

Original Research

The Relationship Between Teaching Style and Assessment Methods Employed by Iraqi High School EFL Teachers

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Abstract

The researchers in the current mixed-methods study sought to identify the relationship between the teaching styles of Iraqi high school EFL teachers and their application of assessment methods. In doing so, the teachers' perceptions regarding the relationship between these two constructs were also explored. To conduct the research, 120 Iraqi EFL teachers (both male and female) were initially selected from several high schools in Iraq. In the quantitative phase, data were collected by administering two questionnaires: Grasha's (1996) Teaching Styles Inventory (TSI) and a researcher-developed Assessment Methods Scale (AMS). A follow-up interview was also performed to consolidate the findings gained in the quantitative phase. As the findings depicted, significant correlations existed between the whole TSI as well as its subcomponents, on the one hand, and assessment methods, on the other. However, only the expert teaching style was singled out as a strong predictor of teachers' assessment methods. Moreover, qualitative findings revealed five key themes from participants' interviews concerning the relationship between teaching styles and assessment methods. These themes included interconnectedness, dependability, differentiation, novelty, innovation, the need for training, and the need for gaining feedback from learners. The findings offer valuable implications for teachers, teacher trainers, school administrators, and policymakers in the Iraqi high school context.

Keywords: AMS, Assessment methods, High school, Iraqi EFL teachers, Teaching styles, TSI

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1. Introduction

The use of appropriate teaching styles in varied language learning contexts is an issue of great concern for teachers in different settings (Díaz Larenas et al. 2011), and it behooves the teachers to try to link their teaching styles and instructional techniques to the needs of diverse learners in multifarious educational contexts (Megasari et al. 2021). In other words, there must be an accord between the teachers' adopted teaching styles and the learners' needs, learning styles, and personality traits in disparate learning environments (e.g., Kartal & Başol, 2019). However, as Sheila et al. (2021) argue, the problem is that the majority of teachers are unaware of the wide-ranging assortment of teaching styles available. Moreover, in cases where they are familiar with such teaching styles, they find it a significant challenge to successfully adapt their adopted styles to the diverse learner needs and preferences in different learning contexts. Another potential problem may be the learners' expectations and the dominant philosophies of education in different learning contexts, which can render the implementation of certain teaching styles impracticable or even unfeasible (e.g., Schweisfurth, 2013).

Due to its multifaceted nature (e.g., Baleghizadeh & Shakouri, 2019), a teacher's teaching style profile can be shaped by a multitude of individual, task-related, and context-specific factors. For instance, among the demographic factors that might influence teachers' preferences for varied teaching styles, reference can be made to the role of variables such as gender (e.g., Amini et al., 2012; Karimvand, 2011) and educational background (e.g., Brew, 2002). It's also evident that the teaching styles chosen by teachers may differ based on the materials and task types they use, as well as the various learning environments in which they teach (e.g., Moradi & Alavinia, 2020; Moradi & Alavinia, 2025; Schweisfurth, 2013).

It is also worth noting that the teaching styles employed by teachers may influence their approaches to learning assessment. Not only do teachers' styles of teaching provide insights into how they tend to assess their learners' performance, but the teachers' perspectives on the most efficient methods of assessment may also inform their preferred and practiced styles and methods of teaching. Thus, it is believed that the relationship between teaching styles and assessment methods is a reciprocal one, with both influencing and being influenced by one another. The interplay between teaching styles and assessment methods is verified by various researchers (e.g., Giraldo, 2018; Scarino, 2013). In view of

the significance of using proper teaching styles for bringing about further learning achievement, and the paramount need for creating a cogent bond between the teaching styles and assessment methods, the researchers in the current study decided to investigate the way Iraqi high school EFL teachers' teaching styles were related to their employed assessment methods. Another principal incentive that drove the researchers to conduct the present research was the scarcity of research regarding the linkages between teachers' styles of teaching and their assessment methods.

2. Literature Review

Although factors contributing to learning success and enhanced educational outcomes are numerous, a teacher's classroom conduct, knowledge, resourcefulness, and employed teaching styles play a prominent role in motivating learners and pushing them toward improved educational achievements. Though defined in distinct ways by different researchers, teaching styles are characterized by Heydarnejad et al. as the "teachers' personal qualities and attitudes in teaching, which are reflected through the use of teaching techniques, activities, and approaches in teaching specific subjects in the classroom" (as cited in Sim & Mohd Matore, 2022, p. 3).

A brief glimpse through the previous literature on the topic reveals that the most significant headway in the field of teaching styles was made in the 1990s, out of the attempts made by a cohort of distinguished researchers, including Dunn and Dunn (1993a, 1993b), Quirk (1994), Lowman (1995), Woods (1995), and Grasha (1996), among others. Dunn and Dunn (1993), for instance, proposed a model that attempted to link teaching styles to learners' learning style preferences. Quirk (1994) introduced a model composed of four categories: suggestive, assertive, facilitative, and collaborative teaching styles. In the model formulated by Lowman (1995), two dominant teaching styles were introduced, one based on intellectual excitement and the other involving interpersonal rapport. Moreover, Woods (1995) referred to three separate teaching styles: teacher-centered, student-centered, and discipline-centered. Finally, Grasha's (1996) model appears to be the most comprehensive, comprising five major style types: expert, formal authority, personal model, facilitator, and delegator. Although the advent of the 21st century was also marked by some advancements in the field of teaching styles, these later investigations were targeted at expanding the previously established models. Cooper (2001), for example, declared that teachers' teaching styles were rooted in their personality.

Teaching styles have been probed in relation to a wide of range of factors, including demographic variables like gender (e.g., Amini et al. 2012; Baradaran, 2016; Brew, 2002; Karimvand, 2011), individual traits such as teacher autonomy (e.g., Baradaran, 2016; Fadaee et al. 2021; Usop et al. 2013), personality types (e.g., Cooper, 2001; Zhang, 2007), self-efficacy (e.g., Dilekli & Tezci, 2016; Heidari et al. 2021), emotional intelligence (EI) (e.g., Baleghizadeh & Shakouri, 2019), and learning-related issues, including classroom management (e.g., Rahimi & Asadollahi, 2012a), and learning success (e.g. Baradaran, 2016; Rosalia, 2017).

Moreover, several other researchers have been interested in presenting various typologies of teaching styles within different learning communities. Research falling within this category includes the investigation done by Mazloom and Hussain (2020) in the Pakistani context, which probed into the dominant teaching styles employed by English teachers in the secondary school context, and concluded that the expert style was more predominantly opted for by the teachers, while the facilitator style was the least frequently utilized teaching style. In much the same way, Sim and Mohd Matore (2022) were interested in pinpointing the overriding teaching styles employed by math teachers in Malaysian primary schools. Running a survey-based study, they administered Grasha–Riechmann’s Teaching Styles questionnaire to 97 mathematics teachers. Based on the findings of their scrutiny, it was revealed that the personal model style was the most frequently used teaching style, whereas the facilitator style was characterized as the one with the lowest frequency of occurrence. Nevertheless, regarding the correlation between teaching styles and teachers’ experience, an inferior yet significant relationship was reported to exist between teaching styles and teachers’ seniority.

Within the framework of investigating different categories of teaching styles, either preferred or practiced by teachers in various learning contexts, another major sub-branch of studies has focused on the degree of control, guidance, and teacher- or learner-centeredness pursued by individuals with varied teaching styles. In this regard, Kassaian and Ayatollahi (2010) tried to unravel the extent to which teachers and learners expect control and guidance in the teaching/learning process. Selecting a sample of 306 students and 36 professors in the academic context, they proceeded to gather data using a survey questionnaire adapted from Grasha (2007). Their results indicated a divergent pattern between the students and professors regarding the degree of guidance preferred by each

group. More specifically, while instructors showed a greater proclivity for the styles with differing levels of guidance and control, based on the distinct courses being taught, the participating students revealed a higher inclination toward the styles requiring a moderate degree of guidance provided by the instructors. Similarly, the scrutiny carried out by Yoshida et al. (2024) focused on Japanese teachers' use of different teaching styles in terms of the degree of control and teacher-learner centeredness required by the styles. Conducting the study in the nursing faculty, they selected a sample of 1261 participants and gathered data using the Teaching Style Assessment Scale. Their study ultimately identified instructors' preferences for implementing a variety of teaching styles, some of which were teacher-fronted and others more learner-centered.

Additionally, regarding the relationship between teacher characteristics and adopted teaching styles, reference can be made to the studies conducted by Zhang (2007), Dilekli and Tezci (2016), and Baleghizadeh and Shakouri (2019). Zhang (2007) investigated the role of teachers' job stress, as a personality trait and context-relevant feature, in shaping the teaching styles used by instructors. In doing so, she administered a battery of questionnaires to 144 professors in the Chinese higher education system. The results substantiated a significant predictive power as regards the effect of job-related stress on instructors' teaching styles. In the investigation conducted by Dilekli and Tezci (2016), the association between teachers' self-efficacy and teaching styles was examined in light of the teachers' diverse thinking styles. A total of 1,003 teachers from the Turkish context were recruited for the study, and data were gathered using a set of questionnaires administered to them. As the findings revealed, significant relationships existed between the teachers' self-efficacy and their teaching and thinking styles. Finally, the study by Baleghizadeh and Shakouri (2019) aimed to investigate the relationship between teachers' emotional intelligence and their teaching styles. However, studies on emotional intelligence have attempted to relate this important construct to various aspects of the teaching and learning process (e.g., Alavinia & Behyar, 2012; Alavinia & Ebrahimpour, 2012; Alavinia et al. 2012; Alavinia & Agha Alikhani, 2014). Research on the linkages between EI and teaching styles, however, appears to be quite scarce. In their study, Baleghizadeh and Shakouri (2019) conducted a survey analysis based on questionnaire administration to a group of 102 English language instructors in a university context. Their obtained results pointed

towards a significant degree of correlation between the instructors' emotional intelligence and their preferred/practiced teaching styles.

Furthermore, in regard to the pursuit of proper assessment methods in compliance with teachers' employed teaching styles, and amidst the endeavors to find appropriate linkages between these teaching styles and assessment methods, a number of researchers have embarked on probes delving into the relationship between these two variables. As a case in point, Abdullah et al. (2024) examined the interrelationships between instructors' teaching strategies and assessment methods, and attempted to relate them to students' learning styles. By this means, they aimed to investigate the impact of linking instructors' teaching techniques, assessment methods, and students' learning styles on the level of student engagement. Their research was conducted in an academic context with 100 college students, and the primary means of data collection used in their study was interviews. The findings demonstrated the seminal role of coordinating teaching strategies, assessment methods, and learning styles in attaining heightened levels of student engagement.

As the review of literature presented in this section has helped disclose, several researchers have expressed concern about the importance of awareness of teaching styles in different learning contexts, as well as the factors that either influence the choice of varied teaching styles or are connected to them in one way or another. However, regarding the relationships between teaching styles and assessment methods, very little research has been conducted. Thus, informed by this dearth of research in this area, and in an attempt to bridge the gap, the current researchers strove to find lucid answers to the following research questions:

1. Is there a significant relationship between Iraqi high school EFL teachers' use of teaching styles and assessment methods?
2. What are the attitudes of Iraqi high school EFL teachers concerning the relationship between teaching styles and assessment methods?

3. Methodology

This section provides information on the design and context of the study, including participants, instruments, and data collection and analysis procedures.

3.1. Design and Context of the Study

As a mixed-methods study, the current research consisted of two phases. In the first phase, which was quantitative, the survey questionnaires, namely Grasha's (1996) Teaching Styles Inventory (TSI) and the researcher-developed Assessment Methods Scale (AMS), were administered to the participants. In the second stage, however, which was qualitative, the data were gathered via semi-structured interviews. The study was conducted on a group of high school teachers in the Iraqi educational context.

3.2. Participants

A total of 120 EFL teachers from various high schools in Iraq constituted the participants in the study. It is worth noting that during the interview phase, one-sixth of the participants (20 teachers) volunteered to participate. The participants were from both genders and varied in terms of age, academic degree, and teaching experience (see Table 1). The sampling method used in the study was based on the convenience and availability of the participants. However, voluntary sampling was implemented for the interview phase of the study. It is worth noting that at the outset of the research, participants were informed of the research objectives and assured of the anonymity and confidentiality conditions. Additionally, to further consider the ethical implications, informed consent was obtained from all teachers prior to initiating the investigation. Though the participating teachers came from a range of language backgrounds, the dominant language background of the participants was Arabic, the standard language used in the context of Iraq.

Table 1

Demographic Background of the Participants

Number of Participants	Questionnaire phase (120 teachers); interview phase (20 teachers)
Gender	51 males; 49 females
Age Range	25-59
Teaching Experience	Below 2 years (23.3%); 2-5 years (27.5%); over 10 years (49.2%)
Academic Degree	53 BAs; 54 MAs; 13 PhDs
Native Language	Arabic

3.3. Instruments

The instruments used in the current study were Grasha's (1996) TSI and Assessment Methods Scale, as well as a semi-structured interview. The following provides a succinct account of each instrument.

3.3.1 Grasha's Teaching Styles Inventory

Grasha's (1996) TSI was administered to gain insight into the participants' profiles of teaching styles. Grasha's TSI encompassed 40 items, arranged on a 5-point Likert scale. The questionnaire assessed the teachers' use of five types of teaching styles, namely expert, formal authority, personal model, delegator, and facilitator. Although the reliability and validity of this scale have already been substantiated in various studies, the researchers decided to reexamine the scale's reliability through piloting. Thus, Cronbach's alpha for reliability, calculated in the current research, equaled 0.75 for the entire questionnaire.

3.3.2 Assessment Methods Scale

The second instrument used in the current investigation was the Assessment Methods Scale. Since the researchers' search for a ready-made questionnaire in this regard did not yield an appropriate measure, they decided to design one based on the available literature on the concept of assessment methods. The constructed questionnaire consisted of 10 items, arranged on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). This scale, termed AMS, also underwent a similar procedure for reliability and validity verification. Based on the analysis, the reliability index, calculated using Cronbach's Alpha, was found to be 0.70. Moreover, expert validation was also employed as the researchers' primary endeavor to ensure the validity of the developed AMS.

3.3.3 Semi-structured Interview

Following the completion of the questionnaire phase, the researchers administered a follow-up semi-structured interview to 20 participants who volunteered to participate in the qualitative phase of the research. This was primarily done to ensure triangulation and obtain more credible and generalizable findings. It is worth noting that the interview questions underwent expert validation, during which some modifications and adjustments were made to the wording of the initially developed questions. Each interview lasted between 8 and 10 minutes, during which the participants' voices were audio-recorded.

3.4. Data Collection Procedure

As stated earlier, the current study was conducted with a cohort of EFL teachers selected through convenience sampling from several high schools in Iraq. To begin with, partial disclosure was made to the participants regarding the research objectives, and informed consent was obtained from them. They were also assured that their data would remain

anonymous and confidential and would only be used for research purposes. Additionally, the study questionnaires (Grasha's TSI & the researcher-made AMS) were administered to them to gain insights into the teachers' profiles of teaching styles and assessment methods, and to pinpoint the potential interconnection between the two constructs. Following this first phase, which was mainly concerned with gathering quantitative data, the researchers proceeded to the second step, which involved semi-structured interviews. This was done to make more rigorous and accountable conclusions based on the obtained findings. In doing so, the participants were invited to participate in a short interview session, for which only 20 participants, i.e., one-sixth of the entire sample, volunteered to cooperate. The interview responses were recorded and later transcribed to provide the basis for the qualitative phase, which was performed through thematic analysis.

3.5. Data Analysis Procedure

To analyze the data obtained for the first research question, several quantitative statistical analyses were conducted, primarily including correlation and regression measures. It is worth noting that since the data followed a normal distribution, parametric statistics, such as the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation, were employed. Additionally, regarding the second research question, which concerned the teachers' perception, a thematic analysis was conducted on the participants' interview responses. In other words, after transcribing the interview data, the transcripts were screened against the original audio recordings to ensure accuracy and completeness. Then, following grounded theory and applying the open, axial, and selective coding procedures, the themes emerging from the teachers' responses were categorized. It is worth noting that to ensure the accuracy of the coding procedure and cater to intercoder reliability, two coders were involved.

4. Results

The first research question in the study dealt with the relationship between teachers' use of teaching styles and their implementation of assessment methods. To analyze this research question and pinpoint the potential relationship between these two constructs, after ensuring the normality of data distribution, parametric statistics using Pearson Product-Moment Correlation were run. The results of this analysis are illustrated in Table 2.

Table 2.

Correlation between Total Teaching Styles and Assessment Techniques

	Assessment methods
Teaching styles	.51*

* Two-tailed, significant at the .01 level.

As is seen in Table 2, there is a moderate, but significant, correlation between teachers' total mean score on teaching styles inventory and the mean obtained on assessment methods questionnaire ($r = .51, p < .01$). This result implies that Iraqi EFL teachers make use of a variety of teaching styles in accordance with learners' needs, styles and preferences. They also opt for a variety of assessment methods that suit different learners and learning settings. Furthermore, the correlations between different categories of teaching style and assessment methods are shown in Table 3.

Table 3.

Correlation between the Subscales of Teaching Styles (TSs) and Assessment Methods

	Assessment techniques
Delegator TS	.36*
Personal Model TS	.34*
Formal Authority TS	.42*
Expert TS	.55*
Facilitator TS	.32*

* Two-tailed, significant at the .01 level.

As is evident in Table 3, considering the association between different subscales of teaching styles and assessment methods, significant positive correlations were observed in the case of expert ($r = .55, p < .01$), personal model ($r = .34, p < .01$), formal authority ($r = .42, p < .01$), facilitator ($r = .32, p < .01$) and delegator ($r = .36, p < .01$) teaching styles, with the fourth subscale in the table (expert teaching style) indicating the greatest correlation. Additionally, according to Table 3, the facilitator teaching style had the lowest degree of correlation (though significant) with assessment methods compared to the other subscales.

The significant correlations observed between different teaching styles and the assessment methods used by teachers inspired the researchers to explore the underlying reasons for this relationship. Thus, multiple regression analysis was conducted to

determine which categories of teaching styles were better predictors of teachers' assessment methods. The results of this analysis are briefed in Table 4.

Table 4.

The Results of Multiple Regression for Teaching Styles and Assessment Methods

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	45.676	4.059		11.253	.000
Delegator	.316	.177	.095	1.784	.075
Personal	-.051	.154	-.018	-.332	.740
Formal	.651	.385	.096	1.689	.092
Expert	1.431	.183	.442	7.826	.000
Facilitator	.149	.139	.053	1.070	.285

a. Dependent Variable: Assessment methods

The results of the multiple regression analysis, as presented in Table 4, reveal that only the expert teaching style is a good predictor of EFL teachers' assessment methods. Further analysis, summarized in Table 5, provides additional evidence to support this finding.

Table 5.

R2 Table for Teaching Styles as the Predictor of Assessment Methods

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.577 ^a	.33	.32	13.54

a. Predictors: (Constant), Delegator, Personal, Formal, Expert, Facilitator

As shown in Table 5, the model summary indicates that the multiple correlation coefficient between the subscales of teachers' teaching styles and their assessment methods is 0.57, and its adjusted square value equals 0.32. Thus, the model containing all the subscales of the teaching styles can predict 32% of assessment methods, meaning that 32% of the variation in EFL teachers' assessment methods can be attributed to their teaching styles.

In response to the second research question, which explored the attitudes of Iraqi high school EFL teachers about the relationship between teaching styles and assessment methods, evidence was gathered via interview analysis, the results of which are presented in this part in light of how these two variables are related in the case of Iraqi high school EFL teachers. The analysis of the transcribed interview data in this regard provided the researchers with a number of overriding themes. The first theme arising from the interview data was the interconnectedness of teaching styles and assessment methods. As the majority of participants contended, teachers often try to opt for assessment methods that align with their teaching styles to ensure consistency and coherence in their instructional practices. For example, a teacher who values student-centered, inquiry-based learning may prefer performance tasks or project-based assessments that allow students to demonstrate their understanding through hands-on activities and real-world applications. In regard to the close relationship between teaching styles and assessment methods, one of the participating teachers stated:

As a teacher, my teaching style heavily influences the assessment techniques I use in my classroom. For example, if I prefer a more hands-on, project-based approach to teaching, I may incorporate performance assessments or project-based assessments to evaluate student learning.

Additionally, another teacher, confirming the intertwined nature of teaching styles and assessment methods, put his opinion in the following way:

My assessment techniques are heavily influenced by my teaching style, which is centered around inquiry-based learning and hands-on activities. As a result, I often use performance tasks, project-based assessments, and portfolios to evaluate student understanding and skills.

Another important theme emerging from the interview data was the dependability of assessment methods on teaching styles. In other words, as most participants noted, teaching styles have the potential to shape teachers' assessment practices through ongoing reflection and evaluation of instructional methods. Thus, by rethinking their teaching and assessment process, teachers might be able to refine their assessment practices over time to support student learning. In this respect, one of the participating teachers expressed her attitude in the following manner:

My teaching style has shaped the way I assess student learning by emphasizing the importance of providing opportunities for students to demonstrate their understanding through real-world applications, collaborative projects, and self-assessment. This approach helps me gauge not only what students know but also how they can apply their knowledge in different contexts.

Another participating teacher maintained:

One way my teaching style has shaped my assessment practices is through the incorporation of authentic assessments that mirror real-world tasks and challenges. By assessing students in contexts that are relevant and meaningful, I can better gauge their ability to apply knowledge and skills in practical situations.

The other prominent theme arising from the analysis of interview data was using differentiation as a way to address different teaching styles in our assessment, in an attempt to also align them with the learners' styles and preferences. For instance, a teacher who values personalized learning may offer a variety of assessment options, such as written assignments, oral presentations, or multimedia projects, to cater to different student strengths and interests. Associated with this theme, several teachers referred to differentiated assessment as the best option to address different learning styles and reflect preferences for different teaching styles. For instance, one of the teachers put her idea in the following manner:

I have modified my assessment techniques based on feedback from students and colleagues. When receiving feedback, I approach the process with an open mind and willingness to adapt. This may involve trying out new assessment methods, incorporating student suggestions, or seeking input from fellow educators to improve my assessment practices.

Also, another teacher, believing in the importance of differentiation, argued:

I have had to modify my assessment techniques based on feedback from students and colleagues. When receiving constructive feedback, I approach the process by first analyzing the feedback to identify areas for improvement. I then brainstorm alternative assessment methods that may better align with my teaching style and the needs of my students.

The use of novelty and innovation in teaching styles and assessment methods was the other predominant factor referred to by the participants. For example, regarding innovation

in assessment, the participants believed that novel techniques, including peer assessments, self-assessments, and digital portfolios, can be integrated into our practices to enrich the process of effective teaching and learning. The following extract is indicative of this perspective:

Balancing traditional assessment methods with more innovative and student-centered approaches is important in my teaching practice. I strive to incorporate a mix of assessments, including exams, projects, presentations, and peer evaluations, to cater to diverse learning styles and preferences while maintaining academic rigor.

As to the use of more innovative methods for assessment, another participant said:

I balance the use of traditional assessment methods with more innovative and student-centered approaches by incorporating a variety of assessment techniques throughout the school year. This enables me to cater to diverse learning preferences while maintaining academic rigor and standards.

The dire need for training was referred to as the other principal technique by a great number of teachers. The teachers who put forth this view unanimously believed that proper training can help them develop professionally and stay informed about effective teaching styles and assessment methods. For instance, in regard to the need for training for using proper assessment methods, one of the participating teachers stated:

To stay informed about new assessment techniques and best practices in teaching, I engage in professional development opportunities, attend workshops and conferences, and collaborate with colleagues to share ideas and resources. Continuous learning is essential for improving my approach to assessment.

The last theme that emerged from the interview data was the need for gaining feedback from one's colleagues and even students regarding which teaching styles and assessment methods are more appropriate. Among those who thought that feedback can help rethink their teaching styles and assessment methods to come up with more efficient ways of teaching and assessing in compliance with learners' needs, one of the teachers put his standpoint in the following way:

I incorporate student feedback into my assessment practices by regularly seeking input on the effectiveness of assessments, clarity of instructions, and overall learning experience. This feedback helps me make informed decisions on how to improve my assessment techniques, thereby better supporting student learning.

In this section, the teachers' perceptions regarding the connection between teaching styles and assessment methods are presented. In so doing, teachers' accounts were also provided regarding how teaching styles and assessment methods can be adjusted and tailored to align with the needs, styles, and preferences of different learners. In what follows, the results thus obtained are discussed by relating them to the previous literature on the issue.

5. Discussion

The first research question in the study aimed to investigate the possible association between the teaching styles employed by teachers and the assessment methods they adopted. The results obtained for this research question pointed to a significant correlation between these two variables. To be more specific, stronger correlations were found between the teachers' assessment methods and their use of formal authority, expert, and facilitator teaching styles. The result thus obtained aligns with a number of earlier investigations on the issue. Similar results are reported, for instance, by Hosseini Fatemi and Raoufi (2014), who found positive correlations between teachers' choice of teaching styles and their implemented assessment methods in the Iranian learning context. The finding is also in compliance with the one reported in Kothari and Pingle's (2015) research, which was conducted in the Indian education context. Their investigation, which was carried out with administrative instructors, also confirmed that a strong correlation exists between teachers' styles of teaching and their preferences for various assessment methods.

Likewise, the finding corroborates the results of Mazaheri and Ayatollahi's (2019) study, which substantiated the strong bonds between teachers' proclivity for employing different teaching styles and their preference for varied compliance assessment methods. Furthermore, the finding resonates with that of Sabado and Allan (2019), who conducted their research with a group of teachers involved in Technical Vocational Education (TVE). As they also indicated, teachers' use of Grasha-Riechmann Teaching Styles strongly and significantly correlated with their application of diverse assessment methods. The finding is also consistent with that reported by Abdullah et al. (2024). Although their study may differ from the present investigation due to the fact that, unlike our study, which was conducted in a high school context, theirs was carried out in the academic domain, similar results were revealed in both studies. Similar to the current research that substantiates the

correlation between teaching styles and assessment methods, their study also corroborated the connections between instructors' teaching strategies and assessment methods, concluding that this alignment can effectively address students' diverse learning styles. However, it is worth noting that their research relied solely on interview data, whereas the current scrutiny employed both questionnaire and interview analysis.

Additionally, as the findings for the second research question revealed, the themes emerging from the participants' interview responses led to several conclusions regarding the quality and direction of the relationship between teachers' teaching styles and their applied assessment methods. As referred to earlier, the themes emerging from the interview phase underscored the interconnectedness of teaching styles and assessment methods, the dependability of assessment methods on teaching styles, the need for differentiation as a way to address different teaching styles in assessment practices, the importance of benefiting from novelty and innovation in teaching styles and assessment methods, the paramountcy of teacher training as a key factor in equipping the teachers with more efficient teaching styles and assessment methods, and finally the need for receiving feedback from the learners.

In relation to the interconnectedness of teaching styles and assessment methods, as well as the dependability of assessment methods on teaching styles, evidence can be provided from a study conducted by Yamtim and Wongwanich (2014), which yielded similar results regarding the close relationship between teaching styles and assessment methods. Additionally, as they contend, instructors are advised to benefit from a wide range of assessment methods to create proper linkages between their teaching styles and modes of assessment. Furthermore, concerning the importance of diversification in instruction and using a variety of styles in accordance with different learners' characteristics, needs and preferences, support is obtained from the previous research, which highlights the important role of differentiated instruction by adopting varied teaching styles in the learners' further achievement (e.g., Alavinia & Farhady, 2012; Alavinia & Sadeghi, 2013; Alavinia & Viyani, 2018). As a case in point, Sabado and Allan (2019) contended that diversifying teaching styles and adjusting them to meet different learners' needs can help achieve better learning outcomes. In much the same way, Rahimi and Asadollahi (2012b) emphasized the importance of tailoring teaching styles to meet the diverse needs of learners, thereby creating stronger rapport and interpersonal relationships.

Altogether, the results obtained in the present study confirm that the teachers' employed teaching styles and their implemented assessment methods are inextricably intertwined. Moreover, based on the teachers' perceptions voiced in the interview data, the interconnectedness and mutual relationship between the two constructs were further substantiated. The findings also highlighted the key role of other factors, such as differentiated instruction and assessment, teacher training, and feedback from learners, as notions that could bring about better integration of proper assessment methods into teaching practices.

6. Conclusion

The primary aim of the current study was to investigate the relationship between Iraqi EFL teachers' use of various teaching styles and their adoption of diverse assessment methods. The results were indicative of a strong positive correlation between these two constructs. It goes without saying that the close linkage and correspondence between teaching styles and assessment methods are highly crucial issues in any learning context, as students are generally evaluated based on the manner in which they have been taught. Lack of accord between these two elements leads to unfavorable results in teaching and learning. In other words, the relationship between these two seminal building blocks of instruction is reciprocal, with both impacting and being impacted by the other. Hence, proper alignment between them can result in increased levels of teaching success and learning achievement. The findings of the qualitative phase of the study also verified the results obtained in the quantitative part and led to the establishment of several noteworthy themes that were discussed in the previous sections.

Drawing on the current findings, several implications and applications can be offered for various stakeholders in the Iraqi EFL context of high schools. First and foremost, teachers, as the chief target group, who are thought to reap benefits from the findings, might be sensitized to the importance of using proper teaching styles and be driven to rethink their assessment methods in compliance with their adopted teaching styles. This will undoubtedly lay the foundations for achieving better educational outcomes and ensuring further accountability in teaching and learning. Syllabus designers and materials developers may be encouraged to coordinate assessment methods with the teaching styles required in different contexts, as these findings are likely to benefit other parties who use textbooks. Additionally, as the results from the qualitative phase of the current study

indicated, the dire need for differentiation of instruction and assessment should be taken more seriously by materials developers and educational policymakers, in an attempt to cater more meticulously to diverse learner needs, preferences, and styles. Last but not least, teacher trainers are among the last groups of stakeholders whom the present findings might inspire. As the qualitative findings revealed, pre-service and in-service training for teachers is essential to familiarize them with efficient teaching styles and assessment methods, particularly in the context of the high school pedagogic environment.

Finally, it must be acknowledged that, despite the researchers' attempt to follow research regulations in the field of humanities, a number of limitations inevitably arose from the particular contextual settings in which the research was conducted. One of the significant limitations that the researchers faced was the difficulty in finding a sufficient number of participants. Although the number of teachers used in this study was partly satisfactory in terms of correlational and survey-type research, higher numbers of participants in future investigations may help attain more generalizable findings. The use of questionnaires and interviews as data collection tools in the present study may be regarded as another limitation. Therefore, interested researchers are recommended to consider replicating the study with a variety of other data collection instruments, such as narratives and observation.

Additionally, the fact that the current investigation was conducted in the high school context in Iraq may constitute another limitation, which could be addressed by opting for comparative investigations in other contexts, such as institutes or universities, in the future. As a final limitation, the study at hand focused solely on the teacher community and did not explore the implications of using different teaching styles and assessment methods on students' actual performance and achievement in the learning process. Informed by this limitation, researchers are therefore recommended to explore the relationship between teachers' use of varied teaching styles and assessment methods and learning outcomes in different educational contexts. After all, it must be admitted that despite decades of scrutiny on teaching styles and assessment methods, theorizing on the concepts and researching the topics still sounds like sailing within uncharted waters, and hence, a lot more research is necessitated to shed light on the disparate, unknown perspectives of these two constructs.

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