van der Veer & Valsiner, 1991). A valuable source of knowledge is, undoubtedly, DA texts, more appropriately for reading comprehension purposes. Using the DA materials and texts in order to enhance students' reading proficiency has another privilege for learners. DA is a compact accessible genre in which much is left unsaid in order for the reader to draw implications. Therefore, it makes students sensitive to the hidden and implied meaning. While in reading DA material students learn to read the lines and decode the meaning in reading comprehensions which are related to DA, they learn to read between the lines. Regarding the issue of DA organization, Arens, Swaffar, and Byrnes (1991) observed that "Students have greater success with texts that convince, inform, and persuade texts with rhetorical illocution—than they do with readings that are purely descriptive" (p. 115).

Indeed, DA as a multi-dimensional accessible genre can be profitably used in the acquisition of various language skills. DA's distinctive features, i.e., its brevity, modernity, and variety make it appealing and interesting to language learners. When the DA reading comprehension material is chosen based on the students' level of English proficiency, it can offer them adequate linguistic, intellectual, and emotional involvement and enrich their learning experience (Arens, Swaffar, & Byrnes, 1991). Thus, this paper proposes that the dynamic assessment can provide ESL/EFL learners with a suitable study resource which is both delightful and instructive to improve their linguistic proficiency and reading comprehension. Consequently, the researchers aim to put forward a variety of strategies to make the teaching of DA enjoyable and academically enriching experience in aiding reading comprehension. These strategies include the design and implementation of motivation building techniques which facilitate overall reading comprehension, listening and spoken skills, and cultural orientation. And teachers should know that DA/LBs have a substantial application to the context of classroom assessment and instruction. Measuring responsiveness of an individual's performance to feedback has long been viewed as an alternative to traditional ability assessment. DA/LBs have been suggested to teachers as a means to enhance ESL/EFL performance of reading comprehension skill.

DISCUSSIONS

Using DA/LBs in English language classroom teaching leads the learners to become better readers and writers. Among the material forms, indeed, the texts which are related to DA/LBs are likable, engaging and exiting phenomenon and can consequently be utilized for language learning purposes in general. The experienced teachers should have practically provided all modern and up to date DA/LBs reading materials that have the following unique characteristics which make them especially suitable to be used in reading comprehension classes: universality, non-triviality, personal relevance, variety, interest, economy, suggestive power, and ambiguity; moreover, each learner's interpretation has validity and an almost infinite fund of interactive discussion is guaranteed(Retrieved from <http://www.finchpark.com/afe/w.htm>).

The DA/LBs reading comprehension materials generate the tension necessary for a genuine exchange of ideas in class discussion. Additionally, the using of these materials pushes the students out of a passive reading state into a personal connection with the text and then beyond, extending the connection to other texts and to the world outside of school. Meticulously related to the issue of implied meaning, Kumara vadivelu (2006) argued that there are two processes through which dexterous readers figure out the meaning of a text. One is what he terms “bottom-up process” and the other he maintains “top-down process”. The bottom-up process is when the reader decodes the individual elements of the text to build a total meaning; however, in the top-down process, the reader starts with forming hypotheses and making predictions. It is evident that these two strategies are used simultaneously by a successful reader. With regard to the above argument, the advantage of using Dynamics Assistant and Lexical bundles materials rather than a non-DA/LBs text is that some pre-reading activities which can be nicely applied to it (such as the discussion of the topic and DA/LBs structure) are very useful in facilitating the readers’ top-down process. The legitimate application of usage of DA structure offers certain advantages for material design for ESL students since this genre includes short DA textual material to be satisfactorily handled in a one or limited teaching sessions by experienced teachers who are fully accounted by DA (Poehner, 2008).

METHOD

Text Assortment

The subject matter/topic and the issue of text assortment/collection is a very substantial one in using DA/LBs in general in language classes. Basically, DA reading comprehension materials are more suitable for students with a high level of language proficiency. Regarding DA materials, apart from the reader’s linguistic proficiency, text difficulty depends on the text’s characteristics and the reader’s DA competence. DA competence can be achieved through repeated exposure to its materials. However, regarding the text’s features, careful attention should be paid to the structure of the text. It is generally preferred to select texts with straightforward structures (Poehner, 2008). Usually, the more confident optimal and choice concerning a suitable text for ESL/EFL learners may be the short definitions of DA and the use of LBs known as multiword-expressions, and texts which are more contemporary and short enough to be discussed in one or two teaching sessions. The linguistic aspects of the text should be related and concern the language, style, and diction, appropriate to the level of our students; Kumaravadivelu (2006) proposed that the text should be sufficiently challenging without being so difficult as to be demotivating; it should be within the students’ grasp, in terms of their linguistic, intellectual, and emotional capacities. In addition, reading a whole, unabridged, and non-simplified DA/LBs text could give the students a sense of accomplishment. Therefore, it will be encouraging when students are psychologically satisfied that they have read the very words of a great writer. In terms of LBs, the following multiword-expressions such as: participant of the study, participate in this study, question in this study aim of this study, the purpose of this, results of this study, to participate in the, to the result of, the results of the, the aim of this, purpose of this, study, within the context of, results of this study, in this study the of this study is, in a study by, were included in the for the purpose of, participate in the study, to participate in the studies have been conducted, in this study was, of the present study, within the framework. date collection and analysis, a result of the, the participants in this, participants pertaining to another, the basis of the, the present study the, implicate of the study, studies have been conducted, findings of the study, participated in the second, etc.; that Hyland (2008a) presented and introduced as a research-oriented category, explaining them as “helping writers to structure their activities and experiences of the real world” (p. 13). In fact, the target bundles on the list have been arranged by frequency, structure, and function. These groupings could offer teachers and materials developers with the type of quantitative and qualitative

data that could encourage them in deciding which LBs should be more valuable and convenient for their rigorous teaching purposes.

Strategies and Procedures

A suggested systematic teaching strategy for DA and LBs can include the following stages:

- Pre-reading activities: to provide students with vocabulary exercises related to DA/LBs and cultural background;
- In-class oral reading: to improve listening and spoken abilities by using multi word-expressions;
- Textual analysis and group work: to improve reading comprehension and communicative skills;
- Post-reading assignments: to establish the acquired knowledge and improve written skills as well;

Keeping in mind that the comprehension of the text is the central focus of the DA/LBs reading materials, as Richard A. Raschio clarifies, the teacher must pay attention to the nonlinear process of the skill of reading. For each DA/LBs reading comprehension material, a number of tasks can be designed to cover the basic language skills required for an efficient reading comprehension. These tasks may include underlining vocabulary work related to LBs, reading comprehension questions, oral presentation of the text, in-class discussion, and interpretation, and finally follow-up tasks which can take the form of written responses or keep a journal (Kumaravadivelu, 2006).

Pre-Reading Activities: Vocabulary Work Related to Multi-Word expressions

One vital issue concerning preliminary comprehension involves the task of overcoming the vocabulary presented by the text. Research studies have confirmed that the comprehension of reading passages which might present linguistic difficulties can be facilitated by appropriate pre-reading tasks. One aspect of the reading material is the vocabulary work which refers to thematic features of DA/LBs. However, the real vocabulary task occurs when students try to use these words in the textual context. A related and accompanying activity can be preparing a brief cloze-type exercise to encourage the students to guess the meaning from the context. In selecting and making the final Students can be required to identify the new vocabulary in the text. The teacher can work together with the students to make a vocabulary list which includes new and targeted vocabulary list. The list can, then, be discussed in class. Students can form groups and work on portions of the list to find their meanings, both denotative and connotative. Since unfamiliar vocabulary will usually interfere with the students' comprehension and may be demotivating them to finish the text, such a list can be very useful. Pre-reading the vocabulary items can also be used to facilitate the introduction of the necessary cultural background and even vocabulary list, items which contain vital or emotional clues should be chosen(Kumaravadivelu, 2006).

In-Class oral Reading: Comprehension Work

In the second stage, students focus on smaller units of the text. At the third stage, the teacher may activate the students' initial response to the text and finally, in the fourth stage, the teacher can introduce the formal features of DA/LBs materials and the texts. During the reading process, the teacher can help students prepare questions which can ultimately lead to the overall understanding of the text and thus facilitate the reading comprehension objectives. This list of questions can serve various purposes. It can stimulate a motivated reading at home, prior to the DA/LBs materials live presentation in the classroom. At the same time, it aids the comprehension of the texts. It can also draw the students' attention to the major issues and ideas presented in the texts. It will also serve to prepare and assist the students' capacity

for developing an independent understanding of the meaning of DA/LBs texts and its critical skills. It is not, however, recommended that the teacher provide a simple summary or a statement of the real DA since that these two should be reserved for the end result. The teacher should allow the students to enjoy the pleasure of discovery and learn how to comprehend and appreciate DA/LBs (Retrieved from <http://www.Hello Friend.com>).

Textual Analysis and Group Work

A valuable activity at this stage is allowing time to the students to think about major issues of the text. To pledge this process, the teachers can introduce and give the text to the students, to read at home, using the prepared glossary, and requiring the students to comment on basic issues of the text. The teachers can also encourage and stimulate their imaginative power by inviting the students to write one or two paragraphs on the main ideas of the text or relate these ideas to their own real-life experiences or even imagine themselves in circumstances suggested in the text. When working with motivated students, even two readings of the DA/LBs reading materials at home prior to its oral presentation in the classroom can be achieved. The first reading can accomplish comprehension objectives and the second one interpretation and critical analysis. It should be noted that the primary purpose of the use of DA/LBs materials and text in EFL/ESL curriculum is not just to expose our students to DA/LBs, but to involve them in a direct experience (Retrieved from <http://About.com>). In addition, the objectives of the language class should be carefully followed and implemented. Students' interest should be stimulated by activating their particular skills. They should be encouraged to read aloud the parts of the materials, supply summaries of the parts or whole of the text, and take part in group discussion concerning the important issues of the text. At this stage, students can move towards more mature critical analysis of the text. All these activities must be fully, creatively, and supportively supervised by teachers pleasurably (Kumaravadivelu, 2006). Dixon and Krauss (1996) supplementary advocated small group activities which can follow whole group work. These small group activities, focusing on a specific task, such as close reading of a significant part of the text, can encourage students to write relevant questions and later try to answer them.

Development Activities and Further Tasks

Re-reading of the DA/LBs reading materials also provides the students with an added advantage of establishing their previous knowledge about the text and multi word-expressions. To augment the effect of this re-reading activity, short writing assignments can be given to students to enable them to articulate and further develop their thoughts and the thematic meanings they have discovered through class discussion. Writing assignments based on the assigned DA/LBs enhance the students' involvement with the text and encourage them to think about, re-read, and further explore the text. Kumaravadivelu(2006) confirmed that the recent researches have indicated that writing tasks as a follow-up activity promote better learning and comprehension compared to reading alone; they lead to the long-term recall of text content (Retrieved from <http://About.com>).

Indeed, students should be able to carry an interaction with the DA/LBs beyond the oral class discussion to develop their language skills effectively. A more useful task would be to require the students to prepare creative, relevant DA/LBs comprehension materials and written responses and reaction reports. This opportunity allows the students to express their independent attitudes and opinions about the significant issues of DA/LBs. Kumaravadivelu (2006) also stated that writing tasks at this stage can take various forms. Students may be encouraged to keep a DA/LBs journal. Thus, they may be asked to write about their personal attitudes about the tests in general. They may also be asked to comment on

the outcome of the measurement and how they evaluate the ending. Additionally, to get more benefits from DA/LBs reading comprehension materials plus using multi word-expressions, the following tips are also recommended and essential to apply to facilitate the below tasks (Retrieved from [http:// About. com](http://About.com)).

Generate a DA/LBs literature classroom that enhances learning meaningfully with a friendly framework of attitudes and values;

Construct and send a clear message about DA/LBs in the target language. Students must know that mistakes are natural steps in learning and can point the way to success. They must know that they can improve their weaknesses. At this point, we should not give up on these kinds of students. We need to give them different homework and ask them to do it with other students using DA/LBs approach. We should never apply sarcasm, shame, and humiliation which are inappropriate ways of addressing the needs of unsuccessful or struggling learners. If we see our students show some signs of improvement, we must motivate them to continue. We know that the things which some students need to learn can be helpful to all students as well (Retrieved from <http://www.finchpark.com/afe/w.htm>). We should keep this point in our mind. This notion is proposed by Oliver and Bowler (2006):“Teachers teach students to learn the subject and learn how to learn”;

Demonstrate and teach famous illustrations of DA/LBs and their relations to ZPD that have genuine importance, and let your students know how and why. At this point, teachers must know that language awareness is conceptualized and it is defined as a person’s sensitivity to conscious awareness of the nature of language and its role in human life (Donmall, 1985, p. 7). Vanlier (1995) explained it exactly as “an understanding of the human faculty of language and its role in thinking, learning, and social life”. The processes involved in understanding and producing utterances in an L2 are active and creative and are central to L2 learning (Brindley, 2002). Therefore, it seems to be a need to better understand the following processes as the basic rules for developing appropriate steps for understanding. In order to get the best result of DA/LBs materials and texts, teachers must go through the following states: teaching for understanding:

- They teach information that has genuine importance and let their students know why. They should make connections between life and school, and convey the significant and usefulness of what they are teaching Bailey (1990);
- They must organize what they are saying and have a flexible and motivated lesson plan (Bailey, 1996);

Let the students see the definition, structure of DA/LBs in the course material they are learning. Emphasize the “why” and the “how”. In order to make sure that the young learners understand the continuum of DA process, styles, and its strategies, make a list of some of the related materials and texts and assess them to see how much they learn. In this case, build students’ self-motivation, risk-taking and help them to develop intrinsic motivation Brown (2006);

Teach in a very friendly manner and introduce and explain new vocabulary in context before students use it formally in the text. The teachers should also try to put their emphasis on the definition as well as keywords which are related to DA/LBs;

Apply multisensory teaching. The multisensory teaching technology relates to the different usages and applications of many different ways of teaching and learning DA/LBs strategies that promote learning in a wide variety of steps.

At this point, teachers should encourage students to participate in labs, do projects of field studies, role play, and perform demonstrations and simulations;

Encourage students by giving them an opportunity to verbalize, explain, summarize, express personal reactions, ask and answer questions and participate in discussion related to DA/LBs and ZPD;

Use clear, simple and well organized visual references and teaching aids, if they are available, such as maps, charts, and diagrams. Make use of the blackboard, overheads, and if it is possible, use of a computer. The teacher should highlight and put in an order the organized information by using different and attractive colorful board markers;

Give special attention to recognizing the information and skills that are practiced to the point of automaticity as well as fluency with frequent regular assignments to practice these skills. We should recognize our student's capacity to do homework of the DA/LBs automaticity. We should tell our students in the early period of the semester that how we will evaluate their work and assess them for the whole semester (Retrieved from <http://Education.com>);

Always offer flexible alternative tasks and involve students in the DA/LBs reading and using multi-words process. It is very useful if teachers always offer learners multiple kinds of assignments and tests. They must permanently evaluate them with a range of ways to learn and to express their understanding. Teachers should give them the gift of time, emphasize the role of time and speed in assignment and test. They should also support DA learners who have appropriately documented a disability with students' services by providing modifications, such as alternative test environment, methods of evaluations, and time of tests. As Brindley (2002) pointed out "We need to find out more about the ways in which tests and other assessments are used. Only through the systematic exploration of such questions will it eventually be possible to improve the quality of teaching (DA approaches and its connection to ZPD) that language assessment can provide"

CONCLUSIONS

In any school or educational institution, that there are teachers/instructors with dissimilar levels of involvement and experience/knowledge, awareness, proficiency, and capability. Reciprocal sharing of experience/knowledge is a treasured source of professional growth. Teacher/instructors are mostly motivated to continue their professional expansion once they initiate their careers. Knowledge about language teaching and learning is in a tentative and incomplete state, and these sorts of teachers require regular opportunities to update their professional knowledge. Classrooms are not only places where students learn, as a matter of fact, but teachers /instructors are also corresponding can learn and increase their skills about interactional teaching as well. In the fullness of time, the teacher's role is a facilitator who eagerly and skillfully monitors the students as they draw implications and form learning experiences through personal involvement with the text. The exposure and disclosure of the students to DA/LBs and ZPD as ESL/EFL material can ensure that they appreciate, apprehend, and escalate a life-like material while they are refining their essence of applying and enhancing a sense of using test measurement proficiency. In consequence, it would be to the overall benefit of the ESL/EFL learners if the instructors promote the use of DA/LBs as a tool to introduce, accompany, and supplement activities to be used as basic modern teaching techniques in terms of expanding internet in the classroom for future teaching and learning involvement. The hegemony and influence found in a DA/LBs can compromise and offer the novices deeper meaning about the acquisition

of language skills. Finally, the unique combination of using DA/LBs reading comprehension and text with lots of word-expressions invite students to engage in a more energetic and up-to-date discussion of their involvement with the text and their own personal experiences relevant to the world of the text intellectually and meaningfully.

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