

Exploring EFL Teachers' Self-Efficacy and Readiness for Student-Centered Assessment Approaches

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ABSTRACT

The shift in assessment to a more student-oriented approach means that EFL teachers need not only to learn about the idea but also to feel they can implement it in their everyday practice. This study aims to examine how EFL teachers build their self-efficacy and readiness in using student-oriented assessment, particularly the application of self-assessment in writing classes. A qualitative approach was used to collect data; semi-structured interviews with three teachers across various school levels were conducted. The results indicate that, despite teachers' awareness of the pedagogical advantages of self-assessment, several challenges remain, including students' low competence, inconsistent institutional support, and inadequate training. This study concludes that teacher readiness is greatly influenced by a combination of psychological factors, such as self-confidence and self-perceived competence, and contextual factors that shape their scope of action. For further research, a broader study covering schools with different conditions, or one that combines classroom observations, is needed to obtain a more complete picture of student-centered assessment practices.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Assessment of students is now increasingly seen as an important factor in improving the quality of learning in English as a foreign language classes. Recently, several policies have required teachers to begin conducting tests that focus more on students than on teachers, such as formative self-, and peer-assessment [1]. An assessment approach that places students at the center is expected not only to provide data on learning outcomes but also to serve as a learning tool that helps them manage their progress, monitor their understanding, and play a role in determining the next steps in their learning [2].

At the same time, teachers play a central role in the implementation of student-centered assessments, from the decision to implement them to the pattern of implementation and the utilization of assessment outcomes in the daily teaching process. Research on language assessment literacy (LAL) and formative assessment literacy (FAL) shows that many EFL teachers still struggle to understand key concepts, apply assessment strategies in practice, and interpret assessment results. This situation limits their ability to implement assessment practices that are more student-centered and focused on the learning process [3], [4], [5]. Similar lines of research on the self-efficacy of teachers suggest that attitudes toward an ability to plan and implement teaching activities have a strong influence on classroom practices and readiness to innovate, especially in contexts of difficulty or resource scarcity [6], [7]. These insights suggest that EFL teachers' self-efficacy and readiness are likely to be critical conditions for the successful implementation of student-centred assessment.

In recent years, various researchers have drawn attention to various features of this landscape. Work on student-centred pedagogy and assessment has documented teachers' and students' perceptions of how frequently such practices are used, the challenges involved, and possible solutions in higher education EFL settings [8]. Studies on teachers' awareness of student-centred pedagogy and assessment have begun to map how far English teachers understand these concepts and how awareness relates to demographic factors. Other research on the self-efficacy of EFL teachers in other countries confirms that this professional self-confidence significantly affects teaching strategies, classroom management, and knowledge in teaching materials, particularly in underprivileged regions [9].

Although the literature in this field is expanding, several research gaps remain, providing strong reasons to conduct this study and confirming its novelty. [10] said research related to student-centered pedagogy and assessment has described the implementation of these practices by teachers and students' perceptions of them. Nevertheless, the conceptualization and measurement of teachers' readiness have not been comprehensive, particularly with respect in self-confidence, perceived competence, and the ability to manage situational constraints. A study by [11] found that teachers' attitudes and awareness regarding student-oriented assessment tend to view it only as a cognitive aspect, focusing in teachers' knowledge and beliefs. Nonetheless, such studies have not conceptualized and measured teachers' readiness in an inclusive manner, particularly in terms of self-confidence, perceived competence, and the ability to manage situational constraints. (e.g., individual universities in the Middle East or East Asia), which makes it less clear how teachers' self-efficacy and readiness for student-centred assessment occur in other educational levels in the wider EFL system [12].

Although language assessment literacy and formative assessment literacy research offer important insights into teachers' assessment knowledge and skills, they often do not connect these to teachers' self-efficacy in using specific student-oriented assessment strategies, including self-assessment, peer-assessment, and learner-generated tasks [13]. Existing EFL teacher self-efficacy research largely focuses on general aspects of teaching, classroom management, and technology-mediated professional development, but not on assessment-specific beliefs, and little is known about teachers' confidence in planning and administering student-centred assessment [14]. Recent systematic reviews of formative

assessment in K-12 EFL contexts emphasise its impact on learning outcomes and teaching effectiveness. However, they offer little detail on how teachers' self-efficacy shapes their willingness to replace or complement traditional tests with more student-centred assessment approaches [15].

Research by [16] in learning environments dominated by high-stakes exams or tests shows that teachers feel pressure when trying to incorporate formative or writing assessments into their teaching. However, these dynamics are rarely explicitly interpreted within the framework of self-efficacy and readiness for student-oriented assessment. The qualitative insights obtained in the cross-sectional survey-based study by Martin-Alguacil remain minimal, especially regarding the definitions of student-oriented assessment by teachers, the indicators of readiness they consider, and how their perceptions have been modified.

The role of context, in the sense of policy requirements, institutional facilitation, resource accessibility, or professional education, has actually been debated in several studies. However, these variables are rarely brought together in a comprehensive analytical framework that links literacy assessment and self-efficacy [17 and readiness for student-centred assessment in EFL classrooms 18]. Although the role of student-centered assessment in education is increasingly recognized, little research has examined the influence of self-efficacy in EFL teachers' self-efficacy on their willingness to adopt such pedagogical methods, especially the application of self-assessment in writing classes. It is critical to understand the level of teacher confidence and the variables that determine their readiness to go beyond conventional, teacher-centered assessment to more participatory practices. Therefore, this study explores EFL teachers' self-efficacy and readiness to apply student-centered assessment, with a focus on self-assessment. Specifically, it addresses two questions: (1) How confident are EFL teachers in implementing student-centered assessment methods, including self-assessment? (2) What factors influence teachers' readiness to use self-assessment in their writing classes?

2. METHOD

In this study, a qualitative approach was chosen and implemented through semi-structured interviews to understand how EFL teachers build self-efficacy and their readiness to implement student-centered assessments, particularly in the use of self-assessment in writing classes. The participants consisted of 3 EFL teachers from different school levels junior high school, senior high school, and vocational school, selected through purposive sampling based on their experience teaching writing. Individual interviews were used to gather data, with a duration of 15-20 minutes, conducted online or in person based on participants' availability. The interview guide comprised question dimensions based on self-efficacy and teacher readiness models, including (1) the confidence of the teachers in implementing student-centered assessment, (2) the experiences and perceptions of teachers regarding the use of self-assessment in writing classes, and (3) the circumstances affecting teacher readiness, such as institutional support, workload, student characteristics, and training opportunities. Thematic analysis to determine common patterns concerning the research questions.

Table 1. Interview Instrument

Dimension	Definition	Example Interview Questions
1. Teacher Self-Efficacy in Student-Centered Assessment	Teachers' confidence in their ability to implement student-centered assessment methods, including self-assessment.	a. How confident do you feel about implementing student-centered assessment in your writing classes? b. What aspects of student-centered assessment do you feel most or least capable of carrying out? c. What aspects of student-centered assessment do you feel most or least capable of carrying out?
2. Experience With Self-Assessment	Teachers' prior use, understanding, and perceptions of self-assessment in writing instruction.	a. Have you implemented self-assessment in your writing classes? If yes, how did you do it? b. What do you think are the benefits or challenges of using self-assessment with your students? c. How do students usually respond when asked to evaluate their own writing?
3. Readiness to Use Self-Assessment	Teachers' preparedness to adopt self-assessment, covering psychological, professional, and practical readiness.	a. How prepared do you feel to use self-assessment regularly in your writing classes? b. What skills or knowledge do you think you still need to improve your readiness? c. In what ways does your teaching environment support or limit your readiness to use self-assessment?
4. Contextual and External Influences	School environment, policy, resources, workload, training, and student-related factors that affect readiness.	a. What school policies or conditions influence your ability to use self-assessment? b. Do you receive any institutional support or training for using student-centered assessment? c. How do class size, student motivation, or available resources affect your readiness?

Source: Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory (1997)

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The five teachers involved in this study. All had at least three years of experience teaching writing, and each had previously encountered student-centered assessment approaches to varying degrees. Their teaching backgrounds offered diverse perspectives that enriched the findings, particularly regarding confidence, classroom challenges, and institutional conditions. During the interviews, the teachers were open in sharing their practices, beliefs, and limitations, allowing for a deeper interpretation of how self-efficacy and readiness shaped their instructional decisions. This variation strengthened the understanding of how assessment practices operate across different educational environments. A study by [19] found that teachers' *assessment self-efficacy* and *readiness* to implement student-centered assessment practices are strongly shaped by their teaching experience, institutional context, and perceived challenges in the classroom. The study highlighted that teachers at different school levels and with varied backgrounds tend to exhibit varying levels of confidence and adaptability when implementing student-centered assessment approaches.

When asked about their general confidence in using student-centered assessment in writing classes, most teachers described themselves as moderately confident but still hesitant about consistency. Narasumber 1 said, "*I know the concept, and I want to use it more, but sometimes I feel unsure if I'm doing it correctly.*" This uncertainty reflects what recent research notes: teachers need clearer guidance when shifting from traditional assessment to

participatory methods. Their responses align with the view that self-efficacy grows through experience and mastery, as indicated by Bandura's model of performance accomplishment. At the same time, the teachers expressed enthusiasm for the approach, suggesting that motivation exists even when skills are still developing. A similar pattern was reported in [20], who found that teachers often show interest and motivation toward student-centered assessment but still feel limited in confidence due to gaps in training and institutional support. The enthusiasm expressed by teachers in this study therefore mirrors previous findings, suggesting that while foundational motivation is present, sustained experience and structured guidance are essential for strengthening teachers' assessment self-efficacy.

Regarding which aspects of student-centered assessment they felt most or least capable of implementing, several teachers emphasized difficulty designing open-ended assessment activities. Narasumber 3 explained, "*I can guide students to reflect, but creating tasks that truly allow them to evaluate themselves is still challenging.*" This aligns with previous findings that teachers often understand the purpose of student-centered assessment but struggle with operational techniques, such as rubric design and criteria simplification. Some teachers felt more confident in giving feedback orally than in guiding students to generate their own feedback. Such differences suggest that pedagogical readiness is uneven, with teachers stronger in traditional support roles than in facilitating student autonomy. This challenge aligns with [21], which found that many teachers have conceptual awareness of student-centered assessment but lack confidence in implementing practical components that promote learner autonomy. Some teachers in the present study felt more confident giving oral feedback than guiding students to generate their own feedback, echoing the disparity noted in Uztosun's research between teachers' comfort with traditional feedback roles and their hesitancy when facilitating student-led assessment processes. Such differences suggest that pedagogical readiness remains uneven, with teachers generally stronger in conventional instructional support than in fostering self-directed evaluative practices.

When reflecting on experiences implementing student-centered assessment, several teachers shared both successes and obstacles. Narasumber 2 said, "*I once asked students to check their own writing, and they enjoyed it, but many of them were confused about what to look for.*" This confusion aligns with recent studies that highlight the importance of explicit instruction before students can self-assess effectively [22]. These studies emphasize that students need clear criteria, modeling, and structured scaffolding to internalize what quality work looks like and to use self-assessment tools meaningfully. Consistent with this, teachers in the present study reported that clearer rubrics and scaffolded practice allowed students to engage more confidently in self-assessment tasks. Their experiences indicate that teachers' confidence in implementing student-centered assessment depends not only on their own skills but also on students' readiness and ability to participate actively in evaluative processes.

Regarding prior use of self-assessment, the teachers reported varying levels of experience, with some integrating it occasionally and others rarely using it. Narasumber 1 said, "*I have used self-assessment a few times, but usually only at the end of a writing task, not throughout the process.*" This limited use corresponds with findings in recent EFL studies showing that teachers often frame self-assessment as a final step rather than an

ongoing reflective tool. A study of [23] found their need for a stronger conceptual understanding of formative, process-oriented assessment. At the same time, teachers expressed interest in expanding their use of self-assessment if given structured guidance.

Concerning perceived benefits of self-assessment, teachers highlighted increases in student awareness and responsibility. Narasumber 2 said, "*Students become more aware of their mistakes when they correct themselves; they try harder next time.*" This perspective aligns with previous research indicating that self-assessment can strengthen metacognitive awareness and writing development. Teachers also mentioned that self-assessment promotes honesty and independence, although they acknowledged variability in students' accuracy. Their insights demonstrate that while benefits are recognized, teachers still require strategies to enhance student accuracy and engagement.

When discussing challenges, teachers noted students' limited vocabulary and a lack of confidence in evaluating their own writing. Narasumber 3 explained, "*Some students don't trust their own judgment, so they wait for the teacher to confirm everything.*" This behavior reflects what learner autonomy research describes as dependence-driven resistance to self-assessment. Teachers also noted that time constraints and large class sizes made it difficult to monitor students' self-evaluations effectively. These constraints influence teachers' readiness, highlighting the importance of contextual support.

When asked about their overall readiness to adopt self-assessment more consistently, teachers indicated varying degrees of preparedness depending on their training and familiarity with assessment frameworks. Narasumber 1 said, "*I feel ready in theory, but in practice, I still need more examples and training.*" This response mirrors recent reports that emphasize the strong link between teacher readiness and professional development opportunities. Teachers acknowledged that readiness is not only about capability but also about confidence and environmental conditions. Their comments show that personal and institutional factors intersect in shaping readiness.

Regarding skills or knowledge they still needed, teachers mentioned rubric development, criteria-setting, and classroom management during self-assessment activities. Narasumber 3 said, "*I want to learn how to create simple rubrics that students understand; sometimes the language is too difficult for them.*" Teachers also wished for more examples of practical self-assessment tools tailored for EFL writing contexts. Their responses indicate a strong desire for technical pedagogical support.

Teachers also reflected on the role of the school environment in shaping their readiness. Narasumber 2 stated, "*My school supports innovative teaching, but there is no specific policy for self-assessment, so it depends on each teacher's initiative.*" This suggests that institutional expectations often shape how confidently teachers approach new assessment strategies. In some cases, teachers felt supported, while others experienced uncertainty due to a lack of formal guidelines. This diversity reinforces the idea that readiness emerges within an ecological system influenced by policy, leadership, and school culture.

When asked about professional development, teachers reported that training on self-assessment was rarely provided. Narasumber 1 said, "*We often get training on curriculum or digital tools, but almost never about assessment like this.*" This gap highlights what many

recent studies argue: assessment literacy remains underdeveloped in many EFL contexts. Teachers expressed that targeted workshops could improve both confidence and readiness [24]. Their reflections indicate that structural support is essential for sustainable assessment innovation.

Student-related factors also influenced teachers' readiness, especially regarding motivation and writing ability. Narasumber 3 shared, "*If the students are motivated, self-assessment works well, but if they are passive, the process becomes very slow.*" This observation supports earlier research showing that student engagement significantly affects formative assessment outcomes. [25] Research also showed that the teachers stated that guiding low-proficiency students through self-assessment required additional scaffolding. Their experiences reinforce the need for differentiated strategies to support diverse learners.

Overall, the findings show that EFL teachers are open to student-centered assessment but are still developing the self-efficacy and readiness needed to implement it confidently and consistently. Their voices highlight the interplay between personal beliefs, pedagogical skills, institutional conditions, and student characteristics [26]. The combination of these factors aligns with contemporary understandings of teacher agency and formative assessment implementation. These results underscore the need for ongoing professional development and stronger institutional frameworks to support teachers in adopting self-assessment within writing instruction.

The findings of this study indicate that teachers' confidence in implementing student-centered assessment is strongly influenced by their prior mastery experiences, which supports Bandura's view that self-efficacy is built through successful performance and feedback. Teachers' reported uncertainty about designing assessment tasks aligned with research suggesting that low mastery experience reduces teachers' willingness to experiment with innovative practices. Studies in EFL contexts also note that teachers lacking assessment training tend to rely on conventional evaluation methods, reinforcing the patterns seen in this study. The participants' moderate confidence shows that they are positioned between willingness and hesitation, a condition common during pedagogical transitions. This situation highlights the importance of structured professional development to strengthen mastery and vicarious learning.

The teachers' experiences with self-assessment align with Panadero's model, which emphasizes the need for explicit instruction and clear criteria before learners can evaluate their own work effectively. Many participants noted student confusion, which suggests that the scaffolding stage was weak or inconsistent. Prior studies show that students require repeated exposure and guided modeling before they internalize self-assessment routines, which helps explain the challenges reported by teachers in this study. The teachers' reflections also suggest that their confidence improves when students respond positively, illustrating the reciprocal relationship between student behavior and teacher efficacy. These dynamics confirm that effective implementation depends on both teacher skill and student readiness [27].

Teacher readiness in this study appears to reflect the construct described by readiness-for-change theory, which views readiness as a combination of capability, willingness, and contextual support. Several teachers stated that they felt theoretically ready

but practically uncertain, demonstrating the gap between conceptual understanding and classroom enactment. This aligns with findings from recent EFL research indicating that readiness is rarely uniform and often shaped by institutional expectations [28]. The teachers' comments suggest that readiness fluctuates depending on workload, access to training, and administrative encouragement. Thus, readiness emerges as an evolving condition rather than a fixed attribute.

The influence of contextual factors found in this study supports the ecological model of teacher agency, which asserts that environmental affordances and constraints shape teachers' actions. Participants who received informal encouragement felt more comfortable experimenting with self-assessment, while those without institutional direction expressed ambiguity about expectations. This reflects research showing that supportive leadership and clear policies enhance teacher confidence during instructional innovation. The absence of formal guidelines, as mentioned by several teachers, may reduce their perceived authority in implementing new assessment approaches. Therefore, institutional structures play a crucial role in shaping assessment practice.

The teachers' desire for more training strongly aligns with the ongoing discussions in assessment literacy research, which argue that teachers often lack sufficient preparation to design and implement formative assessment techniques. Previous studies [29] emphasize that assessment literacy is uneven across teaching populations, and this study confirms similar patterns in the local context. Teachers' expressions of needing practical tools, examples, and simplified rubrics illustrate the "technical dimension" of assessment literacy that many educators struggle with. This highlights the necessity of targeted, hands-on training that goes beyond theory. Strengthening teachers' assessment literacy would directly enhance both their self-efficacy and readiness.

Students' characteristics, such as motivation and proficiency level, emerged as significant influences on the teachers' readiness to use self-assessment. This resonates with sociocultural theories of learning, which underline the importance of learner agency and participation in classroom activities [30]. Teachers in this study reported that motivated students supported the process, while passive or low-proficiency students created barriers. Such findings align with research showing that self-assessment is more effective in classrooms where students are accustomed to reflective tasks and have developed basic metacognitive skills. The teachers' experiences, therefore, illustrate that student readiness is an essential counterpart to teacher readiness.

The findings of the research support the notion that implementing student-centred assessment requires a correlation among teacher beliefs, teacher skills, institutional support, and student preparation. The difference in teachers' levels of confidence appears to indicate that they are in the midst of a process of change. On the one hand, they see the value of the innovations that have been introduced. On the other hand, their actual implementation in the classroom requires adjustments that are not simple, so their confidence is developing gradually. The discussion demonstrates that improving teacher self-efficacy and readiness is not simply a matter of providing information but requires systematic support, modeling, and gradual practice. These findings contribute to the broader literature by showing how self-efficacy theory, assessment literacy research, and ecological perspectives converge in

shaping EFL writing assessment practices. Ultimately, the study highlights the need for integrated training and supportive structures to ensure that student-centered assessment can be implemented effectively and sustainably.

4. CONCLUSION

This study has demonstrated that EFL teachers have a moderate level of self-efficacy in using student-centered assessment, specifically self-assessment, but their confidence varies depending on the task's complexity and classroom context. The teachers showed interest in adopting self-assessment, yet their willingness was strongly linked to their assessment literacy, prior experience in mastering assessment, institutional support, and student profiles. The findings show that although educators can see the advantages of self-assessment for enhancing student reflection and writing quality, they still encounter difficulties in developing explicit criteria, effectively scaffolding students, and addressing the issue of varying student achievement. These results imply that it is necessary not only to enhance conceptual knowledge of teacher self-efficacy and readiness but also to provide long-term, practical professional development and school environments that facilitate assessment innovation. The research is useful in understanding the interaction of personal beliefs and contextual issues in influencing assessment practices, and it helps in emphasizing the need to offer specific training and institutional arrangements in ensuring that student-centered assessment can be realized effectively and productively in EFL writing classrooms.

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