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## CULTURAL ORIENTATIONS, DYNAMIC ASSESSMENT AND VOCABULARY

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### ABSTRACT

*The present study sought to probe the effect of interactionist dynamic assessment on male and female learners with specific cultural dimension orientations. Initially, 120 adult EFL intermediate learners were selected based on convenience sampling from among 15 classes. The cultural dimension questionnaire was given to the participants and the questionnaires were scored to identify the learners who were more oriented towards the extreme end of each of the continuums of the general cultural dimensions. After identifying the cultural orientations of the learners, the VKS proposed by Wesche and Paribakht (1993) was translated into Persian and learners were asked to rate the vocabulary items in a 100 vocabulary list based on the scale. The rationale behind this procedure was to select the vocabulary items that learners were not familiar with. Based on VKS, the learners selected 40 vocabulary items. Ten sessions were determined for teaching these 40 selected words to all the learners using interactionist dynamic assessment. At the end, a 40-item vocabulary test was administered to the groups to test their vocabulary performance. The results of statistical analyses revealed that interactionist dynamic assessment differently affected the vocabulary learning of both male and female learners with specific cultural dimension orientations.*

**Keywords:** Dynamic Assessment; Interactionist Dynamic Assessment; Vocabulary Culture; Cultural Dimensions.

### INTRODUCTION

According to Brooks (1997) culture has to do with the individual's contribution to the continuous kaleidoscope of various life circumstances as well as the rules and models governing attitude and behavior. Referring to these models, people, from infancy onward, try to justify the world to themselves as best they can, making connection with those surrounding them. As pointed out in Brook's definition, culture is concerned with nearly any type of phenomenon which occurs in the world surrounding us. In keeping with this definition, almost all the dimensions of culture are reflected in all educational contexts and the domain of L2 teaching and learning. Clearly, culture influences the development of both L1 and L2 learning. As a matter of fact, culture provides the conceptual frameworks that are coded in any language (Levinson, 2003). In the view of Hofstede (1986), power distance as a quality of culture determines the extent to which the individuals with less power in a society accept the inequality in power, considering it as normal.

The findings of the previous studies indicate that the power distance between teacher and learners accepted by the society in Asian educational system is more than that of the western communities. According to Confucius, teaching is viewed as the most respected job in the majority of Asian communities. As discussed by Richards and Lockhart (1996) to people in Asian communities, teaching is viewed as a teacher-controlled and directed process. In the educational context where teacher teaches in the learners' language instead of the teacher's

language, the cultural adaptation is more likely to be successful than in classrooms in which the medium of instruction is completely unfamiliar to the learners. This is because the L2 teacher exercises more power over the learning situation than any single student (Hofstede, 1986).

According to Hofstede (1997), in masculine societies including western countries (e.g. USA, Italy) achievement and success are considered as the main values in society while consensus seeking, paying attention to other people and quality of life are viewed as dominant values in feminine cultures. Sympathy is usually expressed by people for the underdog. The focus is on keeping away from circumstances distinguishing clear winners and losers. In masculine societies, performance and achievement are viewed as essential milestones and sympathy is expressed by the winners, with status being of great importance to show success. In fact, in Feminine cultures (e.g. the Scandinavian countries and the Austria) the focus is on people (so-called people orientation). Small is viewed as a positive thing and status is not so important.

Hofstede (1997) asserts that uncertainty avoidance (or uncertainty control) has to do with the degree to which individual perceives himself/herself under threat of uncertainty and ambiguity. In cultures where the focus is on avoiding uncertainty, individuals are characterized by a perceived intense emotional demand for rules and formality to structure life. In fact, how individuals think and learn is influenced by this value. In countries where UAI is high (countries such as Iran, South Korea, France, Russia), people feel an internal drive to know of people's perception of a certain subject in the past and present as well as their remarks about it. As a matter of fact, this is viewed as a requirement for competence, resulting in the establishment of high status for experts. This contrasts with weak uncertainty-avoidance cultures (e.g., the UK, the USA, and Denmark) where the members' opinions are more highly respected.

The Long Term Orientation (LTO) is concerned with the extent to which a community puts emphasis on a future-orientated dimension instead of a near term point of view. The nations with low scores in this regard (e.g., USA and West European countries) are usually influenced by monotheistic religions systems (e.g. the Christian, Islamic or Jewish systems). People in these countries believe that there is an absolute and indivisible truth. On the other hand, in countries with high emphasis on LTO (e.g. Hong Kong, Taiwan, China, as well as those practicing Buddhism, Shintoism or Hinduism), people believe that truth depends on time, context and situation.

Another cultural aspect has to do with indulgence versus restraint (IVR). In such a context, indulgence is concerned with an orientation to allow for almost free satisfaction of natural human desires, which makes life enjoyable and full of fun (Hofstede et al., 2010). On the other end of this spectrum lies moderation or restraint. The following are the items that make up the positive end of this dimension:

- moderation
- keeping on being disinterested and pure
- displaying few desires
- Pessimistic and other negative emotions are often related to the restraint end of this dimension.

Studies show that some behavioral consistencies have been retained (e.g. those domains related with math, science and logical reasoning). Nations where children have better performance in



mathematics are communities where children also display better performance in science, in logical reasoning, and in reading. Research findings show a close relationship between success in all these areas and weak monumentalism and strong flexhumility. This even holds true given the inclusion of the role of national wealth (Minkov, 2011) whereas there is a negative correlation between monumentalism and math performance. In a nutshell, the more monumentalist a society is, the lower its achievement in mathematics will be (Minkov, 2011). According to Minkov (2011), desire to finish first and to be considered as the best may push one to set goals that improve superficial learning. On the other hand, superficial learning means that an individual is extrinsically motivated (Minkov, 2011). Moreover, Minkov (2011) makes a distinction between indulgent Americans and restrained Asians as well as Eastern Europeans. He notes that Americans are inclined to receive compliments while in Japan and China, just like Eastern Europe, personal praise often results in embarrassment (Minkov, 2011).

In the context of education, cultural traditions and values considerably influence and shape learners' perception of what learning is and how it should unfold as well as what type of teaching is the best one. Put it other way, people in individualist communities perceive the goal of education differently from those in collectivist societies. That is, teaching in individualistically oriented cultures is mainly aimed at allowing the student to learn in order to cope with new, unknown, unforeseen circumstances. On the contrary, in collectivist cultures, people consider learning as a "one-time process" aimed at preparing the individuals to take part in society (Nelson, 2000). From an individualistic viewpoint, schooling is mainly aimed at raising independent, autonomous learners. In such societies, academic progress is assessed based on individual assessment and individual grades while in classrooms in collectivist societies, collective success rather than individual achievement is the final goal, with students relying on and supporting each other. In the latter, the exclusion of students' peers causes confusion.

Learners in individual societies are pushed to participate in their learning process, express what they have in their minds, and challenge their teachers (Al-Issa, 2005). Instruction in individualist cultures is not on par with mere transference of knowledge to learners but rather as sharing and negotiation of knowledge (Al-Issa, 2005). The students in such contexts are encouraged by teachers to take risk, take part in competition and problem solving. In fact, learning in an individualistic culture entails considerable mutual interaction among learners and teachers. The people in collectivist societies as defined by Triandis (1995) consider learners as part of one or more groups who prioritize the goals of the collectives, rather than personal goals. Learners in collectivist cultures consider teacher as more expert with more authority, more qualified, and responsible for all decisions concerning education (Meleis, 1982).

Therefore, learners' failure is attributed to the teachers' fault and their success is attributed to the teachers' skills and abilities. On contrary to individualist cultures, competition is not encouraged by collectivist societies where education is only a tool to acquire prestige and a higher social status in one's social group (Hofstede, 1986). The two types of societies also are different in another aspect. The two contrasting value systems of individualism/collectivism are different in their emphasis on independence and success from the individual or groups



perspective (Hofstede, 1997). Learners with a collectivist background do not value personal success as much as collective accomplishments.

They are aware of how their personal achievements can turn into final achievements, not waiting for individual motivational counseling (Faitar, 2006). As for individualist culture, students naturally expect the teacher to maintain them in high spirits and assure them that even a poor performance can change into excellence. Individualistic schools try to encourage the learners to develop as independent thinkers and learn individually. They put emphasis on personal responsibility for learning. In collectivist schools, learners avoid expressing their misunderstanding quickly given the fact that it might be viewed as a kind of disrespect to the teacher. It seems that standardized tests are the first option for countries which seek to develop unified standard exams with the aim of comparing learners and even schools. A battery of tests known as the Common Core is a good example. Such a “reductionist” approach can be usually found in individualist cultures in which the individuals have very high motivation to achieve, with schools focusing on topics that are directly concerned with measurable results. These results contribute to employability (Wursten& Jacobs, 2014).

The literature shows that people belonging to collectivist cultures experience hesitation when it comes to focusing so heavily on obtaining top scores and comparing learners and schools through using standardized tests. They focus on collaboration rather than competition. Putting emphasis on competition, individualist educational systems build up immense expectations in the society. For example, all learners need to learn similarly. On the contrary, people in collectivist education systems put emphasis on personalization of education so that every school is able to set its own standards on the basis of a national framework (Wursten& Jacobs, 2014). Similarly, every learner is considered as a unique individual who can earn in his/her own way and can act as a competitor for him/herself.

According to Haywood and Lidz (2007), one of the main topics in research on DA is how to properly provide mediation. This ambiguity has led to scholars' unwillingness to carry out empirical research on DA. Consequently, DA has been marginalized in both general DA literature and literature on L2 DA and it has not been dealt with as it really deserves (Aljaafreh & Lantolf, 1994). Educational practitioners unanimously believe that the mediation inherent in DA can push the individuals to negotiate in order to co-construct ZPDs, providing an opportunity for the learners' progress (Poehner & Lantolf, 2005; Poehner, 2009). In the view of Guk and Kellogg (2007), Vygotsky essentially concentrated on public school teaching, putting aside the notion of a pedagogical duet between learner and teacher.

DA draws on Vygotsky's construct of ZPD (Zone of Proximal Development) which is concerned with the distance between assisted and independent performance. It has to do with a set of tasks that a learner needs to do unaided, taking account of the learner's cognitive skills that are being matured. From a Vygotskian view, the education is mainly aimed at keeping learners in their own ZPDs by paving the way for learning through provision of interesting and culturally meaningful learning materials along with problem-solving tasks reasonably above their level of cognition (Roosevelt, 2008). This entails a thorough grasp of learners' individual differences, demands, motivation, areas of their interest and cognition patterns. This knowledge on part of the teachers makes the instructional interventions be compatible with learners' needs and requirements. Moreover, Vygotsky puts forth the concept of size in ZPD, asserting that learners can have larger or smaller zones of proximal development. It concerns



how much a learner can take advantage of collaboration to enhance his/her performance beyond the actual developmental level (Collins, Kenway & McLeod, 2000). Learners who have a larger ZPD size are likely to show better development in reaction to mediation. Besides, responsiveness to assistance as Vygotsky claims, is an indispensable quality for reinforcing cognitive ability as it gives us an insight into the learner's future development.

In fact, a variety of factors make contribution to determining learners' ZPD size or responsiveness to assistance. According to Sternberg and Grigorenko (2002), different tests are likely to be favorable to different individuals from various cultural backgrounds. Consequently, a learner's weak performance on a test might not be attributed to poor abilities, but rather to the disjunction between his cultural values and those demanded in a test setting. For example, a learner belonging to a culture where collaboration constitutes a part of their daily activities might make more use of DA than a learner who lives in a culture where people's struggle to solve their own problems and collaboration on a test might even be considered as cheating. Similarly, learners' cultural orientations are likely to influence the amount of feedforward they build up in the process of DA.

Individualist learners tend to work independently, viewing help from others whether students or teachers in the test session as cheating to them. On the other hand, learners with a collectivist preference tend to work with peers and to provide and receive assistance when the need arises. Innate factors, including birth order and gender are likely to affect L2 learners' language performance. The research findings show that gender issues influence learners' academic achievements, needs, and interests (Collins, Kenway & McLeod, 2000; Swiatek & Lupkowski-Shoplik, 2000).

In conclusion, despite strong discussions and reasoning in favor of the positive impact of DA, there is no sufficient evidence for its effectiveness in modifying the nature of learners' intervention programs (Deutsch & Reynolds, 2000; Elliot, 2003; Lauchlan & Elliot, 2001; Yeomans, 2008). Although research literature on individual differences in learning dates back to many decades ago, very few, if any, investigations have studied the impact of preexisting individual differences on post-DA performance. The majority of research studies in this domain have focused on learners' change with respect to DA as well as the way in which DA plays a role in revealing individual differences in learning (e.g., Ajideh & Nourdad, 2013; Murphy, 2011; Resing, Elliott, & Grigorenko, 2003; Resing, Tunteler, De Jong, & Bosma, 2009; Stevenson, Hickendorff, Resing, Heiser, & De Boeck, 2013). Put it other way, scholars have not adequately figured out how to meaningfully use DA in the classroom and give feedback on the results so as to maximize learning. Moreover, they have not exactly determined if DA feedback necessarily results in the same amount and type of feedforward for all students who have different cultural or demographic specifics.

Considering the learner as constant in the process of DA and neglecting his/her emotions, priorities, orientations, demographic features, is a gross misrepresentation. It is not yet clear if DA works equally well for boys and girls with different cultural dimensions. Researchers have not fully investigated if students with different cultural dimensions will equally lend themselves to DA intervention and take advantage from the mediations offered by DA assessors. Thus, the current study aimed at probing if interactionist dynamic assessment differently affects the vocabulary learning of male learners with specific cultural dimension orientations. Finally, the study sought to examine if interactionist dynamic assessment



differently affects the vocabulary learning of female learners with specific cultural dimension orientations.

### **Research Questions:**

This study aimed at finding answers to the following questions:

**RQ1:** Does interactionist dynamic assessment differently affect the vocabulary learning of male learners with specific cultural dimension orientations?

**RQ2:** Does interactionist dynamic assessment differently affect the vocabulary learning of female learners with specific cultural dimension orientations?

## **METHOD**

### **Participants**

At the outset, 120 adult EFL intermediate learners at Shokouh Language Institute in Gonabad were selected based on convenience sampling from among 15 such classes at this institute. Totally 65 were female and 55 were male learners. They were mainly university students and studied intermediate level for the purposes of finding better jobs or achieving higher degrees in their related fields. They were within the age range of 18 to 30. Persian was the native language of these students. These learners had all passed their previous English courses at the institute. The courses offered to the participants included and covered the major language skills (reading, speaking, listening and writing) and components (vocabulary and grammar). The vocabulary items included in the course were embedded in the reading content and were usually practiced through gap filling and matching exercises along with occasional multiple choice items. To enter the courses of the institute, learners have to take a placement test (Oxford Placement Test). Following their placement test, the learners will have to attend the classes and pass the final exams given to them after each course. Therefore, the researcher considered the participants studying at the intermediate level at this institute for the purpose of this study.

### **Instrumentation**

#### **Vocabulary Knowledge Scale (VKS)**

Paribakht, and Wesche, (1993) propose five levels or stages in the acquisition of individual words in their vocabulary knowledge scale (VKS). The VKS scale rating varies from total unfamiliarity through the recognition of the word and some idea of its meaning to the ability to use the word with grammatical and semantic accuracy in a sentence.

These five levels include:

- I. I do not remember having seen this word before.
- II. I have seen this word before, but I do not know what it means.
- III. I have seen this word before, and I think it means \_\_\_\_\_. (Synonym or antonym).
- IV. I know this word. It means \_\_\_\_\_. (Synonym or antonym)
- V. I can use this word in a sentence: \_\_\_\_\_. (Paribakht, Wesche, 1993, p. 4)

VKS was used as a criterion to select those vocabulary items that learners were unfamiliar with. To this end, 100 vocabulary items chosen from ten units of Vocabulary in Use was given to the learners and they were asked to assign numbers 1,2,3,4 or 5 to the vocabulary items. The five criteria in (VKS) were translated to Persian to remove any chances of ambiguity in this respect. Moreover, the researcher monitored the learners while doing the activity to assure that



learners were on the right track. Finally, based on the ratings of the students forty vocabulary items were chosen based on which treatment was carried out. The vocabulary items were those that the learners rated 1 or 2 on the VKS.

### ***Vocabulary Test***

To test the subjects' vocabulary knowledge after the treatment a vocabulary test was employed. The vocabulary test was devised by the teacher researcher. To this end, the 40 vocabulary items which had been rated 1 or 2 by the participants based on VKS were included in the test. In order to assure validity and reliability of the tests the following procedures were taken:

***Validity:*** The content validity of the test was ensured via appeal to expert opinion. To this aim, the initial pool of test items was reviewed by an MA and a Ph.D. holder in TEFL with a minimum 15 years of teaching experience and due revisions were carried out on the items. Following that, the construct validity of the test was measured through the employment of a “differential experiment” procedure proposed by Brown (2007). According to this procedure, in order to show the construct validity of a measurement instrument, the instrument could be employed to assess the ability it claims on two different groups whose ability sounds obviously different in this regard. If the difference between the performances of the two groups proves to be statistically different, it could be concluded that the measurement instrument is assessing what it is supposed to measure and hence it is valid. Based on the aforesaid procedure the tests were administered to two different groups of learners who were upper-intermediate and advanced students, respectively. The scores obtained by the groups were analyzed using an independent samples T-Test. The analysis indicated that there was a statistically significant difference between the results with the advanced students outperforming the upper-intermediate ones, hence, the test proved to be valid.

***Reliability:*** Test-retest procedures were drawn on to assure the reliability of the test. To this end, the test was run twice on the upper-intermediate participants with a time interval of 15 days and a Pearson correlation formula was used, the results of which showed an acceptable reliability index of .82.

The Kuder-Richardson Formula 20 test was also used to confirm the internal consistency of the test further. This statistical test checks the internal consistency of instruments with dichotomous choices. The test statistic is:

$$\rho_{KR20} = \frac{k}{k-1} \left( 1 - \frac{\sum_{j=1}^k p_j q_j}{\sigma^2} \right)$$

where

$k$  = number of questions

$p_j$  = number of people in the sample who answered question  $j$  correctly

$q_j$  = number of people in the sample who didn't answer question  $j$  correctly

$\sigma^2$  = variance of the total scores of all the people taking the

To this end, the reliability of the vocabulary test turned out to be .86 which is at a satisfactory level (Brown, 2007).

### ***Intermediate Vocabulary in Use***

*English Vocabulary in Use* is a family of self-study and classroom texts for vocabulary development. The books follow the successful format of the English Grammar in Use titles with presentation of new vocabulary on the left-hand pages and practice exercises on the facing



right-hand pages. This book contains one hundred units covering vocabulary on different topics e.g., sightseeing, hotel, airport, crime, family members etc.

### ***Cultural Dimensions Questionnaire***

The cultural dimension questionnaire used in the present study was the one developed by Saboori (2015). The questionnaire has 26 items on a 4-point Likert-scale which measures 6 dimensions of culture including:

- Power Distance (Items: 8, 12, 14, 15)
- Individualism/Collectivism (Items: 3, 9, 13, 16, 17)
- Masculinity/ Femininity (Items: 10, 19, 23, 24, 25)
- Uncertainty avoidance (Items: 2, 5, 6, 26)
- Long/short term Orientation (Items: 1, 4, 7, 11)
- Indulgence/Restraint (Items: 18, 20, 21, 22).

As stated by Saboori (2015) the instrument enjoys a satisfactory level of validity and reliability. This instrument was given to the participants and it was scored to identify the learners who were more oriented towards the extreme end of each of the continuums of the general cultural dimensions. To be more specific, the participants in each general cultural dimension were subdivided into the following categories as seen in Table 1.

### ***Procedure***

Initially, 120 adult EFL intermediate learners at Shokuh Language Institute in Gonabad were selected based on convenience sampling from among 15 such classes. The cultural dimension questionnaire was given to the participants to identify the learners who were more inclined towards the extreme end of each of the continuums of the general cultural dimensions. The number of participants along with their specific cultural orientations are displayed in Table 2. After identifying the learners with their specific cultural dimensions, the VKS proposed by Wesche and Paribakht (1993) was translated into Persian and learners were asked to rate the vocabulary items in a 100 vocabulary list based on the scale. The rationale behind this procedure was to select the vocabulary items that learners were not familiar with. Since the students' familiarity with the words would distort the effect of dynamic assessment, following procedures were adopted for the purposes of the study. First, 40 vocabulary items were chosen. The vocabulary items were those that the participants rated 1 or 2 on the VKS; 1 meaning "I do not remember having seen this word before" and 2 meaning "I have seen this word before, but I do not know what it means".

Ten sessions were determined for teaching these 40 selected words to all the learners. All groups were taught these vocabulary items using the *Vocabulary In Use* book. To this end, the following steps were taken in the experimental group. Initially, the teacher briefed the students on dynamic assessment and provided some examples. Then to administer dynamic assessment, the instructor went through the following 7 stages:

- The 4 vocabulary items corresponding to the unit under instruction -out of the initial 40 words- were written on the board. Learners were first encouraged to guess the meaning of the words based on the context that the teacher provided orally for them.
- The teacher tried to focus the participants' attention on different word parts such as prefixes or suffixes (if there were any) to find the right meaning.
- The instructor asked the students to identify any synonyms or antonyms of new words.



- Learners were asked to work in pairs and use each word in a sentence based on their guesses.
- Four corresponding definitions of the words under instruction were given to the learners in a jumbled manner. The participants were required to match them to the corresponding definitions.
- The answers were checked and students were assisted in comprehending the meaning of the words.
- The students were put into pairs. One student read the definitions and the other one was required to come up with the correct corresponding word. Then they changed role for the next word.

The aforesaid procedures were taken drawing on the ZPD's concept of "step by step" learning. This teaching course was developed in a way so as to fulfill this purpose. That is, the instructor first started with the first step and moved thoroughly to the other stages by the time the participants had been able to learn the words and use them in sentences appropriately. Having finished the 10 sessions in which the 40 unknown words were covered, the 40 item vocabulary test devised by the researcher was administered to the groups to test their vocabulary performance.

## RESULTS

### *Answering the First Research Question*

The first research question of the study sought to examine if interactionist dynamic assessment differently affects the vocabulary learning of male learners with specific cultural dimension orientations. To find the answer to this research question, the vocabulary scores of the male participants on each dimension of the culture on the questionnaire were compared using independent samples t-test. Tables 3 and 4 display the descriptive statistics and independent samples t-test results for the male learners with high and low power distance cultural orientation.

As seen in Table 4, the sig value equals .026 which is lower than the confidence level of 0.05 indicating that there is a significant difference between the mean of the vocabulary scores for the learners with high and low power distance cultural dimensions. Moreover, as displayed in Table 3, the mean for the low power distance is bigger than that of high power distance learners. Thus, it can be concluded that low power distance learners outperformed the high power distance on vocabulary learning as a result of receiving dynamic assessment.

Tables 5 and 6 display the descriptive statistics and independent samples t-test results for the male learners with individualism and collectivism cultural orientation. As displayed in Table 6, the sig value equals .003 which is lower than the confidence level of 0.05 indicating that there is a significant difference between the mean of the vocabulary scores for the learners with individualism and collectivism cultural dimensions. Moreover, as displayed in Table 5, the mean for the collectivism is bigger than that of individualism. Thus, it can be concluded that collectivist learners outperformed the individualistic learners on vocabulary learning as a result of receiving dynamic assessment.

Tables 7 and 8 display the descriptive statistics and independent samples t-test results for the male learners with masculinity and femininity cultural orientation.



As shown in the Table 8, the sig value equals .012 which is lower than the confidence level of 0.05 indicating that there is a significant difference between the mean of the vocabulary scores for the learners with masculinity and femininity cultural dimensions. Moreover, as displayed in Table 7, the mean for the femininity is bigger than that of masculinity. Thus, it can be concluded that learners with femininity cultural orientation outperformed learners with masculinity cultural dimension on vocabulary learning as a result of receiving dynamic assessment.

Tables 9 and 10 display the descriptive statistics and independent samples t-test results for the male learners with high and low uncertainty cultural orientation.

As depicted in Table 10, the sig value equals .00 which is lower than the confidence level of 0.05 indicating that there is a significant difference between the mean of the vocabulary scores for the learners high and low uncertainty cultural dimensions. Moreover, as displayed in Table 9, the mean for the low uncertainty avoidance is bigger than that of high uncertainty. Thus, it can be concluded that learners with low uncertainty avoidance cultural orientation outperformed learners with low uncertainty avoidance cultural dimension on vocabulary learning as a result of receiving dynamic assessment.

Tables 11 and 12 display the descriptive statistics and independent samples t-test results for the male learners with long and short term cultural orientation.

As presented in Table 12, the sig value equals .002 which is lower than the confidence level of 0.05 indicating that there is a significant difference between the mean of the vocabulary scores for the learners with long and short term cultural dimensions. Moreover, as displayed in Table 11, the mean for the long term orientation is bigger than that of low term orientation. Thus, it can be concluded that learners with low long term cultural orientation outperformed learners with short term cultural dimension on vocabulary learning as a result of receiving dynamic assessment.

Tables 13 and 14 display the descriptive statistics and independent samples t-test results for the male learners with indulgence and restraint cultural orientation.

As shown in Table 14, the sig value equals .007 which is lower than the confidence level of 0.05 indicating that there is a significant difference between the mean of the vocabulary scores for the learners with indulgence and restraint cultural dimensions. Moreover, as displayed in Table 13, the mean for the learners with indulgence orientation is bigger than that of restraint orientation. Thus, it can be concluded that learners with indulgence orientation outperformed learners with restraint cultural dimension on vocabulary learning as a result of receiving dynamic assessment.

### ***Answering the Second Research Question***

The second research question of the study sought to examine if interactionist dynamic assessment differently affects the vocabulary learning of female learners with specific cultural dimension orientations. To find the answer to this research question, the vocabulary scores of the female participants on each dimension of the culture on the questionnaire were compared using independent samples t-test. Tables 15 and 16 display the descriptive statistics and independent samples t-test results for the female learners with high and low power distance cultural orientation.

As seen in the Table 16, the sig value equals .009 which is lower than the confidence level of 0.05 indicating that there is a significant difference between the mean of the vocabulary scores



for the learners with high and low power distance cultural dimensions. Moreover, as displayed in Table 15, the mean for the low power distance is bigger than that of high power distance learners. Thus, it can be concluded that low power distance learners outperformed the high power distance on vocabulary learning as a result of receiving dynamic assessment.

Tables 17 and 18 display the descriptive statistics and independent samples t-test results for the female learners with individualism and collectivism cultural orientation.

As displayed in Table 18, the sig value equals .013 which is lower than the confidence level of 0.05 indicating that there is a significant difference between the mean of the vocabulary scores for the learners with individualism and collectivism cultural dimensions. Moreover, as displayed in Table 17, the mean for the collectivism is bigger than that of individualism. Thus, it can be concluded that collectivist learners outperformed the individualistic learners on vocabulary learning as a result of receiving dynamic assessment.

Tables 19 and 20 display the descriptive statistics and independent samples t-test results for the female learners with masculinity and femininity cultural orientation.

As shown Table 20, the sig value equals .002 which is lower than the confidence level of 0.05 indicating that there is a significant difference between the mean of the vocabulary scores for the learners with masculinity and femininity cultural dimensions. Moreover, as displayed in Table 19, the mean for the femininity is bigger than that of masculinity. Thus, it can be concluded that learners with femininity cultural orientation outperformed learners with masculinity cultural dimension on vocabulary learning as a result of receiving dynamic assessment.

Tables 21 and 22 display the descriptive statistics and independent samples t-test results for the female learners with high and low uncertainty cultural orientation.

As depicted in Table 22, the sig value equals .002 which is lower than the confidence level of 0.05 indicating that there is a significant difference between the mean of the vocabulary scores for the learners high and low uncertainty cultural dimensions. Moreover, as displayed in Table 21, the mean for the low uncertainty avoidance is bigger than that of high uncertainty. Thus, it can be concluded that learners with low uncertainty avoidance cultural orientation outperformed learners with low uncertainty avoidance cultural dimension on vocabulary learning as a result of receiving dynamic assessment.

Tables 23 and 24 display the descriptive statistics and independent samples t-test results for the female learners with short and long term cultural orientation.

As presented in Table 24, the sig value equals .008 which is lower than the confidence level of 0.05 indicating that there is a significant difference between the mean of the vocabulary scores for the learners with long and short term cultural dimensions. Moreover, as displayed in Table 23, the mean for the long term orientation is bigger than that of low term orientation. Thus, it can be concluded that learners with low long term cultural orientation outperformed learners with short term cultural dimension on vocabulary learning as a result of receiving dynamic assessment.

Tables 25 and 26 display the descriptive statistics and independent samples t-test results for the female learners with indulgence and restraint cultural orientation.

As shown in Table 26, the sig value equals .010 which is lower than the confidence level of 0.05 indicating that there is a significant difference between the mean of the vocabulary scores for the learners with indulgence and restraint cultural dimensions. Moreover, as displayed in



Table 25, the mean for the learners with indulgence orientation is bigger than that of restraint orientation. Thus, it can be concluded that learners with indulgence orientation outperformed learners with restraint cultural dimension on vocabulary learning as a result of receiving dynamic assessment.

## DISCUSSION

The current study aimed at probing if interactionist dynamic assessment differently affects the vocabulary learning of male learners with specific cultural dimension orientations. Moreover, the study also sought to examine if interactionist dynamic assessment differently affects the vocabulary learning of female learners with specific cultural dimension orientations. The findings of independent samples t-test revealed that low power distance learners outperformed the high power distance on vocabulary learning as a result of receiving dynamic assessment. This finding can be justified on the grounds that in the culture where there is high power distance, it is usually expected that children to be obedient toward parents versus being treated more or less as equals. The cultures which have high power distance contribute to the concentration of power and influence in the hands of a few rather than distributed throughout the population. As a result, these countries turn out to be more authoritarian. Since the dynamic assessment procedures may encourage a sense of equality between the teacher and learners, a low power distance attribute might be considered as a significant contributor to vocabulary learning by such individuals.

The findings of independent samples t-test showed that collectivist learners outperformed the individualistic learners on vocabulary learning as a result of receiving dynamic assessment. This finding can be justified on the grounds that collectivism is best described by interdependence and cooperation, respect, modesty, social orientation and social intelligence. In fact, collectivist orientation puts more emphasis on the interest of the group than the individual interest. In such contexts, people are integrated into strong, closely knit groups that go on throughout a lifetime to protect in return for unquestioning loyalty (Hofstede, 1997). These attributes of the collectivist might have helped them achieve better vocabulary performance in the interactionist nature of the treatment in dynamic assessment.

The findings of independent samples t-test indicated that learners with femininity cultural orientation outperformed learners with masculinity cultural dimension on vocabulary learning as a result of receiving dynamic assessment. This finding can be justified on the grounds that those cultures that highly value masculine traits put emphasis on assertiveness, competition, and material success. Those categorized as feminine cultures allow for more overlapping social roles for the sexes. Cultures that put emphasis on feminine traits emphasize the quality of life, interpersonal relationships, and care for the weak which can be considered as the interactive features of dynamic assessment as well.

The findings of independent samples t-test indicated that learners with low uncertainty avoidance cultural orientation outperformed learners with low uncertainty avoidance cultural dimension on vocabulary learning as a result of receiving dynamic assessment. This finding can be justified on the grounds that uncertainty avoidance is concerned with the extent to which individuals in a culture feel to be threatened by vicarious or unknown situations. Hofstede (1997) maintains cultures that emphasize uncertainty avoidance tend to be active, aggressive, emotional, compulsive, security seeking, and intolerant. In contrast, cultures that



are weak in uncertainty avoidance are contemplative, less aggressive, unemotional, relaxed, accepting of personal risks, and relatively tolerant. Hofstede (1997) claims that uncertainty avoidance (or uncertainty control) is concerned with the extent to which we perceive ourselves to be threatened by uncertainty and ambiguity. In cultures with strong orientation to avoid uncertainty, people are characterized by a perceived strong emotional need for rules and formality to structure life. The way people think and learn is affected by this value. Thus, learners with low uncertainty avoidance with these features can learn vocabulary in the context of dynamic assessment.

The findings of independent samples t-test revealed that learners with low long term cultural orientation outperformed learners with short term cultural dimension on vocabulary learning as a result of receiving dynamic assessment. This finding can be justified on the grounds that the Long Term Orientation (LTO) has to do with the extent to which a community displays a future-orientated perspective rather than a near term point of view.

The findings of independent samples t-test showed that learners with indulgence orientation outperformed learners with restraint cultural dimension on vocabulary learning as a result of receiving dynamic assessment. This finding can be justified on the grounds that indulgence involves a tendency to provide for relatively free satisfaction of main and natural human desires, which allow for enjoying life and having fun (Hofstede et al., 2010). Minkov (2011) distinguishes indulgent people from restrained individuals, claiming that indulgence tends to receive compliments. However, restraint people do not like to receive praise and positive feedback.

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**Table 1: General Cultural Dimensions and their Subcategories**

General cultural Dimensions	Subcategory 1	Subcategory 2
Power Distance	High Power distance	Low power distance
Individualism/Collectivism	Individualism	Collectivism
Masculinity/ Femininity	Masculinity	Femininity
Uncertainty avoidance	High Uncertainty avoidance	Low Uncertainty avoidance
Long/short term Orientation	Long term Orientation	short term Orientation
Indulgence/Restraint	Indulgence	Restraint

**Table 2: Number of Participants with their Specific Cultural Dimensions**

Specific Cultural Dimension	Male	Female	Total
High Power distance	4	6	10
Low power distance	3	5	8
Individualism	4	5	9
Collectivism	5	4	9
Masculinity	5	9	14
Femininity	3	4	7
High Uncertainty avoidance	7	8	15
Low Uncertainty avoidance	7	7	14
Long term Orientation	4	4	8
Short Term Orientation	4	3	7
Indulgence	5	5	10
Restraint	4	5	9
Total	55	65	120

**Table 3: Descriptive Statistics for the Vocabulary Scores of Male Learners with High and Low Power Distance Cultural Orientation**

Group Statistics					
	GPDM	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
PDM	Male Low Power distance	3	19.6667	2.08167	1.20185
	Male High Power Distance	4	15.7500	1.25831	.62915

**Table 4: Independent Samples T-test Results between the Vocabulary Scores of Male Learners with High and Low Power Distance Cultural Orientation**

Independent Samples Test										
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
PDM	Equal variances assumed	1.283	.309	3.131	5	.026	3.91	1.25	.70	7.13
	Equal variances not assumed			2.887	3.092	.061	3.91	1.3	-.32	8.16

**Table 5: Descriptive Statistics for the Vocabulary Scores of Male Learners with individualism and collectivism Cultural Orientation**

Group Statistics					
	GICM	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
ICM	Male Collectivism	5	33.4000	3.28634	1.46969
	Male Individualism	4	22.7500	3.77492	1.88746

**Table 6: Independent Samples T-test Results between the Vocabulary Scores of Male Learners with individualism and collectivism Cultural Orientation**

Independent Samples Test										
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper	
ICM	Equal variances assumed	1.321	.761	4.531	7	.003	10.65	2.35	5.09	16.20
	Equal variances not assumed			4.452	6.06	.004	10.65	2.39	4.81	16.48

**Table 7: Descriptive Statistics for the Vocabulary Scores of Male Learners masculinity and femininity Cultural Orientation**

Group Statistics					
	GMFM	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
MFM	Male Masculinity	5	17.2000	.83666	.37417
	Male Femininity	3	19.6667	1.15470	.66667

**Table 8: Independent Samples T-test Results between the Vocabulary Scores of Male Learners with masculinity and femininity Cultural Orientation**

Independent Samples Test										
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper	
MFM	Equal variances assumed	.665	.446	-3.5	6	.012	-2.46	.69	-4.17	-.76
	Equal variances not assumed			-3.2	3.2	.042	-2.46	.76	-4.78	-.15



**Table 9: Descriptive Statistics for the Vocabulary Scores of Male Learners with high and low uncertainty Cultural Orientation**

Group Statistics					
GUAM		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
UAM	Male High Uncertainty avoidance	7	10.0000	1.41421	.53452
	Male Low Uncertainty avoidance	7	14.8571	2.03540	.76931

**Table 10: Independent Samples T-test Results between the Vocabulary Scores of Male Learners with high and low uncertainty Cultural Orientation**

Independent Samples Test										
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
UAM	Equal variances assumed	.643	.438	-5.18	12	.00	-4.85	.93	-6.89	-2.81
	Equal variances not assumed			-5.18	10.69	.00	-4.85	.93	-6.92	-2.78

**Table 11: Descriptive Statistics for the Vocabulary Scores of Male Learners with long and short term Cultural Orientation**

Group Statistics					
GLTOM		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
LTOM	Male Long Term Orientation	4	22.7500	4.92443	2.46221
	Male Short Term Orientation	4	17.0000	.81650	.40825

**Table 12: Independent Samples T-test Results between the Vocabulary Scores of Male Learners with long and short term Cultural Orientation**

Independent Samples Test										
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
LTOM	Equal variances assumed	5.531	.157	2.30	6	.002	5.75	2.49	-.357	11.85
	Equal variances not assumed			2.30	3.165	.002	5.75	2.49	-1.96	13.46

**Table 13: Descriptive Statistics for the Vocabulary Scores of Male Learners with indulgence and restraint Cultural Orientation**

Group Statistics					
	GIRM	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
IRM	Male Indulgence	5	26.8000	3.42053	1.52971
	Male restraint	4	18.2500	3.30404	1.65202

**Table 14: Independent Samples T-test Results between the Vocabulary Scores of Male Learners with indulgence and restraint Cultural Orientation**

Independent Samples Test										
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
IRM	Equal variances assumed	.506	.500	3.781	7	.007	8.55	2.26140	3.20	13.89
	Equal variances not assumed			3.798	6.671	.007	8.55	2.25148	3.17	13.92

**Table 15 :Descriptive Statistics for the Vocabulary Scores of Female Learners with High and Low Power Distance Cultural Orientation**

Group Statistics					
	GPDF	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
PDF	female Low power Distance	5	18.4000	1.67332	.74833
	Female High Power Distance	6	15.5000	1.22474	.50000

**Table 16 :Independent Samples T-test Results between the Vocabulary Scores of Female Learners with High and Low Power Distance Cultural Orientation**

Independent Samples Test										
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
PDF	Equal variances assumed	.427	.530	3.322	9	.009	2.90	.87	.92	4.87
	Equal variances not assumed			3.222	7.218	.014	2.90	.90	.78	5.01



**Table 17 :Descriptive Statistics for the Vocabulary Scores of Female Learners with individualism and collectivism Cultural Orientation**

Group Statistics					
	GICF	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
ICF	Female Collectivism	4	33.5000	4.79583	2.39792
	Female Individualism	5	23.2000	4.49444	2.00998

**Table 18 :Independent Samples T-test Results between the Vocabulary Scores of Female Learners with individualism and collectivism Cultural Orientation**

Independent Samples Test										
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
ICF	Equal variances assumed	.183	.682	3.319	7	.013	10.30	3.10322	2.96	17.63
	Equal variances not assumed			3.292	6.34	.015	10.30	3.12890	2.74	17.85

**Table 19 :Descriptive Statistics for the Vocabulary Scores of Female Learners masculinity and femininity Cultural Orientation**

Group Statistics					
	GMFF	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
MFF	Female Femininity	9	27.2222	3.19287	1.06429
	female masculinity	4	20.5000	1.29099	.64550

**Table 20 :Independent Samples T-test Results between the Vocabulary Scores of Female Learners with masculinity and femininity Cultural Orientation**

Independent Samples Test										
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
MFF	Equal variances assumed	4.161	.066	3.988	11	.002	6.72	1.68	3.01	10.43
	Equal variances not assumed			5.400	10.9	.000	6.72	1.24	3.98	9.46

**Table 21 :Descriptive Statistics for the Vocabulary Scores of Female Learners with high and low uncertainty Cultural Orientation**

Group Statistics					
GUAUF		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
UAF	Female High uncertainty avoidance	8	11.0000	1.06904	.37796
	Female Low Uncertainty Avoidance	7	14.8571	2.67261	1.01015

**Table 22 :Independent Samples T-test Results between the Vocabulary Scores of Female Learners with high and low uncertainty Cultural Orientation**

Independent Samples Test										
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
UAF	Equal variances assumed	6.167	.327	-3.76	13	.002	-3.85	1.02	-6.06	-1.64
	Equal variances not assumed			-3.57	7.66	.008	-3.85	1.07	-6.36	-1.35

**Table 23 :Descriptive Statistics for the Vocabulary Scores of Female Learners with long and short term Cultural Orientation**

Group Statistics					
GLTF		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
LTF	Female Long terms orientation	4	22.2500	5.43906	2.71953
	Female Short term Orientation	3	17.0000	1.00000	.57735

**Table 24 :Independent Samples T-test Results between the Vocabulary Scores of Female Learners with long and short term Cultural Orientation**

Independent Samples Test										
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
LTF	Equal variances assumed	3.006	.144	1.63	5	.008	5.25	3.25384	-3.11	13.61
	Equal variances not assumed			1.88	3.26	.008	5.25	2.78014	-3.20	13.70



**Table 25 :Descriptive Statistics for the Vocabulary Scores of Female Learners with indulgence and restraint Cultural Orientation**

Group Statistics					
	GIRF	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
IRF	Female Indulgence	5	27.4000	3.64692	1.63095
	Female Restraint	5	18.6000	4.56070	2.03961

**Table 26 :Independent Samples T-test Results between the Vocabulary Scores of Female Learners with indulgence and restraint Cultural Orientation**

Independent Samples Test										
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
IRF	Equal variances assumed	.470	.512	3.370	8	.010	8.80	2.61	2.77	14.82
	Equal variances not assumed			3.370	7.631	.010	8.80	2.61	2.72	14.87

