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The Representation of Learning-Oriented Assessment (LOA) Practice in EFL Contexts: A Case Study of Teacher Questioning Strategies

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Abstract

Learning-oriented assessment (LOA) has recently gained increasing attention among language researchers. It has been found momentous for both teaching and learning. However, its practical domain has remained under-researched and the current literature has mostly focused on its practicality. Nevertheless, the role of teachers' assessment strategies in the implementation and success of LOA has been overlooked, to date. Moreover, there is a dearth of research on how English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers capture moments of spontaneous LOA. To fill these gaps, the present case study explored an Iranian EFL teacher's questioning strategies as an aspect of spontaneous LOA. Utilizing Conversation Analysis (CA) and Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), this study attempted to uncover the instances of LOA practice represented through questioning strategies during classroom interactions at a basic level. The findings revealed that two types of questioning strategies, namely metacognitive questions and designedly incomplete utterances (DIU), occurred when the teacher extended the main assessment task to focus on the earlier learning goals. In so doing, the teacher sought evidence of student learning status already elicited to take the next step. The study has insightful implications for EFL teachers and trainers concerning metacognitive questions and DIU as useful tools to practice LOA in L2 education.

Keywords: classroom assessment, conversation analysis, interpretative phenomenological analysis, learning-oriented assessment, teacher questioning strategies

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1. Introduction

The language used in classroom contexts by teachers and students can remarkably determine what and how students learn (Wilkinson & Silliman, 2000). As for teachers, their questioning strategies are primary features of classroom interaction that constitute a noticeable amount of classroom talk (Heritage & Heritage, 2013). Questions can stimulate critical thinking, provide means to backchannel, evaluate students' understanding, and elicit teacher feedback (Hamp-Lyons & Tavares, 2011). Given its numerous advantages, questioning is called the "epicenter" of teaching and assessment by Heritage and Heritage (2013, p.179). Therefore, it is not surprising that bulks of research have paid attention to teacher questioning as an assessment strategy (Darong & Niman, 2021; Daşkın & Hatipoğlu, 2019; Hamp-Lyons, 2017; Heritage, 2016; Jiang, 2014, 2020). However, as pinpointed by Jiang (2014), the use of questioning by teachers to guide classroom assessment is a daunting task. Despite complications in how to apply questioning, it plays a prominent role in LOA (Hamp-Lyons, 2017). LOA refers to an assessment approach that integrates assessment and learning by foregrounding students' learning in all assessment practices (Mok, 2012). It reconciles formal-informal and summative-formative assessment techniques (Derakhshan & Shakki, 2016; Jones & Saville, 2016).

Moreover, Hamp-Lyons (2017) argued that a learning-oriented use of questioning demands language assessment literacy (LAL) instruction. LAL refers to the capacity to critically think about the assessment purposes, the fitness of assessment tools, and conditions, and finally decide on the actions to take based on the results (Xu & Brown, 2017). Similarly, Fulcher (2021) regarded questioning as one of the four LAL skills that teachers should possess for LOA. He explicated the questioning skills of teachers for LOA and referred to several features of LOA questioning practices including pitch level, difficulty level, timing, selection techniques, and questioning styles. All these characteristics require LAL. Likewise, Jiang (2020) underscored effective questioning as an overlooked component of LAL. Therefore, not only teachers' questioning practices are important for LOA, but they also indicate a dimension of classroom LAL.

Both classroom LAL and LOA are gaining recognition and significance as the former highlights the importance of literacy to the improvement of learning (Black & Wiliam, 2018) and the latter unifies instruction and assessment (Gebril, 2021). Additionally, LOA ensures that classroom tasks serve both assessment and learning

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purposes (Derakhshan & Ghiasvand, 2022). Given these merits, classroom activities that support LOA and represent teachers' LAL require more attention (Fulcher, 2021; Gebril, 2021). Nonetheless, research on L2 assessment has been limited to formal assessments like standardized and achievement testing (Antón, 2015; Hatipoğlu, 2016). Against this dominance, first-hand observation of classroom interaction can open the doors to the informal practices of assessment (Leung & Mohan, 2004). Likewise, unraveling classroom interactions with a focus on teacher questioning practices, as a dimension of LOA, might potentially indicate how these ideas can be operationalized in classroom settings. Inspired by these lacunas and prospects, the present study intended to reveal how EFL teachers' questioning can facilitate LOA in language classrooms.

1. Literature Review

2.1 Learning-Oriented Assessment

Assessment is sometimes conceptualized in a trichotomy of Assessment as Learning (AaL), Assessment for Learning (AfL), and AOL. Generally, "AaL represents the active engagement of students in assessment and their learning, AfL represents the identification of learning throughout the assessment, and AoL represents the measurement of learning by using assessments" (Schellekens et al., 2021). Within this paradigm, each assessment type, AfL, AaL, and AOL, has its own role in supporting learning and is considered an integral part of it (Mok, 2009). In LOA, specifically, both classroom-based assessment and external exams can generate a structured record of learning (Gebril, 2021).

After clarifying the conceptualizations of LOA, various scholars proposed models for the term (e.g., Carless, 2007; Jones & Saville, 2016; Turner & Purpura, 2016). Carless (2007) developed the first model of LOA, which rests on three principles. They include (1) the designation of stimulating tasks, (2) involving students in the assessment process, and (3) giving timely feedback and feedforward. Similarly, Turner and Purpura (2016) developed a model for second language (L2) learning for the first time. Their model included seven dimensions, namely contextual, elicitation, L2 proficiency, learning, instructional, interactional, and affective. Under the first dimension, the social and political contexts of learning are taken into account. The second dimension highlights the elicitation practices that happen in the classroom, such as tests, spontaneous questioning, and feedback. The

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dimension of L2 proficiency considers a model of proficiency that includes the 'what' and 'how' of performance to be targeted by assessment. The next two dimensions, learning and instructional, recognize the important role of learners and teachers in the assessment process, respectively. The dimension of socio-interactional, as the sixth dimension, describes different elicitations embedded in the talk that is followed by feedback and evaluation. Lastly, the affective dimension recognizes the emotions, attitudes, and beliefs involved in LOA.

Jones and Saville (2016) incorporated the same concepts as those of Carless's (2007) and Turner and Purpura's (2016) models but underscored the alignment of the micro-context of a classroom with the macro-context of external testing (Salamoura & Morgan, 2021). Furthermore, Salamoura and Morgan (2021) reviewed LOA frameworks and identified four similar features among them. They realized that all the frameworks capitalize on integrating assessment *for* and *of* learning, collecting evidence and record-keeping, providing feedback, and developing learner autonomy. They also maintained that 'learner autonomy' is the core of all LOA practices and frameworks. Moreover, teacher questioning can be seen among the various dimensions of LOA frameworks (Salamoura & Morgan, 2021). Teacher questioning can capture the evidence of skills that inform feedback provision and decision-making in Carless's (2007) model. Likewise, Jones and Saville (2016) refer to teachers' observation as an opportunity for collecting evidence to link classroom activities to external tests.

The elicitation and socio-interactional dimensions of Turner and Purpura's (2016) model point out the spontaneous questioning and evaluation of classroom teachers. Moreover, Salamoura and Morgan (2021) highlighted the evidence-collecting feature of LOA to be considered in all studies of LOA. All these studies corroborate the significance of teacher questioning as a component of LOA, which can manifest itself in classroom interactions. However, the way teachers' classroom assessment actually facilitates the learning process in light of questioning is left unclear (Turner & Purpura, 2016). That is why many teachers still find themselves incompetent in guiding their assessment toward enhancing students' learning (James, 2014).

2.2 Classroom Interaction and Assessment Research

In a review study, Banerjee (2021) contended that researchers most commonly

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adopted three data collection procedures in LOA, namely interviews, conversation analysis (CA), and narrative inquiry. The studies that focused on LOA in classroom interactions collected data through observations and analyzed them via CA. Regarding the use of CA in LOA research, Banerjee (2021) highlights the usefulness of the procedure for unveiling the associations between instruction, assessment, and learning. She claimed that by examining CA data, what enhances or hinders learning through assessment embedded in talk-in-interaction, or what is called spontaneous assessment (Turner & Purpura, 2016), can be identified. Then Gebril (2021) called for more studies on LOA using CA to unravel spontaneous assessment in classroom interactions.

For example, Purpura et al. (2016) used an LOA approach to specify how classroom assessment situated in interaction promotes the learning of ESL learners. After selecting several assessment episodes, they examined the data through four LOA dimensions, including instructional, socio-interactional, proficiency, and learning. The results showed that evaluative feedback, the cognitive load of assessment, and the quality of the assistance were among the influential components of LOA. Therefore, they concluded that certain types of assistance affect learners' uptake and success. A case of such findings was that unless teachers follow up on error corrections consistently during classroom interaction, learning is unlikely to occur.

In another study, Tsagari (2014) inspected the effectiveness of feedback or assistance in promoting learning in light of LOA and interaction. Using CA, she extracted several features of learning-oriented feedback. She also argued that LOA takes a teacher-centered orientation and is dependent on a set of interactions. It was also identified that extensive use of the Initiation-Response-Feedback chain is an important aspect of learning within the spontaneous assessment. Her investigation also called for rigorous analysis of spontaneous assessment, especially in classroom interaction.

Other researchers have employed observational techniques to examine how spontaneous assessment takes place in classroom contexts. However, LOA has not been the focal point of investigation. For instance, Daşkın and Hatipoğlu (2019) conducted a study on spontaneous formative assessment in classroom interaction. Through CA, they found that references to a past learning event by the teacher are instances of formative assessment. It was contended that such references provide

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evidence of knowledge and enable the teacher to act upon the evidence and instruction. Likewise, Heritage and Heritage (2013) investigated the student-teacher interactions in a fifth-grade writing classroom to find interactional practices of formative assessment. The results of CA showed that the teacher's questioning practices elicit evidence of learning when they are open and pedagogical. Additionally, Jiang (2020) ran classroom observations to identify dominant patterns of teachers' questioning. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to probe how teacher's LAL impacts questioning practices. The results showed that the majority of the teacher questions were convergent and different factors at personal, institutional, and socio-cultural levels affected teachers' LAL in questioning practices.

As research demonstrates, few studies have analyzed classroom interaction to uncover how assessment occurs in classroom interaction (Rea-Dickins, 2006; Sherris, 2011). Such studies are not primarily concerned with classroom assessment, and they do not address practical implications for LOA. They have relied on formative assessment (e.g., Daşkın & Hatipoğlu, 2019; Jiang, 2020) and are concerned with a few dimensions of LOA, such as feedback (e.g., Tsagari, 2014) and instruction (e.g., Purpura et al., 2016), leaving other aspects of LOA out. As pointed out by Daşkın and Hatipoğlu (2019), other ways of doing spontaneous assessment are yet to be uncovered to further demystify the connection between assessment and interaction. In this regard, Gebril (2021) calls for classroom discourse analysis to unravel the complexity of learning-assessment events. Moreover, how EFL teachers conduct questioning in their classroom interactions that occur for assessment is still underexplored (Jiang, 2020). Despite its highlighted significance, micro-analytic research on the use of teachers' questioning as an assessment strategy per se remains limited (Youn & Burch, 2020). To fill these gaps, this study adopted a case study design to investigate questioning strategies of an Iranian EFL teacher that represent LOA practice, using CA and IPA. More particularly, it sought out how teacher questioning strategies represent learning-oriented assessment at specific moments in classroom interactions.

3. Method

3.1 Participant and Research Setting

The case participant of this study was a 38-year-old English teacher with 19 years

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of teaching experience. She had a Ph.D. degree in Applied Linguistics and was an expert in language testing and assessment. At the time of this study, the teacher was teaching English to Iranian students at the basic level of proficiency. She was selected for this study as an intrinsic case given her experience and willingness to cooperate. An intrinsic case study refers to the examination of a special case that demonstrates outstanding qualities (Stake, 1995). Such qualities were evaluated based on Palmer et al.'s (2005) process. The process includes two stages. The first stage required a relevant degree for the current position of the expert and enough experience in the context (i.e., at least 3 years). The second stage needed acknowledgment of expertise from well-informed people, such as school supervisors. These two requirements were met for the chosen teacher. Moreover, to safeguard appropriate participant selection, a semi-structured interview on L2 assessment knowledge, skills, and principles was held with the case to investigate her LAL level (Giraldo, 2018). To cross-check the validity of the interview questions, the expert opinion of two university professors in language assessment was consulted, and revisions were made accordingly. The interview session lasted for about 90 minutes. It is also essential to note that the participant was informed of the purpose and procedure of the study and consented to collaborate with the researchers regarding research inquiries.

3.2 Instruments

This study utilized a qualitative design where data were collected from different instruments including classroom observation and post-observation stimulated recall interviews. The classroom observations were followed up with ethnographic interviews with teachers focusing on how the EFL teacher engaged in spontaneous LOA with her students through questioning. This study used post-observation stimulated recall interviews to get a deep understanding of teachers' cognitive processes for the employment of questioning strategies for LOA. The choice of different instruments is supported by the argument that more detailed and richer data will be obtained which leads to greater reliability and validity than the use of a single method, thus, creating a better understanding of the issue (Creswell, 2003).

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3.3 Data Collection Procedure

The corpus for this study consisted of video recordings of an EFL class in a language school in Iran. The class was comprised of 15 students at a basic level of English proficiency studying an International English coursebook. Each chapter of the book focuses on an integration of two skills, either listening and speaking or reading and writing. The curriculum, final exams, and teaching materials were all set by the school. Class sessions were held twice a week. Students had to take eighteen sessions to complete the course. They were evaluated during the course by the teacher and at the end of the course through the final exams. The teacher carried out classroom assessments, which comprised 65% of students' final scores. Classroom assessment included a range of assessment practices, such as quizzes, group assessments, and classroom dialogue based on the teacher's choice. Ten sessions (20 hours) of her class were recorded, transcribed, and observed in a non-participatory manner. Since the class was held on an online platform and webcams were usually off during the sessions, it was not possible to capture non-verbal data.

The ethical approval for the study was achieved by the school principal. Likewise, the teacher was assured that her information and responses would be used only for research purposes. The researchers introduced the teacher to the aims of the post-observation stimulated recall interviews, and she was asked to read the particular instances of transcribed work and describe her thoughts explicitly. The interview protocols were audio-recorded and transcribed as well. Analysis of post-observation stimulated recall interview data directed at answering the perceptions of the teacher in employing questioning strategies as a tool for LOA.

3.4 Data Analysis

Owing to its complex nature, researching LOA in L2 classrooms is mostly approached through a qualitative method. Likewise, the data analysis of this study was done using CA and IPA. More specifically, several classroom observations were conducted, recorded, and transcribed using Jefferson's (2004) conventions (see Appendix 1). CA was used in this study because it adopts a micro-analysis study of "naturally occurring talk-in-interaction" (Hutchby & Wooffitt, 2008, p. 12). It pays attention to organization sequences of talk and how questions are constructed in classroom interaction. Furthermore, CA does not pose any invalidity issues on studies with very small sample size.

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More specifically, this study used CA-for-Second Language Acquisition (CA-SLA), which is a perspective to indicate how learning happens within interaction (Sert, 2015). By doing so, CA-SLA can potentially reveal the complexity of questioning strategies for learning-oriented assessment used by the teacher in classroom interaction. The identifications of instances of spontaneous LOA questioning strategies were derived from the examination of the corpus of classroom interactions and they were not pre-defined. That is because developing an emic understanding of the classroom interaction requires the researchers to ground the focus based on recording and patterns that emerge rather than researcher-imposed frameworks (Markee & Kasper, 2004). Students' identities were anonymized in the extracts by replacing their names with S followed by a number.

To analyze the data from interviews, this study drew on the insights from IPA. IPA follows a dual interpretation process called 'double hermeneutic'. This requires the researcher to try to make sense of the participants trying to make sense of their world (Smith et al., 2013). Doing so, allows researchers to take an emic approach to understand the participant's personal experiences. In other words, post-observation stimulated recall interviews were conducted to compare the teacher's actual questioning strategies and her interpretations of the strategies. Through iterative analysis of transcribed data, an analysis of the teacher's account was conducted to capture the thinking processes and reasons behind using particular strategies. IPA enables researchers to investigate how the teacher makes sense of her assessment practices at particular moments in interaction-in-talk.

It is also noteworthy that the extracted instances of teacher questioning representing LOA were re-examined by a second coder, who had a Ph.D. degree in applied linguistics with sufficient experience of teaching L2 assessment courses and running qualitative studies in this domain. In doing so, the extracted instances were given to the second coder, who were asked to check them in a week. Consequently, inter-coder reliability of .97 was obtained using Cohen's kappa coefficient. Moreover, to fulfill the principle of confirmability, which is essential in qualitative research, an experienced L2 researcher audit trialed all the data analysis processes (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Despite minor disagreements, overall, a high congruence was achieved at this phase.

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4. Findings

The analysis of the data indicated that two types of teacher's questioning practices act as a practice of spontaneous LOA: (1) meta-cognitive questions, and (2) DIU. In the dataset, three instances were identified that illustrate how these two teacher's questioning practices do spontaneous LOA. The instances were taken from the fifth and ninth sessions of class when reading and vocabulary were practiced, respectively. Extracts 1 and 2 are the best cases of questioning strategies in interaction.

4.1 Metacognitive Question as a Tool for Spontaneous LOA

Several cases of metacognitive questions occurred during the reading time. Metacognition questions are likely to ask students to articulate a cognitive strategy (a reason, motivation, value, and so forth) required to complete a task. Based on the students' responses, the teacher assessed the class understanding and decided where to focus next. Prior to the extract, the teacher was reading a passage from the book, which contained a short text and a set of true/false questions. Along with these questions, she proposed a few metacognitive questions. In extract 1 (Table 1), the teacher asked a student to read the passage once more and answer the true/false questions. When he read the question aloud and responded to the question, the teacher answered back by giving feedback and probing further by a metacognitive question. In other instances, feedback was totally replaced by a metacognitive question, such as lines 17 and 20 in the following extract. This extract indicates how metacognitive questions can serve learning and assessment purposes simultaneously.

Table 1

Post-Observation Stimulated Recall Interview (Extract 1)

Teacher-Students Interaction Transcript	**Video Stimulated Recall Interview Selected Excerpts**	**Teacher's Perspectives**	**Analyst's Interpretations of the Teacher's Perspectives**
1 T: Now↑ 2 True/False questions (.) 3 um:: 4 (.5) S1 (.) You, please.	I: at this point you were supposed to do true/false questions. Why did you ask about the student's idea?	The teacher thinks true/false questions are not reliable enough to check students' understanding.	As the teacher realized the weaknesses of formal assessment exercises, she came up with a strategy to assess students' comprehension of the

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Teacher-Students Interaction Transcript	**Video Stimulated Recall Interview Selected Excerpts**	**Teacher's Perspectives**	**Analyst's Interpretations of the Teacher's Perspectives**
5 S1: (.8) Yes, teacher. 6 Number 1. Ted's (.) mother (.) is at home. 7 (.3) True. 8 (.3) 9 T: Yes. TRUE. Why do you think? 10 S1: (.10) Because (.5) line 1 (.5) says Ted's (.) mother is not↑ in hospital. 11 T: RIGHT (.) uh. 12 Next question, please. 13 S1: (.8) number 2 (1) Ted's mother works (.) in in hospital. (.6) °False° 14 T: False? 15 S1: (5) 16 S2, S3, S4: [yes] 17 T: False? How come? 18 S1: (.3) °I don't kno- True?° 19 S2: False 20 T: who: said false? Why? 21 S2: Teacher (.) B is false (.) because Ted's mother (.) < is not in hospital >? 22 T: actually:: no 23 it is not because of that. Uhm (.) Anybody else? 24 What is the answer? and why? S10? S7? (.) S5? S4? 25 (10) 26 T: No one? 27 (3) 28 T: Look at ED at the end of the verb (.) work in your book (.3) Ted's mother workED	T: the reason I asked this question is that there is a high chance of getting the question correctly, like 50% chance. Very often, students just guess the answer. I: so comprehension matters. T: definitely. The aim of the exercises is to see if students learnt the passage. You know. I: and you asked about their opinion to check if they had learnt? T: Yes, so that they can show me if they understand the text. I: by doing so, don't you think you diverted the focus of the lesson to past tense? T: we had past tense in the unit. And, I wanted to see what they taught no just past tense.	She finds the aim of the exercises in contrast to the passage. The teacher comments that by expressing their opinions about the reasons they can show if they are on the right track. The teacher believes that she was working on reading comprehension and not grammar. However, the unintentional reference to past tense is not irrelevant to the focus of the unit.	passage by asking metacognitive questions. The teacher cares about the validity of the assessment activity as she mentions the aim of the exercises may not match the activities they do. In other words, true/false questions may simply require a checkmark by guessing rather than assessing students' learning status. Metacognitive questions serve as a means to get deeper insights into students' level of comprehension. The teacher assesses students' understanding of the text. The teacher understands the goal of the assessment. She accounts for her diversion to past tense as one of the goals of the unit.

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Teacher-Students Interaction Transcript	Video Stimulated Recall Interview Selected Excerpts	Teacher's Perspectives	Analyst's Interpretations of the Teacher's Perspectives
in a hospital. 29 S3: Oh:::. 30 (.7) 31 False 32 T: exactly. It is (.) past tense. Now why false? 33 (.5) 34 Do you remember? Uh: When we have past tense? (.5) ED (.)? 35 S3? 36 S3: (.4) It is not now? 37 T: [she is a teacher] 38 S3: [she] a teacher NOW 39 T: very good. Okay 40 hh (2) 41 Let's review past tense together			

I: interviewer
S: student
T: teacher

In this extract, assessment happened when the teacher assessed students' learning of past tense and the difference it makes in the meaning of sentences. In fact, she pretended that the answer was seemingly inaudible to get others' answers in line 14. Doing so, she realized that most of the students could answer correctly, but they seemed to have problems with past tense and therefore had vague ideas about the reason behind the answer. By a wrong answer from a student and an unanswered call for others, the teacher understood that the past tense had not been learned by students thoroughly. She gave the students some clues in line 28 to raise their awareness by emphasizing on *ed* in pronouncing the word *worked*. However, only one of the students noticed what the teacher referred to. In other words, the metacognitive question acted as evidence of students' knowledge of past tense, which was the focus of the previous unit rather than that of the present activity.

It can be argued that what makes assessment relevant here is that by asking about something that is assumed to be in their metacognition, an assessment opportunity is formed through interaction that elicited information for instruction. In this way,

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the teacher was performing spontaneous LOA. The evaluation of students made the teacher go back to the electronic board and explain the past tense very briefly. Therefore, the assessment of students informed the status of learning and guided the instruction. In other words, the measurement of learning happened by using metacognitive questions.

The role of teacher's LAL can be observed in the teacher's comment and its analysis. Realizing the weakness of assessment tasks, the teacher tried to alleviate the tension between assessment type and learning. The teacher did so by using a strategy (i.e., metacognitive questions) to make the assessment task more conducive to the learning goals of the unit.

4.2 Designedly Incompleted Utterances as a Tool for Spontaneous LOA

The second strategy as a tool for spontaneous LOA that was prevalent in the questioning practices of the teacher was DIU. DIU can be regarded as a type of question in which the teacher partly states a sentence and leaves the remainder to students to complete correctly. In extract 2 (Table 2), the teacher was checking students' workbooks to see how they had acquired the vocabulary that was introduced in the previous session. The vocabulary section contained a relevant picture in which all the mentioned words were depicted. The teacher talked about the picture and pointed to the words whenever she mentioned them. Then, the students were asked to listen to an audio track and repeat the words after the teacher carefully pronounced the words. To check each individual's pronunciation and understanding of the vocabulary, the teacher routinely asked several students to repeat the words individually, which was followed by some questions related to the picture. The workbook included the same section titled *word time* in which some words were given to students in a box and they were supposed to complete the sentences with appropriate words. Similar to the previous session, in this part, the teacher posed several questions to check whether the students can use and pronounce the words correctly or not. The analysis of the data revealed that a certain type of questioning was common in such practices (i.e., questioning after teaching the section and in checking students' homework). That is, DIU was used to assess students' learning. This extract is chosen to illustrate how DIU served as a tool for spontaneous LOA.

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Table 2

Post-Observation Stimulated Recall Interview (Extract 2)

Interaction Transcript	Video Stimulated Recall Interview Selected Excerpts	Teacher's Perspectives	Analyst's Interpretations of the Teacher's Perspectives
1 T: S10 (.) 2 you please. 3 S10: (6) page 10? 4 S7: (.5) Page [10 5 S3: yes] 6 S10: <Okay Okay>. 7 (.) workbook er:::: 8 Page 10 9 A 10 er::: complete the (.4) sentences. complete the sentences with the (.7) correct word. 11 One (.) 12 Jenny has a::: /rᵆʃ/ 13 T: Jenny is in a? 14 S10: Jenny is in a: /rᵆʃ/↑ 15 T: is in a? 16 S10: uhm 17 (28) 18 T: S8? 19 S8: °/rᵆʃ/° 20 T: Can you spell the word? S8 21 (2) 22 S8: R U S H 23 T: Aha: Look↑ It has U in it (.) right? 24 S8: yes. 25 T: U pronounced as? 26 S8: u? hum 27 (3) 28 T: how do we read u? 29 (2) 30 We say /r::/? 31 (.5) 32 S10: /rʌʃ/? 33 T: /rʌʃ/. Very good. 34 T: Look at the	I: Okay. Do you mind just briefly telling me what was going on when you were working on the workbook? T: usually, the students forget how to pronounce the words I taught the session before. Most of the time, such mistakes make the students mixed up because the meaning changes. I: and you tried to repeat the sentences to do what? T: to make them pay attention to the pronunciation. To use the words correctly, they need to produce them with correct pronunciation and use them in the right sentences because it is the final aim of learning this unit. This exercise was to check the use of the words, but the pronunciation was to be checked by the teacher too. I: but you continued with asking other students. Why? T: to involve others. You know. They comment on others' phrases and sentences. I: after this exercise, you made a conversation by writing some	To the teacher, learning an item of vocabulary entails learning how to produce it correctly in the appropriate context. However, the workbook exercises only assess the latter aspect of vocabulary learning. Therefore, she accentuates the word pronunciation to ensure students' successful vocabulary learning. Referring to the aim of the unit, the teacher believes that making the students produce the words heightens their awareness of pronunciation nuances. The teacher views interaction as valuable. The teacher provides a real context for the students to use the words.	The teacher identifies the assessment task requiring more interactivity as it pays attention to the written form of the vocabulary used in the context, but checking the oral production of words is left to the teacher. To achieve learning, the teacher adopts a strategy that is in line with the learning goal of the unit to assess production as well as use. The teacher uses DIU to help the students understand linguistic differences at the pronunciation level. The teacher also implicitly refers to peer assessment and the value of involving others in interaction while assessing the student. It can be argued that DIU can serve the purpose of engaging students in peer assessment as well. The teacher realizes the significance of the authenticity of the task and design a more interactive, authentic task by the means of DIU.

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Interaction Transcript	**Video Stimulated Recall Interview Selected Excerpts**	**Teacher's Perspectives**	**Analyst's Interpretations of the Teacher's Perspectives**
box. (.3) we have u in other words like? 35 (.7) 36 /l^/? 37 S3: [/l^k/ 38 S7: /l^k/] 39 (8) 40 T: Ok. /l^k/ and /tr^/? 41 S3: /tr^k/ 42 T: yeah (.) Anything else in the box? 43 (10) 44 S2: /ʃ^t/ 45 T: uh::: 46 /ʃ^t/ means? 47 S2: em::: /ʃ^t/ er::: ((the student shouts)) 48 S5: =no::::: 49 no /ʃ^t/ 50 is /ʃaʊt/ 51 S1: =yes 52 T: excellent↑ $That is /ʃaʊt/ S2$ 53 /ʃaʊt/ has >S H and<? 54 S2: (.5) >O U T< 55 T: yes. O AND U. 56 so it is /ʃaʊt/ 57 now read number two please (.) S10.	sentences on the board. May I ask what was the point? T: yeah. I did to see if they can finally use them in real conversation correctly.		

I: interviewer
S: student
T: teacher

In this extract, 9 cases of DIU were found (lines 13, 15, 25, 30, 34, 36, 40, 46, and 53 in Table 2) in which the teacher collected evidence of students' knowledge of vocabulary pronunciation. Even though the practical exercise in the workbook was to place the words correctly in the given sentences, the teacher withheld the practice until line 57 and informally assessed students' pronunciation knowledge through DIU. The teacher started the question by repeating the sentence and leaving the word unsaid. However, when it failed to receive the correct answer as in lines

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12, 14, and 19 by students repeating in the same way and a long silence (line 17), she provided a hint. The teacher continued the questions by reminding learners of how certain accompanying vowels are pronounced. The subsequent forms of the question were reformulated to be more specific by adding a sentence before the question. In response to the DIU, students could engage in peer assessment (lines 47-51) and demonstrate their knowledge of word pronunciation.

The role of LAL is observable in this extract, too. The teacher understood that in real-world communication students need to pronounce the words correctly so that no misunderstanding happens in interaction due to pronunciation nuances. Therefore, she recognized the problems of the assessment task as lack of involving the learners completely and adopted DIU to relate the assessment task to learning in a more meaningful way. In this way, the assessment task became also a "learning task" since its completion required using the knowledge and skills needed by the course (Carless et al., 2006, p.9). Teaching goals and assessment goals are aligned to specific desirable outcomes,

Extract 2 indicates an example of spontaneous LOA because it elicits evidence of students' pronunciation knowledge to ensure that they are ready to use the words correctly both in terms of oral production and application. By resorting to DIU, the teacher created an "assessment opportunity" (Rea-Dickins, 2001) embedded in interaction.

Furthermore, through such questioning strategies, the teacher was not only assessing the students' pronunciation of the words, but also engaged students in a metalinguistic activity to enhance their knowledge of pronunciation. As observed in the comments, the teacher put the learners at the center of the learning-assessment process. The teacher viewed teacher interaction in assessment as valuable. This practice displays further evidence of the LOA dimension of DIU in spontaneous assessment as it includes elements of students' involvement, teacher's evidence seeking, and integrating assessment and learning in talk.

Extract 2 performs spontaneous LOA in different ways than the metacognitive questions in extract 1. First, unlike metacognitive questions, they pre-expand the main activity in the exercise. Metacognitive questions in extract 1 were raised after the students completed the activity. However, DIU was posed before the students started answering the activity. Second, it can be argued that the focus of assessment in these two types of questions differed. The earlier type did not assess students' comprehension of a text as in metacognitive questions, rather they were

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linguistically based. Metacognitive questions revolved around the comprehension of the text which led to an examination of the tense in the passage, while DIU targeted small units of language as vowels and pronunciation. Therefore, they were corrected on the spot, while metacognitive questions were tolerated to trigger more ideas and raise students' awareness.

5. Discussion

The aim of this study was to investigate the questioning strategies that an EFL teacher adopted in classroom interaction as a tool for spontaneous LOA. The analysis of the extracts revealed that metacognitive and DIU can be used as two powerful tools to this end. It was shown that metacognitive and DIU questions, reflecting the elicitation dimension of LOA in classroom interaction, enable the alignments between types of assessment and learning with learners at the center. More particularly, they performed several functions. First, they were used to promote noticing of the targeted learning points. Second, they facilitated the integration of assessment tasks with learning goals by aligning the assessment goals with teaching goals and, thus helping the assessment tasks to be more learning-oriented. Third, they invoked interaction and peer assessment among the students. Fourth, they improved the quality of the assessment tasks (e.g., validity). In the case of metacognitive questions, as the final goal of LOA is to train self-regulated and autonomous learners (Salamoura & Morgan, 2021), metacognitive questions and DIU acted as LOA tools to raise students' metacognition and awareness, respectively. In this regard, it can be said that they are useful in helping students to develop awareness and finally become autonomous. The findings are partly in line with those of Heritage and Heritage (2013), who found open questions useful in informing students' learning status. In this study, we found that DIUs, which are not open-ended questions, are also useful in classroom assessment. The justification can be that learning-oriented questions do not necessarily need to be open-ended (Yang, 2021). Other types can also be learning-oriented associated with different classroom modes, which was assessment in this study (Yang, 2021). However, unlike their study, this study highlighted the significance of the type of questions as LOA strategies. Despite reporting the type of teachers' questions during assessment practices in descriptive terms (e.g., Jiang, 2020), this study used an in-depth analysis of how questions make the cycle of spontaneous assessment propel.

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Furthermore, the findings echoed those of Salamoura and Morgan (2021) and Campbell & Thorpe (2017), who argued that autonomy must be embedded in all LOA models in light of feedback and self-assessment. A reason behind this finding can be the participant's high LAL and awareness of LOA principles that intend to create autonomy and agency among students even in assessment. Despite these promising insights, the current study had some limitations, which can be compensated in future studies. First, the study followed a case study design with only one EFL teacher that limits the generalizability of the findings to other contexts. Second, the researchers had no control over the demographics and background factors that may have influenced the process of practicing LOA by the participant.

6. Conclusion and Implications

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that teacher questioning strategies are influential ways to manifest and practice LOA in EFL contexts. Moreover, it can be asserted that teacher talk and classroom interactions can be fertile grounds for disseminating the seeds of LOA. Assessment can be added to many other functions of teacher questioning in EFL contexts. In light of the obtained findings, this study may be momentous at both theoretical and practical levels. Theoretically, it enriches LOA research and practice by highlighting the role of teachers' questioning strategies that foster student autonomy in classroom assessment interactions. Moreover, it adds to L2 assessment and interaction knowledge by calling for CA approaches to unpack assessment perceptions and practices. It responds to a call for more studies to see how spontaneous assessment happens in classroom interaction (Daşkın & Hatipoğlu, 2019). Practically, the study can have implications for EFL teachers, teacher trainers, material developers, and program designers. Concerning EFL teachers, the findings can improve their knowledge and practice of LOA in relation to questioning strategies that appear in classroom interactions. Additionally, their LAL may also enhance, given the LOA's significant role in LAL (Fulcher, 2021). Likewise, teacher trainers can utilize this study and offer pre-service and in-service professional development courses related to assessment in which different questioning strategies useful in classroom assessment are taught. They may also plan and propose workshops in which LOA principles are highlighted besides teacher questioning strategies common in classroom interactions.

Furthermore, material developers can benefit from this study by noting that

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assessment tasks might need modifications to be LOA. To deal with such issues, they need to consider the learning objectives of the materials when designing a task. They can also provide teachers with instructions in assessing, teaching, and doing the tasks. Lastly, this study entails implications for program designers, who can use research findings in developing practical skills in assessment and questioning for classroom teachers. In other words, LAL, as indicated by Jiang (2020), requires the development of knowledge as well as skills in conducting classroom assessments. However, teachers may not have adequate skills or be unaware of their practices in spontaneous assessment. Hence, program designers may revisit the current programs or develop new ones in which LAL and LOA practice are more stressed out.

Despite its promising insights, this study had some limitations, which can be compensated in future studies. This study followed a case study design and the findings cannot be generalizable to other contexts. Therefore, future studies can employ mixed-methods designs to have a triangulated approach to LOA and teacher questioning strategies in spontaneous assessment. Motivated researchers can build on the findings of this study and test its generalizability in larger research projects with larger sample sizes. Likewise, further research is needed to discover what other strategies are used in the spontaneous assessment that can raise teachers' LAL. Moreover, this study did not use any questioning typologies, hence avid scholars can investigate different types of questioning strategies in quantitative or qualitative studies to provide a fuller picture of teachers' questioning in spontaneous LOA. Future research can also focus on the role of cultural factors and pedagogical expertise in EFL teachers' practice of LOA. Additionally, the benefits and challenges of applying LOA in L2 classes, especially those involving young learners could be studied to illuminate this line of research. Further, the effect of treatment and explicit training on EFL teachers' knowledge and practice of LOA can be explored in the future. Finally, the interface of LOA and EFL teachers' professional identity, assessment identity, and feedback literacy in the context of L2 assessment can be explored in the future (see Estaji & Ghiasvand, 2019, 2021, 2022; Wang et al., 2023).

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Appendix

Transcription Conventions

[Beginning point of simultaneous speaking (of two or more people)
] End point of simultaneous speaking
= Talk by two speakers which is contiguous (i.e. not overlapping, but with no hearable pause in between) continuation of the same turn by the same speaker even though the turn is separated in the transcript
(0.2) The time (in tenths of a second) between utterances
(.) A micro-pause (one tenth of a second or less)
(word**)** Approximations of what is heard
((comment**))** Analyst's notes
wo:rd Sound extension of a word (more colons: longer stretches)
word**.** Fall in tone (not necessarily the end of a sentence)
wor- An abrupt stop in articulation
word**?** Rising inflection (not necessarily a question)
word (underline) Emphasized word, part of word or sound
word ↑ Rising intonation
word ↓ Falling intonation
°word° Talk that is quieter than surrounding talk
hh Audible out-breaths
>word< Talk that is spoken faster than surrounding talk
<word> Talk that is spoken slower than surrounding talk
$**word**$ Talk uttered in a "smile voice"

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