EFL TEACHERS' LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT LITERACY AND THEIR ASSESSMENT PRACTICES: A CASE STUDY FROM AN INDONESIAN HIGHER EDUCATION CONTEXT

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Abstract. *Research on EFL teachers' language assessment literacy (LAL) and its reflection in their assessment practices remains relatively limited. The current research aims to seek answers to the questions: (1) How did the five EFL teachers perceive their LAL knowledge, skills, and principles in their assessment context? (2) How were these components reflected in their assessment practices? A qualitative case study approach, involving five experienced EFL teachers in an Indonesian university, was employed. The data were collected through two in-depth semi-structured interviews and an analysis of participants' assessment documents. The interviews and document analysis explored participants' LAL and their assessment practices. The assessment documents were analyzed using conventional content analysis to investigate participants' actual assessment practices. The findings indicated that the participants' perceived LAL was not fully manifested in their assessment practices within this departmental context. The participants in this particular institutional context demonstrated the strongest understanding of LAL principles, followed by the skills and knowledge components, which revealed tensions among these components. Regarding assessment practices, the participants demonstrated competence in using various types of assessments aligned with institutional policies. However, discrepancies were identified between their LAL and actual practices, which may be influenced by external factors. Implications for the participants' future professional development were discussed.*

Keywords: Language assessment literacy (LAL); Assessment practices; EFL teachers; Teacher perception; Higher education; Qualitative case study

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1. INTRODUCTION

Language Assessment Literacy (LAL) has been sought as an integral part of professional competencies for language teachers. LAL refers to the ability to use teachers' knowledge and skills to design language assessments, administer them, and interpret their results to evaluate their language teaching practices (Sevimel-Sahin & Subasi, 2019). Coombe et al. (2020) defined it as a repertoire of competencies, knowledge of using assessment methods, and suitable tools to understand, assess, and develop language tests, and to analyze test data. It also refers to understanding and using assessment results to make decisions not only about students' language abilities but also their language teaching (Giraldo, 2020). Assessments also play an essential role in education, as the results provide stakeholders with important information about students' performance and the achievement of learning goals. Therefore, to make informed decisions about their students and their teaching, teachers should have adequate LAL to support assessment-related teaching tasks. It is safe to assume that teachers' LAL and teaching competence are equally crucial for language teachers. However, the research on this topic revealed otherwise.

Research on LAL has suggested that teachers have inadequate LAL to perform assessment-related tasks (Bannister, 2024; Chang et al., 2024; Oo et al., 2024; Tayyebi et al., 2022). Additionally, many research projects reported that teachers' assessment literacy affects their language teaching. For example, Ahmadi et al.'s (2022) study reveals a positive correlation between teachers' LAL and their instruction, indicating that highly assessment-literate teachers are likely to improve their classroom instruction. In addition, these teachers are reportedly more able to monitor their students' learning using appropriate assessment techniques and tools and to adjust their classroom instruction to achieve the learning goals, which eventually leads to more successful language education (Gan & Lam, 2022; Rezai, 2024).

With the rising awareness of the role of teachers' LAL, studies on this topic have become increasingly popular. Several researchers have offered different concepts and constructs (Berry et al., 2019; Brookhart, 2024; Davies, 2008; Fulcher, 2012; Inbar-Lourie, 2008; Taylor, 2013). Other studies developed instruments to measure the language teachers' assessment-related knowledge and skills (Kremmel & Harding, 2020; Lan & Fan, 2019; Pastore & Andrade, 2019; Tajeddin et al., 2022; Tavassoli & Sorat, 2023). These instruments, then, enable researchers to collect empirical data on teachers' assessment literacy levels, which have become flourishing areas of research. Some emerging themes in this area include teachers' LAL levels (Bustamante, 2022; Chang et al., 2024; Elhussien & Khalil, 2023; Fitriyah et al., 2022) and teachers' training needs (Cirocki et al., 2025; Doğan & Ünal, 2024; Estaji, 2024). Those studies provided insight into the LAL status among language teachers and their perceptions of their ability to do assessment-related tasks in their teaching. While these findings are valuable for planning future training, studies on teachers' LAL and their assessment practices are still minimal. Teachers' beliefs and their manifestation in assessment practices still need to be explored to determine whether the concepts and constructs were correctly described and how they contribute to teachers' assessment practices.

Limited research on teachers' LAL and their assessment practices yielded different results. For example, some researchers reported a mismatch between teachers' LAL and their assessment practices (Liu & Li, 2020; Öz & Attay, 2017; Zulaiha et al., 2020), while other research revealed that teachers' LAL were replicated in their assessment practices (Giraldo, 2019). Different research methodologies may have led to conflicting results from these studies. Most of these studies employed data-collection methods such as interviews (Giraldo, 2019; Ukrayinska, 2024; Zulaiha et al., 2020), reflective journals on their assessment practices (Giraldo, 2019; Levi & Inbar-Lourie, 2020), and observations during assessments (Liu & Li, 2020). While those methods are valid, they failed to provide comprehensive pictures of teachers' assessment practices, as teachers' assessment-related documents were not analyzed. Research by Zulaiha et al. (2020) indicated the use of such documents; however, explanations of the document analysis and its contribution to the findings were not provided. A study by Levi and Inbar-Lourie (2020) analyzed teachers' assessment artifacts to see their assessment practices. However, the artifacts used in this study were produced during a training program designed to develop teachers' LAL, which may not accurately reflect teachers' actual assessment practices. Later studies on teachers' LAL and their assessment practices were conducted in reverse, using the language assessment practice to investigate teachers' LAL (Oo et al., 2024; Ukrayinska, 2024). To truly understand how LAL is reflected in teachers' assessment practices, more comprehensive research is needed that investigates both how teachers perceive LAL and the evidence of their assessment practices. This research investigates teachers' LAL manifests in their assessment practices within an institution, in which assessment practice data were obtained from the assessment artifacts they regularly used. These real-world assessment artifacts could reveal real data on teacher assessment practices in the particular institution.

This research employed the three main components of LAL proposed by Davies (2008), Inbar-Lourie (2008), and Giraldo (2018) to gain a comprehensive understanding of teachers' LAL and their assessment practices. They identified three main components of LAL: language assessment knowledge, skills, and principles. Knowledge in LAL refers to relevant background in language measurement, language measurement methodologies, and assessment contexts (Davies, 2008; Inbar-Lourie, 2008). Skills in LAL refer to the ability to conduct tests/assessments, analyze the assessment, and report the test results. These skills may include writing test items, statistics, test analysis, and developing assessment rubrics (Davies, 2008; Inbar-Lourie, 2008). Lastly, principles in LAL refer to teachers' awareness of ethical and fairness issues and consequences of assessments (Davies, 2008; Inbar-Lourie, 2008). A more thorough explanation of the components and descriptors in language assessment of knowledge, skills, and principles was provided by Giraldo (2018), which gives a thorough description of the concepts of LAL. Using these components, this research tried to answer these research questions:

1. How did the five EFL teachers perceive their LAL knowledge, skills, and principles in their assessment context?
2. How were their LAL knowledge, skills, and principles reflected in their assessment practices?

2. METHODS

Since this research investigated EFL teachers' LAL beliefs and assessment practices in a specific institutional setting, we employed a purely qualitative case study in a natural context (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Yin, 2018). Yin (2018) described a case study as relevant to research questions that involve an extensive and in-depth description of a social phenomenon, such as the one presented in this research. Besides, a case study is well-suited for investigating a real-world case that is highly influenced by contextual conditions. In this research, the LAL belief and assessment practices of higher education EFL teachers whose assessment context is low-stakes and nontest-oriented become an interesting case to study.

2.1. The Context and Participants

This study adopted a single case study design by examining a single, bounded institutional case. The present study was conducted in the English language education department in a private university located on the outskirts of a college town in Indonesia. This department offers an EFL teacher training program designed to develop the language and teaching skills of future EFL teachers. The department strongly encouraged its teachers to use diverse assessment methods, especially performance-based assessments, to measure students' academic achievement. The department even discouraged using tests as the only method for assessing students. Teachers had complete freedom to choose, design, and administer assessments. They also had the freedom to give grades to the students. Despite the freedom given by the department, the responsibility for assessing students lay entirely in the teachers' hands, which requires good assessment literacy to perform assessment-related tasks.

Because this study investigated a specific assessment context, participants were selected through purposeful sampling, in which we chose those whose perspectives could collectively explain assessment practices within the department. The five teachers who participated in this study were selected based on their extensive experience in assessing in this highly specific assessment context; thus, they provided rich and in-depth data for the current research. Additionally, this study employed intensive data collection methods, including two in-depth interviews and thorough document analysis. Therefore, the sample and data collection could provide sufficient information power to adequately address this study's aims, consistent with the principle of information power in qualitative research (Malterud et al., 2016).

The five participants (four females and one male), at the time of data collection, had worked in the department for 8 to 12 years and had 10 to 35 years of teaching experience. Their ages ranged from 35 to 57; all had master's degrees in English language education. Based on the interview, all of them attended courses on language assessments in their bachelor's and master's degree programs. Their schools offered fewer assessment course credits than teaching methodologies courses. To maintain the participants' confidentiality, we used pseudonyms in reporting the findings. Rudy was the pseudonym for the male teacher, and Erlin, Anne, Wanda, and Sherly were used for the female teachers.

2.2. Data Collection

Two intensive data collection methods were used: two semi-structured interviews and document analysis. The multiple data collection methods used in this study served as a data triangulation, one way to ensure the validity of qualitative research (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Data triangulation could be done to ensure a coherent justification of findings by examining evidence from multiple data sources (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Additionally, researchers can gain a broader understanding of perceived LAL and assessment practices by examining multiple data sources.

2.2.1. Interviews.

Two semi-structured interviews were conducted with each participant to examine their perceived LAL and assessment practices. The first interview protocol consisted of 9 questions that investigated participants' LAL knowledge, skills, and principles based on LAL frameworks developed by Giraldo (2018), who adopted and extended frameworks developed by Davies (2008) and Inbar-Lourie (2008). The first set of interview questions was: *How would you assess your knowledge of language assessment concepts? What principles of language assessment are you familiar with? What types of language assessment models and methods do you know? What principles do you follow when choosing, designing, and administering language assessments? What principles do you use to guide you when giving assessment feedback? What can teachers do with language assessment results? Who should be informed about the assessment results? How do you assess your ability to consider ethical and fairness issues in assessment? What should teachers do to minimize the negative impacts caused by assessments?* The second interviews were conducted to collect more in-depth data about teachers' assessment practices. Therefore, the second interviews were done after the researchers finished analyzing the documents. Using the same framework as the first interview, the second set of interview questions was: *What considerations did you take into account when choosing these assessments? Why did you choose these assessments for your course? What steps did you take when designing the assessment? How did you ensure the validity and reliability of the assessment? Why did you choose these assessment rubrics? How did you give feedback on the assessment? How did you ensure that the assessments were fair? How did you ensure that the assessments produced positive washback?* In both interviews, probing questions were used to clarify and elaborate on participants' responses.

The Indonesian language was used in the interviews because it is the native language of both the interviewers and the interviewees, making the interview process easier. The first interviews lasted 55 to 75 minutes, while the second lasted 45 to 65 minutes per participant. All the interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed for data analysis. The transcriptions were carefully read and repeatedly reviewed to identify recurring patterns and themes from the interviews (Cohen et al., 2011) that would be reported in the findings.

2.2.2. Document analysis.

In a qualitative case study such as this research, documents are a potential source of empirical data that are important for validating and confirming data obtained in the study. Additionally, by examining data collected through various methods, researchers can corroborate findings across datasets, thereby reducing potential biases that may arise from

a single data collection method (Bowen, 2009). In this study, documents such as course syllabi, which contained assessment plans, assessment rubrics, guidelines for assessments, and examples of classroom tests, were collected and analyzed to investigate the teachers' assessment practices. We collected and analyzed ten sets of syllabi of the courses taught by the five participants in this study. Those documents were then evaluated using conventional content analysis, in which the researchers examined the data without any pre-determined categories, instead allowing categories to emerge from the data (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). We carefully read the documents, focusing on the assessment section of the syllabus, and noted emerging thoughts and concepts that could potentially address the research questions about teachers' assessment practices. These notes were then prepared for the next step in data analysis.

2.3 Data Analysis

Both the interview and document data were analyzed qualitatively. The data analysis in this study followed the guideline of qualitative data analysis proposed by Creswell (2013) where data analysis starts with organizing the data, reading and noting, coding the data to find emerging themes, developing categories, and interpreting the data in relation to the initial research questions focusing the first interview for LAL data, while document and interview 2 were for assessment practices data. The coding process was guided by the established construct of LAL proposed by Davies (2008), Inbar-Lourie (2008), and Giraldo (2018). These frameworks guided our data analysis by using the elements of every LAL component to develop initial coding, categories, and themes. During the analysis, data segments that extended or refined existing LAL frameworks were also considered. The elements were used to develop the initial coding matrix by highlighting instances that reflected those elements. Table 1 below illustrates the use of a framework to determine the categories and themes.

Table 1. Categorizing and theming

LAL Components	Elements
Knowledge	Language measurement principles
	Assessment contexts
Skills	Design and administer the assessments
	Evaluate assessments
	Report assessments' results
Principles	Awareness of ethical and bias issues in assessments
	Awareness of consequences of assessments

The first author developed the initial coding matrix by reading the interview transcripts and documents to identify instances that reflected participants' LAL and their assessment practices in relation to the framework used. The second author then checked the initial

coding matrix. The first and second authors independently coded the data. The codes were then refined by merging the overlapping codes and analyzing underrepresented codes in the data. We then grouped the related codes into categories that reflect key dimensions of LAL and their manifestation in assessment practices. Examples of how codes were grouped into categories and themes are shown in Table 2. Subsequently, we discussed the codes and categories, addressing any inconsistencies to reach consensus on our answers to the research questions. The discussion between the first and second researchers was to maintain the data dependability.

Table 2. Grouping of the categories and themes

Data Excerpts	Initial Code	Category	LAL Themes
A good assessment, in my opinion, must clearly state what will be assessed and how it will be assessed. (Interview 1)	LAL awareness of validity concepts, not the specific term.	Principles of assessments	Knowledge components
I choose assessments that are fun and not intimidating for the students so that they can succeed in my class. (Interview 2).	Practice: considering the effects of assessments.	Emotional effects of assessments	Principles components
"Grading scheme: hard skills (80%) consisting of in-class micro-teaching (20%), book project (20%), and teaching practice (30%); soft skills (20%) including teamwork, social sensitivity, responsibility, and commitment." (Document excerpt)	Practice of using multiple types of assessments	Design and administer assessments	Skill components

2.4. Ethical Considerations

The ethical considerations in this study were maintained by keeping the confidentiality and anonymity of the participants throughout the study. Their participation in this research was voluntary, as they signed the informed consent form to fully participate in the study. The agreement included being interviewed and giving access to their course syllabi, which contained the assessments they used in the courses they taught. The informed consent also described their right to withdraw from the project at any stage of the data collection. Since there was no Ethics Committee at the institution where this study was conducted, the informed consent forms served as the ethical approval from the participants.

3. RESULTS

The current research investigated the LAL and assessment practices of five teachers. Despite being teaching staff in a university, the participants in this study claimed they

received little to no assessment training. Although all participants held master's degrees in English education, the training in assessments in their undergraduate and master's degrees was minimal. They claimed they relied on their assessment experience, mentorship with more senior teachers, and journal articles to develop their LAL and assessment practices. They agreed that they needed more training in assessment to ensure they applied correct assessment practices in their teaching. The findings of this research discussed teachers' LAL knowledge, skills, and principles based on the interview data. Then, findings on participants' assessment practices were also presented.

3.1. Teachers' General LAL

The LAL knowledge themes in the data included participants' understanding of assessment principles and contexts. The LAL skills covered themes such as designing and evaluating assessments. The LAL principles discussed the ethical issues and the consequences of assessments. The overall findings of teachers' LAL are shown in Figure 1 below:
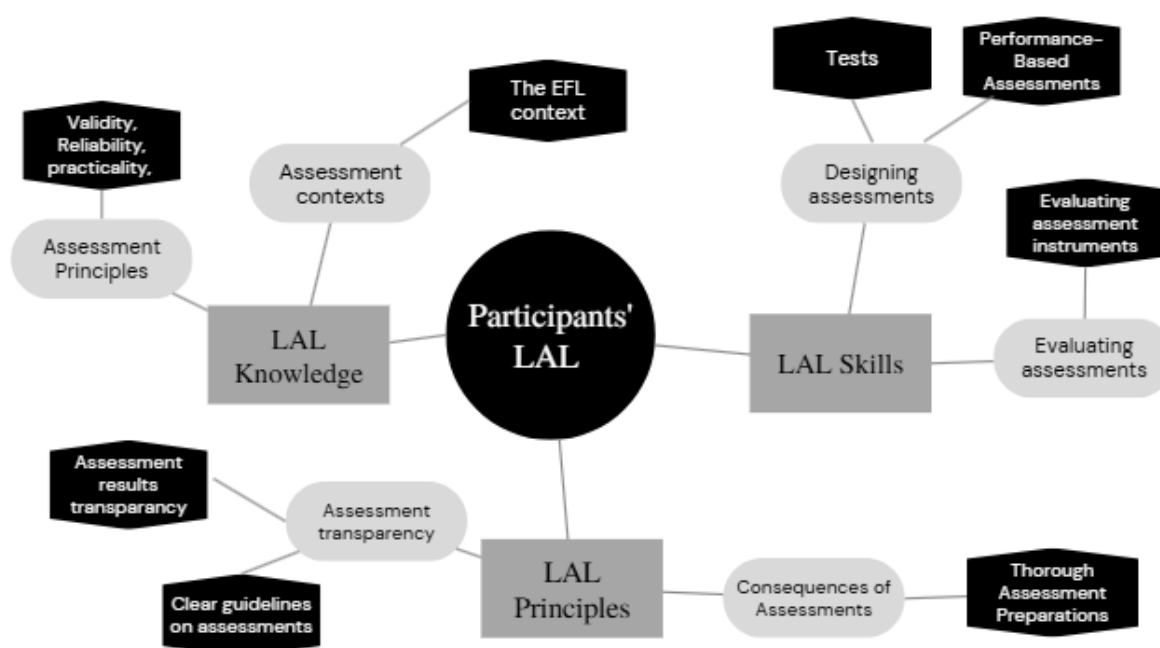
Figure 1. Summary of participants' LAL

3.1.1. LAL Knowledge

The present study reports that two themes emerged from the data regarding the participants' LAL knowledge. Teachers participating in this study demonstrated a profound understanding of the basic concepts of language assessments and an awareness of their assessment context. The interviews revealed that all participants were knowledgeable about the principles of language assessment, including validity, reliability, and practicality. However, the principle of authenticity in assessment was not found in the data. Although not all participants used specific terms to describe the language assessment principles, their explanations demonstrated their understanding of the concepts. For example, Anne

explained, "I always considered the objectives of the assessment and then chose the assessment types that can suit the assessment objectives" (Interview 1). Rudy expressed a similar argument: "I always use different types of assessments depending on the objectives. If I wanted to assess students' understanding, I used tests such as quizzes. On the other hand, I used other types of assessment to assess students' critical thinking skills" (Interview 1).

The participants' statements showed that they understood the concept of assessment validity, although they did not use the term to describe the principle. Among all the assessment principles, participants mostly agreed that validity and practicality were their primary considerations when choosing assessments. Sherly expressed, "I want to use an assessment that is 'doable,' and feedback can be given immediately" (Interview 1). Wanda also agreed, mentioning that an assessment should be easy to administer and not time-consuming. Therefore, assessment validity and practicality were considered more important when selecting assessment methods. The data also revealed that the participants were aware of multiple assessment methods. In the interviews, they mentioned using tests and performance-based assessments in their teaching. Data from the interview and the documents showed that alternative methods, such as presentations, teaching demonstrations, projects, essays, and mini-research projects, were used, demonstrating participants' knowledge of assessment methods.

Another finding on participants' LAL knowledge was the awareness of their assessment context. The interview data revealed that participants were aware that the use of English in the assessment might influence the results of assessments on content knowledge. For example, when Erlin wanted to assess her students' reading comprehension of an English book, she asked them to retell the story as part of an assessment, and she did not put the use of English in the assessment rubric. She understood that her students' motivation to read any books, let alone English books, was low; thus, requiring them to retell the books in English was already too burdensome. Anne also expressed that when assessing students' understanding of content knowledge, she wondered whether the use of English in the assessment should be included in the rubric. She argued that her students might understand the content, but expressing it in English may require more skills. According to Giraldo (2018), understanding teachers' assessment context is one component of teachers' LAL knowledge, enabling them to adapt their assessment practices.

3.1.2. LAL Skills

LAL skills refer to participants' understanding of the design and evaluation assessment instruments (Davies, 2008; Inbar-Lourie, 2008; Levi & Inbar-Lourie, 2020). The interview data revealed that participants in this study designed their assessments collaboratively with other teachers. According to their department policy, a course taught by two or more teachers should use similar or identical assessment methods. The participants also demonstrated a thorough understanding of the development of assessments. They understood the steps involved when designing tests or other performance-based assessments. However, when developing tests, they adapted the existing ones. They might have obtained them from different sources, such as the Internet, and then made necessary adjustments to suit their assessment objectives for practical reasons. Rudy claimed, "I chose

a test from a reliable website such as bbc.co.uk and made necessary changes. Creating tests from scratch would take too much time and energy" (Interview 1). Other participants also reported using similar practices when designing assessment rubrics for performance-based assessments, such as presentations. Erlin described, "I always look for examples of assessment rubrics from the Internet, choose the one that I think is suitable for my assessment goals, and make necessary adjustments" (Interview 1). Wanda also claimed that she might not have the necessary skills to create her own rubric.

Two participants evaluated the assessment instruments. For tests, Sherly explained that "when the majority of the students performed poorly in the tests, I evaluated the test to see if it was at the students' level" (Interview 1). For performance-based assessments, Anne stated that "I constantly evaluate the tasks and the assessment rubrics I have chosen, thinking if they are too demanding. For the rubrics, I also evaluate whether they are still appropriate with my assessment goals" (Interview 1). Wanda asserted, "I usually evaluate my assessment rubrics to see if the rubric I used is flexible so that students can get good scores for the assessment. I know that students would be demotivated if they received low assessment scores" (Interview 1). The statements showed that the participants understood the importance of evaluating the assessment instruments. From the statements, assessment validity, practicality, and washback became the reasons for evaluation.

3.1.3. LAL Principles

The last component is the LAL principles, which refer to teachers' awareness of issues, ethics, and consequences of assessments (Davies, 2008). The interview data revealed that the participants showed excellent awareness of the principles of LAL. Participants demonstrated awareness of ethical issues, including making assessments transparent to students and the consequences of those assessments. Most participants also shared that they ensured the assessments were transparent by guiding the students through them. The first thing they did was include all the assessment guidelines in their syllabus, which were discussed at the beginning of the semester. Wanda remarked, "From the beginning of the semester, my students know the assessments they will be doing in my class, and impromptu assessments do not exist" (Interview 1). Anne, Wanda, and Erlin also had a similar strategy: they wrote detailed guidelines for each assessment and shared them with the students.

Regarding the ethical issues related to the assessment scores, the participants always maintained that they published the students' scores through the university's LMS. The scores from tests, usually taken online, can be automatically viewed in the LMS as soon as students complete the test. The score for performance-based assessments was typically given to students at the end of the semester, which could have been problematic since some assessments were intended to be formative. When assessments were designed for formative purposes, the information obtained from these assessments should be used to evaluate the teaching and learning process. Thus, when the information is given at the end of the semester, it defeats the purpose of formative assessments. The interview data also revealed awareness of the consequences of assessments, ensuring that students are not negatively affected by them. For example, Erlin stated that:

> I know from experience that being assessed is nerve-wracking, and I often perform poorly under such pressure. That is why I always want to use assessments that allow my students to learn and have fun without worrying about being judged. (Interview 1)

Like Erlin, Rudy always ensured that the assessments would not burden students. Other participants also claimed they devoted plenty of time to preparing students for the assessment. For example, Anne explained that she devoted time outside of class sessions to ensure that she and her students could have serious discussions, which in turn helped her students perform well on assessments. In addition, Sherly, who often used tests, claimed that she devoted some of her classroom sessions to providing students with practice tests to prepare them for the actual test.

3.2. Teachers' General LAL and Their Assessment Practices

To understand participants' assessment practices, document analysis and second interviews were used to identify patterns in teachers' assessment practices. The analyzed documents were syllabi outlining the learning plans for a one-semester course. The syllabus format was based on the university's standard, and submitting the syllabi before the semester began was compulsory. The syllabi contained information, such as course objectives, learning activities and resources, and assessment plans for the whole semester. In answering the second research question, the analysis was focused on investigating the assessment plans. The participants' assessment plans revealed that four out of five planned to utilize multiple assessment types, including tests and performance-based assessments. For example, in a syllabus developed by Anne, the assessment methods she planned to use for the Language Learning and Acquisition course included quizzes, writing a language autobiography, interactive presentations, classroom teaching, and writing literature reviews. Detailed instructions for the students on how the assessment would be carried out, along with the assessment rubrics, were also provided.

Other syllabi followed a similar pattern with different degrees of detail in the assessment information. For example, Sherly's syllabus did not include information on the assessment rubrics, despite the department's mandate to use multiple assessment types. The syllabus for a grammar course used only tests for the assessments. The course was designed to have four tests assessing students' knowledge of grammar, including parts of speech, phrases, clauses, and sentences. In the interview, Sherly explained that she also used other assessment methods not listed in the syllabi. She wanted to know not only students' knowledge of grammar but also their ability to use it. She did not include the particular assessment in the syllabus because she had not yet discussed it with the other teachers teaching the same course.

3.2.1. Teachers' LAL Knowledge in the Assessment Practices

Based on the document analysis, the participants demonstrated LAL knowledge of various assessment types in their assessment practices. Although participants were discouraged from relying on a single method for assessing students, they were also allowed to state their reasoning for choosing the specific assessment method. Thus, their practice of using different assessment methods was not merely a compliance with the department regulations but was rooted in their beliefs about assessments. However, although the participants were knowledgeable about the principles of language assessments, such as

validity and practicality, they stated in the second interview that they had never formally analyzed their assessment instruments to determine their validity. Instead, they relied on their judgments of the instrument's validity. They believed the instruments were valid because they had been approved by their colleagues, who taught the same courses. However, Wanda claimed, "I wish the department could invite an assessment specialist to check if our assessment practices have been accurate" (Interview 2). With the validity of the assessment questioned, the participants primarily designed their assessments based on practicality. Erlin confirmed, "I chose this assessment because it is doable and did not take much time for me to design, administer, and score. I also see that this assessment did not burden the students" (Interview 2). While practicality is one principle of language assessment, relying solely on it can be problematic.

Another topic regarding teachers' LAL knowledge was their understanding of their assessment contexts. The participants demonstrated their understanding of assessment contexts in their practices. The second interviews revealed that the participants allowed their students not to use English during the assessments. For example, during a book discussion assessment conducted by Erlin, students were allowed to switch between English and Indonesian. Anne, who incorporated interactive presentations into her assessments, also permitted her students to present in both English and Indonesian. When asked about the reasons for these practices, the participants argued that English was a foreign language in their teaching contexts and that their assessments were not designed to assess students' language performance. Forcing students to use English would undermine the purpose of the assessments. These statements demonstrated that the participants' knowledge is reflected in their assessment practices.

3.2.2. Teachers' LAL Skills in the Assessment Practices

The rubrics that the participants used in their assessments, along with the design of their language tests, confirmed their LAL skills. When using performance-based assessments, such as presentations and book discussions, rubrics were used to score these evaluations. The documents revealed that the participants employed analytical rubrics, in which the performance was scored based on several criteria. For instance, in Erlin's book discussion, the scoring criteria included the book's general information, content, appraisal, and questions. Erlin explained in the interview:

To make the rubric more objective, I tried to quantify it. For example, when I assess students' ability to describe the book's general information, instead of judging the quality of the description, I check whether they include the title and authors, the number of pages, and a summary of the book. I would give a full score of three and deduct points when some components are missing. (Interview 2)

On the other hand, Rudy remarked, "Although the documents state the use of analytical rubrics, I use one criterion when I score the presentation, which is if the presentation was done appropriately, somewhat appropriate, or not appropriate" (Interview 2). It indicated the use of holistic rubrics in assessments. When asked further about his reason for using different rubrics, Rudy stated, "I just want to use a rubric that is flexible enough so that students can get good scores" (Interview 2). Students' success in assessments became his priority in his assessment practice.

The observations in the participants' syllabi revealed their skills in developing tests. Tests were primarily administered online through the LMS, using various formats, such as multiple-choice questions, true-false statements, and short-answer questions. One of the tests even contained all three types of questions. In another test, where the participant claimed to use multiple-choice questions, the analysis revealed design issues. The first problem was that the test lacked clear instructions. The instructions only informed students about the area the test measured and how the score contributed to their overall grade. Information on what students should do with the items, their distractors, and their time allocation for completing the tests was unavailable. For example, one item read "choose one," followed by two sentence choices. The instruction could be confusing because students might not know whether they should select the correct sentence or the correct concepts. The second problem was that the number of options used in the multiple-choice tests varied from one item to another. In one test, the number of options was inconsistent, ranging from four to three to two. While this may not be an issue for a single test, the inconsistency reflects the teachers' level of LAL knowledge, skills, and principles. In retrospect, it may indicate the participant's inability to design an effective test.

Another topic in the skill component of LAL is the use of assessment results in language teaching. The participants argued that assessments did play an important role in their teaching. Anne argued:

I put a lot of effort into preparing students for this assessment. It is not just about the scores. Students' understanding of the concepts I tried to teach is equally important. The concepts in this course are complex, and the assessment I created was designed to help students grasp them. (Interview 2)

The statement also suggests that participants were aware of the role of assessment in the teaching and learning process. However, four participants answered no when asked whether they used assessment results to evaluate their teaching. They claimed they evaluated the assessment types and methods instead of the teaching and learning process. Only one participant reported using the assessment result to make some changes to her teaching. It could indicate that teachers were not fully aware of the LAL principles, such as the effects of assessment on teaching.

3.2.3. Teachers' LAL Principles in the Assessment Practices

The findings on teachers' LAL principles showed that this LAL component stands out from the other components. It means that the participants mainly understood the consequences of assessments. The data from the syllabuses confirmed the findings as they indicated that teachers allocated ample classroom time to prepare students for assessments. Sherly's syllabi, for instance, indicated that she prepared students for a test on parts of speech by giving them weekly quizzes for each part of speech. Sherly argued that she did not want students to fail. Other syllabi also indicated classroom sessions devoted to group or individual consultations. These consultations were used to discuss teachers' feedback on students' work. Rudy stated, "I always make sure students are ready for assessments. I do not want them to receive bad scores because it will ruin their motivation to learn" (Interview 2). Erlin even commented, "It breaks my heart to see the students' sad faces because they did not do well in assessments. It often ruins the classroom

atmosphere" (Interview 2). Despite their awareness of how these assessments affected students, the classroom time devoted to assessments may suggest that the participants' teaching practices revolved solely around assessments. This approach may be problematic because it limits the objectives of the teaching and learning process.

4. DISCUSSION

The present study examines the perceived LAL knowledge, skills, and principles of five Indonesian EFL teachers and how these beliefs are manifested in their assessment practices within an institutional setting. The study explores all three LAL components proposed by Davies (2008), Inbar-Lourie (2008), and Giraldo (2018), namely knowledge, skills, and principles. The teachers displayed varying degrees of understanding of these components. Results showed that they had the highest awareness and understanding of the LAL principles, followed by LAL skills, while LAL knowledge was the component they were least aware of. The findings also indicated that although the participating teachers understood the assessment concept, they sometimes failed to apply that knowledge in their assessment practices. The current findings are consistent with those of Fitriyah et al. (2022) and Zulaiha et al. (2020), both of which were conducted in the Indonesian context. In a similar assessment setting, the findings of this study are also consistent with those of Varshini and Venkatalakshmi (2024), Hambali et al. (2024), and Yin and Fang (2025).

This research, related to LAL principles, suggested that ethical issues and the consequences of assessment were the primary considerations when participants in this study designed, administered, and interpreted the results of the assessments. This finding has been confirmed in previous studies (Latif, 2021; Rezai et al., 2021; Wiese & Nortvedt, 2023; Yin & Fang, 2025). However, some studies have reported opposite results (Liu & Li, 2020; Sultana, 2019; Watmani et al., 2020). A variety of teachers' assessment contexts, especially regarding teachers' autonomy in assessment, may have contributed to these differing results. These findings were similar to studies conducted in university contexts (Latif, 2021; Yin & Fang, 2025), where teachers had greater freedom in assessment compared to those in elementary and high school contexts (Liu & Li, 2020; Watmani et al., 2020), where the government mainly determined evaluation through large-scale assessments. Thus, teachers rarely questioned the fairness, ethical issues, or consequences of assessments (Watmani et al., 2020) because they had no choice but to administer the mandatory assessments.

Research findings on the five participants' LAL skills showed their perception of their skills in designing and evaluating assessments. Participants in this study mainly used tests and performance-based assessments, with a greater emphasis on the latter. The performance-based assessment aimed to help teachers measure students' knowledge and skills (Rezai et al., 2021). Both participants' LAL skill data and their assessment documents confirmed this finding. The current study's results aligned with those of Levi and Inbar-Lourie (2020), Rezai et al. (2021), and Hambali et al. (2024). These studies also reported a shift from using tests alone to performance-based assessments. On the contrary, research by Gan and Lam (2022) and Roslan et al. (2022) still indicated that tests remained the primary assessment method among teachers.

The participants in this study were also reported to understand the design process assessment instruments, such as tests, performance-based assessment tasks, and scoring rubrics. However, data from assessment practices revealed some issues with the participants' tests and rubrics. They needed more training in designing assessments, adapting test assessment rubrics, and developing their own tests and rubrics. Bøhn and Tsagari (2021), Fitriyah et al. (2022), and Chang et al. (2024) also expressed the need for training in assessment design. In addition, this research revealed that the five teachers consistently evaluate their tasks and the rubrics they use to ensure their validity, practicality, and impact on student learning. However, the study's data on assessment practices did not confirm this claim.

Regarding teachers' LAL knowledge, this study found that the participants understand the concepts of validity, reliability, and practicality in language assessments. Among the five principles of language assessments (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010), the concepts of authenticity and washback did not emerge from the current research data. They understood these concepts but failed to use specific terms for those assessment principles. This may be caused by their inadequate theoretical knowledge (Bustamante, 2022; Shafii & Berger, 2025; Sulaiman et al., 2021). In the teachers' LAL beliefs, the teachers in this study demonstrated a deep understanding of the three principles of language assessments, with practicality becoming the primary consideration in their language assessment practices. While practicality is a crucial principle in language assessments, relying solely on one aspect of assessment principles can cause problems, as assessment methods should be chosen not just for their practicality. Moreover, in assessment practices, participants judge the validity of their assessments solely based on the knowledge of what should be assessed and how the assessments should be conducted. No official or formal evaluation of the validity of the assessments used to score performance-based assessments had been conducted. This finding aligned with earlier research, such as studies by Bustamante (2022), Fitriyah et al. (2022), and Rezai et al. (2021). Assessment validity was never formally conducted due to teachers' workload (Fitriyah et al., 2022; Lestari & Yusuf, 2025) and their perceived inability to do such a complex process (Anam & Putri, 2021; Latif & Wasim, 2022; Lestari & Yusuf, 2025).

Finally, the findings of this research suggested that the five teachers' LAL influenced their assessment practices. For example, their high level of understanding and awareness of ethical issues and the consequences of assessment shaped their practices, which emphasize students' success in assessments. In the meantime, their inadequacy of theoretical knowledge about assessments prevented the teachers from applying that knowledge in practice. Studies by Farhady and Tavassoli (2021) and Chang et al. (2024) revealed similar findings: teachers with higher LAL levels were able to design better assessment tests and tasks than those with lower LAL levels. In addition, teachers in this study demonstrated a limited understanding of theoretical assessment knowledge, which may have been attributed to a lack of assessment training. The minimal assessment training these teachers received may not have emphasized theoretical knowledge, as indicated by Davidson and Coombe (2019) and Sulaiman et al. (2021). Hence, a gap exists between LAL knowledge and assessment practices. Another possible reason for this phenomenon is the way these teachers developed their expertise in assessments. The teachers in this study

claimed they relied on their experience and mentorship from more experienced teachers, who mainly discussed practical issues rather than theoretical knowledge in assessments. This kind of practice in developing assessment expertise was commonly found in previous studies (Bustamante, 2022; Larenas & Brunfaut, 2023; Sulaiman et al., 2021).

5. CONCLUSIONS

The findings of this study indicated that teachers in this particular institutional setting possessed a fundamental understanding of assessment, but sometimes struggled to apply that knowledge in their assessment practices. These teachers acknowledged and used tests and performance-based assessments. In addition, the LAL and assessment practices of these five teachers were influenced by their assessment contexts, experience, and training. In the context of this study's assessment, teachers played a crucial role in designing, administering, and interpreting the results. Therefore, these teachers emphasized their assessment practices to avoid negative impacts on their students. Hence, it was shown in their assessment practices. Additionally, given their years of teaching experience, it is understandable that the teachers in this study relied heavily on their experience and collaboration with other teachers to develop their assessment expertise. Due to this approach in developing teachers' LAL and assessment practices, this study suggests the importance of maximizing teachers' experience and collaboration in assessment training programs. In addition, the research findings implied that teachers' LAL influenced their assessment practices; therefore, it is imperative to improve teachers' LAL for better assessment practices.

The small number of participants in this study is a limitation, as it may not be generalizable to or applicable in other assessment contexts. However, the multiple data collection methods used in this study provided more comprehensive information about the specific assessment setting, which can help enhance teachers' understanding of LAL and assessment practices. More studies involving various teachers across diverse assessment contexts are noteworthy to shed light on LAL in a broader context. Additionally, studies on assessment training programs for in-service teachers that incorporate teachers' experiences and collaboration are also needed to identify suitable support for developing teachers' LAL.

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ГРАМОТНІСТЬ У МОВНОМУ ОЦІНЮВАННІ ВЧИТЕЛІВ АНГЛІЙСЬКОЇ МОВИ ЯК ІНОЗЕМНОЇ ТА ЇХНІ ПРАКТИКИ ОЦІНЮВАННЯ: ВИПАДОК ІЗ ПРАКТИКИ В КОНТЕКСТІ ВИЩОЇ ОСВІТИ ІНДОНЕЗІЇ

Анотація. Попри зростання інтересу до грамотності у мовному оцінюванні (Language Assessment Literacy, LAL), емпіричних досліджень, що аналізують її прояви у фактичних практиках оцінювання викладачів англійської мови як іноземної (EFL), залишається відносно небагато. Метою цього дослідження є з'ясування: (1) як п'ятеро викладачів англійської мови як іноземної концептуалізують власні знання, уміння та принципи грамотності у конкретному контекст оцінюванні; (2) яким чином ці компоненти реалізуються в їхніх оцінювальних практиках. Дослідження виконано в межах якісного дизайну за участю п'яти досвідчених університетських викладачів в Індонезії. Емпіричні дані зібрано шляхом двох глибинних напівструктурованих інтерв'ю з кожним учасником та аналізу їхніх матеріалів для оцінювання. Інтерв'ю та документальний аналіз дали змогу реконструювати уявлення та підходи учасників до мовного оцінювання. Матеріали оцінювання було проаналізовано із застосуванням традиційного контент-аналізу з метою виявлення фактичних оцінювальних практик. Результати дослідження засвідчили, що задекларований рівень грамотності у мовному оцінюванні учасників не повною мірою реалізується в їхніх оцінювальних практиках у межах кафедрального та ширшого інституційного контекстів. Найбільш сформованим складником грамотності у мовному оцінюванні виявилося розуміння її принципів, тоді як відповідні знання й уміння проявлялися менш послідовно, що свідчить про напруження між окремими компонентами цього феномену. Що стосується оцінювальних практик, учасники продемонстрували здатність застосовувати різні типи оцінювання відповідно до інституційних вимог. Водночас зафіксовано розбіжності між рівнем сформованості грамотності у мовному оцінюванні та фактичними оцінювальними діями викладачів, що, ймовірно, зумовлено впливом зовнішніх контекстуальних чинників. У статті обговорено наслідки отриманих результатів для подальшого професійного розвитку викладачів англійської мови як іноземної.

Ключові слова: грамотність у мовному оцінюванні (LAL); практики оцінювання; викладачі англійської як іноземної; уявлення викладачів; вища освіта.