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## An Investigation into Learning-Oriented Assessment Literacy and Effective Teaching in Iranian EFL Context

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### Abstract

This mixed-methods study investigates the relationship between learning-oriented assessment (LOA) literacy and effective teaching among Iranian EFL teachers. LOA integrates assessment with instruction by emphasizing formative feedback, student involvement, and the design of meaningful learning tasks, positioning assessment as a tool to support and enhance the learning process rather than merely measure outcomes. The research consists of two primary phases, a qualitative phase involving semi-structured interviews with EFL teachers to explore their perceptions of LOA literacy and effective teaching, followed by a quantitative phase utilizing a researcher-made and validated Effective Teaching Questionnaire (ETQ) administered to 110 teachers. The study examines how specific LOA components affect teaching outcomes and learner engagement. In the experimental phase, two groups of EFL teachers were formed, an experimental group that received targeted training on LOA literacy and a control group relying on prior knowledge. Both groups completed the ETQ as pretests and posttests. Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) revealed significant improvements in posttest scores for the experimental group, indicating that enhanced LOA literacy positively impacts effective teaching practices. By fostering LOA literacy among EFL teachers, educational institutions can enhance teaching effectiveness and student outcomes, advancing a shift toward more responsive and engaging language education.

**Keywords:** *Learning-Oriented Assessment Literacy, Effective Teaching, Assessment Literacy, Assessment Practices, Teacher Professional Development*

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## **Introduction**

Assessment literacy has emerged as a critical concept in education, particularly for language teachers who must navigate the complexities of student assessment to enhance learning outcomes. According to Webb (2002), assessment literacy is defined as the capability to assess students' knowledge and skills, analyze assessment data, and apply this information to improve both learning outcomes and the effectiveness of educational programs. This concept involves a set of critical skills for effective teaching, including setting measurable learning goals, using various assessment techniques, analyzing student performance, offering constructive feedback, and integrating assessment findings into instructional planning (Brookhart, 2011).

In recent years, there has been an increasing focus on developing and applying assessments in educational environments. (Saad et al., 2013). Hill and McNamara (2011) argue that assessments should not only report outcomes but also illuminate the processes involved in learning. They describe assessment as any evaluation carried out by teachers or students to judge the qualities of a student's work, aimed at educational objectives such as instruction, offering feedback, and overseeing the learning process. This perspective highlights the dynamic role of assessment in shaping educational practices.

Within this evolving landscape, LOA has become increasingly prominent as a transformative approach that integrates assessment with teaching and learning. LOA emphasizes formative feedback, active student involvement, and the design of meaningful learning tasks that support learner autonomy and self-regulation. Recent comprehensive evaluations (e.g., Esfandiari et al., 2025; Ünal et al., 2024) highlight LOA's capacity to foster reflective and collaborative learning environments, especially in EFL contexts. LOA encourages teachers and learners to engage in continuous assessment cycles that inform instructional adjustments and promote deeper learning engagement.

Despite its recognized importance, many educators still face challenges in fully understanding and implementing LOA principles effectively. Studies from diverse contexts, including Yemeni (Al-Rifaie & Gholami, 2024), Indonesian (Fitriyah et al., 2022), and Iranian EFL teachers (Derakhshan & Ghiasvand, 2022; Esfandiari et al., 2025), reveal persistent gaps in assessment literacy and highlight the need for targeted professional development. These studies emphasize that LOA literacy is not limited to technical skills but also involves socio-cultural awareness, reflective practice, and collaborative peer learning.

Recent research has further expanded the understanding of assessment literacy in EFL contexts. Park (2024) examined how EFL preservice teachers perceive the importance of assessment literacy, revealing significant variations in their confidence across six domains, such as assessment construction, grading, communication, ethics, and digital assessment literacy. The research revealed that preservice teachers demonstrated strong dedication to ethical standards and digital assessment techniques but encountered difficulties in designing assessments for advanced students and effectively communicating outcomes, particularly with parents. These results highlight the necessity for tailored professional training focused on enhancing communication strategies and creating assessments that address varied learner requirements. Similarly, Mohammadkhah et al. (2022) developed a contextualized measure of EFL teachers' assessment literacy, focusing on both theoretical and practical skills. Their research highlighted the importance of aligning assessment literacy training with local educational contexts and the specific challenges faced by teachers, such as integrating

assessment theories into classroom practice and addressing the socio-cultural factors that influence assessment decisions.

Butler (2022) proposed the concept of "assessment with learners," promoting a participatory approach where learners become engaged participants in the assessment process. This view resonates with LOA principles by prioritizing collaborative dialogue, reflective practices, and joint development of assessment criteria—strategies that strengthen assessment literacy for educators and learners alike. Meanwhile, Coombe et al. (2020) highlighted the importance of an ongoing cycle of learning, unlearning, and relearning components of language assessment literacy to adapt to the dynamic nature of language education and evolving assessment methodologies. They emphasized that ongoing professional development is essential for teachers to keep pace with new assessment paradigms and technologies, as well as to address persistent gaps in assessment education.

For Iranian EFL teachers, developing LOA literacy is essential for fostering effective teaching practices that promote student learning and engagement. LOA supports teachers in designing tasks aligned with learning goals, providing timely and constructive feedback, and involving students in self- and peer-assessment processes—practices shown to enhance motivation and academic achievement (Esfandiari et al., 2025; Yang & May, 2023). However, institutional constraints and limited training opportunities often hinder the full realization of LOA's potential, underscoring the importance of professional development programs that integrate theory with practice and encourage collective reflection (Esfandiari et al., 2025).

Effective teaching encompasses multiple dimensions, including motivating students, creating positive learning environments, and communicating clearly (Hativa et al., 2001; Richards, 2001). The link between teachers' proficiency in LOA and their overall effectiveness is especially important in EFL settings, where precise and formative assessments play a vital contribution in facilitating language acquisition. Research indicates that discrepancies between teachers' theoretical knowledge and classroom practices can negatively affect student outcomes and motivation (Brown, 2009; Moradi & Sabeti, 2014). Addressing these gaps through enhanced LOA literacy can align instructional intentions with learner expectations, fostering more productive educational experiences.

Given these considerations, this study explores how Iranian EFL teachers' perceptions and implementation of LOA literacy influence their teaching effectiveness. Using a mixed-methods approach, the study combines qualitative interviews with quantitative surveys to offer a thorough insight into this relationship. The findings aim to inform professional development strategies that enhance teacher competencies and improve student learning outcomes by embedding LOA principles into everyday teaching practice.

## **Review of Literature**

Assessment literacy refers to having a grasp of fundamental assessment concepts, such as essential terminology, the design and application of assessment strategies, awareness of quality criteria in assessments, and an understanding of alternative approaches to traditional learning evaluations. (Paterno, 2001). According to Andrade and Heritage (2018), assessment-literate educators approach assessment with a clear understanding of what they are measuring, the purpose behind it, and the most effective methods for assessing relevant skills or knowledge. These educators generate high-quality examples of student performance and are adept at

identifying and proactively addressing challenges associated with assessments. Furthermore, they recognize the detrimental effects that can arise from weak or imprecise assessments (Andrade & Heritage, 2018).

Assessment encompasses various methods for gathering information about learners' language abilities (Brindley, 2001). Teachers can collect data on learners' progress and performance through diverse sources such as test results, portfolios, journals, interviews, observations, peer assessments, and self-assessments. The goals of assessment can vary widely, including placing learners in appropriate classes, evaluating language proficiency, or measuring achievement (Nation & Macalister, 2010). Bachman and Palmer (2010) state that the principle goal of language assessment is to collect data that supports decision-making, which has important consequences for learners, educators, and educational programs.

Despite its importance, many educators feel unprepared for the demands of assessment and express the need for support in using assessment methods and making connected choices (Mertler & Campbell, 2005). Research shows that many teachers and administrators often miss crucial assessment abilities, which can result in inaccurate evaluations of students' abilities and limit their potential (Stiggins, 2001).

In recent years, the field has seen a paradigm shift from traditional, summative approaches toward more formative, learning-oriented assessment models. LOA is grounded in the principle that assessment should be embedded within the learning process and serve as a catalyst for student engagement, reflection, and growth (Carless & Winstone, 2024). LOA emphasizes three core components: designing meaningful learning tasks, fostering student involvement through self- and peer-assessment, and providing timely, constructive feedback (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2025). These practices align assessment closely with instructional goals and promote a culture of continuous improvement.

Recent empirical research underscores the value of LOA in diverse educational contexts. In the Iranian context, Esfandiari et al. (2025) highlight ongoing challenges for teachers in balancing assessment demands with pedagogical goals, underscoring the need for targeted professional development in LOA. A recent study by Islam et al. (2025) investigated language assessment literacy within higher secondary English teachers in Bangladesh, revealing that insufficient academic and professional experience in designing assessments hinders the implementation of effective assessment practices. The study emphasizes the importance of strengthened professional development to advance teachers' theoretical knowledge and practical abilities in assessment, especially in contexts with limited resources (Islam et al., 2025). Similarly, a mixed-methods study by Nurisma et al. (2025) examined novice and experienced EFL teachers' LAL in online reading assessment, identifying technology factors, individual teacher knowledge, and experience as key influences on effective assessment practices. Their findings call for targeted assessment training to optimize online assessment literacy (Nurisma et al., 2025).

Further recent research from Indonesia by Cirocki et al. (2025) shows moderate assessment literacy levels among pre-service EFL teachers, with disparities linked to university affiliation. Their findings stress the need for more practical training, integration of alternative assessment methods, and incorporation of technology and artificial intelligence in teacher education programs. This aligns with global trends emphasizing the complexity of assessment literacy as

a multicomponential construct involving knowledge, application, and critical engagement (Fulcher, 2020; Kremmel & Harding, 2020).

The relationship between assessment literacy and effective teaching is particularly salient in EFL and multilingual classrooms. Recent studies (Khan et al., 2022; Zhang et al., 2023) demonstrate that structured professional development in LOA significantly improves teachers' assessment practices, confidence, and ultimately, student outcomes. Such training equips teachers to design culturally responsive assessments, promote inclusivity, and enhance student motivation—critical factors in diverse educational settings. According to Smith and Johnson (2025), targeted interventions on LOA have led to measurable improvements in teaching effectiveness and learner satisfaction. They were reporting that LOA-focused training enables teachers to adapt their instructional strategies and better meet student needs.

LOA is underpinned by sociocultural and constructivist theories, which view assessment as an interactive, context-dependent process that shapes and is shaped by teaching and learning (Brown & Gao, 2025; Stoyhoff, 2012). Assessment literacy is increasingly recognized as essential for competency-based education (CBE) systems and deeper learning initiatives (DeLuca, 2025). Educators must navigate complex data from multiple assessment sources and design assessments that support valid inferences about student learning progression and transfer of skills (Wylie & Heritage, 2024). Effective LOA practice requires not just technical skill but also reflective engagement and a willingness to adapt based on feedback from multiple sources (Guskey, 2024; Liu & Wang, 2025).

Despite these advances, challenges remain. Many teachers continue to experience a disconnect between theoretical knowledge of LOA and practical application, often due to institutional constraints, lack of time, or insufficient support (Taras & Davis, 2012; Yi, 2013). Bridging this gap requires ongoing professional development, collaborative learning environments, and a commitment to aligning assessment with curricular goals and student needs.

LOA literacy is essential for effective teaching, particularly in EFL contexts. By embedding assessment within the learning process, fostering student agency, and providing meaningful feedback, LOA transforms assessment from a summative endpoint to a formative, integral part of teaching and learning. Continued research and investment in LOA-focused professional development are necessary to realize its full potential in diverse educational settings.

### **The Current Study**

This study was conducted to respond the questions below:

**RQ1:** How does the implementation of LOA literacy based instruction influence Iranian EFL teachers' perceptions of effective teaching?

**RQ2:** To what extent do the components of LOA literacy among Iranian EFL teachers affect their effectiveness in teaching, as measured through student outcomes and self-assessment?

The first question focuses on examining the direct influence of implementing LOA literacy based instruction on teachers' perceptions. Understanding this influence is crucial for determining how educational interventions can reshape teaching practices and beliefs. By focusing on perceptions, the question seeks to uncover how teachers view their effectiveness and teaching strategies after exposure to specific instructional methods. This can offer valuable understanding of the psychological and pedagogical changes that arise from professional

development. The second question aims to identify which specific components of LOA literacy are predictive of teaching effectiveness. Understanding these relationships can help in developing targeted interventions that enhance teacher performance. By suggesting methods for measuring effectiveness (student outcomes and self-assessment), this question emphasizes the importance of empirical data in evaluating teaching practices. It encourages a systematic approach to assessing how well teachers implement LOA literacy in their classrooms. The ultimate goal is to improve educational outcomes for students by understanding how teacher LOA literacy translates into effective teaching practices. This may result in improved learning outcomes and experiences for students.

## **Method**

To achieve these objectives, a mixed-methods approach was used, utilizing both quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques. Surveys were administered to a diverse group of Iranian EFL teachers to evaluate their views on LOA literacy and its connection to teaching effectiveness. Selected participants took part in in detailed interviews to provide a richer understanding of their experiences and perspectives on LOA practices in their classrooms.

### *Participants*

The study took place at Safir Language Academy, which is among the largest private language institutions in Iran, taking advantage of the researcher's access to its extensive network and resources. The research was conducted in two primary stages. The first stage involved a specialized group of sixteen participants, including ten PhD candidates and six PhD holders in ELT. The second phase expanded the participant pool to 110 English teachers, comprising both students and graduates from various educational backgrounds—ranging from Bachelor's to PhD degrees—and including individuals from other academic majors. These teachers were selected from different branches of Safir Language Academy across Iran, ensuring a broad representation. The larger group was divided into two subgroups, 50 general English teachers with at least two years of teaching experience and degrees in diverse fields, and 60 ELT specialists who also had a minimum of two years of experience and held degrees specifically in ELT. Both groups included participants of varying genders and ages. The random selection process helped minimize bias and ensured a representative sample, supporting a comprehensive analysis of teaching practices within the academy. The scale and diversity of the sample were made possible by Safir's significant presence and employment of numerous teachers across its many branches nationwide.

### *Materials and Instruments*

This study utilizes a mixed-methods design, integrating qualitative and quantitative research methods to thoroughly investigate EFL teachers' LOA literacy and their effective teaching practices. By utilizing both methods, the research captures the complexities of assessment practices and provides a richer dataset for analysis.

During the first stage of the study, qualitative data were gathered through semi-structured interviews with sixteen EFL teachers. This method is particularly beneficial for several reasons. Semi-structured interviews allow researchers to gather detailed insights from participants. The inclusion of open-ended questions encourages respondents to share their thoughts and feelings

freely, revealing nuanced perspectives on LOA that may not emerge in more structured formats.

While the researcher has a predetermined set of questions, the semi-structured format provides flexibility throughout the conversation. Interviewers have the opportunity to explore intriguing points mentioned by participants, promoting a more organic and engaging dialogue. This flexibility is especially valuable in exploratory research, where unexpected themes may arise. The interactive nature of semi-structured interviews promotes dialogue between the interviewer and participant, encouraging elaboration on responses. This interaction provides a deeper understanding of participants' experiences and insights regarding assessment practices.

The qualitative data obtained through these interviews complements quantitative findings, offering a comprehensive view of the research topic. The interviews included three open-ended questions specifically designed to draw out participants' experiences and perceptions of LOA. Initially, the study involved a literature review that led to interviews with ten PhD candidates and six PhD holders in ELT. These discussions focused on three key questions related to LOA: How do you design learning tasks?

How do you involve students in peer or self-evaluation?

How do you ensure that feedback is effective and promotes future learning?

Insights from these interviews informed the development of a questionnaire used in the second stage of the study, which aimed to measure effective teaching. To enrich the data and gain deeper insights into teachers' classroom practices, the researcher developed two complementary instruments, a self-evaluation questionnaire and a teacher reflection sheet. The self-evaluation questionnaire includes 32 items that enable teachers to evaluate their instructional methods based on the key elements of LOA, providing valuable information on how teachers perceive their effectiveness and highlighting areas where additional support or training may be needed. The teacher reflection sheet encourages educators to critically reflect on their own teaching practices, fostering a better understanding of their LOA literacy and identifying opportunities for professional growth.

Engaging in this reflective process is crucial for continuous growth and development. The study's design corresponds with national standards for measuring teaching effectiveness, ensuring that the instruments are valid, reliable, and appropriate for their intended purpose. Such alignment enhances the credibility of the findings and their contribution to educational research. Drawing on Berk's (2005) framework, which identifies twelve different types of evidence for assessing teaching effectiveness-including student feedback, peer evaluations, self-assessment, and teaching portfolios-this study combines both qualitative and quantitative methods to gather comprehensive evidence of EFL teachers' LOA literacy. By combining qualitative semi-structured interviews with rigorously developed quantitative questionnaires, the methodology grounds findings in both personal experiences and measurable data. This mixed-methods approach offers a comprehensive insight into the complexities of assessment practices in the EFL context, ultimately aiding efforts to improve teaching effectiveness and enhance student learning outcomes.

#### *The Initial Version of the Questionnaire*

The initial questionnaire was created based on comprehensive review of the literature on LOA literacy and effective teaching. It consisted of 32 items covering three fundamental

components: assessment tasks as learning tasks, student involvement in assessment, and feedback as feed-forward. To ensure the validity of the instrument, three university professors specializing in ELT reviewed the items for clarity and appropriateness. Their feedback played a crucial role in improving the questionnaire before it was administered in the study's second phase.

### Procedure

The Teachers' LOA Literacy Study was a comprehensive research endeavor aimed at evaluating the relationship between assessment literacy, grounded in the elements of LOA and effective teaching practices among Iranian EFL teachers. The study utilized a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative research techniques.

In the initial phase, qualitative data were gathered through semi-structured interviews with sixteen EFL teachers. The purpose of these interviews was to investigate teachers' experiences and perceptions related to LOA literacy and effective teaching. The qualitative insights gained informed the development of the ETQ, ensuring that the questionnaire addressed relevant themes related to LOA. After the qualitative phase, the ETQ was piloted with 30 EFL teachers to assess their perceptions of effective teaching and to explore the psychometric characteristics of the questionnaire.

After validating the ETQ, researchers investigated Iranian EFL teachers' perceptions towards effective teaching. They probed the relationships between teachers' perceptions of assessment literacy—grounded in the components of LOA—and effective teaching, examining how these components predicted effective teaching outcomes.

The study also explored the knowledge of LOA literacy and effective teaching among BA, MA, and PhD EFL teachers. Correlation studies were conducted to examine relationships between teachers' LOA literacy and their perceptions of effective teaching, while regression analyses determined how well components of LOA literacy predicted effective teaching outcomes. By developing and validating assessment tools, exploring teachers' attitudes and perceptions, and examining the impact of assessment literacy—rooted in LOA—on effective teaching, this study aimed to add valuable insights to the field of language assessment and teacher education.

The experimental phase of the Teachers' LOA Literacy Study was structured to evaluate the effects or outcomes of LOA literacy on effective teaching practices among Iranian EFL teachers. This section details the methodology employed specifically for the experimental group. In this phase, two groups of 30 EFL teachers each were formed through an available sampling method. The experimental group received targeted treatments focused on enhancing their LOA literacy, while the control group relied solely on their prior knowledge without any additional interventions.

Both groups participated in the ETQ twice, once as a pretest before the treatment and again as a posttest after the treatment had been administered. This design allowed for a comparative analysis of the effectiveness of the LOA literacy training. To evaluate the results, two separate MANOVA were conducted—one for pretest scores and another for posttest scores. The aim was to compare the means of both groups across various components of effective teaching.

## Results

The findings from the Teachers' LOA Literacy study offer valuable understanding into the relationship between LOA literacy and effective teaching practices among Iranian EFL teachers. This section elaborates on how teachers' LOA practices were gauged through the ETQ and presents the results corresponding to the research questions.

### *Pilot Study of ETQ*

The ETQ, consisting of 32 items, was piloted with a group of 30 EFL teachers to evaluate its reliability. The overall reliability index for the ETQ was found to be .841, indicating strong internal consistency. The reliability indices for the four components were as follows: Designing Learning Tasks at .793, Students' Involvement at .746, Peer Self-Evaluation at .772, and Giving Feedback at .815. These values confirm that the questionnaire is a reliable tool for measuring teachers' perceptions regarding effective teaching practices.

**Table 1**

*Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Statistics for Pilot Study of ETQ*

	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Designing Learning Tasks	.793	8
Students' Involvement	.746	8
Peer Self-Evaluations	.772	8
Giving Feedback	.815	8
Total Effective Teaching	.841	32

### Teachers' LOA Practices

The study examined how teachers perceive their LOA practices in relation to effective teaching. Descriptive statistics for the overall ETQ and its four components revealed that teachers rated their practices with a mean score of 3.25 across the questionnaire. Among the components, Students' Involvement had the highest mean ( $M = 3.37$ ), followed by Giving Feedback ( $M = 3.33$ ), Designing Learning Tasks ( $M = 3.17$ ), and Peer Self-Evaluation ( $M = 3.13$ ).

**Table 2**

*Descriptive Statistics for Effective Teaching Questionnaire and its Components*

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
Designing Learning Tasks	110	1	5	3.17	.992	.984
Student Involvement	110	1	5	3.37	1.148	1.317
Peer & Self-Evaluation	110	1	5	3.13	1.080	1.167
Giving Feedback	110	1	5	3.33	1.143	1.306
Effective Teaching	110	1	5	3.25	.835	.697

### Validity of ETQ

The construct validity of the ETQ was established through an Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) using Principal Axis Factoring and Promax Rotation. This method was selected to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the underlying constructs measured by the ETQ. The rationale for employing Promax rotation lies in its ability to clarify factor relationships without

altering the fundamental results, as noted by Field (2024). Factor rotation aids in maximizing variable loadings on specific factors, enhancing interpretability.

Prior to conducting the EFA, it was essential to determine whether the extracted factors were correlated. The Component Correlation Matrix indicated that all correlation coefficients exceeded  $\pm 0.32$ , suggesting significant correlations among factors. Consequently, Promax rotation was deemed appropriate for this analysis. The Parallel Scree Plot further supported the extraction of four factors, aligning with theoretical expectations for the ETQ.

The adequacy of the sample size for EFA was confirmed through the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Measure of Sampling Adequacy, which produced a value of 0.921—considered "marvelous" according to Field (2024). Furthermore, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity yielded significant results ( $\chi^2(496) = 2080.72, p < .05$ ), confirming that the correlation matrix was appropriate for factor analysis.

All items demonstrated significant loadings on their designated factors according to the EFA results, with values above 0.40 in the Pattern Matrix. This indicates that each item contributes meaningfully to its construct. Furthermore, reliability indices such as Composite Reliability (CR) and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) were calculated for each factor. For example, the first factor related to "Peer Self-Evaluation" demonstrated a CR of 0.918 and an AVE of 0.762, confirming both construct reliability and convergent validity.

The validation process for the ETQ involved rigorous statistical analysis to ensure its construct validity. The use of EFA, along with appropriate rotation methods and reliability assessments, substantiates that the ETQ effectively measures its intended constructs related to effective teaching practices among Iranian EFL teachers.

### *The Effect of LOA Literacy on Effective Teaching*

This section investigates the extent to which LOA literacy significantly influences effective teaching practices among Iranian EFL teachers. Utilizing a mixed-methods approach, both correlation analyses and an experimental design were employed to gain a comprehensive understanding. Normality tests indicated that the data did not deviate significantly from normality, with skewness and kurtosis indices all within acceptable ranges. Pearson correlation analysis demonstrated a significant positive correlation between LOA literacy and effective teaching, with a correlation coefficient of  $r(108) = .630 (p < .05)$ . The EFA results showed that all items had significant loadings on their corresponding factors, with values above 0.40 in the Pattern Matrix.

**Table 3**

*Pearson Correlation between LOA Literacy and Effective Teaching*

		LOA Literacy
Effective Teaching	Pearson Correlation	.630**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	110

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

### *Correlation among Components of LOA Literacy and Effective Teaching*

Further analysis showed moderate to large correlations among components of LOA literacy and effective teaching practices, with coefficients ranging from .408 to .530.

**Table 4***Pearson Correlation among Components of LOA Literacy and Effective Teaching*

		Designing Learning Tasks AL	Involving Students in Assessment	Effectiveness of Feedback
Designing Learning Tasks	Pearson Correlation	.530**	.479**	.418**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000
	N	110	110	110
Student Involvement	Pearson Correlation	.504**	.463**	.462**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000
	N	110	110	110
Peer & Self- Evaluation	Pearson Correlation	.447**	.408**	.408**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000
	N	110	110	110
Giving Feedback	Pearson Correlation	.454**	.465**	.423**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000
	N	110	110	110

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

These findings underscore the importance of enhancing teachers' assessment literacy based on learning-oriented principles to improve their effectiveness in promoting student learning outcomes.

The second research question explored to what extent components of Iranian EFL teachers' LOA literacy affected effective teaching. To address this, regression analysis was conducted using a Backward method, as shown in Table 5. This analysis revealed that all three components of LOA literacy entered the model in a single step, predicting 56.9 percent of effective teaching ( $R = .754$ ,  $R^2 = .569$ ).

**Table 5***Model Summary<sup>b</sup>*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.754 <sup>a</sup>	.569	.557	.556	2.167

a. Predictors: (Constant), Effectiveness of Feedback, Designing Learning Tasks AL, Involving Students in Assessment

b. Dependent Variable: Effective Teaching

The Durbin-Watson (DW) index of autocorrelation of residuals is also presented in Table 5. Regression analysis requires that residuals—the differences between observed and predicted data—should not be correlated. The DW index for the present regression model was 2.16, indicating no concern for autocorrelation, as values less than 1 or greater than 3 are cause for concern (Field, 2024, p. 428).

**Table 6***ANOVA Test of Significance of Regression Model*

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	43.242	3	14.414	46.620	.000
	Residual	32.773	106	.309		
	Total	76.015	109			

Table 6 presents the ANOVA test results, which assess the significance of the regression model shown in Table 5. The ANOVA results were significant ( $F(3, 106) = 46.62, p < .05, \eta^2 = .569$ ), indicating that the components of LOA literacy are significant predictors of effective teaching, thus addressing the second research question. Notably, the effect size of .569 reflects the proportion of variance explained by the model, calculated as the sum of squares between groups (43.242) divided by the total sum of squares (76.015).

**Table 7***Regression Coefficients*

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	.753	.218		3.449	.001		
Designing Learning Tasks	.330	.063	.387	5.237	.000	.744	1.345
AL Involving Students in Assessment	.254	.064	.302	4.004	.000	.715	1.399
Effectiveness of Feedback	.267	.076	.260	3.502	.001	.736	1.359

These findings lead to the conclusion that designing learning tasks ( $b = .330, \beta = .387, t = 5.23, p = .000$ ) was the best predictor of effective teaching, followed by involving students in assessment ( $b = .254, \beta = .302, t = 4.00, p = .000$ ), and finally effectiveness of feedback ( $b = .267, \beta = .260, t = 3.52, p = .001$ ). Despite minor differences in their predictive power, all three components of LOA made significant contributions to effective teaching. Table 7 also presents tests for multicollinearity using Tolerance and Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) indices; values below ten for VIF and below one for Tolerance indicate that there was no evidence of multicollinearity affecting the regression model. In summary, these analyses provide robust evidence supporting the predictive relationship between components of LOA literacy and effective teaching among Iranian EFL teachers.

*Insights from Qualitative and Quantitative Feedback*

In addition to quantitative analyses, qualitative feedback gathered from semi-structured interviews with selected teachers provided valuable insights into their assessment practices. To analyze the qualitative data, thematic analysis was employed, allowing for systematically recognizing patterns and shared themes in teachers' answers. This approach involved coding the interview transcripts to extract key ideas related to their understanding of LOA literacy and its impact on their teaching practices which led to the development of the ETQ questionnaire.

In the quantitative phase, a researcher-made ETQ was administered to 110 teachers. This survey aimed to measure the relationship between LOA literacy and teaching effectiveness quantitatively. The results from this phase revealed a strong positive relationship between teachers' LOA literacy and their effectiveness in teaching, as demonstrated by MANOVA results. Teachers who received targeted training on LOA literacy showed marked improvements in their posttest scores compared to those who did not receive such training. Furthermore, a Teacher Reflection Sheet was utilized as a tool for self-assessment. Educators

enhanced their awareness of LOA literacy by examining their own teaching methods and identified areas for improvement. This self-reflection is crucial for ongoing professional development and growth, enabling teachers to align their practices with effective assessment strategies. Teachers reported that their understanding of LOA literacy significantly influenced their approach to designing assessments and involving students actively in their learning. Many emphasized the importance of feedback in fostering student growth and highlighted areas where they felt additional training could further enhance their effectiveness. By integrating both qualitative insights and quantitative data, this mixed-methods approach provides an in-depth insight of how Iranian EFL teachers' perceptions of LOA literacy influence their teaching effectiveness.

### *Experimental Phase of Study*

To investigate the research question regarding the extent to which LOA literacy significantly affects effective teaching, two groups of EFL teachers participated in this phase: an experimental group that received training on LOA literacy and a control group that relied on prior knowledge. Both groups took the ETQ twice—as a pretest and posttest—to assess changes in their perceptions of effective teaching following the intervention. Before discussing results, it is essential to note that assumptions of normality were retained for pretests and posttests of components of ETQ, as shown in Table 8, where the data showed skewness and kurtosis indices less than  $\pm 2$ .

**Table 8**

*Skewness and Kurtosis Indices of Normality (Treatment Phase of Study)*

Group		N	Skewness		Kurtosis	
			Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic
Experimental	PreDLT	30	.062	.427	-.480	.833
	PreSEN	30	.329	.427	-.717	.833
	PrePSE	30	-.061	.427	-.595	.833
	PreGFK	30	.041	.427	-.562	.833
	PostDLT	30	.375	.427	-.119	.833
	PostSEN	30	.067	.427	-.799	.833
	PostPSE	30	-.487	.427	-.496	.833
	PostGFK	30	-.514	.427	-.289	.833
Control	PreDLT	30	.526	.427	-.347	.833
	PreSEN	30	.442	.427	-.391	.833
	PrePSE	30	.381	.427	-.098	.833
	PreGFK	30	.636	.427	.105	.833
	PostDLT	30	.413	.427	-.820	.833
	PostSEN	30	.252	.427	-.235	.833
	PostPSE	30	.212	.427	-.509	.833
	PostGFK	30	1.091	.427	.657	.833

Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) was performed to compare means on pretests between groups, confirming homogeneity in terms of effective teaching prior to treatment. Results indicated no significant differences between experimental ( $M = 2.12$ ) and control groups ( $M = 1.86$ ) on pretest scores for Designing Learning Tasks ( $F(1,58) = 1.59, p > .05$ ). Similar results were observed across other components.

**Table 9***Descriptive Statistics for Pretests of Components of Effective Teaching by Groups*

Dependent Variable	Group	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
PreDLT	Experimental	2.121	.142	1.836	2.405
	Control	1.867	.142	1.582	2.151
PreSEN	Experimental	1.946	.166	1.613	2.279
	Control	1.904	.166	1.571	2.237
PrePSE	Experimental	2.083	.140	1.803	2.364
	Control	1.692	.140	1.411	1.972
PreGFK	Experimental	2.137	.163	1.811	2.464
	Control	1.787	.163	1.461	2.114

Following treatment, MANOVA results indicated that posttest results across all components demonstrated meaningful differences between the experimental and control groups.

**Table 10***Descriptive Statistics for Posttests of Components of Effective Teaching by Groups*

Dependent Variable	Group	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
PostDLT	Experimental	3.162	.160	2.843	3.482
	Control	1.979	.160	1.659	2.299
PostSEN	Experimental	2.825	.175	2.474	3.176
	Control	2.029	.175	1.679	2.380
PostPSE	Experimental	2.879	.190	2.500	3.259
	Control	1.829	.190	1.450	2.209
PostGFK	Experimental	3.354	.199	2.956	3.752
	Control	2.067	.199	1.668	2.465

The findings demonstrated that the experimental group scored higher than the control group on all four components of the posttests assessing effective teaching. Specifically, the experimental group had higher mean scores in Designing Learning Tasks ( $M = 3.16$  vs.  $1.97$ ), Students' Involvement ( $M = 2.82$  vs.  $2.02$ ), Peer Self-Evaluation ( $M = 2.87$  vs.  $1.82$ ), and Giving Feedback ( $M = 3.35$  vs.  $2.06$ ). These findings suggest that training focused on LOA literacy had a positive impact on teachers' effective teaching practices.

**Discussion**

This study has offered important understanding of the connection between LOA literacy and effective teaching practices among Iranian EFL teachers. The results highlight the significance of assessment literacy, not merely as a technical skill, but as a fundamental component of effective pedagogy. By integrating LOA principles into their teaching practices, EFL educators can develop more interactive, learner-focused classrooms that encourage autonomy, critical thinking, and improved learning outcomes. The exploration of assessment literacy revealed that having a deep understanding of assessment fundamentals and LOA practices directly influences teachers' instructional strategies and their ability to cultivate supportive, inclusive classrooms. The study highlighted that developing LOA literacy equips teachers to design meaningful learning tasks, promote active student involvement through self- and peer-

assessment, and provide timely, constructive feedback. These elements collectively contribute to a more dynamic and effective teaching approach.

However, the research also acknowledged existing challenges and limitations that many teachers face, including a lack of adequate training, institutional constraints, and a disconnect between theoretical knowledge and practical application. Addressing these issues requires a multifaceted approach that includes targeted professional development initiatives, collaborative learning environments, and supportive institutional policies. The call for professional development is particularly significant. Successful programs should combine theoretical understanding with hands-on experience, allowing teachers to implement LOA principles in actual classroom environments. The integration of collaborative learning environments, peer coaching, and reflective practices is essential for sustaining assessment literacy growth and promoting continuous improvement.

This study adds to the expanding research demonstrating the importance of LOA in enhancing teaching effectiveness. The results are consistent with modern educational theories that highlight assessment as a vital tool for promoting learning and development, rather than just a method of evaluation. By viewing assessment as a fundamental component of the learning journey, educators can design more effective and meaningful experiences that enhance student growth. This study's findings provide a nuanced and multifaceted understanding of LOA literacy shapes effective teaching practices among Iranian EFL teachers. The strong reliability and multifactorial structure of the ETQ reflect the complex, interrelated nature of teaching effectiveness, consistent with sociocultural and constructivist theories of learning (Stoynoff, 2012; Vygotsky, 1978). These theories emphasize that learning and teaching are socially mediated activities where assessment is not a discrete event but an ongoing, interactive process embedded within classroom dynamics.

The four factors identified—peer/self-evaluation, student involvement, feedback, and task design—highlight that effective teaching is a dynamic system rather than a sum of isolated skills. This aligns with complexity theory (James & Sammons, 2013), which views teaching as an adaptive, emergent process influenced by multiple interacting components. LOA literacy empowers teachers to navigate this complexity by integrating assessment seamlessly into instruction, fostering environments where students actively participate in their learning through self- and peer-assessment (Carless & Winstone, 2024; Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2025).

The significant positive correlation between LOA literacy and teaching effectiveness suggests that teachers who understand and apply LOA principles are better positioned to implement formative assessment strategies that promote learner autonomy and engagement. This finding resonates with self-regulated learning theory (Zimmerman, 2002), which posits that learners develop autonomy and motivation when provided with timely, constructive feedback and opportunities for reflection—core components of LOA. The emphasis on designing meaningful learning tasks as the strongest predictor of effective teaching further underscores the importance of task-based language teaching (Ellis, 2003), where authentic, goal-oriented activities drive both assessment and learning.

The study's results illustrate a shift from traditional, summative assessment paradigms toward LOA's formative, learner-centered approach. This transition is supported by critical and sociocultural theories of assessment (Johnson, 2009; Stoynoff, 2012), which argue that assessment practices must be contextually situated and responsive to diverse learner needs.

LOA literacy involves not only technical competence but also reflective practice and cultural responsiveness, enabling teachers to negotiate institutional constraints and student diversity effectively (Zhang et al., 2023).

According to activity theory (Engeström, 2001), the integration of LOA into teaching represents a transformation of the teacher's activity system, where assessment tools mediate new forms of interaction between teachers and learners. However, contradictions often arise between existing institutional assessment policies and innovative LOA practices, creating tensions that teachers must navigate. Professional development programs that foster collaborative reflection and peer learning (Guskey, 2024; Liu & Wang, 2025) are crucial for resolving these contradictions and sustaining changes in assessment literacy.

The predictive power of LOA literacy components on teaching effectiveness (56.9% variance explained) highlights the critical role of targeted professional development. Recent research (Smith & Johnson, 2025) confirms that professional development programs emphasizing LOA principles—such as designing learning tasks, fostering student involvement, and delivering constructive feedback—lead to measurable improvements in teacher confidence and instructional quality. This supports Fullan's (2007) model of educational change, which stresses the importance of coherence, collaboration, and contextual relevance in professional development.

Moreover, the study's findings suggest that effective professional development must move beyond knowledge transmission to include authentic, practice-based learning experiences. Reflective practice, action research, and cooperative learning (Esfandiari et al., 2025; Yang & May, 2023) enable teachers to internalize LOA concepts and adapt them to their unique classroom contexts. This approach aligns with transformative learning theory (Mezirow, 1997), which posits that deep professional growth occurs through critical reflection and experiential learning.

While enhancing LOA literacy is vital, systemic factors such as institutional policies, standardized testing pressures, and cultural expectations can constrain teachers' ability to implement LOA fully (Taras & Davis, 2012; Yi, 2013). Activity theory's focus on systemic contradictions (Engeström, 2001) provides a useful framework for understanding these challenges. To foster sustainable change, educational stakeholders must align assessment policies with LOA principles and provide ongoing support structures that empower teachers as agents of pedagogical innovation.

It is important to acknowledge certain limitations. Due to the cross-sectional nature of the study, establishing causality is limited, and the sample is delimited to Iranian EFL teachers, affecting generalizability. Data collected through self-reporting can be prone to bias. Institutional and policy-level factors, while influential, were not directly measured. Future research should explore longitudinal impacts of LOA literacy development and examine how contextual variables—such as school culture, administrative support, and student demographics—influence the enactment of LOA. Investigating these dynamics across diverse educational settings will deepen understanding of how to optimize assessment literacy for effective teaching globally.

Professional development should prioritize experiential, practice-based learning, including peer coaching, collaborative reflection, and action research. Policymakers should align institutional assessment policies with LOA principles and provide resources for formative,

classroom-based assessment. Schools should foster collaborative learning environments where teachers can share experiences and co-develop solutions to assessment-related issues. Empowering teachers to adapt assessment practices to student needs will enhance both teacher efficacy and student learning outcomes.

By foregrounding the LOA literacy's impact, this study advances the understanding of effective teaching as an adaptive, socially mediated practice. Fostering LOA literacy through targeted professional development and systemic support enables EFL teachers to transform assessment from a static measure into a dynamic tool that enhances student engagement, autonomy, and achievement. Grounded in contemporary educational theories, these findings provide a robust framework for improving teaching effectiveness and advancing learner-centered education in EFL contexts and beyond.

### **Conclusion**

This study advances the conceptualization of effective teaching as an adaptive, socially mediated practice deeply intertwined with LOA literacy. By fostering LOA literacy through targeted professional development and systemic support, EFL teachers can transform assessment from a static measure into a dynamic tool that enhances student engagement, autonomy, and achievement. Grounded in contemporary educational theories, these findings provide a robust framework for improving teaching effectiveness and advancing learner-centered education in EFL contexts and beyond.

This study has offered important understanding of the connection between LOA literacy and effective teaching practices among Iranian EFL teachers. The results highlight the significance of assessment literacy, not merely as a technical skill, but as a fundamental component of effective pedagogy. By integrating LOA principles into their teaching practices, EFL educators can create more engaging, student-centered learning environments that foster autonomy, critical thinking, and improved learning outcomes. The exploration of assessment literacy revealed that having a deep understanding of assessment fundamentals and LOA practices directly influences teachers' instructional strategies and their ability to cultivate supportive, inclusive classrooms. The study highlighted that developing LOA literacy equips teachers to design meaningful learning tasks, promote active student involvement through self- and peer-assessment, and provide timely, constructive feedback. These elements collectively contribute to a more dynamic and effective teaching approach.

However, the research also acknowledged existing challenges and limitations that many teachers face, including a lack of adequate training, institutional constraints, and a disconnect between theoretical knowledge and practical application. Addressing these challenges requires a multifaceted approach that includes targeted professional development initiatives, collaborative learning environments, and supportive institutional policies. The call for professional development is particularly significant. Successful programs should combine theoretical understanding with hands-on experience, allowing teachers to implement LOA principles in actual classroom environments. The integration of collaborative learning environments, peer coaching, and reflective practices is essential for sustaining assessment literacy growth and promoting continuous improvement.

This study further adds to the increasing evidence that highlights the importance of LOA in enhancing teaching effectiveness. The results are consistent with modern educational

theories that highlight assessment as a vital tool for promoting learning and development, rather than just a method of evaluation. By viewing assessment as a fundamental component of the learning journey, educators can design more effective and meaningful experiences that enhance student growth. Ultimately, fostering LOA literacy among EFL teachers is essential for enhancing teaching effectiveness and improving student outcomes. By dedicating resources to focused professional development, fostering collaborative learning settings, and adopting a learner-centered assessment approach, educational institutions can enable teachers to improve their practices and enhance the learning experiences of their students.

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