



Dynamic Assessment Strategies for Enhancing Reading Comprehension and Student Motivation

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Ulfi Farisyah*
English Education Department, Universitas PGRI Semarang,
Indonesia, ulfifarisyah@gmail.com

Jamiu Temitope Sulaimon
Faculty of Education, University of Ilorin Kwara State Nigeria,
sulaimonjamiu7991@gmail.com

Jafar Sodiq
English Education Department, Universitas PGRI Semarang,
Indonesia, jafarsodiq@upgris.ac.id

*Corresponding Author's Email: ulfifarisyah@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This study explored the impact of dynamic assessment on students' reading comprehension and motivation in an Indonesian vocational school. English language teaching in Indonesia faces challenges due to diverse student backgrounds and limited support, which often affects learners' proficiency, especially in reading and speaking. A pre-experimental design was used, involving pre-tests, post-tests, and questionnaires to gather data from 35 students. The data were analyzed using SPSS version 25 and quantitative methods. Results showed a noticeable improvement in students' reading comprehension scores, increasing from a mean of 82 to 89. Students also reported higher motivation, confidence, and engagement in reading activities. These improvements were linked to the personalized and interactive features of dynamic assessment. The study concludes that dynamic assessment is a promising alternative to traditional assessment methods, as it supports individualized learning and enhances student outcomes in reading comprehension and motivation within vocational education contexts.

Keywords: *Dynamic assessment, Reading Comprehension, Reading Motivation*

Introduction

English Language Teaching (ELT) in Indonesia has been significantly impacted by Indonesia's diverse demographic and social environment (Jalaluddin & Jazadi, 2020). Therefore, it is reasonable to believe that the cultural aspect is one of the key factors influencing ELT's effectiveness in Indonesia (Prastikawati & Adeoye, 2024; Hidayat & Mason, 2023). Apart from cultural aspects, diverse backgrounds, and student characteristics, several other factors influence the effectiveness of ELT in Indonesia (Munandar & Newton, 2021; Marwa et al., 2021). The level of student proficiency, class size, and time allotment are just a few of the issues that the communicative approach might cause. Additionally, teacher competence and access to teaching resources also play a crucial role in determining the success of ELT in Indonesia.

The transition from the 2013 Curriculum to the Merdeka Curriculum has led to significant modifications in learning planning, implementation, and assessment. Key changes include the introduction of teaching modules, diagnostic tests, and structured reflections for both students and teachers, aimed at enhancing competency (Kasman & Lubis, 2022; Prahestina et al., 2024). A crucial component of this curriculum is diagnostic assessment, conducted before instruction to identify students' competencies, strengths, weaknesses, and learning characteristics. This enables teachers to design instruction that aligns with students' diverse needs (Yulianto, 2022; Kazemi & Tavassoli, 2020).

Diagnostic assessment serves as a foundation for targeted interventions, allowing teachers to address individual learning challenges and leverage students' strengths (Rachmawati & Lestarinigrum, 2022; Iwu, 2022; Digna et al., 2023). In this context, dynamic assessment emerges as a more effective alternative to static assessment, particularly in evaluating learners' language skills. By integrating assessment with instructional support, dynamic assessment provides a more comprehensive understanding of students' learning progress and potential (Sana'ati et al., 2019).

Reading is a fundamental English language skill that Indonesian students are expected to master (Wiyaka et al., 2020; Oo & Habók, 2021). It is not solely a cognitive ability but is also influenced by affective factors such as self-efficacy, confidence, attitude, and motivation (Kuşdemir & Bulut, 2018). Given the interconnectedness of language teaching, learning, and assessment, the impact of assessment remains a critical issue in the evolving educational landscape (Fitriyah & Jannah, 2021). Assessment plays a vital role in language education by providing insights into students' comprehension, retention, progress, and the effectiveness of instructional methods (Prastikawati et al., 2024).

This study examines the integration of dynamic assessment in enhancing reading comprehension and motivation among vocational high school students. Specifically, it investigates the implementation of dynamic assessment for eleventh-grade students in the Accounting and Finance major at vocational schools. The research addresses three key questions: (1) To what extent does dynamic assessment influence students' reading comprehension?; (2) How effective is dynamic assessment in improving reading comprehension?; and (3) How does dynamic assessment impact students' reading motivation?.

This study offers a novel contribution by integrating dynamic assessment within the context of vocational high school education, an area that remains underexplored in Indonesian ELT research. While previous studies have examined diagnostic assessment and its role in individualized instruction, limited research has focused on its impact on both reading comprehension and motivation among vocational students. By investigating how dynamic assessment facilitates personalized learning and enhances students' engagement, this study provides new insights into optimizing assessment strategies within the Merdeka Curriculum. The findings are expected to inform more effective pedagogical approaches tailored to the unique needs of vocational learners

Methodology

This study employed a pre-experimental design using pre-tests and post-tests to examine the impact of dynamic assessment on students' reading comprehension and motivation. A pre-experimental design was chosen as it allows for the evaluation of cause-and-effect relationships when a control group is not feasible, making it suitable for classroom-based research (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This design provides initial insights into the effectiveness of an intervention, particularly in educational settings where randomization is challenging (Fraenkel et al., 2019). Quantitative analysis was conducted using SPSS 25 to assess the effects of the treatment. The study targeted all eleventh-grade students in the Accounting and Finance major (AKL) at SMKN 1 Kendal, with a purposive sample of 35 students from Class XI AKL 2.

Data collection involved a reading comprehension test administered before (pre-test) and after (post-test) the intervention to evaluate the effectiveness of dynamic assessment (DA). Additionally, a closed-ended questionnaire with a 5-point Likert scale, adapted from Wigfield & Guthrie (1997) and recent studies on reading motivation in EFL contexts (Schiefele et al., 2016; Yamashita, 2022), measured students' reading motivation. The questionnaire assessed both general motivation and the impact of DA. The data was analyzed using SPSS 25 to determine the mean and standard deviation.

The writer employed Brown's characteristics in rating the reading scale to score the student's reading comprehension levels on both pre-test and post-test (Brown, 2004).

Table 1. Reading Comprehension Level

Criteria	Score
Very Well	4
Good	3
Enough	2
Not Enough	1

After receiving the test score of students' reading comprehension, the mark was applied to the table achievement using English KKM (Minimum Completeness Criteria) 75.

Table 2. English KKM

Grade	Predicate	Categories
92 – 100	A	Very Good
83 – 91	B	Good
75 – 82	C	Enough
0 - 74	D	Not Enough

Meanwhile, the data results from the MRQ were processed by calculating the percentage.

Table 3. MRQ Scale

Criteria	Scale
Very agree	5
Agree	4
Undecided	3
Disagree	2
Very disagree	1

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis testing in this study used the Wilcoxon signed-rank test. The Wilcoxon test is a hypothesis test used to compare or see the differences between two samples that are related. This test is included in the non-parametric test so that it does not have special parameters in the test requirements (Field, 2018). The Wilcoxon test is an alternative test or replacement test for the paired sample T-test. Based on the requirements of the parametric paired sample t-test which requires the data to be normally distributed, the research data cannot be processed using the parametric paired sample t-test so an alternative test is needed, namely the non-parametric Wilcoxon signed rank test. The Wilcoxon test was carried out using the SPSS version 25 program.

The basis for making a hypothesis decision can be seen based on the probability results (Asymptotic Significance) in the Wilcoxon test results with the following basis: (1) If the sig. \leq level of significance (0,05), the null hypothesis is rejected, (2) If the sig. $>$ level of significance (0,05), the null hypothesis is accepted.

Findings

Student's Reading Comprehension Before Being Exposed to Dynamic Assessment

Research question one aimed to find out student's reading comprehension. To answer this research question, a pre-test was needed. In the pre-test, students were asked to do a reading test consisting of 20 multiple-choice questions. The results of the students' reading comprehension before being exposed to dynamic assessment were presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Mean and Standart Deviation of Student's Pre-test Score

Mean	N	Std. Deviation
82	35	6.410

Based on Table 4, students' reading comprehension before being exposed to dynamic assessment was in category C (enough) with a mean score of 82. It could be concluded that students' reading comprehension was not good enough. Although the results were above 75 or above the standard of minimum completeness score (KKM), it still showed a sufficient level so that students needed further learning.

Student's Reading Comprehension After Being Exposed to Dynamic Assessment

After knowing the student's reading comprehension before being exposed to dynamic assessment, the writer conducted a post-test on the students. This post-test was conducted to answer the second research question. In the post-test, students were asked to do a reading test consisting of 20 multiple-choice questions. The results of the post-test showed the student's reading comprehension after being exposed to dynamic assessment. The results of the student's reading comprehension after being exposed to dynamic assessment were presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Mean and Standart Deviation of Student's Post-test Score

Mean	N	Std. Deviation
89	35	7.470

Based on Table 5, students' reading comprehension after being exposed to dynamic assessment was in category B (good) with a mean score of 89. It could be concluded that students' reading comprehension was better than before. The result also showed an increase in the mean score of 82 to 89. Therefore, the result showed a change in students' reading comprehension for the better.

The Significant Difference in Student's Reading Comprehension Before and After Being Exposed to Dynamic Assessment

To find out the significant differences between students' reading comprehension before and after being exposed to dynamic assessment, the writer analyzed the significant differences using the SPSS version 25 Wilcoxon signed rank test, using a significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$.

Table 6. Result of Wilcoxon Descriptive Test

		Ranks		
		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
X - y	Negative Ranks	3a	11.33	34.00
	Positive Ranks	24b	14.33	344.00
	Ties	8c		
Total		35		

Based on Table 6, the results of the Wilcoxon test could be seen which showed the results of the difference in students' reading comprehension ability scores from the pre-test and post-test. The decrease in scores in the post-test was experienced by 3 students with an average decrease of 11.33. The increase in reading comprehension ability scores in the post-test occurred in 24 students with an average increase of 14.33. While the remaining 8 students had the same score and did not change in both tests. Based on these results, it was reinforced by the results of the Wilcoxon Statistic Test for decision on the research hypothesis. The results of the Wilcoxon test were as follows.

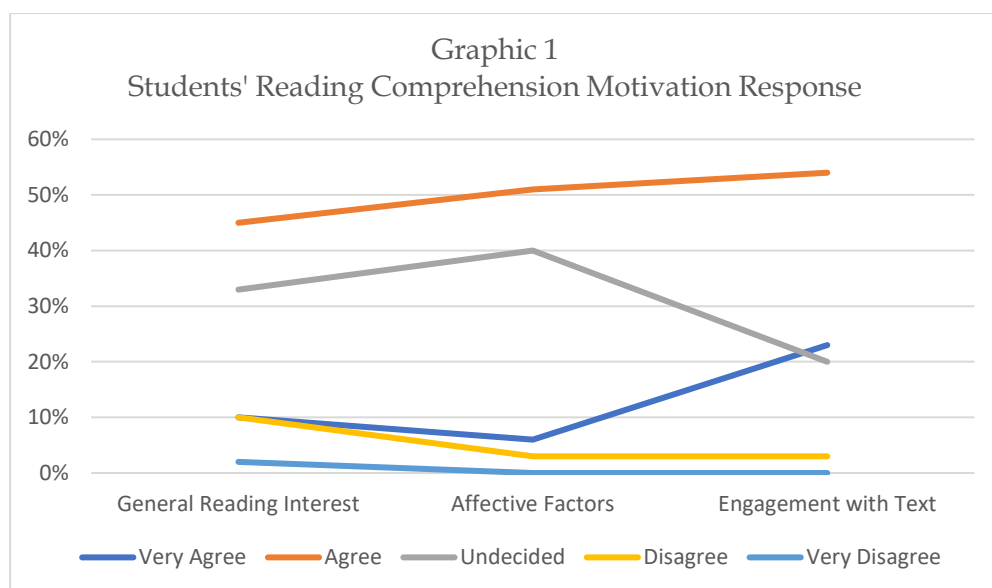
Table 7. Result of Wilcoxon Statistics Test

Test Statistics			
X - y			
Z			3.753
Asymp.	Sig.	(2-	.000
tailed)			
a. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test			
b. Based on negative ranks.			

Based on Table 7, if the result of Sig. (2- tailed) < 0.05 , means that there is a significant difference between pre-test and post-test scores. But if the result of Sig. (2-tailed) > 0.05 , which means that there is no significant differences between pre-test and post-test scores. Based on Table 7, it showed that the value of Sig. (2-tailed) in this research was 0.00. Thus, it could be concluded that $0.00 < 0.05$. It meant that there was a significant difference between pre-test and post-test scores. It meant that (H_0) was rejected and it could be concluded that there was a significant difference in student's reading comprehension before and after being exposed to dynamic assessment.

Students' Reading Comprehension Motivation After Being Exposed to Dynamic Assessment

Students' reading comprehension motivation was important to measure after being exposed to dynamic assessment. To find out students' reading comprehension motivation, the writer provided a closed questionnaire. This closed questionnaire contained 16 questions with five scales of agreement and disagreement about motivation in reading and after being exposed to dynamic assessment. Furthermore, the data from the questionnaire were analyzed by looking at the percentage of each scale. The results of students' reading comprehension motivation after being exposed to dynamic assessment are presented in Graphic 1.



Graphic 1. Students' Reading Comprehension Motivation Response

Graphic 1 illustrates the distribution of students' responses regarding their reading comprehension motivation across three key themes: General Reading Interest, Affective Factors, and Engagement with Text. The responses are categorized into five levels: Very Agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagree, and Very Disagree. The Agree category consistently shows the highest percentage across all three themes, with a steady upward trend, indicating that a substantial number of students have a positive inclination toward reading. The Undecided category initially rises in Affective Factors but then declines in Engagement with Text, suggesting that while some students are uncertain about their reading-related emotions, they become more engaged when interacting with texts. Furthermore, the Very Agree category remains relatively low across the themes but shows a slight increase in Engagement with Text, reflecting that a smaller proportion of students express strong confidence in their reading motivation. Meanwhile, the Disagree and Very Disagree categories remain minimal, suggesting that only a small percentage of students have a negative perception of their reading comprehension motivation.

Overall, the graphic indicates that while many students recognize the importance of reading and show engagement, there is still a level of uncertainty, particularly in affective factors, which may influence their overall reading motivation. These findings highlight the need for strategies to enhance students' confidence and emotional engagement in reading.

Discussion

According to the findings of this study, the student's reading comprehension before being exposed to dynamic assessment showed a sufficient level. In that case, students may have a low level of reading comprehension, as a result of which children will not be critical, reflective, independent creative, responsible, or learn new things for daily life

(Rodriguez-barrios et al., 2021). This condition is in line with what was conveyed by Khasawneh & Al-Rub (2020) that students' reading comprehension was shown to be low in some studies. Several factors contributed to this low level, including the use of traditional reading teaching techniques in schools, the poor quality of the reading curricula, and the lack of education in listening skills. Mohammadian et al., (2018) stated that most of the time, teachers using traditional language teaching methods only use textbooks to teach, which is boring for the students. Thus, reading comprehension is a challenge for EFL students due to several issues, including reading methods, a lack of desire, and a lack of quality resources. For this reason, further exploration of reading assessment is still needed. Besides that, there is little doubt that every student has a distinct reading interest category. As with reading comprehension, some people fall into the high reading interest category, and people fall into the low reading interest category (Annida et al., 2018). Therefore, other forms of evaluation are required so that teachers can use the diagnostic data about pupils who struggle with learning and forecast their future course of action (Mohammadi & Babaii, 2022).

On the other hand, the second research finding found that the student's reading comprehension after being exposed to dynamic assessment had increased. After they were given a post-test, they scored at a good level (B). The advent of DA in applied linguistics has opened up new possibilities for second language acquisition (SLA), especially in language assessment, which has become more process-oriented and has a tendency to emphasize students' fluid abilities rather than just their preexisting ones (Sana'ati et al., 2019). New insights on assessment are provided by DA, which also identifies areas where learners can advance (Abdulaal et al., 2022). This is in line with a previous study conducted by Rahayu et al., (2022) which stated that DA is a structured approach for teaching EFL that emphasizes progress. Because DA combined education and evaluation, numerous growth prospects have become available. DA interaction's two-way nature makes it an ideal fit for standard practices in EFL and ESL classes. For that reason, DA is very important because DA serves both educational and learning purposes in addition to its assessment function, which is to assist students in reaching a better level of development (Amini, 2015).

This study highlights the importance of implementing DA to support students' learning progress in line with the *Merdeka Belajar* Curriculum. As mentioned by Sopiansyah & Masruroh, (2021) the new learning paradigm refers to the implementation of the *Merdeka* Curriculum. It guarantees that learner-centered techniques are used. Faiz et al., (2022) added that according to this new paradigm, learning is a cycle that starts with the mapping of competency standards, followed by the planning of the learning process and the use of assessments to enhance learning and help students reach the desired competencies. This new paradigm of learning gives teachers complete control over the learning process, particularly when it comes to creating learning plans and assessments that are specific to the requirements and characteristics of each student. Kasman & Lubis, (2022) also said that this aligns with the *Merdeka* Curriculum's lesson planning principle, which states that to foster students' motivation, interest, creativity, initiative, inspiration, and independence, lessons should be designed with their

individual differences, participation, and student-centered learning in mind. To create learning objectives that meet the needs of each student, teachers must be aware of and comprehend the unique qualities of each student.

This study also revealed that DA provides a significant difference. This is proven based on the results of their score calculations using the Wilcoxon signed rank test. The results of the calculations show changes in the mean scores of students who were initially at level C to level B. From the significant difference, we can find that DA is a more accurate indicator of students' reading comprehension than a traditional assessment. DA's pedagogical significance is not just in helping students get the right answer, but also in assisting them in developing new understandings that will guide their future performances. (Kazemi et al., 2021). This is in line with what was conveyed by Suherman (2020), in contrast to static assessment, which mainly aimed to evaluate students' answers without giving them feedback to advance, DA was fundamentally a tool that teachers could use to assist students in developing their abilities and understanding. In contrast to score-oriented evaluation, DA allowed teachers and students to work together to complete assignments. Good assessment procedures facilitate the identification of learning gaps, allow teachers to modify their lesson plans to accommodate a range of student needs, and promote active student participation (Nuraini et al., 2025).

Finally, DA also affects the students' reading motivation. This is based on this study's findings. The fourth study finding mentions that students' reading comprehension motivation is a raise. As mentioned by Estrada-Araoz et al., (2023) that Employing DA can enhance self-concept, motivation, and self-regulation. It can also help students become more independent and self-sufficient. Additionally, DA facilitates collaborative learning, where assessors and assessees work together to overcome learning obstacles. Moreover, several arguments were given for employing DA, including the quantity of work required, the increased autonomy and motivation of students, and the simplicity of grading (Mohammadi & Babaii, 2022). All things considered, DA promotes a fun learning atmosphere while offering students educational and psychological advantages. More generally, the results help practitioners better understand and successfully implement DA in the classroom to promote motivation and learning (Kazemi et al., 2020).

Conclusion

Based on the result and discussion of the study, the writer concluded that DA significantly improved students' reading comprehension and motivation. Before the treatment, students' reading comprehension was at a sufficient level, which improved markedly after the implementation of DA. The Wilcoxon signed-rank test confirmed a significant difference between pre-test and post-test scores, indicating dynamic assessment's positive impact. Additionally, the Motivation Reading Questionnaire revealed that students found DA engaging and helpful in understanding reading material, contributing to increased enthusiasm and confidence. To address the shortcomings of this research, future researchers are advised to carry out comparable studies with larger sample sizes.

Although reading comprehension and motivation were the main topics of this study, other aspects of students' varied requirements and circumstances might be examined in subsequent research.

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