The Effect of Interventionist and Cumulative Group Dynamic Assessments on EFL Learners' Writing Accuracy

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ABSTRACT

Group dynamic assessment grounded in Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory is believed to have the potential to provide a context for capturing a group of learners' Zone of Proximal Development (Poehner & Lantolf, 2010). The present study was conducted to compare the effects of interventionist dynamic, cumulative group dynamic, and static assessments on the grammatical accuracy of the EFL learners' narrative writing. The participants of the study were 75 female students studying in the third grade of high school. Employing a quasi-experimental research design, three groups of interventionist dynamic, cumulative group dynamic, and static assessments were formed. The researchers used some wordless picture-sequence prompts for narrative writings in the pre-test, treatment, and post-test sessions. After the pre-test, only the experimental groups received mediational support. All the control and experimental groups were treated the same in the pre- and post-test in a non-dynamic way (static assessment). The data obtained from both pre- and post-test were statistically analyzed by the one-way ANOVA. The results showed that cumulative group dynamic assessment had more effect on developing the EFL learners' accuracy in writing narrative paragraphs. The findings have implications for language teachers and material developers, and syllabus designers.

1. Introduction

Language includes four skills and writing is the most difficult skill for L2 learners to master. Writing is a process through which a writer tries to communicate ideas and thoughts. Not only for second or foreign language writers but also for native language writers, writing needs special instruction. In writing, grammatical accuracy is vital since it causes the writer to transfer intended ideas and to avoid communicative misunderstanding (Lush, 2002).

Assessing the achievement of every student is a necessary part of class activities, especially writing that

presents a challenge for teachers and learners throughout the classroom period. Considering assessment for learning in the classroom, Fulcher (2010) states, "activities should focus upon making the learner aware of the gap between current abilities and performance levels, and the target or goal that the learner wishes to achieve" (p.72).

As a theoretical framework, dynamic assessment (DA) "envisages a monistic view of instruction and assessment" (Ableeva, 2008, p. 57); furthermore, Lantolf and Poehner (2004) examined the learners' responses to instructional behaviors as a sign of learners' potential and then they argued that learners' cognitive abilities can change through mediational practices. They also proposed the terms interventionist and interactionist to describe the two general kinds of mediation. Lantolf (2006) pointed out that although the theoretical construct of zone of proximal development (ZPD) essentially focuses on the communication between novice learners and more capable ones, the scope of ZPD involves more than the interactions between novices and an expert. Therefore, Poehner (2009) expanded the typology of DA by proposing group dynamic assessment (G-DA), where the mediator negotiates with a group of learners to co-construct several ZPDs, while propelling the group onward in its ZPD. On the other hand, traditional non-dynamic assessment (N-DA), **i.e.**, static assessment, can only show the already existent abilities of learners, focusing on the product of learning without any information on learners' potential (Baek & Kim, 2003).

1. Literature Review

Poehner (2008) posited that interventionist DA uses standardized procedures to produce quantifiable results for making between- and within-group comparisons. The results of interventionist DA can be used to make predictions about performance on future measuring instruments. According to Lantolf and Poehner (2004), interventionist DA focuses on learning speed and the extent of assistance provided to the learners to achieve a pre-set goal. "Interventionist DA remains closer to certain forms of static assessment and their concerns over the psychometric properties of their procedures" (Poehner, 2008, p. 18). Within interventionist DA, mediation is offered in different formats: sandwich approach, which involves "mediation at the end of a test or series of activities, and so can also be used with groups" (Fulcher, 2010, p. 73); cake approach, where "mediation takes place after each item or task, and so can only really be used with individuals" (p. 73).

Fulcher (2010) introduced "graduated prompt" and "testing the limits" as two interventionist techniques. In the graduated prompt, a task is created with a series of graded questions "to ask a learner who has problems completing a task. The questions start from the most implicit to see if a learner can overcome a difficulty through guided thinking, to very explicitly focusing on the nature of the problem" (p. 73). In testing the limits technique, learners are provided with feedback on their task performances. Afterward, they are asked to talk about "the problems they face, and what they will try to do to overcome them. This technique requires a teacher to work with a single student on a task, and to provide … scaffolding …" (p. 73)

According to Poehner (2008), "Interactionist DA follows Vygotsky's preference for cooperative dialoging. In this approach, assistance emerges from the interaction between the mediator and the learner, and is therefore highly sensitive to the learner's ZPD" (p. 18). He asserted that this DA approach concentrates on "the development of an individual learner or even a group of learners, regardless of the effort required and without concern for predetermined endpoints" (pp. 18-19). According to sociocultural theory (SCT), mediators can simultaneously offer mediation to a group of learners to help them co-construct a group's ZPD (Poehner & Lantolf, 2005).

As Lantolf and Poehner (2004) explicate, DA has not been accepted with open arms by members of the testing community. As they explained, reliability of the tests and standardization are psychometric issues in DA

that have been criticized. Traditionally, test reliability derives from a commitment to standardization whereby all sources of potential error should be minimized to ensure that the observed score on a test is as close to the true score as possible. Reliability assumes that what is being measured is more or less stable. Within DA, interventionist researchers are committed to the reduction of measurement error through standardized form of mediation.

Generalizability is another issue that has been raised in connection with DA by some L2 researchers. "Generalizability concerns the degree to which one can make statements about individuals' performance in non-assessment contexts on the basis of their performance during assessment" (Poehner, 2008, p. 74). According to Lantolf and Poehner (2004), generalizability can be interpreted in two ways, depending upon whether the assessment instrument is being used as a basis for making decisions about individuals or for research purposes. Generalization for research purposes often involves drawing inferences about a general population from a representative sample of that population. In N-DA, as Poehner (2008) states, "assessments are administered not merely to know how individuals perform a given set of tasks under specific circumstances but because the assessment tasks are believed to reveal certain abilities that assessors wish to measure" (p. 74). To him, "if one can be confident that the assessment adequately captures the abilities in question then it is possible to generalize how individuals possessing those abilities will perform under other circumstances" (p. 74).

Lantolf and Poehner (2004) point out that DA derives its validity not from the assessment instruments but from the procedures followed in the administration of the instrument. Given that the purpose of DA is to push the person's (language) abilities forward, to the extent that this is achieved, the validity of the procedure is established. Of course, researchers may differ with regard to how they understand the abilities they want to assess (e.g., how they define language proficiency).

As Poehner (2009) stated, group-based and one-to-one DA procedures follow the same general principle of offering learners the mediation to help them co-construct a ZPD, but they differ in that G-DA must also take account of the group's ZPD. In other words, G-DA entails understanding the group to be not merely a context for individual performance but a social system in its own right that might be supported to function in ways that are beyond the present capabilities of any individual member. To display the implementation of G-DA in L2 classrooms, according to him, there are two different approaches to G-DA: concurrent and cumulative.

In cumulative group dynamic assessment (G-DA), the students should take turn to engage as primary interactants with the teacher. When a student provides an incorrect answer, the teacher provides that same student with mediation prompts until s/he reaches the correct answer. This approach is believed to be cumulative since its goal is to move the group forward in its ZPD through negotiations with individual group members in their own ZPDs (Poehner, 2009). Lantolf and Poehner (2011) noted that in the cumulative approach, the students other than the primary interactant seem actively engaged and many times, they are volunteers to answer.

As Poehner (2009) claimed, in the concurrent approach, although the teacher provides mediation to a particular individual, the exchange initiated by the primary interactant in the form of question, struggle, or comment can provide the ground for another's contribution. In fact, the failure of the addressed learner leads to bring other learners into playing once considered as secondary participants. Concurrent G-DA supports the development of each individual by working within the group's ZPD. For example, the teacher calls on a different student, other than the student who initiates the interaction, to reformulate the response given by the first student. In this way, the interaction shifts between primary and secondary interactants.

Dynamic assessment has been so far extensively studied by researchers in the field of second language acquisition. Ableeva (2008) tried to examine the effects of dynamic assessment on L2 listening comprehension ability of the university students learning French. The findings showed that there were individual differences in

learners on an assessment manifested their unique ZPDs, which were not revealed in the non-dynamic pre-test. She found that dynamic assessment can be helpful to distinguish the possible sources of problems in test task completions.

Sadeghi and Khanahmadi (2011) examined the effectiveness of dynamic assessment in the development of Iranian EFL learners' grammar. The results of their research confirmed that DA significantly improved the learning of L2 grammar. Alavi, Kaivanpanah, and Shabani (2012) examined an inventory of mediation strategies for teaching listening. They applied G-DA as a method to investigate their effects on learners' listening comprehension. The findings showed how G-DA could provide opportunities for the learners in the social area of the class of which secondary and primary interactants mutually benefited from each other's assistance.

Another study in G-DA is Davin (2013) that reported on the efforts of an L2 Spanish teacher who integrated DA and instructional conversation (IC) within classroom setting to teach a grammatical structure. The findings of her study provided evidence of the compatibility of G-DA and the IC to promote development and improve assessment in the language classroom.

Mehri and Amerian (2015) tried to study the effect of group dynamic assessment on controlled development in the past tense. The results showed that the students developed their understanding of the concept of the past tense through implementing it in transcendence tasks of writing.

Fani and Rashtchi (2015) compared the impact of individualized and group DA on reading comprehension ability of Iranian EFL learners. The study revealed that mediation in concurrent and cumulative group DA, as well as individualized DA positively affected the Iranian EFL learners' reading comprehension ability.

Hashemi Shahraki, Ketabi and Barati (2015) studied the effect of group dynamic assessment on intermediate learners' pragmatic knowledge of conversational implicates in the context of listening. They identified that the mediational strategies can nurture the development of this knowledge. Their findings showed that G-DA enhanced the development of listening comprehension ability especially the pragmatic understanding of conversational implicates among intermediate EFL learners.

Saneiei, Birjandi, and Abdollahzadeh (2015) believed that dynamic assessment offers a conceptual framework which integrates assessment into instruction and posits that learners' responsiveness to instruction can be seen as a measure of learners' potential.

Ramazanpour, Nourdad and Nouri (2016) examined whether there is any difference between female and male EFL learners regarding the effect of dynamic assessment on grammatical accuracy of their writings. The results indicated that there is no difference between females and males regarding the effect of dynamic assessment on grammatical accuracy of their writings.

Mirzaei, Shakibaei and Jafarpour (2017) explored the effect of cumulative group dynamic assessment on depth of vocabulary knowledge in an EFL context. In their study, the split-plot ANOVA results showed that the implementation of interactionist cumulative group dynamic assessment helped the learners outperform the non-dynamic assessment group on both immediate and delayed post-tests. Additionally, the data analysis showed that the participants could increase their depth of vocabulary knowledge by cumulative group dynamic assessment.

It is clear from the background that various studies have been conducted to assess the effectiveness of using DA and G-DA for improving the skills. The empirical studies in the field of DA indicate that using DA has been more successful in improving the writing ability of the learners; furthermore, it has provided broader assessment information than N-DA had done. Considering the characteristics of DA and G-DA and their fundamental differences with non-dynamic assessment, this study intends to compare the effects of interventionist DA, cumulative G-DA and N-DA (static assessment) on grammatical accuracy of Iranian EFL learners' narrative

writing. Therefore, the present study was carried out in order to answer the following question:

RQ1: Are there any statistically significant differences among the effects of interventionist dynamic assessment, cumulative group dynamic assessment and static assessment on grammatical accuracy of Iranian EFL learners' narrative writing?

3. Method

3.1. *Participants*

The participants of this study were 75 students at a high school in Iran in the year 2016. They shared the same linguistic and cultural background. All participants were Persian native speakers, ranging in age from 17 to 18. The participants were Iranian female students who were selected out of a larger sample of 90 students, based on their performance on the Oxford Placement Test (OPT) 1 (Allan, 2004) which was administered at the onset of the study to examine the homogeneity of the participants. The groups were proved homogenous after conducting a one-way ANOVA that showed no statistically significant differences among the means of their performance. The participants whose scores fell within one standard deviation above and below the mean were selected as the main participants of the study. The students were classified into three intact classes of 25 students. Two classes were specified as the experimental groups (i.e., interventionist dynamic assessment group, henceforth EG1, and cumulative group dynamic assessment group, henceforth EG2), regarding the type of treatment they received. The third class served as the control group that received no treatment (i.e., non-dynamic assessment, henceforth CG). In the control group, the researchers used the formative assessment.

3.2. Materials

In order to carry out this research, three instruments were utilized to gather the required data:

Oxford Placement Test (Allan, 2004) was used to homogenize the participants in terms of English language proficiency.

1. Wordless picture-sequence prompts were used for narrative writings in the sessions of pretest, treatment and posttest. The wordless picture-sequence prompts in the pretest and posttest in this study were the same. The titles of the wordless picture-sequence prompt in each session was a kind of an Iranian story, for example; title of one of the wordless picture-sequence prompts in the pre-test and post-test was *the liar shepherd*. The titles of the wordless picture-sequence prompts in those sessions were as follows: Fox and Crow, Parrot and Merchant, Rostam and Sohrab, Beautiful Partridge, Cobra's Decision, and Talkative Turtle.

2. Pretest and posttest were also used to compare the participants' independent performance after receiving mediation between the two tests. Hence, firstly, the participants were given a wordless picture-sequence prompt. Then, the teacher told them a short summary of the story in Farsi and wrote some English words related to it on the board to help them to write. Finally, they were asked to narrate in writing twenty sentences in simple past tense to go along with the wordless picture-sequence prompt for 40 minutes. There was no mediation in this session for any of the groups.

3.3. Procedures

This study commenced with the OPT administration, and continued for other 8 sessions. In this research, the OPT was administered to the participants for homogeneity purposes. Then, the pretest was given to the participants. For six sessions, a wordless picture-sequence prompt was given to all the participants, and then the teacher told them a short summary of the story in Farsi, followed by some related English words on the board. Then, they were asked

to narrate the story through writing twenty sentences in simple past tense to go along with a wordless picture-sequence prompt. The last session was devoted to the posttest administration. The procedure in the pre-test session was exactly repeated in the post-test session. Table 1 summarizes the number and order of the sessions in each group and the procedural steps taken for the purpose of this experimental study.

Table 1

Study Plan

Session	Experimental Groups				Control Group
	Interventionist DA		Cumulative G-DA		N-DA
	Approach	Model	Approach	Model	Form
	Sandwich Interventionist	Graduated Prompt	Cumulative	Graduated Prompt	Formative Assessment
1	Administration of Oxford Placement Test				
2	Administration of the pretest				
3-8	Writing tasks based on Farsi mediation and the wordless picture-sequence prompts				
9	Administration of the posttest				

In the interventionist dynamic assessment group (EG1), after finishing the writing task in each session, the teacher began to mediate the learners within 60 minutes. In this experimental group, the teacher used the model of graduated prompt of the interventionist approach. Mediation in this group was in accordance with Brown's Graduated Prompt Model (2005). While mediating the target problems for the learners, the mediator gradually moved from the most implicit mediational moves to the most explicit ones in order (helping move narration along, request for reading, identifying the specific site of error, specifying error, translation, providing example or illustration, offering a choice, providing correct response, providing explanation, asking for explanation). The mediator was not free to skip any moves, and the learners were not allowed to ask any questions in the course of mediation. Moreover, the mediator offered the same mediational moves for the learners, and the mediational moves were also administered in the same order for the learners. Based on the recommendations by Ramazanpour et al. (2016), the researchers used the interventionist sandwich model of DA, where by participants were assessed after completing the tasks. Table 2 reflects the mediational moves in the Poehner's Typology (2005) as well as the adopted mediational moves in the current study.

The participants in the cumulative group dynamic assessment group (EG2) were divided into five groups. In the process of grouping, it was attempted to place each five learners with almost the same writing ability in one group. Within the applied small group DA, the teacher responded to group's errors based on the mediation in accordance with Brown's Graduated Prompt Model (2005). While mediating the target problems for the learners, the mediator gradually moved from the most implicit mediational moves to the most explicit ones in order (helping move narration along, request for reading, identifying the specific site of error, specifying error, translation, providing example or illustration, offering a choice, providing correct response, providing explanation, asking for explanation).

Table 2

Mediational Moves Adopted from Poehner (2005)

Poehner's Typology (2005, p. 160)	Adopted Mediational Moves of This Study
Helping Move Narration Along	Helping Move Narration Along
Accepting Response	
Request for Repetition	Request for Reading
Request for Verification	
Reminder of Directions	
Request for Re-narration	
Identifying the Specific Site of Error	Identifying the Specific Site of Error
Specifying Error	Specifying Error
Metalinguistic Clues	
Translation	Translation
Providing Example or Illustration	Providing Example or Illustration
Offering a Choice	Offering a Choice
Providing Correct Response	Providing Correct Response
Providing Explanation	Providing Explanation
Asking for Explanation	Asking for Explanation

The purpose of offering the graduated prompts to each group based on its level of responsiveness was measuring the distance between the actual and potential developmental level of ZPD of the group. The reduction in the number of prompts was based on the feedback the teacher got from the groups. Applying more explicit prompts during session three to session nine indicated the growth of ZPD of the groups. Finally, after finishing the writing tasks in each session, the teacher began to mediate the learners within 60 minutes. In this group, following Poehner (2009), the teacher called a student to answer the first question while ensuring that the other learners were actively engaged. If she provided an incorrect answer, the teacher would provide that same student with the most implicit mediation prompt. The interaction continued in the same way between the teacher and the same student until she reached the correct answer. In this approach, the students took turn engaging directly as primary interactants with the teacher, understanding that each subsequent one-on- one exchange will have the advantage of building on earlier interactions.

In the control group, the teacher used the formative assessment. The learners in this group were assigned to complete a writing task individually without implementing DA mediations. Each session, the teacher underlined their errors. The teacher's attention was specially focused on using the verbs in simple past in each sentence. Then, the teacher wrote the correct answers under them without giving any explanation or any other form of feedback, scored their sheets, and finally, gave their sheets back to them in the following session.

Finally, a posttest was administered to all three groups to check whether there were significant differences among the effects of interventionist DA, cumulative G-DA and static assessment on grammatical accuracy of their narrative writings.

Descriptive statistics were calculated for the pretest and posttest scores. Moreover, to test the research

hypothesis, a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted on the data, which were gathered through the pretest and posttest.

4. Results

All statistical tests conducted to address the question in this study used 0.05 as the minimum probability level of significance. The SPSS statistical system was used for the computation in the analysis of the data. Initially, the data gathered through pretest were subjected to descriptive statistics (Table 3).

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics for the Pretest and the Posttest of the Three Groups.

Interventionist DA (EG1)		Cumulative G-DA (EG2)		Non-DA (CG)	
M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
5.24	1.76	5.28	1.86	4.80	1.58

As shown in Table 3, means and the standard deviations of the pretest of the three groups were very close to each other (M=5.24, SD= 1.76; M=5.28, SD=1.86; M= 4.80, SD=1.58). In order to find out if there were any statistically significant differences among the groups before the treatment, this data set was subjected to one-way ANOVA (Table 4).

Table 4

ANOVA for Pretest Scores

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	3.54	2	1.77	.58	.55
Within Groups	217.60	72	3.02		
Total	221.14	74			

Table 4 shows that there was no significant difference among the groups prior to the treatment, $F(2,72)$ =.58, p=.55. After treatment, the participants' scores on the posttest were collected and descriptive statistics were conducted. Table 5 illustrates means and standard deviations for the three groups.

Table 5

Descriptive Statistics for the Posttest Scores

Interventionist DA (EG1)		Cumulative G-DA (EG2)		Non-DA (CG)	
M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
11.92	3.32	15.00	2.43	7.76	1.58

As displayed in Table 5, the means and the standard deviations of the posttest of the cumulative G-DA (M=15.00, SD=2.43) and interventionist DA (M=11.92, SD=2.32) groups were higher than those of control group (M=7.76, SD=1.58). At the same time, all three groups manifested improvement from the pretest to the posttest, compared to the means and the standard deviations of the pretest, as shown in Table 3.To address the research question, a one-way ANOVA was run on the data set, collected through the post-test (Table 6).

Table 6

ANOVA for Posttest

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	660.08	2	330.04	71.48	.000
Within Groups	332.40	72	4.61		
Total	992.48	74			

As shown in Table 6, there was a significant difference among the three groups, $F(2,72)=71.48$, $p=000<.05$. In order to make sure where the differences among the groups lay, LSD post-hoc test was conducted (Table 7).

Table 7

LSD Post Hoc Test

(I)G	(J)G	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confid. Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
EG1	EG2	-3.08*	.60	.000	-4.29	-1.86
CG		4.16*	.60	.000	2.94	5.37
EG2	EG1	3.08*	.60	.000	1.86	4.29
CG		7.24*	.60	.000	6.02	8.45
CG	EG1	-4.16*	.60	.000	-5.37	-2.94
EG2		-7.24*	.60	.000	-8.45	-6.02

Table 7 shows that there was a significant difference in the mean scores of the control group and the interventionist dynamic assessment group ($p=.000 < .05$). Moreover, the level of significance between the control group and the experimental group (EG2) was smaller than .05 ($p=.000$). Thus, there was a significant difference in the mean scores of the control group and the cumulative G-DA group. The difference between the experimental group (EG1) and the experimental group (EG2) was also statistically significant ($p=.000 < .05$). Thus, there was a significant difference in the mean scores of the experimental group (EG1) and the experimental group (EG2).

In order to make sure that all the three assessments were effective, a paired sample t-test was used for each of the three groups to compare the means of the participants' performance on the pre-test and post-test (Table 8).

Table 8

Paired Samples Test

	Mean	SD	Std. Error Mean	t	df	Sig.
Pair 1 (EG1)	-6.68	2.60	.52	-12.79	24	.000
Pair 2 (EG2)	-9.72	2.54	.50	-19.12	24	.000
Pair 3 (CG)	-2.96	1.30	.26	-11.32	24	.000

As it can be seen in Table 8, the level of significance between pretest and posttest for each pair was smaller than .05 ($p=.000$). Thus, there was a significant difference in the mean scores of pretest and posttest in each group. It can reveal that the three assessments were all significantly effective, but the cumulative G-DA is the most effective way among the chosen groups in improving the ability of the EFL learners' accuracy in writing narrative paragraphs.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

This quasi-experimental study tried to find out if there were any statistically significant differences among the effects of interventionist dynamic assessment, cumulative group dynamic assessment and static assessment on grammatical accuracy of EFL learners' narrative writing. According to Poehner (2009), in cumulative group dynamic assessment, the teacher conducts a series of one-on-one DA interactions as the group works toward mastery of a problem. That is, individuals take turns engaging directly as primary interactants with the teacher, with the understanding that each subsequent one-on-one exchange will have the advantage of building on earlier interactions that the class witnessed. The goal in this approach is to move the entire group forward in its ZPD through negotiations with individual learners in their respective ZPDs. Cumulative G-DA attempts to move the group forward through co-constructing ZPDs with individuals.

In this research, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) showed a significant difference among the means of the three groups. Considering the results of the present study, the cumulative G-DA which is one approach of group dynamic assessment, is the most effective way among the chosen groups in improving the ability of the EFL learners' accuracy in writing narrative paragraphs. The reason for the fact is that the participants in the cumulative G-DA performed their task of transferring information to their peers quite successfully.

Abbasi and Fatemi (2015) studied the effect of dynamic assessment on Iranian pre- intermediate EFL learners' acquisition of English tenses. The results of their research indicated that the learners in the dynamic group not only could outperform the other group in terms of learning English tenses but also they had positive attitudes toward learning through dynamic assessment. Moradian; Mofrad and Norolahi (2016) attempted to examine the effect of cumulative group dynamic assessment on learning the passive structures. Results of the study revealed that learning of passive structures by means of cumulative G-DA was significantly increased. Mahdavi (2014) investigated the effect of dynamic assessment on the essay writing ability of different genders of Iranian EFL learners. She concluded that dynamic assessment through mediated learning experience, promotes the writing ability of the learners. Parsi and Vahdani Sanavi (2015) addressed the effects of dynamic assessment on improving the writing ability of intermediate EFL learners.

In addition, the findings of this study were different from Van Lier's (2006) view that considered DA as a threat for dominating testing techniques. Sternberg and Grigrenko (2002) pointed out that it is too different to adopt DA into the classrooms. They urged that DA should be used to make recommendations for learners, not just to describe a learner's performance. Davin and Donato (2013) noted that in the context of group DA, only a particular number of students will be active and respond to teacher's mediation and the rest of the students as the observers benefit from primary interactants' negotiations. They stated that this may limit the cognitive engagement of a majority of secondary interactants in benefiting from the teacher's mediation.

Therefore, the findings of this study might be helpful for those EFL learners who still have difficulties in mastering grammatical rules in writing. The results revealed that language learners who experience cumulative G-DA do more interactive activities and feel more relaxed and less anxious. Language teachers can also benefit from the results of this study. It provides language teachers with rationale to carry out writing group work activities in class to improve students' writing skill with a main focus on meeting the objectives of the task and assessing the extent to which those objectives are met. It also helps the teachers to incorporate cumulative G-DA into their classes and identify the weaknesses of their learners and provide mediation where needed.

Furthermore, this study may be helpful to syllabus designers who need to emphasize more flexibility in curriculum. In DA, learners are the most important side of any educational program. If the syllabus is not in line with the needs of learners, teachers may play the syllabus designer's role. Therefore, there should be enough flexibility in the syllabi to satisfy the needs of the students. This study may also inspire the material developers to

develop materials for writing courses or workshops according to the learners' needs, give the possibility of diagnosing the problematic areas to the teachers, and make language courses more relevant to students' needs (Birjandi et al., 2009).The findings of this study might be helpful for decision makers to enhance cooperative learning in English, give enough space for practice and acting by providing a variety of tasks, increase English language periods in order to provide suitable opportunities for the teachers to concentrate on learning quality.

Like any other research, there were some inevitable limitations imposed on this study which may limit the scope of generalizing the results of this study. First of all, random sampling technique was not employed in this research and in order to collect data a convenience sampling approach was used. Therefore, it might have endangered the external validity of the final results. Second, the type of the pretest and posttest in the form of a wordless picture-sequence prompt for narrative writing might still be another limitation that is worth heeding. Third, the number, gender and proficiency level of the participants can limit the conclusions drawn from the results of this study in terms of its generalizability.

Finally, based on the results and limitations of the current research, some recommendations can be made for further research projects: in this study, the data were collected through employing the wordless picture-sequence prompts for narrative writing; therefore, the researchers would like to suggest multiple measures and tools such as questionnaire, observation, diaries, checklist, interviewing students and a combination of different assessment devices to collect data. In this study, the researchers made an attempt to compare the effects of using interventionist DA, cumulative G-DA and static assessment on developing knowledge of narrative writing of the EFL learners in an accurate grammatical way. In a further study, their effects may be sought in other language skills like listening, speaking, and reading or other language components like lexicon, phonological, syntax, and semantic components, in which the effect on students' reception and production may be different. This study was conducted with 75 female EFL learners in the third grade (pre-intermediate level) of high school. Other researchers can conduct their studies with more subjects at different gender and other levels of language proficiency.

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