

Navigating Mindset Trajectories: Exploring EFL Teachers' Evolution in Embracing Dynamic and Summative Assessment in the Language Classroom

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ABSTRACT

While the potential of Dynamic Assessment (DA) and its variants (Computerized Dynamic Assessment (CDA) and Group Dynamic Assessment (GDA)) for EFL classrooms has been recognized, there is a lack of research on its practical implementation compared to the well-established field of Summative Assessment (SA). Thus, the objective of this qualitative study was to investigate the evolving perspectives of EFL teachers concerning the integration of DA and SA within their classrooms. To achieve this, 50 EFL teachers in Iran were recruited through convenience sampling to complete an online open-ended questionnaire. The primary purpose was to explore their familiarity with, perceptions of practicality for, and preferences regarding DA and SA. Additionally, a sub-group of volunteer participants was requested to provide narratives detailing their real-world classroom experiences using DA and SA. Content and thematic analysis of the responses revealed that the majority of participants were familiar with DA, with the most commonly employed type being GDA. While DA was predominantly viewed as a form of feedback, SA was still seen as a more formal means of classroom assessment. Consequently, it is highly recommended that EFL teachers exploit the advantages of both assessment approaches in order to ensure more equitable decisions concerning students' abilities.

1. Introduction

Dynamic assessment (DA), rooted in Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) (Poehner et al., 2017; Poehner & Wang, 2021), emerged as a response to the limitations of traditional, psychometric assessments. Luria (1961) later contrasted psychometric/systematic assessment, which isolates performance in a controlled environment, with the emphasis on mediated learning inherent in DA. Dynamic assessment emphasizes an examiner's guidance, allowing an individual to solve tasks with support and subsequently apply that learned strategy to similar tasks (Luria, 1961). This interactive process provides a richer picture of an individual's potential for learning and development.

Sternberg and Grigorenko (2002) further define DA as an assessment process that considers intervention outcomes. The examiner guides the examinee to improve performance, with the score reflecting either learning progress (pretest-posttest difference) or just the final achievement. However, as Vygotsky suggests (Poehner et al., 2017), true development goes beyond mastering a single task. According to him, the ZPD emphasizes the ability to transfer mediated knowledge to new situations. In this context, Sternberg and Grigorenko (2002) submit that summative assessment (SA) stands in contrast to DA as a static process. During SA, the examiner presents test items without intervention or feedback, and examinees respond independently. Following test administration, feedback is typically limited to a score report.

By comparing the definitions of DA and SA, it becomes evident that DA and SA diverge in their assessment goals (Poehner & Wang, 2021). Dynamic assessment, aligned with the ZPD, prioritizes a holistic assessment that reveals an individual's learning potential through mediated assistance (Vygotsky, as cited in Rieber, 1998). This process-oriented approach emphasizes individual learning

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potential, not just current skills (Lantolf, 2009). Conversely, SA, rooted in psychometrics, views intervention as a threat to testing reliability and prioritizes the final product, measured by a single score or a set of scores (Haywood et al., 1990; Lidz, 1991).

To date, the substantial positive impact of DA on the process of language acquisition has been extensively articulated (Poehner et al., 2017; Poehner & Wang, 2021). Nevertheless, the majority of these affirmations were predicated upon discoveries that were limited to controlled research settings and language laboratories. A study exploring the genuine perspectives of teachers toward the pragmatic implementation of DA and the potential for its utilization in real EFL classrooms has yet to be undertaken. Thus, in order to bridge this gap, the present qualitative study sets out to investigate the mindset trajectories of EFL teachers in relation to the practicality of DA and its counterpart SA within the classroom. This study holds great importance as its results will furnish genuine insights into the perspectives of teachers regarding the feasibility of implementing these two assessment approaches within authentic EFL classrooms. Consequently, this will empower teacher training initiatives to equip aspiring EFL teachers with the necessary skills to embrace a versatile evaluation approach, thereby harnessing the advantages offered by both assessment methods in order to make well-informed decisions about their students.

2. Review of Literature

2.1. Theoretical Framework

Teachers' beliefs play a crucial role in shaping their classroom practices (Bandura, 1986). Research since then has investigated this relationship to gain a better understanding of how teachers' beliefs affect their classroom practices (Wilson, 1990). For instance, research by Khader (2012) and Pajares (1992) confirmed that teachers' pedagogical beliefs strongly influence their classroom practices, including decision-making, planning, and overall behavior. Pajares (1992) further found that these beliefs are significant predictors of how teachers will act in the classroom.

The relationship between teachers' beliefs and classroom assessment practices is also complex. Although educators may have common assessment goals, their cultural backgrounds, specific contexts, and individual beliefs all influence the techniques they use (Rahim et al., 2009; Brown et al., 2019). Pertinent to this, Inbar-Lourie (2008a, 2008b) proposes Language Assessment Literacy (LAL) as the ability to critically evaluate language assessment practices. It emphasizes important considerations such as the rationale for the assessment, the suitability of the chosen instrument, the testing environment, and the potential consequences of the results. Within this framework, valuable insights can be gained into teachers' evolving perspectives on assessment tools. This framework allows for the evaluation of their knowledge of different tools, how they judge their usefulness, and ultimately, how these beliefs influence their rationale for selecting specific assessments.

2.2. Summative Assessment

Serving a vital function in gauging student progress for placement decisions (Torres, 2019), SA remains a prevalent tool in ESL/EFL classrooms despite acknowledged limitations (Torres, 2019; Purpura, 2016). For instance, one advantage of SA lies in its practicality for both instructors and students thanks to its pre-established timelines (Torres, 2019). Furthermore, SA offers objectivity in scoring and reporting results, providing tangible evidence of student improvement for stakeholders (Purpura, 2016). However, drawbacks are inherent to SA. Primarily, overreliance on SA for proficiency testing results in delayed feedback, hindering adjustments to learning strategies during the course (Torres, 2019). Additionally, numerical scores often lack specific details on strengths and weaknesses, offering a pass/fail outcome rather than guiding student improvement (Purpura, 2016).

To date, research suggests that the exclusive reliance on SA in ESL/EFL classrooms has drawn scrutiny due to its limitations in promoting student learning (Ismail et al., 2022; Torres, 2019). In this regard, comparative research highlighted the advantages of formative assessment (FA) over SA. For instance, Torres (2019) emphasized the importance of timely and specific feedback provided through FA compared to SA, enabling students to adapt their learning strategies effectively. Furthermore, Ismail et al. (2022) demonstrated that FA surpasses SA in fostering academic motivation, reducing test anxiety, and cultivating self-regulation skills among learners.

Yildirim et al. (2024) investigated the emphasis on SA literacy in pre-service language teacher education programs across three universities in Sweden and Finland. It was found that while core assessment concepts like validity and alignment were covered, SA received less focus compared to FA within the curriculum. Additionally, Al-Hawamdeh et al. (2023) found that e-portfolios fostered greater learner autonomy, self-efficacy, and writing development (CAF) in Ethiopian EFL learners compared to SA. More recently, Braga et al. (2024) investigated perceptions of SA methods in block and blended learning. Their findings suggested that frequent, smaller assessments throughout a course are perceived as more accurate and beneficial for workload and feedback than traditional, single, end-of-block assessments. Collectively, the existing research underscores the potential limitations of relying solely on SA, suggesting that alternative methods may be more effective in promoting learner development and comprehensive skill evaluation in ESL/EFL settings.

2.3. Dynamic Assessment

The unique feature of DA lies in its concurrent administration of assessment tasks and instructional interventions (Luria, 1961; Sternberg & Grigorenko, 2002). This approach has been recognized for its diverse benefits in language learning, fostering student growth (Orhon & Mirici, 2023). Studies utilizing DA have demonstrated significant enhancements in participants' receptive skills (Ableeva & Lantolf, 2011; Davin et al., 2014; Kozulin & Garb, 2002). To elucidate, Abdulaal et al. (2022) conducted a study comparing the effectiveness of DA and non-DA approaches for listening and reading skills in 96 Ethiopian EFL students. The results showed that the DA groups demonstrated significant improvement in both skills compared to the control group.

Moreover, Su (2023) explored the role of DA in English teaching and its impact on reading proficiency, using references from Science Direct and Google Scholar. The findings revealed that DA has the potential to establish an enjoyable and relaxed learning atmosphere, as well as enable targeted adjustments of learning plans based on students' feedback. Furthermore, besides aiding students in comprehending unfamiliar concepts, DA can also enhance teachers' understanding of students' learning dynamics, offering significant advantages to both teachers and students.

Similarly, some studies examined the impact of DA on productive skills (Aljafreh & Lantolf, 2011; Gilani et al., 2021; Nang, 2023; Poehner, 2008). To exemplify, Riswanto et al. (2023) compared the effectiveness of DA and non-DA approaches for speaking and writing in 53 intermediate EFL students. The results showed that the DA group demonstrated significant improvement in post-tests, indicating its potential benefits. Furthermore, Harahap et al. (2023) found university students had positive experiences with DA for English speaking. During interviews, the participants displayed favorable experiences and attitudes toward DA as it provided them with a comfortable, structured, practical, and meaningful platform for identifying their speaking behaviors, weaknesses, strengths, and requirements. Moreover, it facilitated the receipt of objective feedback with reduced levels of anxiety. This aligns with past research on positive student responses to DA (Gilani et al., 2021; Nang, 2023). These researchers suggest that DA can be a feasible alternative assessment tool in classrooms.

Studies in Iran also examined the effectiveness of DA in EFL contexts (Azizi & Namaziandost, 2023; Momeni & Nushi, 2022). To illustrate, several studies have examined the viability of implementing and developing the DA procedure in the domains of reading comprehension (Birjandi et al., 2013; Kazemi et al., 2020; Nazari & Mansouri, 2014) and listening skills among EFL learners (Ashraf et al., 2016). The findings showed that the group provided with DA as a form of mediation experienced a statistically significant improvement in performance.

Furthermore, some researchers explored the integration of DA in enhancing learners' writing skills, with findings from studies by Estaji and Ameri (2020), Alavi and Taghizadeh (2014), and Fazlollahi et al. (2015) consistently indicating a beneficial impact of DA on participants' writing abilities. Additionally, investigations into the application of DA on different facets of learners' speaking skills, as evidenced by several studies (Ebadi & Asakereh, 2017; Estaji & Farahanyna, 2019; Safdari & Fathi, 2020) consistently demonstrated significant improvements in learners' speaking proficiency.

Recently, motivated by the scarcity of research on Iranian EFL teachers' views of DA, Momeni and Nushi (2022) investigated the attitudes of 40 Iranian EFL teachers toward DA and found no significant difference between university and language institute teachers. Both groups exhibited a favorable attitude towards the use of DA.

2.4. Dynamic Assessment Variants

The two prevalent variants of DA are GDA and CDA. Group Dynamic Assessment (GDA), introduced alongside traditional DA, emphasizes collaborative learning within a group. In GDA classrooms, learners leverage their peers' expertise to construct knowledge through joint problem-solving and negotiation of meaning (Poehner et al., 2017). In contrast, CDA is a more recent innovation that leverages technology. It utilizes computer programs to administer tasks and provide support to learners during the assessment process (Izadi et al., 2023). This approach offers advantages in flexibility, immediate feedback, and diagnostic capabilities (Ebadi & Saeedian, 2015). Both variations of DA prioritize the learners' ZPD, as well as interaction and scaffolding during the assessment process, with a central emphasis on the learning process.

Concerning DA types, Qin et al. (2024) examined the effect of GDA on the understanding of English subjunctives among 59 Chinese learners. The results showed that the GDA groups improved significantly compared to the control group, indicating its effectiveness. Araoz et al. (2023) also compared the effects of Computerized Formative Assessment (CFA) and CDA on reading motivation, self-concept, autonomy, and self-regulation in 123 Bangladeshi students. The results showed that the CDA group outperformed the other group, suggesting its potential to benefit EFL students in these areas as well.

The impact of two types of DA has also been investigated in the Iranian EFL context (Ghajarieh et al., 2022; Zadkhist et al., 2023). For example, Mallahi and Saadat (2020) conducted a study to compare the impact of GDA and Formative Assessment (FA) on the writing skills of 34 intermediate EFL students. The results indicated that GDA was more effective in improving writing skills than FA. Similarly, Malmir and Mazloom (2021) compared the effectiveness of GDA and CDA in improving pragmatic comprehension among 52 female EFL students. Both groups showed significant improvement compared to the control group, but the CDA group demonstrated greater improvement.

Altogether, the literature review indicates that DA is a well-established concept in the EFL context, both in Iran and beyond. Numerous studies have provided substantial evidence of its positive impact on the language development of EFL students. However, it is important to note that all of these studies have been limited to research settings with small samples of EFL students. Considering Iran's traditional educational system, which still adheres to the systematic approach to assessment, it remains unclear how much DA is actually practiced in real Iranian EFL classrooms (Momeni & Nushi, 2022). Furthermore, the extent to which EFL teachers are familiar with the concept of DA and its functionality, as well as their agreement with the applicability of this type of assessment in their classrooms, is also uncertain. Therefore, the aim of the present study is to thoroughly investigate the level of familiarity Iranian EFL teachers have with DA and its types, their attitudes toward its implementation in the classrooms, their attitudes toward SA, and ultimately their preferences regarding the implementation of either DA or SA. To achieve this goal, three research questions have been formulated for exploration:

1. To what extent are Iranian EFL teachers acquainted with dynamic assessment and its diverse manifestations?
2. How do Iranian EFL teachers view the practicality of incorporating dynamic assessment and summative assessment in their teaching practices?
3. What is the preference of Iranian EFL teachers in choosing between dynamic assessment and summative assessment in their classrooms, considering the underlying rationale?

3. Method

3.1. Research Context

This qualitative study investigated the evolving perspectives of EFL teachers in Iran, specifically those working in English language institutions and university language programs, concerning the perceived practicality of DA and SA in their classrooms. As it is customary in qualitative research, the generalizability of the findings to broader contexts is not a primary consideration. However, in the methodology section of this research, the author meticulously outlines the participants' demographic details, data collection instruments, procedures, and data analysis to adhere to the fundamental tenets of qualitative research. These principles encompass dependability, which pertains to the transparency of the researchers' actions for replication by other independent scholars to yield

comparable outcomes, and transferability, which involves the potential for extending the findings to analogous settings (Nassaji, 2020).

3.2. Participants

To explore teacher perspectives, a cohort of 50 EFL teachers working in English language institutions and university language programs across Iran was recruited through convenience sampling. These teachers participated in this study by completing an online open-ended questionnaire. Additionally, a subgroup of 20 volunteer participants provided in-depth narratives. The decision to employ convenience sampling was based on the advantage it offers in terms of participant accessibility and expediting data collection (Dornyei, 2007). The inclusion criteria were teachers' respective fields of study, including Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL), English Literature, Linguistics, or Translation Studies. Consequently, 50 EFL teachers of various genders and age groups, including 43 females (72%) and 7 males (28%) aged between 25 and 34 years old, made the sample for this study. Table 1 presents an overview of the participant data.

Table 1
Participants' Demographic Information

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Female	43	72%
	Male	7	28%
University Degree	BA	3	11.50%
	MA	37	66%
	PhD	10	23.10%
Teaching Experience	1<	2	7.70%
	1-2	4	15.40%
	3-4	5	19.20%
	<5	39	53.80%

3.3. Instrumentation

This study employed two data collection instruments to examine EFL teachers' evolving perspectives on the practicality of DA and SA in EFL classrooms.

3.3.1 Open-Ended Questionnaire. The first instrument employed was an online open-ended questionnaire. This format was chosen to capture the participants' evolving mindsets toward embracing DA and SA in their teaching practices. The open-ended questionnaire design ensured consistency in responses by incorporating a series of predetermined questions (Flick, 2009). Additionally, to enhance participant accessibility and response quality, the questionnaire was administered online in a written format. This format allowed participants to contemplate their responses thoroughly, enabling them to refine and modify their answers as needed. The questionnaire subsequently incorporated seven open-ended questions designed to gauge participants' familiarity with DA and its types, their opinions on the applicability of DA/SA, their preferences for DA or SA, and the reasons behind these preferences. The questions were informed by the existing literature and the goals of the study. Besides, to ensure the content and language clarity of the questions for optimal participant understanding, three DA experts reviewed it for appropriateness. Given the participants' English proficiency, both the questions and responses were administered in English.

Moreover, in order to ensure the content validity of the questions, five experts in the field of Applied Linguistics were asked to assess the relevance and transparency of the items on a four-point scale ((a) lacking clarity; (b) items necessitate significant revisions; (c) clear but require minor revisions; (d) highly transparent) for transparency, and a four-point scale ((a) irrelevant; (b) items necessitate

significant revisions; (c) relevant but require minor revisions; (d) completely relevant) for relevance. The Content validity index (CVI) is calculated as the proportion of experts approving item clarity/relevance (3 or 4) by the total quantity of them. The index values range from 0 to 1 (if greater than .79, the item is clear; if between .70 and .79, the item requires revision; if smaller than .79, the item should be excluded) (Rodrigues et al., 2017). Ultimately, a magnitude of 91% was attained for the content validity indices of each item, thereby signifying the relevance and clarity of the questions.

It should be mentioned that to efficiently gather the participants' background information, a demographic questionnaire encompassing age, gender, university degree, and teaching experience was also included within the online open-ended questionnaire administered to the participants.

3.3.2 Narratives. The study additionally employed narrative writing as another data collection instrument to delve deeper into participants' real-world classroom experiences with DA and SA. This choice was made to capture the nuanced changes and growth trajectories exhibited by participants regarding the research concerns over time. Narrative writing allows participants to share their experiences chronologically, fostering reader engagement and facilitating the visualization of those experiences (Benson, 2021). Subsequently, 20 out of 50 participants volunteered to provide written narratives detailing their classroom experiences with DA and SA. To ensure efficient qualitative data analysis, the participants were requested to limit their narratives to a single paragraph.

3.4. Procedures

After finalizing the data collection instruments and recruiting participants, the study began by informing participants of the research objectives and their involvement. Additionally, in order to adhere to the ethical standards established by the research communities (BERA, 2011), the participants were requested to provide their consent by signing a consent letter, thus confirming their voluntary participation in the study and ensuring the preservation of their anonymity. Participants subsequently completed the online demographic information questionnaire and also engaged with the open-ended study questions. Completing the two instruments took participants 30-40 minutes. Additionally, they could answer concisely or elaborately.

In the second phase, all participants were contacted to recruit volunteers to write narratives on their classroom experiences with DA and SA. Twenty of the 50 participants then volunteered to contribute these narratives. Their narratives would also elaborate on details from their prior open-ended questionnaire responses. The aim of including narratives from 20 participants was to strengthen the reliability and comprehensiveness of the research findings, employing the method of data triangulation in qualitative research (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Likewise, to ensure accessibility for participants residing in various locations, all data was gathered online, with questionnaires being completed on Google Forms and narratives being submitted via WhatsApp as Word documents.

3.5. Data Analysis

To respond to the research questions, the researchers analyzed the participants' written responses through content and thematic analysis in order to understand their experiences. This process involved reading and coding the textual data to identify recurring themes. This particular approach was chosen due to its recognition as a common method for analyzing data in qualitative studies, as stated by Cole (1988). Following this, the researchers analyzed both questionnaires and narratives, focusing on individual sentences to identify key themes while ensuring participants' meaning was preserved. Therefore, based on the participants' responses, four code lists were developed: familiarity with DA and its types, attitudes toward DA/SA practicality, and reasons for DA/SA preference. For example, the familiarity of the participants with DA and its different types for the first research question was coded as follows: *“Yes. I have utilized DA and GDA in my classes in relation to grammar and writing. They proved to be extremely beneficial in helping learners recognize and overcome their learning difficulties.”* This statement was coded as the participant's familiarity with DA and its different types, specifically GDA.

To enhance the trustworthiness, an independent coder re-evaluated 20% of the codes. This triangulation of analysts helps ensure that the findings are not solely based on one researcher's interpretation (Patton, 2015). As a result, 68 codes and an inter-rater agreement coefficient of 96% were

obtained for participants' familiarity with DA. Likewise, 41 codes and an inter-rater agreement coefficient of 93% were obtained for participants' preferences for the implementation of different types of DA. Additionally, 98 codes and an inter-rater agreement coefficient of 87% were obtained for participants' attitudes regarding the practicality of DA and SA. Finally, 100 codes and an inter-rater agreement coefficient of 90% were reached for participants' DA preferences. The outcomes are presented by reporting the frequency and percentage of the coded segments.

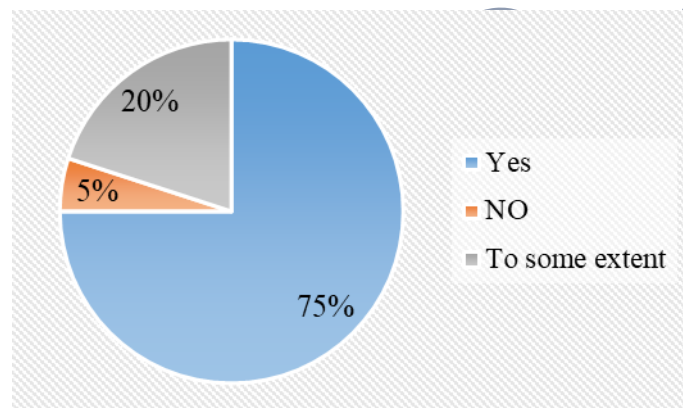
4. Results and Discussion

4.1. EFL Teachers' Familiarity with DA and its Different Types

The results of the first research question, as depicted in Figure 1, illustrate the participants' comprehension of the notion of DA and its various types. Concerning the participants' understanding of DA, the majority of the codes, amounting to 75%, were allocated to the participants' familiarity with and utilization of DA, while a mere 5% of the codes were assigned to their lack of familiarity with DA. Additionally, 20% of the codes were designated to the participants' approximate grasp of DA, albeit not implementing it within their classrooms.

Figure 1

Participants' Familiarity with DA and its Different Types



As shown in Figure 1, a significant majority of the codes ($N = 68$) were centered around the participants' level of familiarity with the concept of DA and its various types, accounting for 75% of the total. Additionally, 20% of the codes pertained to the participants' approximate level of familiarity with DA. For example, some of the participants' accounts are restated below:

“Yes, I have used DA and GDA in my classes to help students identify and correct their grammar and writing issues. These assessments were highly effective in improving their skills”. (Teacher S. A.)

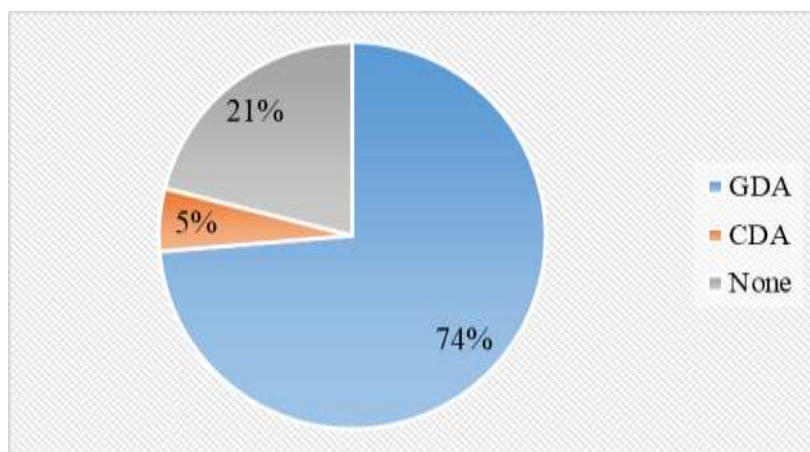
“I have utilized GDA in my classes. It went well; However, the students did not feel they were being assessed (which could be a good thing and a bad thing in a class)”. (Teacher F. H.)

“I have implemented GDA in my classes, as it involves all of the students and makes them all equally benefit from my instructions”. (Teacher M. S.)

Regarding the participants' familiarity and implementation of the DA types, Figure 2 provides a more detailed analysis of the participants' accounts.

Figure 2

Participants' Implementation of Different Types of DA



As illustrated in Figure 2, a significant majority of the codes ($N = 41$), namely 74%, were attributed to GDA. Furthermore, it is worth noting that the participants reported a preference toward the implementation of GDA as well. In contrast, a mere 5% of the codes pertained to CDA, while 20% were designated for the non-implementation of any type. For example, Teacher M. N. stated that:

As previously mentioned, I implement GDA as it allows for effective interaction among students and teachers, leading to better learning outcomes. CDA is not as feasible to implement due to the constraints imposed by limited access to personal computers and the internet, among other factors.

Following the findings, it has been explicated that the majority of Iranian EFL teachers were thoroughly acquainted with DA and its various forms, or possessed a rudimentary understanding of DA, although they did not incorporate it into their classroom assessment. In addition, with regard to the implementation of different types of DA, it was disclosed that the participants favored GDA while only a minority of the participants employed CDA. Based on the findings, it can be inferred that in EFL classrooms, the implementation of GDA is more feasible as it does not necessitate the use of equipment, such as computers and the internet, in comparison to CDA, and only requires the interaction between teachers and students. Consequently, the findings of the first research question offer additional substantiation for the encouraging outcomes of the experimental investigations on the utilization of DA (Abdulaal et al., 2022; Alavi & Taghizadeh, 2014; Ashraf et al., 2016; Birjandi et al., 2013; Ebadi & Asakereh, 2017; Estaji & Farahanyna, 2019; Fazlollahi et al., 2015; Harahap et al., 2023; Kazemi et al., 2020; Momeni & Nushi, 2022; Riswanto et al., 2023; Safdari & Fathi, 2020) and GDA (Ghajarieh et al., 2022; Mallahi & Saadat, 2020; Qin et al., 2024; Zadkhast et al., 2023), given that the participants of this study were mostly acquainted with DA and attested to their triumphant implementation of DA, particularly GDA, in authentic classroom setting.

4.2. EFL Teachers' Perspectives on the Applicability of DA and SA

The results for the second research question, depicted in Figure 3, provide a more in-depth analysis of the participants' experiences with the practicality of DA and SA in the classroom. It was found that about 85% of the codes ($N = 75$) were specifically allocated to the applicability of DA, as it offers advantages and enhances learning through scaffolding. There were also 15% of the codes ($N = 23$) allocated to the applicability of both. For example, Teacher B. M. mentioned that:

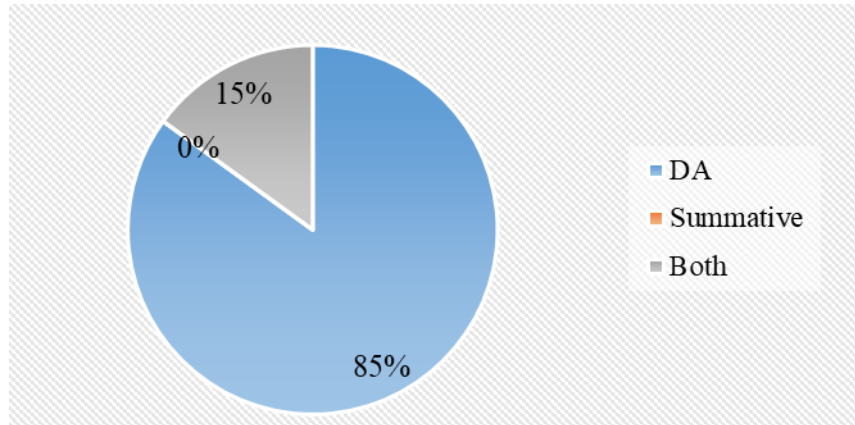
"I have a predilection for dynamic assessment. I believe it is applicable, as I am of the opinion that it is through scaffolding that students' acquisition of knowledge and skills truly transpires".

Similarly, Teacher N. A. was of the idea that:

"For sure DA. Although implementing DA in classes may be more challenging and require teacher training compared to summative assessment, but still applicable. I believe it is a valuable approach due to its numerous advantages".

Figure 3

Participants' Perspectives on the Practicality of DA and SA



Regarding the participants' beliefs about the practicality of SA, they claimed that SA provides a single score at the end of the term, is easy and practical to administer, and should be an essential part of classroom assessment. Additionally, it gives teachers and students a comprehensive understanding of students' proficiency at the end of the course. For instance, Teacher S. A. stated that:

Since summative assessment is easy to execute. It focuses on the product of learning; such assessments can be useful for evaluating students' achievement at the end of the course just for reporting purposes. However, I do not take them seriously or rely on them as the only source of students' evaluation.

Teacher M. S. also claimed that:

It is easy to report and score, allowing students to readily check their learning and roughly assess themselves with a single score. This approach also holds face validity for both students and parents. However, it provides limited detail about students' specific weaknesses and strengths, and it lacks instructional applications for teachers and students.

Teacher F. G. claimed that:

"Summative assessment is a straightforward way to evaluate students for content, which is advantageous and time-saving, but not very revealing underlying cognitive challenges".

The results pertaining to the second research question demonstrated that despite the majority of the participants acknowledging the practicality of DA in their classrooms, they also contended that the implementation of SA has its advantages, possibly due to its less time-consuming nature. They argued that SA is simple to administer and score, while also providing a concise report upon completion of the course. Hence, the findings indicated that EFL teachers' attitudes regarding SA align with the existing assertions found in the literature (Luria, 1961; Rieber, 1998; Purpura, 2016; Sternberg & Grigorenko, 2002), which posit that SA is easy to implement as it furnishes individuals with a solitary score at the end of the course, as well as a report detailing the learning outcomes. Given the findings, the participants view the feasibility of reporting and the summative nature of SA as advantageous. Based on the participants' accounts, it is also implied that SA still maintains its formal status among EFL teachers. However, they do not regard it as sufficient, as it lacks substantial informativeness. Hence, these findings highlighted the limitations of SA as a sole assessment tool in classroom settings, compared to other methods as documented in the existing literature (Al Hawamdeh et al., 2023; Braga et al., 2024; Ismail et al., 2022; Torres, 2019; Yildirim et al., 2024).

Overall, the results provided a further endorsement of previous accomplishments regarding the effectiveness of DA in classroom evaluation (Orhon & Mirici, 2023). This is because the majority of the participants held the belief that DA is more applicable in comparison to SA. Moreover, given that 15% (N = 23) of the codes were specifically focused on the practicality of both approaches, it can be contended that DA and SA possess the potential to be employed in conjunction with one another. This observation aligns with the claims put forth by researchers that DA serves as a viable substitute assessment tool within educational settings (Gilani et al., 2021; Harahap et al., 2023; Nang, 2023).

4.3. EFL Teachers' Preferences for the Application of DA or SA

The results of the third research question showed that most participants preferred the use of DA. Therefore, with respect to their rationale, (see Figure 4), the content and thematic analysis of the responses revealed that approximately 31% of the codes ($N = 31$) were dedicated to the use of DA as a means of providing feedback to students and is deemed essential. For instance, Teacher A. Z. articulated, “By offering feedback throughout the learning process, we are able to witness its impact on students’ academic achievements.” Teacher M. N. opined, “Dynamic assessment resembles bestowing feedback to students. I believe any form of assessment that furnishes feedback to students proves beneficial for their learning.” A total of 27% of the codes ($N = 28$) also conveyed the notion that DA is motivating, humanistic, and alleviates stress. Teacher S. A., for instance, declared:

DA utilizes formative assessment, which provides feedback to learners and focuses on their responsiveness to the feedback and improvement achieved, rather than solely on the ultimate results. This approach offers learners insights into their strengths and weaknesses in a less stressful atmosphere.

Teacher M. S. was of the opinion that:

I choose DA. Firstly, it is more humanistic, which helps students feel more relaxed and fosters a friendly relationship between teachers and students. Secondly, teachers gain better insight into students’ problematic areas. Fourth, as a teacher, my focus is on helping students find their learning potential, and DA is a comprehensive tool to achieve this goal. Fifth, in GDA, you can assist the entire class in finding the correct answer. By identifying a student’s specific problem area, you can provide them with individualized hints and prompts while the rest of the class observes, keeping them engaged. So, it is more time-consuming.

Teacher M. N. also pointed out that:

“When you use dynamic assessment, students feel more comfortable, as they feel they are learning in a process”.

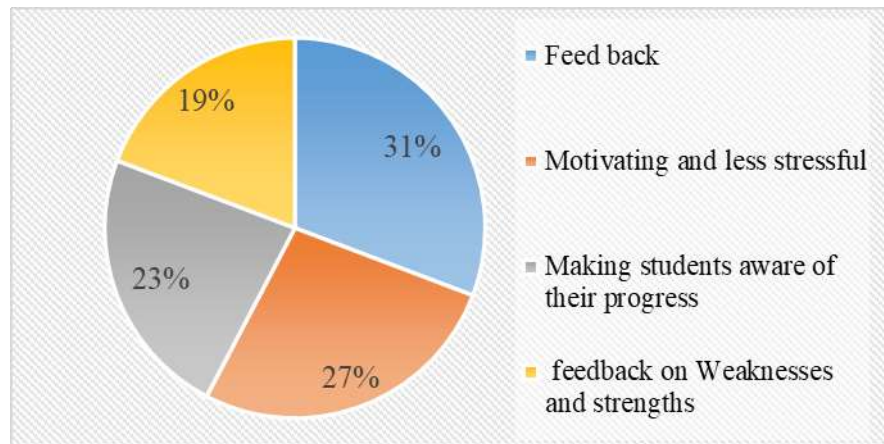
Additionally, 23% ($N = 21$ codes) indicated that DA helps students become aware of their learning process, potentials, and abilities, and gives them a sense of progress. For instance, Teacher A. Z. stated that “Dynamic assessment helps students improve as they learn, is motivating, continuous, and ensures that students learn before moving to the next lesson”. Teacher Sh. N also expressed similar views, “I prefer dynamic assessment because it integrates assessment into instruction and it also tells us more about learners’ abilities and potentials”. Finally, 19% of the codes ($N = 20$) represented the participants’ views of DA as a formative assessment that informs both teachers and students of the students’ strengths and weaknesses. For instance, Teacher F. H. claimed that:

Similar to formative assessment, DA helps students in the process of their learning and it fulfills the needs of the teacher from testing. because what a teacher would need is to find out about students’ weaknesses and strengths and a better way of teaching and nurturing more autonomous students.

Teacher A. Z. also mentioned that:

DA helps teachers and students to have detailed information about the strengths and weaknesses of the students. It can depict a clear picture of the students’ matured abilities and those abilities that are in the process of developing like formative assessment.

Figure 4
Participants' Rationale for DA Preference



The results related to the third research question demonstrated that certain participants viewed DA functions as feedback. However, according to Poehner and Lantolf (2005), the nature of feedback differs from DA. Feedback is a teaching strategy employed by teachers and is provided once, whereas DA is progressive and continuously given throughout the learning process until learning is achieved (Poehner & Lantolf, 2005). It serves as an assessment strategy for teachers. The results also indicated that the participants perceived DA as motivating and less stressful compared to traditional assessment methods. Furthermore, DA enables students to become aware of their learning process, experience a sense of progression, and obtain information about their strengths and weaknesses. Therefore, based on these justifications, it can be argued that DA fulfills a feedback-providing role for EFL teachers, which reflects their belief that learning takes place through an interactive process. This aligns fully with the claim made by Luria (1961) and Haywood and Lidz (2007) that DA possesses an interactive nature until the process of learning takes place through interaction.

In short, the results are corroborated by the findings of Momeni and Nushi's study (2022) which indicates that Iranian EFL teachers have positive attitudes toward the application of DA. This is evidenced by the high frequency of the codes that are dedicated to the participants' familiarity with DA and its types, applicability, and preferences for its implementations. Moreover, the results align with Su's (2023) literature review on DA in the context of English teaching, which suggests that the application of DA fosters an enjoyable and relaxed learning environment, while also enhancing teachers' and students' comprehension of the dynamics of student learning. Lastly, the results are supported by studies that contend that the implementation of DA offers students a comfortable and objective feedback experience, minimizing anxiety levels and increasing awareness of their strengths, weaknesses, and needs (Gilani et al., 2021; Harahap et al., 2023; Nang, 2023).

5. Conclusion

The aim of this qualitative study was to explore the extent to which the feasibility of DA can be realized in authentic EFL classrooms as compared to SA. Consequently, a cohort of EFL teachers was scrutinized in terms of their perspectives on the practicability of DA and SA in real EFL settings. In this respect, the results revealed that many EFL teachers were successfully familiar with DA, and the most commonly chosen type for implementation was GDA, which is likely due to its ease of use, interactive nature, time-saving benefits in the classroom, and lack of need for specialized equipment. These findings suggest that Iranian EFL teachers value the benefits of DA, as evidenced by their reported use of this technique in language classrooms, potentially aligning with research highlighting its effectiveness (Orhon & Mirici, 2023). Moreover, the widespread use of GDA implies its effectiveness compared to individual DA and CDA in EFL classrooms (Poehner et al., 2017).

The results also confirmed that EFL teachers tend to favor DA, while also recognizing the benefits of using SA due to its simplicity of use. This finding aligns with prior literature (Luria, 1961;

Purpura, 2016; Rieber, 1998; Sternberg & Grigorenko, 2002) suggesting EFL teachers favor SA due to its ease of implementation and provision of individual scores for reporting purposes. Henceforth, it is reasonable to conclude that SA must continue to function as an indispensable component of classroom evaluation, as it provides EFL teachers with a direct means by which to communicate a single numerical representation that encapsulates a comprehensive overview of students' linguistic aptitude at the culmination of a given course. However, drawing on the findings, this method, while valuable, may not provide sufficient information to serve as the sole classroom assessment tool (Torres, 2019; Purpura, 2016).

Ultimately, in reference to EFL teachers' rationale for favoring DA, it can be contended that they perceive DA as beneficial because it furnishes students with feedback, it is more stimulating and human-centered, it alleviates assessment stress, and it brings about students' awareness of their learning process, strengths, and weaknesses. These findings align with existing research suggesting DA fosters a comfortable and objective feedback environment, potentially reducing anxiety and enhancing students' self-awareness of strengths, weaknesses, and needs (Gilani et al., 2021; Harahap et al., 2023; Nang, 2023). Therefore, it can be concluded that DA serves as a means of providing feedback for EFL teachers, thereby enhancing the learning process, rather than serving as a formal assessment. In reality, SA continues to hold its own significance as a formal assessment for EFL teachers. On the whole, in light of the participants' continued preference for DA methods, alongside their recognition of SA value as a formal assessment tool, a multifaceted approach that integrates both methodologies is likely more effective. This would capitalize on the strengths of each method, providing a richer picture of student learning.

5.1. Implications

Building on the results, the implications emphasize the complementary role of DA to SA in EFL classrooms in order to achieve a more realistic depiction of EFL students' language proficiencies. Therefore, EFL teachers should not exhibit any bias toward the superiority of DA over SA; instead, they ought to leverage the advantageous attributes of DA, such as its capacity for providing feedback, as well as the ease and brevity inherent in SA, within the context of EFL classrooms. This will allow them to incorporate the integration of DA and SA in order to make more authentic decisions about students' language proficiencies, particularly in high-stakes examinations.

5.2. Limitations

This study also acknowledges inherent limitations related to participant variables. Factors such as teaching experience, instructional context, and learner proficiency levels were not controlled for in the research design. This lack of control may limit the generalizability of the findings, as these variables could potentially interact with participants' perceptions of DA and SA, interfering with the interpretation of the results.

5.3. Suggestions for Further Study

In light of the limitations, this study raises new questions requiring further investigation. In this regard, the particularly relevant areas for future research concern the potential influence of teaching experience, instructional context, and learner proficiency levels on EFL teachers' evolving mindsets toward adopting DA or SA in their classrooms. Addressing these factors in future research designs could enhance the generalizability and credibility of findings in this domain.

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