

Iranian EFL Teachers' Language Assessment Literacy (LAL) under an Assessing Lens

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Abstract: Despite being trained in pre-service teacher education programs, most EFL teachers are underprepared when faced with language assessment-related activities. Part of the problem emanates from the fact that Language Assessment Literacy (LAL) as a construct has not been well defined by experts. The purpose of this study was to pinpoint the components of LAL in the Iranian EFL context using an adapted version of Fulchers' (2012) LAL survey with two types of constructed and closed response items. The participants were 280 English language teachers from seventeen different provinces in Iran. Exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses and cross validation were used to define LAL as a construct. Furthermore, qualitative data analysis procedures were employed to analyze the data obtained from constructed response items. The results indicate that LAL in the Iranian context is comprised of four factors, namely: test design and development, large-scale standardized testing and classroom assessment, beyond-the-test aspects (which mainly includes social and ethical aspects of language testing/assessment), and reliability and validity. Furthermore, the results show that the EFL teachers in this study believe that besides the theoretical issues of assessment, they should also receive hands-on skills-based instruction in language assessment. These results can have direct implications for future teacher education programs with the aim of enhancing EFL teachers' LAL.

Keywords: Language Assessment Literacy, Factor Analysis, Validation, Teacher Education.

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