

# Transcendence of Cognitive Development: The Incorporation of Task-based Instruction into the Transfer Tasks of Dynamic Assessment

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**Abstract**—The implementation of dynamic assessment in the field of second language learning and development is on the rise due to the interest of researchers and practitioners for the fruitful outcomes it provides to the teaching and assessment communities. The researcher's subjective view regarding the difficulty measures of the transfer tasks for the assurance of cognitive modifiability and the stretching the scope of cognitive abilities has to be replaced with a sound scheme. Besides reviewing the implementation of transfer tasks in the literature, this article intends to suggest the scheme in a theoretical and practical way toward constructing a sound valid justification for transfer tasks. The suggestions can contribute to the validity of the dynamic assessment at the same time.

**Index Terms**—Sociocultural theory, dynamic assessment, transcendence, transfer task, task-based instruction

## I. INTRODUCTION: SOCIOCULTURAL THEORY AND DYNAMIC ASSESSMENT

In accordance with the dialectic nature of sociocultural theory (henceforth SCT), there is a feature of unity within the field for different concepts. The unifying status of development and learning in the zone of proximal development (henceforth ZPD), the interdependence of speech and thought, and also the merge of assessment and teaching have been prevalent in the writings and claims of the theoreticians and practitioners working within the SCT's perspective toward developmental studies. One of the significant concepts bearing out of the studies in SCT is Dynamic Assessment (henceforth DA), which has been actually an offspring of the activities in the ZPD. The ZPD is a potential site for those abilities that are in the state of being shaped, possibly in the future, as opposed to those abilities which have been already developed and shaped so far as the mental capability of the individual is concerned. However, the potentiality of the person can be activated through the jointed activity with the more expert person. For Vygotsky (1986), humans' development and the attainment of control over themselves originate from the outside. In other words, the social aspect of human life begins having psychological status. The language that we use helps us, as a psychological tool, to mediate our own mental life, and the mediation and development primarily originate from the participation, interaction, and relationship with the world outside, and then in a stepwise manner the cognitive ability becomes intrapsychological, and finally internalized.

It is specifically the main property of the ZPD of any individual to shine the future potential capabilities of the person in the given domain. Viewed from this perspective, Poehner and van Compernelle (2011) believe that the ZPD is mainly dealing with diagnosis and intervention in the process of development, therefore, the DA has no other way than moving toward a dialectical activity. This means that the change is not realized in transformation, but actually it is the transformation that occurs through the unification of distinct, contradictory processes (Mahn, 1999).

In order to identify these properties, that is, what the person can do alone as well as what he can do with the collaboration and assistance of another person, which by themselves provide the opportunity to understand and develop the person more thoroughly, the unifying concept of DA was introduced to the scientific community by Luria (1961). It is within the DA that teaching and assessment are married. If the assessment is to be fruitful, it has to depend on teaching, and if the teaching is to be effective, it has to bear on the information provided by assessment. As a result, the harmony of the both seemingly separate activities of teaching and assessment are unified through acting upon one realization of DA. Luria cried out the point through the claim that the validity and fairness of the assessment cannot be assured only through statistical approaches, but via theoretical principles and interpretation of the individual. This is partly clear in the reporting of the DA outcomes in that the assessor provides a profile for the learner indicating the problematic areas and suggestions for further modifications as well as scores representing the independent and mediated performance (Haywood and Lidz, 2007).

Mehri and Amerian (in press) believe that although the concept of DA functions as a unified approach of assessment and instruction at the same time, and there is no clear-cut difference between the two in this line of thinking, the emphasis on each can be pinpointed as a result of the goal the researcher/practitioner could have in mind. The introduction of *Dynamic Assessment and Teaching* (DTA) and *Dynamic Teaching and Assessment* (DAT) actually signifies the same idea. It means that the focus of the DA process could be on assessment in one occasion, or it could be more focused on teaching. The former assesses the potentialities of a person via developing the person at the same time. The latter develops the person and assesses the degree of development spontaneously.

Besides the aim, both orientations bear in mind the present-to-future approach toward the mental development of the individual. DA looks into what the person can do and the emerging abilities; in addition to that, the activation of these two spheres of abilities has to be done via the mediator who actively engages in for the development of the person (Poehner and Lantolf, 2005). Moreover, according to Sternberg and Grigorenko (2002) DA provides more information in comparison with other types of assessment. Not only the approach targets a deeper insight in the abilities of the learners, but also it aims at developing them. It is believed that since the mental abilities are always in the state of flux, they have to be assessed dynamically, that is in the process of movement. It is through change and dynamic movement of the abilities that their real power and significance could be pinpointed. Lidz (1991) maintains that DA concentrates "on modifiability and on producing suggestions for interventions that appear successful in facilitating improved learner performance" (p. 6).

The active purposeful interaction occurring in DA session(s) permits the examiner/teacher (this is due to our DAT and DTA classification) to pay particular attention to the processing skills of the person, check out the level of task demand on the person, the amount of effort displayed by the person, the degree to benefit from the mediation, and finally the degree of modified performance in later occasions (Butler, 2000). The process of interaction, not only reveals the capabilities of the individual in a fuller picture, but also tries to develop it. Actually, the revelation of the full picture happens through the development of the abilities, responsiveness of the person, and the identification of the strengths and weaknesses. Of course, Haywood and Lidz (2007) believe that the success of the DA requires the active relationship between the subject and the person who provides instruction, guidance, questions, and mediation in general.

Among the features of the DA, Marcine and Lidz (2001) believe that DA requires both active examinee and examiner, and it needs mediation to convey the basic principles of the field to the learner. Actually Lidz's (1997) definition of the whole process of DA is revealing:

Approaches to the development of decision-specific information that most characteristically involve interaction between the examiner and examinee, focus on learner metacognitive processes and responsiveness to intervention, and follow a pre-test-intervention-post-test administrative format (p. 281).

The above definition includes almost all the basic characteristics of the DA: active participation of the examinee and the examiner, mediation, metacognitive awareness, and responsiveness to intervention. However, the last part of the definition draws on the design of the DA sessions. Lantolf and Poehner (2004) suggest two forms of implementing DA. The first one they name interactionist DA in which the mediator negotiates the needs of the learner as they happen instantly, therefore, a qualitative form of mediation which does not predict the form of assistance to the learner based on the hierarchy but on the moment to moment instances of problems happening in the task in hand. On the other hand, Lantolf and Poehner (ibid) introduce the interventionist DA in which a standard procedure is prepared beforehand in that the mediator is "not free to respond to the learners' need...but must instead follow a highly scripted approach to mediation in which all prompts, hints, and leading questions have been arranged in a hierarchical manner" (Poehner, 2008, pp.44-45).

Another classification of DA suggested by Sternberg and Grigorenko (2002) is to design DA sessions where there is a pretest-intervention-posttest format like a sandwich, or the intervention only but with high prefabricated meditation, like a cake. The former might happen through several sessions, while the latter might happen within one session only. As mentioned earlier, any of the four categories discussed could be implemented bearing the goal of DTA or DAT. Fig. 1 depicts the point more clearly.

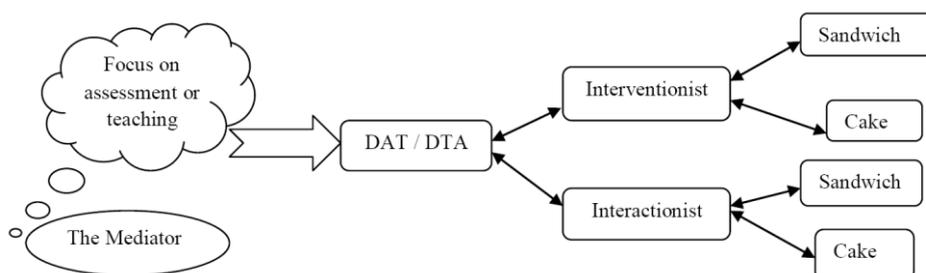


Figure 1. An overall design of the realizations of DA

## II. TRANSCENDENCE AS A VALIDITY MEASURE FOR DA

In Fuerstein, Rand, and Rynders' (1988) model of mediated learning experience, there are actually 11 components which construct the modifiability of the individuals. The first three of these components are considered fundamental, namely, the intentionality, reciprocity, and transcendence. Fuerstein, Rand, and Rynders (ibid) define intentionality as the state in which the mediator intends warily to intervene in the development of the individual. Next, the reciprocity means that both parties in the process of DA play an active role for the mutual interest and a common goal. And finally, the transcendence, which actually contributes to DA, and in the words of Kozulin (2011) plays a significant role in establishing a valid changing prospects, means to let the individual act on the similar but not identical tasks with some spice of complexity based on the previous intervention sessions with the mediator. In other words, the individual takes the principles of the domain at work from the intervention session(s), and applies them to other tasks. According to Kozulin (ibid), a person can be validly assumed to have changed cognitively if he can show a valid performance in other cases and make connection with the domain of the study. For instructional and assessment validity, Haywood and Lidz (2007) believe that transfer should deliberately and assuredly be included into assessment and intervention procedures of DA.

Poehner (2007) applies the idea of transcendence, or transfer, as the process of tracking development not in regard to the task in assessment but also to more complex and demanding tasks. The significance of the transfer to complex tasks is attributed to the change that makes the person move beyond the here-and-now considerations, and spread the scope of his/her abilities to the future. Davydov (1986) maintains that this stretching the learners' capabilities leads to the theoretical learning. By theoretical learning, it is meant to be able to solve problems and defend their answers. In other words, learners can justify and reason for the problem solving strategy and the way they come up with in other situations. The idea of transfer actually validates the change happening during the DA session. It is evidence that the construct that examiners within the field were seeking to change and put into flux has actually happened, and the assessment and the teaching have been effective. Campione and Brown (1990) divide the transfer cases into two categories: near transfer and far transfer. Near transfer "involves the principles learned originally but in different combinations" (p.152), while the far transfer bears more novelty and complexity. Although the ability to be able to act in both near and far transfer is a signal of the degree of control over the point in question, the tasks of transfer have to keep the basic underlying abilities (Toglia and Cermak, 2009).

Campione and Brown (1990) take the transfer as a part of their DA session. The focus is not on the amount of improvement, but on the amount of help with regard to the transfer of the rules to other novel situations. Campione (1989) believes that the inclusion of the transfers distinguishes between the learners who can only use materials they were taught against learners who can understand what they were taught and apply the principles flexibly.

Guterman (2002) believes that "understanding the...body of knowledge is critical for determining what pupils know, how they know it, and how they are able to use their knowledge to answer questions, solve problems and engage in additional learning" (p.284). It actually is evident toward the validity of the DA session if we consider the definition of Messick (1989) about validity: "the degree to which empirical evidence and theoretical rationales support the adequacy and appropriateness of inferences and actions based on test scores" (p.5). Not only the validity, but also the generalizability of the abilities instructed and assessed for future development are enhanced through transfer tasks (Ebadi and Bahramlou, 2014). Moreover, the evidence gathered in the transfer tasks accords for the future performance, in that the true ability is more confidently scored, being safe from other uncontrolled outside influences.

Kozulin (2011) discusses in length the intelligence assessment through the differentiation between the acquisition-related abilities and the thinking-related abilities. The former relates to the learning potential of the mental functioning of the individual, while the latter relates to the cognitive modifiability of the person. Although the motivation for such claims is due to the ignorance of the researchers in the field for taking granted the potentials of the learners in DA sessions as equal to their change in their mind, the fruits of such distinction could be of invaluable use. Grigorenko and Sternberg (1998) believe that there are students who show a significant level of cognitive ability, but are poor in learning sessions. Therefore, there seems to be different areas responsible for these two cognitive abilities, that is the functions of these two parts are related to the acquisition and application distinction mentioned above. Good thinkers, according to Kozulin (2011), are those who can identify the problem and select the relevant and appropriate strategy for the solution. This is different from the good learner, who can use the models and examples provided in the instruction sessions. This means that their ability in acquisition which is a learning power is different from the thinking related abilities which are more a form of application of acquired abilities.

Relating the argument of Kozulin to the models and procedures of DA as well as the significance of transfer, it could be claimed that the learning potential ability is activated in the intervention sessions of DA. Through hints, prompts, explanations, among other techniques, the learner learns certain principles. However, that should not be granted as the valid cognitive modifiability of the person. The learning is actually happening because the ZPD of the person is in access, and ready to be expanded. However, one needs realizing if the DA session has had any significant impact on the reconstructing the cognitive ability of the person. The latter form of investigation relates to the transfer of the abilities gained in the learning potential session, or what we discussed in the intervention part of the DA. In the words of Haywood and Lidz (2007), the learning potential answers the questions of "what is the response to intervention?", while

the cognitive modifiability responds to the question of "how much investment, of what kinds, may be required to promote long-term gains in performance?" (p.14).

Nevertheless, the field of DA needs strong backbone in the details of the assessment and teaching. Whether we take DTA or DAT aims for our implementation, there has to be a systematic design of the transfer tasks to assure the degree of change and transcendence of abilities to the future cases in order to prepare active and successful individuals, and/or select the most appropriate candidates for the different programs (Mehri and Amerian, in press). Therefore, the tasks have to be carefully selected based on the criteria and features attributed.

### III. TASK-BASED INSTRUCTION FOR TRANSFER TASKS

With the advent of the communicative approach, there was a rise for the focus-on-the meaning tasks, and the emphasis on the fluency. Most of the instructional activities were based on the fluency at the expense of the accuracy. Of course, Widdowson (1998) emphasizes that the focus on the meaning actually means the pragmatic meaning, which somehow includes the structured based approach previously taken by audiolingualism. However, the communicative approach focuses on the interactive aspect of the language, instructing learners on language as communication, not for communication (Widdowson, 1978). The discussion on the communicative approach is out of the scope of our current analysis. The point is that the focus changed from the purely structured one to more pragmatic one. Tasks are actually one form of realization of communication. There are different interpretations of what a task is. Prabhu (1987), Nunan (1989), Skehan (1996) are some of the scholars working in this area.

Ellis (2003) reviews different interpretations of a task, and tries to provide a comprehensive definition of the concept.

A task is a work plan that requires learners to process language pragmatically in order to achieve an outcome that can be evaluated in terms of whether the correct or appropriate propositional content has been conveyed. To this end, it requires them to give primary attention to meaning and to make use of their own linguistic resources, although the design of the task may predispose them to choose particular forms. A task is intended to result in language use that bears a resemblance, direct or indirect, to the way language is used in the real world. Like other language activities, a task can engage productive or receptive, and oral or written skills, and also various cognitive processes (p. 16).

Although the task-based instruction bears focus on meaning greatly, the focus on form is not neglect at all costs. While an unfocused task does not insist on using specific forms of language, a focused task requires learners to use specific target forms of the language. Therefore, a task could include both the form and the meaning, but it should be aimed at the pragmatic aspect of language and the production of some outcome.

We do not intend to go into a lengthy discussion of the peculiarities of tasks-based instruction. Readers are advised to consult with two interesting textbooks of Ellis (2003) and Nunan (2004). The argument is to see how the task can contribute to SCT in general and the transcendence part of the DA in particular.

The genetic approach of Vygostky claims that the cognitive functions, in their course of formation start in the social environment when the responsibility of the mental functions are distributed among the individuals who are interacting with the person, and then the functions are later transferred into the internal psychological life of the person, or the actual level of the development of the person (Wertch, 1985). Therefore, the social interaction plays a great role in internalizing the language, in our current concern: the second language development. In other words, if the person intends to have any control over the different layers of the language to be used communicatively in his daily life as a mental tool to mediate his life and mind both internally and externally, he has to be engaged in the process of interaction. Swain (2000) believes that SCT in relation to language studies means learning how to use language in order to mediate the process of language learning. One of the significant ways to operationalize this is through the use of tasks. However, it is not merely the incorporation of tasks that gives rise to the learning in SCT, since learners can interpret the tasks based on their own socio-historical background. Therefore, a task can be realized through different activities for different learners. The task is actually a means of providing context for the ZPD.

### IV. THE EFFECT OF ACTIVITY THEORY ON TRANSCENDENCE TASKS

The task-activity distinction brings us to the activity theory where the motives of the learners play a significant role in giving meaning and purpose to the tasks introduced in class. That is, the individual characteristics of each person bring about different interpretations of the activity. The studies of Gal'perin (1992) provide a model of action. In accordance with the SCT's transformation of human mind, he puts forth three phases of action for acting upon the task, or as previously discussed the personal meaningful activity. The orientation phase of the model, which takes the motives and the purpose of the learner in the performance phase, ignites the triggering point of the process. Since the orientation toward a task can change the performance, hence the evaluation phase could have a different result. In the domain of SCT, learners as agents come to be instructed and assessed with specific motivations and orientations.

Thorne (2004) believes that activity theory focuses on three factors regarding the action of the individuals: a) The tools and artifacts, b) The community and its rules, and c) The division of the labor in the community. In our argument for the incorporation of tasks in the DA's transcendence part, the artifact is actually the language itself for the development of the language. The community is the community of learners in which the class members play a significant role for the development of themselves and the class as a whole. The rules, also, focus on the interactional

aspect of the tasks introduced to the learners for developmental aims. And finally the division of the labor is the contribution of the learners.

Now, the point is that the structuring of tasks in the transfer part of the DA should not be haphazardous, since it cannot contribute to the comparing of the research findings, mediating learners toward a step-wised developmental process, assessing learners from the sound near transfer tasks to the far transfer tasks, and collecting evidence for the validity of the DA. The intuitive incorporation of the tasks in the transcendence part of the DA could hinder the researchers from carrying over the DA approach to the mainstream practical realization. For example, there are loads of tasks in the field without any sound justification of which could be practically more complex and difficult than the other, though there are some attempts to do so in the literature (Gardner and Miller, 1996; Pica, Kanagy, & Faldun, 1993; Prabhu, 1987). There has been a variety of tasks used in the second language learning environment. There are information-gap and opinion-gap tasks, split and shared information tasks, reciprocal and non-reciprocal tasks, role-play and decision making tasks, narrative and descriptive tasks, spot the difference and dictogloss tasks, among others.

## V. DA AND TASKS

In Poehner (2007), the researcher focused on the oral proficiency of learners in promoting their development on the preterit and imperfect aspects of the verbs. Using the pretest-intervention-posttest design, the mediator enriched the learners through mediation to develop their conceptual understanding of the aspects. The post-test task was similar to that of the pretest one. In that the learners had to retell a story. However, two transfer tasks could ensure the level of cognitive modifiability in the learners' mental functioning. The focus again was on narrative tasks, which was similar to that of the intervention phase of the study. The first task was a scene from a movie called *The Pianist*, and the second one was an excerpt from Voltaire's *Candid*. The interpretation of the study so far as why the tasks differed at their level of complexity was based on the graphic and emotional scenes depicted in the extract of the movie shown to the participants as prompts for them in retelling the events. *The Pianist* was assumed as a more complex task because the scenes which were shown to the participants had violent occurring in the Second World War. On the other hand, the justification on why *Candid* was far more complex than *The Pianist* was based on the literary conventions and the lexical familiarity. There is so much subjectivity in hand here. The complexity of the tasks could be questioned on the ground of introducing other complex tasks. The degree to which how and why the two tasks are different is not systematically analyzed and introduced.

In Ableeva's (2010) study the researcher implemented L2 DA on the listening comprehension of the learners. Firstly, the pretest was given to the learners to ascertain the level of actual functioning of the participants. In the intervention phase, learners had a better understanding of the task in question. However, the researcher intended to focus on the degree of change on the listening performance of the learners. The incorporation of the transfer tasks was realized through a television documentary and a radio commercial listening tasks. However, Ableeva justified the difference in complexity with the DA task in relation to the cultural details and the familiarity of the participants with vocabularies and grammatical structures. Putting aside the results of the performance of the participants, the justification on the design of the transfer tasks is not based on a sound theoretical and practical ground. The researcher specifies only the difference in the frequency and difficulty of the vocabulary and grammar. The distinction of the two transfer tasks could be on the ground of the input, in that the TV documentary could be analyzed in relation to their one-way input, and the commercial listening task can behold a two-way input.

Collecting data from 6 students enrolling in a French course, Poehner and van Compernelle (2013) focused on the implementation of DA on the reading comprehension of the L2 French. The researchers used one-to-one interactional sessions in order to pave their way into realizing the process of how the learners answered the 15 items. The interaction could be beneficial for exploring the ways of diagnosing the source of difficulty and a validity measure of the reading process in the minds of the learners. However, the focus of the study was more in line with the DAT approach rather than DTA. The study did not include transfer tasks at all to guarantee the degree of moving from the here-and-now performance to there-and-then one

Kozulin and Garb (2001) used DA on EFL at risk students in text comprehension. The design of the study was pre-test-intervention-post-test. The pre-test stage included only 6 reading comprehension questions since the researcher omitted three sections of the original test which included vocabulary recognition or production. The justification was that to answer such questions the learners had to depend on the prior knowledge. Therefore, the modified version of the reading comprehension questions resembled a real reading task for academic settings. After the mediation, the post-test provided matched items to that of the pre-test stage to the participants. So far as the information, strategies, difficulty level, and length were concerned, the post-test resembled the first one. Actually, the design of the study illustrates the fact that the aim was to dig into the learning potential of the learners since the results also indicates that there were two groups of low-gainers and high-gainers among the participants. The tasks in the study did not focus on the transfer of the abilities to other more complex and difficult ones in order to both stretch the cognitive functioning of the learners and provide a validity measure for the change in the mind of the learners.

## VI. CONSTRUCTING A SYSTEMATIC RESOLUTION FOR TRANSCENDENCE TASKS

The unsystematicity of the tasks in DA sessions can be to the disadvantage of the field. In the area of second language learning studies, the attitude of the researchers and practitioners toward DA is mostly complementary to the mainstream assessment approaches, or what is currently known within the DA domain as static assessment. This might be because the validity of the DA, among others, could be questioned. Of course, there is enough evidence to believe that the use of DA in DAT approach can give us a better picture of the cognitive processes of the learner for assessment purposes. However, the teaching purpose in the form of DTA should be well-supported in practical forms to be implemented more seriously. The research based innovations and actions, despite their fruitful and supportive findings can sometimes be debilitating too. Our claim is for the systematicity of the tasks, in transcendence/transfer sessions in order to build a firm validity evidence and support for the claims DA puts forth in DTA and DAT approaches.

Ellis (2003), reviewing the studies in relation to the task-based instruction provides sound criteria for grading tasks. He proposes a synthetic scheme for the complexity of the tasks in four layers: input, conditions, processes, and outcomes. By input, Ellis means the information that is provided to the learners through the tasks. This layer of task complexity considers the medium, code complexity, cognitive complexity, context dependency and familiarity of the information. The second layer, the task conditions, relates to the situation and context of implementing the task. It is focused on the conditions influencing the negotiation of meaning, task demands, and discourse mode. The scheme also considers the process of performing the task too. The reasoning needed is part of the cognitive operations that the task demands of and influences the learners. Finally, the task is evaluated based on the outcome, and the factors relating to this can affect the difficulty of the process of performing the tasks by the learners. The criterion of outcome includes the medium of the outcome, its scope, the discourse domain, and the complexity of the actual outcome. Table I not only summarizes the criteria for constructing the tasks, but also defines their easiness and difficulty.

TABLE I.  
CRITERIA FOR GRADING TASKS (FROM ELLIS, 2003)

Criterion	Easy	Difficult
<b>A Input</b>		
1 Medium	pictorial → written	→ oral
2 Code complexity	high frequency vocabulary; short and simple sentences	low frequency vocabulary; complex sentence structure
3 Cognitive complexity		
a Information type	static → dynamic	→ abstract
b Amount of info	few elements/ relationships	many elements/ relationships
c Degree of structure	well-defined structure	little structure
d Context dependency	here-and-now orientation	there-and-then orientation
4 Familiarity of info	familiar	unfamiliarity
<b>B Conditions</b>		
1 Interactant relationship (negotiation of meaning)	two-way	one-way
2 Task demands	single task	dual task
3 Discourse mode required to perform the task	dialogic	monologic
<b>C Processes</b>		
1 Cognitive operations:		
a Type	exchanging information → reasoning	→ exchanging opinions
b Reasoning need	few steps involved	many steps involved
<b>D Outcomes</b>		
1 Medium	pictorial	→ written → oral
2 Scope	closed	open?
3 Discourse mode of Task outcome	lists, descriptions, classifications	narratives, → instructions, arguments

Of course the point which needs meticulous attention of the users of such a classification is that all of the above mentioned categorizations are not based on research, though most of them are. Of course, the above model can contribute to a systematic approach of designing tasks for transfer session(s) in DA related studies. In Poehner's (2007) study, the medium of the first task is pictorial, which makes it easy, but at the same time the online dialogues are oral which makes the task difficult. This makes the task a little bit unsystematic. The second task, *Candid*, which is assumed by the researcher to be more difficult than the first one is written, however, the code complexity feature of the task has low frequent vocabularies and complex sentence structures. So far as the cognitive complexity of the tasks is concerned, *The Pianist* could be considered abstract since it is the emotional and violent features of the movie which are interpreted by the study to be of significance, while this could be more difficult for the learner in comparison to the *Candid*'s task. In *Candid*'s task, the idea of abstractness might be looked upon through the material in question. According to Palincsar (1986) in the process of talk what is said could be a source of reflection for the learners to further stretch their capability. In the similar vein, in the *Candid*'s written medium, the source of reflection is a written text which provides more time for analysis. The amount of information, the degree of structure, and the context dependency are in favor of *The Pianist* task so far as the easiness is concerned. The difficulty measures in this criterion are attributed to the *Candid*'s task. In

relation to the conditions of *The Pianist* task in Poehner's study, the interactants' relationship is one-way since the learner has to retell what he has seen in the movie, the same is true for the *Candid's* task where the learner has to retell what he has read. The task demands in *The Pianist* is a single task because the learner has to only observe the scenes and then retell the events, while in the *Candid's* task, the learner first has to read the text, understand it, and then retell the events, and these make it a dual task. The discourse mode of both tasks is monologic which is more difficult in comparison with the dialogic tasks. In the cognitive processes of task performance, since both of the tasks have to reflect the opinion of the learner in retelling the events, both are difficult from this respect. Finally, the outcome of the tasks is not systematic. While both tasks include oral outcome (a difficulty measure in task sequencing), they contain a closed scope (an easiness measure in task sequencing). The discourse mode of both tasks also is in the narrative and description modes, which makes both of them easy. There is some evidence in favor of the second task to be more difficult in the above analysis of the Poehner's (2007) study; however, the unsystematicity in some criteria can ruin the assurance of designing a more difficult task in the transfer phase of the study. The most significant point in the second task, *Candid's* task, which carries a more complex feature, is the code complexity in relation to the vocabulary and grammar.

In Ableeva (2010), the situation is the same. To ease the process of analysis, Table II can describe the features of the two tasks, the TV documentary and the radio commercial, in relation to Ellis's (2003) criteria for grading tasks. The areas of unsystematicity are highlighted.

TABLE II.  
THE ANALYSIS OF ABLEEVA'S (2010) TRANSFER TASKS

Criterion	TV Documentary	Radio Commercial
<b>A Input</b>		
1 Medium	<b>pictorial and oral</b>	<b>oral</b>
2 Code complexity	high frequency vocabulary; short and simple sentences	low frequency vocabulary; complex sentence structure
<b>3 Cognitive complexity</b>		
a Information type	static	static
b Amount of info	few elements/ relationships	many elements/ relationships
c Degree of structure	(unrecognizable)	(unrecognizable)
d Context dependency	here and now orientation	<b>here and now orientation</b>
4 Familiarity of info	(unrecognizable)	(unrecognizable)
<b>B Conditions</b>		
1 Interactant relationship (negotiation of meaning)	<b>One way</b>	<b>Could be dialogic</b>
2 Task demands	single task	Single task
3 Discourse mode required to perform the task	<b>monologic</b>	<b>monologic</b>
<b>C Processes</b>		
<b>1 Cognitive operations:</b>		
a Type	exchanging information → reasoning	→ exchanging opinions
b Reasoning need	(unrecognizable)	(unrecognizable)
<b>D Outcomes</b>		
1 Medium	Pictorial/ oral	oral
2 Scope	closed	<b>closed</b>
3 Discourse mode of Task outcome	lists, descriptions, classifications	narratives, <b>lists, descriptions, classifications</b> , <b>narratives,</b>

As Table II shows, the medium of the TV documentary is both oral and pictorial, while the radio commercial is oral only. The rest of the features in this criterion are in accordance with Table I. In the cognitive complexity criterion, all of the features are in their appropriate places, while the context dependency of both tasks seems to be identical. However, the degree of the structure in the analysis of Ableeva's study could not be easily recognizable, since the study does not specify much about the structures. This is also the case for the familiarity of the information, and the reasoning needed in the processes of the tasks. So far as the conditions are concerned, the TV commercial probably has one way relationship between the interactants in the presentation of the documentary which makes it difficult, while the TV commercial could be dialogic, which makes the analysis of understanding the listening task easier. The discourse mode required to perform the tasks is both monologic, since the learners have to answer the listening comprehension questions alone. In this study, there are several areas of systematicity in the design of the tasks; however, the unsystematicity and the unrecognizable features not specified by the researcher can endanger the degree of confidence in the task difficulty in the transcendence phase of the study. Therefore, a more systematic outlook for the transcendence/transfer tasks is required for constructing a more valid and evidenced grounds for DA research and practice.

VII. CONCLUSION

The concept of transcendence in DA studies, both in the DTA and DAT approach, can contribute to the validity of the psychological change. Although the mere intervention within the DA design is of outmost importance so far as the exploration into the actuality and potentiality of the abilities of an individual is concerned, it can give us a better picture of the capabilities of the person from moving here-and-now performance to the there-and-then one. Moreover, one of the important distinctions of DA in comparison with other forms of assessment is that the intervention during the assessment session activates both the actual level of development and the potential one. To do this, the intervention causes the evaluation to be in the process of movement, and this by itself changes the person. In other words, the evaluation is sensitive to the degree of change in the mental functioning of the person at the same time and it is considered part of the potential ability of the person. Therefore, the ability to take the principles of the intervention phase in DA practice, which is called transcendence, can give us a validity evidence of how much the person can extend his conceptual understanding. The systematic analysis of the tasks in the transcendence can support these points, which makes the field of study more reliable and documented. This is because the near transfer, far transfer, and very far transfer tasks need being carefully designed to assure the interpretation of the data more valid and scientifically justifiable.

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