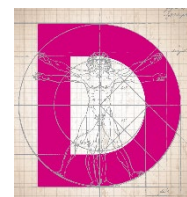


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BRIDGING THE GAP: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN IMPLEMENTING FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT IN EFL CLASSROOMS IN ARABIC-SPEAKING SCHOOLS

CERRANDO LA BRECHA: DESAFÍOS Y OPORTUNIDADES EN LA IMPLEMENTACIÓN DE LA EVALUACIÓN FORMATIVA EN AULAS DE INGLÉS COMO LENGUA EXTRANJERA EN ESCUELAS DE HABLA ÁRABE

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Abstract

Formative assessment serves as a vital guide for teachers and students, supporting progress through continuous adjustments during learning. Unlike summative assessments that measure outcomes at the end, it emphasizes growth, understanding, and deeper engagement. However, its implementation in EFL classrooms in Arab schools in Israel poses significant challenges. To explore these challenges, this study employed a qualitative exploratory design, using a validated open-ended questionnaire to collect rich, detailed data from 20 Arab female English teachers with 5 to 33 years of experience in northern Israel.

This approach allowed teachers to express their perceptions and experiences with formative assessment strategies, capturing the complex personal and contextual factors that shape practice. The findings revealed varied attitudes toward different formative strategies. Sharing learning aims and questioning were seen as effective and feasible, while self-assessment and peer assessment were limited by insufficient class time and lack of student readiness. Providing meaningful feedback was identified as the most difficult due to large class sizes and the pressure of a summative-focused curriculum. Veteran teachers found it challenging to shift from traditional routines, whereas newer teachers, although more open to innovation, struggled with classroom management.

The study underscores the need for professional development to enhance teachers' skills in formative assessment and calls for systemic curriculum reforms that prioritize formative, student-centered learning. Collaboration among policymakers, school leaders,

and educators is essential to create supportive environments that enable successful implementation of formative assessment in EFL classrooms.

Keywords: Formative assessment strategies; EFL classrooms; challenges; Arab teachers

Resumen

La evaluación formativa sirve como una guía fundamental para docentes y estudiantes, apoyando el progreso mediante ajustes continuos durante el proceso de aprendizaje. A diferencia de las evaluaciones sumativas que miden los resultados al final, la evaluación formativa enfatiza el crecimiento, la comprensión y una participación más profunda. Sin embargo, su implementación en aulas de inglés como lengua extranjera (EFL) en escuelas árabes de Israel presenta desafíos significativos.

Para explorar estos desafíos, este estudio empleó un diseño cualitativo exploratorio, utilizando un cuestionario abierto validado para recopilar datos ricos y detallados de 20 profesoras árabes de inglés con entre 5 y 33 años de experiencia en el norte de Israel. Este enfoque permitió a las docentes expresar sus percepciones y experiencias con estrategias de evaluación formativa, capturando los complejos factores personales y contextuales que moldean su práctica. Los hallazgos revelaron actitudes diversas hacia distintas estrategias formativas. Compartir objetivos de aprendizaje y formular preguntas se consideraron eficaces y viables, mientras que la autoevaluación y la evaluación entre pares estuvieron limitadas por el escaso tiempo de clase y la falta de preparación del alumnado. Proporcionar retroalimentación significativa fue identificado como el mayor desafío debido al tamaño elevado de las clases y la presión de un currículo centrado en la evaluación sumativa. Las docentes veteranas encontraron difícil alejarse de las rutinas tradicionales, mientras que las docentes más nuevas, aunque más abiertas a la innovación, enfrentaron dificultades en la gestión del aula.

El estudio destaca la necesidad de desarrollo profesional para mejorar las competencias del profesorado en evaluación formativa y hace un llamado a reformas curriculares sistémicas que prioricen un aprendizaje formativo centrado en el estudiante. La colaboración entre responsables políticos, directivos escolares y docentes es esencial para crear entornos de apoyo que permitan una implementación exitosa de la evaluación formativa en aulas de EFL.

Palabras clave: Estrategias de evaluación formativa; aulas de EFL; desafíos; docentes árabes

1. INTRODUCTION

Formative assessment (FA) has emerged as a critical component of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teaching due to its ongoing nature and capacity to provide meaningful guidance throughout the learning process (Daghighi, 2023). The modern EFL educational landscape demands assessment methods that extend beyond conventional linguistic measurement (Monib et al., 2020). Unlike traditional summative assessments, which focus solely on evaluating final outcomes, FA offers continuous insights that assist both educators and students in understanding and enhancing language learning (Hamdi, 2023).

This approach aligns with broader trends in language education that emphasize communication and student empowerment. By reimagining assessment as a collaborative process, students transition from passive participants to active contributors to their linguistic development (Fine, 2022). Additionally, FA fosters an adaptive learning environment that supports ongoing growth and allows for real-time instructional adjustments, ultimately enhancing teaching and learning outcomes (Khursheed & Shahid, 2023; Rouben et al., 2023).

1.1. Statement of the problem

The implementation of formative assessment strategies (FAS) by Arab Israeli EFL instructors encounters numerous challenges. Despite its recognized benefits, FA is often neglected or underutilized in EFL classrooms. Some educators find FA challenging due to its time-intensive nature and the complexity of aligning various strategies, tools, and techniques with specific learning objectives (De Vries et al., 2024). Consequently, EFL instructors frequently rely on summative assessment for grading purposes, sidelining FA's potential for fostering deeper learning (Ydesen et al., 2023).

In countries like Israel, centralized educational systems further complicate the adoption of FA by enforcing rigid structures and rules, which limit teachers' ability to adapt (Harrison et al., 2015). These challenges include variations in the instructors' willingness to adopt such strategies and their limited experience in integrating them into classroom activities and interactions (López-Hernández, et al., 2023).

This study addresses these challenges by examining the barriers to implementing FA in EFL teaching and exploring potential solutions. Specifically, it seeks to explore the challenges and issues associated with conducting FA in Arab Israeli EFL classrooms. Additionally, it aims to identify the specific needs of Arab teachers that could support them in implementing FA more effectively and fill the knowledge gap in this critical area, while advocating for integrating FA as a core element of EFL instruction.

1.2. Purpose of the study

The study aims to achieve the following objectives:

1. To determine the kind of challenges that EFL instructors face in conducting FA in Arab schools in Israel.

2. To determine what kind of support teachers need from their perspective as practitioners in the field.

The significance of this study stems from the growing global focus on FA in EFL teaching. It aims to identify and analyse the challenges Arab Israeli EFL teachers encounter while implementing FA and the reasons for its limited use in Arab schools, a topic previously unexplored in research. Additionally, this study seeks to bridge the knowledge gap in this area and highlights teachers' perspectives on their needs to facilitate the more effective implementation of FA.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Formative vs. Summative Assessment

FA is a continuous, interactive evaluation process that provides real-time feedback to both students and teachers throughout the learning journey. Originally introduced by Scriven (1967) and further developed by Bloom and colleagues (1968, 1971), FA focuses on small learning units and aims to improve—not just evaluate—the teaching-learning process.

A key distinction of FA lies in its collaborative nature. As Al Khatib (2020) explains, FA functions as a partnership between teachers and students, where both parties actively engage in modifying learning strategies for continuous improvement. This approach helps identify comprehension gaps, enables personalized learning experiences, and ensures the educational process remains responsive to individual needs. Kulasegaram and Rangachari (2018) further note that FA goes beyond content mastery to reshape students' attitudes and encourage personal growth, making it a vital component of educational development.

In contrast to FA, summative assessment serves a different purpose. Typically conducted at the end of a unit or academic period, summative assessments evaluate overall student achievement and content mastery (Kibble, 2017). These assessments, which include final exams, standardized tests, and culminating projects, are often high-stakes and significantly impact final grades (Houston & Thompson, 2017). While FA provides ongoing guidance and opportunities for adjustment, summative assessment offers a comprehensive measure of learning outcomes at specific endpoints.

2.2. What makes exploring teachers' perspectives on formative assessment essential for understanding its implementation?

Teachers' perceptions of FA play a pivotal role in its successful implementation and effectiveness in improving student outcomes. Educators' understanding and beliefs about formative assessment influence how they design, execute, and interpret these practices in their classrooms. When teachers view FA as a tool for enhancing student learning rather than merely a monitoring mechanism, they are more likely to integrate it

effectively into their teaching strategies. For example, Khursheed & Shahid (2023) highlights that positive teacher attitudes toward FA are crucial for fostering student engagement and tailoring instruction to meet diverse learning needs. Moreover, teacher perceptions significantly impact the quality of feedback provided, which is a cornerstone of FA practices (Vuegen et al., 2021).

However, challenges arise when teachers hold misconceptions about FA or lack confidence in their ability to apply it effectively. Studies indicate that teachers may perceive FA as an additional workload rather than an integral part of teaching and learning (Yan et al., 2022). This perception can lead to superficial implementation, where formative practices are reduced to checklist-style evaluations rather than meaningful engagements with students' learning processes. Thus, professional development and training tailored to reshape teachers' perceptions are essential. Training helps educators appreciate the value of FA in fostering a dynamic learning environment and equips them with practical strategies to overcome implementation barriers (Bibi et al., 2024). Cultivating positive perceptions among teachers is, therefore, foundational to the success of formative assessment in achieving its pedagogical goals.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Instrument

This qualitative study utilized an open-ended questionnaire as its primary instrument, allowing teachers to provide detailed and unrestricted responses. The questionnaire included five core questions addressing key themes of formative assessment, along with an additional question inviting teachers to suggest ways to improve the implementation of formative assessment strategies. Its design was informed by a comprehensive review of existing formative assessment frameworks and instruments, including the works of Black and Wiliam (1998), Stiggins (2005), and Brookhart et al. (2008). Although these sources are from earlier foundational studies, they continue to be highly relevant and widely cited in current educational research and practice, providing a strong theoretical basis for the questionnaire items. To ensure the instrument's validity and relevance, a rigorous Delphi committee process was applied, involving a panel of international experts who provided structured feedback over multiple rounds. Each round focused on evaluating the clarity, relevance, and alignment of the questionnaire items with the study's objectives.

Based on the experts' input, iterative revisions were made to refine and finalize the instrument. The Delphi validation method not only enhanced the precision and applicability of the questionnaire items but also confirmed the instrument's effectiveness in capturing the intended constructs, thereby significantly bolstering its credibility and robustness for use in this study.

The themes in the questionnaire related to the five formative assessment strategies applied in the EFL classrooms of the teachers who participated in this study were: sharing learning aims, questioning, self-assessment, peer assessment and feedback, in addition to

a question inviting teachers to propose suggestions for improving the implementation of FAS, as shown in the *open-ended questionnaire*: “Teachers’ Perspective on the Challenges of the Application of FAS in their Classroom”:

- a. Sharing Learning Aims: What are the primary challenges you encounter when trying to integrate sharing learning aims classes?
- b. Questioning: What are the primary challenges you encounter when trying to integrate questioning into classes?
- c. Self-Assessment: What are the primary challenges you encounter when trying to integrate self-assessment into classes?
- d. Peer Assessment: What are the primary challenges you encounter when trying to integrate peer- assessment into classes?
- e. Feedback: What are the primary challenges you encounter when trying to integrate feedback into classes?
- f. What kind of support or resources would make it easier for you to implement FA effectively in your classroom?

3.2. Participants

This study collected data from 20 Arab female English language teachers in northern Israel, representing various school levels, including elementary, junior high, and high school. The participants were drawn from different regions in northern Israel. To maintain anonymity, each teacher was assigned a number from 1 to 20. Their ages range from 22 to 56, and their teaching experience spans 5 to 33 years (see Table 1).

Table 1

Participants’ Years of Experience in Teaching English

Participant	Years of Experience	Participant	Years of Experience
1	7	11	26
2	13	12	18
3	9	13	10
4	20	14	19
5	17	15	5
6	22	16	15
7	30	17	33
8	11	18	23
9	22	19	9
10	6	20	12

3.3. Data analysis

The qualitative data gathered from the open-ended questionnaire completed by English teachers at various school levels were analysed by using descriptive and content analysis (Ültay et al., 2021). This analysis aimed to examine teachers' views on how FAs influence students' motivation and performance in EFL classrooms. Content analysis, a qualitative research method for drawing reliable and valid conclusions from textual or contextual materials (Krippendorff, 2018), was employed to interpret the responses, highlighting recurring themes, patterns, and meanings. This approach enabled the researcher to organise qualitative data into categories of similar responses, uncovering key trends and insights from the participants' perspectives. The analysis process began with the researcher immersing herself in the data by carefully reviewing the responses to grasp their overall meaning. Following this, the unit of analysis was established, focusing on specific words, phrases, or sentences that captured the core themes articulated by the participants.

The researcher created a set of categories to represent the key concepts and recurring ideas identified in the data. These categories were grouped into themes connected to the five formative assessment strategies and their influence on classroom atmosphere, student motivation, and achievement. After defining the categories, the researcher systematically coded the data by assigning portions of the responses to the appropriate categories. This organised approach to coding made it possible to identify the frequency of themes and uncover relationships between different categories. Subsequently, patterns and trends in the data were analysed to derive meaningful insights and reveal the core messages expressed in the participants' responses.

3.4. Methodological procedure

To investigate the effect of formative assessment strategies on the motivation and achievement of Arab students in the EFL classrooms, a detailed implementation plan was developed for use across multiple schools. As part of this initiative, the researcher organized a supplementary course within the framework of a Professional Learning Community (PLC). This course ran for five months, from January to June 2024, with teachers meeting weekly for three-hour sessions. These sessions focused on FA, exploring various themes, strategies, and related components.

Teachers were tasked with applying the formative assessment strategies detailed by Qadura Massri & Gómez-Parra (2023) in a selected class. The primary aim of this initiative was to assess the impact of these strategies on students' motivation and academic performance in English lessons.

At the conclusion of the five-month period, after implementing the strategies and gathering feedback on their impact in the EFL setting, participants completed a five-question open-ended questionnaire. This questionnaire was designed to gather their reflections and insights on the use of formative assessment strategies in their classrooms.

4. FINDINGS

This section presents the content analysis of the questionnaire data, highlighting teachers' perceptions of the challenges they encountered when implementing the five formative assessment strategies in their EFL classrooms: sharing learning aims, questioning, peer- assessment, self-assessment and feedback. It also includes an analysis of their suggestions to make the implementation of FA more effective. Segments of the responses were assigned to the relevant categories, which contributed to identifying the frequency of certain themes and highlighted relationships between the different categories.

Teachers' responses are transcribed below and classified according to the five themes of research:

- a. Sharing Learning Aims:** What are the primary challenges you encounter when trying to integrate sharing learning aims classes?

Teacher 5: "I found this strategy very useful. I did not face any challenges implementing it."

Teacher 9: "Sharing learning helped my students know what I want them to learn in the lesson. Implementing it was very quick and did not need much time. So, it was not challenging for me."

Teacher 16: "It is not a challenging strategy to implement. It does not require much lesson time."

- b. Questioning:** What are the primary challenges you encounter when trying to integrate questioning into classes?

Teacher 3: "I usually dedicate a few minutes to this strategy at the beginning of the lesson to know where my students stand. It makes the class very interactive. I didn't feel it was challenging."

Teacher 11: "Questioning helps me understand what material I need to focus on. I find it very useful and not challenging."

Teacher 14: "Eliciting information from my students makes both of us understand where they are in terms of material, it does not need much time to apply so I don't find it challenging."

- c. Self-Assessment:** What are the primary challenges you encounter when trying to integrate self-assessment into classes?

Teacher 10: "I don't find self-assessment challenging. I give my students a rubric to follow, which helps them to be independent learners."

Teacher 16: "The only challenge about self-assessment is the time I need to dedicate to this strategy in my 45-minute lesson, I'm afraid I cannot apply it every lesson."

Teacher 19: “My students like to compare my comments to theirs. I don’t find it challenging other than I cannot do it every lesson as of the time it needs.”

- d. Peer Assessment:** What are the primary challenges you encounter when trying to integrate peer- assessment into classes?

Teacher 9: “Before applying peer assessment, students need to grasp the importance and purpose of this strategy, and know that it is not a judgmental process.”

Teacher 7: “I want to use peer-assessment, but I feel like I need more time and guidance on how to let my students apply it in a meaningful not harmful way.”

Teacher 12: “Two things I see challenging about peer assessment. One, the time of the lesson which is very short to cover the material I’m required to cover and give my students effective time to peer- assessment. Second, I need to understand how I should apply it and deal with it in a meaningful manner.

- e. Feedback:** What are the primary challenges you encounter when trying to integrate feedback into classes?

Teacher 14: “It’s challenging to give each student the attention they deserve when I’m managing a class of 30 diverse students. While feedback is valuable, it’s not always feasible with such large groups.”

Teacher 8: “The challenge for me was the time required to consistently give feedback to my 9th-grade students.”

Teacher 11: “I’m afraid that I won’t be able to give feedback to give immediate feedback to all my students. There is material that I’m required to deliver to my 5th grades, and immediate feedback will leave me short in time.”

Teacher 19: “The class is too big to reach to every student and comment on everyone’s work.”

Teacher 4: “The ministry’s requirements are too demanding. We are supposed to cover a large amount of material in too little time. Which does not allow us to reach out to every student and comment on their work.”

- f. What kind of **support or resources** would make it easier for you to implement formative assessment effectively in your classroom?**

Teacher 6: “Formative assessment is a treasure, but teachers lack the knowledge. They need to participate in professional development programs to support its implementation.”

Teacher 10: “The school needs to provide us training lessons in our schedule to apply Formative Assessment effectively.”

Teacher 20: “There must be a curricular change and a change of mindset! FL teaching must move from being summative to being formative. As this summative nature leaves almost no room for formative assessment.”

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

FA, which emphasizes continuous feedback to enhance student learning, provides several benefits compared to traditional summative assessments. However, implementing it can be difficult for teachers. This study aimed to highlight the challenges faced by English language teachers in Arab schools when applying FAs. The responses from the validated open-ended questionnaire provide insight into the various challenges teachers face when implementing FAS in their classrooms. These challenges primarily revolve around time constraints, class sizes, and the need for adequate support and training to effectively integrate formative assessment practices.

As shown by our results, teachers generally found sharing learning aims to be an easy and effective strategy, with no significant challenges reported. Teachers 5, 9, and 16 emphasised that this strategy was quick to implement and did not consume much class time. These positive responses align with research suggesting that clearly defined learning goals help focus students' attention and increase engagement (Zajda, 2024). Given its simplicity and ease of implementation, it seems that sharing learning aims is a formative assessment strategy that teachers are able to use consistently without major barriers.

Questioning emerged as another strategy that teachers found useful and manageable. Teachers 3, 11, and 14 highlighted their role in fostering interactivity and gauging students' understanding. These teachers appreciated how questioning enabled them to assess where students stood in terms of content knowledge without requiring significant time or effort. This finding aligns with assertion that questioning is a key tool for FA, as it provides immediate insight into student understanding and helps teachers adjust their instruction accordingly (Pan et al., 2024).

While self-assessment was generally viewed positively by some teachers, several others mentioned time constraints as a significant challenge. Teachers 10, 16, and 19 noted that although the strategy was effective, it was difficult to implement regularly due to the limited time available in each lesson. Teacher 16 particularly emphasised the challenge of fitting self-assessment into a 45-minute lesson. This concern reflects a common issue in time-constrained educational settings, where teachers struggle to balance the various demands of the curriculum with the time needed for effective formative assessment (Cooper, 2015). However, despite this challenge, teachers noted that providing rubrics or structured guidelines helped students engage in self-assessment more independently, which is consistent with the literature that supports the use of rubrics to guide self-assessment (Dang & Le, 2023).

The responses regarding peer assessment revealed a more nuanced set of challenges. Teachers 9, 7, and 12 identified concerns related to students' understanding of the purpose of peer assessment and the time required to implement it effectively. Teacher 9 emphasised the importance of ensuring that students grasp the non-judgmental nature of peer assessment, whereas Teacher 7 expressed a need for more guidance on how to facilitate peer assessment meaningfully. Teacher 12's concerns about time limitations echoed those raised for other formative assessment strategies, suggesting that the logistical challenges of fitting peer assessment into the class schedule were a recurring

theme. These concerns about time and student preparation are well-documented in the literature, which suggests that peer assessment can be an effective tool for promoting reflection and collaborative learning, but it requires careful planning and adequate time for students to engage meaningfully (Adesina et al., 2023; Mellon et al., 2024).

Feedback emerged as one of the most challenging aspects of FA, particularly in large classrooms. Teachers 14, 8, and 11 noted the difficulty of providing individualised feedback to every student, particularly in classes with 30 or more students. Teacher 4 comments about the demands of the curriculum and the need to cover a large amount of material in a short period further underscores the time constraints that limit the feasibility of providing effective feedback. The issue of time limitations is particularly acute in large classrooms, where managing student needs and delivering personalised feedback is a significant challenge (Henderson & Phillips, 2015). The challenge is particularly acute in underfunded sectors, such as Arab- schools, where larger class sizes are more common, and additional resources are scarce (Alshammari, 2024; Shafir et al., 2016). Despite these challenges, feedback remains a cornerstone of FA, with studies demonstrating its crucial role in improving student learning and achievement (Hattie & Timperley, 2007).

In addition to the challenges posed by large classroom sizes and time constraints, Israel's education system is heavily centred on summative assessments, such as the Meitzav and Bagrut exams, which dominate the curriculum (Ydesen et al., 2023). This emphasis on high stakes testing leaves limited space for FA practices that could foster a more dynamic, student-centred learning environment (Ydesen et al., 2020, 2023). Under pressure to prepare students for these standardised exams, teachers often resort to "teaching to the test", limiting their ability to implement innovative teaching strategies and reducing students' opportunities for deeper, more meaningful learning (Harrison et al., 2015).

Furthermore, the curriculum set by the Ministry of Education prioritises grammar, reading comprehension, and writing skills across various grade levels (Syrquin, 1998). While this curriculum aligns with international standards, it lacks the flexibility needed to address the diverse needs of students, particularly in multilingual classrooms such as those found in Arab schools (Zeid & Cretu, 2020). Consequently, teachers are constrained by a rigid curriculum that makes it difficult to incorporate formative assessment practices, which require adaptability to respond to real-time student feedback.

Throughout delivering the PLC (professional learning community) the researcher also noticed another important factor that might also contribute to the way teachers perceive the implementation of formative assessment might be their teaching experience years: Senior educators (Teachers 6,7, 9, 11, 14, 17 and 18) often find the implementation of FA assessment particularly challenging. Many teachers with 19 to 30 years of professional experience have well-established teaching routines, which can make them resistant to adopting new assessment practices (Woodland, 2016). Additionally, these teachers may view FA as an added burden rather than an enhancement to student learning (Panorkou & Kobrin, 2017). The pressure to meet institutional expectations and the demands of standardised testing further detract from their ability to prioritise ongoing, informal assessment techniques (Carroll, et al., 2019). Consequently, while these senior teachers may recognise the value of formative assessment, practical constraints such as

large class sizes and time limitations often prevent them from effectively incorporating it into their teaching.

On the other hand, new teachers are generally more receptive to adopting innovative teaching strategies, including FA. This openness can be attributed to their recent exposure to modern educational theories and their focus on student-centred teaching (Cabanillas-García, 2025; Shruthi et al., 2025). New teachers are often more inclined to explore methods that foster active engagement and personalised feedback (Cents-Boonstra, 2021), which are key components of FA. However, despite their enthusiasm, novice teachers may still face challenges related to classroom management and institutional pressures, which can hinder the full implementation of these practices.

When asked about possible suggestions to facilitate the implementation of formative assessment strategies, the teachers highlighted several critical dimensions of the challenges and opportunities associated with implementing formative assessment practices in schools. Firstly, it is important to underline the fact that there was a consensus regarding the importance of professional development as a foundational step toward improving formative assessment practices. As Teacher 6 aptly describes, formative assessment is perceived as a “treasure” that remains underutilised due to a lack of teacher knowledge. This underscores the urgent need for professional development programs that equip teachers with the theoretical understanding and practical tools necessary for integrating formative assessments into their teaching. Moreover, Teacher 10 emphasises the importance of institutional support in this transformation. Teachers express the need for dedicated time and resources within their schedules to receive targeted training. This point highlights the role of school leadership in prioritising formative assessment by providing structural support and ensuring that professional learning opportunities are embedded within the school culture. Without institutional backing, even the most well-intentioned efforts by individual teachers may face significant hurdles.

Teacher 20's perspective adds another layer of complexity by advocating for systemic changes. According to this teacher, the shift from summative to formative assessment requires not only professional training but also a fundamental change in curriculum design and mindset. The existing focus on high-stakes, summative evaluations limits the scope of FA, constraining its potential to foster meaningful learning experiences. This statement aligns with broader educational literature, which suggests that sustainable implementation of FA practices often necessitates alignment with curricular frameworks and broader educational policies (Pastore 2024).

The findings of this study underscore the multifaceted challenges faced by English language teachers in Arab schools when attempting to implement formative assessment strategies. Despite its potential to foster student-centred learning, the adoption of FA is hindered by time constraints, large class sizes, and an education system predominantly focused on high-stakes summative testing. Teachers acknowledged the value of strategies such as sharing learning aims and questioning, which were easier to implement, but identified feedback, peer assessment, and self-assessment as more challenging due to logistical and institutional limitations. The study also highlights the need for professional development, institutional support, and systemic changes to curriculum design to facilitate the shift from summative to formative assessment. Addressing these barriers

requires a collaborative effort involving policymakers, school leaders, and educators to create a more flexible and supportive environment for formative assessment practices.

However, this study is limited by the fact that only teachers who participated in the Professional Learning Community (PLC) were involved, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to the broader population of English language teachers in Arab schools. Future research should consider longitudinal designs to examine the long-term impact of formative assessment implementation and explore student perspectives to gain a more comprehensive understanding. Investigations into effective models of professional development and systemic reforms tailored to under-resourced schools would also provide valuable insights for policy and practice.

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