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Original Research

The Effects of Dynamic Assessment on the Students' Self-assessment: The Case of Writing Skills

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Abstract

This study examined how dynamic assessment affects grade 11 students' writing self-evaluation. Participants were chosen from existing sections, creating a quasi-experimental design. Students were randomly picked from two grade 11 sections and allocated to control and experimental groups. This study has 97 participants—49 in the control group and 48 in the experimental group. The researcher used a pre-test, post-test, self-rating rubric scale, and individual interview to gather data. After validating parametric test assumptions, mean standard deviation, one-way ANOVA, and regression analysis were used to analyze the data. Qualitative analysis was also employed to support quantitative conclusions with individual interview data. The one-way ANOVA analysis revealed a significant difference in writing performance between experimental group students and their self-assessment levels ($p = 0.004$). Research indicates that self-assessment accurately predicts writing performance, with a significant t-value at the alpha level of 0.000 ($p<.05$). Thus, self-assessment levels affect pupils' writing performance. Dynamic assessment is expected in classes to improve students' self-evaluation reliability.

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INTRODUCTION

Over the years, various methods for instructing students in the art of writing in English as a second language have developed. Students were expected to write sentences free of errors in former periods since writing was seen as a separate talent that could be mastered. Students were encouraged to learn and practice individual skills, reflecting the pedagogical style of the period, which was based on behaviourist philosophy. Students were viewed as receptive learners of the language who could easily internalize its rules in this manner. In subsequent decades, there was a paradigm change in the way writing was taught, with an emphasis on rhetorical functions including description, comparison, and contrast at the discourse level (Cheung, 2016; Lounis, 2010). However, original thought is stifled by this approach.

Scholars have taken note of new approaches to teaching writing as a result of students' discontent with this method, with an eye toward guiding their work toward more cohesive statements (Silva, 1990). A process-

based approach to writing teaching has been shown to improve student writing overall, according to research. For those reasons, it has become standard practice in English as a foreign language classrooms. The primary focus is on helping students understand how to effectively convey their thoughts through textual composition. Secondly, according to Lindamann (1995) and Nagao (2018), revision is considered as a process of creating and uncovering meaning. Students are thus encouraged to devote a great deal of time to the different phases of writing under this method, which ultimately leads to better writing.

Since assessment is now seen as fundamental to the process of language acquisition, it has prompted a shift in assessment practices brought about by new theories of language teaching and learning. The paradigm shift in language teaching, and specifically in writing instruction, necessitates new approaches to evaluation. Most notably, shifts in the assessment paradigm were also required by the new global perspective on writing (Besharti, 2018). Furthermore, there is a complex web of principles established from writing instruction that are followed while evaluating written work. As an example, sentence drills, fill-ins, substitutions, and transformations are some of the forms that writing assessments take. The behaviorist aim of habit building was the inspiration for these exercises.

It is acknowledged that instruction alone cannot guarantee the completion of the intended goals. It is critical to check if students have really learned the material. The most critical benefit of evaluation is the accurate and useful data it gives regarding students' writing development. The assessment methods vary according to the tasks that students were expected to complete. In the past, teachers would provide students with sample phrases to follow while writing controlled compositions. The pupils' writing abilities were primarily evaluated through controlled compositions and discrete-point exams of grammar and vocabulary. The emphasis on final products is a holdover from the product approach to writing instruction, as pointed out by Hinkel (2004). These tests fail to take into account the ways in which students' cognitive capacities can be enhanced. As a result, evaluation is no longer considered a means to an end—rather than an essential component of the learning process. In addition, instructors may not be able to give students timely, relevant comments that can help shape their comprehension due to the assessment method.

Researchers and practitioners alike have so noted the limits of impartial evaluation. Not being able to write on it seems to de-contextualize information and how we make sense of it (Badger & White, 2000). According to Neff-Lippman (2012), one major issue with this type of writing assessment is that it does not allow students to revise their work and does not take rhetorical and contextual factors into account when evaluating it. Therefore, instead of relying solely on evaluation to guarantee learning outcomes, there is a need to develop assessment techniques that help students enhance their writing abilities.

The aforementioned problems have caused language researchers to reconsider their views

on writing evaluation, which they now believe can have a substantial impact on students' and teachers' writing development. So, instead of limiting assessments to the confines of a single semester or course, they proposed continual, long-term evaluations. The purpose of the alternative assessments is to address the shortcomings of the traditional evaluation strategies. The long-standing, one-and-done approach to evaluating students' writing abilities prompted their implementation. Critical to defining student achievement and relieving teachers of assessment burden, these methods allowed students more agency over their own learning (Farrokh & Rahmani, 2017; Lenski & Verbruggen, 2010). Portfolio, peer, and self-assessment are only a few of the many methods included.

But there are downsides to alternative assessments as well, and it may be challenging for teachers to implement them consistently in EFL courses. To start with, when students are inexperienced with peer assessment, they may not give honest ratings to their partners' written work. Teachers may also find it challenging to provide individual comments to pupils when the class size is high. Because of this need, researchers developed dynamic assessment, a thorough learning-oriented evaluation that pinpoints individuals' true cognitive capacities and caters to their range of skills. One key distinction between dynamic assessment and other forms of evaluation is the emphasis it places on combining instruction and evaluation into a single process (Daneshfar & Moharami, 2018).

Self-evaluation by EFL students is more reliable when using DA. As a result, students are better able to assess their strengths, areas for growth, and potential areas for improvement in their performance. Alemi (2015) found that when EFL students learn more about the criteria used to evaluate writing, dynamic evaluation can help them become more accurate self-evaluators of their writing.

Aly (2005) also found that students' writing improved substantially when they assessed themselves on topic, organization, and language. From what the researcher can tell, self-rating is not a common kind of assessment in Ethiopian secondary schools, and students rarely use it either. The classroom teacher was in charge of evaluating the pupils' writing assignments. For example, according to research by Medhanit, Meseret, and Akililu (2014), educators hold the view that writing class pupils are unable to provide honest assessments of themselves. Most students were found to be over-or undervalued, according to the study. With the right kind of guidance, this study seeks to determine how much DA helps students do credible written self-evaluations.

A large body of research has examined how dynamic assessment influences students' self-evaluations on a global scale. Thus, the majority of research shows that students' writing can benefit from self-evaluation. For instance, Oscarson (2009) presents data that backs up the claim that using self-assessment in EFL classes yields positive effects. This study sought to answer the question, "How can EFL students benefit from self-assessment to foster the development of skills necessary for lifelong language learning?" by examining the effects of this practice. Furthermore, Aly (2005) demonstrates that the students made

substantial improvements to their writing in every area, but she does not specify which parts of their work were revised. She says, for instance, that the students' introductions were better, but she doesn't say how. Since self-evaluation of content and organization can also be evaluated qualitatively, her reliance on quantitative data collection has its limitations.

The validity and usefulness of written student evaluations were studied by Ross et al. (1999). They ran a classroom research to see how well a training program that taught primary school pupils to critically assess their own narrative writing was received. The students were instructed on how to use the criteria that they helped establish to evaluate their own writing as part of the training program. On top of that, they got comments from their instructors on how they did on their own assessments. Students' narrative writing improved more under the treatment condition than under the control condition overall. Students' self-evaluations also become more accurate as a result of the training. The treatment group, in particular, showed less tendency to exaggerate how well they wrote.

Similarly, Andrade et al. (2008) looked at how self-evaluation affected the writing performance of elementary school pupils in a writing class. In order for students to evaluate their own work, we provided them with a rubric to use as a guide. The results showed that after accounting for prior English proficiency, the treatment condition resulted in higher essay scores compared to the control condition. As a result, students' writing improved after receiving clear instructions on writing criteria and detailed instructions on how to put these criteria into practice. Taken together, the research points to students' narrow understanding of self-assessment and the fact that their written self-evaluations did not match up with their teachers' evaluations. Thus, the researcher sets out to study how EFL students' self-evaluations of their writing change when they use dynamic assessment. The following research questions were developed to help achieve the objectives:

Do experimental group students' writing performances differ by their self-assessment levels?

To what extent does student self-assessment predict their writing performances?

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Design, Instruments, and Sampling Techniques

The study used a quasi-experimental methodology that was not randomised and involved groups that were already in place and undamaged. When classes are created at the start of the year, it is highly improbable that participants in school-based studies will be randomly assigned to therapy. Because every classroom is seen as a separate group in this case, a quasi-experimental design is preferable to an experimental one. Assigning students at random to either the experimental or control groups was a challenge. It was thought that this strategy was essential for increasing the likelihood of finding a causal relationship between DA and writing performances. Therefore, pupils were evaluated in a traditional way for the control group and an experimental group that got intervention in dynamic evaluation. A pre-test is administered to students in order to gauge their current writing abilities. Students then spend nine

weeks learning writing through dynamic evaluation. In order to determine how much of an impact dynamic assessment had on the students' writing abilities, a post-test was administered to both groups. To collect data for this study, the researcher used a self-rating rubric scale, individual interviews, and pre- and post-tests. It was believed that these research tools would be helpful in directing the research toward the study's goals. Students in the eleventh grade at Arjo Secondary School in the year 2021 were the focus of this research. The experimental and control groups were made up of two sections of eleventh graders who were chosen at random. There were 48 pupils in the control group and 49 in the experimental group. Therefore, 97 students from both groups of eleventh grade participated in the study.

Techniques for Analyzing Data

The research in this study made use of both qualitative and quantitative methods of data analysis. We used SPSS to examine the numerical data that came from the self-rating scales, the pre-test, and the post-test. As a result, both simple and complex statistical methods were employed. Research question 1 was computed using a one-way ANOVA following the computation of descriptive statistics. Using simple regression, we were able to calculate the second research question. Prior to conducting this research, the assumptions of parametric tests were run. Additionally, qualitative analysis was performed on the data gathered from individual interviews.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Results

Using information gathered from the interview, self-rating rubric scale, and pre- and post-tests, the results provide a comprehensive analysis of the data. The study's aims are examined in the order they were intended. To find out whether there was a difference in the writing performances of the experimental group students based on their self-assessment levels, the following techniques were followed. The analytical self-rating guide was used to have the experimental group members rate their own written work. Each part of the writing is defined in terms of mechanics, language, organization, and substance in the self-rating description. The cumulative scores of the pupils are calculated by adding their individual component scores. The students' scores are compared to the marks given by the teachers who rate them. This indicates that the findings from the teacher raters served as the standard for classifying the children into three divisions. Use SPSS to calculate numerical comparisons between students and raters.

Students were considered to be authentic raters if their ratings of their written work were nearly identical to those of the teachers. Conversely, undervalued pupils were those who scored their written work lower than the instructor. Plus, it was thought that students were being overvalued if they gave their written work (paragraph) better marks than they were due. The data was shown in the table that follows. Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics for a one-way ANOVA. It can be inferred from the table that the mean score of respondents who underrated their writing performances in self-rating in the post-test accounts for 21.57 with an SD of 4.669.

And the mean score of respondents who rated their writing performances genuinely was reported to be 20.09 (SD = 3.727). Respondents who overrated their writing performances in self-rating have a mean value of 16.79 (SD = 2.594). The table further indicated that underrated raters have the highest mean scores, whereas overrated raters have the lowest mean scores. Table 1 illustrates that a larger number of students belonged to underraters, whereas a small number of respondents belonged to overraters.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics for One Way ANOVA

	N	Mean	Std. D	Std. Error	95% interval mean		Minimum	maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Under raters	23	21.57	4.669	.974	19.55	23.58	16	30
Genuine raters	11	20.09	3.727	1.124	17.59	22.59	16	26
Over raters	14	16.79	2.594	.720	15.12	18.26	11	21
Total	48	19.83	4.416	.644	18.58	21.17	11	30

Parametric tests' assumptions were checked using normality checks and Levene's test. So, to find out how the writing abilities of the experimental group students varied based on their self-assessment levels, we used a one-way between-groups analysis of variance (ANOVA). Table 2 displays the outcomes. There were a total of 48 participants in the experiment, and they were divided into three groups according to their written rating levels: 23 undervalued raters, 11 true raters, and 14 overrated raters.

Using the established standards for grading composition, they evaluated their own writing. We compared their score with the instructor's evaluation. According to the results of the one-way ANOVA ($F(2, 44) = 6.226$, $p = 0.004$ at $p < .05$), the table showed that there was a statistically significant gap.Based on the ratings, we can observe that the three groups were significantly different from one another. Because of this, finding out which two groups differed significantly from each other requires post hoc analysis.

Table 2

One Way Anova (Analysis of Variance) Test of Self-Rating Levels

		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Post test	Between Groups	197.904	2	98.952	6.226	.004
	Within Groups	699.330	44	15.894		
	Total	897.234	46			

Underraters had a significantly higher mean score (M = 21.57, SD = 4.669) compared to overraters (M = 16.79, SD = 2.594), as shown in Table 3, which is a result of a post-hoc multiple comparison using the Scheffe test. There was a distinction between underraters and overraters, as shown in table 3, with a p-value of 0.004 at the 0.05 level. Neither underraters nor overraters differ significantly from genuine raters on the mean score (M =20.09, SD = 3.727). So, there was no discernible difference in the real mean score disparity between the two sets of data. In addition, the effect size was determined to be.167 using partial eta squared.If we compare this value to the ETA Squired recommendations, we see that it is greater. It follows that overraters and underraters likely had distinct degrees of proficiency in writing. It follows that students' writing performances in the experimental group vary in relation to their degree of self-evaluation.

Table 3

Post-Hoc Multiple Comparison of Scheffe Test

(I) status	(J) status	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Under raters	Genuine raters	1.474	1.461	.605	-2.23	5.18
	Over raters	4.873*	1.383	.004	1.37	8.38
Genuine raters	Under raters	-1.474	1.461	.605	-5.18	2.23
	Over raters	3.399	1.633	.127	-.74	7.54
Over raters	Under rater	-4.873*	1.383	.004	-8.38	-1.37
	Genuine raters	-3.399	1.633	.127	-7.54	.74

Examining the reliability of student self-evaluation as a predictor of writing performance was the goal of the second study question. This goal was accomplished by computing simple linear regression. These tables provide a summary of the findings: An ANOVA, a coefficient, and a summary of the model were the primary outputs of the regression. You can see a summary of the model in Table 4.

Table 4

Model Summary of Linear Regression

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.776[a]	.603	.594	2.78836

a. Predictor: (Constant), self-assessment score

Table 4 indicates a simple linear regression analysis. A simple R value (R =.776) represents the correlation between the observed values and the predicted values

based on the obtained regression equation of the dependent variable. As shown in Table 4, a significant correlation (R =.776) was observed between student self-rating and their writing performances. Moreover, the R-Square (.603) from the same table gives the proportion of variance in the dependent variable accounted for by the independent variable set for the model. Besides, the adjusted R square gives more accurate information about the fitness of the model, provided that the R square tends to be inflated due to the large number of cases. The adjusted square in the table was reported to be.594, which indicates that the model explains 59% of the variance in students' writing performances. To make sure that the model is significant, regression analysis is referred to in the ANOVA[b] table shown below. The F Statistic (ANOVA b) was carried out to examine the overall strength of the model. From Table 5, the finding showed that the model is statistically significant F (1, 46) =69.842, p=000. It appeared plausible to conclude that the predictive power of student self-rating over their writing performances was highly significant.

Table 5

Anova[b]

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1. Regression	543.020	1	543.020	69.842	.000[a]
Residual	357.647	46	7.775		
Total	900.667	47			

a.Predictor: (Constant), self-rating score b. dependent variable: writing performance

All of the regression coefficients, their significance levels, the model's intercept, and other relevant data are presented in Table 6. The numbers shed light on the reliability of the self-rating as a predictor of writing performance, the dependent variable. The results of several regressions are shown with unstandardized coefficients. We used the standardised coefficient from the table above since we ran linear regression. Our results show that y = 5.923 + 3.549 is the linear regression function as estimated by the linear regression analysis.

Table 6

Coefficients [a]

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	-3.549	2.827		-1.256	.216
Self-rating	5.923	.709	.776	8.357	.000

The students' writing performances changed by 0.776 standard deviations due to an increase of one standard deviation in self-rating, as evidenced by the value of beta

weight (β) in standardised coefficients = 0.776. There was a clear correlation between how well they rated themselves and how well they did on writing assignments; the p-value (Sig.) was less than 0.001. Thus, students' self-evaluations serve as reliable indicators of their writing abilities. The findings are corroborated by the interview with students, who emphasized the value of self-rating in identifying areas for improvement and minimizing the number of errors impacting the quality of their paragraphs (artifact from the interview with Student B).

The previous study conducted by Wong and Mark (2018) is incongruent with the present finding, which indicated that self-rating significantly helps students progress in their writing performances. Thus, if teachers encourage students to self-rate their written products frequently, it is more likely for them to polish the qualities of their writing, which eventually helps them to improve their writing performances.

Discussion

To point out if experimental group students' writing performances differ by their self-assessment levels, a one-way ANOVA was used. Before it was run, students were classified into three groups based on their self-assessment levels. These are underrated raters, genuine raters, and overrated raters. Accordingly, post-hoc analysis of the Scheffe test revealed that there was a statistically significant difference between underrated and overrated raters at p.004<.05 (table 3). It can be inferred that genuine raters have a more realistic view of their writing performances, and they tend to have ratings equivalent to teacher ratings. Harmony in self-rating and teacher rating shows students are being nurtured with the necessary skills to reflect genuine performances in writing. It shows they are strict in their rating. In the present study, high and medium achievers rated their paragraphs genuinely in the post-test. It was noted that the level of writing performances of students had something to do with the accuracy of their self-rating in writing. According to the present finding, the higher they achieved in writing, the more reliable their self-rating in writing would be. This group of participants has the capability to make use of the feedback that the teacher wrote on their test papers.

This finding is in contrast to Matsuno (2009), and Meihami and Varmaghani, (2013), who found that high-achieving students underrated their writing performances when they were asked to rate their own writing. Such students are more likely to notice their shortcomings in writing. Their finding also confirmed that students who have low proficiency tend to overestimate their performance in self-ratings. As far as undergrads are concerned, teachers rated them better than the students did. Teacher and students are at variance, which means a discrepancy in rating was demonstrated between teacher and students. On the other hand, overraters were students who rated themselves higher than the teacher did. They overvalue their work. Some medium achievers are either overrated or underrated in the posttest. In spite of the presence of the scoring rubric and criteria for assessment, such students fail to judge their performance in a manner comparable to that of the teachers. In

the present study, low achievers tended to overestimate their writing performance relative to teacher ratings, as they did not want to be rated at a low level.

To support the findings of the above quantitative results with qualitative data, the researcher prepared an interview question regarding how to make self-ratings more reliable to reflect their actual level of writing performance. The respondents have made it clear that training on self-rating is essential to reduce overestimating and underestimating their writing performances. In other words, practice, support, and experience are key elements to enhancing the accuracy of self-rating in writing.

For instance, here are some of the extracts taken from few students.

Student C: Students should practice self-rating on regular basis. Teachers should help students to genuinely make self-accuracy.

Student D: Getting teacher's support, identifying the weakness and strength of his writing may enable students to make reliable self-rating of their writing.

From the present study, it can be inferred that if students get more practice and more exposure to doing the self-rating, they will display improvement in self-assessment.

A simple linear regression analysis was computed to examine the predictive power of student self-ratings over their writing performances. In other words, the study aimed at investigating how much of the variance in students' writing performance scores can be explained by student self-rating. When the correlation was examined, there was a high positive relationship between the student self-rating and their writing performances (r = 0.776). Moreover, the estimated regression model is 5.923+-3.549 with an adjusted R-square of 59% of the variance in students' writing performances. It is highly significant with $p<.001$ and $F = 69.842$. The standard error of the estimate is 2.78836. Overall, the result of the regression analysis revealed that self-rating can be used as an indicator of students' writing performances, as the sig value was reported to be.000 ($p<.05$).

Thus, the strength of the student's self-rating is a major factor in whether the student writes well or not. It is an important means of gaining a dynamic picture of students' writing performances. Based on the qualitative data, self-rating had a potential impact on students' writing performances. In the interview with the experimental group, two of them asserted that self-rating had a positive impact on their writing performances. The remaining respondent argued that he may not revise his work as he assumed what he wrote was right. Regarding the impact of self-rating, respondents have expressed their views in the following ways:

Student A: When I write, I assume everything is correct. I may not revise it. But, if I show it to my partner, He or she will provide me with feedback in terms of punctuation, grammar, etc. I can gain something and develop my knowledge

Student B: Self-rating is worthwhile for identifying and working on our weak areas. There is the possibility to reduce the degree of making mistakes when self-assessment is applied in the class. The findings were consistent with the study conducted by Wang (2007), who found that students' writing ability can be judged by their self-rating.

Numerous researchers support the impact of self-rating on improving students' writing. Their study demonstrated that students can actually play a key role in assessing the final product of their writing. They claim that it helps them master English writing conventions, which can, in turn, enhance their writing.

CONCLUSIONS

The research found that students' self-evaluations of their writing abilities revealed significant differences between the experimental and control groups. According to the results, underestimated raters and overstated raters were significantly different. Contrarily, there is no significant difference in the mean score of authentic raters between underraters and overraters, since the sig value is higher than.05 ($p<.05$). The scores that real raters get are usually on par with what teachers give their students, suggesting that they have a more accurate picture of how well they write. Both high and average achievers in this study gave honest ratings to their paragraphs on the post-test. However, the post-test ratings of a few middle performers were skewed one way or the other. Underachievers in this study were more likely to exaggerate how well they wrote compared to how their teachers rated them. Students' writing performances in the experimental group differ according to their self-rating levels. Improving the precision of self-rating requires training on the subject.

Students' self-ratings can be utilized as a measure of their writing performance, according to the regression analysis. It is a crucial tool for developing a realistic image of how to organize, write, and edit their paragraphs. No matter how good or bad their work is, the study found that self-evaluation can predict it. Students' writing skills are likely to improve after using the self-rating method. The following suggestions were put out after considering and drawing conclusions from the current study: To start, students should be provided with the best possible assistance to maximize their self-evaluation abilities when composing paragraphs, since their writing performance varies according to their level of self-assessment. Second, students are required to actively participate in evaluating their own written works, as self-rating is a predictor of writing performances.

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DECLARATION

There is not any competing interest.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

Further data sets are available from the corresponding author upon request.

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