



## **Microgenesis in Dynamic Assessment of L2 Learners' Socio-cognitive Development via Web 2.0**

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### **Abstract**

Theoretically grounded in the Vygotskian Sociocultural theory of mind (SCT), dynamic assessment (DA) explores the learners' developmental processes and provides insight into their potentials for future development by providing them with necessary assistance during the performance of the assessment task through collaborative dialogue. Sociocultural theory (SCT) operates on the premise that learning is socially situated, appearing first on the inter-mental (social) level and then on the intra-mental (individual) level (Vygotsky, 1978). The evolution from computers to world wide web and recently to second generation of web (web2.0) as sophisticated cultural/psychological tools which allow for learners' full participation in collaborative environments lends support to Vygotsky's thesis. O'Reilly (2005) described Web 2.0 as an evolution from the linking of information to the linking of people with an increased emphasis on user generated content, data and content sharing and collaborative effort. It is believed that multimodal Web 2.0 - like all other human creations - should be considered as a cultural tool that mediates the transformation process from lower mental functions to the higher, cultural functions (Vygotsky, 1978). The socio-cognitive development of L2 learners in DA is investigated through Vygotsky's notion of microgenesis. Mitchell and Myles (1998) describe microgenesis 'a local, contextualized learning process . . . [that] can sometimes be traced visibly in the course of talk between expert and novice.' (p.1980). This study represented a web-based qualitative inquiry in which the multimodal discourse of the collaborative web 2.0 was exploited to enrich mediation in DA and shed a new light on the socio-cognitive development of L2 learners. The current study implemented the microgenetic method as the general analytical framework for data analysis, it was also supplemented with questionnaires and follow up interviews with students to further explore the data. The findings of the study revealed that the highly enriched mediation in dynamic assessment via web 2.0 contributes to the dialogic collaboration between learners and mediators which in turn results in learners' development beyond their current capabilities. It was also possible to obtain a richer and more accurate understanding of L2 learners' potential level of socio-cognitive development.