Measuring EFL Teachers' Assessment Identity: Development and Validation of a Questionnaire

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Abstract

This paper investigated the quantitative phase of an exploratory sequential mixed methods research. The main purpose of this study was to develop and validate a Teachers' Assessment Identity (TAI) questionnaire based on the dimensions and factors found in the first part of the study. The extracted factors from interviews along with the theoretical framework formed the basis for the generation of the pool of items, which later reduced to 46 items for eventual inclusion in TAI questionnaire. This initial draft of the scale was revised and re-worded based on the comments offered by assessment experts and teachers. The designed questionnaire was then distributed to 384 EFL teachers. Normality and reliability of data were measured using SPSS. Construct validity of the designed scale was assessed through CFA with AMOS 24. The results derived from the statistical analysis indicated that TAI questionnaire had a good model-data fit, and the factor loadings and reliability values were at a satisfactory level. The findings showed that the Teachers' Assessment Identity (TAI) questionnaire contained three dimensions i.e. assessing assessment literacy, dispositions, and contextual factors. This questionnaire could be used as a valid and reliable scale for teachers as assessors.

Keywords: Assessment Identity questionnaire, Development and Validation, Disposition, Iranian EFL Teachers

INTRODUCTION

Assessment could be important to enable instructors to measure the effectiveness of

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their teaching (Popham, 2018). Assessment has an impact on the process of teaching and learning (Baird, 2013; Shepard, 2000; Xu & Brown, 2016). Because of strategic nature of assessment, it has been recognized as a central part of

curricula in almost all educational systems around the world, and as a significant dimension of professionalism (Day, 2002; O'Neill & Adams, 2014). Teachers' competences to perform successful assessment practice and making use of assessment data are fundamentally important in quality assessment (Looney, Cumming, Kleij & Harris, 2017). Nowadays teachers are expected to meet higher expectations to make learning happen. They should be capable of choosing and developing appropriate assessment methods, run and score tests, interpret and report assessment data, evaluate learning and assess and behave ethically (Williams, 2015). Recently emphasis has been on teacher assessment practice in classroom context which gives rise to numerous professional values that include a comprehensive and more extensive range of teacher assessment activities (Wyatt-Smith, Alexander, Fishburn & McMahon, 2017). As new advances emerge in teacher education, teacher education programs should apply effective procedures to enhance teachers' knowledge in instruction and assessment and keep up with advances and research findings to enhance teachers' awareness to face the new challenges (Tavassoli & Farhady, 2018). One pre-requirement in the first place, would be to identify one's present status. In the current multidisciplinary world, the link between identity and success is especially important. As a matter of fact, professional identity is the outcome of relational and social influences within a person's present occupation or organization (Arthur, 2008). One area in which professional identity can have a profound impact is language assessment.

Conceptualizing Teacher Assessment Identity
In the field of Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL), teacher assessment identity (TAI) could be a newly developed term. It was first introduced by Adie (2013), who inspected teachers' assessment process in an online course; she used the term "teacher assessment identity"

to refer to the teachers' views of themselves as assessors. She continues that online teachers were worried about being judged by their colleagues of the way in which they had assessed students' online work. Closely related to the concept is the work of Xu and Brown (2016) who carried out a review of a hundred of investigations on Teacher Assessment Literacy, and developed the framework of Teacher Assessment Literacy in Practice (TALiP). They precisely intended to connect assessment literacy research with the possible effects for teacher education. Three of their reviewed research studies dealt with teachers' identity as assessor in a number of different settings. The conceptual model presented by Xu & Brown (2016) depicted one pyramid containing 6 elements. These elements were knowledge base, teacher conceptions of assessment and emotional connections with assessment. The main core of TALiP is (re)construction "EFL teachers' identity as assessors" (p.158) as the student teachers evolve from inexperienced students to learned assessment professionals who can take on the assessors' role.

Moving Beyond **Assessment** *Literacy*
Although the concept of assessment literacy still continues to be widely used (e.g., Farhady & Tavassoli 2018; Ölmezer-Öztürk & Aydin 2018; Tao, 2014), numerous researchers have stretched the concept of assessment literacy beyond knowledge, and skills. For example, in his investigation of teachers' *conceptions* of assessment Brown (2011), refers to Tompson's (1992) who suggested using the idea of teacher's conceptions as a more general mental structure, encircling teacher's beliefs, preferable theories, propositions, guidelines, psychological conceptions, favorite strategies. Brown maintained that conceptualizations perform as a framework through which a teacher views, interprets, and interacts with the teaching environment. Such conceptions may not be in line with the anticipations of

policy, nor even with classroom practice. As he suggested, teachers have multiple and conflicting conceptions of assessment. Conceptions of assessment focus on teachers' beliefs about assessment. Assessment is known as a sociocultural activity which takes place in social interactions among stakeholders and the nature of learning itself (Elwood, & Murphy, 2015).

Having both assessment literacy and Conceptions of assessment in mind, the theoretical framework of this study is based on TAI presented by Looney, et al. (2017). She contended that "instructors' identity as professionals", conceptions of assessment (COA), their disposition with regard to assessment, and the view they have of their role as assessors are important in their classroom assessment, what she calls TAI.

The notion of quality teaching has been raised as one of the stepping stones and pre-requirement of teachers' identity and professionalism (Tillema, Leenknecht & Segers, 2011). This raises concern among teacher educators and researchers to worry about increasing importance of accountable and professional teachers. One such concern is the identity of teachers in relation to assessment (Looney et al., 2017; Xu & Brown, 2016). Rising professionalization of the field resulted in presenting standards, ethical codes, and guiding principles for effective assessment practice (Taylor, 2017). How teachers interpret the learning situations, or conceive of classroom assessment can seriously impact the way they make assessment decisions and how they act in different situations. (Pishghadam, Adamson, Shaghayegh, & Kan, 2013; Yan, Zhang, & Fan, 2018). The study of TAI is seen important because it has been shown to be related to measures of the quality of student learning. Teachers' conceptions, beliefs, experiences, and feelings are all significant in their assessment work and in their role as assessor, it can be argued that assessment literacy is not sufficient to represent the range and complexity of these dimensions (Jan-nesar, khodabakhshzadeh &

Motallebzadeh , 2020). This reconceptualization of TAI incorporates a range of assessment approaches and skills, and even confidence in different assessment practice. It also includes teachers' beliefs, values and feelings concerning assessment which enlightens how teachers are involved in every day classroom assessment. It emphasizes not merely on what teachers do in their assessment, but also on who they are.

As noted earlier, recent studies concerning AL mostly focused on teachers' perceptions of assessment, the needs and wants of the teachers. (Inbar-Lourie, 2008; Malone, 2013; Lam, 2015; Scarino, 2013) and the most frequent conclusion was that instructors ought to be backed and stimulated to become more proficient in assessment. Some others specifically focused on COA. Only very few empirical studies explored assessment in relation to teacher identity (e.g. Adie, 2014; Cowie, Cooper, & Ussher, 2014; Xu & Brown, 2016). Only one theoretical study on TAI was done by Looney et al. (2017). She maintained that in order to shed light on teachers' assessment practice, its necessary to do more research to understand teachers' Assessment identities, and assessment dispositions. Therefore, there seems to be a gap to attempt and synthesize TAI as a multidimensional construct, followed by the validation of scale with a sample of Iranian EFL teachers. Among the related studies, only one recent study focused on the components of TAI (Jan-nesar, khodabakhshzadeh, Motallebzadeh & Khajavi, 2020). Having interviewed EFL teachers, they presented a new empirical TAI model for Iranian EFL teachers. They concluded that Iranian TAI was found to be a three-dimensional model (consisting of Assessment literacy, Assessment dispositions and contextual factors). To solidify our own understanding of those dimensions and to identify whether the model reflect reality, and also to provide a deeper and more comprehensive knowledge regarding TAI dimensions in language assessment, the researchers tried to

construct a new scale based on the above-mentioned qualitative data and the existing literature. In so doing, the following research questions were proposed:

> *RQ1: Does the newly designed EFL teachers' Assessment Identity scale enjoy validity?*
> *RQ2: Does the scale enjoy reliability?*

REVIEW OF LITERATURE
In educational setting assessment has an important role in the process of teaching and learning (Baird, 2013; Shepard, 2000; Xu & Brown, 2016). As the recent research indicates many teachers are not literate enough, i.e. they don't have the necessary skills to properly assess their students learning progress and arrange for effective and successful instruction (DeLuca, Coombs, MacGregor, & Rasooli, 2019; Pill, & Harding, 2013; Popham, 2011). Given the importance of accountability, and the necessity for decision-making based on assessment data, it goes without saying that inquiry about instructors' skills, COA, beliefs and values, background, feelings and assessment practices is essential if we are going to end up in effective education(Xu & Brown,2016; Looney et al., 2017).

With regard to the three dimensions of TAI in the research (Assessment literacy, disposition and contextual factors), numerous studies have been done around the globe. Among them Assessment literacy has the most numerous recurrences. Nevertheless only a few studies have taken the other factors into account. Below some of the most relevant ones will be reported. Fulcher (2012) developed and validated a scale on teachers' Language Assessment Literacy (LAL). His survey had two significant contributions. It provided new information for the concept of assessment literacy. Moreover, it presented some solutions for methodological problems with existing survey techniques. Tao

(2014) developed and validated a set of scales to measure teachers' classroom assessment literacy and beliefs. The results indicated that each of the scales had satisfactory measurement properties. Findings also showed that the instructors had limited classroom assessment literacy. Ölmezer-Öztürk and Aydin (2018) developed and validated the Language Assessment Knowledge Scale (LAKS) to assess 542 EFL teachers' language assessment knowledge. Their findings showed that the scale had a good model-data fit with the obtained factor loads. Hence, LAKS with four sub-scales was found to be a valid and dependable instrument in evaluating EFL teachers' assessment knowledge. Farhady and Tavassoli (2018) developed, a LAK test focusing on major areas of language assessment. They concluded that contrary to teachers' claims in needs assessment, the majority of them had low levels of LAK and they showed willingness to improve their LAK. Pastore and Andrade (2019) attempted to provide a different model that redefine assessment literate teachers. They presented their model with three dimensions – conceptual, praxeological, and socioemotional intended to support teachers in identifying and developing the knowledge, skills, and dispositions.

There are a number of studies defining language assessment literacy (LAL) in the field of language testing. Based on Tylor (2009) language assessment literacy refers to "the level of familiarity, skills and understanding of assessment rules and practice that is progressively needed by other stakeholders, dependent on the groups requirements and contexts" (p. 24). In the same way. Inbar-Lourie (2017) stated that LAL needs extra competencies i.e. the combination of assessment literacy and language-related skills. Mertler and Campbell (2005) made an Assessment literacy inventory, they found that pre-service teachers in the study did not have the sufficient level of assessment literacy. Looney et al. (2017) in their review article, proposed that the role of the teacher as an assessment practi-

tioner goes beyond what has been previously identified through conceptualizations of assessment literacy and what has been put forward through existing scales. They claim that beside knowledge and confidence, some other factors are also influential in assessment implementation such as teachers' beliefs, teachers' role and type of interactions with students, prior experiences and contextual elements.

In the field of education, Teacher identity is as familiar notion as assessment literacy. Nowadays, Identity has drawn the attention of famous scholars in teacher education as an area with a substantial contribution in students' learning process (Barkhuizen, 2016). Researchers had have a tendency to explore the construct from a multiplicity of perspectives including identity as pedagogy and in relation to students and professional settings (Leavy, McSorley, & Boté, 2007; Morgan, 2004), evolving, social and psychological perspectives (Friesen & Basley, 2013), positioning (Arvaja, 2016), and in response to organizational or political variations in education (Mockler, 2011). To best understand the complexity of teachers' classroom practice, we need to explore teachers' experiences with other stakeholders while he depends on his sociocultural, capitals to manage his classroom. A majority of readings of teacher identity assume a socio-cultural viewpoint, signifying that it is framed and re-framed over a career and mediated by the contexts in which teachers work and live. Most also agree that teacher identity is not stable, but shifts over time as a result of a range of external contextual and internal factors (Beijaard, Meijer, & Verloop, 2004; Mockler, 2011). Identity development is neither simple nor linear: rather it is responsive to events and circumstances (Yan, Zhang, & Fan, 2018). Mockler (2011) groups the events and circumstances under three headings: personal experience; professional context; and external political environment. Personal experience includes influential personal experience of teachers,

teaching and schooling, including, their historical experience in assessment. The professional context identified by Mockler (2011) comprises those factors that shape the classroom work of teachers – curriculum, assessment system, school and organization culture, collegial relationships and experience of reform. In a study done in 2004, Beijaard et al. proposed that teacher identity encompasses a number of sub-identities, and that the emotional dimensions of identity are also of great importance. These proposed that in identity investigations, care must be taken to the notion of emotions and feelings in the school context, but the topic is under-researched. Day et al. (2006) have also stressed that attention paid to emotional factors in the discussion of teacher identity has not been sufficient. In their review of the theme of personal and professional identities, they point to the important tension between the structures within which teachers work and which exert influence on that job, and the teachers' agency, which they labeled as teachers' aptitude to track his or her valued goals.

Unfortunately, only few empirical studies of identity development in relation to language assessment have been carried out. A common deficiency of the language assessment exploration on "identity" is the impression that identities are considered fixed and specifiable, rather than "plural and context sensitive" (Brown & McNamara, 2004, p. 534). Beijaard et al. (2004) considered teacher professional identity as "an ongoing procedure of incorporation of the 'personal' as well as 'professional' dimensions of being and becoming a teacher" (p. 113). Compared to other types of identity, teachers' professional identity, goes through a course of continuous evolution, precisely for the need to adjust to the new requirements and activities of the present-day society. Renee (2018) assumed an important role for teacher professional identity in teachers' effectiveness, maintenance, in teaching and assessment practice in classroom context.

The notion of disposition is closely related to emotional dimensions of teacher identity. The first time the term emerged in educational field was in 1990s. Standards for teaching published in 2001 by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) in the US (NCATE, 2001) defined disposition as "the values, professional ethics and commitments which effect teachers' actions and reactions in relation to all stakeholders. Disposition influence student learning, development and motivation, and also the instructor's professional development" (NCATE, 2001; p. 53). In the present study, disposition is used as an umbrella term to include Codes of Ethics, Beliefs & Attitudes, Emotions & feelings and Experience. Schussler (2006) doesn't believe in detaching dispositions from teachers' understanding and skills in teaching and assessment. Rather, she puts forward a view of dispositions as a point of coming together where the external influences such as the system demands for assessment, curriculum requirements, or school organization meet the teacher's individual internal schemata of beliefs, values, history, and experience. Looney et al. (2017) regarded dispositions as an important constituent of assessment identity, as 'filters' between the external necessities of assessment work in classroom and in the education system, and the beliefs and values believed by teachers about student learning. Mpofu and Nthontho (2017) explored the necessary dispositions that pre-service teachers require to be called effective teachers. In so doing, adopting a qualitative approach, 5 articles concentrating on teaching dispositions were selected. They used Inductive thematic analysis to analyze the results. The findings showed that in order to become effective practitioners, pre-service teachers needed learner-related, self-related, & profession-related dispositions. Thus, they recommend that any teacher preparation program must include dispositional qualities in their curriculum. One aspect of disposition which is partly focused in this study and is of great interest of EFL teachers around the

world is ethical considerations with respect to assessment. Vladi (2015) in a part of his study inspected ethics in language testing. Generally speaking, he presented a clear picture of theoretical foundation of language testing, but particularly he noticed how social context is connected with the development of communicative language testing. Farhady (1999) in his study, mentioned the uses and misuses of language tests that may cause prejudicated decisions, which in turn, may highlight the notion of ethics in language testing. In the same way, he examined the notions of ethical and unethical functions of test results within various sociopolitical contexts. Finally, he stated some recommendations and instructions for fair implementations of language tests. Speaking of ethics, Malta Council for the Teaching Profession (2012) devised a specific Code of Ethics and Practice for teachers. Its important assumptions are keep faith in teaching profession, keep being in contact with students, recognize learners' distinctiveness and diversity, keep on Collaborative practice with all significant others, peers, parents and carers, be Honest and Truthful, and strive to update your professional knowledge. Kafi, Motallebzadeh & Ashraf (2017) reviewed the literature and samples of codes of ethics. They utilized the gathered codes to design an instrument for the instructors' understanding and commitment to professional ethics. They finally arrived at 4 components (commitment to profession, learners, society and organization).

METHODS
Participants
The participants of the study included 384 EFL teachers working at high-schools (private and public) in different parts of Iran using Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample size table. It was decided that the population was indefinite. Consequently, a total of 348 teachers through availability sampling was considered as the participants of this study.

The scale was arranged in an online format and sent to almost all provinces of Iran. After

two months period, the total number of EFL teachers who carefully filled out the scale was 348. In fact, 227 males (59.1%), and 157 females (40.9%) participated in this study. They taught at different contexts: 197 public (51.3%), 25 private (6.5%), 157 both public and private (40.9), and 5 university (1.3%). Teachers had different ranges of teaching experience: 50 (5-10), 47 (11-15), 111 (16-20), and 176 above 20 years. In addition, they were in different age ranges: 35 (20-30), 148 (31-40), 176 (41-50) and 25 (above 50. Moreover, participants had different degrees: 123 BA (32%), 150 MA (39.1%), and 111 PhD (28.9%).

Instrumentation

Teachers' assessment identity questionnaire is an authenticated and dependable questionnaire developed and validated in this study by the present study researchers. The scale includes three dimensions: Assessment literacy (13 items), contextual factors (10 items), and dispositions (26 items). The items were measured on a five-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, and 5 = *strongly agree*).

Procedure and Data Analysis

The data of the current survey was collected during 2019–2020 academic year. The design was exploratory with two-phases. Based on this design, first part of the study, qualitative phase, was done by (Jan-nesar, et al, 2020). They interviewed 26 Iranian EFL teachers to find out the dimensions and factors affecting teachers' assessment identity. All collected interviews were carefully transcribed and meticulously read. This process was particularly helpful in finding the underlying dimensions of the questionnaire. The extracted factors from interviews along with the theoretical framework presented by Looney et al., (2017) formed the basis for the generation of a pool of 80 items which later were reduced to 46 as the candidates for eventual inclusion in the questionnaire. These items were based on a 5-

point Likert scale and asked the EFL teachers to report the extent to which each item applied to them. This initial draft of the scale was revised and re-worded based on the experts and teachers' comments. the researchers asked 10 assessment experts to check out the items to establish content validity. They reviewed the dimensions, and the related items and gave comments on each item. The relevance of each dimension to the corresponding items, the possible modifications and omissions were noted. Experts also made some comments on the wording of the statements. Finally, experts' comments were applied and the early draft of the structured questionnaire was designed.

For the purpose of piloting and ensuring that potential respondents would realize each item clearly, the designed questionnaire was distributed among 30 EFL instructors. In order to avoid any probable ambiguities concerning the designed questionnaire, the researchers tried to provide teacher participants with few explanations about the main objective of the study. Having filled the scale, an interview was made on how teachers perceived each individual item. They were asked to criticize item wording, simplicity of the statements and rational grouping and organization of the items. Based on the analysis of piloting data, a number of items were modified.

The final version of the questionnaire was a 5-point Likert type scale starting with strongly disagree to strongly agree. The scale includes three dimensions: Assessment literacy, contextual factors, and dispositions. For validating procedure, reliability of this scale was obtained through Cronbach's alpha and its validity was measured by running CFA through Structural Equation Modeling approach. Validation procedure resulted in eliminating three items. Finally, after the reliability and validity were verified, the last draft of the questionnaire with 46 items turned out as TAI questionnaire. Next, the TAI questionnaire was distributed among the target

EFL teachers. The process of quantitative data collection lasted about six months and at the end of this period, 384 questionnaires which were correctly responded were gathered and considered as the core data of the current study. Finally, the collected data were entered into SPSS Version 24 software. Normality and reliability of data were checked using SPSS. Then, construct validity of the designed scale, was assessed through Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) with AMOS 24.

Study Design

As stated earlier, this paper investigated the second phase of an exploratory sequential mixed methods research. Researchers of this study started with qualitative data and on the second phase the collected information were used to do the follow-up quantitative phase to verify the data gathered in the former stage.

RESULTS

Firstly, to check out the normality of the collected data, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was used. Table 1 illustrates the results of the normality test.

Table 1.
Results of the Normality Test

	Statistic	df	Sig.
Assessment Literacy	.605	384	.079
Contextual Factors	.794	384	.058
Dispositions	.615	384	.071

Results of normality test demonstrated that the data is normally distributed across all the variables.

Table 2 presents descriptive statistics of dimensions of the TAI questionnaire, including the mean, standard deviation, maximum and minimum scores. Because the number of items was different in the various subscales of the TAI questionnaire, an average item score was computed for each dimension, ranging from 1 to 5 in the last column.

Table 2.
Descriptive Statistics of dimensions of the TAI Questionnaire

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean per item
Assessment Literacy	384	32.00	65.00	51.75	8.16	3.98
Contextual Factors	384	23.00	50.00	36.88	5.60	3.68
Dispositions	384	72.00	111.00	92.70	8.45	3.83
Overall	384	143.00	219.00	188.33	17.40	3.84

As it can be seen in Table 2, among three dimensions of teachers' Assessment Identity, assessment literacy was found to have the maximum mean score (3.98) and contextual factors has the minimum mean score (3.68).

In order to examine the validity of designed the TAI Questionnaire, Confirmatory Factor Analysis was used. According to the findings of the CFA analysis, the association between each dimension of the anticipated model was investigated. Figure number 1 displays the resultant model of the CFA.
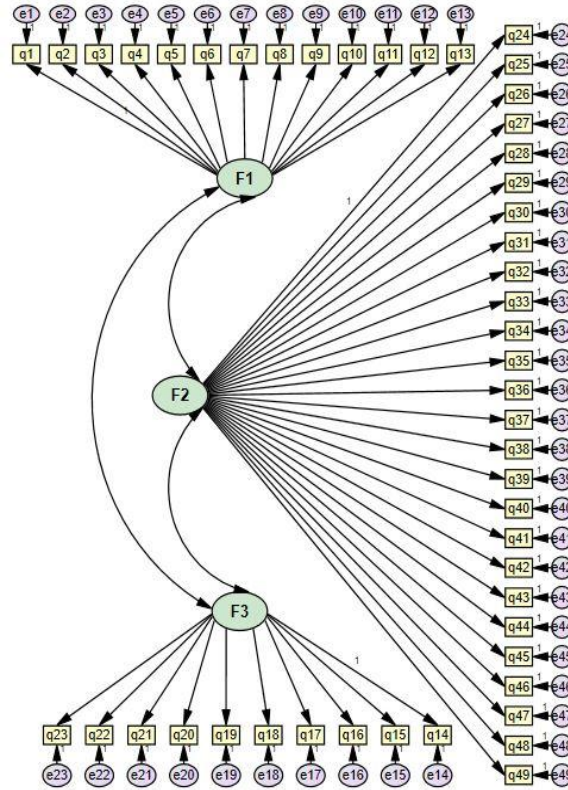
Figure 1 The proposed model of CFA

As the proposed model illustrates, the designed questionnaire includes three main sub-components: (F1) Assessment Literacy, (F2) Dispositions, and (F3) Contextual Factors.

To check the model fit, goodness of fit indices were used. Goodness of fit indices can be seen in Table 3. In this study, χ^2/df, GFI, CFI, and RMSEA were used. To have a fit model, χ^2/df should be less than 3, GFI and TLI should be above .90, and RMSEA should be less than .08.

Table 3.
Goodness of Fit Indices

	X2/df	GFI	CFI	RMSEA
Acceptable fit	<3	>.90	>.90	<.08
Model 1	2.97	.89	.88	.07
Revised Model	3.02	.91	.90	.07

As Table 3 shows, the goodness of fit indices is not within the acceptable range. Because some measurement models did not show adequacy to the data, the researcher made some modifications on the model. These modifications included the removal of three items of dispositions (q30, q37, q41) due to low loadings. Based on the results, all the goodness of fit indices is within the acceptable range. Therefore, the questionnaire enjoyed acceptable validity after modification. The CFA model with all factor loadings after modification can be seen in Figure 2.
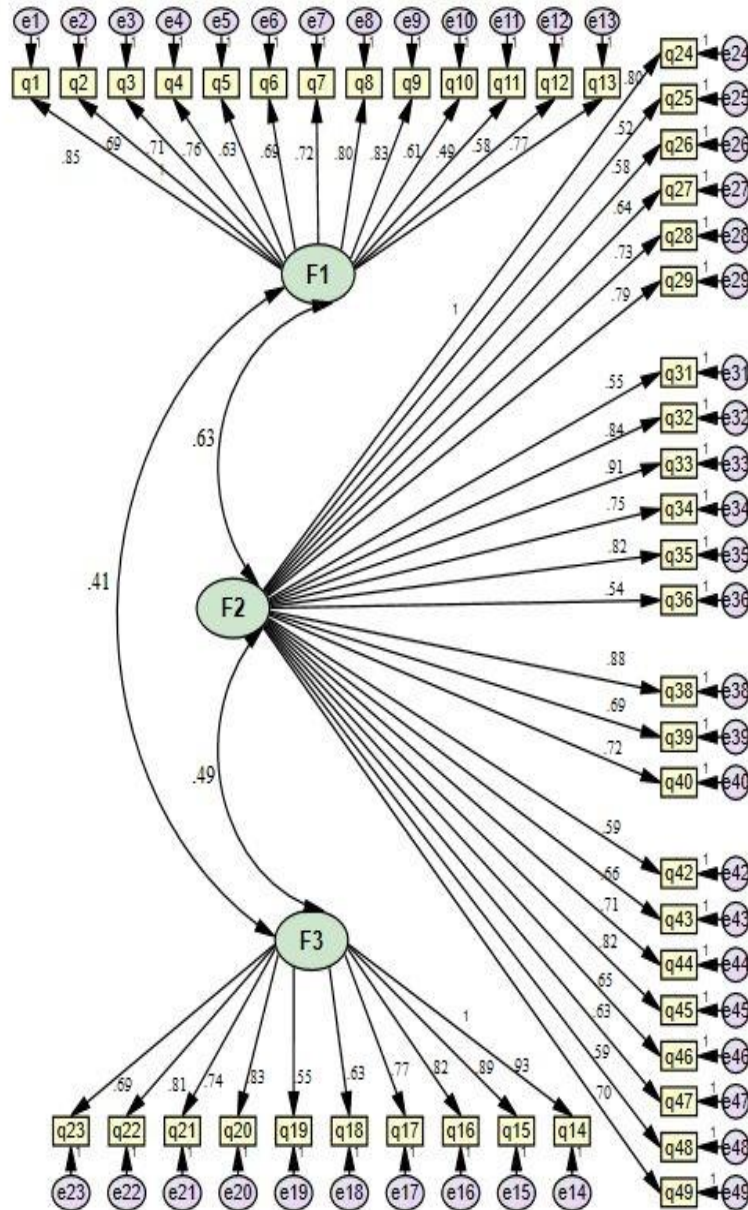
Figure 2 The CFA model with all factor loadings after modification
Note: (F1) Assessment Literacy, (F2) Dispositions, and (F3) Contextual Factors

As Figure 2 illustrates, TAI Questionnaire has three dimensions. Assessment Literacy (F1) is correlated positively and significantly with Dispositions (F2) (B=.63, p<.05), and with Contextual Factors (F3) (B=.63, p<.05). Moreover, there is a positive significant correlation between Dispositions (F2) and Contextual Factors (F3) (B=.49, p<.05).

Table 4 shows the loadings of each dimensions of the scale in CFA model.

Table 4
The Loadings of Each dimensions of the Scale in CFA Model

Subscales	Number of items	Items Number	Loading
Assessment Literacy	13	Q1	.85
		Q2	.69
		Q3	.71
		Q4	.76
		Q5	.63
		Q6	.69
		Q7	.72
		Q8	.80
		Q9	.83
		Q10	.61
		Q11	.49
		Q12	.58
		Q13	.77
Contextual Factors	10	Q14	.93
		Q15	.89
		Q16	.82
		Q17	.77
		Q18	.63
		Q19	.55
		Q20	.83
		Q21	.74
		Q22	.81
		Q23	.69
Dispositions	20	Q24	.80
		Q25	.52
		Q26	.58
		Q27	.64
		Q28	.73
		Q29	.79
		Q31	.55
		Q32	.84
		Q33	.91
		Q34	.75
		Q35	.82
		Q36	.54
		Q38	.88
		Q39	.69
		Q40	.72
		Q42	.59
		Q43	.66
		Q44	.71
		Q45	.82
		Q46	.65
		Q47	.63
		Q48	.59
		Q49	.70

As the table shows, among 49 items of the questionnaire, 46 items remained. Among 13 items of Assessment Literacy, item 1 has the highest loading (.85) and item 11 has the lowest loading (.49). Loadings of the Contextual Factors, with 10 items ranges from.55 to.93. Item 14 has the highest loading and item 19 has the lowest loading. Finally, loadings of the Dispositions, with 23 items ranges from.52 to.88. Item no 38 has the maximum loading, but item 25 has the lowermost loading.

Table 5 provides information concerning the internal consistency of the three dimensions of the questionnaire.

Table 5.
Cronbach Alpha Indexes

Scale	Subscales	Number of items	Cronbach alpha
	Assessment Literacy	13	.866
	Contextual Factors	10	.651
TAI	Dispositions	23	.789
	Overall	46	.873

As it can be seen, the designed questionnaire gained acceptable indexes of Cronbach alpha as a whole as well as in its dimensions: Assessment Literacy (.86), Contextual Factors (.65), and Dispositions (.78). This table also indicates that the reliability of the overall TAI questionnaire is.873 which suggests very good reliability for the scale with this sample. Therefore, the proposed model in qualitative phase (Jan-nesar et al., 2020) is approved.

DISCUSSIONS
The researchers noticed, according to the literature, that numerous studies focused on the needs and perceptions of language instructors regarding testing and assessment (Inbar-Lourie 2008; Lam, 2015; Malone 2013; Scarino, 2013) and the most frequent conclusion was that instructors ought to be assisted and stimulated to learn more and get proficient enough in assessment. But this study tried to look at the issue of assessment from a different perspective, that is the identity of teacher as assessor. As mentioned before, the research question of the present study aimed to validate TAI questionnaire in Iranian EFL context. Following a thorough and in-depth review of the related literature specifically in continuation of the study done by Jannesar et al. (2020) the current research developed and validated a unique questionnaire to assess assessment identity of teachers. After a tough validation process comprising gathering the opinion of EFL teachers and assessment experts regarding assessment identity questionnaire, the questionnaire was administered to 384 Iranian EFL teachers. The results derived from the statistical analysis in the validation stage of the study indicated that the designed TAI questionnaire had a good model-data fit, moreover, both factor loadings and reliability indexes were found to be at an acceptable level. This demonstrated that the developed items and the conceptualization of TAI in Iranian EFL contexts were meaningful to the EFL teachers in Iran. In its final version, TAI questionnaire was developed as a 46-item scale consisting of three dimensions; assessing Assessment literacy, contextual factors, and dispositions. The descriptive statistics for TAI factors show that participants have good levels of assessment literacy and it has the highest effect on Iranian EFL teachers' TAI. whereas contextual factors were found to have the least effect on TAI. Dispositions were in the middle. The same results were found by Jannesar et al. (2020).

The significance of AL is natural. Numerous studies explained the importance of assessment literacy. Mertler (2002) and Popham (2006), viewed assessment literacy as a main link in the association between assessment quality and student achievement. Instructors require to have an adequate level of assessment literacy to be successful in their assessment practice. The findings of the first dimension are in line with Farhady & Tavassoli's(2018) and Tao's (2014) studies which stated that assessment literacy is important because it assists teachers to perceive, analyze and utilize data on student performance to enhance the quality of teaching. The results are also in line with Xu and Brown's (2016) conceptual framework of TALiP which emphasized on the teachers' knowledge base, teacher conceptions of assessment and emotional connections with assessment. They stressed that as an assessor, a teacher should have knowledge of assessment purposes, content, and methods. Educators need to know the purpose of their assessment (i.e., formative, summative). The findings also approve of those studies which focused on teachers' dispositions (Cummins & Asempapa, 2013; Mpofu & Nthontho, 2017). But this dimension was a bit different in the present study. Disposition in this study includes many factors like assessment (ethics, fairness, beliefs, emotions& feelings and experiences). Having this dimension in mind, the results are more in line with the theoretical model of Looney et al. (2017) and the proposed model of Jan-nesar et al. (2020). teacher candidates' assessment dispositions must be expounded, conversed, and restructured if necessary. seemingly, formation of new assessment procedures and its implementation demands a serious and expressive reference to the conceptions underlying these actions.

With regard to the contextual factors, the dimension includes both macro and micro contextual factors. The professional context was once referred to by Mockler (2011). To him professional context comprises those factors that shape the classroom work of teachers – curriculum, assessment system, school climate culture and or-

ganization, collegial relationships and experience of reform. The findings of this dimension are consistent with those of Salinas' (2017) study which revealed that both macro and micro contextual factors have influenced the construction of EFL instructors' identity. The results of this study also confirm Borg's (2003) findings, suggesting that factors like, contextual factors, professional coursework, and classroom practices all impact teachers' assessment identity. In line with the findings of the present study, Xu and Brown (2016) found similar findings. They stated that in spite of the decisive function of teacher attitudes toward assessment, assessors are not allowed to do whatever they theorize in real practice since they are employed in a workplace community and larger social, political, and cultural settings which has its own particularities. The context imposes limitations on instructors' assessment practices in terms of what they need to do and what they have to refrain from doing (Salinas, 2017).

CONCLUSION

By considering the existing scales on EFL teachers' assessment, it is evident that the scales developed in the earlier related literature primarily focused specifically on assessment literacy (Campbell, Murphy, & Holt, 2002; Malone, 2013; Mertler & Campbell, 2005; Pill, & Harding, 2013; Taylor, 2017), assessment knowledge (Farhady & Tavassoli, 2018; Ölmezer-Öztürk & Aydin, 2018), and assessment perception (Tao, 2014; Vogt & Tsagari, 2014). In view of the scarcity of research concentrating on TAI and the necessity for the existence of such an instrument to measure TAI, as one of the requirements of finding quality assessors, this study aimed to develop TAI scale. The current research developed and validated a unique questionnaire to assess assessment identity of teachers. The ratings obtained by the English language teachers in the validation stage showed that the developed items and the conceptualization of TAI in Iranian contexts had been meaningful to EFL teachers and indicative of their concern for assessment. So, it

can be concluded that the scale could be used as a valid and reliable instrument to measure EFL teachers' assessment identity and find out which teachers are better assessors.

Such Context-sensitive assessment scales, like TAI developed for the present study, are even more effective, expressive, and real-world. TAI offers EFL teachers, student teachers and teacher trainers with an efficient, eloquent tool to measure the underlying elements which possibly make a contribution to teacher professional assessment practice. It depicts a more distinct image of teacher identity particularly in the area of assessment and provides a more operative means of giving feedback on the quality level of teachers. This scale is also applicable for planning remedial training programs, planning new workshops and making critical changes in academic or educational guidelines which could, in turn, result in a more complete teacher education programs and development of more qualified assessors in general. It goes without saying that, further research can without doubt lead to enhancements in the current scale and possibly shed light on some latent aspects of TAI.

Miller (2009) proposes four central areas related to teacher identity that could be examined in teacher education and professional development:

1. caring for the nature of identity,
2. recognizing the intricacy and significance of the context,
3. caring for teachers' critical reflection, particularly 'critical social reflection,
4. Identity and pedagogy, particularly, connected to the identities of the students

Regarding the importance of teacher assessment identity in the process of becoming a quality teacher and assessor, research on how preservice English teachers develop across the globe becomes important in understanding how different contexts shape the identity of prospective teachers. This study, in turn, can offer insights to teacher trainers in training more qualified assessors in future (Izadinia, 2013; Olsen, 2008). Assessors who are more knowledgeable, have an ideal assessment dispositions, i.e, take into account the ethical considerations regarding assessment (fairness, respect, honesty, confidentiality, etc.) and take account of their students' feelings. Think positively though they might have had terrible experiences and also try to put up with all restrictive contextual factors.

A further contribution is the endeavor to help curriculum development specialists and national and even international policy-makers who design teacher-training policies. As stated earlier, in the field of assessment little attention has been paid to teachers' assessment dispositions (i.e ethics in assessment, teachers' beliefs, feelings and experiences), contextual factors and their resultant effects on the upcoming teachers assessment identity. The present study provides a model of TAI which could be utilized as a framework to fill this gap for the improvement of teacher education programs and their design and implementation. In so doing, the required material (theoretical and practical) can be included in teacher-training and also in in-service programs. It is hoped that the presentation of this model will also be a contribution to the literature on how to improve assessors' practice in conducting more successful assessment. The scale can serve as an evaluative tool to measure the level of teachers' assessment identity in the EFL educational context of Iran.

The study sample was limited to Iranian EFL participants. It is a preliminary step toward TAI. Supplementary research seems necessary to make it more inclusive and generalizable. In so doing, it can be done in other EFL contexts (language institutes and universities) and even on other fields of education. Also, having triangulation in mind, researchers can benefit from other ways of data gathering like observation, think aloud procedures, etc. The result may surely be interesting and possibly different like the studies by (Lam, 2019; Smith et al., 2014). The present researchers had limited time, other researchers can include intervention, workshops, in-service training and compare the results.

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