

A summary of two research studies by university teachers in Taiwan

Dynamic Speaking Test: A Study from Feng Chia University April 2025

Difeng Chueh of the Department of Foreign Languages and Literature (DFLL) at Feng Chia University (FCU) conducted a trial of the Dynamic Speaking Test (DST) among undergraduate students.

The DST was assigned to 18 students across different year levels - freshmen through seniors. Students were asked to complete a questionnaire, made up of ten Likert scale items and two short answer questions, which was designed to capture student perceptions regarding usability, clarity, timing, relevance and perceived learning outcomes.

97% of all responses across all respondents were either 'Agree' or 'Strongly Agree'.

In the open-ended responses, students noted that the test helped them identify specific areas for improvement, such as organizing their speaking more effectively and increasing English interaction with peers. Many also expressed a willingness to recommend the test, citing its engaging and real-life scenarios. A few students expressed reservations around the time allowed for response and preparation.

Professor Chueh concluded that students held an overwhelmingly positive attitude to the DST. Their responses indicated that:

- it was easy to use the test
- the tasks were based on real-life scenarios
- the content was fun and interesting.

From an educator's standpoint, he highlighted that the information provided by DST is likely to be of significant value to educators and universities, as is the practicality of a speaking assessment that students can take in any room, at any time and using any device.

Dynamic Speaking Test Trial, Ming Chuan University April 2025

Lanasari Tan from English Language Center of Ming Chuan University carried out a study into the Dynamic Speaking Test (DST), exploring its accuracy, its usability and student satisfaction. This trial involved 18 students from diverse backgrounds (Taiwanese, Vietnamese, Indonesian, and Japanese), ranging from freshmen to seniors.

Ms Tan analysed the results, comparing them with her own grading and, where possible, with results from external high-stakes tests. In four cases, where students had a recent result from an external proficiency test, the DST result matched those results. In the other 14 cases, 12 results were consistent with the teacher's expectation based on her own in-school evaluations of their speaking ability. The DST results were confirmed by her analysis of the students' responses within the DST system. Only two results were different from expectation (in both cases, lower). The researcher's analysis was that those candidates underperformed on the task achievement criterion, which she suggested might be due to unfamiliarity with task-based speaking tests.

In addition to grading, the researcher analysed the system's transcription accuracy, comparing it with her own manual transcription and with automated tools such as Microsoft transcription functionality, Samsung Transcript Assist, Happy Scribe, and Voiser.net. Her evaluation put transcription accuracy at above 95%.

Student feedback on the test indicates that they found:

- The test format and instructions were clear.
- The tasks were relevant.
- The test progression was logical.
- The time allotted to preparation and response was less than they wanted.

From a teacher's perspective, she noted that the test was easy to conduct across a range of devices (smartphone, tablet and PC/laptop). She also highlighted that taking DST provides students with useful training for other communicative speaking tests that they are likely to encounter in future contexts.