

# Exploring Indonesian Lecturers' Perceptions and Practices on English Language Assessment

Imam Munandar,<sup>1\*</sup> Shaumiwaty<sup>2</sup>

<sup>12</sup>Institut Agama Islam Negeri Takengon, Aceh Tengah, Aceh – Indonesia

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## Abstract

Assessments are crucial in teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL), impacting students' knowledge acquisition and influencing teachers' beliefs and training. The present research investigates lecturers' fundamental conceptions regarding assessing English as a foreign language (EFL) and their instructional practices in higher education. Twelve English department EFL lecturers participated in a study using purposive sampling, semi-structured interviews, and questionnaires. The research used a thematic analysis methodology to identify themes, classifications, and subcategories reflecting respondents' perspectives on EFL evaluation. The study's results showed that the subjects used diverse terminology to illustrate evaluation, offering a stimulating context for their respective methodologies. Furthermore, the participants believed that language assessment serves multiple purposes, including administrative and educational functions. Most respondents viewed evaluation as a continuation of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom instruction and acquisition, significantly influencing students' educational outcomes and learning strategies. Therefore, considering how assessments can improve student learning will likely influence educators' working in EFL assessment. Research highlights the need for professional development for lecturers to improve their understanding of language assessment and practice through workshops, training sessions, and resources.

**Keywords:** language assessment; Indonesian; EFL; lecturer's belief; lecturer's practice

## Introduction

Evaluation design and its application in the teaching-learning environment have recently led to a significant focus on teaching and learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Scholars and professionals have examined and analyzed efficient and streamlined evaluation

methodologies for supervising and assessing EFL education and instruction in domestic and international contexts (Archbald, 1991; Wahyuni et al., 2021; Zaim et al., 2020) who researched authentic assessment for speaking skills in the Indonesian EFL context, clearly described the application of genuine evaluation in a speaking class, emphasizing the different evaluation categories and the associated grading rubrics. Macey et al. (2013) conducted a study on implementing authentic assessment and developed a practical guide in language assessment. All authors presented above exhibit the importance of assessment in English

**\*Corresponding Author:** Imam Munandar  
(imameducator@gmail.com) Jalan Yos Sudarso  
No.10, Central Aceh Regency, Aceh, 24519

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as a Foreign Language (EFL) education. Still, assessment occupies a pivotal place in education and is a fundamental aspect of pedagogy (Suwartono & Riyani, 2019). It enables educators to refine their teaching methods, improving students' learning outcomes (Padmadewi et al., 2022). Furthermore, assessments of superior quality and demonstrated efficacy benefit the learning process, particularly when used properly.

Employing a conceptual structure in this research helps the researcher define the components under investigation and provide a basis for exploring these components and other linked factors. Cockerill et al. (2018) emphasized the interdependence of teachers' cognitive processes, planning, decision-making, and beliefs, which substantially affect their daily classroom practices. It suggests that teachers' implicit theories and conceptions about assessment significantly influence their cognitive processes and planning, manifest in classroom practices, and ultimately improve the teaching and learning environment (Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2017). Thus, it is beneficial to investigate the theoretical foundations of educators' perspectives and evaluation methodologies. According to Berger et al. (2018), teachers' concepts are neither uniform nor unambiguous but diverse and interconnected. In light of numerous studies demonstrating the substantial influence of teachers' perceptions of teaching, learning, and curricula on their instructional practices and students' learning outcomes, it is crucial to examine instructors' assessment conceptions. To identify the characteristics of the factors in the current research, the researcher consulted Brown's four primary evaluation frameworks.

Brown (2004) provides an extensive list of assessment objectives separated into four distinct groups: improvement, institutional responsibility, individual responsibility, and insignificance. The notion of improvement implies that assessment can improve students' learning quality.

On the other hand, school and student responsibility notions assume that evaluation can be used to track the development of a school's performance and, separately, students' learning. In conclusion, irrelevant frameworks assert that assessment can serve meaningless purposes. Doolittle (2002) identifies four primary purposes of assessment, including deciding the current status of students, observing their progress, designating grades, and evaluating teachers' instructional effectiveness.

Following conducting a thorough literature review on evaluation goals, the researcher identified two primary classifications of assessment purposes: demonstrating and enhancing student learning. According to Stiggins (2002), scholars and practitioners frequently refer to the initial evaluation as a summative assessment, while the subsequent evaluation is frequently referred to as a formative assessment. Both educators and learners can employ a formative evaluation to modify that will enhance the practice. When a high-quality evaluation is used for formative purposes in the classroom, it provides educators and students with feedback that can be used to enhance instruction and learning, respectively. Collaboration between instructors and students during the formative assessment is hypothesized to result in positive learning outcomes. Consequently, the current approach to

evaluating student learning has changed from utilizing assessments solely for grading and assuring accountability to using assessments to form, illuminate, and enrich learning practice. Additionally, he proposes a more significant allocation of resources for implementing assessment for learning (Stiggins & Stiggins, 2002).

A previous discourse on assessment emphasized that all assessment methods are inherently social (Moradian et al., 2021). Social performances occur in social contexts and involve social actors who may perform actions on themselves or others. Assessment of students in the classroom is not a purely technical or objective process. Instead, it is a component of the teaching and learning cycle within the school's context. Adopting a sociocultural perspective, the scholar views language evaluation as an integral part of classroom practices that are neither detached nor context-free. This statement assumes that educators are individuals with specialized knowledge and skills rather than autonomous entities and engage in complex and potentially contradictory assessment processes as social agents (Hill, 2015). In this research, the sociocultural theory will serve as a ground and guide the formulation of an understanding of instructors' beliefs regarding evaluation and its influences on their daily classroom environment. Despite the vast body of research on assessment, specific gaps have been identified in the literature concerning teachers' cognitive processes and assessment practices, particularly in the context of TEFL in an Islamic tertiary education institution. In addition, a substantial proportion of scholarly works in the Indonesian context have emphasized their research on the primary and secondary levels. It

stimulated the present researcher to focus the research on the tertiary level of an Islamic campus. The research above inquiries will be conducted to improve language classroom evaluation and establish a solid ground for Islamic higher educational institutions.

In light of the context above, it is necessary to investigate the assessment beliefs of lecturers of EFL classrooms at the tertiary level of Islamic educational institutions. The primary goals of this study are to determine the assessment-related beliefs held by EFL lecturers and to analyze how these lecturers implement evaluation practices following their conceptions. Furthermore, it analyses the perceived need for adapting one's expertise to the educational objectives and criteria associated with the instruction and acquisition of EFL. This research aims to provide an extensive review of the relevant literature. The review includes educational articles, books, and other pertinent publications. This literature review aims to synthesize and evaluate the existing knowledge and research findings related to the topic to identify voids in the literature and suggest future research directions.

Empirical evidence suggests that educators' pedagogical and epistemological beliefs significantly influence their instructional practices, evaluative methodologies, and the content and scope of their students' knowledge acquisition. The study conducted by Muñoz and Palacio (2012) focused on the assessment beliefs of teachers as well as the evaluation framework implemented at a language center located at a university in Colombia. Using questionnaires and interviews, the researchers engaged sixty-two educators in the data collection. The findings revealed a discrepancy between educators' self-reported actions and beliefs. In actuality, the

respondents maintain that evaluation is a valuable instrument for formative assessment. Educators recognize the modifications necessary to improve their pedagogical strategies and offer more significant learning opportunities through assessment, regarded as a mechanism of educational governance. Thus, the research revealed that educators need more meaningful chances for introspection, self-assessment, and guidance on formative evaluation techniques.

Saad et al. (2013) conducted a study in which 35 Iranian EFL instructors from various schools nationwide participated. A questionnaire containing open-ended queries was used to collect data. The findings of this study indicate that educators' perspectives on the essence of evaluation were influenced by their context, socio-political situation, and understanding of the language education domain. Nonetheless, the present study revealed that educators did not substantially contribute to the assessment process due to hierarchical administrative strategies in evaluation and pedagogy. The study respondents focused on the significance of instructors' evaluation beliefs and their central duty in the evaluation process.

Yu and Lee (2014) undertook qualitative research in China to investigate the perspectives and approaches of 26 Chinese EFL instructors on the utilization and purpose of peer feedback within the context of composition instruction. The study used semi-structured interviews to investigate educators' perspectives on peer feedback and its implementation in their instructional practices. The study revealed that instructors' understanding of the efficacy and value of peer feedback in fostering the development of students as writers and second language learners varied significantly. In

addition, the strategies utilized by individuals varied considerably based on their ideologies and the instructional environment context. Peer criticism in the context of L2 writing is of interest to educators. Even though instructors may initially rely on their convictions to guide their approach, it is essential to note that their methods may evolve alongside their convictions. This study's findings suggest that EFL instructors may not comprehend the significance and potential of peer feedback in fostering the development of their students. This lack of awareness may prevent students from engaging in and benefiting from second language (L2) writing peer interactions.

In the Indonesian EFL context, Azis (2012) examined the evaluation practice of 107 English secondary school instructors. Participants were administered a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews as part of the mixed-methods analysis. According to the findings, assessment facilitates classroom activities while emphasizing learners' and the institution's responsibility. The individuals on the issue appeared to hold a different opinion than those who argued that the verdict was meaningless. Puad and Ashton (2021) conducted a study at an Indonesian Islamic residential school. Six English language teachers discuss classroom-based assessments related to EFL in secondary schools. Given the impending curriculum reform in Indonesia, which mandates incorporating formative assessment practices into pedagogy, it is essential to investigate the educators' perspectives. The research revealed that educators view classroom-based assessments as summative rather than formative. In addition to evaluating students' academic aptitude, their classroom demands and conduct received

considerable attention. Grades and test scores held children accountable to their educators and parents for their academic progress and achievements. This article illuminates the difficulties of implementing formative assessment techniques in conventional and hierarchical classroom settings.

A more recent series of studies on EFL assessment and evaluation have been conducted in several settings. Namely, the study carried out by Fitriyah et al. (2022) studied 55 Indonesian EFL teachers employing a mixed method revealed the importance of lecturers' professional development in the field of language evaluation, emphasizing that a good understanding of the EFL evaluation concept would improve the condition of EFL teaching and instruction in language classrooms. Similarly, Islam et al. (2021), in their extensive study in the Bangladesh context, put forward the importance of teachers' language assessment professionalism in EFL evaluation. Using mixed qualitative and quantitative methods, they found that due to inadequate teachers' professionalism in EFL evaluation, there was a mismatch between the EFL evaluation policy in the curriculum and the actual practice of EFL teachers in language classrooms.

According to previous research presented above, it can be concluded that educators' beliefs regarding EFL evaluation affected the implementation of the in-class evaluation. However, minimal research has been conducted to investigate the prevalence of educators' assessment convictions in Indonesia's Islamic tertiary education environment. The statement suggests that educators should improve their evaluation practice and consistently consider factors that could affect the administration of

classroom assessments. Assessment, according to (Cheng, 2015), consists of two fundamental components: "the what" and "the how." "The what" refers to the understanding and conceptualizations of the language, while "the how" refers to any method used to evaluate this knowledge.

The previously conducted research in the Indonesian EFL context also has shown that English language assessment implementation faces numerous challenges, including test bias, inconsistent standardization, limited validity, test anxiety, cultural and linguistic diversity issues, subjectivity in scoring, resource constraints, accessibility concerns, the influence of the test preparation industry, high-stakes pressure, security issues, technology-related challenges, difficulties in score interpretation, inadequate feedback mechanisms, and ethical dilemmas. Addressing these problems requires ongoing research, development of fair assessment instruments, technology integration, transparency, and ethical practices to ensure the effectiveness and equity of language assessments. These obstacles have driven the researcher to carry out this study in the EFL context in higher Islamic education in a province of Indonesia.

## Method

### Research procedure

The present study investigates educators' fundamental beliefs and practices in the classroom setting regarding EFL learning evaluation. The investigation concentrates on English lecturers' assessment practices and beliefs at the State Institute of Islamic Studies in Takengon, Indonesia. According to Gustafsson (2017), a case study is a statistical investigation

that analyses a recent phenomenon in its actual setting. In addition, it entails a comprehensive examination of a single unit. According to the preceding definitions, the case study methodology focuses on a single entity or occurrence to enhance comprehension of the provided situation. Using a case study methodology in the present study was motivated by the researcher's desire to comprehensively address the most pertinent

contextual factors concerning the examined phenomenon. Using Brown's four primary evaluation frameworks, the study investigates lecturers' assessment conceptions or beliefs.

**Participants**

All participants who participated in this research work at the English department of Institut Agama Islam Negeri Takengon are presented in the table below.

**Table 1**  
*Research Participants' demographic information*

Lecturers	Gender/Nationality	Level	Major	Teaching experience (in years)
L1	F /INA	Assistant Professor	Pure Linguistics	19
L2	F/INA	Assistant Professor	Applied Linguistics	10
L3	F/INA	Assistant professor	Applied Linguistics	10
L4	M/INA	Assistant Professor	TESOL	10
L5	F/INA	Assistant Professor	Applied Linguistics	10
L6	F/INA	Assistant Professor	Applied Linguistics	10
L7	F/INA	Assistant Professor	Applied Linguistics	10
L8	F /INA	Assistant Professor	Educational Technology	10
L9	F/INA	Assistant Professor	Pure Linguistics	10
L10	F/INA	Assistant Professor	Pure Linguistics	10
L11	M/INA	Assistant Professor	Pure Linguistics	10
L12	M/INA	Lecturer	Curriculum Development	04

**Data collection**

Semi-structured interviews and open-ended questionnaires are utilized in this study to investigate the beliefs and practices of lecturers regarding English language assessment. In the interview, a set of questions was adopted from the EFL evaluation framework developed by Brown (2004). In contrast, the 30-question open-ended questionnaires were taken from

Shohamy et al. (2008) (see Appendix 1). These instruments determine the perceptions and practices of EFL lecturers. The questionnaire consists of two primary components: (a) Personal information, involving age, length of teaching expertise, and level; and (b) Evaluation practices, which includes the rate and types of evaluation, the tools employed, their contribution to the ultimate grade, the particular language elements of each

instrument, language form or content-oriented, as well as the significance and objectives of the evaluation.

EFL lecturers' evaluation beliefs and instructional methods were the primary focus of the interview queries. The absence of observation as a data collection method in the current investigation may be considered a limitation of this study. This study's methodology included using semi-structured interviews and open-ended questionnaires on evaluation practice to collect data. The length of the interviews varied between 30 and 45 minutes. This study's data acquisition strategy involved conducting in-person interviews with the respondents. The interviews used open-ended questions to gather information regarding lecturers' perspectives on evaluation practice and instructional strategies. An open-ended questionnaire was given to the respondents simultaneously with their interview.

### **Data analysis**

The quantitative data from the questionnaire, which included dichotomous and multiple-choice items, was statistically evaluated. On the other hand, the data obtained through interview transcriptions were coded and then qualitatively examined. In terms of the coding system, open coding was applied by assessing similarities and differences in all acts or occurrences that arose from the interview transcriptions. In this sense, similar activities were grouped and classified. A thematic analysis also identifies recurring themes, patterns, or categories within the qualitative data. This combined quantitative and qualitative data analysis approach will enable us to comprehensively explore,

understand, and present the multifaceted aspects of Indonesian lecturers' perceptions and practices in the context of language assessment.

## **Findings and Discussion**

### **Finding**

This section of the study involves the presentation of the researcher's findings, which were derived from the data collected via interviews and open-ended questionnaires. The examination of educators' perspectives and methodologies in evaluating EFL learning and instruction revealed a variety of topics linked to their perceptions of EFL evaluation and classroom approaches. The participants utilized a variety of topics to characterize the evaluation, giving a fascinating context for their practices. The authors used multiple themes to outline the various language assessment objectives involving administrative and pedagogical justifications. Most respondents viewed evaluation as an enhancement of EFL classroom instruction and acquisition, hugely affecting student learning outcomes, learning strategies, and student motivation. This statement pertains to assessment for learning, a purpose for assessment proposed by Brown (2004). This form of evaluation is employed to enhance the quality of the student learning experience. The impact of evaluations on student learning is a significant factor that significantly influences lecturers' decision-making.

### ***Lecturers' conceptions of EFL assessment***

The questionnaire and interview responses of EFL instructors were analyzed to determine their perspectives on

assessment in EFL education. Participants who were lecturers provided a clear comprehension of how to assess students' learning. Participants have conveyed a shared understanding of assessment as a method for evaluating the learning process, specifically as a tool for measuring student performance. As an example, the first educator mentioned the concept of assessment as a method for gauging the progress of students' knowledge acquisition:

*... assessment is an integral element of all stages of learning, especially for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students, as it allows us to evaluate their progress...*

Consistent with this assertion, lecturers 6 and 12 added that assessment evaluates students' knowledge, skills, and abilities, determining whether they have progressed during and after their education.

*... evaluation of learning outcomes is a crucial aspect of instruction that cannot be neglected. The instructor needs to monitor their student's progress and evaluate their level of achievement. I believe that the location where the assessment occurs is the case...*

*... As assessment is important to get a clear picture of our student's achievement and progress, it should be valid and reliable so that the scores students get can be taken into responsibility...*

As stated by a previous participant, assessment is a systematic procedure by

which educators designate a numeric value to students based on their performance in a particular academic discipline. Based on the collected responses, it is evident that a substantial number of instructors in Islamic institutions of higher education believe that assessments serve to enhance the learning process (formative dimension) and validate learning outcomes by assigning a final score at the end of the semester (summative aspect).

Regarding formative evaluation, individuals should use the evaluation as a reference point to identify areas that require improvement. Instances of this could include the mode of material delivery to tailor it to the specific needs of each pupil. Additionally, the summative evaluation reveals that respondents provide a variety of evaluation methods, such as project submissions and oral interviews.

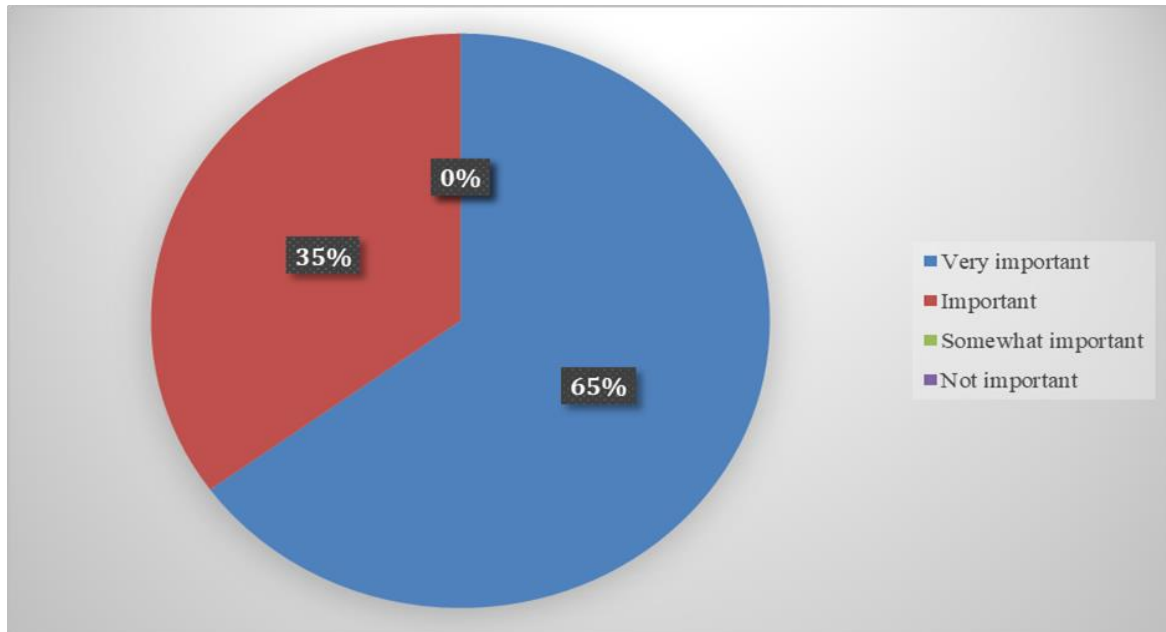
### ***Lecturers' purposes for assessments in EFL***

To determine the goals of educators in administering evaluations within the context of EFL pedagogy, a survey and interview were conducted with the subjects. The questionnaire or interview findings suggest that the EFL lecturer is engaged in their profession. According to the survey results, most respondents acknowledged the evaluation's significance, and none viewed the evaluation objectives as moderately essential or unimportant—charts 1 to 5 display observable data.



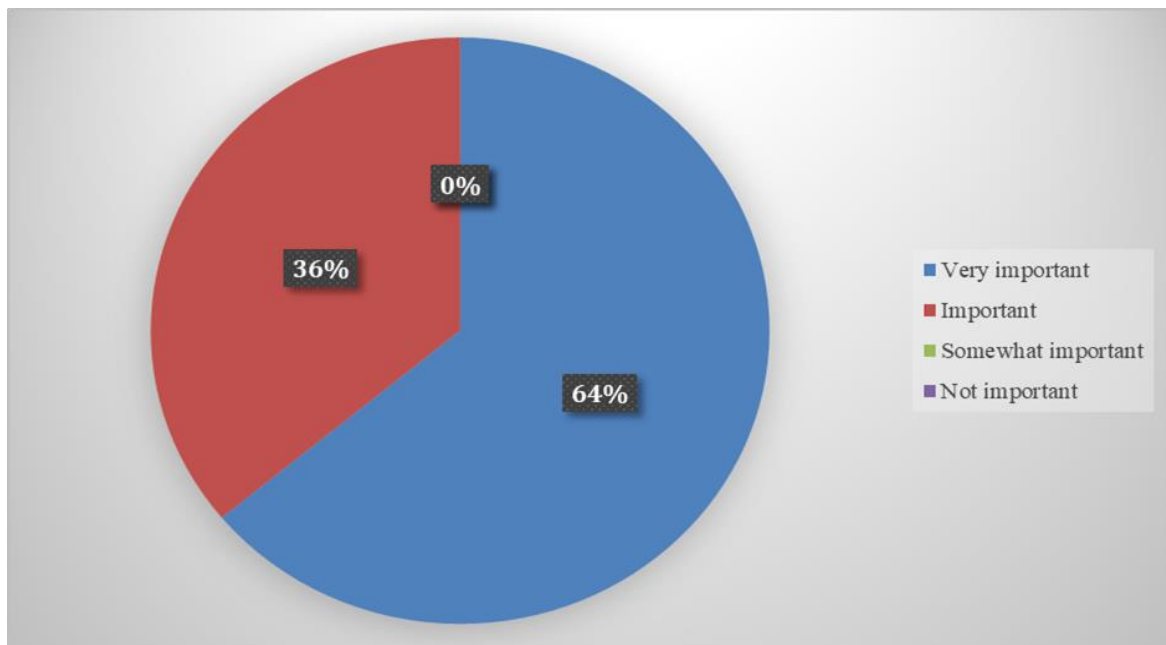
**Chart 1**

*Lecturer beliefs on assessment purpose: To assess ongoing learning progress*



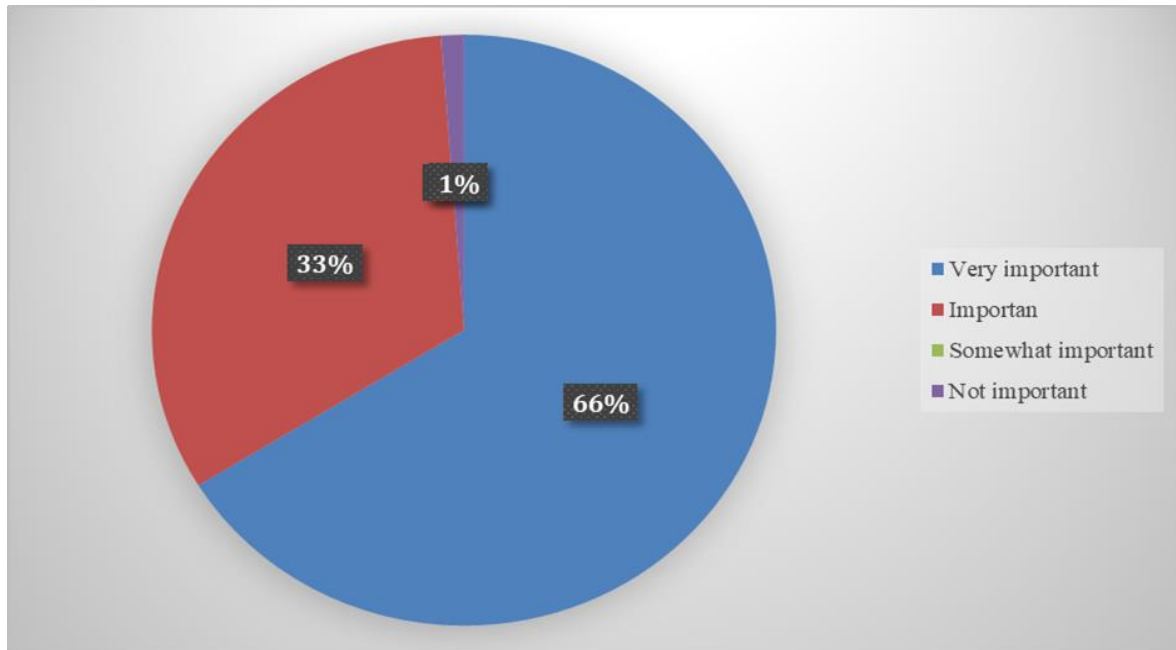
**Chart 2**

*Lecturer beliefs on assessment purpose: To diagnose the difficulties*



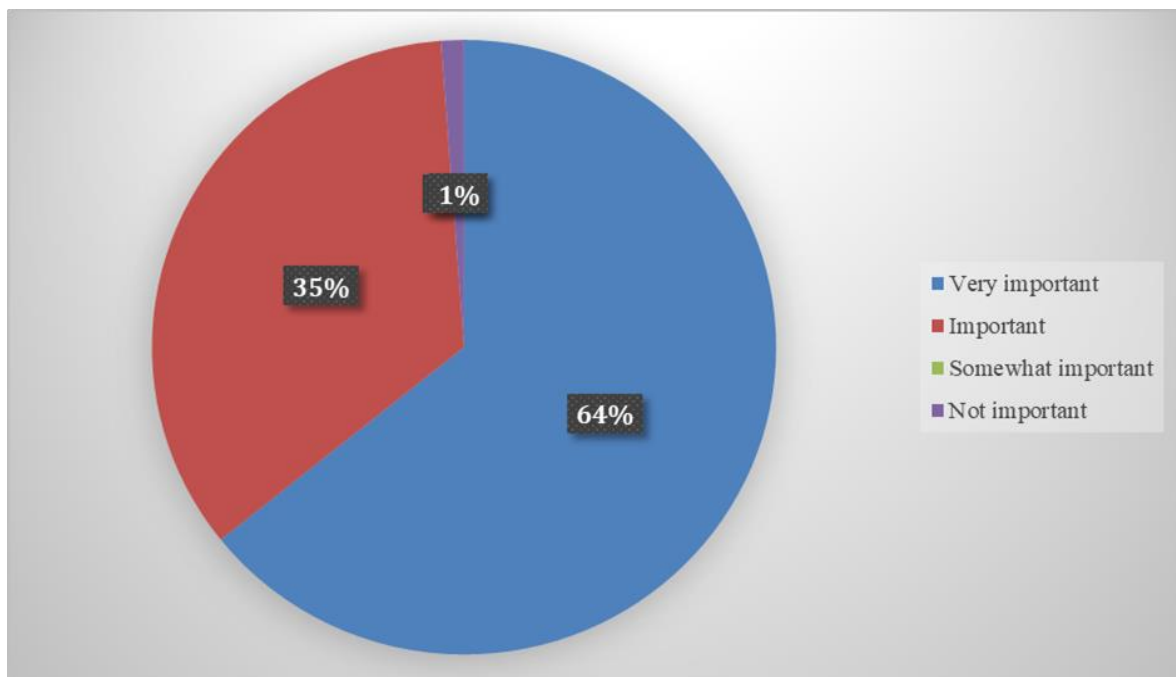
**Chart 3**

*Lecturer beliefs on assessment purpose: To place into a course*



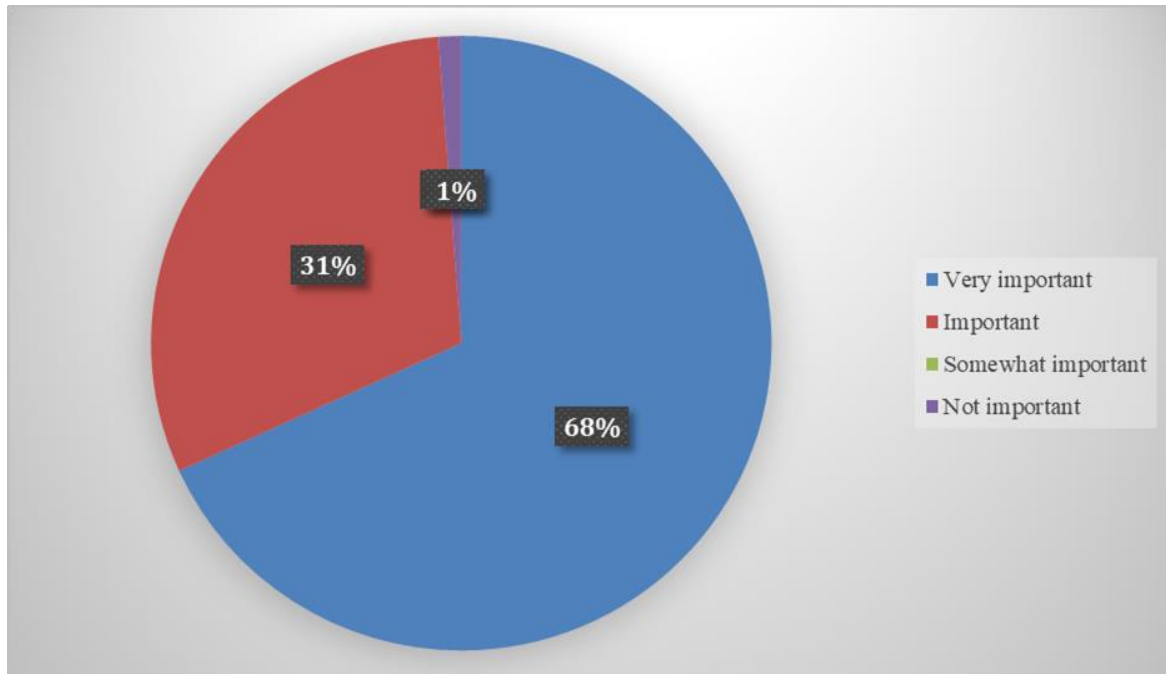
**Chart 4**

*Lecturer beliefs on assessment purpose: To evaluate end-of-course achievement*



**Chart 5**

Lecturer beliefs on assessment purpose: To assign grades



Nine respondents believed that the goal of the evaluation, which is to assign scores, is fundamental (68%), and ten percent said that evaluating grades is essential. Meanwhile, another purpose of assessing ongoing learning progress was assumed as highly important (65%) and significant (35%), to diagnose difficulties, essential (64%) and essential (36%), to place into a course, essential (66%) and essential (34%) and to evaluate end-course achievement were assumed as highly important (65%) and essential (35%). This finding aligns with the interview result in which Lecturer 10 said that he employed assessment to assign scores according to students' performance

*...From my perspective, assessment determines whether or not students comprehend the presented material, assign scores that replicate their*

*performance, and evaluate if my instructional goals have been acquired...*

Similarly, lecturers 7 and 10 mentioned that assessment aims to assign grades to learners. Through the process, the educator can assess areas of their pedagogy that require refinement and determine how much they have met their instructional goals.

*...The assessment's primary goal is to evaluate the learner's learning progress and identify areas for improvement. Through this procedure, it would be possible to assess the degree to which the stated course objectives have been attained. In addition, it would allow for evaluating student achievements and assigning grades commensurate with their demonstrated performance...*

*... assessment is a key part of understanding our students' academic achievement and to which we can rely on their progress in the classroom...*

Individuals with limited teaching experience tend to believe that summative evaluation is the evaluation process's primary goal. The statement pertains to the individual's understanding of assessment, which entails measuring students' academic aptitude or determining their knowledge level. In addition, it is evident from the study that most educators believe assessment can aid in evaluating the achievement of their instructional objectives.

Surprisingly, participants with extensive language teaching experience and training explained the assessment's purpose more elaborately. The 11th lecturer stated that both professors and students could utilize assessment. She saw assessment as reflecting the teachers' attitudes towards their instruction, including the strategies and methods she employed. In addition, students can use assessment results to determine their performance. In this situation, assessment for learning is essential.

Notably, those with extensive teaching experience and training in language instruction provided more elaborate justifications for the evaluation's purpose. Lecturer 4 stated unequivocally that assessment has the potential to serve as a tool for both educators and students. The individual believed that evaluation reflected educators' self-reflection on their pedagogical strategies and classroom techniques. Learners can use the evaluation results to evaluate their academic achievement. The present scenario emphasizes the significance of assessment for learning.

The views of these lecturers corroborate Bartholomaeus's (2010) assertion that evaluating students is essential in aiding instructors to determine the extent to which educational goals have been attained and in allowing instructors to gain insight into the unique qualities of their students. Additionally, the researcher's identified purposes align with assertions regarding assessment, emphasizing the importance of assessing students' unique qualities. However, there is a lack of precise and unambiguous information regarding how educators engage in self-reflection and self-evaluation of their pedagogical practices in light of the assessments they administer. Consequently, this discrepancy presents an opportunity to improve the current research by investigating these facets in future studies.

### ***The Guiding Assessment Principles***

This subject-related information was gathered through interviews. Participants in the study disclosed diverse information. According to Lecturer 7, the assessment principle should be adaptable, realizable, and consistent with the H+1 paradigm. The individual advanced the claim that:

*...The issue's essence is that the evaluation should align with our instructional goals and adhere to the H+1 framework. This suggests that the instructional materials provided to students should be one level more complex than their average academic proficiency...*

Moreover, lecturers 12 asserted that the evaluation administered to students must correspond to the specific skill being taught or meet the validity criteria. In addition, it is

essential to ensure that the evaluation is practical, feasible, and not overly time-consuming. The presenter said:

*...The validity of assessment principles is, in my opinion, of the utmost importance. The evaluation is based on the specific talent that is being taught. In addition, the evaluation is simple to administer...*

*... validity and reliability are central to our test to understand students' academic performance. Both teachers and students are happy when the test is valid and reliable...*

Similarly, lecturer 9 stated:

*...During the assessment procedure, it is essential to consider the condition of the students. The assigned task should be tailored to the individual circumstances and academic proficiency of each student...*

According to the previous data, it is evident that the respondents perceived that the evaluation procedure should consider each student's unique circumstances. It implies that the evaluation must meet the criteria for adaptability and breadth. The evaluation procedure must be objective and transparent. Additionally, the respondents claimed that the task could be created and modified utilizing the available resources, necessitating adherence to the validity and relevance standards.

### ***EFL Lecturers' Assessment Practices***

As evidenced by the questionnaire and interview with EFL lecturers, the study's findings indicate that most participants share similar perspectives on assessment practices. Discernible differences in the use of formative

and summative assessment by educators were evident based on their verbal responses to questionnaires and interviews. The most prevalent form of formative assessment is now quizzes. Regarding summative assessment, most participants agreed that selecting instructional aids depends on the subject matter being taught. As an example, the tenth educator mentioned:

*...Variability in teaching efficacy depends on the particular course and level of expertise imparted. Various talents possess different measurement systems. When teaching speaking, I will evaluate the student's fluency, precision, and other elements. Therefore, I typically evaluate the academic development of my students through oral evaluation...*

In addition, lecturers 1 and 9 elaborated on the instructional materials in her pedagogy. She made the following remark:

*...I evaluate students by administering tests, exams, and grading rubrics. Assessments may consist of multiple-choice evaluations or writing assignments depending on the topic taught...*

*...I assess the students through a series of tests. Before those tests, I make sure that the students understand the scoring rubrics very well...*

Similarly, lecturer 3 expressed her propensity to incorporate tasks into her summative evaluation, although this approach is subject-dependent. For example, the speaker provided a Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) topic in which he employed a mini research project to evaluate his learner's

final academic achievement. Despite its infrequent use, the lecturer also emphasized the significance of oral evaluation as a powerful method for quickly assessing students' comprehension. In addition, lecturer 6 stated that it was common practice to implement projects at the end of the course to increase the student's engagement with and significance of the course material.

*...At the end of the academic year, I prefer to assign homework to my students. It is preferable that the participants in the endeavor feel a greater sense of excitement and significance. As the semester's culminating assignment to develop my curriculum and course material, I instructed the students to develop an English language course curriculum. The students completed their assignments with great zeal and extraordinary skill...*

*... We can evaluate students' performances by giving them a mini project with a prolonged period so that they are prepared to accomplish it well...*

A survey that assesses the proportion of assignments evaluated with the final grade confirms the interview's findings. 82% of the participants calculated the project's final grade as 100%. However, one participant contributed 86% of the project's utilization, while another contributed 60%, which was considered when determining the final grade. In contrast, alternative assessment methods, such as written or comprehensive examinations, oral examinations, in-person and virtual assessments, and class participation, are frequently used to determine final grades. The current study reveals a striking lack of portfolio

use in the assessment practices of the participants. This observation highlights the potential for additional research on the topic.

### Discussion

According to the available evidence regarding their beliefs about assessment, lecturers believe that assessment serves the dual purpose of validating and enhancing learning. The current discovery validated Brown's (2004) research, which found that educators agreed that evaluation enhances pedagogy and scholarship while also imposing accountability on educational institutions. Notable is that most instructors who participated in the study reported using formative evaluation since they maintain that it enhances learners' performance. Despite this, some people continue to use evaluations for educational or evaluative purposes. This finding suggests that participants understand the significance of evaluation for learning instead of assessment of learning. It suggests that EFL lecturers at the State Institute of Islamic Studies Takengon are enthusiastic about using assessment methods to form and improve the student learning experience and teaching condition. The present study validates (Momeni & Nushi, 2022) research conducted in the Iranian context, which revealed that the highest consensus among the four assessment frameworks centered on vision enhancement.

Notably, those who maintain accountability as the primary goal of evaluation are relatively inexperienced in the education field. This finding shows that the duration of a teacher's instructional career affects their evaluation perception. According to (Azis, 2012), teachers' personal experiences may influence their assessment-related attitudes and ideas. Her

examination of numerous articles on the subject revealed this observation.

According to the present study, all participating instructors view assessment as an essential aspect of their professional practice. In comparison, the current finding corresponds with the findings of the (Azis, 2015) mixed-method study, which investigated the assessment comprehension of Indonesian junior high school educators and the relationship between their assessment practices and conceptions. In the context of Indonesian education, it is noteworthy that educators at both the secondary school and Islamic tertiary level of education have divergent perspectives on the perceived insignificance of assessment. The participants in both studies understand the strategic functions of assessment and its use in validating and enhancing students' learning and educators' instruction.

Furthermore, individuals participating in assessment-focused professional development initiatives tend to have broader perspectives and methodologies for evaluating students. This evidence supports the finding of previous research conducted by Azis (Azis, 2012) that participation in a professional development program positively affects the beliefs and perceptions of instructors. The statement proposes the potential effectiveness of instructor professional development programs in enhancing their knowledge of assessment methodologies and their pedagogical practices.

However, the present research's findings do not replicate some previously conducted research findings. Namely, the research conducted by Nazari (2017) showed that instead of focusing on building professionalism

in language assessment, EFL teachers tended to incline the language assessment outlined in the school policy and curriculum. They demanded a more dynamic language assessment by which teachers were given more autonomy in ruling out the personalized assessment that better suited their needs. Meanwhile, in their research, Noori et al. (2017) found that EFL teachers participating in the study favored formative assessment over summative assessment. Their decisions to use specific evaluation procedures were influenced by factors such as university norms and policies, large classes, and time restrictions.

## Conclusion

According to the findings and previous discussion, the researcher has deduced that most participating lecturers use formative assessment techniques because they view it as beneficial to student learning. Nevertheless, a minority of lecturers continue to use assessments for learning or summative purposes. Unexplored in this study is how lecturers can evaluate and quantify their students' learning capacities. Despite the participants' belief that formative assessment is essential for measuring student progress, no designated instrument exists. The scope and implementation of the assessment are constrained by its primary function of assigning grades to students for school accountability (assessment of learning).

A comprehensive investigation into the development of an evaluative instrument tailored to Islamic tertiary education within the English as a Foreign Language context is required to advance academic inquiry. This study aims to increase EFL lecturers' knowledge

of their perspectives on language evaluation and pedagogical methods, thereby facilitating the advancement of their instructional abilities and professional development. Additionally, the current study contributes to the theories of existing literature on implementing assessment in a broader sense and the conceptions and practices of lecturers in the context of Islamic tertiary education. The findings of this study suggest that teacher professional development programs can potentially improve the assessment practices of EFL lecturers, thereby enhancing the state of their instruction and evaluation literacy.

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