Challenges of Implementing Formative Assessment by Iraqi EFL Instructors at University Level

Khaldoon Waleed Husam Al-Mofti[1]

[1] Department of English, College of Arts, University of Anbar, Al-Anbar, Iraq

ABSTRACT

Formative assessment (FA) is an essential element of EFL classrooms. It allows instructors to amend, adjust, and monitor the process of teaching to reach their desired goals. However, this form of assessment is often overlooked in Iraqi EFL classrooms. As such, this study aims to investigate the challenges of implementing the FA strategies by Iraqi EFL university instructors and their attitudes to improve its use effectively in teaching. The data for this study were gathered through the observation of six EFL classes and semi-structured interviews conducted with three EFL instructors from three different Iraqi universities. The results revealed that there are many challenges for FA strategies implementation. Some of them were related to the EFL instructors' insufficient knowledge to conduct FA strategies effectively and also their inability to create assessment criteria for their tasks and activities. Moreover, the time-consuming nature of the FA strategies and time limit of the class sessions makes it impossible for the instructors to integrate these strategies into their teaching. Furthermore, the instructors also reported that their students do not have enough knowledge of FA strategies, and cannot be involved in their implementation. Finally, the study recommends that training is needed for the Iraqi EFL instructors especially those with less experience on how to integrate and use FA strategies in the classroom.

KEY WORDS: Challenges, EFL Classrooms, Formative Assessment, Iraqi EFL Classroom, University Level

1. INTRODUCTION

Formative assessment (FA) is an essential element of EFL classrooms (Jin, 2017). Wei (2010, 838) defines it as a "range of formal and informal assessment procedures undertaken by instructors as an integral part of normal teaching to modify and enhance learning". Also, it helps educators and instructors to measure the effectiveness of teaching and the degree of lesson achievements. Besides that, it allows instructors to amend and adjust teaching instructions throughout their observation of how lessons content is delivered and how learning objectives are met. Therefore, teaching and assessment cannot be separated in every lesson of EFL classrooms (Torres, 2019). FA, according to some educators, it supports learning and motivates the students during the positive and negative feedback they get from their teachers. Moreover, it helps instructors to know their students' needs and "progress concerning a particular unit of learning" (Karimi, 2014:4).

It is then agreed by many educators and researchers that FA is an ongoing process starts from the lesson plan period and continues to the actual implementation of the lesson in the classroom. Teachers often use FA to have insight on how educational instructions are moving towards achieving the required and desired objectives (Newton, 2007; Filsecker & Kerres, 2012). More importantly, it can be applied either by computer software tools in distant learning such as My Accesor or through the traditional way of classroom interaction with the students as a form of constructive feedback. Although of its importance in EFL teaching, FA is

usually neglected and sometimes overlooked by many instructors. It is argued by some instructors that it is a complex process and difficult to implement because of its time-consuming feature. They may also complain about its different strategies, tools, and techniques (Wei, 2010) in which its applicability is contingent on its purpose with every strategy for a specified objective. For instance, in Iraq, the centralized system influences the application of FA strategies in the EFL teaching where teachers have to follow fixed educational systems, rules and cannot amend them to some extent. Therefore, EFL instructors may encounter one or all of these challenges together. As such, the current study is essentially required to identify this gap knowledge and try to find solutions to it.

Nevertheless, even though FA strategies use in teaching is significant, and its importance is quite evident in EFL classrooms, it can be said that qualitative and quantitative research on this essential component of EFL instruction is overlooked and missed in Iraqi EFL contexts to the researcher's knowledge. This lack of knowledge and with little research on FA may be attributed to its known-grading and marking features. EFL instructors in Iraq usually focus their attention on only one type of assessment, the summative assessment that is used to give scoring and grading to the students. Thus, the current study tends to explore and fill the gap knowledge on this important field in EFL teaching previous texts.

1.1 The Statement Of The Problem

More specifically then, using FA strategies by Iraqi EFL instructors is faced by many challenges. These challenges vary in terms of instructors' willingness to use them or the lack of experience to integrate them in the classroom activities and interactions. As such, the current study aims to investigate the challenges and problems in conducting FA in Iraqi EFL classrooms. Besides, the study intends to highlight the kind of problems that Iraqi EFL instructors face in conducting FA strategies and their knowledge about it.

1.2 The 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 Iraq.
2. To identify the number of FA strategies used in each lesson in comparison to the whole class time.
3. From conclusions, the study aims to pinpoint the pedagogical implications behind the challenges of using FA to avoid them in planning and implementing EFL instructions in Iraqi EFL classrooms.

1.3 Research Questions

The current study tries to answer the following questions:
1. What are the main challenges or difficulties that Iraqi EFL teachers face for implementing and conducting FA strategies and tools in the classroom?
2. To what extent do Iraqi EFL teachers apply FA tools and strategies in their teaching in?
3. What is the amount of influence that has the challenges on the use of FA strategies on instructions at Iraqi EFL classrooms?

1.4 Significance of the Study

The importance of the current study lies in the rising attention of FA worldwide in EFL teaching. This study helps in defining and recognizing the challenges that Iraqi EFL teachers face during their implementation of FA. Moreover, it also pinpoints the reasons behind not using this kind of assessment especially in the Iraqi context where no previous research has been conducted on this important part of EFL teaching and learning to fill the knowledge gap.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 The Effectiveness of Using FA in EFL Classrooms

There is consensus among instructors that FA is an effective and powerful element of EFL classrooms and its applicability is important for a successful learning environment with better results (Black and Wiliam, 2009; McMillan, Venable, & Varier, 2013; Popham, 2014; Ketabi & Ketabi, 2014). However, its effectiveness is conditioned upon a long time of practice (Shavelson, 2008) and its applicability is a "complicated process" according to Akhmedina (2017). It is complicated as he suggests because some instructors need to have diagnostic abilities, meaning they have to know how to reflect and analyze the learning process. Alternatively, in one exceptional study, Areiza (2013) argues that FA applicability does not require special knowledge but the same kinds of "testing instruments" can be used with some adaptations.

Overall, FA has seen much attention recently by scholars and teachers because it is an internationally acquired reputation of being very effective in EFL teaching and learning. Therefore, some researchers emphasized that FA strategies use and applicability requires long experience as well as 'significant effort and knowledge' Akhmedina (2017, P. 25).

2.2 Previous Studies

Past studies varied with different aims, methods, results, and they "indicated the importance of FA to improve the quality of the teaching and learning process

in the classroom" Widiastuti & Saukah (2017). Some studies focused on the reasons for not conducting FA in EFL classrooms as in Tan (2004); Dunphy (2010); Bennet (2011); Heitink et al (2015). These studies concluded that the main reason why teachers not taking the opportunity of using the FA is that they lack the skills and knowledge of using the FA. These instructors complained that FA is time-consuming and they were unable to integrate it in their instructions. Henceforth, this summarizes that the use of FA is mainly contingent on the professional experience of the instructors and their qualifications to conduct it.

Other studies focused on the instructors' willingness to use FA during their teaching in EFL classrooms as in Sondergeld et al (2010). While some other studies were concerned with the students' feedback and using the FA in classrooms and how it helps to support learning as in Owen (2016), in general, aligning the lesson outcomes with its specified objectives.

To the researcher's knowledge, however, no previous study was conducted to investigate the challenges of using FA in the Iraqi EFL classroom. Therefore, the researcher was motivated to conduct the current one. On the other hand, in the Iraqi EFL teaching and learning contexts, previous studies were mainly focused on EFL learner's motivation, for example, in Al-Mofti and Hussein (2019) and Abdullah and Al-Mofti (2017) or on EFL students' pragmatic competence Hussein and Al-Mofti (2014).

3. METHODOLOGY

To answer adequately the questions raised in this study, there was a need to conduct a qualitative analysis. As such, the tools used to collect data for qualitative analysis were semi-structured interviews conducted with three EFL teachers at three different Iraqi universities. In addition to the interviews, observation of six EFL classes from the three Iraqi different universities was conducted to check the instructors' awareness, knowledge, and use of the FA strategies. These observed classes were analyzed qualitatively using the "grounded theory". The Iraqi universities under investigation for the current study were the faculty of Arts at the University of Anbar, university of Baghdad, and the University of Mosul. Thus, one teacher was chosen from each university for the interviews. While the two observatory classes were attended and conducted for each one of the selected three teachers.

On the other hand, quantitative analysis was excluded from this study only in few instances where the frequency of using FA by the Iraqi instructors were counted because the main objective is to investigate the challenges of using FA by Iraqi EFL teachers and the focus was on analyzing descriptive information rather than statistical data.

3.1 The Participants

As mentioned above, the three male instructors of this study were selected upon their consensus and approval using (Creswell, 2014) for sampling the participants. They are instructors at the faculty of Arts at the universities under investigation, who has been teaching English as a foreign language for almost the same period, 6 years with different ages. The youngest is 31 and the oldest 36 years old. All of them teach materials related to English language and linguistics, holding a master's degree in English linguistics from Iraqi universities. They were given the labels A, B, and C to keep their identity hidden.

According to Jef Verschueren, presuppositions are "relations between a form of expression and an implicit meaning which can be arrived at by a process of (pragmatic) inference." The presupposition is "an implicit meaning that must be presupposed, understood, taken for granted for an utterance to make sense." (1999, p. 30). On the other hand, Lambrecht regards presuppositions as "a lexicogrammatical phenomenon that belongs to the information mutually known on the part of interlocutors in conversational exchange." Hence, he defines presupposition as "the set of propositions lexicogrammatically evoked in a sentence which the speaker assumes the hearers already know or is ready to take for granted at the time of speech" (1994, p. 52).

The term presupposition first appeared in the work of the German philosopher Gottlob Frege (1892) in his writings on the nature of reference and referring expressions. Kadmon (2001, p. 10) summarizes Frege's main claims as follows:

- Reference expressions (names, definite descriptions) carry the presupposition that they do in fact refer.
- For a sentence to have a truth value, its presupposition must hold.
- A presupposition of a sentence is also a presupposition of its negation.

3.2 The Interviews

The interviews were conducted in English with each one of the teachers separately, one-to-one interview. Each interview lasted for 40-50 minutes and at the location of the participants' choice. This allowed the researcher to talk and have long discussions with the participants about their methods of teaching and narrowing the topic to talk about the nature of their assessment tools that they usually use in their classes. This way of interviewing allowed the researcher to gather data to answer the questions raised in this study about the challenges that the Iraqi EFL teachers face in their teaching. The questions of the interviews were taken and adapted from (Akhmedina: 2017), see Appendix I. The questions are divided into two sections,

main questions, and minor ones. The purpose of these questions is to elicit information about the teachers' knowledge about conducting assessment tools. They can be summarized as follow:

1. Teachers' knowledge and perception about the importance of formative assessment in EFL classes.
2. Teachers' professionalism in using formative assessment.
3. Their attitude and feedback about FA
4. The general challenges and obstacles that the teachers face during the implementation of FA in their classes.

The complete form of the questions is in the appendix section of this research (Appendix I1) as adopted from (Akhmedina: 2017).

3.3 Observation Tool

Six EFL classes of the three participants were observed using the EFL teacher observation tools adopted from the new teacher project (2011) "Rating Assessment of Performance Areas" and "Checklist (criterion-based) Form" from Peer Observation of Teaching (2017). The forms of observation tools were adopted and compiled in one form with some minor modifications by the researcher. The final version of the tool was circulated to the scientific committee of the English department in the Faculty of Arts at the University of Anbar for their feedback and approval. More importantly, the form focused on marking FA strategies used by the observed instructors and their knowledge about the main purpose of the observation in order not to draw their attention to FA. These observatory classes were conducted mainly to support the data compiled from the interviews and to validate the results obtained. To avoid any subjectivity of the observation tool used by the researcher, one experienced instructor attended the observation classes and assisted the researcher in the FA strategies used by the instructors.

4. DATA

To answer the questions of this study, the collected data from the interviews and the observation of EFL classes are presented here for the analysis with some quoted verbatim of the answers collected from the participants. They were presented with coding into topics and analyzed based on the "grounded theory" method under each research question of the study in the discussion section below. Tables are used for each participant to present information related to the observed classes

4.1 Findings of the Observation Classes

In the following section, the results of the observed classes are presented in tables for each one of the

participants. They contain information on whether the instructors use FA in their teaching and how frequently they use it and what the types they use are. The types of FA strategies observed in the research are adopted from (Brown, 2010: 6-7). The tables below also show the frequency of using not only the FA but also the summative assessment (SA) used by the instructors during the observed classes. This was done to identify and compare all the types of assessment implemented by the instructors and their significance concerning the lesson and teaching process. In addition to that, the percentage of time allocated for the FA strategies implemented to whole class time is calculated to show their percent of applicability and use. The following table (1) is used to show results obtained from the observed classes of participant A:

TABLE 1
Participant A Uses of FA in The Two Observed Classes.

Participants A	Frequency of using FA	Real-time Assessment	End of Class Assessment (Summative)	Time of using FA in one class /45 minutes
Class 1	2 (feedback)	-	-	% .05
Class 2	-	-	-	% 00

The real-time assessment is also presented in table (1) to refer to the cases where the teacher stops the learners to give them immediate feedback for their overall performance in the class. This type of assessment according to Brown (2010) is one form of FA strategy and is characterized by being commonly used by instructors. In the table (1), it is quite evident that Participant A did not have any knowledge about the importance of using assessment in teaching because, in both observed classes, he had no intention to check the level of his students' understanding or measuring the outcomes of his classes at the end. Although he used FA strategies twice in his first class, he seemed unaware of its types when he was asked in the interviews. Moreover, no FA strategies were used in the second class at all. Thus, the objectives set for the lessons were not examined if met or not by the instructor.

The next table (2) is used to present the information obtained from the observed classes of Participant B:

TABLE 2
Participant B Uses of FA in The Two Observed Classes.

Participants B	Frequency of FA used and their types	Real-time Assessment	End of Class Assessment (Summative Assessment)	Time of using FA in one class /45 minutes
Class 1	-	-	1 (15 Minutes) test	% 00
Class 2	-	-	-	% 1.55

As shown in table (2) above, Participants B conducted a 15 minutes test at the end of his first observed class. He seemed to have little knowledge about the differences between FA and SA. He did not use any FA strategies, for instance, he did not use any constructive or immediate feedback when he presented his lecture or when he interacted with his students. Moreover, there was no check for students' understanding of the presented materials at the end of the class. He thought that tests and exams were types of FA rather than SA. The participant used the test as a grading tool to add to the students' total score rather than as a way of checking students understanding or whether the lesson objectives were met. Although of their essential role in EFL classes, Participant B invested the whole class time to present class materials to the students and conducted activities without any FA strategies used. Seemingly, he did not plan to integrate any FA strategies in his lesson plan. The classes were condensed with information, activities and no time was spared for collecting feedback from the students about the topics discussed and explained. Next, is the table (3) that is used for the information obtained from Participant C.

TABLE 3
Participant C Uses of FA in The Two Observed Classes

Participants C	Frequency of FA used and their types	Real-time Assessment	End of Class Assessment (Summative)	Time of using FA in one class /45 minutes
Class 1	4 (1 quiz)+(3 Constructive Feedback)	-	-	8 %
Class 2	5 (1 quiz)+ 4 feedback	-	-	8.6 %

Participant C, on the other hand, had different results from Participants A and B. He showed high knowledge of FA strategies, their importance, and applicability by conducting multiple FA strategies, 4 in the first class and 5 in the second. This is seen from the information obtained from the observed two classes in the table (3). Although, the classes were condensed with information and materials presented by the instructor, however, he managed to integrate some FA strategies into his classes. Apart from what seen with Participants A and B, participant C invested almost 8-8.6 % of the class time to implement FA strategies in the form of quizzes, constructive feedback, and students' feedback. The quiz is an important tool to identify whether the objectives of the lesson were met or not. While students' feedback is an in-depth analysis of teaching methods and procedures implemented by the instructors so he can amend, change, and apply different ones if he receives any negative comments on them from the students.

Generally, and from the 6 observed classes, there was a disparity of the information obtained from the three participants. The following bar chart is used to show the differences between the three participants' results of the observed classes.

BAR CHART 1
Comparison of the three Participants use of FA, Real-time and Summative Assessment in the Observed Classes.
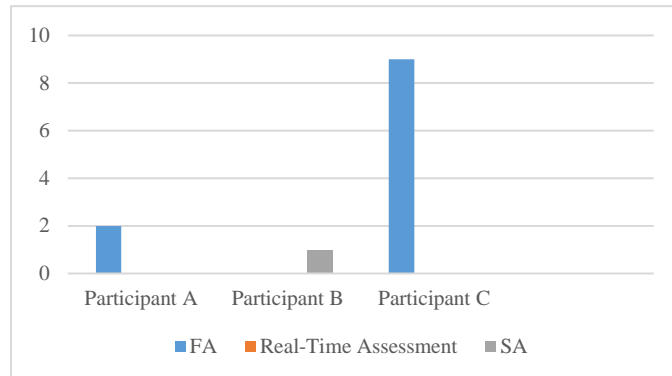
4.2 Findings of The Interviews

In this section, the data collected from the interviews with the participants presented and analyzed. The analysis of the participants' answers is divided into topics following the questions of the interview and presented into sections as follows:

4.2.1 Instructors' Understanding and Knowledge of FA

The instructors' knowledge about FA seemed to be varied from each participant to one another. Their answers about the definition of formative assessment have shown this with support to the information obtained from the observed classes. Based on the feedback taken from the three participants' towards their knowledge of FA, they seemed to have a different understanding of the FA nature. The comment below was taken from Participant B when asked about FA, its purpose and use:

"I can say that formative assessment is something related to the evaluation of what the students have gained from the taught materials. This would consequently help to give a general understanding of how the students have learned and how teaching is aligned with the objectives of the lessons".

Although, the information obtained about participant B in the observed classes showed that he did not use any FA strategies in his classes. He only conducted one scoring test at the end of his class believing it to be a form of FA. However, his comment above clearly denoted the opposite. The feedback showed that participants B is fully aware of the importance of using the FA in teaching through his comment "what the students have gained from the taught materials" and the comment "understanding of how the students have

learned". This comment by Participant B summarized the main important features of FA strategies and their usefulness in the EFL classroom. It was without any surprise supported by a similar comment by Participant C about FA strategies who was the highest participant to conduct FA strategies in his classes. He commented as follow:

"I know that FA is essential in EFL teaching because there is a need to check students' understanding and this could be done through the use of FA strategies".

Through the observatory classes of participant C, it was evident that he was very keen to incorporate FA strategies into his classes in a professional way even though class time was very limited in comparison to the amount of the materials that were presented. His comment supported the theme made by Participant B for the necessity of using FA in the EFL classrooms. Thus, this showed that instructors although aware of FA importance they seemed to struggle to apply it in their teaching. This can be attributed to many reasons, for instance, the inability to integrate and organize FA strategies into the lesson plans and the class materials. This was also observed from the attended classes where the instructors had some struggles to conduct these strategies. Therefore, some training and guidance are required to teach the instructors how to integrate and use FA in teaching and also how to overcome any obstacles may encounter them in the application of the FA.

Participant A, on the other hand, had a different view about the nature of the FA. This was reflected in his understanding and knowledge about FA. He commented about this clearly in his answers to the questions 'what is FA?',

"It is not easy to differentiate the difference between the FA and summative assessment. So, if we apply one of them, we believe that we are applying the other one because we think they are similar and without no distinction".

The comment above supported the claim that some of the EFL instructors are still unable to differentiate and apply the FA strategies and their types. Participant A explicitly mentioned that when he said that 'it is not easy to differentiate the difference between FA and summative assessment' and there is no distinction between the two. This supports the motive above that some training is needed to improve the instructors' knowledge and skills about FA strategies application.

4.2.2   Challenges and Obstacles of Applying FA in Iraqi EFL Classrooms.

The instructors' answers to the question "what are the challenges of using FA strategies in your teaching?" were varied according to the teachers' knowledge of the FA and use. The teachers reported that activities usually take up to 50 % of class time. Their attention is focused on activities and tasks to create an interactive environment for the learners rather than implementing FA strategies. In their response to the challenge question above, there was a consensus among the participants that the challenge to create tasks for students' assessment and to collect information about the learning process is the most difficult one. This is because there are two kinds of FA required, oral and also written based on the subject of the class. For example, in speaking practice, oral FA is required to evaluate the students' performance, while with writing practice, writing tasks are required to assess the written products of the students. The participants also mentioned the other big challenge to them was also the creating of assessment criteria. These assessment criteria usually used to tell the students what they are required to do to meet their learning goals. They have to be created to gather information about the students' performance and progress towards achieving the desired goals and objectives of the class. Thus, creating these assessment formats is challenging for the instructors especially those inexperienced ones.

Another challenge for conducting FA was the students' inability to provide feedback and assessment to their colleagues and themselves. In implementing FA strategies, there is a need to include the students and involve them in the FA process not only the instructors who give the assessment. Thus, one part of the FA tools are missing in the Iraqi context because students cannot assess their peers more objectively. For instance, assessing colleagues usually create tensions among students because they do not perceive the value of assessment as part of learning but rather as judgment. Participant B commented on this issue in the following way:

"I believe that our students' educational mentality is still behind letting them assess their colleagues in a well-qualified way. They could have a prejudiced assessment where this could lead to problems or even clashes with the other students. So, I think this could be challenging for us as teachers".

Moreover, the instructors agreed that the time-consuming nature of FA is another challenge to them especially with the limited time of the class. The instructors reported that it is very difficult to integrate FA strategies into the lesson plan and activities because it is usually allocated for instructor presentation, interaction, and practice of the students. For example, to check students' understanding of a subject, there is a need to conduct a quiz and the quiz usually takes up to 15 minutes of the class time. This time is often allocated for some activities rather than for a quiz. As such, they neglect its importance because, to them, they think that

it is important to finish the curriculum then doing FA. The educational system is centralized as Participant C reported and instructors are asked to finish the curriculum on time. Therefore, all the attention is directed towards the summative assessment to present the results of the students over the course time.

It is also worth mentioning that sometimes providing immediate feedback is challenging and difficult to some instructors according to participant A. He said that in group activities, it is difficult to provide feedback as one form of FA to one student in the class because they are in groups or pairs activities doing the tasks at the same time. Thus, talking to one student and giving him feedback is not possible while the other students are working on the task and need to be monitored. Therefore, providing an immediate assessment of the whole class students at the same time doing the class task is challenging for the instructors.

Participants C pointed out that some FA strategies could be amended and adapted to meet the Iraqi FFL learners' requirements and also to address the challenges the instructors face in their teaching process. For example, amended FA strategies to deal with the time limit of the class and the time-consuming nature of the FA.

4.3 Discussion of Results

It is important to note that the results obtained from the current study cannot be generalized for all the EFL Iraqi instructors because the sample included only three instructors as mentioned earlier. As such, any generalization can only be made if a larger number of instructors are included and participate in collecting enough data for results generalization.

The findings obtained from the data collected through the observed classes and the interviews can be summarized as follows:

1. The inability of the instructors to create classroom activities and assessment criteria for integrating FA strategies.
2. Students can not in any way provide an assessment to their colleagues and help in using FA strategies in the classroom activities.
3. The inability to use immediate feedback to the students because of their large number in each class as well as including feedback in groups' activity.
4. The time-consuming nature of FA that is not implemented in the limited time of the class. Especially with a centralized system of education that focuses on SA rather than FA.

There is a common consensus among the participants that integrating FA in the activities of the lesson requires training and hard work. As such, it is related to the instructors' ability to integrate FA and their experience incorporating the whole lesson plan balancing the tasks

and including the FA strategies. Therefore, experience plays an important role in supporting the instructors in their teaching process and incorporating FA strategies in classroom activities. Those with a lot of experience are more active to integrate FA strategies through the lesson time and vice versa.

Moreover, the participants pointed out an important challenge for FA implementation. Although at the university level, the students seemed to have limited experience and knowledge about providing feedback to their peers in the classroom. Thus, FA strategies are implemented by instructors only without students' participation. As such, there is a real need to raise the awareness of the students about FA and their important role in the learning process to get them engaged to achieve the learning goals.

Another interesting issue that was reported by the participants was the time limit of classes and not having enough time to include FA in the learning process. This challenge is not a case related to experienced or inexperienced instructors but rather an issue related to the educational system. Instructors need to cope with this issue from different perspectives. For instance, it is either to balance time between different activities and FA implementation, or they could allocate whole class for the presentation of new materials and allocate the next class for conducting assessment and so on.

Overall, the findings have been derived from the current study were mostly consistent with the findings of the previous studies with regards to the challenges of conducting FA strategies by EFL instructors as well as the influence of the instructors' sufficient knowledge to implement FA effectively.

5. CONCLUSION

In this study, the concept of FA was investigated deeply in two different ways of collecting data: the observation method of class and the semi-structured interview conducted with the three participants of the current study. For the qualitative data that has been obtained and analyzed, it can be concluded that the challenges of FA strategies implementation in EFL classrooms were highly related to the instructors' knowledge and experience. Besides, the time constraint of the classroom session was also another challenge to the instructors. Moreover, one instructor reported that a large number of students in each class as well as the students' limited knowledge and awareness about FA to provide constructive feedback to their colleagues are also important challenges that should be observed. Therefore, these issues are required to be addressed deeply in future studies.

Finally, the current research also concluded that there was a real need to provide training to the Iraqi EFL instructors about how to use FA effectively and how to

cope with the challenges encountered through the application of FA strategies. For instance, the time limit can be overcome by the allocation of extra time for the class sessions

5.1 Recommendation For Further Research

The current study recommends that research on the kind of training and workshops that Iraqi EFL instructors/teachers receive during their teaching services are required to see if the FA strategies are discussed and taught in this training. This allows the researcher to see and learn about the gap that the instructors have and lead to planning for future training and workshops to support the teachers/ instructors especially the inexperienced ones. Moreover, the current study recommends the investigation of FA implementation across different disciplines such as the history of geography to evaluate their importance in areas other than language learning.

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APPENDIX 1

The following questions' form is adopted from Akhmedina (2017) to collect data from the participants

Questions:

Warm-up questions:

1. What subject do you teach? How long have you been teaching?
2. What is your experience working in the Iraqi EFL classroom?

Attitudes

3. What do you think about the effectiveness of formative assessment?
4. Do you think formative assessment differs a lot from the traditional 5-scale assessment model? If yes, in what ways?

Challenges

5. What is the most difficult aspect of formative assessment in your practice?
6. Do you find it difficult to give feedback that will facilitate learning? Why do you find it difficult?
7. What do you think are the reasons for the challenges you face?
8. What do you think of students' ability to self- and peer-assess?