

## CONCEPTUALIZATIONS OF LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT LITERACY

**Dawletmuratova Ulbosin Maksetovna,**  
*NSPI, 2<sup>nd</sup> year Masters of Degree,  
English and literature department*

**Key words:** language assessment literacy, conceptualization, training courses, education, TESOL programs.

Language assessment literacy (LAL) plays an increasingly important role in language education and constitutes an integral part of language teachers' professional competence [2]. The teachers who are language assessment literate can design and administer effective testing activities, interpret students' scores accurately, formulate appropriate teaching plans and make rational education decisions. However, teachers' insufficient LAL may lead to poorly designed language assessments, incorrect interpretation of test results and irrational educational decisions, all of which may have negative consequences for students.

However, despite its crucial role in language teaching and assessment, teachers' LAL remained inadequate. TESOL programs for pre-service teachers incorporate insufficient language assessment contents [5], and limited language assessment training opportunities are provided to in-service teacher[3].

Additionally, education policymakers and university or school administrators were at fault for not ensuring teachers are well trained before starting their teaching careers [2]. These factors together inhibit teachers' LAL development.

Recognizing the importance of language teachers' LAL and the needs for teacher development, a number of studies have been performed to conceptualize LAL, investigating teachers' LAL and supporting resources in different contexts and from different perspectives. However, relevant research is "still in its infancy", and more research on this topic is needed to advance LAL scholarship. To provide a comprehensive picture of current research and lay the foundation for future LAL studies, this review will first examine the conceptualizations of LAL

and the empirical studies on teachers' LAL, then provide implications and future directions.

As mentioned above, the concept of assessment literacy was first proposed by, who defined assessment literates as the stakeholders who "have a basic understanding of the meaning of high- and low-quality assessment and are able to apply that knowledge to various measures of student achievement" (p. 535). Based on definition, the researchers from the language education community proposed the concept of LAL, noting that LAL is different from the assessment literacy in general education because the assessment of language knowledge and communicative competence has its own complexities [5]

Significant progress has been made in conceptualizing LAL, with the multidimensional and contextual dynamic nature of LAL recognized. However, some issues and challenges with the current LAL definitions and conceptualizations persist. First, the majority of existing LAL conceptualizations are proposed based on English-speaking contexts. However, because LAL is a highly contextualized concept, the LAL dimensions teachers need will vary from one context to another. In addition, further exploration is needed to conceptualize skill-specific LAL.

Current LAL models are primarily concerned with general language assessment. However, assessing different language skills necessitates different knowledge and competence. For example, when developing listening tests, test developers should consider the phenomena associated with spoken language such as dialects, accents and regional variations, as well as colloquial language and slang, which will not be considered when developing writing tests. [4]

Finally, the majority of the language teacher assessment training programs were shorter than one semester in duration. Although short term training programs impart language assessment knowledge and skills, long term training programs are needed as they are more effective at helping teachers apply what they have learned to the context in which they work. Flexible training methods

such as online training courses, collaborative learning, and reflection are also worth exploring to ensure that as many language teachers as possible participate in LAL training.

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